

**Power and Publishing: Contemporary Arabophone and
Francophone Algerian Literature and its National and
Transnational Conditions of Production**

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the relationship between Algerian fiction writing and its conditions of production. It examines how these conditions of production shape both literary careers and novels' thematic concerns. It assesses the possibilities and limitations of the existence of an "Algerian literary field" within a transnational context in which Algeria is an economically minor cultural player. The evolution of the relationship between art and the market is studied across the *longue durée* – i.e. since the first Algerian novels were published at the start of the twentieth century to the present day. Particular attention is paid to a new generation of Algerian authors – mostly in their late 30s – writing today, whom have hitherto not been the subject of academic study. This is alongside the analysis of the careers and work of internationally well-known contemporary authors Kamel Daoud, Yasmina Khadra, Boualem Sansal, Waciny Laredj and Ahlam Mosteghanemi, who owe part of their success to the creation of literary personas, and notably the persona of the post-colonial "translator" of Algeria to non-Algerian audiences.

The majority of existing academic studies focus on Francophone fiction publishing. Arabic-language fiction and publishing has tended to be understudied. This thesis brings together the study of Arabic-language literature with that of French-language literature to offer a more complete study of the Algerian publishing scene. It argues that the existing scholarly literature has been overoptimistic about the margins of manoeuvre of Algerian writers, both in Arabic and French, to escape or subvert the thematic (and aesthetic) expectations of publishing houses and the power of transnational (notably French and Middle Eastern) networks over Algerian publishing houses. The fact that French-language authors tend to gravitate towards Paris and Arabic-language authors towards Sharjah or Beirut also reinforces the distinction between "Arabophone" and "Francophone" Algerian literatures. Yet at the same time, contemporary Algerian authors and publishers are increasingly seeing themselves as part of one field: whilst a new generation of authors returns to the work of previous generations for inspiration, regardless of language of expression, an

increasingly monolingual, younger reading public is creating a market for the translation of classics of Francophone Algerian literature into Arabic.

One of the contributions to knowledge of this PhD is the production of new empirical material about publishing in Algeria, and notably a range of interviews with owners and senior employees of Algerian private publishing houses (Chihab, Casbah, Barzakh, Apic, Frantz Fanon, Fassila, Ibn Al Chatie, El-Ikhtlief, El Almaia, Dar El Izza wa El Karama, Tafat, NECIB, El Mothakaff and El-Hibr), book shop owners and younger authors (Sofiane Mokhenache, Abdelouahab Aissaoui, Miloud Yabrir, Riadh Hadir, Saïd Khatibi, Rafik Taibi, Ryad Girod, Smail Yabrir, Samir Kacimi, Mohammed Djafar, Alloua Koussa, Abdellatif Ould Abdellah, Amal Bouchareb and Djamila Morani).

Declaration

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

Dedication

To the woman who did not had the chance for education but always stood for the education of women,

To the Memory of my Mother

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Dissemination

7 and 8 September 2017, “A Snapshot of the conditions of production of some contemporary Algerian novels written in French and Arabic: Languages, Themes and Production”, paper presented at an international conference on *Rupture, Repression, and Repetition? The Algerian War of Independence in the Present*, University of Leeds.

26 and 29 August 2019, selected to attend an international summer school on *Concurrences and Connections: From Colonial Mobilities to Postcolonial Borders* at the Linnaeus University Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, Sweden. Presented a paper entitled “Becoming a transnational Algerian literary celebrity: a case study of Kamel Daoud”

5 and 6 September 2019, selected to present a paper entitled “Programmed Success: a case study of Yasmina Khadra” at the international conference *Intellectuals Across Borders: Writers, Artists, Activists*, organised by Münster University, Germany, in cooperation with the University of Lisbon, Portugal.

Published article in a special issue of the *Journal of African Literature Association* dedicated to North Africa. Title: Rethinking the Algerian publishing “boom”: perspectives of authors, booksellers, and publishers on transnational networks and local infrastructure.

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Abbreviations

AILF	Association Internationale des Libraires Francophones [International Association of Francophone Bookshops]
ASILA	Association Internationale des Libraires Algériens [International Association of Algerian Bookshops]
BIEF	Bureau International de l'Édition Francophone [International Office of Francophone Publishing]
EDIF	Edition Diffusion Internationale Française [International French Publishing and Distribution]
ENAG	Entreprise National des Arts Graphiques [National Enterprise of Graphic Arts]
ENAL	Société Nationale d'Édition et de Diffusion [National Society for Publishing and Distribution]
CNL	Centre National du Livre [National Book Centre]
ONDA	Office National du Droit d'Auteur et de Droits de Voisins [The National Office for Copyright and Related Rights]
ONEL	Organisation Nationale des Editeurs de Livres [The National Organisation of Book Publishers]
OPU	Office des Presses Universitaires [The Office for University Presses]
SNED	Société Nationale d'Édition et de Diffusion [National Society of Publishing and Distribution]
SNEL	Syndicat National des Éditeurs du Livre [The National Union of Book Editors]

UEA Union d'Éditeurs Algériens [Union of Algerian Publishers]

Note on Transliteration and Translation

I have used the transliteration system of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* for the Arabic titles, and quotes in Arabic. Quotes from interviews in languages other than English are inserted in the text in English and accompanied by the original language in footnotes.

Introduction

At the heart of this thesis are questions about identity, representation, and power. As Philip Altbach argues in “Publishing in Africa from Independence to the Present Day”:

Publishing is absolutely essential to the cultural, scientific, and educational life of nations, has an importance beyond its limited economic roles. While it may be appropriate to import textiles or even computers, the production of books that directly reflect the culture and history of a nation or people is something that cannot be left to others...it is a vital part of culture and deserves special consideration (cited in Bgoya & Jay, 2013:19).

Fiction and non-fiction publishing say something about “us”. Yet in the post-colonial context, and specifically in this thesis which examines the case of Algeria, whilst we have a plethora of works studying the forms which representations of “our” politics, societies and cultures take, not enough attention has been paid to how such representations have been produced. Who defines and speaks for “us”? Who are they writing for? What are the mechanisms in place, including educational policy and the national and international literary markets, which enable some voices to be heard whilst others are silenced, which ensure that some thematic concerns dominate, whilst others are ignored? What margins of manoeuvre do authors have to subvert the power relations that shape what they can publish and get read?

In the last few years, a number of scholarly works have celebrated what has been described as boom in Algerian publishing since 2000. This boom has been connected to the emergence of several new independent publishing houses, new authors, and new aesthetics (Mokhtari, 2006; Treacy, 2016; Ann-Lewis, 2016; Ford, 2016; Gueydan-Turek, 2016). In 2017, there were 1,382 publishing houses in Algeria, compared to sixteen in 1994 – although the Algerian Ministry of Culture identifies

only thirty to one hundred of these 1,382 publishers as active participants on the literary scene (iReMMO, 2018). A new generation of Algerian authors such as Kamel Daoud, Mustapha Benfodil, Adlène Meddi, and Kaouther Adimi, often first published by Algerian publishing houses, have found international fame and recognition.

At the same time, this publishing boom in Algeria and the emergence of new Algerian international literary stars has prompted anxieties about who exactly these authors are writing for, and what effects this might have on the ways in which they represent “our” (i.e. Algerian) politics, culture, and society. Once a popular journalist in the pages of Algerian French-language newspaper *Le Quotidien d’Oran*, Kamel Daoud is increasingly criticised in Algeria for reproducing negative Orientalist fantasies of the Muslim and Arab world for the consumption of Western reading publics. In a recent work on Francophone authors, Kaoutar Harchi (2016) argued that fame depends on recognition in the Global North, and thus judgments made by publishing houses about an author’s sex, social and educational background and origins and nationality play a determining role in shaping how novels are labelled, read, and perceived. Harchi’s monograph is a rare example of a study which examines the conditions of production and the creation of literary personas – most other academic work is focused on literary analysis with emphasis on Francophone fiction publishing.

This thesis innovates on previous works by studying both Arabophone and Francophone literary production together. Arabic-language fiction and publishing has been largely understudied, beyond a few well-known authors such as Waciny Laredj and Ahlam Mosteghanemi (Holt, 2008; Ben Youssef Zayzafoon, 2010; Baaqeel, 2015, Baaqeel, 2016, 2019). Only a few rare previous studies bring Arabophone and Francophone together, such as Anissa Daoudi’s 2016 article about Algerian female writers Ahlam Mosteghanemi, Assia Djébar and Fadhila El Farouk. This separation reinforces the idea that there is something substantially different about literature produced in Arabic and that produced in French, whereas, in fact, academics’ choice of which language literature to focus on is often more a reflection of their own

linguistic skills (i.e. they are more likely to read only French, than read only Arabic or both French and Arabic) than a stylistic or thematic distinction. Karima Laachir (2015:3), writing about multilingual literary traditions in Morocco argues that “the presumption that postcolonial literature written in English or French is the only one that engages with colonial legacies through the prism of language is problematic because it disconnects literature written in European languages from those written in ‘local’ or ‘native’ languages, with which they have been in dialogue aesthetically and politically as they emerge from the same context”.

Taking Arabophone and Francophone literature together thus has several advantages. Firstly, it allows us to develop a fuller understanding of the “Algerian” literary field. If, as Altbach states, “the production of books [...] directly reflect[s] the culture, history of a nation or people” (qtd in Bgoya & Jay,2013:19), studying Arabophone and Francophone literature together enables us to explore the extent to which an “Algerian” literature, irrespective of the language of expression, can be said to exist today. How have the connotations of writing in French and writing in Arabic evolved since the start of the twentieth century? Who do newer generations of Algerian writers look back to as their literary inspirations – i.e. what extent do they understand the Algerian canon as multilingual, regardless of the language(s) in which they write?

Secondly, studying Francophone and Arabophone Algerian literature together gives us a more complete picture of the transnational contexts in which Algerian literature is operating. In an article on contemporary Algerian cinema, Walid Benkhaled (2016) argues that Algerian cinema no longer exists: films labelled “Algerian”, including those with Algerian directors and actors, are overwhelmingly funded through European (primarily French) sources, and with this funding comes constraints. Notably, films are expected to conform to the thematic expectations of European audiences (oppressed women, illegal migration) and language quotas (some French funding requires a certain percentage of the film to be in French). In what way might the literary context be similar to that of cinema?

One obvious difference is that there are independent Algerian publishing houses who can fund the publishing of a book, whereas film producers have to secure funding either from the Algerian government or from foreign funders. As Sofiane Hadjadj, the co-founder of one of Algeria's leading independent publishers, Barzakh editions, argued in 2018, literature is far less expensive to produce than cinema or theatre and it is under less political surveillance as it is considered to influence a smaller percentage of the population compared to other art forms (Métaoui, 1 October 2018). At the same time, financial success for Algerian authors is largely secured by publishing outside of Algeria. On the one hand, there is the well-known French/European literary market, but, on the other hand, there is also a Middle Eastern literary market to which far less academic attention has been paid. In this context, how do transnational literary markets shape content but also how do writers seek to maintain a degree of creative freedom? Studying these two transnational contexts together allows us to both recognise the dominance of France as the "Greenwich Meridian" (Casanova, 2004:90), and at the same time de-centre the former colonial power as Beirut and Sharjah also become important cultural centres for Algerian literature. This allows us to underline the shifting and evolving power relations in the international context – this is a more complicated story than the Global North continuing to dominate the Global South as it did during the colonial period.

Theoretical and conceptual framework

This thesis is informed by the theoretical works of Pierre Bourdieu's *The Rules of Art* (1996) and *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993). The theories of Pierre Bourdieu are important because they extensively consider the role of publishers within the literary field and conditions of production. Bourdieu's focus was on a powerful group of French publishers and their domination of the literary field in France, notably Le Seuil, Actes Sud, and Plon. Algerian publishers today conduct their transactions with these same publishers. Bourdieu describes the publisher as "a dual personality, who must know how to reconcile art and money, love and literature and the quest for

profitability” (qtd in Steemers, 2014:203). Bourdieu established the following criteria to measure the reputation of a publishing house. These criteria are organised into three categories: symbolic, social, and economic capital. Symbolic capital is based on the age of the house and its location, how many Nobel prize winners they have published, the “ranking” of authors based on the number of citations that they receive in a corpus, the number of works which have become classics in the literature, and in dictionaries, in addition to the number of titles translated. Social capital is based on the publishing house’s network with known personalities and names in the scene who can review, praise, promote and give talks about the works. The economic capital of the house is based on funds from the government that will contribute to the house strength in order to be able to compete in the world of publishing, in addition to the number of salaried employees, the number of distributors, and their dependency on others. The commercial success is based on the number of copies printed and the number of best sellers.

Bourdieu’s work also sheds light on the taste of the market and how this shapes which texts are eligible for more investment and which are considered to travel into other contexts. He highlights the need to pay close attention to how the thematic and aesthetic priorities of those who have the money and power to publish and make the careers of authors shape the content of literary work. The field of power according to Bourdieu (1996:215) “is the space of relations of force between agents or between institutions having in common possession of the capital necessary to occupy the dominant positions in different fields, it is the site of struggles between holders of different powers”. Bourdieu was always supportive of the autonomy of the literary field (Crowley, 2013). Bourdieu’s “La Culture en Danger” [Culture in Danger] article foresees the impact of commercial pressure on literary works (Crowley, 2013) and the risks of publishing only those who accept espousing the rules of the market to gain symbolic, economic, and cultural capital.

In *Postcolonial Writers in the Global Literary marketplace* (2011), Sarah Brouillette builds her argument on Bourdieu’s theories. Brouillette analyses the

politics of inclusion and exclusion of Anglophone postcolonial writers in accordance with international market taste. The most successful writers, she argues, are those who produce English-language fiction which “is relatively ‘sophisticated’ or ‘complex’ and often-realist; it is politically liberal and suspicious of nationalism; it uses a language of exile hybridity, and ‘mongrel’ subjectivity” (2011:61). According to Brouillette these are the characteristics of fiction which aimed at an international market. To quote Brouillette (2011:80-81), “fiction is the World readable or as she labels it ‘world-fiction’ aimed at an international audience”.

Brouillette was influenced by the work of Bourdieu, and Graham Huggan and Pascale Casanova. Brouillette praises the work of Huggan’s *Postcolonial Exotic* (2001) as

a ground-breaking materialist study of ‘the industry of postcoloniality’, [which] is dependent upon faith in the existence of global reader figure who exoticizes literature in the same way that a tourist ostensibly exoticizes ‘foreign’ cultures. It is in this light that Huggan identifies a certain ‘strategic exoticism’ that pervades postcolonial writing, as authors attempt to show that they understand the ways in which they are being asked to present the Third world or global South to a presumably apolitical metropolitan audience” (Brouillette 2011:5).

Huggan argues that the way in which African writers present themselves is information for the consumption of foreign audience and critics, through which they can read and interpret the world and the culture of these authors:

anthropological exotic...invokes the familiar aura of other, incommensurably “foreign” culture while appearing to provide a modicum of information that gives the uninitiated reader access to the text and, by extension, the “foreign” culture itself. Thus, the perceptual framework of the anthropological exotic allows for a reading of African literature as the more or less transparent window onto a richly detailed and culturally specific, but still somehow

homogenous – and of course readily marketable – African world (Huggan, 2001:37).

‘Fiction’, ‘postcolonial’, ‘language’, ‘origin’, ‘prize winner’, ‘censorship’, ‘gender’, ‘taboo’, and the identity of the writer, these phrases and concepts are used for marketing postcolonial writers, writers writing in the language of the former colonisers, either in French or in English. As the Lebanese author Hanan Al-shaykh stated in her interview with Yasmine-El-Geressi, “I am tired of being referred to as an Arab Feminist writer” (2018, July 20).

The concept of the postcolonial exotic is well developed and applied in Anglophone postcolonial literature, but is also very relevant to the Algerian context. I apply it particularly in chapter 4 of this thesis, where I analyse how a group of authors talk and present information about themselves, performing the role of interpreters, ethnographers of their own societies (what Huggan terms *autoethnography*) and bridges of understanding between cultures. As Charles Forsdick underlines (2001: 14) the exotic can be transgressive: “exotisme (and its English equivalent ‘exoticism’) were coined in the first half of the nineteenth century, [and] the term has shifted repeatedly between two semantic poles, one signifying an exoticness essential to radical otherness” – but in the context of postcolonial literature “exoticism” tends to reinforce, rather than challenge, the status quo – “the other [meaning] describe[s] the process whereby such radical otherness is either experienced by a traveller or translated, transported, represented for consumption at home.”

The “postcolonial exotic” is part of what Pascale Casanova has termed “programmed success”. In *The World Republic of Letters* (2004), Casanova emphasises that it is economic domination which enables continuing cultural dominance, and the expectation that postcolonial writers will (re)produce certain forms of knowledge and art. Casanova criticizes the production and commodification of “world literature”: she classifies world fiction as half-literary, half-commercial (2004). Whilst some scholars would see hybridity and the mixing of styles as an artistic

endeavour (Dobie, 2017), Casanova places greater emphasis on how hybridity and the mixing of styles result instead from commercial imperatives. She argues that Paris continues to dominate the literary field and it is where postcolonial writers seek to gain visibility. Casanova argues that writers from less powerful nations have two choices, either to imitate or to rebel. In her analysis of *A Suitable Boy* (1993) by the Indian writer Vikram Seth, Casanova uses the term “programmed success” to describe how Seth became successful because he met the commercial criteria of the international literary field (2004:121). In the sub-Saharan African Francophone context, similar arguments are made by Richard Watts in *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World* (2005), which is inspired by Gerard Genette’s 1987 *Paratexts*. Focusing on the paratexts surrounding the works of postcolonial writers, Watts (2005:7) argues that “in Francophone literature’s present and future, it is impossible to imagine a fully liberated and autonomous work in French by a postcolonial author that is not marketed in some way (perforce linguistically, but also thematically and structurally) by its colonial past”. The former metropole continues to impose itself as the center of the world.

All of these ideas and concepts are highly relevant to understanding Francophone and Arabophone publishing in Algeria, and of Algerian authors. Drawing upon the insights of this previous work on other contexts, this thesis seeks to demonstrate the power relations at play in understanding why some Algerian works of fiction are published and others are not. Unpicking the symbolic, social and economic capital of Algerian publishers and authors is a theme throughout. The works of Bourdieu, Brouillette, Casanova, Huggan and Watts call upon us to pay close attention to why certain thematic concerns are foregrounded—the *anthropological exotic* – and how certain authors become not only literary figures but are also seen to be “spokespeople” for their societies. This includes analysing how individual writers contribute to the creation of their literary persona through different forms of marketing (Steemers, 2014). It is also necessary to reflect on the impact of this in terms of the existence – or otherwise – of an Algerian literary field,

which speaks to Algerians about themes of interest to them in languages which they read.

Before continuing, it is worth making a note on the term “world literature”. David Damrosch (2003: 6) defines world literature in the following way: “A work enters into world literature by a double process: first, by being read as *literature*; second, by *circulating* out into a broader world beyond its linguistic and cultural point of origin”. In reality, much like the term “world music”, the label tends to be applied more to works from countries in the Global South than works produced in countries in the Global North, including when those works don’t actually change language (for example, works in English by Indian or Pakistani authors). Algerian literature is more known, labelled, marketed and classified as a Francophone and Arabophone literature. Indeed, generally speaking, in the French-language context, the term “Francophone literature” tends to be used instead of “world literature”, but with the same centre/periphery divide works of literature in French produced in France are just “literature” whilst works of literature in French produced in Africa or Asia are “Francophone literature”. In 2007, a group of “Francophone writers” wrote an open letter in *Le Monde*, arguing for the term “littérature monde en français” (world literature in French) to be used instead of “Francophone” as a way of moving away from the centre/periphery hierarchy. However, as debates about “world literature” in English have demonstrated, the term is not necessarily less neutral. In the context of Algerian literature, the terms “Francophone” and “Arabophone” literature continue to be the most commonly used. Pheng Cheah points out that “recent attempts to revise world literature have obscured its normative dimension because they have only understood the world in terms of spatial circulation, the paradigmatic case of which is global capitalist market exchange” (2014:303).

Research questions

This thesis seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are the opportunities and limitations for Algerian authors and editors publishing fiction within Algeria, and how have these shifted over time?

- 2) What kinds of publishing opportunities are created by the transnational networks within which Algerian independent publishers are embedded? How do these contribute to determining what gets published?
- 3) What is the pathway to international success for Algerian fiction authors? What are the kinds of literary personas which they need to create, and what types of work are they expected to produce?
- 4) How do young Algerian authors who do not want, or have not had the opportunity, to create such personas see their place in the Algerian literary field?
- 5) How has the question of language choice evolved over time? What impact do transnational publishing networks had on reinforcing the idea of distinct “Francophone” and “Arabophone” Algerian literatures? What has been the impact of a shift in Algeria in the language of literacy, from French to Arabic?
- 6) Finally, bringing all these questions together, does an Algerian literary field exist, and if so, what defines it?

Sources and methods

This thesis is based on several sources and uses different methods. Chapters 1 and 2 are based on an extensive survey of scholarly works published on, and works of, Algerian literature in French and Arabic since the start of the twentieth century. Chapters 3 and 5 are largely based on semi-structured interviews, which I conducted with Algerian publishers, bookshop owners and authors between 2017 and 2018, supported by academic and texts, newspaper articles and audio-visual media pieces. Chapter 4 draws on a range of published interviews with the authors discussed, their TV appearances and journalistic and academic texts. Chapters 4 and 5 adopt the method of tracking the career of a series of authors, as a way of identifying patterns in the relationship between writing, securing publishing contracts in and beyond Algeria, writers’ media activities and networks of friends and contacts. It is important to underline that although I have read the novels referred to, this PhD is not focused

on literary analysis – instead it explores the relationship between creative output and commercial contexts.

In order to obtain their perspectives on the possibilities and challenges of publishing in Algeria, I interviewed representatives of thirteen Algerian independent publishers, specifically Barzakh, El Almaia, Apic, Frantz Fanon, El-Hibr, El-Ikhtlief, Casbah, Chihab, Dar Ibn Chatie, Fassila, NECIB, Dar El Izza wa El Karama, El Mouthakaf and Tafat. I attended the Algerian International Book Fair (SILA event) in both 2017 and 2018. This was where I managed to interview a number of the publishers, as they were often not very reactive in replying to my email enquiries. I decided to include a variety of publishers, including those with economic and symbolic capital, well known in the Algerian field and internationally, as well as some regional ones with less symbolic and economic capital. A majority of Algerian publishers attend SILA and so I was able to cast the net widely to recruit potential interviewees. Some publishers refused to participate in my study (e.g. Media Plus in Constantine and Dar Mdarij in Tlemcen) and others said that they would and then withdrew (e.g. Dar el Adib, Oran). I was not able to interview Middle Eastern and European publishers who have commercial relationships with Algerian publishers, as despite trying to contact them they did not reply.

In addition, I visited bookshops and spoke to their owners. There are very few bookshops in Algeria. I focused on the major cities where bookshops are concentrated and where for reasons of family ties it was more straightforward for me to travel to: Algiers, Oran and Tlemcen. Those bookshops where I was also to conduct interviews include Ibn Badis, Tawkia in Oran, Alili in Tlemcen which are owned by same publisher and distributor, Dar el Izza wa el Karama, who also owns other bookshops in central Algiers such as Ibn Khaldoun and many others. I also conducted interviews at the Tiers Monde bookshop in central Algiers owned by Abdelrahman Ali Bey. Several bookshop sellers refused to take part, among them an employee at the El Maamoun bookshop in Oran even after I brought for him permission from the

owner, which is Dar El Izza wa El Karama. All publishers and bookshop owners were unwilling to share information on sales figures.

Finally, I conducted interviews with fourteen young Algerian authors writing in Arabic and in French. These authors are less visible than the literary stars examined in chapter four as they have not developed similar public personas. They are not full-time novelists and they have other professions in order to survive. However, they have had some critical success within and beyond Algeria. I selected them because they have had some critical success, and some limited reviews of their work, but they have not yet been the subject of academic study and cannot live from their art. These authors were mostly contacted through Facebook. Some of them were interviewed during the 2017 SILA event, notably Sofiane Mokhenache, Abdelouahab Aissaoui, Miloud Yabrir, Riadh Hadir, Saïd Khatibi, and Rafik Taibi. Ryad Girod, Ismail Yabrir, and Samir Kacimi were interviewed in central Algiers. I travelled to Mosteghanem to interview Mohammed Djafar, to Constantine to interview Alloua Koussa, and to Mascara to interview Abdellatif Ould Abdellah. Amal Bouchareb who currently resides in Italy and Djamila Morani preferred to respond to my questions through email. Some of the Francophone authors – who are better known – did not respond to my messages and emails: these include Sarah Haider, Adlène Meddi, Akram El Kébira, and Kamel Daoud.

All interviews were conducted in Modern Standard Arabic (fusha) as well as in Algerian Arabic (darija) and in French. The interviews were semi-structured; questions asked to publishers, bookshop owners and authors are listed in the bibliography. All interviews were transcribed, translated into English, and then coded prior to key word and thematic analysis.

Positionality within my research

It was not easy for me as an Algerian female researcher to conduct this research in Algeria. I am the first female in the whole family continue her studies beyond

undergraduate level, and the first one to study outside of Algeria. Questions were raised by members of my family about why I was returning to Algeria to conduct my fieldwork, and I was obliged to repeatedly explain to the whole family the nature of my project, what I was going to do, why and how. I came under significant pressure by being told “you are a role model for your nieces and nephews”, “you are the honour of the family” which made it more difficult for me to move around in different cities in Algeria to conduct research – whilst my father was willing to accept the idea of me travelling and living alone in the UK, he was not prepared to accept this within Algeria. Outside of my hometown of Tlemcen, I had to be accompanied by my brother.

This was in addition to the fact that the Algerian literary field is difficult to study for an Algerian without connections within it. The fact that I was unknown within Algerian literary circles raised several questions and doubts amongst those publishers, booksellers, and authors whom I was hoping to interview. I was not recommended by anyone, I had to establish a network with my participants by myself. This was initially difficult for purely practical reasons, which in themselves reflect the shaky infrastructure of publishing in Algeria. It was difficult for me to contact publishers and authors. Most of them do not have a well-established website or profile. I had to try and identify their contact details through the Algerian Ministry of Culture official website. However, some details were not updated, and I ended up calling the wrong persons. Therefore, social media was the only solution to reach my participants and to have hope for a prompt reply. I decided to add some of my participants as friends on Facebook. This might seem a not-so professional means to contact each other, but in Algeria Facebook pages are often much more used than official websites and mechanisms of contact, even for large organisations and I carefully managed this from a personal safety perspective.

This led to the second significant issue which I faced: I received several refusals, including from those who initially agreed to take part and later changed their minds because they were not convinced about how or why an Arabophone Algerian female sponsored by the Algerian government studying in the United Kingdom might

study Algerian literature. This is revealing of instinctive distrust of the Algerian government by some Algerians (even though the Algerian government/ Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research did not in any way shape the questions or content of this study) – and this too is reflected in some of the attitudes of booksellers who did agree to be interviewed in chapter 3. They are often scathing of government support and perceived conditions attached to it, even though they also take it when it is on offer. Frustratingly, sometimes potential participants would not give me a straight refusal, but rather would keep putting me off. For example, the director of one publishing house in Oran agreed to participate and signed the consent form and we set a date to do the interview, but when I arrived to do the interview, I found the publishing house closed. After several phone calls, she replied and stated that she was on holiday and she did not know when she was coming back. Heading twice to Oran from my home city of Tlemcen was not easy for someone with limited budget, accompanied by her brother.

These refusals were also revealing, I felt, of a certain prejudice in Algerian literary circles, which can be elitist and Francophone, towards Algerian Arabophone students and pre-judgements about the quality of the work which would emerge from the research. The Algerian undergraduate and postgraduate system is often criticised by its elites and its graduates – who are overwhelmingly female – denigrated. It was somewhat disheartening when I saw that foreign researchers seemed to be welcomed much more readily than me, because their interest was seen as more prestigious than my interest. Some Francophone writers – who receive national and international press coverage – were not responsive, I sent messages for example to Sarah Haider, Adlène Meddi and Kamel Daoud but I did not hear any response from them. However, as many foreign researchers, and journalists, tend to focus on Francophone authors, this gave me an advantage when contacting Arabophone authors. The Arabophone writers who I contacted were very responsive and were happy for me to come back to them on a number of occasions with further questions. This can only reveal that they were happy to be studied because they are largely ignored by academics within and beyond their home country. As such, my

positionality as a female, Arabophone Algerian researcher enabled me to access material which researchers with a different position in the field would find more difficult to access.

Organisation of the chapters:

Chapter 1: Finding spaces of expression between colonial domination and post-colonial censorship: language, themes and audiences

Chapter 1 sets out the emergence and development of the Algerian novel from the late nineteenth century to the end of the 1980s. It demonstrates how dominant power relations – notably the political system in place, its linguistic and educational policies and the thematic concerns, or perceived thematic concerns, of editors and readerships – played a fundamental role in determining what was published and who was able to read it. It underlines how publishing beyond the borders of Algeria, be that colonial Algeria or post-colonial Algeria, has always provided an outlet for writers who did not want to be constrained by the conditions of production within Algeria, although this transnational publishing came with its own constraints, notably driven by the expectations and tastes of non-Algerian audiences. This chapter explores the intense politicization around the question of the language of expression, as a result of colonization and decolonization, in debates which were similar to colonial and post-colonial contexts elsewhere in the world. It questions the extent to which an *Algerian* literary field emerged in this period in which Arabophone and Francophone novels and novelists were in dialogue with each other – or whether they were developing in separate spheres.

Chapter 2: Shrinking spaces of expression in Algeria and the return to the real:
Explaining the civil violence of the 1990s to different international readerships

Chapter 2 explores the impact of the civil violence of the 1990s on the Algerian literary field. It examines how the dramatic situation in Algeria, and the fact that

many Algerian writers came to live in exile during this period, played a key role in shaping the kind of literature which was produced and who read it, and who did not read it. The literature of this period is often described as “the literature of urgency” in which French publishers (and those of other nationalities) had an insatiable thirst for documentary-like accounts of extreme forms of violence and anything which seemed to explain it to them and their readerships. One of the contributions to knowledge of this chapter is to put a relatively well-known story of the 1990s Francophone “literature of urgency” into conversation with its far less studied Arabophone counterpart, in order to assess the extent to which – thematically – they came to form part of the same literary field – or not. The composition of national and transnational readerships, and their market tastes, is analysed by looking at what was published, in what language and where.

Chapter 3: New independent publishing houses after 2000: finally, an Algerian literary field or the persistence of dependency?

Chapter 3 explores the new, independent publishing houses established after the end of the civil violence in Algeria. These are often celebrated as offering young Algerian authors the opportunity to publish in their own country, and explore new aesthetics and themes, breaking with the more documentary forms of the past. However, these independent publishing houses still face a number of difficulties: financial, technical (including relating to infrastructure) and inconsistent governmental financial support. In order to overcome some of these obstacles, publishers seek out transnational networks for co-publishing with European (French-language) and Middle Eastern (Arabic-language) publishers and to a lesser extent other African publishers. Publishers thus play the role of mediators, choosing texts which thematically will travel well to other contexts. The Algerian literary field has re-emerged but remains dependent on more powerful cultural actors and audiences in the international context. French-language works continue to dominate fiction publishing despite the fact that the Algerian education system up until university has been completely Arabised since the 1980s.

Chapter 4: Becoming a transnational Algerian literary celebrity

Chapter 4 examines the trajectories of the Algerian authors today who are best-known internationally: Kamel Daoud, Boualem Sansal, Yasmina Khadra, Ahlam Mosteghanemi and Waciny Laredj. Three write in French (Daoud, Sansal and Khadra), and two in Arabic (Laredj, and Mosteghanemi). The chapter demonstrates that Kamel Daoud, Boualem Sansal and Yasmina Khadra became literary stars by becoming interpreters of the Arab and Muslim world for Western audiences – as well as cultivating the image of being rebels against their own society and culture. All of these authors are published in France, although some did begin their publishing careers in Algeria. Arabophone writers Mosteghanemi and Laredj follow a similar path to the Francophone writers, except their fame comes from recognition in the Middle East, where they are embraced by secular-leaning, more liberal media and Arab states which seek to create an image of tolerance and openness. Studying these two transnational contexts together demonstrates that it is not just a straightforward neo-colonial relationship being (re-)produced – Algerian writers are positioned in a similar marginal way in their “South-South” relationship with the Middle East. What Paris, Sharjah and Beirut have in common is that invest significantly more money in cultural production than Algiers. The Algerian literary industry is a minor player in the field. Stretched across two transnational contexts, this reinforces the division between “Arabophone” and “Francophone” literatures, and the Algerian literary field struggles to exist in Algeria.

Chapter 5: Rising Stars or Struggling Artists?

Chapter 5 examines little known Arabophone and Francophone authors, under the age of 40, seeking to live, write and be read in Algeria, as well as beyond. This chapter is based on the works of and interviews with Miloud Yabrir, Ismail Yabrir, Mohammed Djafar, Saïd Khatibi, Abdelouahab Aissaoui, Riad Hadir, Ryad Girod, Djamila Morani, Sofiane Mokhenache, Amal Bouchareb and Samir Kacimi. These authors have attracted almost no scholarly attention compared to those authors examined in chapter 4. They engage with similar themes as the authors discussed in chapter 4 but

have not developed similar public personas as part of their marketing strategy. The lack of infrastructure in Algeria means that publishing remains small scale – sales of 300 copies can be considered a mark of success. The chapter explores from the perspectives of these authors how they navigate Algerian and international publishing contexts. This includes self-promotion on social media and leveraging local, national, and international literary awards to secure publishing contracts. This younger generation has a largely depoliticised attitude towards language compared to previous generations: language is presented as a tool for artistic expression rather than an ideological weapon. They refer to both French and Arabic language Algerian authors as their inspirations, and are often reviewed in French and Arabic language press whatever language they write in. This suggests that the division of Algerian literature into “Francophone” and “Arabophone” no longer works as they are being seen by a new generation of authors and their readers as part of a shared field.

Chapter One: Finding spaces of expression between colonial domination and post-colonial censorship: language, themes, and audiences

Introduction

This chapter sets out the emergence and development of the Algerian novel from the late nineteenth century to the end of the 1980s. It demonstrates how dominant power relations – notably the political system in place, its linguistic and educational policies and the thematic concerns, or perceived thematic concerns, of editors and readerships – played a fundamental role in determining what was published and who was able to read it. It underlines how publishing beyond the borders of Algeria, be that colonial Algeria or post-colonial Algeria, has always provided an outlet for writers who did not want to be constrained by the conditions of production within Algeria, although this transnational publishing came with its own constraints, notably driven by the expectations and tastes of non-Algerian audiences. This chapter explores the intense politicization around the question of the language of expression, as a result of colonisation and decolonisation, in debates which were similar to colonial and post-colonial contexts elsewhere in the world. It questions the extent to which an *Algerian* literary field emerged in this period in which Arabophone and Francophone novels and novelists were in dialogue with each other – or whether they were developing in separate spheres.

The impact of colonial rule on Algerian literacy and literary production

Before the French invasion in 1830, Algeria was part of the Ottoman empire. Under the Ottoman Empire, literature and arts remained marginalised because much more focus was placed on the army, and economic enterprise to gain power (Abun-Nasr, 1975:175). Medersas (schools), *zaouias* (brotherhoods of religious experts) and mosques were the main places to learn Arabic, Islamic values, poetry, and

memorisation of Hadith (the sayings and narrations of the Prophet Mohammed, Peace Be Upon him) and the Quran (Bensaid & Ladjal, 2014). Prior to 1830, Djabri (1981:24) asserts that 40% of the population had acquired some level of literacy in Arabic as a result of the education dispensed by these religious institutions. In the city of Constantine, for example, in 1837, there were six to seven hundred students (Bensaid & Ladjal, 2014). In 1850, however, twenty years after the French invasion in 1830, this number had dropped to just 60. The arrival of French colonialism brought about a massive drop in literacy amongst the Algerian population.

The main form of literary expression for Algerians up until the nineteenth century was the poem in Arabic. Poems engaged with the description of cities, landscapes, Sufism, the glorification of heroic figures and their victories, grief, and criticisms of previous invaders. Similar epic themes can be found in the writings of the pre-Islamic and Islamic poets like such as Antar Ibn Shaddad el Absi (508–525) from the Arabian Peninsula, Mansur Al-Hallaj (858–922) and Al-Khansaa (575–645) (El-Rahman, 2016:336; Homerin, 2006:77; Feldman, 2017; Bamia, 2001; Sperl, 2007:460). It was not until the end of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the French conquest that the genre of the novel and short story was introduced to Algerians. There is an ongoing wider debate about whether the West influenced the East or vice versa in the development of the novel (Ouyang, 2012:3-7).

Algerians responded to the French invasion through both arms and the word. In some rural areas of Algeria, people performed traditional poetry as a form of popular resistance against the French. One poem in this period was produced by Said Mohand, about a battle that took place in the Kabylia region between the French and the local people known as Aït Melikech in 1856. The French colonel and ethnographer Adolphe Hanoteau recorded this poem because he was knowledgeable about the Tamazight language. He collected more than fifty poems and songs from the Kabylia region with the help of the local people. After a long struggle, the poem was published in 1867. Poems were considered as a medium of knowledge used by French

ethnographers to understand the local people, out of fear, the French Ministry of War refused to publish it (Goodman, 2002).

Elsewhere in Algeria, El Amir Abd el Qadir (1808–1883) led armed resistance against the French. Between 1837 until his capture in 1847 he was able to take control of many territories around Algeria (Jansen, 2016; Bamia, 1971:12). El Amir Abd El Qadir was a poet as well. His writings were inspired by pre-Islamic poets, for example, Antara, and Imru'al Qays. During his stay in Damascus El Amir Abd el Qadir wrote his كتاب المواقف [The Book of Attitudes], “making him one of the leading thinkers in modern Islamic mysticism” (Jansen, 2016:9). The reception of El Amir Abd el Qadir’s works is mixed. In his comparative study between the poetry of El Amir Abdel Qadir and the Egyptian political leader and poet Mahmoud Samy El Baroudy (1839–1904), Tayeb Aittawi found that El Amir Abd el Qadir’s poems were poorly received by Middle Eastern critics. Middle Eastern writers have always tended to have a sense of superiority over the Maghreb in terms of literature (Zaimi, 2018). Since the nineteenth century, is an enduring tendency in the Middle East to consider literary production in Arabic from North Africa as not well written, because North Africa regions are not considered as “Arab enough” but rather overly influenced by the French language (Aittawi, 2016).

Another response, through the pen, to the French invasion was that of Sidi Hamdan Ben Khodja (1773–1842). Ben Khodja was born in Algeria into a wealthy family of Turkish origin. He was encouraged by his uncle to pursue his studies beyond Algeria. He travelled to several countries among them Tunisia, France, and London, therefore, he was able to learn several languages including French, Arabic and English. He wrote three books in Arabic. While in exile in Paris, he wrote مرآة [The Mirror] in Arabic translated into French as *Le Miroir: Aperçu Historique et Statistique sur la Régence d’Alger* [The Mirror: a historical and statistical insight into the Regency of Algiers]. This was published by the French printing house de Goetschy Fils et Compagnie in 1833. The book depicts the violence and the injustices committed by the French soldiers and the corrupted Algerian administration, “The first text,

published in 1833 [...] an Algerian, a Moor, published under his real name a text in their language, to address them, particularly those who lived in the capital and were already getting excited about this installation in a foreign land [...] His inaugural gesture marked the formation of a new intellectual figure open to the West, aware that it was vector of modernity that could not be ignored”¹ (Ali-Benali, 2011:124).

When El Amir Abd el Qadir was in exile, other leaders continued the struggle against the French, such Mokrani in 1870 and Ouled Sidi Cheikh in 1864–1865, Abu Amama in 1881 (Djabri,1981:34; Brower,2011:42-43; Bouyerdene, 2012:5; Dunwoodie,1998:10; Bamia, 1971:20). In the face of failure, some Algerians with the means to do so started to migrate towards Morocco and Syria. The French in turn wanted to impose their culture as well as their political rule. They started with the replacement of mosques by cathedrals (Rezzik, 2015:24; Djabri,1981:32). Teachers were restricted by the French to only teach students how to read and memorise the Quran, without any explanation of its meaning or any broader curriculum. In 1836, the French established bicultural schools, called *École Mutuelles*, attended mostly by Jews, Muslim orphans, and children of the poor (Beck, 2010; Djabri, 1981:43-47; Dunwoodie, 1998:19). By 1849, the teaching of French language increased, and in 1850, the French authorities created *Écoles Arabes Françaises*. Some Algerian pupils attended, but these pupils had to abandon their language and culture and master the language and the culture of the coloniser (Dunwoodie, 1998:19).

In the 1880s, universal, free secular education was introduced in mainland France. In Algeria, this mostly benefitted the children of European settlers, who were arriving in Algeria from France, but also Spain, Malta, Italy, and Germany in ever

¹ Le premier texte, publié en 1833...un algérien, un Maure, va publier sous son nom un texte dans leur langue, s’adresser à eux, surtout à ceux qui dans la capitale française s’émeuvent déjà de cette installation en terre étrangère...Son geste, inaugural, marque la formation d’une figure inédite d’intellectuel ouvert à l’Occident, conscient que celui-ci est vecteur de la modernité qu’on ne peut plus ignorer

greater numbers. In 1954, the year in which the War of Independence began, there was one “European” for every 8.5 Algerians in Algeria and almost total literacy amongst the European population. Educational provision for the Algerian population was much more limited: “in 1882 there were 3,200 pupils in 23 schools; by 1892 there were 12,300 in 124 schools, and by 1901, 25,3000 in 228 schools plus 474 *classes indigènes* attached to European schools” (Dunwoodie, 1998:19). In 1865 the École Normale des Instituteurs de Bouzareah was established to train a small number of Algerians to teach in French primary schools. Amongst those trained here was the novelist Mouloud Feraoun (Dunwoodie, 1998:23).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, most Algerians did not send their children to these schools due to poverty, the absence of Arabic and Islamic subjects and above all, these schools were mostly established in urban areas where they did not live. Schooling was intertwined with the French “civilising mission” (*mission civilisatrice*), built on the claimed superiority of the West – and especially the French – and inferiority of other people’s religion, customs, language, education, beliefs, and practices (Addi,1996:93-150). Students were taught by the French that their ancestors were the Gauls, and their motherland was France (Carjuzaa, 2001:51; Benrabah, 2013:34). The French language was presented as a language of technical knowledge, rational science, universalism, and modernity which Algerians were summoned to assimilate into, while Arabic was declared as a foreign language; spreading the myth of the superiority of French and the inferiority of Arabic (Dunwoodie, 1998:19).

At the end of the First World War in 1918, France decided to reward those who participated in the war by granting access to education for some more Algerian boys. For those Algerians who had been to France to fight and work, their perceptions had changed upon their return to Algeria. They came back with ideas of liberty and self-determination and their attitudes towards French education had shifted. They accepted sending their children to French schools, and this did not necessarily mean accepting the dominant (French, colonial) culture, as some later novels written about

this era demonstrate (Dunwoodie, 1998:21; Bamia, 1971:23). For many, French education came to be seen as a good investment and a means of social and political development (Djabri, 1981:39; Evans & Phillips, 2007:31), although some continued to see it as a disruption of Algerian identity (Bamia, 1971:24). By 1930, more Algerians sought access to education, and this ran in parallel and arguably was connected to developing anti-colonial and nationalist ideas (Djabri, 1981:57). By the time of independence in 1962, eighty percent of Algerians were still illiterate (Gafaïti, 1997:60). Of those who were literate, most were literate in French alone, rather than literate in Arabic or in Arabic and French. This had an obvious impact on readerships: most Algerians could not read anything.

Mimetic Literature in the 1920s

The first Algerian literary works written in French and published in France by private French publishers began to emerge in the 1920s. Benrabah argues that M'Hamed Ben Rahal's (1858–1928) novel *La Vengeance du Cheikh* [The Vengeance of the Sheikh] in 1891 was the first novel to be published, by *La Revue Algérienne et Tunisienne littéraire* (2013:128). Salhi, on the other hand, argues that Seddik Ben El Outa's *Fils de Grande Tente* [Son of the big tent] was the first novel to be published in 1908 by Ollendorff, Paris. Mohamed Ben Mustapha's (1879–1921) *Le Goumier* (1920, a *goumier* is a term for a North African soldier in the French army), published by Payot in Paris, is also often presented as the first Algerian novel in French. These were primarily aimed at French audiences, either in metropolitan France or colonial Algeria.

Algerian writers of this period were influenced by French writers, to the point that they wrote and described Algeria and Algerians in a similar way to the style employed by French writers. In the words of Salhi (1991: 34), novels produced during this period were those of “imitation and assimilation”. *Le Goumier*, for example, is an autobiographical, epistolary, poetical, and ethnographic novel about a man who participated in the First World War, the protagonist studied French history and was

influenced by French writers and their culture, language, and heritage. Ben Mustapha used the novel as a medium to promote peace between the French and Algerians, to make the case that Algerians' assimilation into French language and culture was not something wrong and could take place whilst sustaining pride in one's origins and culture. Abu-Haidar is less critical than Salhi of these authors and points out that it was difficult for Algerian authors to declare any anti-colonial point of view due to censorship (Abu-Haidar, 2001:19).

Cox further underlines that the French media at the time played an important role in the promotion of literature engaging in such themes to reinforce the ideology of the civilising mission (2017:159) – this is a colonial version of the post-colonial *programmed success*, discussed by Casanova. For Salhi (1991), these writers were also encouraged by prizes provided by the French. Khodja Chukri (1891–1967) was a court interpreter from a wealthy family, who attended both French and traditional (Quranic) schools (Rezzik, 2015:16). His second novel *El Euldj, Captif des Barbaresques* [El Euldj, Captive of the Barbarys], was published in France in 1923 by Arras at the author's expense, and awarded the African Artists Society Prize (Gafaïti, 1997:63). In 1991, this book was re-published by the French publisher Actes Sud and in 2005 by the Algerian publishing house Anep.

El Euldj, Captif des Barbaresques reflects on the historical situation of Algeria before and after the Ottoman Empire. The protagonist sees the past of his ancestors not as glorious; he describes it as savagery and plagued with violence and intolerance. Amrouch (2007:81-84) argues that Khoudja's description of the Ketchaoua mosque, transformed into a cathedral, was nevertheless used as an intertextual reference to critically comment on the French colonial system. Rezzik (2015) goes as far as interpreting Khoudja as anti-colonialist with a negative representation of the oppressor and the suffering of the oppressed. He mastered the coloniser's culture, and he used it against them to assert his Algerian identity. Debates amongst scholars continue about whether these novels reproduce stereotypes about Muslims and Algerians or whether they serve as acts of resistance, undermining claims to the

“benefits” of colonisation as the “civilising mission” is repeatedly shown to fail. Debates also continue about whether the use of Algerian colloquial terms in the texts are there to add an exotic and exoticizing touch of “couleur locale” or to destabilise the French language reader who does not necessarily know what they mean.

The Colonial Gaze and the Algerianist Literature

With the emergence of the romanticism movement in France during the 1850s, an influx of French artists and travellers to Algeria began, and they wrote, reported, and described everything they observed and experienced. Their practices of describing and comparing reproduced Orientalist tropes (Murray-Miller, 2008:57). Their focus was on the deserts, the palms, and the camels. Flaubert, Alphonse Daudet, Guy de Maupassant, Eugène Fromentin, Lamartine, and Victor Hugo, amongst others, all gave an exotic image not only about Algerians but also about Arabs more generally (Dunwoodie, 1998:43). Amrouch argues that their writings were more political than artistic and used to validate the French presence (2007:95; Moussa, 2012:73). Algerian women were a primary object for these Orientalist writers, which reinforced arguments about Frenchmen being humanists and bringing modernity. In the works of Melchior Joseph and Eugène Daumas, key themes were polygamy, divorce, women’s oppression, and the sexual harassment of young girls by Algerian men (Clancy-Smith, 2006:32; Lalaoui-Chiali, 2010:161). These themes would continue to be recycled in the literary works of Algerian writers of French and Arabic expression.

It is important to underline that for a large part of the colonial period “Algerian” literature was not associated with work of the autochthonous inhabitants of the land, but European settlers and their descendants, who saw themselves as “Algerians” (compared to the metropolitan French) and dismissed the autochthonous population as “natives”. *L'Association des Écrivains Algériens* [Algerian association of writers], *Littéraire de l'Algérie* [Literary of Algeria] and *La Revue Afrique* [Africa Forum] were created in 1920, 1921 and 1924 respectively by a group of writers including Jean Pomier, Ferdinand Duchêne, Charles Hagel, Paul Achard and John Antoine Nau (Salhi, 1991:24; Amrouch, 2007:94; Martini, 2008). This cluster of writers

wanted to confirm their identity as true Algerians, by which they meant migrants from the Northern Mediterranean now living in Algeria. They saw themselves as superior to the Jews, the Muslims, and even the metropolitan French. They believed that Islam should be eradicated from the country, and considered colonialism a necessity to regain Algeria, presented as a “lost country” of the Roman Empire (Aoudjit, 2010:7). At the forefront of the “Algerianist” movement was Louis Bertrand (1866–1941). Born in France, he was sent to high school (lycée) in Algiers in 1891 (Dunwoodie, 1998:84). Bertrand was fascinated by “le peuple neuf” (the new people) which he claimed was being created in Algeria because of Mediterranean colonisation. He published several works about Algeria, amongst them *La Cina* (1901) and *Sang Des Races* [Blood of the Races] (1899). In both, Algeria is presented as a recovered Christian land and the French language as a tool to narrate North Africa (Dunwoodie, 2010).

The Algérianists decided to include some Algerians who wrote in French, including Abdelkader Hadj Hamou, Ouled Cheikh and Slimane Ben Ibrahim. Ouled Cheikh, for example, was the author of *Myriem dans les Palmes* [Myriem between the Palm Trees] (1936) published in Oran by Plaza editions and targeted at a metropolitan audience eager to read writings about the exotic (Kaye & Zoubir, 1990:85; Bamia, 1971). Slimane Ben Ibrahim (1870–1953), together with Etienne Dinet, wrote *Khadra la Danseuse des Ouled Nail* [Khadra, Dancer of the Ouled Nail] in 1910, published in Paris by Piazza publishing house. This was an Orientalist piece of writing objectifying the bodies of Algerian women. Dinet was a French Orientalist painter who converted to Islam and lived with local people (Salhi, 1991:36). René Pottier and Saad Ben Ali together wrote *La Tente Noire, Roman Saharien* [The Black Tent, A Saharan Novel], published in 1933 in Paris by Les Oeuvres Representatives. The novel depicts a French protagonist who escapes from France to Algeria attracted by the beauty of the desert. She converted to Islam, and her name became *Nedjma* instead of Jeanne, she married an Algerian, Slimane, and was surrounded by the native people who were described as naive and jealous (Salhi, 1991:48-53). More than 80 years later, a young Arabophone Algerian writer, Saïd Khatibi, would make

extensive reference to *La Tente Noire* in *أربعون عاما في انتظار إيزابيل* [Forty Years Waiting for Elizabeth Eberhardt], published in 2016 by a cooperative publishing agreement between El-Ikhtilef in Algeria and Difaf in Lebanon. In this novel, Khatibi uses Etienne Dinet as the narrator of his novel (see chapter 5).

L' École d' Alger

The Algerianists group declined by the 1930, and a new group of writers emerged with a new political vision, in opposition to that of the thirties (Dunwoodie,1998). In 1935, the École d'Alger was established, composed of Albert Camus and the bookseller and owner of the publishing house, *Les Vraies Richesses* [True Wealth], Edmond Charlot – in 2017, the Algerian Francophone author Kaouther Adimi wrote a novel about Edmond Charlot under the title *Nos Richesses* published by the French publisher Le Seuil and translated to English as *Our Riches* in 2019 by Chris Andrews, to be released with the American publishing house New Directions Publishing in April 2020. Authors at École d'Alger included Gabriel Audisio, Emmanuel Roblès, René-Jean Clot, Jean Amrouche, Jules Roy, Claude de Fréminville, Max-Pol Fouchet, Marcel Moussy, André Rosfelder, Jean-Pierre Millecam, and Jean Pélégri. They called for different style and content from metropolitan France. They were concerned with the political, economic, and social problems of Algerians. They considered themselves to be suffering from alienation because of their sense of holding a dual culture, being French and Algerian. This literary school produced many literary magazines such as *La Nef*, *La Fontaine*, and *L'Arche*, which would open up the floor for some Algerians to tell the world about the suffering of their fellow Algerians. There are some debates around the authorship of co-edited and co-written novels by Algerian and French writers.

Of these writers of the École d'Alger, it was Albert Camus who would become internationally recognised, raising awareness among Algerian writers of French expression of the power of using the novel to make their voices heard (Cox,

2017:160). Camus believed in equality between settlers of European origin and Algerians, but he did not believe that Algeria should become an independent country (Porter, 2011:67-71). Camus was always convinced that Algeria belonged to France, his physical and emotional attachment to the land – but land that he saw as “French Algeria” – is clear in his writings; he refers to Algeria as *une patrie* (Ahmad, 2001:103). After the War of Independence (1954-1962), Camus became a controversial figure, perceived differently by Algerian writers of French and Arabic expression. Kamel Daoud’s breakthrough novel *Meursault, contre enquête* [The Meursault Investigation] (2013), is based on Camus’s 1942 *L’Étranger* [The Stranger].

The “recovery of Algerian identity” through literary production in Arabic

Algerian fiction writers of Arabic expression also appeared in this period, but they were more devoted to short story writing and poetry, influenced by Mashreq writers and poets. Bamia (1971:390-404) argues that the absence of means, publishing houses, printing and distribution and the political situation of the country prevented the emergence of the novel in Arabic as genre. Like Francophone writers, the themes of their short stories were also critical of traditional Algerian society. They critiqued arranged marriage, and illiteracy and the injustice practiced by the French, and poverty using humour and irony.

One of the key publishers of poetry and short stories in Arabic in Algeria was the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama. In 1931, Abdel Hamid Ben Badis (1889–1940) together with Bachir El Ibrahimy (1889–1955) Tayeb El-Okbi established the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama (Salhi, 1991:17; Djabri, 1981:59; Dunwoodie, 1998:30; Sharkey, 2012:125). Ulama leaders ran different traditional institutions such as Quranic schools and Médersa (schools teaching a wide curriculum in Arabic). These small and limited prototype schools faced difficulties such as the imprisonment of teachers, financial crises, and many of them closed. Nevertheless, the number gradually increased to 150 schools in 1958 (Djabri, 1981:70). They aimed to promote the Arabic language and Arabic culture; they declared that Algeria was an Arab and Muslim country. They established some Arabophone newspapers: *al*

Muntaqid [The Critical] in 1925 and then *al Chihab* [Meteor in 1925, which was closed by the French authorities after only 18 issues, and finally *al Basair* [Clairvoyance] (which ran 1936-1939 and 1949-1956) (McDougall, 2006:64-67; Cox, 2017:159). The Ulama promoted the production of poetry, short stories, and theatre in Arabic as a political act, a medium of awakening the national consciousness. In 1937, the poet Moufdi Zakaria (1908–1977) published several poems in Tunisia and in 1955 would write what would become the Algerian national anthem (Cox, 2017:159). Cox (2017:159) argues that Ben Badis supported poetry as a strategy to appear as part of the Arab world during the Nahda (Renaissance) in Egypt. Ulama narratives also influenced theatre. Mahieddine Bachtarzi (1897–1986) performed in Algerian Arabic, *darija*.² The themes of his performances – such as his play *Fakko* [They are aware, and you cannot fool them] – were anti-colonial and criticised Muslims conservatives. These theatrical pieces were often censored by the colonial authorities. Arabophone historians also wrote new histories to those written by the French (Salhi, 1991:18).

² Algerian languages differ from one city to another but the most common and widely used in daily life is Darija. Darija is a combination of Arabic, French and Spanish, languages introduced to Algeria through the long history of colonialism, mixed with Tamazight. Darija is mainly based on Arabic language structures, grammars and vocabulary and is comprehensible to non-Algerian Arabic speakers. Speaking in Arabic was suppressed by the French under colonial rule, but darija was also frowned upon by the new post-independence state, as a poor version of Modern Standard Arabic (*fusha*). In Morocco and Egypt there have been some attempts to publish in darija, but in Algeria this remains limited and darija continues to be considered by many as a non-literary language.

Torn between Two Cultures

Those educated in French schools found it difficult to strike a balance between their culture and that of the French. However, in one way or another, they were influenced by the coloniser's lifestyle, thoughts, and ideas. Aissa Zehar's *Hind*, published in 1942 in Algeria by the French-owned Baconnier publishing house, centres on two siblings supported by their father to study at French school. The perception of these siblings amongst the neighbouring conservative families was negative because they saw them as traitors to the Algerian cause. In contrast to those perceptions, the novelist presented his characters interested not only in the French language but also in learning the Arabic language and memorising the Quran. Nevertheless, the characters became more Westernised, and they established relationships with the French to demonstrate to their families that the French and their civilising mission was positive for Algerians, which was not acceptable to their parents because the French were not Muslims (Salhi, 1991:59).

Marie Louise Amrouche, known as Taos Amrouche (1913–1976), and Djamila Debèche (1926–2011) were the first Algerian women to publish novels in French. Amrouche's *Jacinthe Noire* [Black Hyacinth] published in 1947 by the Parisian Charlot publishing house (republished in 1972 by the Parisian Maspéro), was influenced by the works of Thomas Hardy and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (Bamia, 1971:106). This novel is about an "uncivilised" Tunisian girl who goes to France to study, the themes of the novel addresses culture shock. Amrouche thus developed a critique of the civilising mission, blaming it for the disruption of her inner peace and happiness: this makes her work stand out from others of its time (Salhi, 1991). French publishers supported these Algerian female writers who were perceived as rebellious and transgressive in their writings against the men in their society. Debèche's *Leïla, Jeune Fille d'Algérie* [Leïla, Young Girl from Algeria] was published in 1947 in Algeria by the Algerian Charras printing house. Leïla, the protagonist, is sent to a French school by her father. She pursues her studies in Algiers, but when she returns to her conservative family, she is forced to wear the veil and to marry her cousin, and to

follow her parents' traditions. Leila, as a rebellious girl, returns to join the French family in Algiers with whom she had previously stayed (Salhi, 1991: 62).

The introduction of the Arabic novel

After the Second World War, a growing number of literary works were produced in French, whereas works in Arabic were minimal. Nevertheless, in 1947, the playwright Ahmed Reda Houhou (1910–1956) wrote the first short novel in Arabic. Houhou was a journalist, translator and author. His father had sent him to the Middle East to follow Islamic Studies and Law. *غادة أم القرى* [Ghada, Mother of Villages] is composed of forty-four pages published in Tunisia by El Tlissi publishing house in 1947. The place of publication also tells us about the absence of the Arabic-language literary field in Algeria. The novel address women's role, oppression, and notably the forced marriage of young girls to older men (Cox, 2017:159) – again underlining that these were not just themes in the French-language, French-published literature. The author criticises traditions and superstitions, he uses *darija* and proverbs.

Reda Houhou was influenced by Egyptian novelists in their metaphorical use of women as a symbol for the nation (Ouyang, 2014: 46-47). In short, he – like Zehar, Amrouche and Debèche – was very much writing about one of the key themes of the time: how the nation (whether that be a colonial Franco-Algerian nation or an independent Algerian nation) could be (re)imagined through (re)imagining the roles and representations of women. The Algerian Arabophone novelist Waciny Laredj argues that Houhou was influenced by the discourse of the reformist Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto (UDMA), especially in his depiction of women as prisoners in their own homes (1986:31). Houhou would go on to write several articles opposing the French coloniser in *al Chihab* [Meteor] and *al Basair* [Clairvoyance] newspapers owned by the Ulama (Laredj, 1986:124). Houhou was assassinated by the French army in 1956, during the Algerian War of Independence (Benrabah, 2013:130; Cox, 2017:159).

As Houhou's trajectory demonstrates, Algerian writers were becoming increasingly political in their writings. The Second World War and its aftermath are seen as a key point in the development of Algerian nationalism, and by extension, the development of Algerian literature. The ferocious repression in Sétif, Guelma and Kherrata following an anti-colonial demonstration on 8 May 1945, in which up to 80,000 people were killed (Abun-Nasr, 1975:325), is often seen as a turning point. According to Arab (1990:35-36), authors became committed to the anti-colonial struggle and source of inspiration derived from witnessing, and indeed participating in, the traumatic events of May 1945 – this was the case for Kateb Yacine, for example (Bamia, 1971:90).

The Algerian Aly El Hammamy (1902–1949) was a political activist who took part in the 1920s anti-colonial struggle in the Rif in Morocco alongside Abdelkrim el Khattabi. He was also a teacher of history and geography in Baghdad for eleven years. Aly El Hammamy visited many places, such as Palestine, Damascus, Russia, and France (Bahiri, 2011; Abdmezien, 2015). *Idris* was his first novel written in French and published in Cairo in 1948. El Hammamy published his work in Cairo because his ideas were in opposition to the colonial system in Algeria, preventing him from publishing in his country. El Hammamy's novel title alludes to the Idrisid period between 789 and 983. The novel is underpinned by criticism of European colonialism; praise for Maghrebi nationalism; a celebration of plurality and reproach for the weak educational system and society's social problems. El Hammamy was also in opposition to everyday Muslim superstitions (Salhi, 1991:70-103). He glorifies the Islamic past, inspired by Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Badis, Ibn Toumert, Ibn Rushd and Taha Hussein. He revisited history to trace his identity; he depicted the Berber resistance against invaders together with their heroes such as Jugurtha, Massinissa, Hannibal, and Tariq Ibn Ziyad. After independence in Algeria, this novel was serialised by the official Algerian daily Francophone newspaper *El Moudjahid* (from 1970–1971) and re-printed by the Algerian state-owned Société Nationale d'Édition et de Diffusion [National Society of Publishing and Distribution, SNED] in 1977, with a preface in Arabic by Mohammed Abdelkrim El Khattaby. In 1988, it was published by the

Algerian state-owned Société Nationale d'Édition et de Diffusion [National Society for Publishing and Distribution, ENAL] and the preface in French was written by Cheikh Bouamrane, former minister of the Algerian Ministry of Culture and Communication (Salhi, 1991:301).

Few of these authors are well known in the Algerian literary canon. Their works rapidly disappeared from the scene and became very difficult to find once the 1950s generation of writers arrived (Salhi, 1991:289). Nevertheless, these early works – and their conditions of production – laid down the foundations for the works to come. French-language literary production now dominated because that was the language in which most Algerians, if they had access to schooling, were now educated. It also dominated because that was where the money was. Arabic-language publishing was much smaller and took place outside of Algeria, in Cairo or Tunis. Poetry was much more popular as a form in Arabic, whereas the novel was favoured in French. The Algerian audience for all of these works was very small, because of overwhelming illiteracy. Most of those reading French-language novels produced by Algerians in the first three decades of the twentieth century were metropolitan French people, or European settlers in Algeria. Works by Algerian authors were largely locked in mimetism, even though there were cross-community attempts to create a distinctive “Algerian” literature. Despite two different contexts for French- and Arabic-language production, resistance to the colonial status quo could be – and was – expressed in both languages, as was social criticism. This criticism was increasingly less timid.

The Algerian novel of 1950s: *la littérature engagée*

By the 1950s, a new generation of writers in French in the 1950s had emerged who used their pen to make the abuses of the colonial system reach both metropolitan French and international audiences. This was *la littérature engagée*. Aoudjit argues that (2010:1)

unlike some of their Algerian predecessors such as Said Guennoun in *La Voix des Monts: mœurs de guerre berbères*, 1934 and Saad Ben Ali in *La Tente Noire Roman Saharien*, 1933, these new writers did not pay tribute to the alleged benefits of colonialism, nor did they indulge in the description of exotic and attractive places to entertain their French readers...Feraoun, Dib, Mammeri, and Kateb put Algerians center stage. They revealed the suffering of Algerians, showed their discontent, and envisioned their dreams

For Bamia (1971: 90): “They spontaneously set themselves witness to the condition of their people. Their novels testified to a process of decolonization”. This generation of Algerian writers was proud of their origins, and they were keen to present their people and their suffering to metropolitan audiences without reinforcing the stereotypes made by some French intellectuals. For Salhi (1991 : 129), “they maliciously exploited the ethnographic data, through which the authors sought to reaffirm their cultural roots and prove that their people owned a rich patrimony, for their political ends”.

The Algerian novel of the 1950s thus moved away from the style of French Algerian writers of European descent as well as the previous writings of Algerian authors of the 1920s (Bamia,1971:75). According to Salhi, in a letter to Albert Camus, Mouloud Feraoun (1913–1962) was against the idea that French writers, and among them Albert Camus, did not include in his novel *La Peste* [The Plague] (1947) any Algerian characters. Therefore, he took the pen up in opposition to these French writers to represent his people (Cox, 2017:160; Bamia, 1971:67-68). Feraoun was schoolteacher and graduate of the École Normale de Bouzaréah. He worked as a teacher in different schools in the Kabylia region (Dunwoodie, 1998; Ghafsi, 2018). Hiddleston (2014:180-202) argues that Feraoun is a humanist writer; he was against

the suffering of human beings whatever their nationality or faith. *Le Fils de Pauvre* [Poor Man's Son] was his first novel, written in 1939 but published in 1950 by Le Puy in Paris, because the initial French publisher tried to impose on Feraoun a preface by someone he did not know (Salhi,1991:106). In 1954 and 1982 this novel was reprinted by Le Seuil and in 1988 by ENAL in Algeria. In this novel, Feraoun gave a detailed description of his village, demonstrating that the "civilising mission" did not work for most people. The themes of the novel concentrate around poverty, injustice, emigration, misery, childhood souvenirs, family relationships, women's oppression, fertility and forced marriage, he also blended Islamic traditions with Kabyle ones (Salhi, 1991:106-111; Kelly, 2005; Cox,2017:161; Aoudjit,2010:9-10; Bamia, 1971:91).

According to Charles Bonn (1990 :20), the descriptive style of the novels of the fifties was not always tolerated by the nationalist leaders, particularly when – despite the abuses of the colonial system which were richly described – protagonists could be nevertheless saved by a French education genuinely rooted in liberty, equality and fraternity. Feraoun's nuanced position was not appreciated by settler hardliners, either. He was assassinated by the anti-independence Secret Armed Organisation (OAS) in 1962 (Salhi, 1991:222).

Mohammed Dib (1920–2003) was forced to wait six years to publish his first novel *La Grande Maison* [The Big House] in 1952 due to the absence of interest from publishing houses. Once published in metropolitan France by Le Seuil, the novel was republished in 1967 and again in 1975 by the same publishing house (Bamia, 1971:81). *La Grande Maison* was followed by *L'Incendie* [Conflagration] in 1954 and republished by Le Seuil in 1967 and *Le Métier à Tisser* [The Loom] in 1957 and republished by Le Seuil again in 1974. Focusing on his childhood memories using the protagonist Omar, Dib depicts the hard conditions of Algerian families, children, women, parents, and working-class conditions in the urban areas during French colonialism. The characters suffer from stress, depression, and famine. (Salhi,1991:112-116; Benrabah, 2013:34; Cox, 2017:160). Lyons (2003:594) argues that a sense of nationalism comes through Dib's novels. This shows that Algerian

writers were able to subvert the French discourse despite publishing in France, reinforcing the idea that Algeria was a land that belong to Algerians.

These authors' inspirations were not limited to the French canon. Baali (2004:250-251) argues that Dib was influenced by American writers such as John Dos Passos, Ernest Hemingway and Pearl Buck in their description of the suffering of working-class. Rich (2014) claims that the treatment of dispossession in Dib's *Conflagration* (1954) has a lot in common with the American writer John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* (1939). Dib was criticised by the French and by some Algerians who were in favor of French assimilation. They accused him of forgetting the good deeds of the French, while others said that Dib's condemnation of the oppressor was not enough. Bamia (1971:75) argues that Algerian authors find it hard to satisfy both audiences. After independence, Dib attempted to distance himself from the same topics, making the switch to psychological romantic and science fiction writings (Bamia, 1971:95-96).

Mouloud Mammeri (1917–1989) was born in Algeria, moved to Morocco, and then returned to Algeria. Later he moved to Paris to finish his studies and returned to Algeria after independence. He became a professor of ethnology at the University of Algiers, known for his support and recognition of the Amazigh language and culture in North Africa. Mammeri wrote several short stories, plays, poems and four novels published by the same French publisher Plon in Paris. After the War of Independence, he made the switch to film script writing such as *l'Aube des Damnés* [Dawn of the Sentenced to Death] (1965) and *ālyl yḥāf mn ālyl* [Death of a Long Night] (1979) directed by Al Guthi Bin Ddouch (Zaoui, 2018). Mammeri's novels are considered as ethnographic and descriptive (Berrichi, 2006; Zaoui, 2018; Bamia, 1971; Sellin, 1983). Like other authors of his generation, Mammeri was restricted to writing in French as his sole language of instruction but did not aim to please pro-colonial French audiences. These writers did not support the French claim that Algeria belonged to France and they described and narrated the suffering of Algerians in rural and urban areas.

This meant that they were sometimes subject to censorship. Before the publication of *La Colline Oubliée* [The Forgotten Hill] published in 1952 by Plon in Paris (later reaching its third edition, republished in 1969 and then again in 1978), Mammeri was obliged to remove several passages from his novel, notably those which criticised the French occupation (Bamia, 1971:75). Later, after independence, some Algerian nationalists would accuse Mammeri of being regionalist, amongst them Mostefa Lacheraf, Mohammed Cherif Sahli, Jean Sénac, Mohamed al Gharbi (Aoudjit, 2010: 25; Arab,1990:33; Salhi, 1991:131; Lyons, 2003:577; Lacete-Tigziri,1998:19-25).

On the witness stand

On 1 November 1954, armed conflict broke out in Algeria. The newly created National Liberation Front (FLN) sought to achieve total independence through political and military means (Vince, 2015: xii; Evans & Phillips, 2010:55; Stone, 1997:36). The impact was felt on Algerian literature, but this did not mean that other themes were abandoned. In *Le Sommeil du Juste* [Sleep of the Righteous] published in 1955 by Plon in Paris, Mammeri addressed the theme of the marginalisation of Algerian emigrants and their suffering in France (Abun-Nasr, 1975:319). Mammeri also gave importance to the relation between son and father (Baali, 2004:168), and the clash between old and new generations and identity crises (Bamia, 1971:92). Algerian novels written in French which were explicitly critical of the colonial system and overtly pro-independence were supported by the left-leaning French publishing houses including Le Seuil, Gallimard and Les Editions de Minuit (Orlando, 2017:38; Gafaïti, 1997:63).

Assia Djébar (1936–2015) is Algeria's best-known novelist. Born as Fatima Zohra Imalayene into a well-off family in Algeria, she was able to follow a European education at the Sorbonne university. In 1957, she wrote her first novel *La Soif* [Mischief] published by Juilliard. The same novel was purchased and published by the Algerian private publishing house Barzakh in 2018 also translated to English in 1958 as *Mischief* and released by Simon & Schuster publishing house. Djébar was named

La Sagan Musulmane (The Muslim Sagan) by René Julliard. Later Djébar became the holder of several international literary awards from US, France, Italy, Belgium, and Germany (Harchi, 2016:122-123). In *La Soif*, the protagonist enjoys her total freedom; she talks about many taboos, including self-discovery, pleasure, and desire. In *La Soif*, Djébar distances the setting of her novel from the time of the anti-colonial struggle (Bamia, 1971:97): “The revolutionaries considered *La Soif*’s subject particularly inappropriate because the book ignores the revolution at a time when the country was engaged in a fierce war” (Accad, 1996). For nationalists, literature during the 1950s was meant to support the armed revolution against the French coloniser. During the War of Independence, Djébar had the chance to move and teach in Tunisia and Morocco, and after the war, she returned to Algeria and started to teach at the University of Algiers. After ten years of silence, she then returned to publishing literature (Accad, 1996).

Kateb Yacine (1929–1989), is another prolific poet, playwright, and novelist. He held several literary awards, including the Prix Jean Amrouche in 1963 and the French Grand Prix National des Lettres in 1986. Yacine’s ideological stance was as a left-wing nationalist, he participated in the 8 May 1945 demonstrations and was jailed for a short period by the French (Nadia, 2015:24; Villasenor, 2015). *Nedjma* [Star], published in 1956, was written in French while Kateb Yacine was in exile and was published by Seuil. The protagonist is presented as half French and half Algerian and speaks Arabic. He blends poetry and drama with fiction, transliteration of popular dialects, folks and symbols and patriotic and popular songs (Salhi, 1991:188; Arab, 1990:38-39; Cox, 2017:161; Bamia, 1971:93; Villasenor, 2015:154). Cox (2017:161) argues that the inclusion of popular dialects was meant to subvert French readers’ expectations and destabilise them. This work is perceived as revolutionary, centering on identity crises, love and marriage, it is a masterpiece about history, political leaders, organisations, the oppressor and the oppressed (Salhi, 1991:178; Hiddleston, 2014:203-244; Villasenor, 2015:156). Aesthetically, Graebner describes *Nedjma* as embodying “chronological disturbance and structural complications of twentieth-century experimental writing” (cited in Villasenor, 2015:154). Armitage (2000:47)

argues that this novel marked a healing and confirmation of Algerian identity. *Nedjma* had a significant impact on all Algerian writers (Arab, 1990:40; Holt, 2008:127). For Woodhull (1993:27):

Nedjma thus embodies Algeria's "betweenness" because of her multifaceted, contradictory, and shifting identity encompassing past and future, tribal and national society: she is of culturally mixed and uncertain parentage and has a symbolic ties to France not only through class privilege and education, but also through her association with revolutionary immigrants workers who are themselves cultural hybrids; she at once recalls Algeria's repeated conquest, resistance and cultural renewal, and fuels the male protagonists revolutionary activity.

Baali finds that American and French writers influenced Kateb's writings, including Faulkner, James Joyce, Gustave Flaubert, Baudelaire, and Arthur Rimbaud (Baali, 2004:184-185; Benhaimi, 2011: 132; Bonn, 1990).

Malek Haddad's (1927–1978) *Je t'offrirai une Gazelle* [I Will Offer You a Deer] (Paris: Juilliard, 1959) dwells on the author's experience of writing and sense of exile in the French language (Poole, 1996:84; Serrano, 2001:28). According to Poole, Haddad along with other writers felt alienated, he was unable to express his Algerianness in the language of the other, because he had not been educated in Arabic (Benrabah, 2007:206). Haddad's *Le Quai aux Fleurs ne Répond Plus* [The Flower Quay no longer answers] was also published by Julliard in 1961. The protagonist Khaled Ben Tobbal is depicted as a writer who lives in Paris because of the war. This novel is about the impossibility of the writer to write, exile, language, and identity crises (Arab,1990:37-41; Cox,2017:162; Bamia, 1971:96).

Djebar, Kateb Yacine and Haddad all expressed views on writing in the French language. They had not chosen to write in French, this was the only language in which

they had been educated: even when writing subversive texts, this had to be done in the language of the coloniser (Belinda, 1996:166). Kateb Yacine declared that the French language was a *butin de guerre* [the spoils of war] and he refused to give up writing in it (Benrabah, 2013:138), although after independence he did turn to theatre in *darija* as a way of speaking to Algerian audience in their language. After the War of Independence, for Haddad, writing in French was deeply painful: [...] “the French language is my exile, but today, I add: the French language is also an exile for my readers. Silence is not a suicide, a *hara-kiri*. I believe in the extreme positions. I have decided to shut up; I have no regrets or bitterness to put down my pen. We do not decolonise with words”³ (cited in Atallah, 2002: 61).

But these authors’ views on their language of expression also changed depending on the shifting political context. Assia Djebar considered the French language “as violence, dispossession of Algerian language as a great crime of French colonialism. French was once the wounding language, exiling Algerians from Tamazight and Arabic” (Tageldin, 2009: 471). At the same time, Djebar considered that French could be used as a way to reveal the injustice and the trauma, to give voice to the silent ones (Armitage, 2000:52). After independence, when Arabic was made the sole official language of Algeria both French and Arabic took on new political connotations for Djebar: “Arabic [then became] the colonial executioner and the French the wounded tongue” (Tageldin, 2009: 473). Similar views were expressed by Tamazight (Berber) speakers such as Mouloud Mammeri: French could become the language of liberation, rather than the language of shame, in opposition to Arabic monolingualism (Armitage, 2000:53; Bamia, 1971:73). Bilingual authors who began publishing just after Algerian independence could also assume writing in French, although painfully and publicly aware of why it was that they could write – and

³ [...] la langue française et mon exil, mais aujourd'hui, j'ajoute : la langue française est aussi l'exil de mes lectures. Le silence n'est pas un suicide, un *hara-kiri*. Je crois aux positions extrêmes. J'ai décidé de me taire ; je n'éprouve aucun regret, ni aucune amertume à poser mon stylo. On ne décolonise pas avec des mots

Algerians could read – in this language. Rachid Boudjedra (b.1941) (qtd by Armitage, 2000:51) asserted that:

For me, as an Algerian, I did not choose French. It chose me, or in other words, it was imposed on me through bloody centuries and tears and through a painful and long history of colonialism. But, thanks to the great French writers I feel at peace in this language, with which I have an impassioned relationship which only adds to its beauty.⁴

The debate around writing in the language of the former coloniser would be a burning issue in the post-independence period (Cox, 2017 :162), intimately connected to the question *who are we?* (Benrabah, 2013:139).

The impact of Algerian independence on the novel in the 1960s and 1970s

After 132 years of violence, poverty, injustice, marginalisation and famine, Algeria achieved independence in July 1962. Algerians were keen to restore their identity as well as their economic and political sovereignty. Ben Bella became the first president of Algeria (1962-1965). Arabisation, Islam, and a socialist economy were his proclaimed policies. The 1962 constitution declared that Algeria had a sole national religion, Islam, and a sole national language, Arabic (Benrabah, 2007:229; Abu-Haidar, 2000:154; Cox, 2017:158). The Berber language (Tamazight) was repressed. Debates about language and identity became more ferocious after 1965, when on 19 June Houari Boumédiène overthrew Ben Bella “as a return to the roots of Algerian

⁴ Pour moi, Algérien, je n'ai pas choisi le français. Il m'a choisi, ou plutôt il s'est imposé à moi à travers des siècles de sang et de larmes et à travers l'histoire douloureuse de la longue nuit coloniale. Mais c'est grâce aux grands écrivains français que je me sens en paix dans cette langue avec laquelle j'ai établi un rapport passionnel qui ne fait qu'ajouter à sa beauté

nationalism” (Evans & Phillips, 2007:81). Boumédiène was against what he saw as the bourgeoisie class and their more secular politics, his worldview was based on the agrarian revolution, and he focused more on urbanisation and industry (Evans & Phillips, 2007:85). The people were described as the real force of the revolution and social justice, teachers and students symbolised the progress of Algeria.

Both under Ben Bella and Boumédiène, Algeria attempted to re-situate itself within the Arab world and not as a French colony. By 1963, partly as a result of tardy, late colonial investment in education, the number of literate Algerians had increased, literacy in Arabic remained low whereas one million read French and six million spoke French (Benrabah, 2007:194). The Algerian state invested massively in education for boys and girls, which in the first years of independence led to an increase in literacy in the French language, as more teachers were available to teach in French. Nevertheless, from 1962 onwards, *Al Taarib*, Arabisation of both the education system and the administration was official Algerian policy, with the stated aim of restoring the identity of Algerians (Orlando, 2017:165). The policy necessitated the recruitment of teachers from different Arabic speaking countries due to the absence of professional and skilled teachers in Algeria (Cox, 2002). Despite this, during this period, the French language continued to be seen as the language of modernity, technology, and science, and preserved its high status in higher education and administration.

Under the Boumédiène regime, the role of authors and the content of their works “had to comply with the new official narrative of Arab-Islamic ‘authenticity’, the true essence of ‘real’ Algerians. Second, they committed themselves they became ‘engaged’, as they used to say, in the creation of an ‘obsessive unanimism’” (Bensmaïa, 1998:10). “The writer’s third function involved rewriting the history of the war of independence for the powers that be. Therefore, in the name of national building, ‘engaged’ writers became ‘soldiers in a war of words’ (Sukys, 2007:54)” (cited in Benrabah, 2013:143). Mammeri’s *L’Opium et le Bâton* [Opium and the Stick] published by Plon in Paris in 1965, republished in 1978 and again in 1984, is a realist

novel, set in 1956. It was turned into film and funded by the Algerian government, considered a faithful representation of the *mujahidin* [independence fighters] in the rural guerrilla and their suffering (Salhi, 1991:236; Bamia, 1971:216-224).

Cox (2002: 52) argues that there was a contradiction between the state discourse and reality, and this was reflected in literary texts. The Arabisation programme faced opposition from intellectuals and from Tamazight-speakers – including Mammeri – because their identity, language and history were suppressed and were not considered as part of Algerian official history, which further augmented disagreements between intellectuals, elites, and people. The first generation of Algerian writers had been told that their ancestors were the Gauls, the generation of the 1970s and 1980s founds themselves with another version of official history. Algerian novelists during this period became critical of the situation and suspicious towards the history of Algeria and the place of Algerian women in post-independence Algeria. Therefore, gender, language and history became the dominant themes of Algerian French and Arabic novels. For example, Assia Djébar's third novel, *Les Enfants du Nouveau Monde* [The Children of the New World] was published by Julliard in Paris in 1962. In this novel, Djébar includes women from different backgrounds with a focus on those who participated in the War of Independence (Channa, 2010:19). This shift in writing according to Salhi (1991:218-223) was made by Djébar to demonstrate her political commitment and concerns and sense of nationalism after being accused that her first work *La Soif* was only about women's struggle for self-fulfilment (see also Orlando, 2017:91; Cox, 2017). These shifts could also be read as Djébar's beginning to look into the future, foreseeing that women who had participated in the war would be forgotten, marginalised, and deprived of their rights. After independence, Djébar moved from individuality to collective memory, which in some ways fitted with the dominant discourse. At the same time, Channa argues that in *Children of the New World*, Djébar subverts the narrative of the National Liberation Front (FLN) by writing about women's sensuality, and emotional expression (2010:27). For Djébar, such writing creates "a point for take-

off. A combat zones. A restoration of body. Bodies of new women in spite of new barriers” (Woodhull, 1993: xxii).

The establishment of the Société Nationale d’Edition et de Diffusion [The National Society of Publishing and Distribution] (SNED)

In order to promote the publication of works which were considered suitably “authentic” for Algerian audiences, the Algerian state decided to invest into the literary field through the creation of the Société Nationale d’Edition et de Diffusion [The National Society of Publishing and Distribution, SNED] in 1966. The SNED became the Entreprise Nationale du Livre Algérien [The National Enterprise of Algerian Book, ENAL] in 1983 (Carré, 2016:56; Treacy, 2016; Bouayed 1985; Amarouali & Terrar, 2014, Madi, 2001; Pinhas, 2005:67). Cox argues that the era of Boumediène’s reign had a significant impact on the literary writings in terms of aesthetics and content. Algerian authors were bounded with specific, revolutionary themes to write about, and this could be limiting to the writer’s creativity, in the words of Alan Swingewood “the novel’s political commitment to freedom results in the unfreedom with it” (cited in Arab,1990:46). However, it could also mean they had to become more creative.

By 1973, the SNED had published 268 books in French and 287 in Arabic. The Office des Presses Universitaires [The Office for University Presses, OPU], formed in the 1970s to publish academic works, had published 1,382 books in Arabic and 1,633 in French (Benrabah, 2007:205), and the Institut Pédagogique National [The National Pedagogic Institute, IPN] was established to produce school textbooks (Amarouali & Terrar, 2014; Bouayed, 1985:24; Pinhas, 2005:67). Abdelkader (1986:29) found that there was imbalance between Arabic and French because French remained the dominant language in universities, despite the fact that by the 1980s primary and secondary school had been fully Arabised, as had the humanities at higher education level. According to Amarouali & Terrar (2014), the OPU was able to publish 831 titles

between 1975–1984, SNED was able to publish 300 titles in one year, with 10,000 copies for each title. Thirty-four book shops were in Northern part of Algeria. The statistics are not always consistent. According to the French translator Marcel Bois, only seven novels were published in a duration of eight years between 1971 to 1978. Other figures suggest that the number of titles produced each year (although it is not clear how many were fiction) were around fifty to one hundred (Amarouali & Terrar, 2014, Madi, 2001; Bouayed, 1985:29).

Most literary works by Algerian authors continued to be published beyond Algeria. Bouayed provides practical and financial reasons for why Algerian authors preferred to publish their works outside Algeria – delays by the SNED in book releases due to the absence of book industry professionals, the absence of distribution networks, and authors’ desire to reach more readers and earn more money (Bouayed, 1985:16). For Abdelkader (1986 :11):

The refusal, the delay in publication...the reading committee of manuscripts all played a role in hindering the publication, the criteria of selection and the choice of the manuscripts were never revealed [...] the manuscript could only be transformed into a book and distributed after a delay of one, if not three years, even when everything was going well⁵

Although Algerian printing houses were limited, they were well equipped with sophisticated and modern materials, all imported from abroad. Yet, these printing houses suffered from the absence of qualified and professional staff, which resulted

⁵ Les refus, les retards de publication...les commissions de lecture de manuscrits ont jusqu’ici joué un rôle de frein dans la publication où les critères de sélection et de choix des manuscrits ne peuvent jamais être connus [...] le manuscrit ne pourra être transformé en livre et diffusé qu’après un “délai” d’une année sinon trois quand tout marche bien

in slow and delayed production (Bouayed, 1985). Leperlier (2014:66) further points out that the SNED remained dependent on the French publishing system, with Algeria a captive market for French publishing houses, making the development of any local publishing houses challenging. Private Algerian publishing houses, which were also at the same time printing houses and bookshops, were only able to publish a very limited number of books due to the absence of economic capital. The highest producing private publishers for the period 1962 to 1986 were the Merazka and Boudaoud bookshops, who were able to publish twenty-four titles during this period. El-Nahda published twelve titles whilst La Maison du Livre Algérien owned by a European was able to publish seven titles (Abdelkader, 1986:26).

National production represented only about 15 % of the books available in Algeria, with 85% coming from importation during the 1970s (Abdelkader, 1986:9). Abdelkader found that from 1975, money spent on importation was tripled, for example, in 1981, the SNED spent \$20,000,000 on importing books (1986:44). In 1979, the SNED imported 2,354,375 volumes in the Arabic language and 1,867,000 volumes in the French language. Books in Arabic were imported from Beirut, Tunisia, and Kuwait whereas books in foreign languages (primarily French) were imported mainly from France (Abdelkader, 1986). To take its works abroad, the SNED remained dependent on co-publishing with Middle Eastern and European publishers including Economica and Publisud, in France, Belgium and Beirut (Abdelkader, 1986).

Another reason which encouraged writers to continue to publish beyond their country was censorship. They were bounded by several constraints about themes considered to be suitable. Among these were advancing the idea of Algerian identity as Arabo-Muslim and avoiding a too-close examination of the complexities of nationalist history (Cox, 2017:158; Evans & Phillips, 2007:84; Pinhas, 2005:67). Amongst the works banned were the memoirs of the former wartime FLN leader, Khaled Bentobal (1923–2010), the works of Cheikh Kheireddine, and Mohamed Teguaia (Madi, 2001). Rachid Mimouni managed to publish *Le Printemps n'en sera que plus beau* [Spring will be all the more Beautiful] in 1976 with SNED, but he was obliged

to remove several passages. Mimouni decided to publish his subsequent works in France (Abu-Haidar, 1991:15; 2005). Mimouni's *Le Fleuve Détourné* [The Diverted River] was published in 1982 in Paris by Robert Laffont following the refusal of SNED to publish it. It was republished by Stock in 2000 and republished by the Algerian publishing house SEDIA in 2007. The novel contains an explicit criticism of the state as well as of the Algerian society (Abu-Haidar, 1995:326). Mimouni's work was well received by French critics who connected it to Camus, Kafka and the Romanian writer Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu. It was with the publication of this novel that Mimouni reached fame because the French supported him while he was banned from leaving Algeria to attend a conference in Paris. The Algerian state then relented and let him travel to France, and indeed his 1983 novel *Une Paix à Vivre* [Peace for Living] which explores women and their suffering under the patriarchal system was published by SNED, although several passages were censored before its publication. This was republished by the French publisher Stock in 1995 and in 2016 republished by the Algerian publishing house SEDIA. Robert Laffont in Paris published Mimouni's fourth novel *Tombéza* – which is more directly critical of the state as well as discussing tradition, hypocrisy and women's marginalisation (Abu-Haidar, 1995; 1996:77).

Gueydan-Turek (2016) and Treacy (2016) argue that those authors who published with SNED were not aesthetically challenging because authors found themselves as producers of the state discourse rather than their own ideas. Similarly, Waciny Laredj, who himself has primarily written in Arabic, argues that Arabophone authors were influenced by the Association of Algerian Muslim (Ulama), who played a key role in shaping Algerian official history in this period, and failed to create narratively or aesthetically challenging works (1986:40-50). Algeria did receive other countries' censored work. Book fairs were organized by European and Middle Eastern publishers, and they used to bring all their censored authors to Algeria. Madi (2001) stated that these foreign publishers benefited from the Algerian market, he labelled Algeria as a *dépotoir culturel* [cultural dump].

Continuities in publishing abroad

Authors of French expression continued to write and publish from abroad. Djébar's *Les Alouettes Naïves* [The Naive Larks] was published in Paris by Julliard in 1967 and shed light on women's social, economic conditions during the War of Independence and their struggle and contribution. In this novel, Djébar also raises the issues of the language policy in Algeria (Bamia, 1971:228-234). The prolific bilingual poet, novelist and playwright, Rachid Boudjedra (b.1941) was also a key author from the 1960s onwards in both Arabic and French. Well-read in Islamic cultural heritage and history (Laredj, 1986:7), Boudjedra is often described as the perfect example of postcolonial *métissage* in fiction (Allen, 2006:10). Boudjedra is known for his provocative writings that transgress taboos imposed on both sexes by the norms and traditions of Arab Muslim societies. He is also known by his acerbic criticism of the political system, which has led to many run-ins with the Algerian authorities. *La Répudiation* [The Denial] first published in Paris in 1969 by Denoël is a novel against traditions. It is an acerbic criticism of patriarchal society, and he blames society for giving men a false sense of masculinity; known in Algeria as *rodjla* (Armitage, 2000:74; Cox, 2002:216-217; Abu-Haidar, 2001:16; Serrano, 2001:27). This novel was rejected by Algerian editors, because of the content, but when published in France it sold twenty-seven thousand copies in the first seven months on the market (Shepard, 2017:108).

There is a difference between works Boudjedra published in Arabic in Algeria and those he published in French in France, which is suggestive of the author accepting to adapt his work to the market as part of the editorial process (Cox, 2002:201). This includes not including very offensive words in his Arabic novels which are made explicit in his novels of French expression such as "ce putain de livre" [this bitch of a book], "ce salaud de père" [this swine of a father] (Abu-Haidar, 2001:17). Anti-colonial declarations were made more explicit in his Arabic novels. *La Répudiation* was awarded the Prix des Enfants Terribles in 1970 and was republished in 1976 by the Relire collection in Paris and in 1981 by Gallimard Folio, again in Paris. It was translated into Arabic by the Algerian publishing house Anep in 1984 and reached its second edition in 2000. In the 1980s, Boudjedra began increasingly

publishing in Arabic. In 1982 *التفكك* [The Breaking Apart] was released by the Lebanese publishing house Ibn Rushed. This is a novel about women's struggle and the clash between modernity and tradition, hypocrisy, and corruption of the Muslim brotherhood (Carjuzaa, 2001: 47-48). Republished within the same year by ENAL in Algeria, it was translated to French by the author himself and published by the French publisher Denoël as *Le Démantèlement*. Two years later in 1984, he was able to publish another novel in Arabic *المرث* [The Maceration] released by Anep in Algeria and translated to French in 1985 as *La Macération* by Antoine Moussali and published by Denoël in France. In 2003, the same novel was re-published again by Anep.

Apart from Boudjedra, Algerian Arabophone writers in the 1960s and 1970s received little international critical attention, and when they did receive attention this was often negative. Arar Muhammed Al Ali's *ما لا تذرؤه الرياح* [What the Winds cannot efface] was published in 1972 by the SNED. The French critic and translator Marcel Bois described it as full of "détails inutiles, redondances, utilisation de procédés trop voyants" [futile details, redundancy, and obvious plot devices], his second novel *الطموح* [Ambitious] received the same criticism (1978:19). Abdelmalek Murta'd's *نار ونور* [Fire and Light] was published in Cairo in 1975 and received sharp criticism from Algerians who accused the Egyptian publisher of deliberating choosing a bad quality text and presenting it as representative of Algerian literature (Bois, 1978).

Challenging some received ideas about language and ideological conflicts

During this period, Francophone writers found themselves in a linguistic dilemma. Some chose to remain silent, others made the switch to filmmaking and theatre in Algerian Arabic, such as Kateb Yacine and Assia Djebar. This switch was meant to address Algerians directly in their languages, although both went back to writing in French later on. The desire to address Algerians in their languages was very much in keeping with the attitudes of African writers and filmmakers across the continent, who sought, to paraphrase the title of Ngũgĩ Wa Thiongo's seminal 1986 work, to

decolonise the mind. Other Algerian authors rejected the association between writing in French and reproducing a colonial mindset – as the author Jamel Eddine Bencheikh (1930–2005), who chose to live abroad, argued “the language is not always a cultural vector [...] the truth is that: “[...] anything tinged with the French or the west is presented as an obstacle to be eradicated”⁶ (cited in Atallah, 2002:62).

In the most stereotypical representation of this “language conflict”, those who wrote in French were accused of being traitors, whereas those who wrote in Arabic were accused of reproducing the state discourse and a narrow-minded view of an “Arabo-Islamic” Algerian identity. To a certain extent, this latter accusation was reinforced by the values ascribed to the Arabic language in the state discourse, as the carrier of authenticity and selfhood. As Belinda Jack argues, “since independence [...] Arabic has increasingly been regarded by some as the language of tradition and a new oppressive conformism; French is thus proposed by some intellectuals as the language of liberation” (cited in Armitage, 2000:43).

However, we should be cautious about some of the stereotypes and assumptions made about the perspectives and orientation of Arabic-language works. Debbie Cox (1998; 2002) argues that Algerian Arabophone writers published by the SNED could challenge and subvert the state discourse using different metaphors and allegories to comment on the political, cultural, and social system of the country, in addition to commenting on the situation of women. Arguably it was easier for Arabic-language works to do this because, in a period of significant ideological emphasis on Arabization, Arabic-language works were under less political scrutiny than their French-language (and automatically “ideologically suspect”) counterparts. For example, Abd El Hamid Benhadouga (1925–1996), a novelist and short-story writer studied in Algeria, Tunisia and worked in France. He also contributed to radio

⁶ [...] la langue n’est pas toujours un vecteur culturel [...]; la vérité en est que: [...] tout ce qui est teinté de francité ou d’occidentalisme est présenté comme l’obstacle à abattre

programmes for BBC in Arabic and the French ORFT in Algeria (Bois, 1978). In his early career, Benhadouga published short stories with Tunisian and Lebanese publishers. His first novel, ربح الجنوب 1972 [The Wind from the South], was published in Algeria by the SNED and adapted to film in 1975. In 1988, this was republished in Tunisia by Muassasat Abd al Karim bin Abd Allah. This novel criticises state discourse, explores themes of inequality between rural and urban populations in addition to women's societal problems and language policy (Cox, 2002:129). Benhadouga's novel نهاية أمس 1975 [The End of Yesterday] was published by SNED, and in 1985 was republished in Tunisia by Abed El-Karim Abed Allah Company. بان الصبح 1980 [Morning became Clear] was also published by the SNED and in 1992 republished in Beirut by Dar El Adab. In الجازية والدراويش [Jaziyah and the Dervishes], published by ENAL in 1983, he focuses on history and mythology (Cox, 2002:129-161; Cox, 2017:165).

Authors publishing with the SNED in French also played with the boundaries of what was politically acceptable. Yamina Méchakra's (1949–2013) *La Grotte Éclatée* [The Exploded Cave] was published in 1979 by SNED, with a preface written by Kateb Yacine. In 2000, it was re-published by ENAG. This novel is based on a female character who is a nurse in the wartime National Liberation Front Army on the Algerian-Tunisian border. Méchakra uses the past to comment on the present, she uses blindness as a metaphor to comment on unwritten histories, especially that of the *mujahidāt*, women who fought during the Algerian War of Independence. Mervette (2017) considers Méchakra as a feminist who subverted the state discourse criticising the exclusion of women from public life after the War of Independence. Perhaps one factor preventing Méchakra being censored is that she was largely unknown. According to Mervette, the first study of *La Grotte Eclatée* was conducted in Algeria by the Algerian scholar Rachid Mokhtari in 2015. Eight years earlier, when Algeria was selected as Capital of Arab Culture in 2007, parts from the novel were adapted to theatre (Mokrani, 2007).

After the death of Houari Boumédiène in 1978, Chadli Bendjedid was selected as the third president of Algeria in 1979 and remained president until 1992 (Hill, 2006;

Stora,2001:180). Benjedid's changes in Algerian economic and cultural policy signalled a shift in direction from the Boumédiène period (Cox, 2002:47). Among the changes he made was the privatisation of large parts of the state-run economy (Evans & Phillips, 2007:119; Stora, 2001:184-185; Cox,2002:47). Chadli nevertheless shared the same views on language policy as Boumédiène – i.e. he maintained the policy that Arabic language should be the sole official language taught in schools and the language of instruction in the humanities and social sciences at university (Hill, 2006). By 1983, the SNED was considered to have failed to fulfil the established objectives as a state publishing house and its roles were redistributed across a number of other state-run organisations. The ENAL was given the task of editing and distribution, the *Entreprise National des Fournitures Éducatives et Culturelles* (ENAFEC) [National Enterprise for Educational and Cultural Supplies] dealt with textbooks, and *Entreprise National des Arts Graphiques* (ENAG) [National Enterprise for Graphic Design] and the *Entreprise Nationale des Messageries et Presses* (ENAMEP) [National Enterprise for Couriers and Press] were also created.

The refusal of the state to recognise other ethnic groups and languages resulted in several revolts starting from the early 1980s. On 19 March 1980, the government banned a lecture organised by the Algerian Francophone novelist Mouloud Mammeri to be delivered in Tamazight at the University of Tizi Ouzou (Benrabah, 2013:140; Evans & Phillips, 2007: 122; Stone, 1997:61). From the late 1960s onwards, Amazigh activists had sought ways to express their denied identities through different artistic mediums such as song, theatre, poems, and novels. Part of this cultural revival had begun amongst Tamazight-speaking activists who were part of the Algerian diaspora living in France. These activists, singers and writers were accused by their opponents of promoting the values of French colonialism, spreading division between Arabs and Berbers. This did not lead to a growth in Tamazight publishing – the language was still being codified in the 1970s – but it did to a certain extent increase the political power of writing in French as a way of expressing one's plurality.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the emergence and development of Algerian literature within its political and economic publishing contexts. The huge decline in literacy and the shift in the main language of instruction which was imposed by French colonial rule played a major role in determining who was going to write Algerian literature and who they were going to write it for. In a colonial context in which the Arabic language was marginalised and denigrated, the first generation of Algerian novelists were a relatively privileged minority, educated in French, writing for French readers in metropolitan France and European readers in colonial Algeria. These authors were primarily published in Paris – Casanova’s capital of the world republic of letters – because this was the cultural centre in the colonial period as it was in the post-colonial period, but also because settler-owned publishers in Algeria were less likely to publish them as they were more hostile to Algerian voices. Indeed, even the label “Algerian” had to be wrested from literature produced by settlers. Interestingly, a new generation of contemporary Algerian writers – Saïd Khatibi, Kaouther Adimi and Kamel Daoud – have revisited Algérianiste and École d’Alger writers in recent years and appropriated them as part of their literary heritage.

Writing in French for French audiences, Algerian authors writing in the colonial period had to struggle to find their voice in a context where their culture was not valued, or at least only prompted reader interest when it was presented in exoticised and stereotypical forms which met their tastes – similar to the kinds of themes and tropes which Brouillette argued would be considered commercially successful in later, post-colonial “world literature”. As the discussion here shows, debate continues about the extent to which different Algerian writers in the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s and 1950s reproduced stereotypes about themselves, or managed to subvert them in ways subtle enough to not be a barrier to getting published. Language and the act of writing were intensely politicised, and it is hardly surprising that the realist mode dominated.

For the very small number of authors who were able to produce literary work in Arabic, writing in Arabic was an act of resistance to colonial domination. Novels in Arabic were not published in either Algeria or France: whilst Algerian Francophone literature was on the periphery of French-language (Paris-centred) publishing, Algerian Arabophone literature was on the periphery of Arabic-language (Middle Eastern-centred) publishing. Some literature did nevertheless begin to make it into the pages of Arabic-language newspapers published in Algeria in the form of poems and short stories from the 1930s onwards. For many authors writing in French, this too was a subversive act – they were turning the language of the oppressor against the oppressor to denounce the inequalities and inequity of colonial rule. There were also common thematic concerns across Arabophone and Francophone Algerian literary production – such as the relationship between tradition and modernity, identity, the role of women and the family. This is suggestive of a certain dialogue between Arabophone and Francophone publishing in the colonial period – even if many Francophone writers could not read Arabic, most of those writing fictions in Arabic (albeit this was a tiny minority) could read French, such as Reda Houhou. In terms of the quantity and visibility of output though, in the colonial period, the Algerian literary field was primarily formed through France in French for French audiences.

After independence in 1962 until the 1980s, the Algerian state invested in the literary field by establishing the only permitted publishing house, the SNED. The SNED struggled with a number of practical issues which limited its efficiency, and attractiveness to authors, as a publisher and distributor. Authors publishing with the SNED were at least officially limited to writing about specific themes which supported official discourse on what Algerian identity was: it was Arabic-speaking, Arab and Muslim. Some authors made the switch to film to reach wider audiences, as most of the Algerian population was still illiterate. Other authors chose to publish beyond Algeria, mainly in France, to avoid censorship, but also – and perhaps primarily – because of the enduring prestige of the large French publishing houses and their promise of commercial success. As Gafaïti (1997:68-69) argues:

In order to escape censorship at home, Algerian writers will do almost anything to be published by French publishers. On the one hand, since the local, state-run publishing company cannot compete with the French publishing industry, and since cultural recognition comes from the Parisian media and critics, most Algerian writers, despite the fact that they may espouse a nationalist position vis-à-vis French neocolonial discourse, cultural paternalism, imperialism, and so forth, would rather have their books accepted by Gallimard and Le Seuil than be published in Algeria. Apart from the censorship factor, this favoritism toward France is due to the French currency and not in nonconvertible Algerian dinars, and the promise of international distribution

In the post-colonial period, then, the “Algerian” literary field was taking shape in two places: there was the officially funded and to a certain extent officially sanctioned Algerian literary field in Algeria in Arabic and French aimed at Algerian readerships with its themes of celebrating the War of Independence and Arab and Muslim Algerian identity; and the Algerian literary field in France, in French, which was much more appealing to French market tastes with its focus on critiquing the political myths and social taboos of post-independence Algerian society.

And yet, we should be careful to not just reproduce a stereotypical classification – such as that of Gafaïti (1997: 65) – in which, on the one hand, there were talentless writers seeking to ingratiate themselves in an autocratic Algerian political system, and, on the other hand, there were writers who refused to be bought and thus adopted silence or exile. When we look at the themes of some of the Arabophone novels published by the SNED, and Francophone novels published by Parisian publishers, we can also see shared concerns, particularly those relating to social critique. Indeed, some Arabophone writers were able to be more subversive in the content of Arabic-language books because the form of their work was already in the officially approved language and therefore it was under less political surveillance than French-language books, which always risked being accused of neo-colonial anti-

Algerianness. When we see that thematically Algerian novels in French or Arabic were often not so different, it becomes more evident that arguments about languages of expression were not so much a reflection of different content in the two languages, but rather provided the location for a proxy debate for broader confrontations about Algeria's past, present and future.

After independence, growing numbers of Algerians were able to read novels in French, Arabic or both, although the low print runs and distribution problems of the SNED means that it is hard to know how accessible Algerian works of literature were to them. The civil violence, however, would stop in its tracks the development of an Algerian reading public reading Algerian novels published in Algeria.

Chapter Two: Shrinking spaces of expression in Algeria and the return to the real: Explaining the civil violence of the 1990s to different international readerships

Introduction

This chapter explores the impact of the civil violence of the 1990s on the Algerian literary field. Multipartyism was introduced in Algeria in 1989, which also prompted the establishment of a number of independent publishing houses. However, in 1992 the Algerian army cancelled the second round of legislative elections when the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) looked like it was going to win. A decade of civil violence ensued. Terrorists targeted both Arabic and French-language writers, artists, and intellectuals as well as politicians, trade unionists, teachers, and children (Gafaïti, 1997). Islamists considered literature as a form of art as a danger to its political, social, and cultural project (Hiddleston, 2005). Publishing in Algeria more or less came to halt as a result, resulting in more Algerian writers than ever publishing in France as well as some Arabic-language authors increasingly publishing in the Middle East. Those now publishing in France included writers who had previously published in Algeria and included some who had previously published in Algeria in Arabic and who, in the context of the 1990s, made the switch to write in French.

This chapter examines how the dramatic situation in Algeria, and the fact that many Algerian writers were living in exile, played a key role in shaping the kind of literature which they produced. The literature of this period is often described as “the literature of urgency” in which French publishers had an insatiable thirst for documentary-like accounts of extreme forms of violence and anything which seemed to explain it to them and their French and international readerships. One of the contributions to knowledge of this chapter is to put a relatively well-known story of the 1990s Francophone “literature of urgency” into conversation with its far less studied Arabophone counterpart, in order to assess the extent to which –

thematically – they came to form part of the same literary field – or not. The composition of national and transnational readerships, and their market tastes, is analysed by looking at what was published, in what language and where, and what was translated, and where.

Economic, political and cultural unrest in Algeria and its impact on publishing

Historians and commentators disagree on the label given to the bloody ten years that plagued Algeria during the 1990s. The term “civil war” is often used in international publications, for Algerians this is the black decade or civil unrest. A former member of the Algerian army, Habib Souaïdia, described this period as *La Sale Guerre* [The Dirty War] in a book published by Gallimard in Paris in 2001 and banned in Algeria. The Algerian Francophone writer Yasmina Khadra refuses the term civil violence and prefers to label it as a war against terrorism. The conflict took the lives of up to 200,000 people. Bombs attacks and killings took place all over Algeria, women, journalists and men and women of arts were particular targets and many fled the country (Stora, 2001:215-216).

There are political, economic, and cultural explanations of the civil violence. Under the Chadli presidency, the price of oil collapsed with a catastrophic effect on the economy of the country (Mortimer,2006:158). Algeria became indebted to international organisations – such as the International Monetary Fund – which then sought to impose its free market model on Algeria (Cox, 2002:48; Stone, 1997:63; Stora, 2001:186). Inequality plagued the country. Benrabah also puts some of the blame on linguistic and cultural conflicts generated by programmes of Arabization, described by some authors as a “cultural civil war” or linguistic “intellectual cleansing” (Benrabah, 2007:209). At the very least, the fact that by the 1980s the first generation of Algerians who had been through an entirely Arabised primary and secondary education system were arriving at university and onto the job market only to discover that the language they needed for social advancement was still French was a source of intergenerational and class tension.

Following the liberalisation of the Algerian economy, several private publishing houses were established, notably Casbah and Chihab. Initially, they focused on the publication of textbooks, which was no longer a state monopoly. The Francophone Algerian bookshop Média Plus opened its doors in 1986 and turned into a publishing house in 1991. They all suffered from the absence of raw materials and printing facilities (Bouayed, 1985:31). Moreover, given the dangerous political situation in Algeria, these publishers and bookshops had little opportunity to develop their trade, although Média Plus, ENAL, ENAP, ENAG, OPU, Dar El Afaq, Alfa, El Aurassi, Dar El Fikr, Dar El Ijtihad, Alaoui, Laphomic, Bouchène, Dahlab, and Fennec all formally remained in operation (Abdelkader, 2017).

During the civil violence in Algeria, Islamists saw themselves as cultural and spiritual decolonisers. They declared that the FLN liberated the Algerian land from French colonialism and that Islamists were going to free the Algerian mind from French culture, thoughts and ideas (Martinez, 2004: 16-17; Hiddleston, 2005; Evans & Phillips, 2007). The violence targeted not only those who were perceived as “Francophone” but also those who wrote and performed in Arabic, Algerian Arabic and Tamazight. Cheb Hasni (1968–1994), a rai singer, was murdered in 1994 purportedly because he used darija with erotic lyrics in his songs. Matoub Lounès (1956–1998), a singer and vocal supporter of Tamazight language and culture, was killed in 1998. The Francophone journalist and satirist Saïd Mekbel was murdered in 1994, and the Arabophone playwright Abdelkader Alloula who wrote in darija was assassinated in 1994 (Abu-Haidar, 2000:160; Benrabah, 2013:147-149, Schaefer, 2015:29; Gross, 2002:370; Daoudi, 2018).

A number of leading or emerging authors in this period, including Amine Zaoui (b.1956), Amara Lakhous (b.1970), Salim Bachi (b.1971), Waciny Laredj (b.1954) and Rachid Boudjedra all chose exile towards France because homegrown terrorists aggressively targeted them. From Paris, they began to depict the terrible violence unfolding in Algeria. Although they usually wrote in Arabic, Zaoui, Laredj and Boudjedra began writing in French. Already prolific writers in French such as

Mohammed Dib, Khelladi Aïssa (b.1953), Assia Djebar, Leïla Sebbar (b.1941) and Malika Mokeddem published a number of documentary-like works with their French publishers, and all of them lived in France at this time. As Christiane Chaulet Achour stated “in this era as in others, the period of turbulence and violence felt in Algeria had a definite production repercussion [...] Urgency: this is the duty felt by Algerian women [and indeed men] to tell and bear witness” (cited in Belkaid,2018:128). Algerian writers intensively reporting on the national crisis were enthusiastically supported by French publishers, who were eager to know about the complicated situation in Algeria because media coverage was extremely difficult and dangerous. The works of these authors were published with the most prestigious French publishing houses, including Albin Michel, Sindbad, Le Seuil, Actes Sud, Flammarion, L’Harmattan, Stock, Marsa and Grasset publishing houses. In terms of quantity, most novels were in French, but there were an estimated seventy-five Arabic-language novels published by Algerian authors from 1990 to 2003 (Nassiam, 2011-2012), primarily with Middle East publishers. Amongst Arabophone authors, Bachir Mefti, Waciny Laredj, Zuhur Ounissi, Amine Zaoui, Mohamed Sari, Habib Sayeh, and Jilali Khalass, Ibrahim Saadi, Tahar Wattar, Djilali Amrani and Hafnaoui Zaghez to mention few all wrote about the violence of the 1990s in Arabic.

The theme-driven literature of urgency

Many of the Algerian novels published during the 1990s are often criticised as being journalistic and aesthetically unchallenging (Bonn & Boualit, 1999:17; Geesey, 2000; Guardi, 2005:99). As Geesey (2000) puts it, “At times, for both men and women writers, their own political slant on the Algerian crises is openly presented, and a work subtitled ‘novel’ is more often a journal of events and a mediation on the causes and on the nature of the conflict. As with any writing that seeks to bear witness to terrible events unfolding in the present, some of the works documenting the civil war are very uneven in quality”. For example, in 1997 Mohamed Sari’s البطاقة السحرية [The Magical Card] was published by the Arab Writers’ Union, based in Damascus. This novel was republished in Algeria in 2000 by Al Djahidia publishing house and

previously serialized in the Algerian Arabophone newspapers *El Khabar* in summer 1993. According to the author, it is a realistic novel about the 1990s based on primary data, such as interviews with some army officers and visits to some cities and villages where the violence took place. With this novel, Sari attempted to answer ambiguous and complicated questions such as why the violence and who is killing who? The story turns around a teacher expelled from his job who joined the terrorists, as well as the danger of being a journalist. The author also revisited history of Algeria during French colonialism and the 1988 October Riots. Barkan (2016) categorises this novel as journalistic with an absence of aesthetics.

Bearing witness was the main motive for writing and the dominant theme of these authors' works. They explicitly described tortured bodies, violence, the absence of those who had been killed, and paid tribute to murdered men and women of arts. In *Blanc de l'Algérie* [Algerian White], published by Albin Michel in Paris in 1995 (translated into English in 2000 by the American publisher Seven Stories Press), Djébar attempted to pay tribute to the men of art, her close friends who were assassinated during the civil violence and among them Abdelkader Alloula, Tahar Djaout and M'Hamed Boukhobza. Borrowing from the commemorative language of the War of Independence, she gave them the iconic status of *chahids* and *abtals* (martyrs & heroes) (Abu-Haidar, 2001:14; Cox, 2017:164; Hiddleston, 2005; Hiddleston, 2006). In doing so, Gueydan-Turek argues that Djébar subverts the state discourse as well as the Islamist ideology (Gueydan-Turek, 2011; Hiddleston, 2005). Djébar also criticises Arabization through the celebration of various Algerian languages within this novel (Hiddleston, 2005; Hiddleston,2006). She used symbols such as the white colour to refer to the eradicated history of men of art and their resistance to the violence of the Islamists (Hiddleston, 2005; 2006; Belkaid, 2018: 127-128). This was a theme which Djébar would return to again and again, for example in *Oran Langue Morte* [Oran, dead tongue], published in Paris by Actes Sud in 1997 (Daoudi, 2018) and *La Femme en morceau* [The Women in Pieces] (Paris: Actes Sud, 1996). In her comparative analysis between Djébar's *La Femme en morceaux* and Boudjedra's *Timimoun* (Paris: Grasset, 1997), Riad (1999: 68) argues

that, “The common thing between these two authors is to recommend the text as a response to the violence and the sufferings of contemporary Algeria: a text of collective history in which they integrate the unbearable historical events in Rachid Boudjedra; a text of individual stories, past and present in Assia Djébar who uses fiction to correct a failing memory and not to write only the death but also the life of the victims in collective memory”⁷.

In Beirut, Fadhila El Farouk (b.1967) started her career as a journalist in Algeria before moving to Lebanon during the civil violence in Algeria. She was supported by many Lebanese intellectuals. In 1997, she published a book of short stories, لحظة لاختلاس الحب [A moment of Love’s Embezzlement], with Beirut’s Dar El Farabi, and in 1999, she was able to publish her first novel مزاج مراهقة [The Mood of a Teenager] again with the Dar El Farabi publishing house (the second edition was issued in 2007). El Farouk had to wait for two years to see her second novel ثاء الخجل 2003 [Feminine Shame] to be put into print by the prestigious publishing house Riyad El-Rayyes in Beirut. Several publishers had refused to publish it because of its themes based on women’s rape and the situation of women’s suffering during civil violence. Daoudi (2018) argues that this is the first Algerian novel in Arabic that talked about rape. From Paris, Latifa Ben Mansour wrote *La Prière de la Peur* [The Prayer of Fear] (1997) published by ELA/La Différence, and *L’année de L’éclipse* [The Year of the Eclipse] (2001), published by Calmann-Levy and which also depicted the violence of the 1990s against women such as sexual abuse and rape (Evans, 2006).

In *La Malédiction* [The Curse] published in 1994 by Stock in Paris, Mimouni was more influenced by Algerian writers such as Kateb Yacine and Mourad Bourboune

⁷ Le point commun de ces deux écrivains est de préconiser le récit comme réponse à la violence et à la souffrance du présent algérien : récit de l’histoire collective dont il intègre les événements les plus insupportables chez Rachid Boudjedra ; récit des histoires individuelles, présentes et passées chez Assia Djébar qui se sert de la fiction pour corriger une mémoire défaillante et inscrire non seulement la mort mais aussi la vie des victimes dans les mémoires collectives

to reflect on Algerian history, state corruption and religious propaganda. The setting of this novel is a hospital, interpreted by Baffet (1999:6) as “la métaphore d’une nation déchirée entre avenir et passé” [the metaphor of nation torn between the future and the past].

Furthermore, authors sought to challenge Islamists’ claim to embody an “authentic” Algerianness through plunging into the past. In exile, Djébar published *Loin de Médine: Filles d’Ismaël* [Far from Medina: Daughters of Ismail] with Albin Michel in Paris in 1992. This was reflection on the patriarchal Family Code of 1984, the October 1988 youth riots and the political rise of Islamists which had an impact on her and other women’s lives, through a revisiting of women’s situation during the founding period of Islam. In doing so, Djébar challenged the Islamists’ appropriation of Islam (Carjuzaa, 2001:44; Rice, 2006:103-104; Hiddleston, 2006:120). Djébar argued that the FIS and their fundamentalist supporters misunderstood Islam and falsely underplayed the status of Muslim and non-Muslim women during the era of the prophet. Djébar illustrated this with the example of the daughter of the Prophet, who refused polygamy and was supported by her father (Ghazoul, 2014). As Zimra (1993:117) argues “*Médine*, “this book that answers back”, was written simultaneously to address the new Algerian as well as the old Islam”. Indeed, Touria Nakkouch (2012:187) summarises all Djébar’s works in this period in the following terms: “The novels that Djébar wrote between *So Vast the Prison* (1994) and *Strasbourg Night* (1997), namely *Algerian White* (1995) and *The Tongues’ blood does not run dry* (1996), are devoted, one could say to a double concern of writing the violence and resisting the violence of writing”⁸.

As can be seen, the thematic concerns of French language work and Arabic language work was remarkably similar. In her comparative study between Tahar

⁸ Les romans que Djébar écrit dans les années entre *Vaste est la prison* 1994 et *les Nuits de Strasbourg* 1997 à savoir *le Blanc de l’Algérie* 1995 et *Oran, langue morte* 1996, sont consacrés, pourrait-on dire, au double souci d’écrire la violence et de résister à la violence de l’écriture

Djaout's unfinished French text *Le Dernier Été de la Raison* [The Last Summer of Reason] which was published by Seuil in Paris in 1999 and Waciny Laredj's Arabic-language *Saiyydatu al-maqam* [The Lady of the Tomb] which was published in 1993 by the Iraqi publishing house Dar Al Gamal, based in Cologne in Germany, Jarvis (2010:89-90) argues that "*Saiyydatu al-maqam* opens to question the legitimacy of state violence, a risky and radical move that Laredj shared in common with writers like Djaout...to read Laredj's and Djaout's work together is also to recognize, correctly, that literary reckoning with official truths takes places in and between all of Algeria's languages – not just in French". Whether they were reading each other's work and saw themselves as part of a shared literary field was another question. What can be asserted with considerable confidence is that relatively few Algerians in Algeria were reading these works, where problems of surrounding importation, censorship, and distribution networks were ever worse in the 1990s.

The tale of two Tahars? Le Drame Linguistique [The Linguistic Drama]

This similarity in themes and arguments across many Francophone and Arabophone works has been little foregrounded. Instead, many academics have instead focused on the clash between two leading Algerian authors of this period – the French-language author Tahar Djaout and the Arabic-language author Tahar Wattar.

Francophone intellectual Tahar Djaout (1954–1993) was a prolific writer, founder of the *Ruptures* weekly magazine in 1993 and a former student of Assia Djebar (Hawley, 2010). He was critical of both the Algerian state and the Islamists (Mortimer, 2009:1305). Djaout was in favour trilingualism of the country – Tamazight, Arabic and French (Benrabah, 2013:148-150; Daoudi, 2018). Djaout had nevertheless been published in Algeria by the SNED. His novel *L'Exproprié* [The Expropriated] was published by the SNED in 1981 and republished in 1991 in Paris by François Majault. *Les Chercheurs d'Os* [The Bone Seekers] (1984) and *L'invention du Désert* [The Invention of the Desert] (1987) were published by Le Seuil in Paris. Both novels criticised Algerian official history and the failure of the state to fulfil the promises of

the independence struggle (Hiddleston, 2005, Hiddleston, 2006; Geesey, 1996). According to Geesey (1996:271-272) “Djaout’s fictional treatment of the war of independence has sought to distance itself from earlier, socio-realist narratives of the Algerian revolution”. Djaout’s unfinished final text *Le Dernier été de Raison* 1999 [The Last Summer of Reason] which was published after his death is a novel that narrates the struggle of a bookseller in the face of the Islamists domination in the country. It is described by Hawley (2010:395) “a very angry text that portrays a society blinded and fanaticised by the Text, a society tethered to Word that pulverizes it”.

Tahar Wattar (1936–2010) studied at Zaytuna university in Tunisia and at the Ben Badis Institute (El-Shakry, 2011:127-128; Leperlier, 2014:70) and he used to work as a censor with the SNED (Benrabah, 2013:150). According to Leperlier, Wattar was not known to Arabophone readers until the translation of his work into French (2014:71). From 1989 onwards, he became the president of the cultural association الجاحظية. In 2005, he was awarded the Sharjah Prize (UNESCO, 2005). Wattar was an Arabophone short story writer, playwright, journalist, critic, and member of the FLN. Wattar’s first novel اللّاز [The Ace] was submitted in 1972 and published two years later in 1974 by the SNED (Cox, 2002:88). It was re-edited by the same publishing house in 1977. Like nearly all authors of his generation, Wattar’s style is realist and fairly conventional in its treatment of themes (Sellin & Abdel-Jaouad, 1998:168). Cox argues that his novels reveal what had been silenced by the state – the hidden histories and the division within Algerian society and amongst its political leaders (Cox, 2002:88). For example, the division between and within the political leaders of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic and the National Liberation Army in 1962, as well as the division between the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA) members who were in opposition to the FLN’s domination of the UGTA (Hill, 2006). Wattar also explores the theme of homosexuality to transgress the codes of a conservative society. He talks about marginalisation and poverty to break with the discourse of unified people. He undermines the notion of a truth promoted by the state (Cox, 2002:87-128; Cox, 2017:165).

Wattar's second novel was الزلزال 1974 [The Earthquake], first published in Algeria by SNED and republished in Beirut in 1974 by Dar Ilm Li Malayin, and translated to English in 2000 by the American scholar and translator William Granara and published by the Lebanese publishing house Dar Al Saqi based in London. Wattar uses satire, monologue, and intertextual references from the Quran to criticise Algeria's post-revolutionary socialist regime in terms of language, identity, agricultural reform, education, and ethnic diversity (El Shakry, 2011:121). In a satirical way, he mocks the character Bu al Arwah, who uses the Quran and Hadith to justify his abusive actions towards women and to expand his land holdings – similar scenes can be found in the work of Francophone writers to criticise religious leaders (El Shakry, 2011:134). Wattar's عرس البغل [The Wedding of a mule] was published first in Beirut in 1978, then in Algeria by ENAL in 1980 and then in 1987 in Cairo by Dar el Hilal. The novel is about the negotiation between tradition and modernity. The novel is a socio-political criticism of Algeria, the author uses different metaphors and allegories, which explore the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised and newly independent Algeria (Carjuzaa, 2001: 55; Cox, 2017:165). Cox (2002:171) describes Wattar's القصر و الحوات [The Fisherman and the Palace], published in 1980 by Dar El Baath in Constantine, as a story which “allows for the expression of a critique of power relations and authoritarianism, whilst avoiding censorship by its fantasy style”. In العشق والموت في الزمن الحراشي [Love and Death at the time of El Harrachi] published in 1982 by the SNED and within the same year re-published in Beirut and Jerusalem, Wattar gives voice to the *mūjahidat* and their political engagement (Cox, 2002:186). Nevertheless, writing in Arabic and being a member of the FLN and the Writers Union in Algeria, Wattar was also accused of being part of the regime.

Djaout and Wattar shared a number of similar opinions on post-independence Algeria. But they clashed on the question of what language these critiques should be expressed in. On 26 May 1993, Djaout was fatally wounded in a terrorist attack in Algiers, and he died a few days later. In an infamous television interview, Wattar responded to the death of Djaout by stating that Tahar Djaout's writing in French was a tourist guide to Algeria for French audiences. Wattar declared that Djaout's death

was a loss for the French audience and his family but not for his country. This clash is often referred to in the academic literature as representative of a wider Arabophone vs Francophone cultural conflict. However, when we look at the creative output of Djaout and Wattar we can see many thematic similarities, and quite a similar critique of the post-independent state, even though Wattar was in many ways closely aligned with its political system. One might wonder if what Wattar was really contesting was who had the right to be defined as a rebel within his own society.

Conclusion

The political and economic context of the 1990s civil violence had a dramatic impact on Algerian literary production. Due to the dangers of writing and practical impossibilities of publishing in Algeria, and the political and ethical desire to make the world aware of what was going on in Algeria, Algerian authors shifted to writing primarily for international audiences. Arabic- and French-language publishing had strikingly similar themes, but different reading publics in the Arabophone North Africa and Middle Eastern world and the French and Francophone world. Paying close attention to the thematic similarities, but emphasising the different markets, enables us to challenge overly the simplistic opposition between “Arabophone writers” and “Francophone writers”. Tahar Wattar’s highly ideological position on what made an “Algerian” writer was not necessarily representative. We should be wary of taking one of the dominant ways in which the 1990s civil violence was read at the time – as, above all, a culture war – as an academic frame of reference (Benkhaled & Vince, 2017).

International publishers and translators had a very specific idea of what they were looking for when they selected texts to be published: they wanted ethnographic descriptions, particularly if these revealed the barbarity of Islamists, the failings of the Algerian state and the subjugation of women. This market taste to a certain extent converged with authors’ need to mourn the dead, to bear witness and to desperately try to understand what had befallen their society. It also cannot be

denied that writing about these themes was a pathway to commercial success for some authors, whilst it consolidated the international reputation of others. An Algerian readership in Algeria of these works was conspicuous by its absence.

In 1999, a former member of the wartime FLN Abdelaziz Bouteflika (b.1937) was elected as the fifth president of Algeria. Bouteflika launched a number of projects to end the civil violence, including the civil concord law which pardoned terrorists who laid down their weapons and reintegrated them back into Algerian society. Officially, ninety-nine per cent of Algerians voted for this law, but this figure is much contested. In official discourse, the 1990s was consigned to the past, a history not to be spoken of again, whilst many questions remained unanswered, and indeed people missing (Le Sueur, 2010:74-97). Algerian authors of French and Arabic expression have refused to stop asking questions and, as we shall see in the following chapters, continue to revisit and write about this period criticising the reconciliation programme, the Islamist discourse and the Algerian state. As part of a strategic of improving Algeria's international image and being seen to "move on", Bouteflika very explicitly prompted a more pluralistic approach to Algeria's languages, including French and Tamazight (Aitsiselmi, 2002). In 2016, Tamazight was declared an official language.

The thematic preferences for publishers seeking works to profitably publish and/or translate did not change with the end of the civil violence in Algeria at the turn of the century. Since 9/11 and the "war on terror" publishers' interest in novels which appear critical of religious fundamentalism and socially conservative societies, and which are written by "insiders" – i.e. women and men from the Arab and Muslim world – has only been heightened (Bourget, 2010). It is these types of novels that will gain international recognition, and scholars' attention, because they seem to support the dominant discourse on the "war on terror", Islam and Muslims, and the situation of women in the Arab and Muslim world. The fact that insiders are making these criticisms make them seem both more "authentic" and more "subversive" and thus more credible and commercially promising. Toler (2001:50-53) argues that publishers

are part of the perception of the novels as ethnographic documents rather than a work of art “the Maghrebi novel appears in English translation as a glimpse into a culture and not as a work of art with any inherent merit as literature”. This is reinforced by Amireh (1996) who argue that “reviewers of Arab women’s books seem to take their cues from the titles and covers. Unfailingly, they read these novels as sociological and anthropological texts that ‘reflect’ the reality of Islam and the Arab world and ‘lift the veil’ from what one reviewer called the ‘unimaginable world of Arab women’”. One should not forget that this are one of the marketing strategies of publishers, media, critics and reviewers for the promotion of these types of novels. The following chapter will explore the extent to which this could be challenged in Algeria from 2000 onwards, with the end of the civil violence and the creation of several new, independent publishing houses.

Chapter Three: New independent publishing houses after 2000: finally, an Algerian literary field or the persistence of dependency?

Introduction

This chapter explores the new private publishing houses established after the end of the civil violence, in Algeria, by Algerians. These have been celebrated as offering young Algerian authors the opportunity to publish in their own country, and explore new aesthetics and themes, breaking with the more documentary forms of fiction writing of previous decades. Indeed, the celebration of the growth of independent African publishing is not limited to Algeria. Suhr-Sytsma (2018), for example, has argued that new Nigerian publishers such as Cassava Republic Press liberate African authors from the pressure of metropolitan European expectations. This chapter provides a somewhat different evaluation by focusing on the conditions of production of these new Algerian works published by new publishing houses. Notably, it examines the infrastructure in place in Algeria to support publishing, distribution and sales and the transnational networks which Algerian publishers seek to be a part of both to subsidise their costs and to reach international markets.

As discussed in the introduction, quantitative data on sales, or even numbers of bookshops, is extremely hard to obtain. In the Global North, the Electronic Point of Sales (EPS), established in 1990, provides sales reports. This does not exist in Algeria. None of the Algerian private publishing houses, authors or booksellers were willing to provide me with their sales figures, which I was hoping to obtain in order to know the balance between Arabic- and French-language publishing and the number of sales of works of fiction relative to other genres. This reluctance to share sales figures is revealing, suggesting that the national and international acclaim which some of these editors have achieved may not be matched with sales. Pinhas (2005:69) estimates that sales of works of fiction in Algeria range between just 1000 and 3000 copies. A few well-established writers of French and Arabic expression may

reach more than 5,000 as in the case of Waciny Laredj, Ahlam Mosteghanemi or Yasmina Khadra. The production of Algerian publishers does not exceed twenty to forty titles per year per publisher. French publishers, in comparison, produce 45,000 titles per year. The UK produces more than twenty books per hour, and in 2013 they published 184,000 titles. In the Arab world, Sharjah was classified in 2017 as the World Book Capital City by the UNESCO. In 2018, China saw an increase in sales with 11.3 % with 203,000 new titles and online purchases raised to 27% while bookstore purchases dropped to 6.69% (International Publisher's Website, 2017).

In the absence of quantitative data for Algeria, this chapter is based on qualitative research which seeks to elicit multiple perspectives on the conditions of production of novels in Algeria, from people involved in various stages of the book industry, triangulated with a wide range of newspaper articles and secondary literature. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with publishers, writers and booksellers. In the existing literature, far more attention has been paid to the final product of publishing (i.e. thematic and aesthetic analysis of works) than to the material conditions of production of these works. One of the contributions to knowledge of this chapter, therefore, is to map out a range of private publishing houses which currently function in Algeria, exploring how they see their role and their editorial line, language balance, the financial and practical difficulties they face, and their relationship with the Algerian state as well as with publishers beyond Algeria . This mapping exercise includes well-known publishers such as Chihab, Barzakh, El-Hibr, Apic, Casbah, and El-Ikhtilef and lesser-known, mainly Arabophone publishers such as Dar ibn Chatie and Fassila.

Publishers' self-image as engaged citizens and taboo breakers – and their limited economic capital

Algerian private publishers provide different motivations and reasons for entering into this field, but all of the publishers present it as a vocation rather than a commercial venture. Owners of private publishing houses including El-Hibr, Barzakh,

Casbah, Tafat, and Chihab declare that they invested in this field using their own money, while also recognising that they had previously received subsidies from the Algerian Ministry of Culture notably around specific cultural events. For Mohammed Sari, an Algerian bilingual novelist and member of the Algerian National Book Center, these subsidies came with a set of criteria: texts should not be (too) subversive (iReMMO, 2018).

In publishers' own words, coming to the world of publishing and editing is based on the love of arts, books and literature. Some publishers took risks and opened their new publishing houses during the civil violence, others chose to venture into the world of publishing without prior experience. This kind of initiative is considered a form of resistance in the face of the enemies of art. Other reasons which encouraged these new 'independent' publishing houses to invest in the literary field include their owners' own difficulties in getting published. At the same time, publishing houses have to survive if not thrive. The catalogues of Algerian private publishing houses include novels, poetry, historical and philosophical books, academic research, short stories, interactive and activity books, school textbooks, children books, autobiographies of Algerian political leaders, as well as coffee table books. They publish both national and international authors. This variety reflects the fact that selling novels alone is not enough to financially survive.

A few of these private publisher's pre-date the publishing boom which began after 2000, and they are generally the largest Algerian publishing houses: Chihab, Dar El Hikma, Casbah, and Dahlab. Himrane Djaouida, a member of the Chihab publishing house editorial team stated that the house was a bookshop during the 1950s. The owner then established a printing house, and in 1989 they decided to open Chihab publishing house from their own personal funds – one of six publishing houses which opened in Algeria that year – and did not receive any support from the state (H. Djaouida, personal communication, July 03, 2017). Chihab is considered one of the largest and most professional publishing houses in Algeria (Abdelillah, 2016).

Média-Plus began life as a bookshop in 1986, becoming a publishing house in 1991. It is owned by a former journalist from the Algerian Francophone newspaper

Liberté, Saïd Yacine Hannachi. It stayed open during the civil violence, and Hannachi was able to publish some novels of French expression in this period, but it closed again in 1997 due to the absence of funding and support. The house is 100% Francophone and a member of the Association International des Libraires Francophone [International Association of Francophone Bookstores] (ALIF) since 1991. The driving motivation behind the establishment of this bookshop and publishing house was Hannachi's dissatisfaction towards the book industry and the reading culture in Algeria. Média-Plus is described by the Algerian journalist K. Smaïl as "an 'activist' local cultural space"⁹ (2007). Hannachi was praised and honored during an event organised by the French Embassy in Algeria by the French ambassador Bernard Émié who described him as "a key player in Constantinoise cultural life"¹⁰ (Saidani, 2014). Addressing Hannachi the ambassador continued: "You are present in all fields [...] your engagement for Francophonie must be saluted and it is reflected in your choices as a bookseller, in your choices as a publisher, in the values that your titles convey and the debates that you have animated [...]"¹¹.

Entering the world of publishing is considered as part of M'hand's family tradition. M'hand took over his father's bookshop in El-Biar, which has existed since 1965. M'hand's father was an Arabic language teacher who graduated from Zaytuna University in Tunisia and the bookshop initially only sold Arabic-language literature, as M'hand explained in an interview which was conducted in French by the Francophone Algerian magazine *L'ivrEscQ* in 2016. The bookshop was also a platform devoted to generating discussions and debates between authors and critics about culture and literature. M'hand decided to take over the bookshop during 1988. It was

⁹ c'est un espace culturel et de proximité «militante»

¹⁰ Hannachi est aujourd'hui un acteur incontournable de la vie culturelle constantinoise

¹¹ dans tous les domaines vous êtes présent...votre engagement pour la francophonie, qui doit être salué et se retrouve dans vos choix de libraire, dans vos choix d'éditeur, dans les valeurs que vos titres véhiculent et que vos débats ont animé

a time of crisis, but it was at the same time a period of the end of the single party, followed by that of the civil violence. It was not an easy task for anyone to work in the cultural field. Among the obstacles M'hand faced was a death threat from terrorists due to some titles that were available in his bookshop. M'hand took risks to keep his bookshop open in the sake of art: M'hand presents this as an act of resistance. In 2006, he decided to expand the scope of his bookshop and established El-Hibr publishing house (I. M'hand, personal communication, July 03, 2017). El-Hibr publishing house and El-Biar bookshop are members of the ALIF. Amongst those he has published is Frantz Fanon. For M'hand, "Fanon's thought is part of our heritage. He was for the emancipation of peoples; he demanded the unity of the African continent against the settlers. We always try to produce titles that are specific to our history and our collective memory"¹² (Zakour, 2016, Sep/Oct., p. 27). M'hand has also benefitted from some subsidy programmes run by the Algerian Ministry of Culture.

The Arabophone publishing house El-Ikhtilef is based in central Algiers, but its main office is in Lebanon. Editing, printing and publishing take place in Beirut, then the production is imported to Algeria. El-Ikhtilef was established in 1996 and was part of the Algerian cultural association known as Al-Jahizia run by the Algerian Arabophone writer Tahar Wattar (B. Mefti, personal communication, July 03, 2017). The Algerian bilingual novelist and journalist Bachir Mefti (b.1969) is a member of El-Ikhtilef editorial team together with Assia Moussei who took over El-Ikhtilef in 2000.

Most Algerian independent publishers operating today, however, date from the 2000s. Perhaps the most internationally famous Algerian publishing house, publishing in French and Arabic, is Barzakh. Barzakh opened their doors in 2000 and is run by the Francophone Selma Hellal and her bilingual (French/Arabic) husband, Sofiane Hadjadj. Publishing and editing were not part of the couple's plan. Both were

¹² la pensée de Fanon fait partie de notre patrimoine. Lui qui était pour l'émancipation des peuples, qui réclamait l'unité du continent africain contre les colons. On essaye toujours de cibler des titres qui sont propres à notre histoire et à notre mémoire collective

students in France but were always surrounded by texts and books. What motivated Hellal to open this publishing house, in her own words was “نموت على الرواية” [meaning that she is a lover of novels] (S. Hellal, personal communication, November 2017). The French journalist Christian Lecomte (2011) described Hellal in the following terms: “Selma of Algiers was struck by the ambient vacuity and the insupportable silence of the white city [Algiers]. It was necessary to go and find authors to make books and noise”¹³. In 2011, in an interview with the French journalist Pascale Priestley in Algeria, Hadjadj responded that Barzakh was attempting to publish works that represent the *reality* of Algerian society particularly by the content but also by the *form* and that they were interested in inventing new ways to tell contemporary Algeria and write about taboos, an editorial line which is based on subversive imagination (Priestley, 2011). Through this response, Hadjadj demonstrates that the documentary genre is (still) privileged, and fiction is (still) understood as a form which can be used in opposition to the regime, to social codes, saying things which cannot be said in other forms as in the 1990s. In an interview with the French journalist and novelist Eve Charrin (2017) published in *Book Magazine*, Hadjadj is quoted as stating that “In Algeria, fiction allows us to challenge the forbidden” [en Algérie, la fiction permet de braver les interdits].

In my interview with her, Hellal gave the examples of the novelists Kamel Daoud, H'mida Ayachi, and the historian Malika Rahal as Barzakh authors who fit this editorial line. She also stated that she was keen to publish confirmed authors whose works sell well, such as the Algerian bilingual novelist Amine Zaoui. Still, she stated, Barzakh see themselves as accompanying authors through the whole process, and this close accompaniment and the small size of the editing team (Hellal and Hadjadj) means that they cannot take on too many new authors (S. Hellal, personal communication, November, 2017). Another key reason that encouraged Hellal and Hadjadj to establish Barzakh was that Algerian writers and journalists had chosen

¹³Selma l'Algéroise est frappée par la vacuité ambiante et le silence insoutenable de la ville blanche. Aller chercher donc des auteurs pour faire des livres et du bruit

exile during the civil violence and all their works were published in the country of their residence, with nothing was published in Algeria (Priestley, 2011). As Hellal puts it:

We have to remember the context of the year 2000, it was just after the end of the black decade, when there was only violence, there was the religious discourse of terrorism, and there was the violent discourse of the state, and people were obliged to choose between terrorism or the state. So, we said to ourselves, could literature help us find a third voice, to leave us in peace? Literature is the space of dreaming, a space of complexity, where we do not have to choose, it is the space of the freest of beings, how to put it, it is freedom, total freedom.¹⁴

According to Hellal, literature and publishing gave them the space to distance themselves from the constraining political categories of the civil violence and find new ways of expression. This is a theme which returns in interviews with a number of publishing house founders and owners.

Hellal describes opening the house from their money, starting with a budget of 100,000 DZD [£639,37] (S. Hellal, personal communication, November 2017). In 2010, Barzakh was the winner of The Prince Claus Fund in the Netherlands, which led to a grant of 100,000 euros for their cultural development (*L'ivrEscQ*, 2010, Sept/Oct., p. 16). Hellal also stated that Barzakh received funds from the Algerian government in 2011 (S. Hellal, personal communication, November 2017).

¹⁴ Il faut se souvenir du contexte 2000, c'était après la décennie noire, il n'y avait que des violences, il y avait le discours religieux du terrorisme et il y avait le discours violent de l'état, les gens devaient choisir, entre le terrorisme et l'état. On s'est dit, la littérature ça permet de trouver une troisième voix *yakhtiwenna* ? La littérature c'est l'espace de rêves est aussi l'espace de la complexité où on n'a pas à choisir, c'est espace de l'être et le plus libre, comment dire, le freedom, total freedom

APIC is another Francophone publishing house established in 2003, by the couple Karim Chikh and his wife, Samia Zennadi. The couple state that they decided to contribute to Algerian cultural heritage through the production of books. Like the founders of Barzakh, the civil violence and the situation of culture in Algeria also motivated the couple to enter the world of publishing (K. Chikh, personal communication, November 2017). For the co-founder of APIC publishing house, Samia Zennadi, publishing is a social good (Nehmé, 2013) :

We were looking for a way to impose ourselves through culture, and first by the book because it is a vector of knowledge transmission. After the terrible 1990s, we also wanted to contribute to the reconstruction of this “broken self” in relation to what we experienced and suffered during this period, but also during the colonial period. We were broken into small pieces. We need a positive construction, which helps us to understand and define ourselves, not to reject others, but to explain ourselves. People who do not know our culture, we do not put them aside. We just want to define ourselves with a sovereign project of construction, and we began by aiming towards that goal. Modestly at the beginning, then gradually, we formed a network with committed intellectuals, and little by little, we took on this dimension¹⁵

¹⁵ Nous cherchions un moyen de nous imposer par la culture, et d’abord par le livre car c’est un vecteur de transmission du savoir. Après les terribles années 1990, nous voulions aussi contribuer à la reconstruction de ce « moi éclaté » par rapport à ce qu’on a vécu et subi durant cette période, mais également durant la période coloniale. Nous avons été émiétés. On a besoin d’une construction positive, qui nous aide à nous comprendre et à nous définir, non-pas pour rejeter les autres, mais pour qu’on s’explique. Les gens qui ne connaissent pas notre culture, nous ne les mettons

Assia Ali Moussa is a novelist, poet, translator, and founder of the Arabophone publishing house Mim in 2007. Ali Moussa says that she sees her role as giving a chance to young Algerian writers working on different genres who would otherwise be marginalized “I try to fill a gap in this nothingness”¹⁶ (A. Ali Moussa, personal communication, September 19, 2019). Ali Moussa is described by the Algerian poet and writer Abderrezak Boukebba as *adventurous*, sacrificing everything to do this job, to do it in the name of humanity (Boukebba, 2016, November 1). Mim publishes mostly for young Algerian Arabophone authors, including Djamilia Morani, Ismail Yabrir, Malika Rifa, Samia Ben Dris, Saliha Laradji, Sofiane Mokhenache and Abdelouahab Aissaoui. The house also publishes other genres of literature such as poetry, and theatre, in addition to literary and philosophical criticism and research.

Tafat is another Francophone publishing house established in 2010 by a young Francophone novelist, Tarik Djerroud (b.1974), who never thought or imagined that he would venture into the world of publishing. It is after the difficulties he faced in 2000 to publish his first novel, when he was obliged to cut some passages, that he decided to open his own publishing house (T. Djerroud, personal communication, November 2017). The absence of publishing houses in the Kabylia region was another motivation behind the establishment of Tafat in Béjaïa, Djerroud declared “The absence of publishing houses has a negative effect on culture in general. There is a kind of cultural desert because most people prefer to make the switch to other, more lucrative areas of business”¹⁷ (Graba, 2014). For Djerroud, publishing is a kind of social

pas à l'écart. Nous voulons juste nous définir avec un projet souverain de construction, et c'est en allant vers cela que l'on a commencé. Modestement au début, puis progressivement, nous avons constitué un réseau avec des intellectuels engagés, et petit à petit nous avons pris cette dimension.

¹⁶احاول ان اسد ثقبا في هذا العدم

¹⁷ le manque des maisons d'édition a des effets négatifs sur la culture en général. Il y a comme une sorte de désert culturel et cela est dû au fait que la plupart des gens préfèrent se convertir dans des secteurs plus rentables

activism and resistance, “for me, editing is a kind of activism, then, as you know, we do not earn enough money, but I made this sacrifice because I am attached to this profession that I practice more with love, and would go as far as to say with passion”¹⁸ (Graba, 2014). The initial funds to set up Tafat came from an Algerian regional literary award – he won first prize in the Olympiade de littérature de Béjaïa [Béjaïa literary Olympics] in 2005, for his first novel *Le Sang de Mars* [The Blood of March], published by Belles-Lettres in Algeria. The prize was worth 100,000 DZD [£638.13]. Djerroud argues that money which comes from culture needs to go back into culture. As we can see, very small amounts of money are involved. Djerroud states that he was able to publish sixty titles from 2010 to 2017 (average 8.5 titles a year) (T. Djerroud, personal communication, November 2017).

El-Ibriz publishing house was established in 2012 by Samira Bendris who spent several years in the world of publishing as an editor with Anep, Alpha, and Dalimen (*L’ivrEscQ*, 2015, May 15). In six years (2012–2018), Bendris has been able to publish thirty titles (average 5 titles a year), and she has a particular interest in themes related to women’s issues. She states that her selection is based on the feeling of a “coup de coeur” [if she falls in love] (*L’ivrEscQ*, 2015, May 15). In her previous job as an editor with Anep, Bendris was disappointed several times because she was unable to allow the publication of some good manuscripts (IREMMo, 2018). Bendris was encouraged by her friends to open this publishing house. Editing is presented by her as a passion “books are my passion, and editing is my relentless will to demonstrate that beautiful things exist and will continue to exist as long as we are still breathing on this beautiful

¹⁸ Pour ma part, l'édition, j'ai aussi opté pour une forme de militantisme ; puis, comme vous savez, on ne gagne pas assez d'argent, mais j'ai fait ce sacrifice parce que je reste attaché à ce métier que je pratique beaucoup par amour et je dirai même par passion

earth [...]”¹⁹ (*L’ivrEscQ*, 2015, May 15). Bendris presents herself as rebelling against those who polluted the world of publishing “I am sickened to see few so people do their work conscientiously with professionalism without cronyism or expecting something in return; I am revolted by this undignified image of the publisher who becomes ‘beznassi’ [pejorative term for businessman/ woman] par excellence and we lose all our credibility in the eyes of our authors[...]”²⁰ (*L’ivrEscQ*, 2015, May 15). Bendris benefited from subsidies established by the Algerian Ministry of Culture in 2012 (IREMMO, 2018). Nevertheless, in return, she was obliged to submit four titles of “coffee table” books, two in French and two in Arabic, to the Algerian Ministry of Culture, and they bought one thousand copies of each. Bendris was able to secure this support because the books submitted met the editorial line of the Algerian Ministry of Culture, notably they were centered on the history of Algeria and the glorification of the War of Independence as well as folklore (IREMMO, 2018).

Ibn El Chatie is a private Arabophone publishing house opened in 2004, closed after the death of its owner in 2008. In 2013, the house was reopened by the owner’s son, the poet and writer Addi Chatat. The house remains unable to compete with the bigger publishers and recruit more employees due to the absence of financial support because the house still struggles under debts and loans (A. Chatat, personal communication, October 29, 2017). Ibn El-Chatie presents itself as trying to publish for the regional marginalised young authors within and beyond Algeria.

¹⁹ Le livre est ma passion, et l’édition est ma volonté acharnée de montrer que de belles choses existent et continueront d’exister aussi longtemps que nous continuerons de respirer sur cette belle terre

²⁰ Je suis écoeurée de voir que rares sont les personnes qui font leur travail consciencieusement et en tout “professionnalisme” sans “copinage” ou attente de retour d’ascenseur; je suis révoltée par cette ignoble image qu’on a donnée de l’éditeur qui devient le “beznassi” par excellence et on perd ainsi toute crédibilité aux yeux de nos auteurs

The couple Amar Ingrachen and Sarah Slimani decided to establish Frantz Fanon publishing house in 2014, located in Tizi Ouzou. The motivation behind opening this publishing house was the difficulties that Slimani faced while she was looking for a publisher to publish a collection of short stories written in Arabic by her mother, whose is also a French language teacher. Slimani and her husband state that they are keen to publish all that goes against the tide, new and philosophical ideas, and their main aim is to publish everything that prompts debate be that novels, history or philosophy. According to Slimani, Algerians have a lot to say. Still, there is a kind of fear and self-censorship, not so much because formal censorship exists, but rather Algerians do not express themselves freely. Therefore, the couple decided to encourage Algerians to speak and to cross red lines, for example to write about religion: “Our mission is to encourage debate about our society and culture”²¹. The founders of Frantz Fanon publishing house invested with their own money. They made the choice not to ask for funding from the Algerian government in order to free themselves from the constraints imposed by the Ministry of Culture, such as censorship.

Publishing houses often have highly evocative names, conjuring up enlightenment and connected to key moments, movements and figures in Algerian history. *Hibr* means ink in Arabic, referring to knowledge and writing. El-Hibr decided to open its doors on 16 April 2006 because on this date is also an annual Algerian national event known as يوم العلم [the day of knowledge]. This date also commemorates the Algerian Islamic reformist Abdelhamid Ben Badis (1889–1940). *Chihab* is an Arabic word that means a flaming fire, which reminds us of the Algerian Arabophone newspaper Chihab [Meteor] established by the Association of Algerian Muslim ‘ulama (religious thinkers) in the 1930s. Slimani chose to name their publishing house Frantz Fanon. The choice of this name according to Slimani is to pay tribute to the revolutionary figure Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), the intellectual and psychiatrist from Martinique who fought for and wrote about Algeria and Algerians

²¹ La question ta3na il faut débattre des questions de la société, de la culture

and their suffering under French colonialism and who was in favour of Algerian independence but was forgotten in post-independent Algeria (S. Slimani, personal communication, November, 2017) – although of course he is a key figure in post-colonial studies.

Tafat is a Berber word, meaning light (T. Djerroud, personal communication, November 2017). *El-Ikhtilef* is an Arabic word that means different and diverse, breaking with the single party that ruled the country, according to Mefti (B. Mefti, personal communication, July 03, 2017). *Barzakh* was the choice of Sofiane Hadjadj because he is well-read in Persian literature and Islamic culture. Choosing the name *Barzakh*, according to Hellal, is a way of positioning literature as between life and death, the place of complexity (S. Hellal, personal communication, November 2017). *Barzakh* is a word with religious connotations. It is explained by Islam.org website as a “veil or a barrier that stands between two things and which does not allow the two to meet”. The Algerian critic Amina Bekkat (cited by Anne-Lewis, 2016:88) refers to:

Barzakh, the title of a work by the Spanish writer Juan Goytisolo (Gallimard, 1994) who defines it as an intermediary world where appearances change continually. Literature, according to the young editors, is more concerned with contradictions, hybridity and composites than with certitudes, and it is this that interests them first and foremost: “to navigate the subtle and uncertain space between, where writing sometimes occurs in muted steps, sometimes as a hammer striking, ever approaching that which we call the real”.

The co-founder of Apic, Samia Zennadi, explains that Apic means that the job of the editor is always at risk “a publishing house is fragile, we can go under at any moment”²² (Nehmé, 2013). APIC was taken from an TV series broadcasted during the 80s *L’homme qui tombe à pic*, as stated by Chikh: “ It is the publisher who is in the right place at the right time, frankly it’s very often the writers are in the right place at

²² une maison d'édition est fragile, on peut toujours couler à pic

the right time each time, whether it be for the historical novel, or the novel in general, or essays that speak about Algeria, it is always the writers who are there when you need them for us ”²³ (K.Chikh, personal communication, November, 2017).

The names of these publishing houses are chosen to embody the vocation of the publisher as carrying out an important mission, bringing about light and nuance, in a politically and economically risky context. The names also contribute to publishers’ self-image as embodying “Algerianness” in its multiple forms, through their historical echoes. All publishers present themselves as engaged in a vocation, an act of citizenship to push societal boundaries and build a better society with little interest in commercial success. Nevertheless, the absence of economic capital is a major problem that Algerian publishers suffer from because it means that they are unable to recruit more employees to handle proofreading, editing and marketing. This is on top of legal and distribution issues.

The political and legal framework: the Algerian Ministry of Culture, taxation, import and export

The Algerian Ministry of Culture’s primary motivation is to promote Algerian literature written by Algerian authors but also international authors who write about Algeria. Most of the initiatives taken by the Ministry tend to promote the work of previous generations of Algerian Francophone and Arabophone authors, through republication and the translation (primarily from French into Arabic). At the end of the 1990s, investing in culture was seen by the Algerian state as a way to demonstrate that it was turning a new page, after the carnage wreaked on the cultural scene by the civil violence. In 1997, a law was established which formalized support from the

²³ C’est l’éditeur qui tombe à pic, est franchement très souvent les écrivains qui tombe à pic à chaque fois, que ça soit pour le roman historique, ou le roman tout court, ou des essais qui parle de l’Algérie, voilà c’est toujours les écrivains qui tombent à pic pour nous

Ministry of Culture for book publishing: The Ministry would purchase 2000 copies of each title published and distribute it across Algeria, within the same law it was announced the establishment of a library in each province (iReMMO, 2018).

Yet the extent of state subsidies depends on the health of public finances. In recent years, austerity has bitten. In the early 2000s, there was significant funding for culture; for example, in 2007, twenty million euros was dedicated to editors (Abdelkader, 2017:30). The cultural budget reached the historical sum of 452 million dollars, the largest budget in the Arab region and Africa in 2011, during the event Tlemcen Capital of Islamic Culture. 24 countries took part in the latter event, more than 500,000 people attended, 32 documentaries were produced, 280 books were edited, and 12 conferences were organised (Berriah, 2019). With the organization in 2009 of the 2nd Panafrican Festival of Algiers, the budget reached the sum of 360 million dollars (Abdelkader, 2017 :19). In contrast, in 2019, during Le Salon International du Livre en Algérie (SILA) [The International Book Fair in Algeria], the budget devoted to editors was 55 million DZD [£419,400], which represented 25 % less in comparison to the 2015 budget, which was around 120 million DZD [£838,835] (Meddi,2019). The Algerian case thus follows a pattern which can be seen across Africa: “with the economic crises in West Africa and the economic liberalization of countries in East Africa, most African states cancelled entire sections of cultural affairs, leaving new independent publishers to cope with the work” (Carré, 2016:57).

The role played and the efforts made by the Algerian Ministry of Culture in the literary field are poorly perceived among Algerian publishers and authors. Publishers and authors complain about the same obstacles: the absence of state support in subsidies and in promoting literature through literary programmes on state-owned TV and radio and state-funded literary magazines. Publishers criticise the Algerian state for only providing financial support around one-off cultural events.

When the SILA was approaching, Sofiane Hadjadj of Barzakh was interviewed by the Algerian journalist Fayçal Métaoui, and was asked “Why is it hard to publish a book in Algeria?” (Métaoui, 2018, October 1). Hadjadj replied:

There were years of political abundance in terms of the book industry which was very generous, for both better or worse, and today there is austerity, it's really nothing, we are abandoned, for example, I have not had any contact with the Ministry of Culture for several years, nothing, no contact, zero, nothing, there is no money, therefore, there is no contact, I find this unfortunate, because I find this economy extremely fragile, bookshops for example are also another problem.²⁴

In the “years of abundance” in the early 2000s, the Algerian bilingual novelist and a member of El-Ikhtilef editorial team Bachir Mefti agreed that a considerable budget was devoted to publishing in Algeria, and many had the chance for funding – including, he argues, people who had little to do with literature or prior experience. For Mefti, the government mismanaged the money, they should have asked people with prior experience in the field (B. Mefti, personal communication, July 03, 2017).

In official declarations, the Algerian Ministry of Culture has little sympathy for these complaints. Minister Azzedine Mihoubi (2015–2019), in an interview with the Arabophone newspaper *El-Chourouk*, declared that the Ministry would no longer support publishers, he mentioned that there were 1193 publishers but, in his opinion, only 30 were professional and had their own distribution networks, reading committees, printing houses and a long history of publishing (Chalabi, 2016). In 2016, when asked a question about the current situation of Algerian authors who remained marginalised, Mihoubi blamed publishers for not being sufficiently dynamic in

²⁴ avec des années d'abondance politique du livre qui étaient peut être très généreuse au sens positive et négative de terme, aujourd'hui c'est le *takashoff*, c'est vraiment il n'y a plus rien, on est un peu abandonné à nous-même, par exemple moi j'ai plus aucun contact avec le Ministère de la culture depuis des années, rien, aucun contact, zéro, rien, il n'y a plus de l'argent donc il n'y a plus de contact, je trouve ça un peu malheureux, parce que c'est une économie très fragile aussi, les librairies par exemple c'est une problématique essentielle

promoting Algerian authors (*L'ivrEscQ*, 2016, Nov/Dec, p.12). For Mihoubi, publishers needed to be more proactive in developing marketing strategies, creating platforms for their authors and organising conferences, and national book fairs (*L'ivrEscQ*, 2016, Nov/Dec, p.12):

The book is a product that must be sold; it needs the media to make it known...they release I don't know how many titles a year without giving great importance to the promotion...so, that's why the author seek publishers abroad...when an author wins a prize... it proves that he has talent...a publishing house must devote 20% to 30% of its production to promotion. Do big advertising campaigns. As soon as you publish, you distribute. What is the use of putting aside a quota of stock? Go and see the market abroad and export. Broadcast externally, even if only by co-publishing with publishers from the Maghrib, Africa or elsewhere, these efforts must be provided, otherwise writers are discouraged²⁵

Publishers would refute the idea that they have this degree of choice in determining how much media attention they can generate, or how easy it is to export

²⁵ Le livre est un produit qui doit se vendre ; il lui faut les médias pour le faire connaître...ils sortent combien de titres par an sans accorder une grande importance à la promotion...donc, voilà pourquoi l'auteur tente les éditions à l'étranger...lorsqu'un auteur remporte le prix..., ça prouve qu'il a du talent...une maison d'édition doit mettre 20 à 30% de son tirage dans la promotion. Faire du matraquage publicitaire. Dès que tu édites, tu distribues. A quoi sert de mettre tout un quota dans des stocks...voir le marché à l'étranger et exporter. Diffuser à l'extérieur, ne serait-ce par la coédition avec des éditions du Maghreb, de l'Afrique ou d'ailleurs, ce sont des efforts qu'il faut fournir sinon les écrivains se découragent

their works. Transnational co-publishing, as we will see shortly, also presents its own constraints.

Amongst the problems in Algeria which Algerian publishers complain about and consider to be the responsibility of the state are high taxes imposed on ink and paper, which make the price of books in Algeria expensive and above the purchasing power of many Algerians. The average salary of Algerian families does not exceed 25000 DZD (£1158.9775) per month and the price of a book is around 1000 DZD (£7) (Guenanfa, 2018). Publishers often make unfavorable comparisons with what they perceive to be greater state support in other countries. Abdelkader Lazar, owner of النشر الجامعي الجديد [University New Publishing] which is located in Tlemcen and focuses on publishing academic and scholarly books, stated that in Tunisia, if the publisher wants to publish a book, the government will pay for the paper, with similar forms of state support in Egypt, France and Lebanon. In Algeria VAT is around 19%, nearly 20% of the price of the book (A. Lazaar, personal communication, June 29, 2017). In the UK, sales of printed books are not subject to VAT, whilst in France VAT on books ranges from 2.1 to 5.5%. The founder of El Okbia publishing house, Ahmed Boumedrine made a similar argument : “In countries like Lebanon and Egypt, the costs of printing books are cheap, however, in Algeria, the book industry is taxed like other industries...we can improve our competitiveness when the costs of input (paper, ink, printing equipment) is lower”²⁶ (Saadoun, 2017).

Ahmed Madi, the president of the National Union of Book Publishers, has called for the end of taxation on paper, ink...etc. “ What we mean by support for the book is the definite exemption of taxes imposed on raw materials. That is to say

²⁶ Dans des pays comme le Liban ou l’Egypte, le coût d’impression du livre est très faible alors qu’en Algérie, l’industrie du livre est taxée comme toutes les autres industries...nous pourrions améliorer notre compétitivité lorsque le coût des entrants (papier, encre, équipements d’imprimerie sera moins important)

paper, the presses, ink, films”²⁷ (Smaïl, 2018). One of the reasons paper is relatively expensive is because it is not produced in Algeria, and therefore has to be imported from abroad and purchased with foreign currency. In 2017, the price of paper was 85 DZD [£0.59] for one kilogram and in 2018 this became 200 DZD [£1.40]. An article was published in the Algerian Francophone newspaper *Liberté* about the situation surrounding the importation of paper and its market in Algeria (Faiblesse de la production et hausse des importations, 2010 [Weaknesses in production and the increase in imports]), one can read the following analysis :

The paper industry in Algeria has undergone a structural crisis and a drop in its market value. [...] the paper industry and printing in the public sector has very slow growth, less than 11% in 2008 [...] amongst the factors which explain this poor performance is the lack of raw materials. Algeria is dependent on foreign countries for raw materials. Imports of paper have increased in the past 10 years, from 420 million dollars to 600 million dollars a year. The needs of the Algerian market for paper and cardboard were estimated in 2006 at 500,000 tons, which could only be met by 55% imports²⁸.

²⁷ Ce que nous entendons par soutien au livre, c’est l’exonération définitive des taxes sur la matière première. C’est-à-dire le papier, les plaques, l’encre, les films

²⁸ L’industrie du papier en Algérie a enregistré une crise structurelle et une baisse dans la valeur du marché [...] l’industrie du papier et de l’impression dans le secteur public a enregistré un taux de croissance faible, estimé à moins de 11 % en 2008 [...] parmi les facteurs qui ont également engendré cette contreperformance, l’on note le manque de matières premières. L’Algérie est un pays dépendant de l’étranger en la matière [...] Les importations en papier ont augmenté ces dix dernières années, de

Printing is another problem. Slimani, co-founder of Frantz Fanon publishing house explained that publishers have to pay in advance a lot of money which results sometimes in debts and loans. The number of printing establishments is very limited, and some publishers have to wait for a long time to reach their turn for their products to be printed. Some of them are privileged, and they have their own printing establishments such as Casbah and Chihab, whereas, Barzakh uses the printing house Mauguin which is located in Blida in Algeria, owned by a French woman whose parents used to live in Algeria, and they produce works on good quality of paper. In contrast, Fassila and Dar Ibn El Chatie can only afford for their books to be printed on low quality paper. Dar Ibn El Chatie faced several problems with authors because of the delay in printing and the absence of professionalism in the people who deal with printing.

It is worth underlining that this is not just a case of Algerian production stagnating and the market being filled with foreign imports, as importing books is also a challenge. Commenting on the importation of books, Ahmed Madi declared that importers need to ask for the authorisation from government ministries and it depends on the genre of the book, if they need for example to import historical books they need authorisation from the Ministry of mujahidin: “We need to wait up to two to three months to gain it. The time in which another book is released”²⁹ (Gueanfa, 2018). “The importer has to deposit a list containing the full title of book, name of the author(s), name of publisher, year and language of edition, international standard book number (ISBN), if applicable, and number of imported copies”³⁰(Nour, 2017).

420 millions de dollars à 600 millions de dollars par an [...] les besoins du marché algérien en papier et carton étaient estimés, en 2006, à 500 000 tonnes, satisfaits à raison de 55 % par l’importation [...]

²⁹ Il faut attendre deux ou trois mois pour les obtenir. Le temps qu’un autre livre sorte

³⁰ l’importateur n’a qu’à déposer une liste contenant le titre complet du livre, le nom de l’auteur ou des auteurs, le nom de l’éditeur, l’année et la langues d’édition, le

Exporting Algerian novels is also a challenge. Flici Othmane, in charge of El Othmania publishing house denounced to the Algerian online news agency TSA in 2017 that “Import practices must first be changed. When you import, you pay little tax, but when you export, you are taxed are 35 %”³¹ (Saadoun, 2017).

Other obstacles for publishers and editors in developing their businesses, notably in terms of import, export and money transfers are the Ministry of Commerce, border agencies, and administrative obstacles more broadly. For the president of Syndicat National des éditeurs du Livre [National Union of Book Publishing] (SNEL), Ahmed Madi, quoted in an article entitled “Il faut rapatrier notre patrimoine intellectuel qui est de l’autre côté de la mer” [We need to repatriate our intellectual patrimony which is on the other side of the Mediterranean]: “It is about the exportation of culture, heritage, history, creativity. We treat books as if they are a comestible product. But when it comes to books, reading, we should facilitate the right to reading, to knowledge”³² (Smaïl, 2018). Madi also shares the same opinion as Chikh, co-founder of Apic, and Bendris, founder of El-Ibriz, who see direct subsidies from the Ministry of Culture as not necessary, but rather underlines the necessity of tax benefits and the simplification of bureaucratic procedures “We are not asking for financial support, but just that all the bureaucratic obstacles are removed, that taxes are eliminated, to encourage reading within society, across the country. The laws on the book market are complicating the market”³³ (Smaïl, 2018).

numéro international normalisé du livre (ISBN), le cas échéant et le nombre d'exemplaires importés

³¹ il faut d’abord changer les pratiques douanières. Lorsqu’on importe on paye très peu de taxes, mais lorsqu’on exporte, on est taxés à hauteur de 35 %

³² Il s’agit de l’exportation de la culture, le patrimoine, l’histoire, la création. On traite l’exportation du livre au même titre qu’un produit comestible. Quand il s’agit du livre, la lecture, il faudrait faciliter le droit à la lecture, au savoir

³³ Non, nous ne demandons pas un aide financière. Mais tout simplement de bannir les entraves bureaucratiques, l’exonération des taxes sur la matière à 100%, pour

Algerian distribution networks and bookshop sellers' perspectives on readerships and markets

The absence of professional distributors is a major problem in the Arab world more broadly, with books often only distributed in big cities, in addition to issues of piracy and censorship (Eschweiler & Goehler, 2010; Al-Qasimi, 2011). In a recent Algerian TV programme, *Question d'Actu* presented by the Algerian journalist Nazim Aziri, broadcast on the Algerian TV channel (aimed at Algerians living abroad) Canal Algérie in October 2018, three Algerian editors were invited to talk about publishing and the book industry in Algeria. These included Asia Baz, director of Anep, Karim Chikh, the owner of Apic and Hassane Bennamane, the owner of the publishing house Dar el Omma and the representative of National Book Centre. When the journalist asked Chikh if his books are distributed in all of Algeria, Chikh answered that the law 13/2015 established by the Ministry of Culture in July 2015, organise the different roles of the book industry in Algeria and improve its effectiveness are just in theory and are not yet applied in practice. Asia Baz mentioned that this law states that the price of individual books should be the same all over Algeria. She further added that there is no organised chain of distributors and at the same time, the number of bookshops is limited, not exceeding forty in all the territory of Algeria. Asia Baz, indicated that there is a need to establish a public library in each province in Algeria (Vidéo Chaoui, 2018). Djerroud, owner of Tafat publishing house, agrees that the lack of bookshops is a major issue, connected to poor reading culture in Algeria (T. Djerroud, personal communication, November 2017).

For Slimani, co-founder of Frantz Fanon publishing house, distributors are not doing their job properly: she stated that some of them are not serious, and make life easier for themselves by not going to more distant places (S. Slimani, personal communication, November, 2017). Dealing with bookshops and ensuring the availability of El-Hibr's books in all Algeria's bookshops is something that M'hand

encourager la lecture au sein de la société, à travers le pays. La loi du marché du livre promulguée complique davantage ce marché

cannot guarantee. M'hand deals directly with twenty bookshops, located in different cities. He establishes an agreement with them, and they are then informed when El-Hibr releases new titles. This agreement is also based on the idea that these books should remain on their shelves. But to guarantee for the writer that his/her book will be available in all Algeria is impossible. According to M'hand, there is an inadequate number of bookshops, and sometimes booksellers refuse to display novels. They prefer to foreground and sell more lucrative books such as cookery books and school textbooks (S. M'hand, personal communication, July 02, 2017).

Salim Bouali is the owner of El Shamss bookshop, established in 1972, and located at the centre of the city of Tlemcen in the West of Algeria. It holds around 30,000 books of which 40% are in the French language, 2% in English and the rest in Arabic. In the past, this bookshop was also a space devoted to debates around literature with the presence of Mohammed Dib and Kateb Yacine (Gary, 2018). Bouali stated that many publishers and bookshops were closing down because there was a decrease in book purchases. This bookshop owner made explicit reference to the price of books being beyond the purchasing power of many Algerian families. When families did have money to spend on books, they did not buy Algerian novels. The types of books that Bouali says sell well are extracurricular activity books. He added that things have changed from the 1990s to now, people are buying more international literature, for example, the collection of *Harry Potter* books written by the British novelist J.K Rowling and sometimes works by Algerian authors such Yasmina Khadra and Maïssa Bey (S. Bouali, personal communication, June 28, 2017).

In an interview with the director of Ibn Badiss bookshop in Oran, Maliani Ahmed which took place in June 29, 2017 stated that:

Our best seller is the book of لا تحزن [Don't be Sad, a book about spiritual motivations based on hope and solutions to daily problems] by Aid Al Qarani 2002 in Arabic, everyone wants to read it; and also, the book of مائة من عظماء [One Hundred of Great Muslim personalities who changed the course of history], then it's books about religion, especially the Quran during Ramadan is the bestseller[...] In terms of students, it depends

on their major, if we take the field of medicine [taught in French], we sell few medicine books, maybe because their books are imported from abroad and are really expensive, so students are unable to buy them[...]the field that attracts a lot of student purchases is the law, those who study law [taught in Arabic] buy their books because they are cheaper, they are printed in Algeria and they are less expensive than those imported from abroad. The law taught inside is Algerian and the writers are Algerian lecturers, therefore, we can say that their prices are affordable for students[...] In terms of novels, students who are doing a MA, for example, they purchase novels, Algerian novels, but they need to be translated – for example if they take a title in French by Yasmina Khadra they ask if it has been translated into Arabic[...]there is also a demand for some books which are part of the curriculum, classical texts such as Al-Nazarat, Al-Abarat, al-Manfaluti, Taha Hussein, Saadeq Al-Rafei'ie, there is a demand for these books. In French, there is Mouloud Feraoun and Mammeri, these are all in French, and when we talk about the university level, I can say it with regret that students rarely visit the bookshop unless they were asked for a project, but not because of their curiosity, no.³⁴

³⁴ يتصدر المبيعات هو كتاب لا تحزن يطلبه الكبير والصغير، عائض القرني ، والذي يأتي من بعده هو مائة من عظماء الإسلام غيروا من مجرى التاريخ، كذلك كتاب مطلوب موجود هنا في المكتبة، بعد ذلك بالتدرج يأتي الكتاب الفقه المصحف خاصة في شهر رمضان هو يتصدر المبيعات... الطلبة حسب التخصص ، الطلبة يعني لو نأخذ تخصص طب ، تواجد الطلبة، الذين يدرسون تخصص طب قليل جدا ، لأن ربما من بين الأسباب أن الكتاب المجلوب من الخارج سعره نوعا ما مرتفع ، الطالب يصعب عليه شراء كتاب [...] التخصص الذي يجلب الطلبة هو تخصص القانون بحكم أن كل الكتب مطبوعة في الجزائر، فبالتالي ؛ عندما يطبع الكتاب في الجزائر يأتي سعره أقل تكلفة من الكتاب المطبوع في الخارج ، بحكم أن القانون هو قانون جزائري و الكتاب هم أساتذة في الجامعة فبالتالي الكتاب نستطيع أن نقول في معظمه في متناول الطالب ، بعد ذلك يأتي كل ما يتعلق بالروايات، نحن نرى خاصة طلبة الماستر في الأدب ، في بعض الأحيان يقتنون نفس الرواية لكاتب جزائري شرط تكون مترجمة [...] يوجد كتب مطلوبة ضمن البرنامج وهي كتب كلاسيكية ، النظرات ، العبرات ، المنفلوطي ، طه حسين ، صادق الرافعي، هذه كتب مطلوبة ويوجد بالفرنسية ، يوجد مولود فرعون مولود معمري ؛ هؤلاء كلهم بالفرنسية جزائريين ، وعندما نروح للمجال أو المستوى الجامعي ، هو بكل مرارة نقول ان

In terms of Algerian novels and younger reading publics, this bookshop owner reveals two key points: firstly, that younger audiences are looking for novels in Arabic or translated into Arabic, and secondly, that they buy few books in general unless essential for their course because of financial limitations.

In public, marketing-orientated statements, publishers are positive: according to the founder of the Algerian Francophone publishing house Média-Plus, Saïd Yacine Hannachi

our readership exists even if there has been a drop in sales in recent years. It is enough to be loyal, to meet their expectations and, above all, to make available to them the works they wish to acquire. If the national production does not pose a problem in terms of availability, it is still not obvious when it comes to importing books. We try to do the maximum but the gap between supply and demand persists with, in addition, the high costs of certain titles despite the efforts of certain importers who have proven to be good partners for booksellers.³⁵ (Smaïl,2007).

In more private interviews, it is hard to escape the sense that, for many booksellers, the Algerian novel is in crisis – and sales have declined even since period of the 1990s which wreaked havoc on the Algerian cultural scene. This stands in contrast to the media – and academic – celebration of a renaissance in Algerian

الطالب قليل التردد على المكتبة ، لا يأتي إلى المكتبة إلا إذا كان متابعة معين متعلق ببحث فقط، أما إذا كان هكذا من باب الفضول انه يأتي إلى المكتبة و يقتني كتاب هذا تقريبا لا بكل مرارة نقول انه نادر [...]]

³⁵ Le lectorat existe même si l'on a enregistré une baisse des ventes, ces dernières années. Il suffit de le fidéliser, de répondre à ses attentes et, surtout, de mettre à sa disposition les ouvrages qu'il désire acquérir. Si la production nationale ne pose pas de problème en matière de disponibilité, ce n'est toujours pas évident quand il s'agit de livres d'importation et des nouveautés. On essaye de faire le maximum mais l'écart entre l'offre et la demande persiste avec, en sus, la cherté de certains titres malgré les efforts de certains importateurs qui se sont avérés de bons partenaires pour les libraires

publishing and literature. Hassane Bennamane, the founder of Dar El Omma publishing house, calls for further research: as he sees it, there is something wrong with the numbers. How can a country with forty-four million inhabitants only have two hundred bookshops? He declared that editors are finding it difficult to survive selling 500 to 1000 copies for 44 million inhabitants. He further added that the number of sales is low and sometimes sales does not exceed forty or fifty copies. In the 1980s and 1990s, Bennamane claims, sales were good, of around around 1000 to 2000 copies. Bennamane blamed students for losing interest in reading. He denounces that reading or having a book is considered something luxurious (Vidéo chaoui, 2018). These perspectives require us to dig down further into perceptions of who the Algerian reading public *is*, *what* they want to read, and how *bestselling* is understood in the Algerian context. Before we do so, let us turn to the visibility of novels in Algeria.

Marketing Algerian literature to Algerians: state and private initiatives

One of the main sources of visibility for new novels in Algeria are the culture pages of national daily newspapers (or their weekend edition). This tends to be a single page. To the best of my knowledge, there is no stand-alone literary magazine devoted to literature in Arabic. There is only one Francophone magazine, *L'ivrEscQ*, directed by the Algerian Francophone novelist Nadia Sebkhî collaboratively with French scholars such as Denis Brahimî, and they review Francophone novels and books as well as including interviews with authors and political elites engaged in cultural activity. Furthermore, there are only three TV programmes devoted to debates around literature on Algerian national television. Algerian programmes are known for their discontinuity, sometimes due to censorship at other times due to an absence of funding. Expression Livre and Culture Club are broadcast late at night on the Algerian TV channel Canal Algérie aimed primarily at the Algerian diaspora, in French. Another TV programme قراءات [Reading] is also broadcast late on the Algerian Arabophone TV channel الجزائرية الثالثة [Algerian Channel Three], which invites Algerian authors of

Arabic expression but only those who are holders of literary prizes and known within the Algerian cultural sphere such as Waciny Laredj and Ismail Yabrir.

Some Algerian publishers, including Apic, Fassila, Ibn El-Chatie, Chihab, Barzakh, Casbah, Tafat, Mim and Frantz Fanon, despite the administrative and economic obstacles, make significant efforts to advertise their authors, using social media, audio-visual and print media. They also seek to organise and coordinate events and roundtable debates for authors to present, sell and dedicate their books. These literary events most of the time take place in bookshops in big cities such as Oran, Tlemcen, Béjaïa, Algiers, Constantine and Tizi Ouzou. Often these bookshops are owned by publishing houses for example: Tiers Monde in central Algiers belongs to the Casbah publishing house, L'Arbre à Dire belongs to Barzakh, Chihab has their own bookshop of the same name, the El-Biar bookshop is owned by M'hand, founder of El-Hibr publishing house, and the Alili bookshop in Tlemcen, Ibn Badiss, Maamoun, and Tawkia in Oran all belong to the same publishing house, Dar el Izza wa Karama, Shamss in Tlemcen, owned by Salim Bouali. The Mauguin printing house has a bookshop under the same name Mauguin in Blida, and Média-Plus in Constantine is also a bookshop and publishing house. Publishing houses also promote their publications in cultural spaces such as the Café littéraire de Bouzeguène in Tizi Ouzoi, as well as in regional book fairs and festivals such as Racont'Arts in Bouzeguène, La librairie Gouraya Culture in Béjaïa, La Maison des Jeunes de Tazmalt, and the Centre El Amel in Mascara. Himrane Djaouida, a member of Chihab editorial team, declared that all those who publish their works with Chihab have the opportunity to dedicate and present their novels at El-Hibr's El Biar bookshop and sometimes at Chihab's publishing house/ bookshop (H. Djaouida, personal communication, July 03, 2017). Saïd Yassine Hannachi, the owner of Média-Plus publishing house, describes the publishing house's associated bookshop as: "a general library. A collection of works in different disciplines. The Media-Plus bookstore is distinguished by the cultural activity it generates throughout the year for the promotion of books and reading. Literary cafes and other sales dedications have become traditions...hundreds well

known authors, but also young talented authors attend meetings for debates, books presentations and signings”³⁶ (Média-Plus Web site).

These strategies are a way to overcome the poor infrastructure of distribution networks within the country, as well as the limited public space (in the press, on TV and on the radio) to discuss literature. For Amine Zaoui (2018), these types of self-organized events are a kind of resistance against state neglect. Zaoui further added that these events are very modest, but when they are considered to acquire a political dimension or impact, the authorities began to create problems for the organisers.

These signings and roundtable initiatives are often devoted to writers of French expression including Kamel Daoud, Adlène Meddi, Akram el Kébir, Kaouther Adimi, Chawki Amari, Mustapha Benfodil, Sarah Haidar, Ryad Girod, Amine Zaoui, Maïssa Bey, Samir Toumi and Mohamed Sari. Chawki Amari was invited to the 28th edition of the café littéraire in Miliana, at the Mahfoud Touahrifor Theatre to present his novel *Balak* (Barzakh, 2018). Kamel Daoud was invited to Alili bookshop, in Tlemcen, Mustapha Benfodil was invited to Centre El Amel, in Mascara, to present and dedicate his recent novel *Body Writing* (Barzakh, 2019). Amine Zaoui was invited to the Cercle Frantz Fanon de Riadh El Feth (Algiers) in collaboration with the Algerian Francophone magazine *L’ivrEscQ*. Maïssa Bey, Adlène Meddi, Kaouther Adimi, Mustapha Benfodil were invited to the Mauguin bookshop. These authors also have a strong connection with France, as they were also invited to the 23rd edition of Maghreb des Livres in 2017, which is an annual event that takes place in France organised and sponsored by the French state, including its Centre National du Livre [National Book Centre], the French Foreign Ministry, the French television channels

³⁶ Librairie générale. Un fonds d'ouvrages dans différentes disciplines. La librairie Média-Plus se distingue par l'animation culturelle qu'elle produit à longueur d'année pour la promotion du livre et de la lecture. Les cafés littéraires et autres ventes-dédicaces sont devenus des traditions...Une centaine d'auteur(e)s connus, mais aussi des jeunes talents sont passés pour des rencontres-débats, présentations d'ouvrages et signatures

TV5 Monde and France24, alongside the Algerian Francophone newspaper *El Watan* and the Arabophone newspaper *El Khabar*. In fact, it is often the same Francophone authors who circulate in France: at the 2016 Association France Algérie event, Karim Chikh, co-founder of Apic, Bachir Mefti, Waciny Laredj, Maïssa Bey, Kaouther Adimi, and Amine Zaoui were all invited (*L'ivrEscQ*, 2016,Nov/Dec,p.4). The Arabophone writers discussed in chapter five do not tend to have these opportunities.

The main advertising event in Algeria – and one of the biggest cultural events annually – is the International Algerian Book Fair (SILA). The SILA takes place every year for two weeks at the end of October and beginning of November. It attracts huge crowds. For example, at its 24th edition in 2019, SILA registered nearly 1,149,527 visitors, more than 250,000 book titles and 1,030 participants from 36 countries, including 298 local (Algerian) publishers, 323 publishers from the Arab world and 409 from the rest of the world (SILA.dz website). SILA is an opportunity for publishers to introduce their authors, a chance for Algerian authors to meet their audience, but also to build and establish networks with European and Middle Eastern booksellers and publishers. For example, some Algerian booksellers find SILA an excellent occasion to buy books because it is a solution to overcome importation problems. Algerians come from across Algeria to buy books which they would have difficulty finding in local bookshops, from the furthest away parts of Algeria this is often done through organised group day trips. The majority of Algerian publishers release their new titles when SILA is approaching.

For Slimani, the co-founder of Frantz Fanon publishing house “a publishing house which does not take part in SILA, does not exist, I need to exist, so that people will see me”³⁷ (personal communication, November 2017). SILA for M’hand is a space to advertise his annual production as well as his house and an opportunity to meet with authors, publishers and booksellers (S. M’hand, personal communication, July 02, 2017). For the co-founder of Apic publishing house, SILA is a test where publishers

³⁷ une maison d'édition qui ne participe pas' au SILA, ça ne existe pas, j'ai besoin d'exister, que les gens me voient

come to know the status of their publishing houses in comparison to other publishing houses and to find those interested in the works produced by the house, “pour nous, c’est un barometer” [for us it is a barometer] (K. Chikh, personal communication, November 2017).

Middle Eastern and European publishers and booksellers also attend SILA. Although sales figures are unavailable, these publishers are considered by themselves and their Algerian competitors to sell well in comparison with Algerian publishers. Adi Chatat, founder of Ibn Al Chatie publishing house explained that sometimes Algerian readers refuse to buy the local production and prefer to buy what comes from abroad (personal communication, October 29, 2017).

There is a dissatisfaction towards the management and the organisation of this event among authors and publishers. The SILA event privileges publishers who are already active and visible in the cultural field (Barzakh, Apic, El-Hibr, Mim, Casbah, El-Ikhtilef and Chihab), they have the advantage of taking over the main space (Pavilion central) with mass media coverage in addition to programmes for conferences, debates and invitations for confirmed authors to dedicate and present their novels (see Appendix). There are some publishers who have a feeling of marginalisation and inequality between publishers. Djerroud expressed his disappointment toward SILA “ I think, SILA cannot be successful with its methods [...] it is not, it is not, it is not the idea that I have about what a book fair is, we have 500 writers in Algeria, all languages combined, but they have been marginalised, and that’s a shame”³⁸ (T. Djerroud, personal communication, November, 2017). The SILA can reinforce hierarchies as much as flatten them out. Algerian critic and journalist Salim Aggar (2018) analysed SILA 2018 in the following terms :

It is obvious, Algeria does not have a commercial market for books and SILA is an unexpected occasion for a publisher to know the audience of his author.

³⁸ Je pense que le SILA ne peut pas être réussi avec ces méthodes [...] ce n’est pas, ce n’est pas, ce n’est pas l’idée que je fais d’un salon de livre, nous avons 500 écrivains en Algérie, toutes langues confondues, mais ils sont mis de côté, et ça c’est dommage

There are nevertheless some known authors who remain bankable. It is the case of Yasmina Khadra and Kamel Daoud. Both authors and without any doubts were the stars of SILA³⁹

Aggar listed the following as the best sellers during SILA 2018, which were all new releases: Yasmina Khadra's *Khalil* published by the Algerian publisher Casbah, Waciny Laredj's *Le Livre sur l'Émir* [The Book of the Amir] published by the French publisher Actes Sud, Ahlam Mostaganemi's شهيا كالفراق [Tasty as Parting] published by the Lebanese publisher Hachette Antoine, Kamel Daoud's *Le Peintre Dévorant la Femme* [The Painter devouring the woman] published with the French Stock, Amine Zaoui's *La Boite Noir de L'Islam* [The Black Box of Islam] published by the Algerian publishing house Tafat, in addition to Rachid Boudjedra's *Les Contrabandiers de l'Histoire* [The Smugglers of History] published by the Algerian publishing house Frantz Fanon. These were the most popular books alongside some previously published historical and philosophical books which were considered provocative, notably *Les Derniers Jours de Muhammed* [The Last Days of Mohammed] by the Tunisian theologian Hela Ouradi, published in France by Albin Michel and re-published by the Algerian Francophone publishing house Koukou. This book that investigates the mysterious death of the Prophet Mohammed (Peace be Upon Him) (Aggar, 2018, see Appendix).

Defining the bestseller, the national market and reading publics

M'hand owner of El-Hibr publishing house and bookshop states that his sales figures are 1000 copies for 40 million Algerians:

To be honest, we do not have a bestseller. We bought the rights of Assia Djebar, and we can say that these two works

³⁹ C'est connu, l'Algérie ne possède pas un marché commercial du livre et le SILA est une occasion inespérée pour un éditeur afin de connaître l'audience de son auteur. Il y a néanmoins quelque auteurs connus qui demeurent bankables. C'est le cas de Yasmina Khadra et Kamel Daoud. Les deux auteurs ont été indéniablement les stars du SILA

are at the forefront of El Hibr's list. We established a collection of poetry. Still, it is challenging for us to sell poetry. Assia Djebar is the one at the top of our sales if we say that Assia's works reached 500 copies per year we can say that she is at the top of the sales⁴⁰ (S. M'hand, personal communication, July 02, 2017).

Al Habib Sayah, an Algerian author of Arabic expression, further confirm this, he states that in his contracts the publisher only commits to publishing 1000 copies, unless the novel is nominated to an international literary award. In 2010, the co-founder of Barzakh Hellal was asked by the Francophone Algerian magazine what the house sells, to which she replied, "Literature remains difficult to sell. Coffee table books. Essays. And others."⁴¹ She further added, when she was asked to provide names of "stars" she published, that Barzakh do not have stars, the star according to Hellal is the one who sells 50,000 copies in three months and they do not have this kinds of numbers (*L'ivrEscQ*, 2010, Sept/Oct, pp.16-17).

Even without sales figures, the anticipated sales for an Arabic-language novel are low. Chihab publishes in Amazigh, Arabic and French. However, Djaouida Himrane, a member of the editorial team of Chihab publishing house, describes taking a risk when Chihab published the first work of Jilali Ilila, العسل المر [Bitter Honey] in 2017. The publisher was amazed that the work sold 200 copies, explaining that fiction sales usually do not exceed fifty copies (H. Djaouida, personal communication, July 03, 2017). This explains why Algerian writers of Arabic expression included in

⁴⁰ في الحقيقة نحن ليس عندنا bestseller في الحبر لكن أغلبية المبيعات ، مثلا كان عندنا حظ ، نشرنا كتابين بشراء الحقوق آسيا جبار يعني نعتبره مثلا بلي هذا العمليين في المجال الأدبي أستطيع أن نقول بأنه في المقدمة تاع ما نشرناه في دار الحبر ومن بعد حاولنا يعني أسسنا سلسلة تاع شعر وكذا لكن والله من الصعب الواحد باش يبيع الشعر ليس من السهل الواحد يبيع الشعر وكذا يعني أستطيع أن أقول إنها آسيا جبار هي في المقدمة تاع المبيعات ولو حينما اقول انها في مقدمة المبيعات يعني إذا كان بعنا ٥٠٠ نسخة في السنة مثلا من الكتاب يمكن أن نقول أنها في مقدمة المبيعات

⁴¹ la littérature [...] reste difficile a vendre. Des beaux livres. Des essais. Et autres.

chapter 5 state that they cannot make a living from their writings. Some of them have taken the initiative to self-promote and distribute their work in the face of the refusal of many booksellers to display their novels because they do not sell well.

For Slimani, co-founder of Frantz Fanon publishing house, good sales are only for well-established authors, such as Rachid Boudjedra. Boudjedra is one of Algeria's most famous authors who has been writing and publishing in French and Arabic for decades. Slimani explains that Boudjedra's non-fiction *Les Contrebandiers de l'Histoire* [The Smugglers of History], a provocative pamphlet in French published by Frantz Fanon in 2017 and which violently criticises Kamel Daoud, Yasmina Khadra and Boualem Sansal, sold around 1,000 copies. As a result, the same work was re-written by the author himself in Arabic as *زناة التاريخ* in 2018, because there was a high demand for it from Arabophone readers (S. Slimani, personal communication, November 2017). Notably, *Les Contrebandiers de l'Histoire* attracted particular attention because it critiqued Algeria's internationally best-known Francophone authors, accusing them throwing aside Algeria's anti-colonial sensibilities to falsify history. This was seen as potentially commercially appealing to an Arabic-language audience in Algeria who might not be able to read the original French this, again, is revealing of national market taste.

Whether publishing in French or Arabic, publishers and writers can be quite dismissive of their Algerian readership, or potential readership. Both publishers and authors describe Algerian society as a bookless society. All interviewees were particularly critical of what they saw as a lack of reading culture in Algeria. Algerian families are accused by publishers for not showing interest in buying books, students and teachers are accused of losing interest in reading, in comparison to previous generations in the 1970s and 1980s.

Again, this is based on publishers' and authors' perceptions: it was not possible to obtain sales statistics to bear this out. None of the publishers I interviewed mentioned as a factor to explain low sales the price of books or specifically mentioned their absence from the shelves in many provinces, although they did make the broader point about problems of distribution. When asked directly about price, Sarah

Slimani co-founder of Frantz Fanon publishing house stated that everything is expensive, and the most expensive book they have is around 700 DZD (£4.90), she further added that other publishing houses have more expensive books ranging from 1200 DZD to 1400 DZD (£8.40 to £9.80). Slimani did not ignore that the price has increased a lot, and people will give up on reading because they find books expensive, however, she says that the house is trying to do their best (S. Slimani, personal communication, November 2017). When I asked Chikh, co-founder of Apic publishing house, about the relative high price of books, his response was “books are a spending choice”. He ironically commented that Algerians do not negotiate the price of chicken, but they try to negotiate the price of a book (K. Chikh, personal communication, November 2017).

In contrast to publishers’ and authors’ visions of Algerian as a non-reading public, surveys suggest that Algerians see themselves as readers, and as readers of novels. According to a study of 1,000 people conducted by the National Book Council and École Nationale des Statistiques et de l'Économie Appliquée [National School of Statistics and Applied Economics] in ten Algerian cities in 2018, 52% of Algerians prefer to read novels, 68.6% read in Arabic and 41% read in French, 90.2 % prefer to read privately on their own, 51.2 % agree that e-book reading facilitates access to books (Métaoui, November 13, 2018). Informal observations suggest that Algerians’ reading practices are bypassing traditional publishing networks. For example, Algerian readers download free books from the internet as pdf formats, they share and exchange books, they read using social media and other online platforms including Facebook groups J’ai Lu Original, Book Lovers Reading Junkies, and Book Sharing Community (List of websites for free pdf books download are listed in the appendix). This, of course, is also considered as threat to the publishers’ business.

In an interview with the French journalist Pascal Priestley (2011), Hadjadj, the co-founder of Barzakh publishing house, stated that although demographically the Francophone readership was smaller, and ageing, they have a strong tradition of reading, which makes purchasing novels a natural reflex, “something that you cannot

find in this younger generation” according to Hadjadj. Hadjadj state that Francophone readers

constitute an important purchasing power in terms of the book[...] I do not think French has disappeared from the social sphere[...]it is present in daily life[...] for my generation, I do not consider the French language as Kateb Yacine put it, a war booty[...] I consider it as a vehicle for daily life[...]...there is no longer this warlike dimension, that does not mean that there is an absence critical distance in understanding what might be conveyed behind a language, in terms of culture or ideology, but for us French is a tool of knowledge, almost like English or maybe other languages”⁴².

Seven years later, in an interview with the Algerian journalist Fayçal Métaoui, Hadjadj stated that the number of Arabophone readers was flourishing. However, when Métaoui asked him if Barzakh was publishing any work in Arabic in 2018, Hadjadj replied, with regret, no, but it was something they were hoping to develop the following year. He added, “The majority of the readership in Algeria is Arabophone, Francophone readers are minority, of course we are a little more competent also to publish books in French probably, but we are still attempting to develop this aspect of things, and there are very good publishing houses that produce Arabophone literature”⁴³ (Métaoui, October 1, 2018).

⁴² constituent un pouvoir d'achat vraiment important en termes du livre[...] je pense pas que le français a disparu du champ social [...] elle est très présent dans la vie quotidienne...ma génération, je considère pas le français comme dit Kateb Yacine un butin de guerre[...]Je le considère comme un véhicule de vie quotidienne[...] il n’y a pas cette dimension guerrière, ça ne veut pas dire qu’il n’y a pas une distance critique à l’égard de ce qu’une langue peut véhiculer derrière la langue, en termes de culture ou de idéologie mais pour nous c’est un outil de connaissance, de savoir, je dirai presque d’autant que l’anglais ou peut-être d’autres langues

⁴³ Le lectorat majoritaire en Algérie est Arabophone, le lectorat francophone est minoritaire bien sûr, nous, on est peut-être plus compétent aussi pour faire des livres

In a televised report by Echorouk News in Arabic during summer 2017, entitled “Francophone readers are more likely to approach books than Arabophones”⁴⁴, the journalist filmed at the best-known Algerian bookshop, Librairie du Tiers Monde in central Algiers. One of the customers interviewed declared that she had a French schooling, therefore, reading and speaking in French is her own choice, she also made a declaration that most Algerians like French and they find the Arabic language hard. The owner of the bookshop Ali Bey Abderahmane declared that many people who are aged more than forty-five years old are the ones who ask for books written in French language and at the same time, he declared that in Algiers a small proportion only read in Arabic. Within the same report, the Algerian poet Ibrāhim Sadiki stated that books written in French are more popular than Arabic because they have the chance for a good marketing whereas Arabic titles remain on the shelves, not distributed and not given media attention. Yet within the same interview, the two came to agree that the language does not matter, what matter is the content of the book (Echorouk News TV, 2017). This underlines the need for a study on the balance of Arabic- and French-language publishing based on quantitative as well as qualitative data, without which there is a tendency for publishing houses and booksellers to fall into either over-optimism about Arabic-language publishing (for marketing reasons), or assumptions about the enduring dominance of French (based on engrained assumptions about reading publics).

Post-2000, language is no longer as politicised by Algerian authors and publishers in the same way as in previous decades. That does not mean that the publishing in the two languages takes place on an equal footing. A number of Algerian

en français, mais on essaye de développer quand même cet aspect des choses [Arabic language publishing], mais il y a de très bonnes maisons d'éditions qui font la littérature arabophone

⁴⁴ المفردسون يقبلون على الكتاب أكثر من المعريين [...] أين يمكن الخلل

publishers state that they do not have pre-determined balance in the publication of Arabic, French or indeed Tamazight language works – instead, the choice of what to publish is based on the quality of the manuscript (H. Djaouida, personal communication, July 03, 2017). Frantz Fanon, Casbah, Barzakh and Chihab all present the argument that texts submitted in Arabic are generally not of good quality, full of grammatical and spelling mistakes. Casbah’s representative even showed me some copies of manuscripts in Arabic and stated that sometimes authors refuse to respond or to take into consideration the feedback provided by the in-house editorial team (S. Sebaoun, personal communication, July 03, 2017).

Across publishing houses, there is a kind of ad hoc, informal division of labour. For M’hand, the balance between the two languages within his publishing house is fifty per cent each (S. M’hand, personal communication, July 02, 2017). This is unusual. El-Ikhtilef and Mim are known for their Arabophone publishing, therefore, young authors of Arabic expression tend to approach them. Both houses are connected to Middle Eastern publishers, El-Ikhtilef deals with Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc and Difaf in Lebanon, and Mim deals with Dar Fadāat for Publishing and Distribution in Jordan. The publishing houses Apic, Barzakh, Chihab, Casbah and Frantz Fanon are known for being more Francophone and deal with European, mainly with French publishing houses and their networks. The Barzakh editorial team states that it is regrettable that they do not have a more even balance between French- and Arabic-language publishing: ninety per cent of publications are in French and just ten percent in Arabic. The absence of Arabophone editors within the house led the team to decide to reduce the production of books in Arabic because Hadjadj is the only one who masters the Arabic language among Barzakh’s editorial team, and he is no longer able to do it alone (S. Hellal, personal communication, November, 2017). Poet and novelist Chaweki Righi, the founder of the small, lesser known Constantine-based publishing house Fassila, created in 2012, explains that they only publish in Arabic because they do not have an editorial team for French language manuscripts and are financially unable to recruit more employees (C. Righi, personal communication, 5 July, 2017). It is perhaps significant that it is one of the best-known, Algiers-based

publishing houses, which specializes for practical reasons of editorial expertise in mostly French-language texts, and a much smaller, regionally based publishing house, which specializes in Arabic-language texts, for practical reasons of editorial expertise. Another example to illustrate and reinforce this is the publishing house Dar Ibn el Chatie, a very small publishing house, based in Jijel and publishing only in Arabic.

One of the ways in which reading publics are developed is through education. In 2016, the Algerian Minister of Culture Azzedine Mihoubi declared the idea that Algerians were not big readers was false. Rather, he stated, they were just less visible as Algerians prefer to read in their private space, unlike their Europeans counterparts. Nevertheless, he also announced the better integration of novels into school curriculums through a collaboration between the Ministries of Education and Culture:

I want the child to know the Algerian author, to discover the text of an Algerian writer who is near him rather than a text of another author from abroad. A child who cites an Algerian author is what we're aiming for. Contemporary writers. [...] The Minister for Education Nouria Benghabrit is passionate and will get there [...] we have several challenges to overcome. You have to believe and go slowly but surely⁴⁵ (*L'ivrEscQ*, 2016, Nov/Dec, p.17).

The current lack of integration of Algerian authors into the Algerian curriculum was criticised by a number of publishers in interviews. M'hand, owner of El-Hibr, described the estrangement of the Algerian child from Algerian literary works and blamed the education system. In M'hand's opinion, children read all that comes from abroad, from the Middle East and the West, but not what comes from Algeria literary

⁴⁵ Je veux que l'enfant puisse connaître l'auteur algérien, découvrir le texte d'un écrivain algérien qui est près de cet enfant plutôt qu'un texte d'un auteur d'ailleurs. Un enfant qui cite un écrivain Algérien est le pari. Des écrivains contemporains...la ministre de l'Education nationale Nouria Benghabrit est passionnée, elle y arrivera...nous avons beaucoup de défis à relever. Il faut y croire et partir doucement et sûrement

works to build an Algerian national identity (S. M'hand, personal communication, July 02, 2017).

There are some Algerian authors already included within the school curriculum, including Waciny Laredj, Abdelhamid Benhedouga, Rachid Mimouni and Mouloud Feraoun. For example, an extract from a Feraoun text, *Jours de Kabylie*, was included in the French textbook 2008–2009 for the first year secondary level (p.79), within the same textbook an extract from Fadhma Aït Mansour Amrouche's *Histoire de ma vie* was published (republished by the French publishing house La Découverte in 2000), in addition to Mohammed Dib's *L'Incendie*. For the second level at secondary school, in the French textbook, 2006–2007, one can find extract from Tahar Djaout's journalistic writings in the Algerian newspaper *Algérie Actualité* from 1982, Malek Haddad's *Le Malheur en Danger*, 1956 (p.206), and Jean el Mouhoub Amrouch's *Le Combat Algérien* (p.207). Texts by the Arabophone writer Abdelhamid Benhadouga, Francophone Kateb Yacine's *Nedjma*, Francophone Mouloud Feraoun and Arabophone Reda Houhou texts were part of the school curriculum in 2015–2016 for the fourth level at secondary school. These are all older texts, primarily dating from the 1950s, with the exception of Djaout.

Reissuing classics and the creation of the canon

Two key areas in which publishers have invested in recent years are reprints and translation. Notably, Algerian private publishing houses are buying the rights of major Algerian authors initially published outside of Algeria. It is noticeable that it also tends to be texts from internationally recognised Algerian authors who began their careers in the 1950s (Mohamed Dib, Assia Djebar, Kateb Yacine, etc.) which Algerian publishers are keen to republish, for Algerian readers today, either in their original language (French) – or in translation (into Arabic), and then the stars of the 2000s – Daoud and Khadra. Chihab is one of several Algerian publishers who have sought to strike deals with French publishers to bring back titles of previous generation of Algerian authors published abroad, making them accessible to Algerian readers with

affordable prices. A book which would cost 20 euros in its French edition can be published in Algeria, with Chihab, for 1000 DZD to 1200 DZD (£7 to £8.40). Chihab has bought the rights of the trilogy of Mohammed Dib as well as the works of Rachid Mimouni.

French publishers are well aware that previous generation of Algerian authors sell relatively well. The reluctance of French publishers to sell the rights of these authors' works to Algerian publishers is a source of great frustration to Chihab (H. Djaouida, personal communication, July 03, 2017). In an article entitled "Edition Algérienne: entre dèche et débrouille" [Algerian editors between poverty and making-do], the French-language magazine *Jeune Afrique* commented that:

This is why [Algerian] publishers are calling on the French Embassy in Algiers [to support them], explained French cultural attaché Vincent Garrigues. [He stated that] we have developed a policy to support Algerian books. We devote 220,000 euros per year to the sector. We help publishers to acquire the rights in France for a reasonable price – 500 to 1000 euros. About twenty books benefit from this each year, for a maximum circulation of 1,000 copies"⁴⁶(*Jeune Afrique*, February 03, 2010).

It was very difficult for the founders of Barzakh to buy the rights of Assia Djebar's first work, *La Soif* [Mischief]. The founders of Frantz Fanon are keen to buy the rights to Tahar Djaout's works but they have found it difficult because they simply do not have enough money (S. Slimani, personal communication, November 2017). Other Arabophone small independent publishers such as Ibn Chatie and Fassila are keen to purchase the rights of Algerian authors previously published abroad, but it is

⁴⁶ Raison pour laquelle les éditeurs font appel à l'ambassade de France à Alger, précise Vincent Garrigues, attaché culturel, car nous avons développé une politique de soutien au livre algérien. Nous consacrons 220 000 euros par an au secteur. Et aidons les éditeurs à acquérir les droits en France à un tarif préférentiel – de 500 à 1 000 euros. Une vingtaine d'ouvrages en bénéficient chaque année, pour un tirage maximal de 1 000 exemplaires

beyond their budget (C. Righi, personal communication, July 05, 2017 and A. Chatat, personal communication, October 29, 2017). In addition to the costs of buying rights, Algerian companies have various difficulties transferring money abroad due to the nature of the Algerian banking system. There is some – but limited – moral pressure on French publishers to not put too many obstacles in the way of an Algerian republication of Algerian authors. The French owner of L’Aube edition, speaking at the 2012 SILA, presented the aim behind selling the rights and cooperative publishing with Algerian publishers as a way of maintaining a good relationship with the Algerian authors they publish, who want to be read in their home country: “This is what I am interested in, giving due consideration to my author, to please him, because it is important for him to be read in his own country”⁴⁷ (Priestley,2012). Algerian publishers also seek to sell rights to foreign publishers. The co-founder of Apic Karim Chikh declared that he was able to sell the rights of some of his productions to French publishers and thus place some Algerian authors “dans le champ éditorial à l’étranger” [in editorial lines abroad], for example Sarah Haidar’s *La Morsure du Coquelicot* [The Poppy Bite] (2016) was sold to Blast publishing house in 2019 and Métagraphes publishing house in 2018, in addition to Suzanne El Farrah el Kenz’s *La Maison du Néguev* [Neguev’s House] (2009) (K. Chikh, personal communication, November 2017).

In reissuing classics of Algerian literature, one of the things which Algerian publishers often do is translate these works from French into Arabic. Translations are usually state funded – and in this case tend to only happen on specific events and occasions or depend on Western and Middle Eastern funders and professional translators. For example, SEDIA is an Algerian publishing house which works closely with French publishers. According to the journalist Sarra Kharfi: “Sedia publishing house has invested in the field of translation for a few years now, by publishing texts in Arabic by Francophone writers, notably Malika Mokeddem, Nina Bouraoui and

⁴⁷ C’est ça qui m’intéresse, de rendre service à mon auteur, de lui faire plaisir, parce que pour lui, c’est important d’être lu dans son propre pays

Mohammed Dib⁴⁸ (Kharfi, 2014). Nacéra Khiat, a member of the SEDIA editorial team, explained that (Kharfi, 2014):

The idea started in 2007, a year after the launch of the Mosaïque collection which republishes in Algeria Algerian authors who are published abroad. This is a way to make this literature accessible, especially since the works are sold cheaper than the imported French edition. To bring these writers even closer to the Algerian readers, we have created Foussaifissa collection, which is none other than Arabic version of Mosaïque. It gives the Arabic-speaking public the opportunity to read these Algerian writers whose fame goes beyond Algerian borders...the experience was not easy, but the financial support programme of the Ministry of Culture during various cultural events allowed us to sell some titles translated into Arabic language to the ministry and encouraged us to continue.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Les éditions Sedia ont investi, depuis quelques années déjà, dans le champ de la traduction, en publiant des textes en langue arabe de plusieurs auteurs francophones, notamment Malika Mokeddem, Nina Bouraoui ou encore Mohammed Dib

⁴⁹ L'idée a commencé en 2007, une année après le lancement de la collection "Mosaïque", qui réédite en Algérie des écrivains algériens publiés à l'étranger. Une manière de rendre accessible cette littérature, d'autant que les ouvrages sont vendus beaucoup moins cher que l'édition française importée. Pour rapprocher encore plus ces écrivains des lecteurs algériens, nous avons créé la collection Foussaifissa, qui n'est autre que la version arabe de Mosaïque. Elle donne la possibilité au public arabophone de lire ces écrivains algériens dont la renommée dépasse les frontières algériennes...L'expérience n'a pas été facile, mais le programme d'aide du ministère de la Culture à l'occasion de différentes manifestations culturelles nous a permis la vente au ministère de certains titres traduits et nous a encouragés à continuer sur notre lancée

The famous Algerian Francophone novelist Yasmina Khadra, who publishes with French publishers in France has more than four novels translated to Arabic by SEDIA, working in collaboration with the French publisher Hachette. Khadra's translators include the Algerian bilingual novelist Mohammed Sari and the Lebanese translator Nahla Beydoun. All these translations were funded by the Algerian Ministry of Culture. For example, on the cover of Yasmina Khadra's *Ce Que le Jour Doit la Nuit* (2008) [What the Days Owes for the Night], translated as فضل الليل على النهار, one can notice the stamp of the Algerian Ministry of Culture. A large number of Khadra's works are translated into Arabic, often soon after publication in French: *La Part du Mort* [Dead Man's Share], is translated as قسمة الميت, *Les Sirènes de Bagdad* [The Sirens of Baghdad] is translated as سنونات كابول, *A Quoi Revent les Loups* [Wolf Dreams] is translated as بماذا تحلم الذئاب, *L'Imposture des Mots* [The Lies of Words] is translated as مكر الكلمات, *Cousin K* [Cousin K] is translated as القرية كاف, *Les Agneaux du Seigneur* [In the Name of God] is translated as خرفان المولى and *L'Attentat* [The Attack] is translated as الصدمة. All of these translations were sponsored by the Algerian Ministry of Culture. *La Dernière Nuit du Raïs* (2015) was translated into Arabic by the prestigious Lebanese publishing house Dar Al Saqi in 2016 as ليلة الرئيس الأخيرة [The Dictator's Last Night]. Dar Al Saqi was originally established as a bookshop in London in 1979, before setting up as a publishing house in Beirut in 1991. It prides itself on its editorial line based on tolerance, enlightenment and not being afraid to challenge taboos. Its website blurb indicates praise from *The Guardian* and *The Times*: "Anyone interested in Arab culture is aware of the invaluable role Saqi plays in making available pioneering, specialist and often controversial books that large publishers refuse to go near". Khadra has argued that he prefers his work to be translated by a Lebanese or Syrian translator because he was dissatisfied with the quality of the translation of *A Quoi Rêvent les Loups* 1999 by the bilingual Algerian novelist Amin Zaoui in 2002. As the Algerian poet Salah Badis has put it, the idea persists that the Middle East has a stronger legitimacy over the Arabic language than North Africa (Baala,2018).

Some works of Assia Djébar, Mohammed Dib and Anouar Benmalek have also been translated into Arabic by SEDIA in partnership with French and Middle Eastern publishers. In cooperation between the Algerian state and the French National Book Center, an event was organised during SILA 2017 for a project to translate Djébar's works into Arabic (Graba, 2017). In 2008, SEDIA re-published Malika Mokeddem's *Mes Hommes* [My Men], first published in 2005 by the French publisher Grasset. This was funded by the Algerian state as part of the festivities surrounding Algiers Capital of Arab Culture in 2007. In 2007, during Algiers Capital of Arab Culture, Apic publishing house produced and translated some works in Arabic as well, for example, Nadjia Abir's *باب القنطرة* [The Bridge Door] initially published in 2005 in French and translated to Arabic by Assia Ali Moussa, funded by the Algerian Ministry of Culture. Hannachi, the owner of Média Plus, was able to re-edit, re-publish, and translate the work of Malek Haddad into Arabic, and notably *L'élève et la Leçon* [The Pupil and the lesson] in 2003 thanks to funding made available as a result of Algeria hosting various international cultural events.

On the website of the famous online Arabic bookstore Neel wa Furat, one finds other works of Mokeddem translated into Arabic such as *Les Hommes Qui marchent* [The Men who Walk] (1990) published by the Lebanese-based Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc in 2011 in collaboration with El-Ikhtilef in Algeria. Mokeddem's *Je dois tout à ton oubli* [I owe everything for your forgetfulness], published by Grasset and Fasquelle in 2008, was re-published and translated into Arabic in 2011 by Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc and translated by the Algerian translator Said Boutadjine as *أدين بكل شيء للنسيان* under the supervision of the Center of Arabisation and Programming. Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc have well-funded distribution networks, nearly eighty distributors in the Arab world including Doha, Beirut, Oman, Kuwait, Iraq, Sudan, Libya and Algeria. In Algeria, Arab Scientific Publishers have two distributors, Al Maarifa and Dar El Jazeera El Thakafia. It is written on the first page of *أدين بكل شيء للنسيان* that, "it is The Arab Scientific Publishers who bought the rights from the French publishing house Grasset, this book was published as part of the Georges Schehadé Aid Programme and benefited from the

support of the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and the Cooperation and Cultural Action Services of the French Embassy in Lebanon”⁵⁰ (Mokeddem, 2011). This mixed funding (French Embassy and Beirut-based Arabic-language publisher) is a reminder that we should not draw too firm a distinction between works published and aimed at the West and those published and aimed at the Middle East. Indeed, French Embassies can fund the translation of works in French into Arabic as part of their strategy of promoting French culture.

M’hand, the owner of El-Hibr publishing house, was able to purchase Kateb Yacine’s *Nedjma* and translate it into Arabic cooperatively working with twelve Algerian translators trained in France for a duration of ten months. El-Hibr has also purchased a number of works, including Assia Djébar’s *Le Blanc d’Algérie* [Algerian White], *La Femme sans Sépulture* [Woman without Burial], *L’Amour La Fantasia* [Fantasia : an Algerian Cavalcade], and *Femmes d’Alger dans leur Appartement* [Women of Algiers in their Apartment] which were translated into Arabic, with the support of French National Book Centre and the Algerian National Book Centre. In support, translation workshops were organized by the French Embassy in Algeria (L’Ambassade de France en Algérie, 2017; Hind,2017). Kateb Yacine’s *Nedjma* was also translated, more unusually, into the Tamazight language by ENAG. The director of ENAG Hamidou Messaoudi further confirmed in 2017 that by 2018 fifty per cent of Kateb Yacine works would be available for Algerian readers in Arabic as well as in Tamazight (Radio Algérienne website, 2017).

The attention which Algerian publishers give to translating into Arabic and republishing works of classic French-language Algerian literature is suggestive of monolingual reading publics. Translating Kateb Yacine or Assia Djébar into Arabic brings these classic works to new (younger, Arabophone) audiences and it is striking

⁵⁰ Cet ouvrage publié dans le cadre du Programme d’aide a la publication Georges Schehadé, bénéficie du soutien du Ministère des affaires étrangères et Européennes et du Services de Coopération et d’action Culturelle de l’Ambassade de France au Liban

that both the Algerian and French state find common ground in investing in this through their respective National Centres of Books. Translation is expensive, and it needs economic capital, which Algerian publishers cannot afford. Intermittent and event-dependent funding from the Algerian Ministry of Culture leaves significant space for translation choices to be determined by the French Embassy and Middle Eastern publishers and translators. It is largely French and Middle Eastern publishing houses shaping the Algerian literary scene. Whilst – largely on the initiative of their French publishers – Algeria’s best-known authors such as Assia Djebar and Rachid Boudjedra are published in languages other than French and Arabic (English, Spanish etc.), for the majority of authors this is not the case, despite claims of political will to promote Algerian literature worldwide. For example, on 2-3 November 2016, the 8th Meeting of the Euro Maghrebian writers in Algeria was organised. Discussing translation, Hassan Mendjour, the representative of the Ministry of Culture, declared “The Ministry of Culture encourages the translation of prominent Algerian novelists into English and French to promote Algerian literature worldwide”⁵¹ (*L’ivrEscQ*, 2016, Nov/Dec, p.25). Yet this is a constantly evolving situation as new international cultural players emerge: for example, it was recently announced that China would be cooperating with Dar El Fadaat for Publishing and Distribution to support creativity, and translation of young Arab authors (Saudi, 2018).

Transnational networks and co-edition

Both Algerian authors and publishers underline the importance of strengthening their relationship with publishers from the Global North, the Middle East and sub-Saharan African publishers to overcome several hurdles that they are facing for the publication and the circulation of their works. Algerian authors and publishers are

⁵¹ Le Ministère de la culture encourage la traduction des oeuvres de grands romanciers algériens vers l’anglais et le français afin de promouvoir la littérature Algérienne au niveau mondial

attracted by the symbolic and economic capital provided by Western and Middle Eastern publishers. These publishers have a significant budget for translation projects, and they organise cultural events such as writing residencies for writers. For example, the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation based in Jordan cooperates with the International Prize for Arabic Fiction for the organisation of events for writers and publishers. Co-edition is a central part of Algerian publishing houses' strategies, boosting economic and symbolic capital. At a very practical level, such collaborations help overcome practical problems such as the lack of online payment in Algeria. Crowley (2013) argues that cooperative publishing is beneficial for both small and conglomerate publishers.

When publishers state that the aim behind establishing these commercial corporations is to introduce Algerian literature to readers beyond Algeria, they are playing the role of a mediator in the *World Republic of Letters*, to use Casanova's term. Chihab, for example, has several cooperative publishing agreements with European and Middle Eastern publishers and distributors. The aim behind reinforcing these relations is to guarantee the availability of their books in countries other than Algeria. 213 titles by Chihab are available on the French online bookshop Decitre.fr. Casbah, Barzakh, ENAG, ENAL, Kalimat, and Apic productions are available on the website of the Société Française Indépendante et Alternative de Distribution [French Independent and Alternative Distribution Company], SOFIADIS.fr, and on Libraire de l'Orient.

Barzakh has solid relations with foreign publishers. In the Middle East for literary works in Arabic they work with Dar Al Jadeed, which has numerous local and international distributors, in addition to the availability of their works in online bookshops such as Amazon, eKtab, Abjjad and Neel wa Furat and Dar Al Mutawassit. Kamel Daoud's *The Meursault Investigation* (2013) which was initially published by Barzakh in French was translated into Arabic as part of a collaboration between Barzakh and Dar Al Jadeed, funded by the French Embassy in Lebanon. Dar Al Jadeed is a prestigious Lebanese publishing house, has several partnerships in Algeria,

Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq. For the publication and circulation of Algerian literary works in French, Barzakh works collaboratively with French publishers such as Actes Sud, l'Aube, Le Bec en L'Air and les Édition Zoé in Genève. These bilateral agreements facilitate the promotion of Algerian writers and the re-circulation of consecrated texts. On Barzakh's website one can read the following, "regarding the accompaniment with Actes Sud, after several years of active collaboration [...] Barzakh editions and Actes Sud edition wish to cross a milestone in 2011 and forge a reinforced and unprecedented partnership. They will henceforth publish, in Algerian co-edition and at a regular rhythm, background texts, essays, fictions, in French or Arabic, classic or contemporary authors from Africa, the Arab world and the Mediterranean"⁵².

Smail M'hand declared that collaboration with French publishers facilitates the process for Algerian publishers to reach international audiences and together with other publishers he hopes to further reinforce this cooperation in the world of translation and training courses on how to run a bookshop (Bureau Internationale de l'Édition Francophone, 2015). The owner of Média-Plus publishing house, Saïd Yassine Hannachi stated that cooperative publishing solves the problem of those who are keen to have their books published abroad and at the same time want them to be available in Algeria (Priestley, 2012). According to the founders of Frantz Fanon publishing house, releasing titles simultaneously with two publishers in two locations gives more credibility to the house because it contributes to the symbolic capital of the house. They were also able to establish some transnational networks with Dar Al

⁵² Quant au compagnonnage avec Actes Sud, après plusieurs années d'une collaboration active [...] les éditions barzakh et les éditions Actes Sud souhaitent franchir un cap en 2011 et nouent un partenariat renforcé et inédit. Ils publieront dorénavant, en coédition algérienne et un rythme régulier, des textes de fond, des essais, des fictions, en langue française ou arabe, des auteurs classiques ou contemporaines d'Afrique, du monde arabe et de la Méditerranée

Mutawassit for titles in Arabic. In addition, the house also had some cooperative publishing with Grasset in France, and Voltage in Belgium.

El-Ikhtilef, which produces around 40-75 books a year in Algeria, relies heavily for distribution of their production beyond Algeria on two large Lebanese publishers, Difaf and Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc with whom they established a partnership in 2003. Arab Scientific Publishers Inc is a big publishing house established in 1986 in Beirut. Works published in co-edition by these two publishing houses will have a chance for a broader distribution within and beyond Algeria. They have also ensured the availability of their works on online bookshops such as Neelwafurat, Al Furat, and Al-Manhal. Neelwafurat.com is online bookshop is owned by the Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc. launched in Beirut in 1998. The company has more than 400,000 titles in its catalogue and several offices in the Middle East such as in Jordan, Syria, and Egypt (Mermier, 2005:154-155).

Unlike Barzakh – who also has agreements with these online bookshops – all of El-Ikhtilef’s editorial work takes place outside Algeria. M’hand stated that “El-Ikhtilef remains just a name in Algeria, but all the commercial process is done outside Algeria” (S. M’hand, personal communication, July 02, 2017). According to the co-founder of El-Ikhtilef, Assia Moussei, the idea of partnership was suggested by Arab Scientific Publishers as they have the means of distribution and promotion. In 2009, the house was able to produce 200 titles and reached 450 titles by 2014 (Bahidj, 2014). El-Ikhtilef co-translates the works of some English and American philosophers and novelists into the Arabic language. Still, all these processes take place in Beirut (B. Mefti, personal communication, July 03, 2017). Sometimes, they publish collaboratively with Difaf in Beirut, Dare El-Amane in Morocco and Kalima in the UAE as the main subsidiser of the translation projects. Mim has some transnational networks with publishers in the Levant region, including Dar Al Fadaat for Publishing and Distributing and with the Tunisian publishing house Masciliana.

Apic has sought to avoid getting locked into a centre-periphery relationship with either Europe or the Arab world by establishing commercial links with publishing houses in sub-Saharan Africa, notably Mali and Senegal (Djendir, 2012). Soon, they

hope to establish networks with South of America, European and Asian publishers (K. Chikh, personal communication, November 2017). In 2019, Barzakh and APIC joined the Senegalese publishing house Papyrus Afrique. APIC is also amongst the Alliance Internationale des éditeurs indépendant [International Alliance of Independent Editors]. This transnationalism towards the south nevertheless reinforces the French-language offer. Chikh declared “We integrated Algerian authors in order to place them within the African context, hence the collection of Resonances which exists since 2007 at APIC”⁵³ (Berriah, 2018). In 2007, the house created the series *Resonances Panafricaine* dedicated to African literature. Chikh considers this initiative as an opportunity to introduce texts to Algerian readers that they do not know and to place Algerian authors within the African context, and then within the continental context. Chikh is standing against the idea of borders, and his first aim is to liberate them through literature because he believes that lovers of literature do not have boundaries (K. Chikh, personal communication, November 2017). Therefore, APIC is considered a cultural bridge between Algeria and other African countries, and co-founder Samia Zannadi organised and attended several times literature festivals as she used to be a member of International Festival of Literature and Youth Books between 2008-2010. Authors published in the *Résonances Panafricaine* include Patrice Nganang’s *Temps de Chien* [Dog Days: An Animal Chronicle] first published in 2001 by Serpent à Plumes, and Sami Tchak’s *Filles de Mexico* [Girls of Mexico], first published by Mercure France in 2008, to mention only a few. Most of these writers are holders of some literary awards. The co-founder of Apic explained some of the difficulties she faces (Ghanem, May 26, 2016):

we are helping our colleagues from Mali, Congo, and Benin to publish books in Algeria which we export despite difficult conditions of exportation. Unfortunately, our ambition to get away from cultural domination is not always shared by those in

⁵³ On a intégré les auteurs Algériens pour les mettre dans leur context africain, d’où la collection “Résonances” qui existe depuis 2007 à APIC

charge of cultural events around literature, and no amount of conferences and empty political declarations will realise these goals. They will become concrete by effectively rewriting the international rules that govern literature spaces, spaces in which the capitals of the northern hemisphere have now essentially become “central banks” that reward and consecrate works, authors and even editors

Zannadi declared that Algerian authors are not known in Africa only Kateb Yacine because he used to teach at one of Mali’s universities, “at the moment, none of our authors published by the publishing houses with whom we are trying to establish long-lasting links. Notwithstanding the state of African exchanges with regard to books, we still try to be involved in other book fairs that take place in Mali, Cameroon, Burkina-Faso, Senegal and Niger to make our authors and their texts known” (Ghanem, May 26, 2016). “One of our aims is to edit African authors on the continent so as not being dependent on the great literary centres that are always France, United Kingdom, and the United States. It is true, we do not have the same means, but we want to give our writing a continental distribution. *Madame l’Afrique* was first published in Algeria, and then by Gallimard”⁵⁴ (Nehmé, 2013).

For some, these transnational ties complicate any centre-periphery relationship. As Laure Pécher and Pierre Astier (March 20, 2014) argue in an article published by the French newspaper *Le Monde* “The delocalisation of the book trade beyond its big major historical centers has not been to the detriment of some but for the benefit of all, including authors, who are present in all markets. Instead of exporting books from Europe, we export publication rights from any center,

⁵⁴ L’un de nos buts est d’éditer des auteurs africains sur le continent pour ne pas rester tributaire des grands centres littéraires que sont toujours la France, l’Angleterre les États-Unis. C’est vrai, nous n’avons pas les mêmes moyens, mais on veut donner à un écrit en le diffusant à partir du continent. *Madame L’Afrique* est sortie d’abord en Algérie, puis chez Gallimard

European, Asian, South American, etc”⁵⁵. Others are less convinced and underline that dependency on historic literary centres remains. The critic Chérif Bemoussa Abdelkader (2017) bemoaned that the role played by Maghrebi publishers is not enough in comparison to Middle Eastern publishers. Therefore, Maghrebi authors are always dependent on Middle East publishers for the circulation and the promotion of their works.

Conclusion

Algerian publishing houses are operating under limited funding and a lack of infrastructure, including a complicated legal framework. In this context, it is hardly surprising that publishers present their businesses as vocations rather than commercially viable affairs. Most cannot afford to offer publishing contracts to new or unknown Algerian writers as their limited economic capital prevents them from taking risks. Therefore, they often have to be conservative in their selection of the texts submitted, relying on recommendations, personal contacts or based on previous sales. Translations are also considered a safe investment.

The relationship of independent publishing houses with the Algerian state is inconsistent: they are deeply distrustful, and the state representatives of culture appear to have little interest in addressing their concerns. This is part of a broader picture of disaffection with those in power in Algeria, and language of rights perceived to be unmet. Although when public finances were better, publishers received sometimes significant funding, today publishers and bookshop owners blame the state not just for poor infrastructure, but also for not promoting a reading

⁵⁵ la délocalisation du commerce du livre hors de ses grands centres historiques ne s’est pas faite au détriment des uns mais au profit de tous, y compris des auteurs, plus présents sur l’ensemble des marchés. Au lieu d’exporter des livres depuis l’Europe, on exporte des droits de publication depuis n’importe quel centre, européen, asiatique, sud-américain, etc

culture in schools, not subsidizing paper and printing, not encouraging literary programmes on state-owned TV and radio, and indeed not spending public money wisely when the price of petrol was high.

The reading public to whom books are sold in Algeria is clearly very small. Whilst the statistics do not exist to break this down demographically, publishers' and booksellers' impressions are that the younger Arabophone public is bigger, but the Francophone public is more likely to buy a book, and specifically more likely to buy a novel. The larger more prestigious Algerian publishing houses tend to be the ones specialised in French-language publishing. Nevertheless, the perceived commercial viability of translating French-language Algerian literature classics into Arabic for non-French-reading Algerian audiences is also contributing to bridging over this divide and hierarchy, by bringing these works into a shared literary heritage.

Transnational networks and funding streams in the Middle East and Europe are key for Algerian publishers to survive. This is not a simple case of the dominance of the West, and specifically Paris, as the "Greenwich Meridian" (Casanova, 2004:90). Underlining the ways in which Beirut and Sharjah are increasingly important magnets for Algerian authors writing in Arabic allows us to underscore that this is a more complicated story than the Global North continuing to dominate the Global South as it did during the colonial period. These transnational networks nevertheless contribute to the idea that Algerian literature can be divided into that of "French" or "Arabic" expression. At the same time, it is noticeable that the French Embassy (in Algiers or Beirut) has contributed to the translation of French-language texts into Arabic, working with Arabic-language publishers. This is a particularly significant development given the dominant view that we might have of French soft-power – and particularly the notion of Francophonie – as seeking to promote "French culture" through the French language alone.

The book industry in Algeria nevertheless remains undeveloped and unstructured. Algeria contributes little to the world of publishing, translation, promotion and distribution. Therefore, some Algerian writers who want to achieve

commercial success and international recognition develop alternative strategies, and as we will see in the next chapter, there are ways to “programme” this success.

Chapter Four: Becoming an Algerian transnational literary celebrity

Introduction

This chapter examines the trajectories of the best-known Algerian authors today: Yasmina Khadra, Boualem Sansal, Kamel Daoud, Ahlam Mosteghanemi and Waciny Laredj. The first three authors write in French, the latter two in Arabic. The chapter demonstrates how they have acquired the status of literary celebrities by becoming interpreters of the Arab and Muslim world for international audiences and/or cultivating the image of being rebels against their society and culture. All of the Francophone authors are published in France, although some did begin their publishing careers in Algeria. Arabophone writers follow a similar path to Francophone writers, except their fame comes from recognition in the Middle East, where they are embraced by the secular, liberal media, and Arab states which seek to create an image of tolerance and openness. These authors thus demonstrate what Casanova has termed “programmed success”. Programmed success is a process of gaining public prominence – and book sales – through the author and publisher adopting smart marketing strategies. This can include amplifying criticism of the author in the media, notably when these critics can be characterised as “conservative” or “traditional” (Brouillette, 2011:83-86). These authors develop a public persona by performing on the international stage the role of sociologist, politician, economist, feminist, historian, linguist and anthropologist of their own societies, which they simultaneously heavily critique. The way in which authors talk about their own lives, and notably their childhood and why they became a writer, is also part of the process of creating a persona. These authors start to receive invitations after any crisis that takes place in Algeria, or indeed the Arab and Muslim world, to explain and analyse it – and indeed they can be called upon to do this more often than they are called upon to talk about their literary works. They cross borders easily from one country to another, to deliver lectures, speeches and run writing workshops. They are the regular recipients of prestigious international rewards.

In order to map out how “programmed success” functions, this chapter takes the approach of closely tracking the career of each author in a chronological way. This allows us to understand how book publications, Algerian and international crises, media appearances, and prestigious international invitations and prizes are connected to, feed into and trigger each other, as part of the process of creating the transnational post-colonial literary celebrity.

Waciny Laredj: the transnational literary celebrity, across Arabophone and Francophone worlds, but largely bypassing Algeria?

Waciny Laredj (b.1954) was born into an Arabophone family in the region of Tlemcen, in the western part of Algeria. His father used to live in Paris but decided to return to Algeria to participate in the anti-colonial struggle. His father was tortured and died in prison in Tlemcen on 24 April 1954 (Sky News, 2014). His grandmother raised Laredj after the death of his father. Laredj had the opportunity to follow traditional Arabic-language schooling (Quranic school/ madrasa). Laredj’s first encounter with literary works was *One Thousand and One Nights*, which he stole and used to read it secretly, “reading *One Thousand and One Nights* definitively took me out of the sacred”⁵⁶, in addition to the works of the Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez, which “awakened the Andalusian side that was dormant in me and which was transmitted to me by my grandmother”⁵⁷ (Ghosn, 2010).

Laredj has stated that he will always be thankful to his grandmother for making him a bilingual writer: he speaks, writes and conducts his interviews in French as well as in Arabic. He had the opportunity to follow Francophone schooling, and around age 16/17 he had a strong relationship with the French language. Laredj was

⁵⁶ la lecture des *Nuits* m’a fait définitivement sortir du sacré

⁵⁷ a réveillé le côté andalou qui sommeillait en moi et qui m’a été transmis par la grand-mère

nevertheless encouraged by his grandmother to learn and write in Arabic. In contrast to Kamel Daoud and Yasmina Khadra who, as we will see, have stated that they were discouraged by their Arabophone teachers, Laredj is proud of his Arabic-language education. By the time he went to university, Arabisation was taking place in Algeria and he obtained a degree in Arabic literature. After completing his undergraduate degree, Laredj gained a scholarship from the Algerian government to continue his studies abroad.

According to Laredj, this was the time for rupture with the French language. Laredj stated that he could have gone to Paris but he chose Damascus, where he stayed ten years. In Damascus, he married the novelist and poet Zineb Laouedj and they had a son and a daughter (Ghosn, 2010). He holds an MA and PhD from the University of Damascus. It was also in Damascus that Laredj was able to establish strong networks with Syrian and Lebanese poets and novelists. He used to attend roundtables and debates about literature at some of the local writers' houses and cafés, including Hanna Minna, Nizar Qabanni, Adonis, and Muhammed al-Maghout. Laredj declared that his house was also a space for literary debates, and he refers to this as the golden period in his life. It was also during the early 1980s that he began to publish (Sky News, 2014).

According to El Aref (2017:1), Laredj has moved beyond some of the debates imposed on the previous generation of Arabophone writers, among them Tahar Wattar. Laredj disconnected the Arabic language from promoting a particular political discourse or being forced to be linguistically "pure". Laredj includes references to Algerian popular culture, songs, French sentences and sometimes colloquial phrases (in darija) accompanied by their translation for readers who are not familiar with Algerian Arabic. For Hanina (2016:14), darija and popular sayings are used to illustrate the social status of the characters, but also to transgress of the dominant discourse of the Islamists and the sacredness of the Arabic language.

The Laredj-Laouedj couple decided to return to Algeria in 1985 when Laredj was offered a position as a lecturer at the University of Algiers. However, during the civil violence in Algeria, which broke out a few years later, he was targeted by the

Islamists. He moved to Tunisia and then to France where he started to teach Arabic literature at the Sorbonne University. He continues to live in Paris with his wife. On 21 December 2018, Laredj and Laouedj were invited to the Arabophone channel Al Ghad, which broadcasts from Egypt. They were interviewed by the Moroccan writer and broadcaster Yassin Adnan, a close friend of the couple. Two stories were told about their lives during the black decade. Adnan stated that when he visited the couple in 1993 in Algeria, they were on the Islamists' blacklist, and were effectively imprisoned in their house out of fear. Yet Laouedj tells a slightly different story in which they were not forced to leave Algeria but proposed an opportunity in France: she states that Laredj was offered a writing residency in a prestigious French higher education institute. That said, in the 1990s, sometimes these positions were offered to Algerians as a way of helping them to leave the dangerous situation in Algeria. When they moved to Paris, Laredj and Laouedj gained support from French, Moroccan and Algerian scholars and intellectuals including Pierre Bourdieu, Rachid Boudjedra, Jean-Pierre Léaud, Marie Virolle, Jacques Ralith, Daniel Reig, Mohammed Arkoun, Jamel-Eddine Bencheikh and Abdellatif Laabi. This stay in Paris then became permanent (Al-Ghad TV, 2018).

Laredj's works are widely known in the Middle East and North Africa although they remain absent from the Anglophone market. The example of *سييدة المقام* [The Lady of the Tomb] (1995), which is an acerbic critique of religious fundamentalism, provides a good example of the transnational – European and Middle Eastern – networks involved in the publication of Laredj's works. The novel was published with the Iraqi publishing house Dar Al Jamal, which is based in Germany and has been run by Khalid al-Ma'âli since 1983. Dar Al Jamal has a strong network in Beirut and its publications are widely distributed in the Arab world. Among the high-profile authors published by Dar Al-Jamal are the Moroccan writer Mohammed Choukri, the Iraqi poet Sargon Boulos, and the Saudi novelist 'Abdallah al-Qusaymi. Dar Al Jamal also publishes the works of prominent German writers, translated into Arabic, such as Robert Musil, Paul Celan and Gottfried Benn (Mermier, 2005:106-108).

Commenting on the success of *The Lady of Tomb* in 2011, in an interview conducted by the Algerian scholar Rachid Mokhtari in the Algerian Francophone newspaper *Le Matin DZ*, Laredj said: “*The Lady of Tomb* [published as *Les ailes de la reine* in French] was originally released in Arabic, in Germany, after my Lebanese [Dar Al Adab] and Algerian publishers withdrew for fears of Islamist repression. Paradoxically, the novel sold well, thanks to the dynamism of the German publisher who circulated it in the Arab world and Western world, after translation and good media coverage. It was subsequently reissued in Beirut and several times in Algeria, including,” Laredj added ironically, “in a beautiful pirate edition, produced for the Arab Year [one of the international events organised in Algeria] in Algeria by ENAG”⁵⁸ (Mokhtari, 2011). The French-language edition – *Les Ailes de la Reine* – was translated in collaboration between Laredj and Marcel Bois, who previously translated the works of the Algerian Arabophone writers Tahar Wattar and Abdelhamid Ben Hadouga. It was published by the French publishing house Sinbad in 2009 and republished in 2011 with the Algerian publishing houses Espace Libre and Alpha (*Liberté*, November 11, 2005). The novel was released again in 2015 by the prestigious Lebanese publishing house Dar Al Adab, which had previously refused it. It was also translated into the Tamazight language and released during the SILA event in 2019.

La Gardienne des Ombres [The Guardian of Shadows] (1996) engages with similar themes as *The Lady of Tomb*. The novel was praised by the Algerian Francophone writers Mohammed Dib and Leïla Sebbar (*Liberté*, November 11, 2005). According to the Algerian researcher Abi Ayad in his review of this novel (2000), “this

⁵⁸ *Les ailes de la reine* est sorti au départ en langue arabe, en Allemagne, après que mes éditeurs libanais et Algériens s'étaient rétractés par peur de répression Islamiste. Paradoxalement, le roman s'est bien vendu grâce au dynamisme de l'éditeur allemande qui l'a fait circuler dans le monde arabe et occidental, après traduction et une bonne couverture médiatique. Il a été réédité par la suite à Beyrouth et plusieurs fois à Alger, avec à la clé, une belle édition pirate, réalisée à l'occasion de l'année arabe en Algérie par l'ENAG

narrative fiction, which situates the story and the actions of its characters initially in the city of Algiers, bears witness to the daily reality of a city closed in upon itself due to the omnipresent terror of religious and political extremists which torment it and sack its cultural heritage and geography whose anthropological and scientific value is precious⁵⁹. *The Guardian of Shadows* reveals a similar pattern of circulation across networks in the French- and Arabic-speaking worlds as *The Lady of the Tomb*. It is somewhat unclear whether this novel was originally written in French or Arabic. Laredj has stated that: "Recognising that for the same reasons *The Guardian of Shadows* won't find a publisher in Arabic, I wrote it initially in French and self-translated to Arabic. But I definitely abandoned this practice because I realised that I was giving myself a lot of freedom, translation had become a rewriting where the two versions no longer resembled each other"⁶⁰ (Ghosn, 2010). The novel was published, then, in Arabic as حارسة الظلال in 1998. It was then translated by Zeinab Laawedj et Marie Virolle as *La Gardienne des ombres* in Paris by Marsa Editions in 1998 (Abi-Ayad, 2000). The Algerian Francophone newspaper *Liberté* gives a slightly different chronology, stating that the novel was edited by the French publishing house Marsa in 1996, re-edited in 2003 with the French publishing house Eden, and in 2005 published by the Algerian publishing house Espace Libre (*Liberté*, November 11,

⁵⁹ Cette fiction narrative, qui situe l'histoire et l'action de ses personnages essentiellement dans la ville d'Alger, se veut être le témoignage d'une réalité quotidienne dans d'une cité entièrement repliée sur elle-même en raison de la terreur omniprésente des extrémistes religieux et politiques qui la rongent et saccagent son patrimoine culturel et mobilier dont la valeur anthropologique et scientifique est inestimable

⁶⁰ Sachant que pour les mêmes raisons *Hârisat al-dhilâl* (*La Gardienne des ombres*) ne trouvera pas preneur, je l'ai directement écrit en français et retraduit moi-même vers l'arabe. Mais j'ai renoncé définitivement à cette pratique car j'ai constaté que je me permettais beaucoup de libertés; la traduction devenait une réécriture où les deux versions ne se ressemblaient plus

2005). In 2012, the same novel was published in Arabic by Roueya for Publishing and Distribution in Cairo, Egypt.

Laredj is in the position of being well integrated into literary circles in both the Middle East and Europe, benefiting from the cultural and symbolic capital that this brings. In total, he has published twenty-three novels in the Middle East, with the most prestigious publishing houses, including Dar Al Adab. The Algerian scholar Chérif Bemmoussa Abdelkader (2017) argues that publishing with these publishing houses is a major contributing factor to his visibility in the Arab world. Laredj is also a recipient of several national and international literary awards, such as Le Prix National du Roman Algérien [The National Prize for the Algerian Novel] for شرفات بحر الشمال [Balconies of the North Sea] published by Dar Al Adab in Beirut in 2002. In 2007, he received the most prestigious Arab literary award, the Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Literature, كتاب الامير [The Prince's Book], published in 2004 by Dar Al Adab. This novel is about the struggle of the nineteenth-century Algerian leader and fighter Amir Abdel Qadir against French colonialism. Laredj laughingly dismisses any suggestion that he has a strategy for winning prizes, preferring to present this as an almost happy accident. On 9 January 2016, Laredj was invited to the Emirates TV programme Hilw El Kalam presented by the journalist and poet Brewin Habib, who asked Laredj what makes him happy, and suggested that this might be literary awards and that Laredj might be hungry to receive more. Laredj replied:

The Sheikh Zayed award is among the most important literary awards, it holds a weighty name as well as its symbolic value[...] but I will tell you something, I was the last one to be informed by a friend about participating in it, he called me and asked for copies of my novel, he was among the reading committee, at that time I was in Paris, I went to a bookshop, and I couldn't find it, I went

to the second one, and I found seven copies [sic.], I sent five and I kept one for me [...]"⁶¹ (Laredj,2017).

Yet as can be seen, Laredj winning the award was not so accidental – he was asked to participate by a friend of the reading committee.

Laredj's *اصابع لوليتا* [Lolita Fingers] was published in Beirut in 2012 by Dar Al Adab and was nominated for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction. The title of this novel reminds us of the Russian American Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955). The Tunisian novelist and critic Kamel Riahi made the connection between Laredj's novel and both Nabokov's *Lolita* and the French theorist Roland Barthes' *The Fashion system* (1967) (Riahi, 2012). Indeed, in North African/ Middle Eastern literature, there exist several novels which respond to this 1955 work, including the Iranian author Azar Nafisi's *Reading Lolita in Tehran* (2003). In this novel, Laredj talks about several themes including love, exile, emigration, civil unrest, prostitution, loss, history, identity crises, memory and trauma, the abuse of women, and again reminds of debates about language choice in Algeria. Stylistically, Shama (2013) argues that the work bears a resemblance to the writings of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the Lebanese novelist Amine Malouf. Intertextuality in Laredj works goes beyond the Algerian landscape, including – in addition to Nabokov's *Lolita* – references to the

⁶¹ بروين حبيب: تقول لست صائدا الجوائز ولكن يفضي بنا هذا الإنتاج الغزير أن نقول هناك مطامع لدى واسيني في كل سنة خصوصا جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب هذه كانت جائزة مفصلية بالرغم من أنك كنت حاصل من قبل

واسيني: نعم أكيد هذه جائزة مهمة ، جائزة الشيخ زايد بالإسم التي تحمله ، و بالقيمة الرمزية و القيمة المالية ، لكن بصراحة أقول لك ، يوم ترشحت لهذه الجائزة كنت آخر من يعلم بهذه الجائزة ، حيث أنا أو من بكل الجوائز ، أو من بالصدفة، صدفة الجائزة ، بس لو أحكيك في دقيقة ذهبت لكي أبحث لأنه كلموني أصدقاء من الجائزة ،شارك يعني بالدورة الأولى يحتاجون إلى أسماء و إلى آخره كلموني قلت Ok نزلت في باريس إلى مكتبي الذي عادة أتعامل معه ،قال لي لا والله لا يوجد و لا نسخة ، بالصدفة ، المكتبة التي بجنيها ، مكتبة تديرها شابة لبنانية، دخلت عندها بالصدفة أبحث وقلت لها هل عندك كتاب الأمير؟! قالت لي ولو دكتور أنا عندي سبع نسخ فأخذتهم كلهم و أرسلت خمسة واحتفظت بواحدة

Swedish writer Patrick Süskind (*The Perfume*, 1985), the erotic paintings of the French artist Gustave Courbet (*The Origin of the World*, 1866) and the decolonial thinker Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) (Al Aref, 2017).

Laredj is frequently invited to speak on current affairs in the media, national and international, notably in Arabic but also in French. This is a key marker which contributes to the visibility and persona of the postcolonial writer. Between 22 and 25 August 2013, Laredj was invited to the Louisiana Festival of Literature in Copenhagen, Denmark. He talked about the Islamists and the political system in Algeria, the civil violence, sexuality and women's oppression in the Arab world. He talked about some literary works that speak to these topics and praised their authors – amongst those he mentioned was the 2005 *Girls of Riyadh* by the Saudi novelist Rajaa Al-Sanea. According to Laredj, these types of books are about the complex lives of people in the Arab world, breaking with taboos (Louisiana Channel, 2014).

After the Charlie Hebdo attacks in 2015, Laredj was invited to the BBC in Arabic to give his opinion about the incident. The journalist reminded Laredj about his novel *Lolita Fingers* and its theme, which is the spread of fundamentalism to France. Laredj sought to explain the reasons behind these terrorist attacks and argued that the attackers were not integrated into French society because they were still considered as Arabs and Muslims and not full French citizens. In 2015, Laredj was interviewed by an Arabic-language Sudanese channel. Laredj was in Sudan at the time in order to participate in the fifth edition of the Tayeb Salih literary award. He talked about the clash of civilisations, and connected this to the Arab Spring, Arab revolutions, and Arab political leaders and their political system. In the context of this, he also referred to his two-volume *الليلة السابعة بعد الالف* [The Seventh Night after Thousand] published in 1993 and 2002, by the Syrian publishing house Dar Ward, as well as his biography *سيرة المنتهى عشتها كما اشتهتني* [The Biography of the terminal, I lived it as I desired], published in 2014 by Dubai Cultural Magazine (Sympatica000, 2015). Also, in 2015, Laredj was honoured by the Saudi cultural association Al-Ithaiynya which was established in 1982. Amongst the stated aims of the association is building bridges of understanding and cultural exchange between poets, novelists,

philosophers. In a video of the event uploaded on the official channel of Al-Ithaiynya on YouTube, the committee praised the personality, the efforts and the contribution of Laredj, whilst Laredj talked about his life, the importance of the Arabic language and he also revisited Algerian history and underlined the role of Amir Abdel Qadir and his contribution to the anti-colonial struggle (Laredj, 2015).

In 2016, Laredj was invited to speak about his life, novels and crises of extremism on the Sky News TV channel in Abu-Dhabi, which is aimed at Middle Eastern and North African audiences. Laredj was asked about the process of writing his biography, and he spoke about his life during the bloody ten years in Algeria. He then connected this to international relations with the Arab world, and foreign interventions, such as that in Libya. Laredj referred to various ethnic, regional, and linguistic crises in Algeria. It was only at the end of the interview that the journalist asked Laredj about his forthcoming novel, *نساء كازانوف* [Women of Casanova], and gave some hints into its content. This novel was planned to be published in time for the SILA in Algeria in November 2016, as well as book fairs in Beirut and Palestine around the same time or shortly afterwards (Sky News, 2016). This kind of interview is what Genette (1987) terms the epitext, an interview to introduce the text for a wider audience before its publication. Crucially though, in this interview, the main task allotted to Laredj was to explain contemporary politics and society in Algeria and in the Arab world more generally. This is the expectation when Laredj is invited to speak in both the West and in Middle Eastern and North African countries such as Palestine, Emirates, Sharjah, Jordan, Sudan, Morocco and Tunisia to talk about his work.

Ahlam Mosteghanemi: The prodigal daughter of the nation and Arab world

Ahlam Mosteghanemi (b.1953) was born in Tunisia. She is the daughter of the political activist Mohamed Chérif, who was exiled to Tunisia after the 8 May 1945 massacre in Algeria which preceded the War of Independence (1954-62). Her father was a teacher and a member of Bourguiba's Neo-Destour party. Mosteghanemi has described her father as a Francophone intellectual, both knowledgeable about

French culture and imbued with Algerian nationalism. Her father died in 1992 after a long struggle with a complicated illness and she dedicated her PhD to him. Mosteghanemi was sent by her father to an Arabic-language school, and he emphasized that his daughter needed to learn Arabic. In conferences and interviews, Mosteghanemi frequently comes back to this story, and connects it to Malik Haddad who suffered from his inability to write in the Arabic language. The family decided to return to Algeria after independence. Her father took up a position within the Algerian government, responsible for the redistribution of agricultural lands to farmers. According to Mosteghanemi, her father was in a hurry to build post-independence Algeria and was a man of justice, humanism and an opponent of illiteracy. During the 1970s, when Mosteghanemi was 17 years old, she found herself needing to help her family financially, because her father was expelled from his position and he went through depression.

At this point, Mosteghanemi began to be invited to a weekly programme devoted to poetry, to perform her poems, while her father was at the hospital. To her great surprise, her father would escape from hospital to attend his daughter's performances. On one occasion, after she performed her poetry, she was accused by an Islamist of polluting the language of the Quran. She couldn't defend herself, but her father did, and from that day, Mosteghanemi had a sense of freedom (France24, November 20, 2017). She studied in Algeria and obtained her first degree in literature. She states that she was prevented from continuing her studies at university in Algeria due to her feminist positions. According to Mosteghanemi, it was her teachers who were against her and she was expelled from Algerian Writers' Union. She considers herself as rebellious (France24, November 20, 2017). In 1972, Mosteghanemi was able to publish her first work with the Algerian publishing house SNED under the title, *على مرفأ الأيام* [In the Harbour of Days], a collection of poetry.

In 1976, Mosteghanemi met her husband George El Rassi, a Lebanese historian and journalist who was interested in Algerian history and was preparing his thesis about Arabisation and cultural conflicts in independent Algeria (Mosteghanemi, 2017). Also, in 1976, she published her first work, *الكتابة في لحظة عربي*

[Writing at Moment of Nudity], with the Beirut-based Dar Al Adab. She declared that with the publication of this collection of essays, she received bitter criticism from Islamists, notably because of the title of her work (France24, November 20, 2017). In 1980, Mosteghanemi decided to move to France to study at the Sorbonne University. Here, she completed a PhD on the status of Algerian women in literature, under the supervision of the famed Islamic scholar and sociologist Jacques Berque. Berque wrote the preface when her thesis was published by L'Harmattan in 1985 (Faqr, 1998:79; Holt, 2008:126; France24, November 20, 2017). Through these networks, Mosteghanemi gained social and cultural capital.

In 1993, Mosteghanemi moved to Lebanon and shifted her interest from writing poetry to novels. Her first novel *ذاكرة الجسد* [Memory in the Flesh] was published by Dar Al Adab in Lebanon in 1993 as well as in Algeria – this was, of course, during the civil violence. According to Mosteghanemi, at that time, she did not know how to write a novel, and it was just an exercise. Commenting on the major success of this novel about post-independence Algeria across the Arab world, she says that it expressed her honest, painful feelings towards the failure of state- and nation-building in the region. Like Laredj, Mosteghanemi considers herself a witness of the civil violence, and one of her thematic preoccupations was the situation of women during this bloody period.

The choice to publish with Dar Al Adab was not by accident. According to Mermier (2005 :59), “Dar al Adab has succeeded in bringing together the crown jewels of Arabic literature, and is today one of the most prestigious publishing houses in the Arab world, and maintains robust transnational networks with French publishing houses including Actes Sud and Verso.” As Leperlier (2012:69) points out, the physical presence of Mosteghanemi in Beirut in addition to her Lebanese husband facilitated the process of approaching this competitive and well-known publishing house. Moreover, one of the editors at Dar Al Adab, Souheyl Idriss, had a particular interest in Arabophone Algerian writers in the 1970s, a continuation of his political sympathy for the Algerian independence struggle, and his own experiences teaching Arabic in Algeria as part of the Arabization programme (Leperlier,2012:69). The high

profile of this publishing house granted Mosteghanemi wide distribution and circulation, as well as associating her name with Dar Al Abad's other authors, leading literary figures in the Arab world such as Nizar Qabbani, Naguib Mahfouz and Henna Mina. Abu-Haidar (1999:165) argues that "having one's works produced by a reputable publishing house in Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, or Tunisia [...] ensured their acceptance and their wider circulation in Algeria" – i.e. it was the transnational which raised their profile nationally. Mermier (2005:55) describes Beirut as "an intellectual crossroad on the scale of the Arab world and the concomitant development of a professional environment and an editorial field, subject [nevertheless] to the vagaries of the Arab book market and regional political vicissitudes"⁶².

In 1998, Mosteghanemi won the Naguib Mahfouz Prize for *Memory in the Flesh* (Holt, 2008:123; Baaqeel, 2015:144). This would be the first of many prizes. The Naguib Mahfouz award is a high-profile prize established in 1996 by the American University in Cairo and includes as part of the prize translation into English (Allen, 2001:205; Mehrez, 2002:44 & 54). Mosteghanemi seems fully aware of the market and the importance of these literary awards and their contribution to fame, as she stated: "Instead of wealth, the Mahfouz prize offers creative writers the opportunity to reach thousands of readers all over the world in more than one language. This is a privilege to which no Arab writer can aspire without an extensive network of relations and dozens of recommendations" (Mosteghanemi,1998). In *Egypt's Culture Wars: Politics and Practice*, the Egyptian scholar Samia Mehrez sees in the Naguib Mahfouz Prize an encouragement for authors who are seeking access to the West through the translation of their works, rather than seeking to grow their Arabic-language readership. After every winner is announced, in what is almost a ritual, established authors prompt a debate criticizing the recipient and accusing the judges of promoting poor quality work (Mehrez, 2000:44). This process brings the author,

⁶² [un] carrefour intellectuel à l'échelle du monde arabe et de la formation concomitante d'un milieu professionnel et d'un champ éditorial soumis aux aléas du marché du livre arabe et aux vicissitudes politiques régionales

his/her attackers, and the prize-winning work to greater public attention. This is precisely what happened with Mosteghanemi when she won the award. For Mehrez (2000:45):

by honoring one text, the Naguib Mahfouz Award panel judges not only extended the legitimacy of established writers in the field to the international level but they have taken upon themselves the more risky role of conferring legitimacy on new ones [...] AUC has taken on the role of identifying and naming the best scribes of the alley [a metaphor Mehrez uses for the nation writ large]. Having walked into this minefield, AUC has consistently found itself subject to the rules of the alley and its few scorn-ridden scribes and has been described as “representing a reality of its own making”.

The AUC judges described Mosteghanemi as the first Algerian woman to write a novel in Arabic, breaking with the Algerian Francophone tradition. She was categorized as nationalist because of her support for Pan-Arabism (an ideology based on the political, economic, social and cultural unification of the countries of the Arab world). She is also considered a feminist writer. Indeed, an examination of the packaging and reception of her work reveals significant focus on her gender and her language choice, as much as – if not more – on the content of her work. The fact that she is a woman coming from a conservative and patriarchal society is constantly flagged by publishers, scholars, and reviewers. This is not specific to Algerian writers – similar processes can be seen at play for other women from the Arab world, including the Moroccan writer Leila Slimani, the Tunisian novelist Fawzia Zouari, and the Egyptian author Nawal El Saadawi.

The press also focuses very much on the idea that she is the first, a path breaker. *The Mail Online* described Mosteghanemi as “one of the most successful female writers in the Arab world” (Moore,2013). *The Times* review of *Memory of the Flesh* – published by the reviewer on her blog – declared “This Algerian author is the most successful woman writer in the Arab world” (Saunders,2013). Mosteghanemi became famous in Algeria after she was praised beyond Algeria’s borders. She is nevertheless also very famous in Algeria, even though she has not lived there for

many years. She is mobbed by fans when she attends the SILA and her books are at the forefront of bookshops in Algeria and always available (see Appendix): “Ahlam Mosteghanemi is a legend in Algeria” (Davies, 2016). Algerian presidents have praised her work, including Ahmed Ben Bella and Abdel Aziz Bouteflika. In the words of Ben Bella, who she met in Geneva, “Ahlem Mosteghanemi is an Algerian sun which enlightens Arabic literature. She has carried Algerian Literature to a level which evolves into the history of the Algerian fight” (Mosteghanemi, n.d.). “Ahlem has carved a place for herself as one of the most important writers of the Arab world” reads a statement made by the Egyptian film director Youssef Chahine and published on the website of the Arab British Center.

The main controversies surrounding Mosteghanemi have been unsubstantiated accusations of plagiarism. Some of these accusations are far-fetched – for example, those who accuse her work of being written either by the Iraqi poet Sa’di Yusuf or the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani (Mehrez, 2000:51; Holt, 2008:124). On the contrary, Qabbani announced his admiration for *Memory in the Flesh*: “It made me dizzy. Rarely does a novel make my head go around” (Arab World Books). For Ellen McLarney (2002), who has written extensively on women’s literature in Arabic, these accusations of plagiarism can only tell us about the marginalization of women’s voices in the literary field. *Memory in the Flesh* was translated into French by Mohammed Mokeddem in 2002 by the French publisher Albin Michel, as *La Mémoire de la Chair*. This translation came about with the help of Waciny Laredj, who introduced her to the Parisian market (Leperlier, 2012:73). Holt (2008:136) argues that “the translation of Arabic into French serves only to register that the novel is, in this case, ‘authentically Algerian’”. The French publisher Albin Michel presents Mosteghanemi in the following terms: “political, she expresses the rebellion of a woman and a people; nourished in French culture, she knows how to invent a very

personal style, whose sensuality and lyricism never exclude irony”⁶³ (Albin Michel website).

Baaqeel stated that the English translation of Mosteghanemi’s novel did not reach similar sales in comparison to the Arabic version of her novel. Mosteghanemi remains little read in the English-speaking world. Mosteghanemi declared that the poetic language was lost in the English translation by Baria Ahmar Sreih and funded by the American University of Cairo Press because it was a quick translation and the translator was not talented enough. It was re-translated under the title of *The Bridges of Constantine* by Raphael Cohen in 2013 and released by the prestigious English publishing house Bloomsbury (2015:144). The novel has also been translated into several other languages, including Spanish, German, Chinese and Italian language. Outside of legal sales, Mosteghanemi’s works are very popular on illegal free PDF download websites. On a study of 4share.com, a website for illegal book downloads, Jacquemond (2016:352) found that prominent Egyptian writers are at the top of literary piracy, but Mosteghanemi was at the top of the non-Egyptian pirated Arab novelists in 2011, with 250,000 copies downloaded.

The problem with reviewers, publicists, scholars and publishers marketing Mosteghanemi as the author of the first Algerian novel written in Arabic is that this is not factually correct. The first Algerian female novelist to publish in Arabic is in fact a former government minister, Zuhur Ounissi (b.1936). Ounissi published a collection of short stories in Arabic, الرصيف النائم [The Soft Pavement], in 1967, and in 1982 she released الظلال الممتدة [Extending Shadows]. Two years later, she published على الشاطئ الآخر [On the Other Shore]. Ounissi published a further two novels, من يوميات مدرسة حرة [From the Diary of a Liberated Teacher] in 1978 and لونجا والغول [Lunja and the Ghost] in 1995 with the Algerian publisher Dahlab (Faqir, 1998:141). The latter is about

⁶³ politique, elle exprime la révolte d’une femme et d’un peuple; nourrie de culture française, elle a su inventer un style très personnel, dont la sensualité et le lyrisme n’excluent jamais l’ironie

Algerian women who participated in the war of independence and their position after liberation (Kaaben, 2015).

Mosteghanemi has declared that she practices self-censorship because she respects her readers and presents herself as an Arab Muslim woman. Speaking to a journalist for the Algerian Arabophone TV channel Echorouk, in response to a question about what Arab readers like most about her writings, Mosteghanemi answered that Arab readers are interested in all the themes she writes about but not sexuality. She added that if they want to read about this topic, they know whom they should approach – lots are published in the Gulf region. She states that this does not mean that she cannot write about men's oppression of women – which she does – but she takes into consideration her readers, so everyone will be able to read her works without being ashamed, and this is part of her success (Algerian Tourism, 2013). In another interview, Mosteghanemi claims that she cannot write about everything explicitly (France24, November 11, 2017).

In an interview with Baaqeel, Mosteghanemi explained that writers such as the Egyptian Nawal El Saadawi and the Lebanese Hanan Al-Sheikh have acquired fame due to the perceived transgressive nature of their writings:

In the case of Hanan Al-Sheikh's novels, I actually have some reservations about them despite her being one of the Arab writers whose writings are most widely read in Britain. These are like my concerns about Nawal El Saadawi, who is a great novelist, but I think depicts the wrong images in her writings about the Arab woman or the Arab homeland. I believe that El Saadawi for instance writes what the Western reader likes to read about Arab society, particularly when she makes major heroes out of marginal situations in her novels: where the hero becomes a pimp or gay or the Arab woman turns out to be a prostitute. This is something I would never attempt in my writings because it feels like a forgery of reality under the canopy of literature. I know that Arab society is not absolutely pure, but it is also not corrupt to the extent this writing suggests. We cannot change Arabian society nor send it any message by provocation (Baaqeel, 2014:152).

Here Mosteghanemi performs the conservative, “authentic” version of Algerian – and Arab – society, presenting herself as upholding certain shared values and not playing to Western audiences. Drawing on Graham Huggan’s *The Postcolonial Exotic*, Harrison (2015:61-62) argues that “[Mosteghanemi’s] novels make Algeria legible for a Mashriqi public [...] Mosteghanemi’s novels are part of a cultural industry whose center radiates from Cairo and Beirut, not Rabat and Algiers”.

فوضى الحواس [Chaos of the Senses] was published in Beirut with Dar Al Adab in 1997 and is considered by Mosteghanemi as the second part of *Memory of the Flesh*. It was reprinted thirty times, translated into French as *Le Chaos des Sens* with the French publishing house Albin Michel in 2006 and into English as *Chaos of the Senses* by the English publishing house Bloomsbury in 2015. عابر سرير [Bed Hopper] was published in 2003 also with Dar Al Abad and went into twenty-two reprints (Mosteghanemi blog). الأسود يليق بك [The Black Suits You] was published in 2012 and sold more than 200,000 copies (Ben East, 2013). It was only six years later in 2018 that *The Black Suits You* was released in French by Hachette Antoine in Beirut, translated by Fadia Farah Karlitch and Johnny Karlitch. The book appeared with the title *Les Femmes ne meurent plus d’amour* (Hanifi, 2018). In *the Black Suits You*, the protagonist’s father and brother are killed during the civil violence in Algeria, and so she becomes a singer, and she always dresses in black and is chased by a rich man in his fifties. She travels from Algeria to France, and from France to Syria and Egypt. It is, according to Mosteghanemi, a novel which explores the struggle between money and principles. Mosteghanemi states that she decided to switch from Dar Al Abab to the prestigious Lebanese publishing house Hachette Antoine because Dar Al Adab was unable to defend her rights as an author, notably in terms of copyright issues. In contrast, she argues, Hachette Antoine is more professional, in the way that they advertise for their writers and the legal frameworks which they have established and impose (Algerian Tourism, 2013).

The Black Suits You has come in for criticism as a less accomplished novel – notably Mosteghanemi was criticized on the Algerian Arabophone TV channel Echorouk in 2013 for this reason, in front of the author. Mosteghanemi in response

declared that she writes books to defend herself because she does not respond to criticism. She stated that those who accuse her are the enemies of success and what shocked her was that they were Algerians, she stated that she used to reply to their criticism but not anymore (Algerian Tourism, 2013). Mosteghanemi is less visible in the media than Daoud, Laredj, Sansal and Khadra. She has stated that she is not the kind of person who likes to appear on TV and has several times refused invitations from media outlets who have offered a considerable amount of money for her to appear (Algerian Tourism, 2013) – this projected reclusiveness is also part of her persona.

In 2016, Mosteghanemi was once again invited to the Algerian Arabophone TV channel Echorouk, and she repeated her disinterest in participating in TV programmes – although of course, she did this whilst participating in a TV programme. She does accept invitations to book fairs: online videos can be found documenting her presence at book fairs in Sharjah, Kuwait, Tunisia, Abu Dhabi, Dubai as well as in Algeria. According to Laredj, Mosteghanemi's fame is a phenomenon and will disappear in time, and the long queues to meet her and get her to dedicate works do not necessarily indicate that her novels are of good quality (Al Arabiya, 2016). To some extent, Laredj shares similar view with Samir Kacimi toward the writing style of Mosteghanemi and the audience she is targeting. Kacimi argues that her books are read mostly by teenagers (personal communication, July 04, 2017).

It is perhaps hardly surprising that the most successful female writer in the Arab world provokes such disparaging comments – whether they be motivated by jealousy or the genuine belief that Mosteghanemi is “just” a popular fiction writer. What is worth underlining is how these rivalries and disputes are often expressed through the language of political legitimacy. In 2016, Mosteghanemi accused Laredj of leaking the information that *Memory of the Flesh* was going to be translated into Hebrew, and doing so in a way which meant that the information was taken out of context and made to look as if she was “collaborating” with Israelis against the interests of Palestinians. In fact, Mosteghanemi insisted in a Facebook post, she had been approached by a Palestinian translator working for an Israeli publisher, Carmel

publishing house. Carmel, she argued, had been established with the goal of promoting Arab culture, and had already translated into Hebrew and published several Arab writers and political figures who were fierce critics of Israeli policy towards Palestine and Palestinians. She said that she had accepted the translation of her work on the understanding that she would renounce her royalties and copyright fees so that Carmel could translate other Arab authors. She also pointed out that many years previously, when she won the Naguib Mahfouz prize, she had rejected outright a Hebrew translation of her work. Mosteghanemi accused Laredj of leaking the information as the same Arabic/Hebrew translator had already translated Laredj's *سيدة المقام*, the first Arabic-language Algerian novel to be translated into Hebrew.

Laredj respond to these accusations on the Algerian TV programme Echorouk News. He had been invited to talk about his novel, *سيدة المقام*, but the discussion rapidly centred on Mosteghanemi's accusation. Laredj flatly denied that he was the source of the "leak" and mocked the idea of the leak. He stated that he was against racism towards languages and speaking in the Hebrew language or being published in Hebrew does necessarily mean a betrayal of the Palestinian cause. He said if Mosteghanemi wanted to publish her book in Hebrew she should just go ahead and do it, she has the right to be translated into any language and this was a way of spreading Algerian cultural patrimony. One of the journalists present in the TV discussion suggested that perhaps Mosteghanemi's publisher had made up the leak just to generate publicity around the forthcoming publication and enter the Hebrew market. Interestingly, even though Mosteghanemi clearly stated that she had agreed to the translation by Carmel publishing house, on several pro-Palestinian news websites information circulated suggesting that her work, along with that of other Arab women writers, had been translated and published without their permission by the Israeli publishing house Resling Books (the Palestinian Center of Information, 2018; Bishara, 2018).

Mohammed Moulessehoul: from accusation to accommodation

Mohammed Moulessehoul (b.1955), known as Yasmina Khadra – his pseudonym is his wife’s name – was born in the southern part of Algeria, in the province of Béchar, Kenadsa. He has extensively talked about his biography and published biographical writings: most recently in April 2018, in *Le Baiser et la Morsure* [The Kiss and the bite], a collection of interviews conducted by Catherine Lalanne and published by the French publisher Bayard. Like other Algerians whose primary education began after independence, Moulessehoul had the opportunity to be educated in the Arabic language. Moulessehoul declared that from an early age he admired poetry and Middle Eastern literature, indeed, he was born to a well-known family of poets in the Sahara, the tribe of Doui Menia, which Khadra is always proud of. Moulessehoul has stated that as a child he used to sing for his sisters.

At the age of nine, 1964 Moulessehoul was sent by his father to l'École des Cadets de la Révolution [Revolutionary Cadet School] of El Mechouar in Tlemcen, in the west of Algeria. This school was devoted to orphans of the War of Independence, but his father insisted on placing him in it to serve his country. Moulessehoul describes this experience in his book *L'Écrivain* [The Writer] and depicts himself as kidnapped by his father (France24, 2018), almost a victim of nationalism. According to Moulessehoul, he lost his identity because his name was erased and replaced by his registration number instead. During his stay at this school, in the absence of other leisure activities, Moulessehoul had access only to books. This experience became part of Moulessehoul’s narrative, he presents himself as traumatised by his childhood memories, growing up in oppressive, conformist surroundings which did not tolerate individual choices. Yet, in contrast to what Moulessehoul has stated, one can argue that he was privileged in comparison to the situation of many Algerian children at that time because he had the opportunity to study at this prestigious school. In 1968, Moulessehoul moved to a similar school in Koléa, on the outskirts of Algiers, and continued his studies in a bilingual class.

Talking about his trajectory, Moulessehoul explains that whilst at school he decided to become a poet, because he was well-read in Middle Eastern literature

such as the prominent poet Al Mutanabbi from Iraq and the Tunisian poet Abou el Kacem Chebbi. However, in his account, Moulessehouel was discouraged by his Arabic teacher, and encouraged by his French teacher instead, who offered him a copy of Camus's *L'Étranger* [*The Stranger*], and from that day onwards, Moulessehouel decided to write in the French language. During his stay at the Koléa military school, Moulessehouel was also encouraged by the Algerian Francophone novelist and playwright Slimane Benaïssa, and he used to tell stories, poetry and perform plays in Arabic and French to entertain his friends (Durham, 2015: 40). For Moulessehouel, writing in French embodies resistance and protest "to write in French is also, for me, a way of protesting against the scandalous campaigns of the Arabophones against the Francophones. It is almost an act of resistance"⁶⁴ (Geffroy, 2007). It is not entirely clear what he is referring to by "the scandalous campaigns of the Arabophones". Sansal and Douad do not target "Arabophones" so broadly when explaining why they write in French – they state that they do so as an act of opposition against the Islamists. Moreover, Mosteghanemi and Laredj write about similar themes to Daoud, Sansal and Moulessehouel/ Khadra, including critiquing fundamentalism and closed identities – and they do so in Arabic. However, what Khadra is doing by claiming that French is a language of resistance, is reproducing a cliché familiar to – and comforting to – his Western readership. Ironically, he made this declaration in an interview which was entitled "I write books which upset the West" (Geffroy, 2007).

In 1975, Moulessehouel passed his baccalaureate exam and, under the pressure of his father, joined l'Académie Militaire de Cherchell [The Military (Officers') Academy of Cherchell]. In 1978, Moulessehouel left the school and engaged in the combat units as a lieutenant. For Moulessehouel entering the world of literature was an act of individual will to seize control of the future which his father – and by extension the army and wider society – had planned out for him:

⁶⁴ Écrire en français est aussi pour moi une manière de protester contre les campagnes scandaleuses des arabisants à l'encontre des francophones. C'est presque un acte de résistance

I was kicked out of my family; it is a fact: an unfortunate initiative from the part of my father. And I was adopted by the army, which I left without resentment: the army raised me, I served it, I believe, with dignity and courage. I never attempt to deviate from the path that had been designated for me. I never rebelled. But I never gave up on what I consider to be powerful than a destiny: my vocation as a writer. I continued to write in a world that denied for me this freedom, and I realized my dream, perhaps thanks to him: prohibitions forge unyielding wills ⁶⁵ (Douin, 2001)

Being an officer in the army did not prevent Moulessehouf from writing and publishing in Algeria under his real name before the outbreak of the civil violence in the 1990s. In 1984, he published *Houria* with the state-owned Algerian publishing house ENAL. *Amen* was published in Paris, also in 1984. Under his real name of Mohammed Moulessehouf he also published *La Fille du Pont* [The girl on the bridge] in 1985, *El-Kahira-Cellule de la mort* [Cairo, Death Cell] in 1986 and *Le Privilege du Phénix* [The Privilege of the Phoenix] in 1989, all with the same publishing house, ENAL. These three works were later republished by another Algerian publishing house, Chihab, under what by then was Moulessehouf's pseudonym, Yasmina

⁶⁵ J'ai été éjecté de ma famille, c'est un fait : une initiative malheureuse de mon père. Et j'ai été adopté par l'armée, que je quitte sans rancune : elle m'a élevé, je l'ai servie, je crois, avec dignité et courage. Je n'ai jamais cherché à dévier de la voie qu'on m'avait tracée. Je ne me suis jamais rebellé. Mais je n'ai jamais renoncé à ce que j'estime être plus fort qu'un destin : ma vocation d'écrivain. J'ai continué à écrire dans un monde qui me refusait cette liberté- là, et j'ai réalisé mon rêve, peut-être grâce à lui : les interdits forgent les volontés inflexibles

Khadra. On the official website of the Algerian private publishing house Chihab, the works of Khadra are described in the following terms: “the allegory that builds the universe of *The Privilege of the Phoenix* shares its spaces, in *The Girl on the Bridge*, with historical reality. *The Privilege of the Phoenix*, *The Girl on the Bridge* and *El-Kahira or the Death Cell* constitute a fresco of the Algerian land, from colonial conquest to the war of liberation”⁶⁶.

After the publication of *Le Privilege du Phénix*, Moulessehoul was accused of plagiarism by the Algerian Arabophone writer Tahar Wattar. But greater challenges were to come. By 1989, Algeria was entering into a period of political crisis and was on the verge of the civil violence of the 1990s. Moulessehoul was an officer in the Algerian army, fighting against terrorism, but this did not prevent him from writing. Nevertheless, this started to become more risky: Algerian artists and intellectuals either writing in Arabic or in French were at risk of being targeted by Islamists. Moreover, the Algerian army started to take a greater interest in what Moulessehoul was writing. This was connected to both the political context in Algeria, and the fact that Moulessehoul’s work was attracting increasing international attention. In 1988, he published in France *De l’autre Côté de la Ville* [On the other side of the city] with the prestigious French publishing house L’Harmattan. The following year, in 1989, Moulessehoul was awarded Le Prix Joseph Peyre-Renaissance Aquitaine. Moulessehoul has stated in a number of interviews that attempts by the Algerian army to censor him is the reason why he started to write using his wife’s name, Yasmine Khadra.

In fact, Moulessehoul has several stories about why he uses his wife’s name. In one version, while he was involved in the armed struggle against terrorism, his French publisher in France asked for his identity card because Moulessehoul had sent

⁶⁶ l’allégorie qui construit l’univers du *Privilège du Phénix* partage ses espaces, dans *La fille du pont*, avec la réalité historique. *Le Privilège du Phénix*, *La fille du pont* et *El-Kahira ou La Cellule de la mort* constituent une fresque de la terre algérienne, de la conquête coloniale à la guerre de libération

his manuscript without a name, only the title *Le Dingue au Bistouri* (1989), and Khadra asked his wife to send her identity card instead (KTOTV, 2012). In another version, Khadra declared that it was his wife's choice and she was the one who proposed the idea of using her name, she said to him when he decided to give up on writing due to censorship imposed on him by the army "You have given me your name for life, and I will give you mine for posterity"⁶⁷ (Douin, 2001). In the same interview with *Le Monde*, Khadra does not hesitate to pay tribute to his wife and – in his words – to all women around the world, "to take a feminine name, it was also a way to express my admiration for Algerian women who, during the fundamentalists' war in Algeria, waged a masterful fight for human rights. I have a deep affection for them".⁶⁸ Leperlier (2017) argues that the use of a woman's name became another tool used by Khadra to defend Algerian women's rights, particularly against fundamentalists. Khadra stated "It's not just a tribute to her, but to Arab womanhood in general. In some Arab countries, women account for as much as 60 percent of the population, and are still completely marginalised" (Feehily, 2006). The multiple stories around Khadra's name are significant: they go from the very banal (he did not want to get into trouble with his employer, he needed to send an identity card, his wife's was available), to the personal (an act of love from his wife), to the political grand gesture for all Arab women (I have taken a female name to honour you – and to speak from you). They are thus a key part in the development of his persona as the anti-fundamentalist spokesperson for Algerian society, informing his readership of "what goes on there". Leperlier (2017 :183) argues that Khadra provides "an x-ray of the social body of Algerian society, better than some of the Algerian sociologists with

⁶⁷ tu m'as donné ton nom pour la vie, je te donne le mien pour la postérité!

⁶⁸ Prendre un nom féminin, c'était aussi une manière de dire mon admiration aux femmes algériennes qui, pendant la guerre intégriste en Algérie, ont mené un combat magistral pour les droits de l'homme. J'ai une profond affection pour elles

an international reputation have done. Moreover, his whole story is a quasi-sociological study”⁶⁹.

In 1993, Khadra received funding from UNESCO, via the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture. His transnational career took off from here. Khadra's first work in the *Morituri* trilogy was published in 1997 with the Paris-based publishing house Baleine. The novel was republished with Gallimard in 1999 with a preface by the writer Marie Ange Poyet and received Trophée 813 for the best Francophone thriller in 2006, as well as making it into four editions. *Morituri* was followed by *L'Automne des Chimères* [Autumn of the Phantoms], and *Double Blanc* [Double White] released in the same year, 1998, and published with the same Paris-based publishing house, Baleine. *L'Automne des Chimères* was awarded the German International Prize for the Noir Novel in 2002. These works explored the petro-state and Algeria's corrupted economic system as a way into understanding the Algerian civil violence (Deckard, 2013; Leperlier, 2017; Canu, 2007). To use Casanova's term, this trilogy gave Khadra access to the world republic of letters. Khadra is most certainly a writer born of the literature of urgency (Chapter 2), and the themes of his novels responded to the tastes of the French market in the 1990s. Khadra's persona was very attractive in conforming to reader expectations about an Algerian writer in this period: discouraged by his Arabic teacher, with a brutal experience of education and separation from his family, writing novels in French, an Arab male who espoused a female name, as well as being a former Algerian army officer who took part in the fight against terrorism. *Les Agneaux du Seigneur* was published with the prestigious French publishing house Julliard in 1998 and translated to English as *In the Name of God* with the American publishing house Toby Press in 2000. This was followed by *A Quoi rêves les Loups* (Julliard, 1999) translated into English as *Wolf Dreams* by Toby Press in 2007. Both *In the Name of God* and *Wolf Dreams* have as key themes

⁶⁹ [II] radiographie le corps social de la société algérienne, mieux que ne l'avaient fait certains sociologues algériens de réputation internationale. D'ailleurs, tout son récit est une étude quasi-sociologique

terrorism, and why young people join terrorist groups. For the Algerian bilingual novelist and critic Saïd Khatibi (2016):

In his novels *Morituri*, *Autumn of the Phantoms* and *Wolf Dreams*, for example, Khadra played a dual role: witness of the war, and narrator of it, but he could not adhere to “neutrality”. He has always taken a consistent stance in his writings on the years of the war in Algeria, in a harmonious position with the authorities, hostile to the Islamists, perhaps due to the author’s military background, or because he was also affected by the years of violence and blood. Although many Algerian writers wrote about the black decade of the nineties, among them Assia Djebar, Rachid Boudjedra, Rachid Mimouni, Amine Zaoui, and many others, the works of Yasmina Khadra represent the most important literary archive to understand what had happened, and in documenting the facts of cases of a country that was living under a daily bombings and massacres ⁷⁰.

By the official end of the civil violence in 2000, Khadra decided to retire from his position after 36 years of service in the Algerian army. Together with his family, they left Algeria and moved briefly to Mexico. Khadra was supported by the

⁷⁰ في رواياته 'موري توري'، 'خريف الأوهام' و'بم تحلم الذئاب مثلا، لعب خضرا دورا مزدوجا: شاهدا على الحرب وساردا لها، لكنه لم يستطع أن يلتزم " الحياد"، فقد اتخذ دائما في كتاباته عن سنوات الحرب في الجزائر موقفا متناغما مع السلطة، معاديا للإسلاميون، ربما يرجع الأمر إلى تكوين الكاتب العسكري، أو لتضرره هو أيضا من سنوات العنف و الدم، ورغم ان كثير من الكتاب الجزائريين كتبوا عن عشية التسعينات السوداء، على غرار آسيا جبار، رشيد بوجدره، رشيد ميموني، أمين الزاوي، وغيرهم، فإن أعمال ياسمينه خضرا تمثل الأرشيف الأدبي الأهم لفهم ما حصل، وفي توثيق وقائع حالات بلد كان يعيش على وقع التفجيرات والمجازر اليومية

International Parliament of Writers (IPW) (Deckard, 2013), an organisation for exiled and vulnerable writers, established in 1994 by Vaclav Havel together with other writers, including Salman Rushdie and Jacques Derrida, in part in response to the Rushdie fatwa, in part in response to the situation of Algerian writers during the civil unrest (Stransky, 2011; Cooper, 2011). In 2002, a short clarification of the reasons why the IPW and Khadra had parted ways was published by the IPW executive director Philippe Ollé-Laprune, who was at the time the director of the Book Office at the French Embassy in Mexico 1994–1998:

We would like to set the record straight concerning this writer, whom we invited as part of our City Asylum programme. In September 2000, IPW helped Yasmina Khadra, his wife and his three children to leave Algeria and come to France. He was offered the possibility to stay for two years in Mexico City, and he settled there a month later with his family. He had the use of an apartment at the Casa Refugio Citlaltepétl (the IPW refugee house), was given a monthly allowance and his children went to school at the French lycée. Nevertheless, at the end of his first three months there, Yasmina Khadra, who demanded to be given a residence in France, decided himself to leave Mexico City, we have formally noted this decision, which we regretted.

This story is revealing. Khadra and his family left Algeria within the framework of an international scheme to support writers whose lives are threatened for their ideas – a scheme supported by no less a figure than Salman Rushdie. Yet he left in 2000, when the situation in Algeria was far less dangerous and one might argue that the most important factor in his decision to leave was that it coincided with his retirement from the Algerian army. The IPW supported Khadra in moving to Mexico, but as a French-language writer who had a certain international stature to sustain and develop, being in a Spanish-speaking South American country had its limitations, however safe it might be. He therefore – to the IPW’s obvious displeasure – rapidly moved to Paris, which continues to be a major destination for

post-colonial writers where he could build his economic, symbolic, and cultural capital. In interviews, Khadra himself explains this as destiny, exile to France is a way of reconciliation with the writer that he was always meant to be: “I had this in my blood since I was little”⁷¹(Douin, 1999), “I was born to write”⁷² (Douin, 2001).

Shortly after moving to Paris, in 2001, Khadra revealed his real name to the media on the French television show *Bouillon de culture* (France 2) (Tarifeño, 2001). The French literary establishment was stunned, not least because “she” had been seen as “an authentic voice of the Arab woman” (Jeffries, 2005). After revealing his identity, his publisher decided to cancel Khadra’s interviews with the French media. His publisher also decided to print 30,000 instead of 250,000 copies of his first autobiographical book, *L'Écrivain* [The Writer], which was published in 2001 (Agerup, 2018; Leperlier, 2017). In an interview with Jeffries in 2005, Khadra gave the following explanation for the decline in his popularity:

there were many misunderstandings because people found it hard to understand a writer who was a soldier...I had to really fight against those who did not appreciate my work because they pigeonholed me as some sort of brute who was responsible for military massacres. Let me tell you, it was a hard battle – there is no honesty or integrity among the pseudo-intellectuals I had to take on. There’s much more honesty and integrity among soldiers, trust me.

Khadra's persona as an “authentic” writer was disrupted after revealing his identity. Controversial questions also emerged about his role as an officer during the civil violence, sometimes journalists even asked Khadra if he had participated in killing. For example, in a short documentary about Khadra produced and funded by the Qatari government and displayed on Al-Arabiya TV channel as part of the *Rawafid* programme in 2012, Khadra was asked precisely this.

⁷¹ j’avais ça dans le sang depuis que je suis tout petit

⁷² j'étais né pour écrire!

Khadra entered a period in which he wrote mainly autobiographical works which did not sell particularly well, although they continued to be published by the French prestigious publishing house Juillard. These included *L'Écrivain, L'Imposture des Mots* [The Imposture of Words] in 2002 and *Cousine K* [Cousin K.] in 2003. The latter was translated into English, with an afterword by the American poet Robert Polito, and released by the University of Nebraska Press ten years later in 2013, once Khadra's career picked up again. Following this decline in sales, and still writing under the name Khadra, the author's thematic concerns began to shift. From being inspired by Algerian society and presenting himself as an observer of local problems, he began to write much more broadly about the Arab world, and specifically the war on terrorism, the veil, Israel-Palestine, the invasion of Iraq and the condition of women. Sales went up, and he gained international recognition for *Les Hirondelles de Kaboul* [The Swallows of Kabul], published in 2002 and described by *The Guardian* (Freely, 2004) as "in the tradition of Albert Camus", followed by *L'Attentat* [The Attack] published in 2005 and *Les Sirènes de Bagdad* [The Sirens of Baghdad] published in 2006. Published by Juillard, these three novels were translated into nearly 40 languages. The French newspaper *Le Monde* described them as "a passionate fictional trilogy on the misunderstanding between the West and the Orient"⁷³ (Rousseau, 2006). Khadra was awarded several prestigious international literary awards (Khadra's literary awards are listed in Appendix) and some of his novels were adapted into films and plays. For example, *L'Attentat*, which is set in the Israel-Palestine conflict and reached sales of 750,000 in France alone was adapted to the screen by the Lebanese filmmaker by Ziad Doueiri in 2013. Khadra also began also to write film scenarios in collaboration with the Algerian filmmaker Rachid Bouchareb and the French screenwriter Olivier Lorelle such as *La Voie de l'Ennemi* [Two Men in Town] (2014) and *Road to Istanbul* (2015), which address similar themes to those in his novels.

⁷³ une passionnante trilogie romanesque sur le malentendu entre l'Orient et l'Occident

Khadra's *The Attack*, *The Sirens of Baghdad* and *The Swallows of Kabul* met the taste of the market and helped Khadra to further build his symbolic and cultural capital. Khadra was now positioned as providing an insight into the Arab and Muslim mind more broadly. As one reviewer entitled his review of *Les Sirènes de Baghdad*, this was an insight into "The Logic of Terrorism" – with Khadra positioned as reading the terrorist's mind to tell the story of how "a shy young man becomes suicide bomber" (Schenck, 2008). One comment on this novel on the Goodreads platform declares that "it also provides a window into the mind of a suicide 'bomber'".

Following the publication of *Les Sirènes de Baghdad*, on 30 September 2006, Khadra was invited to France 2 TV's *On n'est Pas Couché* programme. Khadra explained and praised the Arab civilisation and their contribution to the production of knowledge. He explained the mentality of the Arab Muslim world, terrorisms and the terrorists, the West vs the Orient, American soldiers, and the invasion of Iraq. Khadra defended Islam and modernity in the Arab world against fellow participant Eric Zemmour. He also talked about Algeria's corrupted political system, and about his experience in the Algerian army during the civil violence. He talked very little about his novel. This is a pattern whether he appears in the French-language media or the Arabic-language media. According to Khadra, with the publication of *L'Attentat*, he was accused by an Arab journalist who had not read his works of writing for Western audiences and betraying the Palestinian cause in a bid to gain the most prestigious French literary award, Le Goncourt (Al Hiwar, October 30, 2010). Khadra responded that he was a defender of the Palestinian cause, and rejected those journalists who did not read, or did not know how to read, his works. When he was invited to the Qatari Al Arabiya TV channel in 2012, Khadra adopted a much more conservative position than that which he takes in the Western media as a rebel against his own society. The journalist stated that he perceived Khadra as conservative as he does not cross "red lines", to which Khadra responded that he respects religion because he is a Muslim and Arab.

Every time Khadra is asked to explain and comment on the situation in the Arab and Muslim world, he always connects this to his experience as a former officer

in the Algerian army in addition to his identity coming from Bedouin, Berber, Arabophone and Muslim background. Khadra continues to perform the role of the analyst, the messenger, the mediator, the observer, and the witness. He is presented and marketed as an expert and someone who can read terrorists' mind and people's cultures. Such paratexts are used by the author himself, Khadra always revisits and includes his experience as a former officer in the Algerian army when speaking in Western universities, schools, conferences, and when giving interviews (Griffon, 2000: 16). In his own words : "All what I say is true. Fictionalised a little maybe. Nevertheless, it is a plagiarism of the Algerian reality, a surgical analysis of the Islamists. I am an expert on this phenomenon"⁷⁴ (Douin,1999). Khadra also enjoy a great journalistic capital. The invitations he received from the media and the press.

As the American critic Adam Shatz puts it: "it is good time to be a Muslim writing about the troubles with Islam" (2004). For Becker (2007), "Khadra is perhaps so extraordinarily successful because he tends to take as his subjects' current controversial topics from the Arab and Muslims world". As Agerup (2018:188) argues in discussing the reception of Khadra on the global stage, "Yasmina Khadra illustrates how the writer's profile as an expert on Arab culture and terrorism takes priority over historical accuracy. The knowledge he transfers to his readers bears his ideological and aesthetic mark. Khadra's version of the Arab world is marked by his opinions, values, and fears. While readers think that they have read a story about Afghanistan, they have shared in the writer's worldview".

The recognition, which Khadra has achieved amongst Western audiences as an analyst, messenger and mediator of the Arab and Muslim world is matched by the Algerian state's recognition of him as a cultural ambassador. This contrast with Sansal and Daoud whose personas as modern secularists go a bit too far for the Algerian government. Daoud, for example, only holds one Algerian literary award (the 2008 Mohammed Dib award) and is much more consecrated in the West. Mosteghanemi,

⁷⁴ Tout ce que je dis est vrai, romancé peut-être. Mais c'est un plagiat de la réalité algérienne, une analyse chirurgicale de l'intégrisme

Laredj and Khadra, on the other hand, are welcomed and praised by the Algerian government. In 2008, Khadra was appointed by the Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika as director of the Algerian Cultural Centre (CCA) in Paris, a position which he held until 2014. This is a diplomatic position with diplomatic advantages.

On the 6 December 2017, Khadra was invited to the Arabic-language version of the news channel France24 and gave an interview in which he said he would reveal the circumstances of his appointment to the CCA. Khadra was asked how and why he was appointed to the CCA, and whether or not he had lost close friends over his decision to take up the position. The accusations of those who criticised him for taking up this role included that he was profiting from the regime by having a chauffeur-driven car, luxury accommodation and a tax-free salary as well as diplomatic status. Khadra counter-claimed that he was appointed to the position because of his critique of the Algerian political system. He states that in 2007 he published an article in the Spanish newspaper *El País* which criticised the presidential elections which were happening in Algeria at that time. Following this, Khadra said that he received an invitation from President Bouteflika asking to meet him – which the two men did in July 2006, in Oran. Khadra stated that at this point the president confirmed that his criticisms were true and following another meeting at the SILA later that year, the president suggested to him that he take over the position of the CCA in Paris. According to Khadra, when he accepted this position, he lost 20% of his readers. However, Khadra stated that he accepted this job – and made this sacrifice – to serve Algerian culture, even though his 10 million-strong readerships meant he did not need the job (Berbère Télévision, 2015). For Khadra, those who criticized him were the enemies of success (see also Meyer, 2014; Al Hiwar, 2010). However, after Khadra unsuccessfully stood against President Bouteflika in the 2014 presidential elections, his term at the CCA came to an end.

In interview with the German translator and scholar Regina Keil-Sagawe at Khadra's office at the CCA, Keil-Sagawe describes Khadra as writing "passionately committed literature that traces the conflict between the Arab world and the West with unashamed pathos and emotion. And which appeals worldwide for

understanding between nations, for peace and tolerance in Algeria, Somalia, Afghanistan, in Israel, Palestine and Iraq” (2013). After his time as director of the CCA came to an end in 2014, Khadra increasingly wrote works which focused on reconciliation between peoples and nations. In 2008, he published *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (2008) with Julliard. In an interview with Khadra uploaded onto YouTube by his publisher, he declared that this was an attempt to humanise the relationship between Algeria and France (Khadra, 2009). *Ce Que le Jour Doit à la Nuit* is set in 1930s Algeria and is a love story between an autochthonous Algerian and a European settler, at a time when these kinds of relations were seen as a taboo. Regina Keil-Sagawe (2013) asked Khadra if he was nostalgic about this period (which would be an unusual position for an Algerian to adopt, but a common one for most French settlers). Khadra declared that he was not even born during the period he was writing out, but that writing about something which was not recognised as part of official history was an act of love towards his own country. This novel was adapted to film in 2012 by Alexandre Arcady, with the love story between Younes and Èmilie is interpreted by Arcady as a metaphor of impossible love and reconciliation between Algeria and France (Telarama website).

In 2011, in the middle of the Arab Spring, Khadra was invited to France24 in Arabic to comment on the political tensions in North Africa and the Middle East. Khadra talked as a political analyst. He was asked about Tunisia and Tunisians, Khadra praised Tunisians and their peaceful revolutionary actions. He was also asked about Algeria. Khadra re-visited and connected the revolutions in the Arab world to the Algerian October Riots in 1988, the civil violence and the situation of men of arts during that period. One of the comments below this interview posted on YouTube expressed surprise that a writer was brought in as expert: “Madam, what is the reason behind inviting well-known writer Yasmina Khadra and to not ask him a single question about his literary works, all your questions are about politics, what is this? If you want answers to your political questions, you should invite political analysts

and experts and not the prominent writer Yasmina Khadra, and I would love to hear more about his literary works"⁷⁵.

Within the same year 2011 and with the same TV channel, France24, but in French, Khadra was invited to talk about the same events, revolutions in the Arab world. The journalist did not hesitate to ask Khadra about the danger of Islamists and democracy in the Arab world (France24, 2011). A critical comment under the video on YouTube reads: "this Yasmina Khadra was saying that he was in opposition to the Algerian regime, but after the Algerian authorities offered him a position at the Algerian Cultural Centre in France, he is no longer the same"⁷⁶ (France24, 2011).

If the discovery that Khadra was not a woman but a man in the Algerian army dented his "authenticity", the fact that Khadra took up what is considered to be a position of high government office – director of the CCA – was another blow to the persona of outsider who provides insight into the inside, particularly as he began to write about places which he had never visited. In an interview with Jeffries in London, Khadra stated that he did not visit Afghanistan to write *Les Hirondelles de Kaboul*, but he was very familiar with the mentality of Taliban, which is according to Khadra is like Algerian fundamentalists' mentality (Jeffries, 2005). A similar question was asked of Khadra when he was invited to France24 in Arabic to talk about his novel *Dieu N'habite pas à La Havane* [God does Not Live in Havana], a 2016 novel translated into Arabic in 2018 by the prestigious Lebanese publishing house Hachette Antoine as ليس لها فانا رب يحميها. The journalist asked Khadra if the time he spent in Cuba – three days – was enough to write about Cuba's people and their culture. Khadra justified his choice to write about Cuba and Cubans because, in his words, they shared a lot with Algeria and Algerians in their determination, resistance against foreign domination

⁷⁵ سيدتي ما سبب استضافة الأديب الكبير ياسمينه خضرا ولم تسألينه ولا سؤال أدبي واحد كلها أسئلة سياسية ما هذا؟ إذا أردت أجوبة عن أسئلتك السياسية كنتي أستضيفتي محللين سياسيين وليس أديب كبير كنت أتمنى الاستمتاع أكثر بحديثه الأديبي

⁷⁶ Ce Yasmina Khadra se dit de l'opposition, mais après que le pouvoir Algérien lui a offert du travail au Centre Cultural Algérien en France, ce n'est plus le même

and struggle for liberation (France24, 2016). Khadra has explained that he has many friends from different countries, and through this has come to know their cultures. For example, he states that he relied on an Israeli friend when writing *L'Attentat* and spoke to army officers who were close to former Libyan president Muammar Gaddafi (1969–2011) when he was writing *La Dernière Nuit du Raïs* [The Dictator's Last Night]. This tells us how just confident Khadra is to take on the role of spokesperson and analyst. A France24 in French ran an interview with Khadra when *La Dernière Nuit du Raïs* came out with the title "Yasmina Khadra dans la tête de Kadhafi" [Yasmina Khadra in the head of Gaddafi] (2015). Compared to the other authors discussed in this chapter, Khadra produces books notably quickly within which he makes arguments of authority about a whole range of sociological, political, religious, economic, and cultural problems.

In his article "Littérature Algérienne : le bestseller introuvable ? Le cas de Yasmina Khadra" [Algerian literature : the impossible to find bestseller ? The case of Yasmina Khadra], Leperlier (2017:177) underlines the particular popularity and productivity of Khadra :Between 2004 and 2007, 14 titles of Algerian authors were part of the bestsellers according to Hebdo Books; 9 by Yasmina Khadra, 3 by Boualem Sansal, 1 by Kamel Daoud and 1 by Fellag. These numbers place Algeria as the 13th country of "best sellers" in France⁷⁷. Khadra's *Ce Que le Jour Doit à la Nuit* reached sales of 800, 000 copies, compared to the bestselling French writer Marc Levy's *Tous ces choses qu'on ne s'est pas dites* [All Those Things We Never Said], which reached sales of one million copies (Leperlier, 2017: 177).

In 2014, Khadra published *Qu'Attendent Les Singes* [What the Monkeys are waiting for], initially in France, the novel was then re-published in Algeria by Casbah. In April, Khadra was invited to the French TV channel C+ with Fateh Titouche, an

⁷⁷ Entre 2004 et 2017, 14 titres d'auteurs Algériens ont fait partie des "Meilleures ventes" hebdomadaires, selon Livres Hebdo ; dont 9 de Yasmina Khadra, 3 de Boualem Sansal, 1 de Kamel Daoud et 1 de Fellag. Ces chiffres font de l'Algérie le 13^{ème} pays provenance des "Meilleures ventes" en France

Algerian activist against the Algerian political system. Khadra commented on the Algerian president, on the Algerian political system and on the ongoing presidential elections. The whole debate was devoted to the political situation of Algeria. It was only right at the end that the interviewer advertised Khadra's novel, and Khadra declared "If you want to know what is happening in Algeria read this novel" (ACA DZ, 2014). Khadra declared that his failure to mount a successful campaign in the presidential elections of that year was because he was attacked by a group of journalists, manipulated by the Algerian regime, to discredit his writings and by a certain intelligentsia for whom he who created the term *Khadraphobie*. According to Khadra, they accused him of plagiarism, and they stated that he insulted Algerians, and he works for France and Zionists (L'Invité, 2014). Speaking on the Al Jazeera English channel in 2015 – having been invited on to comment on the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris – Khadra declared: "For the last 15 years I have been personally attacked by detractors saying that I do not write my books, that I am a plagiarist, a spy, that I follow the system. I never reacted: why? Because I know, the more you react, the more you feed this downward spiral, this malicious and devastating tsunami" (Al Jazeera English, 2015).

In 2018, Khadra published *Khalil*, about the terrorist attacks of 13 November 2015 in Paris. The psyche of the terrorist and youth radicalisation is a persistent theme in Khadra's novels, including *Wolf Dreams*, *In the Name of God*, and *The Last Night of the Dictator*. On 22 October 2018, he was invited to the Médiathèque George Sand d'Enghien-les-Bains together with the French journalist and editor Catherine Lalanne. During this conference, Khadra adopted the role of the sociologist and psychologist and explained to the audience how youth are radicalised and brainwashed to join the Islamists. He advised parents to take care of and keep an eye on their children. Khadra was also invited to the French TV programme *Vivement Dimanche Prochain*, and his novel was described as one of anti-radicalisation, "a novel of life that every adolescent should read, the end of the novel is very moving" (Interview People, 2018).

Khadra is more popular and prolific than any other Algerian author currently writing. He attends national and international book fairs, such as Frankfurt, SILA, Livre Paris, Quebec, Sharjah, and he also attend conferences with scholars and academics, always accompanied by his translator on his journeys to non-Francophone countries. Khadra cross borders easily for the promotion of his works; he can travel to more than ten countries in one month. He has also toured in Algeria, in Tlemcen, Oran, Algiers, Béjaïa, Sidi Bel Abbes – indeed of the five writers discussed in this chapter, it is only Sansal who has not received any invitation from Algerian publishers or the state.

This analysis of Yasmina Khadra as literary celebrity is not to underestimate the works he produces – although the lexis of his works, and the speed at which he produces them, makes them less aesthetically sophisticated than those of some of the other authors discussed here – but to demonstrate the centrality of Khadra’s “persona” in the publishing, sales and consumption of his novels. His books are framed as giving direct insight into the problems of the Arab Muslim World, with a thematic approach familiar to Western readers: women oppression’s, the veil, Franco-Algerian relations, the war between Palestine and Israel, and the war on terrorism. The use of his wife’s name as a pseudonym, his position at the Algerian army but also the fact that he was censored, not to forget the narrative he established for himself in marketing his autobiography with the support of his publishers, journalists, and the media all enabled him to gradually build his economic, cultural, symbolic, and journalistic capital.

Boualem Sansal: the no-so-banned writer crossing all the red lines

Boualem Sansal (b.1949), is Francophone Algerian author, from a French and Tamazight-speaking family. Born in the west of Algeria in the province of Tissemsilt, his maternal grandfather was a soldier in the French army and took part in the First World War. His paternal grandfather was from Morocco. His mother was an educated woman who spoke French, whereas his father enjoyed life through travelling and playing the piano. Sansal was raised by his grandmother after the death of his father

but later with his two brothers joined their mother who moved to Algiers with her second husband. In 1963, aged 14, Sansal went to study at the Charles Lutaud Lycée, before joining the prestigious École Polytechnique in 1968 where he became an engineer in the state-owned oil and gas industry (Harchi,2016:225-238). Sansal's personal history is entwined in all his literary works.

It was in Algiers that Sansal met the Algerian Francophone writer Rachid Mimouni and both worked in Boumerdès at the National Institute of Production and Industrial Development (INPED), i.e. in the state-owned oil and gas industry. From time to time with other colleagues, they used to talk and discuss literature. Sansal used to take notes about some of the problems of his society, and with an economist's lens discuss them with his friends – he later decided to publish these notes (Harchi, 2016:243). Sansal started his career as a novelist during the civil violence in Algeria.

Sansal has written eight novels so far, all in French, all of them published abroad and translated into several languages, including English, German, and Hebrew. All Sansal's works are issued by the same French publisher, Gallimard. Sansal's first novel appeared under the title *Le Serment des Barbares* [The Barbarians' Oath] in 1999, as the civil violence was coming to an end. Sansal's *Les Serment des Barbares* is a detective novel based on an investigation which relies heavily on delving into the past. Sansal seeks to investigate the complexities of Algerian history to question the present, arguing that there are missing parts in official Algerian national, and nationalist, history which need to be written, including the experiences of European settlers in Algeria (*pieds noirs*) and Algerians who fought in the French army (*harkis*) (Brisley,2013:91-112). This is indeed a theme across Algerian Arabophone and Francophone writers, for example, Mohammed Ben Djebbar (b.1965) published a novel under the title الحركي [harkis] in 2015 in Arabic with the Algerian 21st publishing house. *Le Serment des Barbares* was translated into Arabic by Mohamed Sari in 2007 and published by Algerian El-Ikhtilef and Beirut Arabic Scientific Publishers Inc.

According to Harchi (2016: 245-246), referring to *Le Serment des Barbares*, “at Gallimard there was a noise that an extraordinary manuscript had just arrived from Algeria”⁷⁸. Upon receiving the manuscript, what the publishers saw was a detailed insight into Algeria’s culture, society, economy, and politics. The author himself states that the novel was a no-holds-barred insight into Algeria, which he was taking a risk to publish, as an Algerian author who still lived in Algeria in the 1990s. He was advised by his French publisher to publish it under a pseudonym for his safety but Sansal refused. Sansal sees himself as a continuity of the previous generation of Algerian Francophone writers, including Tahar Djaout and Rachid Mimouni (28 Minutes Arte, 2018). Tahar Djaout was, as we have seen in chapter 2, murdered during the 1990s, having continued to live and write in Algeria despite the threats against him. Like Djaout, this was a risk which Sansal was prepared to take, and it did cost him: “My personal life and that of my family has been really ravaged by the Islamists”⁷⁹. Najib Redouane (2014 :77) writes in relation to Sansal that “it is therefore through a necessary urgency, which reveals a tremendous act of courage, a real commitment, that Sansal resorts to writing to express a shared disenchantment and despair after the hopes born from independence ”⁸⁰

It was after the publication of *Dis-moi Le Paradis* [Tell me Paradise] in 2003 that Sansal was removed from his job as director of the INPED due to his explicit criticism of Algeria’s political elites (Redouane,2014:76; Harchi,2016:249). He has nevertheless continued to insist that he will live in Algeria. When asked by a journalist why he does not move to Paris, Sansal did not deny that from time to time he thinks

⁷⁸ chez Gallimard le bruit courait que venait d’arriver d’Algérie un manuscrit extraordinaire

⁷⁹ Ma vie personnelle et celle de ma famille ont vraiment été ravagées par les Islamistes

⁸⁰ c’est donc par une urgence nécessitée, qui révèle un formidable acte de courage, un véritable engagement, que Sansal recourt à l’écriture pour dire le désenchantement et le désespoir partagés après les espoires nés de l’indépendance

about it with his wife, but then he hesitates, “if we do not fight for our state, what other struggle of ours will be credible? Can you trust someone who fights for peace in the world but does not struggle for his country? The primary struggle is where you live, at home” (Hendler, 2012). One of Sansal’s most famous novels is *Le Village de l’Allemand ou le Journal des frères Schiller* [An Unfinished Business] published with Gallimard in 2008, winner of the RTL-Lire, the SGDL Roman and the Louis-Guilloux and Nessim-Habif prizes. *An Unfinished Business* is marketed as the first novel written by an African author which engages with the Holocaust. It is based on true story and the character Malrich decides to reveal the truth to the world because he believes that crimes could occur again if we do not correct history, “I felt I had to tell the world. I knew it was all ancient history, but still and all, life doesn’t change and what happened to us could happen again” (Sansal, 2008:8).

This idea of having a duty to improve one’s country is common in the ways in which Algerian writers who became celebrities after 2000 talk about themselves. Khadra, for example, states that this was why he decided to stand in the 2014 presidential elections, whilst Daoud rejects the idea of leaving Algeria as a way of resisting the tyranny of the Islamists who stand against art, and men and women of art. The fact that they can stay in Algeria also reflects that they are in less danger than the writers of the 1990s. Without denying that Sansal has suffered personally and professionally because of his writings, suffering, risk, and resistance has also been made part of his marketing narrative. This is part of the way in which postcolonial writers are perceived: as rebellious outsiders. Sansal is seen as someone who is living in exile in his home country. In an article written by David Caviglioli (2015), entitled “Boualem Sansal: Le Kamikaze” [Boualem Sansal: the Kamikaze], the accompanying photograph is a picture of Sansal on his apartment balcony, surrounded by barbed wire – this expresses an idea which Sansal has articulated, that of Algeria as a prison of intolerance.

Sansal’s *Harraga* first appeared in France in 2005, published by Gallimard. The title comes from a commonly used Arabic word in Algeria – also familiar to French readers – to describe those who cross the borders illegally to reach Europe, seeking

a better life. Sansal focuses on the thoughts, behaviour, difficulties of and relationship between his two main characters, Chérifa and Lamia, which is entwined in explicit criticism of the Algerian government. *Harraga* is also meant to describe Chérifa (whose name means “honourable”), who transgresses the norms and traditions imposed on her as a woman by an oppressive society in the Arab Muslim world. The novel thus brings together themes likely to appeal to Western taste: illegal migration, religion and women’s oppression in the Arab and Muslim world. Reviewing the English translation of the novel in 2014, the British newspaper *The Independent* stated that it “explores Islamism and its treatment of women” (Sanai, 2014). Goodreads is one of the most well-known online platforms to discuss books, with sixty-five million users. A short review of *Harraga* published by Marie from Canada on 28 March 2018 stated: “what an incredible writer Sansal is, this is my first novel by this author and I really like his writing. I entered the universe of a woman who lives alone, and who also lives great loneliness about which she is ambivalent. Through [Sansal’s] vision, we discover the Algeria of today with the tensions between current society and Islam, and the Algeria of his daily life, his work, his neighbourhood and his house”⁸¹.

Sansal might refuse to permanently leave Algeria, but his career is very much transnational. Sansal’s works are available in some Algerian bookshops but he is not a holder of any Algerian literary award – in contrast to Ahlam Mosteghanemi, Waciny Laredj and Yasmina Khadra, who are holders of Algerian literary awards and often invited to the SILA and Algerian universities. In 2015, for example, Laredj was honoured by the Algerian Ministry of Culture, Azzedine Mihoubi, who stated that:

⁸¹ quel incroyable plume que celle de Sansal, c’est mon premier roman de cet auteur et j’aime beaucoup son écriture. Je suis rentrée dans l’univers d’une femme qui vit seule, et qui aussi vit une grande solitude face à laquelle elle est ambivalente. A travers son regard, nous découvrons l’Algérie d’aujourd’hui avec les tensions entre la société actuelle et l’Islam, et l’Algérie de son quotidien, son travail, son voisinage et sa maison

“Waciny Laredj is not only a man who represents Algerian literature in the Arabic language but also a writer, receiving these literary awards gives the best image of his country and is a sign of the development of its culture in all its rigor and its quality”⁸² (Graba, 2015) – we have already seen above the praise heaped on Mosteghanemi by Algerian presidents. In contrast, Sansal’s works are read, translated, praised and given awards by Western publishers, and to a lesser extent Middle Eastern one. *Harraga* was translated into Arabic in 2007 by the Algerian publishing house SEDIA and the Lebanese publishing House El Farabi, sponsored by the French CNL in collaboration with the French Ministry of Culture. The 2014 translation of *Harraga* into English was supported financially by English PEN’s Writers in Translation Program, funded by Bloomberg and the Art Council England. Four years later, the writing of *Le Train d’Erlingen: Ou la Métamorphose de Dieu* [The Erlingen train: or the metamorphosis of God], published by Gallimard in 2018, was subsidised by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Sansal clearly appeals to French – and European – tastes in content and style. According to the Algerian journalist Fayçal Métaoui, “Gallimard literary critics have estimated that Boualem Sansal has a certain ‘Rabelaisian verve’ and they salute his ‘vitality in writing’”⁸³ (Métaoui, 2006).

When Sansal is introduced by journalists in conferences and interviews, he is always presented as someone whose novels are banned in Algeria, and that he is targeted by the Islamists. This fits with Casanova’s argument about Paris being seen as – and nourishing its reputation as – as the land of freedom: “Paris [...] represents the last bulwark against national censorship: its historical reputation as the capital of every form of liberty – political, aesthetics, and moral – makes it a beacon of freedom

⁸² Waciny Laredj n’est pas seulement un homme représentant la littérature algérienne en langue arabe mais aussi un écrivain qui, en recevant ces prix donne la meilleure image de son pays ainsi que l’état d’avancement de sa culture dans toute sa rigueur et sa qualité

⁸³ les critiques littéraires de Gallimard ont estimé, eux, que Boualem Sansal a une certaine “verve rabelaisienne” et saluent sa “vitalité” dans l’écriture

for writers” (Casanova, 2004:129). Sansal is actually less censored than some of the paratexts surrounding his works might suggest. With a few notable exceptions – one being Sansal’s 2006 *Poste restante: Alger. Lettre de colère et d’espoir à mes compatriotes* [An Open Letter to my Compatriots in Algiers] which openly criticised the Algerian political system in a non-fictional form – Sansal is not subject to direct state censorship, rather publishing houses are reluctant to take him on in case they are closed down. Some publishing house representatives declare that they would not want to publish Daoud or Sansal – whether this is for aesthetic reasons, political differences of opinion, fear or jealousy (as Daoud argues) is hard to work out. According to the representative of Casbah publishing house Sebaoun Said, Sansal and Daoud write for French audiences. He added that Sansal would be forgotten in years to come because no Algerian can see him or herself in his works. Whereas if an Algerian read Mohammed Dib or Assia Djebar from the first page he/she would find him/herself plunged into Algeria’s history and culture, “Sansal and Daoud c’est l’actualité, l’événement” [Sansal and Daoud, it’s the news, the one-off event], and when that event disappears they are no longer relevant (S. Sebaoun, personal communication, July 3, 2017). Nevertheless, Sansal’s works are available on the shelves of bookshops in Algeria: as the Algerian journalist Hamdi Baala confirms in an article on Huffington Post Algérie in 2015 “Boualem Sansal’s novels did not face any kind of censorship, sources from the Ministry of Culture confirmed this for the Huffington Post Algeria this Monday 19 October, recalling that his books are sold in bookstores”⁸⁴.

Sansal describes himself as stubborn and insists on continuing to write, give talks and criticise not only Algeria and its political system but also the Arab-Muslim world as well as Islam. Sansal uses humour to mock the Muslim and the Arab world and their political leaders, and this is well articulated in his novels. Sansal spends the

⁸⁴ les romans de Boualem Sansal ne font l’objet d’aucune interdiction, ont affirmé au Huffington Post Algérie des sources au ministère de la culture ce lundi 19 Octobre en rappelant que ses livres se vendent normalement dans les librairies

weekend in Paris for talks and debates and the rest of the week in Algeria in his office, and he describes the Muslim weekend (Thursday and Friday until recently in Algeria, now Friday and Saturday) as not useful (Hendler, 2012). This rejection of the Muslim weekend is one of a number of positions adopted by Sansal which make him “cross a red line” and stand out from mainstream opinion in Algeria.

The most controversial example of “crossing red lines” is Sansal’s attitude towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. Kamel Daoud, too, has refused to take an unequivocal pro-Palestinian position, but has not gone as far as Sansal. In 2008, Sansal was the first Arab writer who supported the presence of Israel at the Paris Book Fair while some Arab countries refused to attend when they knew about Israel’s attendance (Hendler, 2012). Then, between 14 and 16 May 2012, Sansal visited Jerusalem and attended the Jerusalem International Festival of Writers. His visit to Jerusalem prompted significant debate in the Middle Eastern, Western and Algerian media. According to Sansal, this visit was to show his opposition to the Algerian regime. Sansal said that some supported his visit whilst others in Algeria were against, but he was encouraged by his wife (Kessler, 2012). Sansal was described by the *Jerusalem Post* as “a staunch secularist” (Kessler, 2012). The Palestinian Hamas described Sansal’s visit as “a crime against the 1.5 million Algerian martyrs who gave their lives for freedom” (Kessler, 2012; Hendler, 2012), whilst the Lebanese columnist Najwan Darwish stated that “worn-out clichés about dialogue and peace [to justify attending events in Israel] do not fool even the idiots” (Kessler, 2012). Sansal said that in Algeria he was accused of betraying religion, the Arab world and the martyrs. He added that he had also received extensive criticism from Western anti-Semites, and that Hamas exploited his visit to warn other Arab intellectuals that “either you are with us or against us” (Hendler, 2012).

As a result of his attendance at this festival, the 15,000-euro Arab Novel Prize, sponsored by the Arab League, which had been awarded to Sansal for his 2011 novel *Rue Darwin* [Darwin Road], was withdrawn. This is a semi-autobiographical novel which explores Sansal’s family history as well as the history of Jews in Algeria. A previous winner of the prize had been Rachid Boudjedra for *Les Figuiers de Barbarie*

[The Barbary Figs] in 2010. The prize giving ceremony had been due to take place at the Institute du Monde Arabe in Paris. On his return from Jerusalem, Sansal was informed by the Jordanian Ambassador that the ceremony was cancelled. This action in particular helped Sansal to increase his reputation as tolerant and rebellious and someone who is not afraid to take a position against mainstream opinion in the Arab world in general and in Algeria in particular. After this incident, Sansal published an article targeted at Arab political leaders which accused them of hypocrisy. According to the Israeli journalist with whom Sansal met in Paris, on the premises of Gallimard, Sansal stated that: “if anyone needs to speak out in the service of the Arab community and Muslims around the world, it is the intellectuals. After all, we will not ask a bricklayer to work in Israel and give a speech about it when he comes back. But for an intellectual that is his profession. The Arab intellectuals do not merit that epithet. They take no responsibility for anything. They are afraid” (Hendler, 2012). This led to the establishment of a group composed of French and European intellectuals to support Sansal, including the prominent Israeli writer David Grossman and Denis Huber, executive director of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (Hendler, 2012).

Both Sansal and Daoud challenge the idea, extremely popular in Algeria, that there is a long-held “natural” allegiance between Algerians and Palestinians, as two peoples who have fought or are still fighting colonialism. Palestinians supported the Algerian War of Independence between 1954 and 1962, and in the 1970s the Palestinian Liberation Front (PLO) was based in Algeria. On Palestine and religion, Sansal and Daoud take positions which clearly demarcate them from mainstream, consensual Algerian opinion, and they attract attention from the Western media because of this. They present themselves as and are presented as “rebels” against both the political system and the society they come from.

Sansal’s *2084: La fin du Monde* [2084: The End of the World] was released in 2015, and, like all of Sansal’s novels, was published by Gallimard. The novelist, critic, and columnist for several English and Middle Eastern newspapers Robin Yassin-Kassab (2017) found that the novel is underpinned with satire, fable and polemic. It

explores the themes of freedom of expression, injustice, religion, and totalitarianism. The novel is considered a work of science fiction inspired by George Orwell's *1984*. The way Sansal's novel was marketed as having first and foremost a connection to George Orwell's *1984*, is similar to how Kamel Daoud's *Meursault contre-enquête* was marketed as rewriting Albert Camus and how Laredj's *Lolita's Fingers* was marketed in relation to Nabokov's original work. These connections make "world literature" accessible and locatable for Western audiences. *The National* compared *2084* to *1984* by George Orwell and to *Soumission* [Submission] by French author Michel Houellebecq (2015). In fact, the French left-wing newspaper *Libération* reported that Michel Houellebecq had found Sansal's imagining of Islamic totalitarianism coming to power in Europe even more dystopic than that in his own work (Le Touzet, 2015). The French centre-right newspaper *Le Figaro* described *2084* as the book of the year (Aïssaoui, May 15, 2015).

The central theme of this novel is the threat of Islamists and their gradual domination of Europe. In writing this work, Sansal – like Houellebecq in *Soumission* – tapped into an idea/ conspiracy theory on the French right/ extreme right about *le grand remplacement* [the great replacement]. In an interview with the Algerian Francophone newspaper, *Liberté*, Laredj was asked about Sansal's *2084: La fin du Monde*, and he said "[Sansal] is locked into a certain type of Islamophobia, it is his choice, but reading his novel I can see that it unfortunately is very similar to *Soumission* by Michel Houellebecq, we are always in the same logic, 'be careful, Muslims are here', if you say this in Europe, and particularly in France, as you enter the game, you are part of this machine"⁸⁵ (Azzouz, 2016). The Algerian critic Nadia Ghanem denounced Sansal as being amongst the so-called "intellectuals", "enriching

⁸⁵ Il est plutôt viré sur une certaine islamophobie, c'est son choix, mais en lisant son roman je vois que ça ressemble malheureusement à *Soumission* de Michel Houellebecq, on est toujours dans la même logique, "faites attention, les musulmans sont là" si vous dites ça en Europe, et surtout en France, c'est que vous rentrez dans le jeu, vous faites partie de cette machine

the corpus of an institutional canon” (October 6,2015). The novel won – amongst other prizes – le Grand Prix du Roman de l’Académie Française with a value of 5,000 euros together with the Tunisian writer Hédi Kadour for his novel *Les Prépondérants* [The preponderants]. What is notable about this prize, which was established in 1914, is that most of its holders published their works with the most prestigious and oldest French publishing houses such as Flammarion, Grasset, Stock, Plon, Seuil, Gallimard, Albin Michel and Julliard. The novel was translated to other languages with the support of Institute Français, including Serbian, Polish, Ukrainian, Czech, Dutch, Chinese, Croatian and Danish. On their website they stated, “through its translation support programmes, the Institute Français participates in the global dissemination of French language literature”.

The timing of the *2084* also boosted sales. On 7 January 2015, twelve journalists and cartoonists who worked for the French satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* were killed in a terrorist attack. *Charlie Hebdo* had previously published caricatures of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). As a result, Michel Houellebecq’s *Soumission*, due to publish the same day, was delayed. Sales of both *2084* and *Soumission* were given a significant boost. The novel was immediately translated into German and sold more than quarter of a million copies (Flood, 2015). Sansal was supported by Michel Houellebecq who referred to Sansal on the popular French TV programme *On n’est pas Couché*. Invited to talk about his novel *Soumission*, Houellebecq justified his views on Islam by giving Sansal’s latest book *2084: The End of the World* as an example to escape the Islamophobia label (i.e. Houellebecq argued that he could not be Islamophobic as a writer from the Muslim and Arab world was expressing the same views as him). The spectators of the show that evening were more than 1.31 million, for Harchi, Sansal’s novel gained fame through what she called the houellebecquien (referring to Michel Houellebecq’s ideas and opinions towards the Arab and Muslim World) (2016:261-268).

2084 was primarily talked about in Algeria in the context of a plagiarism row. In 2015, Waciny Laredj published *2084 حكاية العربي الأخير* [The Story of the Last Arab], with the Lebanese publishing house Dar Al Adab. The title of Laredj’s book has two

attractive keywords, *2084*, which is like Sansal's and George Orwell's titles and the word *Arab*. Laredj's work is also marketed as having a connection with Orwell's *1984*. Just before the release of Laredj novel, which was planned for Beirut International Book Fair, Laredj accused Sansal of plagiarism in a Facebook post. He declared that he was shocked that both novels share the same thematic preoccupation, which is the domination of Islamists in Europe as well as in the Arab world. Several Middle Eastern newspapers showed their solidarity with Laredj and accused Sansal of plagiarism, including *Ahram*, *Al Hayat* and, in Algeria, *El-Bilad Online* and *El-Hiwar*. Following on from this, Laredj gave several interviews to both the French- and Arabic-language press in which he criticised Sansal's political positions. In an interview with *Al Quds Al Arabi*, Laredj opposed Sansal's views towards the Algerian revolution and its combatants, notably in relation to an article published by Sansal in the French newspaper *Le Monde* in July 2016. In another interview with the Algerian Arabophone newspaper *El-Raaed*, Laredj confirmed that he is not against Sansal's literary works but in opposition to his ideology and his support for Israel (*El Raaed*, August 06, 2016).

In an interview with the Algerian Francophone newspaper, *Liberté*, Laredj also disclosed his opinion towards Kamel Daoud's journalistic writings: "I do not think that Kamel Daoud thinks freely," declared Laredj, "I stood in solidarity with Kamel Daoud when he received a death threat from an Islamist, just after the release of his novel", but he argued, he disagreed with Daoud's article on Cologne and thought he was manipulated by the French media: "I think he was consecrated too quickly".⁸⁶ (Azzouz, 2016). This again raises the question of to whom these authors are writing and on what basis, with the suspicion that they are being rebellious and critical of their society, culture, and religion to please the West for easy access to fame and

⁸⁶ Je ne crois pas que Kamel Daoud ait une pensée libre [...] J'ai pris position avec Kamel Daoud lorsqu'il a été menacé de mort par un islamiste, juste après la sortie de son roman [...] je crois qu' il a été consacré si vite, qu'il faut qu'il garde ça, car ensuite ça devient de la manipulation

commercial success. That said, critiquing Daoud and Sansal for being “unauthentic” and playing to Western audiences is also part of Waciny Laredj’s literary persona as he seeks authenticity and legitimacy whilst in many ways making the same arguments as them.

Kamel Daoud: the making of an outsider

Kamel Daoud (b.1971) was raised in an Arabophone family, at his grandparents’ house in a small village in the western part of Algeria. In interviews, he has explained that during his childhood, books were inaccessible, and therefore one of his motivations was to write the type of books that he was keen to read (Harchi, 2016:173). Daoud is well-read in French literature, Arabic literature and about Islam. He claims that French language and literature helped him to discover themes of eroticism and sexuality. Therefore, he was able to find out about women’s bodies and enrich his vocabulary, which – according to him – he could not find within the Arabic language. The idea that French is a more “open” language, in which sexuality can be discussed, in contrast to Arabic, is a common trope of Algerian writers of French expression, even though there is a long history of erotic literature in Arabic – and indeed Laredj talks about discovering sex and sexuality in Arabic-language literature. Nevertheless, this image of the French language as transgressive and subversive is one which French newspapers and magazines like to produce – *Le Point* for example, depicted Daoud as reading French books about eroticism and sex in secret, hiding from his grandparents who would never disturb him when they saw him reading because they thought he was studying (*Le Point*, February 02, 2017). All of this, however, is a narrative produced post-hoc about how Daoud became a writer, by Daoud, his publishers and Western journalists after he became famous in 2013.

In the meantime, Daoud graduated from the University of Oran with BA in French Literature. By the late 1980s, he had started his career as a journalist at

Detective newspaper. This was during the political and social unrest of October 1988 which brought about the end of the single-party state. In 1996, he became a journalist for the widely read Algerian Francophone newspaper *Quotidien d'Oran*, notably producing the *Raina Raikom* column [My opinion is your opinion] which was about the social, economic and political problems of Algeria and Algerians. He was widely known for his explicit criticism of the state (Ford, 2016:20). As a journalist, he looked for stories in dangerous and inaccessible places. His first *Detective* essay was about the Had Chekala massacre (Harchi, 2016:181; *Le Point*, February 02, 2017, p. 42).

Daoud is presented in the Western media as someone who experienced the trauma of the civil violence of the 1990s and who was traumatized by the Islamists' discourse, in addition to living in a conservative society that does not tolerate an individual's freedom. Mechaï (2017) describes Daoud as "hungry for life. He was 20 years old when the civil war broke out in Algeria in the early 90s and is determined to catch up on his 10 years of non-living...". According to Daoud, the domination of the Islamist discourse in this period, made discussion and writing about gender and sexuality taboo (Au Coeur de la Nuit, 2017). These are the key markers that unquestionably contributed to the successful creation of his celebrated persona. In a published interview with Daoud uploaded by his French publisher Actes Sud Édition on YouTube in 2017, they have carefully chosen to title their promotional video about Daoud as "Writing to bear witness to one's time"⁸⁷

Between 2003 and 2013, Daoud was able to publish several literary works in Algeria and was awarded some Algerian literary prizes (see Appendix). These earlier works were studied primarily by his local friends and colleagues (Chaggou, 2011; Ford, 2016; Bahi, 2015-2016, 2017). Daoud's first fictional novel, *Meursault Contre-Enquête*, was published by the Algerian private publishing house Barzakh in 2013. Invited to present and sign his novel in Bejaïa; Daoud said "the publication of my novel coincided with the celebration of the centenary of the birth of Albert Camus. It

⁸⁷ Écrire pour témoigner de son époque

was just by chance. I had the idea for this novel in my head for a long time [...]”⁸⁸ (Mouas, 2014).

Daoud may have been overplaying the coincidence of publishing a book based on Camus’s *L’Étranger* [The Stranger] (1942) in the centenary year of the author’s birth. Certainly, this meant that there was an added focus on Camus, who had been receiving more attention in Algeria since the 1990s. In the 1950s, Camus (1913-1961) – who had been very critical of the colonial system in the 1930s – alienated himself from Algerian nationalists by refusing to recognise Algerian claims to an Algerian nationality, and independence, instead insisting on the “Mediterranean” identity of Algeria and the legitimacy of French rule. His works had long been criticised in Algeria for focusing on European characters in Algeria and Algerian landscapes devoid of Algerians. In the 1990s, during the civil violence, Camus underwent a certain rehabilitation in some Algerian Francophone circles, and his vision of a multicultural (i.e. non Arabo-Islamic) Algeria was to a certain extent revived.

Daoud describes himself as fascinated by Camus’s philosophical and humanist notions. He had already published a “response” to Camus’s *L’Étranger* in 2010, in the French newspaper *Le Monde*, entitled “L’Arabe tué deux fois” [“The Arab killed twice”]. It was the idea of Daoud’s Algerian publisher, Barzakh, to use this as a basis for a novel, and the Barzakh editorial team funded Daoud’s writing grant in the region of Kabylia. Through its timing and subject matter, this was a novel which was highly likely to attract international attention. For Harchi, this was an astute commercial and marketing move by Barzakh: “What becomes apparent here is that this was a commissioned text within the context of the centenary of Camus’s birth. This highlights the belief of the editorial team in the possibility to obtain a text which, once published, would enrich its fiction catalogue and increase the publishing

⁸⁸ La publication de mon roman a coïncidé avec la célébration du centenaire de naissance d’Albert Camus. Cela n’était que fortuit et un pour hasard. Cela fait longtemps que j’avais en tête l’idée d’écrire ce roman

house's"⁸⁹ (Harchi,2016 :186). With this publication, Barzakh gained symbolic capital in the world republic of letters. In May 2014, the novel was re-published by Actes Sud in France. Barzakh played the role of mediator and decided that Daoud's work need to travel to the "world market of intellectual goods" – Paris (Casanova, 2004:127).

Most of the reception of *Meursault Contre-Enquête* focuses on how Daoud retells and rewrites Camus's *L'Etranger*. However, the novel's reception in Algeria is somewhat different to that in Europe. Algerian critics and readers tended to read the novel as a response against Camus and his dehumanisation of Arab characters. European critics were more likely to see a tribute, "Daoud sets out to repair this omission, not by coming to bury Camus as a mere colonialist, which has become a cottage industry among academics, but instead to praise him as an artist" (Zaretsky, 2015b). Daoud received several Francophone literary awards for *Meursault Contre-Enquête* including the Prix des cinq continents de la Francophonie (see table of Kamel Daoud). These literary prizes are created only for Francophone writers outside of mainland France, to support the presence of the French language all over the world (Harchi,2016:188). They also contribute to authors' symbolic and economic capital. Daoud began to appear increasingly in the French media, and gradually reached European and American audiences too. He made several potentially provocative declarations about language, identity and religion, which in turn contributed to Daoud reaching the international stage as much as *Meursault, contre enquête* did.

On 13 December 2014, Daoud was invited to the French mainstream infotainment programme *On n'est pas couché*. In a wide-ranging interview, Daoud gave his opinion on religion, colonisation, the Arab spring and the Arabic language in Algeria. In the following days, Daoud was targeted by Abdel Fattah Hamadache, a

⁸⁹ Bien que le terme ne soit pas prononcé, ce qui s'apparenterait ici à une commande de texte dans le cadre du centenaire de la naissance d'Albert Camus signale la croyance de l'équipe éditoriale en la possibilité de disposer, bientôt, d'un texte qui, une fois publié, viendrait enrichir son catalogue romanesque et accroître sa visibilité

self-designated theologian and political commentator, who stated that Daoud had insulted Islam, Muslims and the Quran (Orlando, 2017:297; Ford, 2016:230). In his Facebook account on 16 December 2014, Hamadache stated that Daoud belonged to *hizb fransa* [the pro-French lobby] and called upon the Algerian authorities to publicly sentence him to death for waging war against God, his Prophet, his book, Muslims and their country (Cocquet, 2014). This was repeated by Hamadache on an Algerian TV channel (El Bilad TV, 2014). Hamadache stated that Daoud was manipulated by the French to “ضرب القيم والثوابت الجزائرية” [attack Algerian values and principles]: “He questioned the Quran and sacred Islam, he insulted the dignity of Muslims and he sang the praises of the West and Zionism. He attacked the Arabic language, wrote Abdelfattah Hamadache Zeraoui [...] We call upon the Algerian political system to publicly condemn him to death, because of his war against God, his Prophet, His Book, Muslims and their country.”⁹⁰ (Cocquet, 2014).

Daoud re-published Hamadache’s paragraph on his personal Facebook account (Huff Post, 2014), and then immediately deactivated it. It was Daoud who first used the term “fatwa” to refer to Hamadache’s attack (Ford, 2017). Daoud tweeted that a “fatwa to kill me [has been issued] by the Algerian Salafist movement, signed by Abde El Fettah Hamdache”⁹¹. The term fatwa is very connotated. Notably it evokes the edict issued against Salman Rushdie by the Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini when he published *The Satanic Verses* in 1988. In her ground-breaking book, Brouillette (2011:83-86) asserts that the (so-called) fatwa issued against Rushdie by Khomeini led to Rushdie gaining global visibility. In turn, the “global media market”

⁹⁰ Il a mis le Coran en doute ainsi que l’islam sacré; il a blessé les musulmans dans leur dignité et a fait des louanges à l’Occident et au sionistes. Il s’est attaqué à la langue arabe, écrit Abdelfattah Hamadache Zeraoui [...] Nous appelons le régime algérien à le condamner à mort publiquement, à cause de sa guerre contre Dieu, son Prophète, son Livre, les musulmans et leur pays

⁹¹ fatwa pour me tuer émise par le mouvement salafiste Algérien, signé par le Abde El Fettah Hamdache.

and “metropolitan academics” gave Rushdie the status of an analyst of the human condition in the so-called third world to the “postmodern audience”. The status and influence of Hamadache can in no way be compared to that of the Ayatollah Khomeini – not least because in Sunni Islam, there is no “clergy” in the way that there is in Shi’a Islam. Hamadache has no particular religious or political authority in Algeria, he is an ex-politician of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). By using the term “fatwa”, Daoud was making a parallel between himself and Rushdie.

The “fatwa” was seized upon by the media in Europe and the Middle East, with articles and television reports presenting Daoud as an author in danger with his life threatened by Islamists. Several headlines of Middle Eastern and European newspapers shared the same keywords *the fatwa, bloodshed, Salafist, black decade*. A number of Algerian journalists and writers – including Bachir Mefti, Adlène Meddi, Amine Zaoui and Waciny Laredj – expressed their solidarity with Daoud, connecting his situation to that of Algerian intellectuals and writers during the civil violence. *Al Quds Al Arabi*, a London-based pan-Arab daily newspaper, to which many Algerian authors contribute, published an article entitled: “An Algerian Imam Salafist wastes the blood of the writer and journalist Kamel Daoud and revives the fatwa of extremism”⁹² (Zayet, 2014). Al Jazeera news in Arabic also published an article about Daoud, narrating the same story and using the same terms – fatwa, bloodshed, and killing (Boudhan, 2014). Daoud was invited to the Algerian Arabophone TV channel KBC El Khabar, and he defended his ideas. Interestingly, he did not insist too much on Hamadache’s ideological opposition to him. Rather more banally – speaking in Arabic to an Algerian audience – he explained that the reason behind this *fatwa* was due to the success he achieved in Europe, which annoyed many. For Daoud, other Algerians were jealous and enemies of success (DZ Video, 2014).

However, speaking in French and to international audiences, Daoud’s interpretation of Hamadache’s critique was much more dramatic and ideological. In

⁹² إمام سلفي جزائري يهدر دم الكاتب الصحافي كمال داود ويعيد إحياء فتاوى التطرف

an interview with French newspaper *Le Figaro*, conducted with the writer and journalist Mohammed Aïssaoui on 18 December 2014, two days after the “fatwa” was issued, Douad was asked why he has chosen to write in French. His response was “The Arabic language is entrapped by the sacred, by dominant ideologies. We fetichised, politicized, ideologised this language”⁹³ (Aïssaoui, 2014). Amongst those who interviewed was Adam Shatz, who contributes to the *London Review of Books*, *The Nation* and *New York Times*. In a chapter published in 2017, Vince and Benkhaled urge academics of and commentators on Algeria to go beyond taking these “culture wars” at face value. Instead, they argue that these apparently diametrically opposed positions (Hamadache vs Daoud) are part of a shared performance, together they are “performing Algerianness”. In order to become publicly audible and visible, Algerians have to play certain roles – Hamadache is the Muslim conservative, Daoud is the secular modernist, and their confrontation plays out along well-worn lines which gives public visibility to both protagonists. This kind of public confrontation also conforms to foreign stereotypes about Algeria being permanently locked in a conflict between “modernity” and “tradition”.

Nevertheless, for international readerships, this is how postcolonial writers are made. Rebelling against national language policies, religions, norms and traditions established by their societies is part of the marketing. After the so-called fatwa, *Meursault, Contre-Enquête* achieved international success. It was immediately translated into thirty-three languages, and widely distributed in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France and Algeria. By 2017, 16,000 copies had been sold in Algeria, 242, 000 in France and 53, 000 copies in the United States (Kaplan, 2017). When the work enters the world of translation, according to Casanova (2004:133), “it constitutes the principal means of access to the literary world for all writers outside the center. Translation is the major prize and weapon in international literary competition”. Commenting on his success at an invited lecture at Yale

⁹³ La langue arabe est piégée par le sacré, par les idéologies dominantes. On a fétichisé, politisé, ideologisé cette langue

University in 2016, Daoud declared that he was not expecting this massive success, particularly the dozens of reviews written in the American press, which he pointed out exceeded the number of pages of the novel.

This is all part of the paratext of the novel. As Brouillette (2011) argues, we need to pay close attention to how novels are framed for audiences through their front covers, author information, sales figures and number of languages translated into, extracts from reviews, as well as listing of literary awards. As Genette (1997:345) also underlines, how authors present their work in interviews, and how the work is presented in newspapers, magazines, radio and television programs, lectures and colloquia are also part of the paratexts which shape how readers will approach a work and what they will expect from it.

For *Meursault contre-enquête*, there was a clear expectation that it would provide a mirror into Algerian society. *The New York Times* described it as “[A] stunning debut novel...[which] nudges us into a contemplation of Algeria’s history and current religious politics; colonialism and post colonialism; and the ways in which language and perspective can radically alter a seemingly simple story” (Kakutani, 2015). For the American weekly magazine, *The Nation*, “humor erupts in [the book] every time there is a tragedy, and this recipe for the Algerian absurd gives Daoud’s book its literary sting” (Kaplan, 2015). According to the British weekly *The Economist* “[...] it is also a lamentation for a modern Algeria gripped by pious fundamentalism” (2015).

In the English version of Daoud’s novel, six pages are devoted to extracts of the reviews written about the novel, from different newspapers, praising it for its content and the writer for his courage. These reviews serve to direct the reader to interpret the novel – as Ford (2017) argues – as of value for finding out about “Algeria’s history”, the “religious”, “politics” and “humor”. Recurrent words in reviews are “postcolonial”, “classic” and Daoud is repeatedly praised as “thoughtful” and “provocative”. All these descriptions characterise and canonise postcolonial writers in the market, whilst simultaneously narrowing down the possibilities of different readings. Daoud increasingly started to appear on European television

programmes, received invitations and attended conferences in universities, and was interviewed in the international media. Through these invitations, Daoud was expected to explain and discuss his views on current global issues, but more specifically women, sexuality, Muslims and terrorism (see the table of all the events attended by Kamel Daoud within and beyond Algeria in the Appendix). A noteworthy example of the kind of role which Daoud was meant to take on – as the “rebellious postcolonial writer” – is a documentary produced by the Franco-German television channel Arte in 2017. The documentary was about Daoud and the Moroccan writer Leïla Slimani, with whom he shares similar ideas, particularly about the situation of women in North Africa.

Daoud and Slimani start their conversation about the oppression of women in the Arab world walking through streets of Paris where the camera lens is directed towards different ethnic minorities. They enter a bar and the camera films them through the window of the bar with Daoud sipping alcohol and Leila smoking a cigarette – both of which might be considered transgressive acts in Algeria (alcohol and women smoking publicly). This used to illustrate that Daoud and Slimani find more freedom beyond their countries of birth. The two authors then discuss issues surrounding women in the Arab and Muslim world, particularly the taboo of one’s loss of virginity before marriage. Daoud describes Slimani in the following terms : “I really like Leïla Slimani, I like her character, she is very combative, she is very brave to bring up key questions about sexuality, we have to do it, and we have to dare to do it”⁹⁴. Slimani also praised Daoud for his courage, and she announced her solidarity with him when he was criticized by a group of scholars after an article he published about the “Cologne incident”.

⁹⁴ Ô Leïla Slimani je l'aime beaucoup [...] j'aime son caractère elle est très combative, elle a beaucoup de courage d'évoquer la question centrale de la sexualité aussi, ça il faut le faire, il faut oser le faire

In 2015, the refugee crisis in Europe as a result of war in the Middle East had reached its peak. Following German Prime Minister Angela Merkel famous words of welcome, “we can do it”, 890,000 refugees arrived in Germany (Benedikter & Karolewski, 2016). Merkel’s position was not shared by all Germans: according one survey, 50% of Germans expressed fears about the massive arrival of refugees (Benedikter & Karolewski, 2016). A series of sexual assaults on the streets of Cologne on New Years’ Eve on 31 December 2015, which were blamed on refugees, seemed to crystallise these fears. On 31 January 2016, Daoud published an article in the French newspaper *Le Monde* about these incidents entitled “Cologne, lieu de fantasmes” [Cologne: place of fantasies], with the subheading ‘le rapport à la femme’ [The relationship to women]. Daoud connected the attacks to the cultural and religious background of refugees and migrants. He advised European countries to better educate refugees about how to behave towards women, because they are coming from a world with narrow minded views about women.

Ford underlines the provocative language used by Daoud (2016:255) – in Daoud’s words “the other comes from this vast, painful, terrible universe which is sexual misery in the Arabo-Muslim world”⁹⁵ (2016). Daoud describes refugees as “Arabo-Muslims” coming from “the world of Allah” used to treating women violently: “women are denied, refused [an existence], killed, veiled, shut away or possessed”⁹⁶. He concluded: “Asylum has to be offered to the body, but the soul has to be persuaded to change”⁹⁷ (Daoud, 2016). With this article, Daoud reinforced a number of clichés about the Arab and Muslim world. Daoud was not present at the events he described, and in the first German police reports, the ethnicities of presumed attackers were not revealed. Following a prolonged investigation, it emerged that theft was just as common as sexual assault and that – although there were some

⁹⁵ L’autre vient de ce vaste univers douloureux et affreux que sont la misère sexuelle dans le monde arabo-musulman

⁹⁶ la femme est niée, refusée, tuée, voilée, enfermée ou possédée

⁹⁷ il faut offrir l’asile au corps mais aussi convaincre l’âme de changer

refugees charged – most were migrants, not refugees, some were German and many were not caught (Mechai, 2017).

Daoud was accused by some academics and intellectuals in France and the US of fanning the flames of racial tension by connecting the crimes to religion and culture. For Mechai (2017), the article was “well written, maybe, but so untrue [...] His racism and Islamophobia were denounced in France by several intellectuals”. The American Moroccan novelist Laila Lalami (2016) wrote, “formerly an Islamist, Daoud is now a devout secularist – an intellectual journey that has taken him from believing that Islam is the only solution to believing that Islam is the only problem”. The article rapidly gained Daoud further attention, including an article on the BBC website entitled “Algerian novelist Kamel Daoud sparks Islamophobia row” (Schofield, 2016).

This row was further stoked by a collective letter written to *Le Monde* by a group of French and American academics who accused Daoud of perpetuating and reinforcing stereotypes about the Arab Muslim world, repeating Orientalist clichés (*Le Monde*, February 12, 2016). Amongst the signatories to this letter were the historian and professor at Stanford University Joel Beinin who works on the history of Middle East, Houda Ben Hamouda, a lecturer at Stanford, the politician Nadia Merzouki who has published several books together with the French political scientist Olivier Roy and the philosopher and South African professor David Theo Goldberg (Shatz, 2016; Harchi, 2016:215; Hofmann, 2016). All of them were based in Western universities.

Daoud was dismissive of the letter, not least because none of the signatories were Algerians living in Algeria. In an interview with the French right-wing magazine *Le Point*, Daoud declared that “There’s a kind of racism in their patronizing declarations. They are not judging me on what I say, but on where I am saying it from. I don’t need anyone to speak for me. I don’t justify the existence of anyone. On the

right or on the left”⁹⁸ (2017:44). Despite declaring that in response to the letter he was abandoning journalism, in February he published another article entitled “Sexual Misery of the Arab World”, which, according to Adam Shatz who had become Daoud’s close friend, was a response to his accusers. For Shatz, “I think that Daoud, who is a friend of mine, was mistaken to link the Cologne attacks to the ‘fantasies’ of a ‘sick’ Muslim world. But I recoiled at the inquisitorial and censorious tone of the letter from the collective to *Le Monde*. I also found it disturbing that Daoud could be dismissed as an intellectual who is part of a secular minority in his country, where he struggles against a sometimes-violent puritanism” (Shatz, 2016).

When Daoud was invited to talk about his book *Mes Indépendances* [My independences] on the French weekly programme La Grande Librairie on TV5 Monde in 2017, he would underscore that it was essential for him to write the article “Cologne, lieu de fantasmes” because he knows so well the culture of his country and how women are treated. It is Daoud – according to Daoud – who has the right to play the role of analyst of his country and gender relations. On 13 March 2016, Daoud was invited to Germany’s top literature festival Lit. Cologne. He was not able to attend in person but participated through video conferencing, declaring “Women’s freedom is my freedom” and “you can measure a country’s health by its relationship with women” (Hofmann, 2016). On 23 September 2017, Daoud was invited to a French TV programme called C l’hebdo, with Michel Onfray. Onfray is a philosopher and writer who is notable amongst other things for being a fierce critic of religion, he also contributes to the French right-wing magazine *Le Point* which Daoud also writes for. The first question was directed to Onfray about what he likes most about Daoud: Onfray replied that he appreciates Daoud’s courage in taking risks (C l’hebdo, 2017).

Through “Cologne, lieu de fantasmes”, Daoud thus consolidated his reputation in the West as a writer who “dares” to say things which other Algerians,

⁹⁸ il y a une forme de racisme dans leurs déclarations condescendantes. Ils ne jugent pas mes propos, mais d'où je les emets. Je n'ai pas besoin que l'on parle à ma place. Je ne serai le faire-valoir de personne. A gauche comme à droite

Arabs or Muslims do not dare to say, notably about religion and women. This has come to largely overshadow his literary production. In interviews, Daoud argues that his fame has allowed him to tackle difficult and controversial topics: “in order not to get into trouble, some ingredients are needed. First, a media visibility that relatively protects you...but the problems don’t really come from the government but from the religious sphere. They are very virulent as soon as I tackle important affecting subjects such as Islam, Palestine, sexuality and women” (Mechai, 2015). However, it is also undeniably through engaging with such controversial topics, using language and tropes which are instantly accessible to Western audiences that Daoud has also achieved fame.

Daoud’s presence at different European events continues (see table in the Appendix for Kamel Daoud). The Institute Français in Norway funded Daoud’s tour in Europe from 8-9 May 2018, which included visiting Sweden and Denmark in the presence of three hundred-strong audiences. Daoud was asked if he noticed any similarities or differences among the audience in the questions they asked, Daoud declared that in Denmark readers asked him about the *burqa* and religious symbols in his country and in Oslo readers asked him about language choice (Institute Français Norvège, 2018). On 15 October 2018, Daoud was invited to the French Konbini News TV channel and was interviewed by the French journalist Hugo Clément, on the theme “Le monde arabe a un problème avec le sexe” [The Arab world has a problem with sexuality]. At the beginning of the interview, Daoud stated that he was going to explain the social and sexual misery that leads to wars and deaths in the region (Konbini, 2018).

Daoud’s presence at different European events continue. His French publishers fund his visits at universities, conferences, libraries and book fairs. In 2017, Daoud published another novel, *Zabor Ou Les Psaumes* [Zabor of the Psaumes], with the book coming out simultaneously with *Actes Sud* and *Barzakh*. The novel is, according to Daoud, a response to those who criticised him. The title of the novel and the characters’ names all derive from the Quran. For the German writer, translator

and critic Stefan Weidner, “Zabor is a kind of autobiography, except that it is elevated to symbolic level and devoted to the intimate fantasy world of the writer [...] in this book, poetry and imagination are more important than the story” (2019). It is a novel that talks about the danger of approaching sacred books, literature, the right to imagination and fiction but also the situation of women in enclosed societies such as Algeria. It also engages with the theme of what Daoud calls the enemies of success, the coloniser/colonised relationship, as well as the language question. The rights of the novel were sold to the Netherlands (Ambo/Anthos), Italy (La Nave di Teseo), Sweden (Bokförlgaet Tranan), Romania (Polirom), Serbia (Akademska Knjiga), Greece (Patakis), USA (Other Press, WEL), Norway (Solum), and Germany (Kiepenheuer). The novel sold more than 56,000 copies.

Conclusion

This chapter examined “programmed success” for five of Algeria’s most successful current writers, through the creation of a literary persona. In the case of all five authors, they became famous nationally only because their profile was raised through publishing internationally. This is particularly striking in the case of the two Arabophone writers, Mosteghanemi and Laredj, whose literary careers were made in Lebanon and Syria, respectively. Despite the Algerian Arabization programme which was in full swing when they started writing in the 1980s, it seems that it was impossible to imagine an Arabophone literary star emerging from Algeria at this time. Indeed, it is striking that Mosteghanemi continues to be marketed as the first Arabic-language Algerian female novelist, when the first was in fact Zuhur Ounissi. Ounissi was extremely well connected politically – she is after all a former government minister – but was totally invisible internationally and therefore remains little known nationally. The three Francophone writers are more rooted in Algeria – and all lived in Algeria for a long time after beginning their career (and Sansal and Daoud still do live in Algeria, and much of their sense of legitimacy and authenticity stems from this) – but they only became literary celebrities when their works moved to France. This is

particularly notable in the case of Yasmina Khadra. Despite publishing several books in Algeria in the 1980s and 1990s under his own name of Mohammed Moulessehoul, he became Yasmina Khadra when the publication of his works moved to France. This is a striking demonstration of the difficulty of existence of an Algerian literary field.

A central part of the creation of the persona is the positioning of the writer as informant of and rebel against his/her society. Postcolonial writers are, to a significant degree, obliged to exoticize their societies and their lives to be internationally canonized. They need to perform the role of the political, economist, cultural and religious analyst. Yasmina Khadra is the writer who most closely, and prolifically, reproduces current affairs as the thematic concerns of his novels, to the point where Rachid Boudjedra has dismissed him simply as doing the work of a journalist (Belkaid, 2010). The five authors here perform this role to different degrees. Mosteghanemi is arguably the least rebellious figure – with her official invitations and stated avoidance of shocking her readers in the Arab world too much, whilst Sansal is the most rebellious, notably with his open rejection of following a pro-Palestinian line and his works which border on far-right “great replacement” theories about Muslims replacing the Christian and Jewish white population of Europe. That said, female Algerian writers are particularly called upon to take up the role of rebels against the men in their own society in terms of family relations and sexuality, and this is why the disappointment was so great when it was revealed that far from Yasmina Khadra representing the authentic voice of an oppressed Arab woman he was, in reality, a man in the Algerian army. Who the author is seen as being as important as what they write. This is in many ways part of the condition of the post-colonial writer. As Moudileno (2011) argues in her study of two female Francophone writers from sub-Saharan Africa writing and publishing in France, Calixthe Beyala (b.1961) and Marie NDiaye (b.1967), the marketing of their works focuses as much on the identity of the authors as the content of their novels.

As part of building successful careers, all five authors have embraced the role of explaining Algeria and the Arab world to the rest of the world, both through their fiction writing and their media appearances. It is particularly worthwhile here to look

at the writers' appearances in the Arabic-language media, which is less studied – the fact that these authors are called upon to explain Algeria, Franco-Algerian relations, the Maghrib, terrorism, etc., to Arabic-speaking audiences in similar ways as to European audiences underlines the heterogeneity of their potential readership – the “Arab world” is not a monolith. Indeed, these authors' careers also underline that the delineation between the Arabic-language and French-language publishing worlds is not clear cut and that there is significant cross over. Translation is a point of cross over, and the most prestigious Arabic-language publishers in the Middle East are clearly very well connected with their European counterparts. It is also part of the French state's soft power policy to actively encourage translation of French-language works into Arabic, so that this “Francophone” culture can reach Arabophone audiences. All of the writers have a “story” about why they write in the language that they do, which is often recounted in interviews and is linked to family situations and political positions, but it is striking that – in comparison with previous generations – with the exception of Sansal, all could have written in French or Arabic, their age and circumstances making them more likely to be bilingual. In that sense, they are very different from the previous generation of authors who generally had no choice but to write in either Arabic or, more often, French.

Controversy is a key part of creating a literary persona. It is a cliché to state that no publicity is bad publicity, but from the back-stabbing and sniping surrounding the AUC Naguib Mahfouz prize and translation (Mosteghanemi) to the so-called “fatwa” issued against Kamel Daoud, all of these scandals raised the profile of the authors in question and contributed to increasing sales of their works. What is striking is that whilst many of the arguments are universal ones which high-profile authors become entangled in – plagiarism, popular appeal, whether they are “great enough” to leave something behind for posterity – rivalries, professional jealousies and the expression of political differences of opinion are often expressed in the language of betrayal: authors are accused of betraying the Algerian people, the Palestinian cause and/ or selling out to the West, at the same time as they insist on their authenticity, their reliability and their legitimacy to speak. For example, Sebaoun Said, the

representative of Casbah publishing house, praised Khadra's works and persona and compared it to that of Sansal. Said stated that Sansal novels are targeted for a specific audience – despite the fact that one might argue that Khadra's work over the past two decades has targeted a similar French/ European audience. According to Said, Sansal's writings were against Islam, Algeria and Algerians (S. Sebaoun, personal communication, July 03, 2017). Such denunciations, however, are not necessarily bad for the novelist's career, as they consolidate his/her position as a rebel against his own society.

Back in Algeria, Mosteghanemi, Laredj, Daoud and Khadra can be accommodated and indeed celebrated by the Algerian state as their "cultural exports" even though Algerian book publishing infrastructure and state support has contributed very little to their success, with the notable exception of Daoud and the private publishing house Barzakh edition for the publication of *Meursault, contre-enquête*. All of these authors – with the exception of Sansal – are "welcomed back" to Algeria with republication of their works by Algerian publishing houses. Chihab and SEDIA have re-published the works of Khadra, Mosteghanemi, Laredj, and Daoud in French as well as in Arabic, even though their success was made elsewhere.

What happens, then, to those Algerian authors who do not want to, or are not able to, make their identity and/or their "rebellious personality" part of their persona as an author? What happens to those Algerian authors who do not have established contacts with the publishing world outside of Algeria? Chapter 5 explores the trajectories of some of these authors.

Chapter Five: Rising Stars or Struggling Artists?

Introduction

This chapter examines little-known Arabophone and Francophone authors, under the age of 40, seeking to live, write and be read in Algeria, as well as beyond. This chapter is based on studying the literary careers of, and carrying out interviews with, Saïd Khatibi, Ismail Yabrir, Miloud Yabrir, Samir Kacimi, Djamila Morani, Amal Bouchareb, Mohammed Djafar, Ryad Girod, Riadh Hadir, Abdelouahab Aissaoui, Abdellatif Ould Abdallah, Belkacem Meghouchene and Sofiane Mokhenache. With a few rare exceptions, these authors have attracted almost no scholarly attention compared to those writers examined in chapter 4, and the level of critical and media attention which they have received is also much lower, with occasional reviews in the Algerian French- and Arabic-language press. This younger generation of authors tend to engage with similar themes to the authors in chapter 4, but generally in less explicit and provocative ways and they have not developed similar public personas as part of their marketing strategy. Although a number of these authors hold prestigious national and international literary awards, they are less visible to international audiences in comparison to the Algerian transnational literary celebrities. The lack of infrastructure in Algeria means that publishing remains small scale – in most cases, sales of 100 copies is considered a mark of success. Most of these authors cannot make a living from their writing – indeed, when I asked them if they made money from writing, most of them laughed. Therefore, they are all obliged to have other professions.

This chapter explores from the perspectives of these authors how they navigate Algerian and international publishing contexts. This includes self-promotion on social media and how they seek to leverage – i.e. use to secure a publishing contract – local, national and international literary awards. This younger generation has a largely depoliticized attitude towards language compared to previous generations; language is presented as a tool for artistic expression rather than an

ideological weapon. They refer to both French and Arabic language Algerian authors as their inspirations and are reviewed in the French and Arabic language press regardless language they write in. This suggests that the division of Algerian literature into “Francophone” and “Arabophone” no longer works as they are being seen by a new generation of authors and their readers as part of a shared field.

Table of authors whose careers are analysed in chapter 5

Name and surname	Gender	Place of birth	Language(s)	Total of published novels	Profession
Saïd Khatibi (b.1984)	Male	Bousaada	French and Arabic	Two in Arabic	Journalist, translator & novelist
Ismail Yabrir (b.1979)	Male	Djelfa	French and Arabic	Six in Arabic	Poet, novelist & journalist
Abdellatif Ould Abdallah, (b.1988)	Male	Mascara	French, Arabic and English	Two in Arabic	Architect & novelist
Miloud Yabrir (b.1984)	Male	Djelfa	French and Arabic	One in Arabic	Journalist, doctor & novelist
Abdelouhab Aissaoui (b.1985)	Male	Djelfa	French and Arabic	Seven in Arabic	Novelist

Sofiane Mokhenache (b.1984)	Male	Sétif	French and Arabic	Two in Arabic	Novelist
Riadh Hadir (b.1982)	Male	Oran	French, Arabic and English	One in French	Freelancer & novelist
Mohammed Djafar (b.1976)	Male	Mostaganem	French and Arabic	Four in Arabic	Former teacher, novelist
Ryad Girod (b.1970)	Male	Algiers	French	Three in French	Mathematics teacher & novelist
Djamila Morani (b.1988)	Female	Relizane	Arabic & English	Two in Arabic	Teacher of Arabic language & novelist
Samir Kacimi (b.1974)	Male	Algiers	Arabic & French	Eight in Arabic	Columnist & novelist
Amal Bouchareb (b.1984)	Female	Algeria/Damascus	Arabic, French, Italia & English	Two in Arabic	Columnist & novelist

Belkacem Meghzouchene (b.1979)	Male	Tizi-Ouzou	Arabic, French, English, Tamazight	1 in Arabic 2 in English and 1 in Tamazight	Columnist & novelist
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The trajectory of a successful, young, Algeria-based author

This chapter begins by sketching out the profiles of the authors who form part of the study here. These trajectories are useful to compare to those of the authors in chapters 1, 2 and 4 in order to better understand the factors which lead to national and international (in)visibility as a writer.

Ryad Girod (b.1970) was born in Algeria to a French father and an Algerian mother. He studied in Algeria as well as in France. Girod is a Francophone writer as well as being a maths teacher. He has worked as a maths teacher in Paris, Algeria and Saudi Arabia. In 2008, was able to publish his first novel *Ravissements* [Raptures] with the French publishing house José Corti, which was republished in 2010 in Algeria by Barzakh. In 2015, he published his second novel *La Fin qui Nous Attend* [The end waiting for us] with Barzakh. Three years later, in 2019, Girod published his third novel, *Les Yeux de Mansour* [The Eyes of Mansour], once again with Barzakh. The novel was republished within the same year with a French publisher P.O.L. Girod is a winner of Algerian and French literary awards (see Appendix). Of all the authors in this chapter, Girod's profile is closest to that of the Francophone writer whose career is more or less "made in France", and that is hardly surprising given his socio-economically comfortable and Franco-Algerian background. Interestingly, however, he has gone from being a writer published in France to be a writer published in Algeria, albeit with one of Algeria's most prestigious publishing houses, rather than the usual trajectory which is the reverse.

Samir Kacimi (b.1974) was born in Algiers. He holds undergraduate and master degree in law and has worked as a lawyer and in the world of journalism as an editor, contributing to several Algerian and Middle Eastern newspapers and magazines. In 2016, Kacimi was appointed as a consultant at the Algerian publishing house Anep in addition to holding editorial roles with other prestigious Arab publishing houses. Kacimi first started with poetry and then made the switch to novels between 2006 and 2007. He is a prolific novelist, who has won a number of national literary awards, as well as being nominated and longlisted for Middle Eastern awards (see Appendix). He started to gain more visibility in France after the translation of his work *حب في خريف مائل* [Love at the turn of autumn] which was initially published in 2014, through a cooperation between El-Ikhtilef in Algeria and Difaf in Beirut. In 2017, the novel was purchased and translated into French by Barzakh in Algeria and Le Seuil in France as *L'Amour au tournant*.

Mohammed Djafar (b.1976) was born into an Arabophone family. He graduated from the University of Senia, Oran (west of Algeria) with a degree in literature and currently lives in Mostaganem, also in the western part of Algeria. Djafar is an Arabophone poet, short story writer and novelist. Djafar used to be a teacher but decided to leave this profession because – in his words – he is someone who believes in the total freedom of the individual. Djafar was able to publish some literary works within and beyond Algeria with the help of some friends, this includes poetry, short stories and novels (see Appendix). In 2014, his second novel appeared under the title *هذيان نواقيس القيامة* [Whistles of Resurrection] with El-Ikhtilef and Difaf. In 2019, he published another novel *لابوانت* [La Pointe] with Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc.

Belkacem Meghouchene (b.1979) is a trilingual novelist and poet, born into a Tamazight-speaking family in Tizi Ouzou. Meghouchene contributes to several national and Middle Eastern newspapers and is the winner of two local literary awards (see Appendix). In 2010, Meghouchene published *Sophia in the White City* in English, with l'Odyssée publishing house in Tizi Ouzou. Three years later, he published his second novel in English, *The Overcoat of Virginia* with Édilivre in France.

In 2016, his third novel, this time in Arabic, appeared under the title المحروسة لا تشبه غرناطة [The Casbah does not look like Granada] with Dar el Quds, a publishing house based in Oran. In 2017, he published another novel in Tamazight, Tazemmurt tcudd s akal-is [The Olive tree attached to its root], with Achab publishing house in Tizi Ouzou.

Ismail Yabrir (b.1979) comes from an Arabophone family. His schooling was in the Arabic language at both a Quranic school and at Algerian state school. At an early age, Ismail Yabrir was a short story writer and poet. Currently, he works for the Algeria Press Service while at the same time conducting a PhD about the place of history in Algerian literature. He is also a winner of several regional, national and international literary awards (see Appendix). In 2008, Ismail Yabrir decided to make the switch from poetry to novels. His first novel ياموندا ملائكة لافران [Laveran Angels] was published by Moufam publishing house in Algeria in 2008. This was followed by other novels that were published within and beyond Algeria (see Appendix).

Riadh Hadir (b.1982) is a Francophone writer, born into Francophone family in Oran, who moved to Algiers and married a French woman. With the encouragement of his friends, Hadir was able to publish his first novel in French, *Pupille* [Pupil] in 2017 with the Algerian state-owned publishing house Anep.

Abdelouahab Aissaoui (b.1985) is an Algerian Arabophone novelist, born into an Arabophone family. Aissaoui studied science at the University of Zayan Ashour in his hometown of Djelfa in southern Algeria and graduated in electromechanical engineering. He currently works as a maintenance engineer. In a relatively short period of time, Aissaoui was nevertheless able to become a prolific writer and win several national and Middle Eastern literary awards. He has published five novels written in Arabic, one in Beirut and the rest in Algeria, in addition to a collection of short stories (see Appendix).

Amal Bouchareb (b.1984) was born in Damascus but grew up in Algeria. She graduated from the University of Algiers with a degree in Translation Studies. From 2008 to 2014, she was a teacher of English at the University of Bouzareah in Algiers.

From 2013 to 2014, she worked as an editor for the Algerian literary newspaper أقلام [Pen] directed by the Algerian Writers' Union. Bouchareb currently resides in Italy and works at the Emilio Salgari library, running workshops around reading, writing, translation and creativity in addition to some other activities for children. Bouchareb has two novels so far, and she is holder of several national literary awards (see Appendix). Her first novel appeared in 2015, entitled سكرات نجمة [Flickers of the Star], published with the Algerian publishing house Chihab. Her second novel ثابت الظلمة [Enduring Darkness] was also published by Chihab in 2018.

Saïd Khatibi (b.1984) is a multi-lingual columnist, poet, translator and novelist. He is well-versed in both French and Arabic literature. He is contributing to different online Middle Eastern and Algerian newspapers including *Al-Quds Alarabi*, and the Algerian online magazine *Nafha*. He graduated with BA in French literature from the University of Algiers and conducted his studies in France at the Sorbonne University, graduating with a MA in Cultural Studies. Khatibi holds several awards for his literary works (see Appendix). In 2013, he published كتاب الخطايا [Book of Sins]. In 2016, he published his first novel أربعون عاماً في انتظار إيزابيل [Forty Years Waiting for Isabell] with El-Ikhtilef and Difaf. Two years later, in 2018, the author published another novel titled حطب سراييفو [Sarajevo's Firewood] with the same publishing house.

Miloud Yabrir (b.1984) was born into an Arabophone family in Djelfa in the southern part of Algeria. Miloud Yabrir writes in Arabic but also masters the French language and used to work as a translator and journalist. He was the winner of the Samir Kassir Freedom of Press prize in 2018 in Beirut for a short piece of writing entitled "A Seat in the Dark", in which he used the metaphor of the cinema hall to depict the complexity of the Algerian political system. He currently works as a psychotherapist at the Frantz Fanon Hospital in Blida. In 2015, Miloud Yabrir won third prize in the United Arab Emirates Sharjah Arab Creativity competition for his first unpublished novel, جنُوب الملح [South of the Salt]. After winning this prize, the novel was published by the Algerian publishing house Barzakh and Dar Al Jadeed in Lebanon.

Sofiane Mokhenache (b.1984) is an Arabophone writer, born into Arabophone family in Sétif in the east of Algeria. Having lived in Egypt, he returned to Algeria and is a graduate of the University of Algiers in politics and law. Mokhenache was able to publish two novels in Algeria and he is also a holder of some national literary awards (see Appendix). لا يترك في متناول الأطفال [Keep it beyond the reach of children] is Mokhenache's first novel, appearing in 2012 and published by the Algerian publishing house Mim. In 2016, the author was able to publish another novel with the same publishing house, مخاض سلحفاة [Tortoise Birth].

Djamila Morani (b.1986) is an Arabophone writer, born into an Arabophone family in Relizane, in the west of Algeria. Morani is a teacher of Arabic, and she has published two novels. تفاح الجن [Djinn Apple] appeared in 2016 with the Algerian publishing house Dar el Mothakaff. The following year, تاج الخطيئة [Crown's Sin] came out with the Algerian publishing house Mim.

Abdellatif Ould Abdallah (b.1988) is an another young Arabophone writer with a background in science, and who also studied architecture. Ould Abdallah's first novel, خارج عن السيطرة [Out of Control], appeared in 2016 with the Algerian publishing house El-Ikhtilef and Difaf. His second novel, التبرج [Shamelessness], was published with the same publishing house in 2018.

These brief biographies help us begin to understand why these authors are not able to create a persona, or the position of “translator” of Algeria to the rest of the world in the same way that the authors in chapter 4 are. In many cases, they come from “peripheral” parts of Algeria – that is to say, outside of its urban, coastal cities. Those who were born in Algiers, such as Kacimi, Girod, and Bouchareb, are more famous than the brothers Miloud and Ismail Yabrir, Aissaoui, Morani, Djafar and Ould Abdallah. In the main, they do not come from privileged families with cultural capital. The Arabophone, less cosmopolitan background of most of these authors can mean that they are considered more “conservative” on the national and international publishing scene, less likely to be rebels against their own society. The regional publishers with whom they might initially work also do not have the same clout and

reach as Algiers-based publishers (who in turn are very small players compared to the French and Lebanese publishers). These authors nearly all publish with Algerian publishers, even if in some cases some of these bigger publishers have co-publishing arrangements with French or Lebanese publishing houses. Despite the constraints which they are working under, these authors do have strategies for raising their profiles, and do see themselves as striking a new path compared to the older generation.

Becoming a writer and making one's place in "the canon"

Authors' precise reasons for entering the world of literature differ from one to another, but broadly they make similar arguments about writing as a way of expression, imagination and freedom, a space beyond painful realities. Reading and writing for these authors tends to be presented as a nourishment of the mind and the soul. In 2008, Ismail Yabrir says that he decided to make the switch from poetry to novels at a low point in his life, caused by a sense of failure. For Saïd Khatibi, writing is life. Amal Bouchareb states that she was encouraged by her father who discovered her talent at an early age. She describes writing as a process of self-discovery in which through her characters she can travel beyond borders. Ryad Girod states that from an early age he was addicted to reading. He says that he has no interest in writing about his experiences or life because there is nothing special about it, rather his aim is to create a strange and new universe. The same goes for Riad Hadir. Maghzouchene states that he was addicted to reading, writing and learning new languages, which enabled him to become a writer. Writing for Maghzouchene is ointment because he is shocked by life, its evils and misfortunes. He says that he started writing because of the struggles of life and everyday problems, although he also freely admits that the dream of fame, success and money were also driving motives. Samir Kacimi talks about writing as a dream, and indeed his novel is called *الحالم* [The Dreamer]. He states that he has no interest in transmitting any message within his writing. He cities

Italian, Spanish, Latin American and English authors as his inspirations and he is also well-read in Algerian Francophone and Arabophone writers, although he states that he has more admiration for writers from Eastern Europe. Writing for Djafar is an obsession, is an adventure, a way to understand the world around him, he states that he writes to live.

These are much more inward-looking reasons than those given by writers of a previous generation: for the generation of Djebbar and Dib, writing was about denouncing colonialism and societal woes, for the generation of Mosteghanemi and Daoud, it was about commenting on wider society and politics through one's personal stories, for this new generation it is much more personal, the sense of a personal quest. In many ways, this is a reflection of a global phenomenon in which younger generations are more individualistic, but this also reflects the fact that, firstly, these Algerian writers do not see themselves as the spokespeople for anyone, and secondly, they are mostly not making a living from their writing so there are few expectations attached to what they write about.

The inspirations cited by these authors provide a number of insights into the creation of an Algerian canon, across languages. The authors all state that they have read and were inspired by Algerian authors of French and Arabic expression, but at the same time they cite American, English, Russian and French novelists and philosophers. Girod, for example, states that he is inspired by the works of the French novelist and the Nobel Prize winner Claud Simon, and indeed this stylistic inspiration can be seen clearly in Girod's first novel *Ravissements*, through the use of longer sentences, idiosyncratic punctuation and blank pages. Girod also states that he was influenced by Algerian writers such as Boudjedra and the French-Algerian Nina Bouraoui. Ismail Yabrir states that he was influenced by both early generations of Algerian authors and contemporary Algerian writers. Ismail Yabrir sees himself as a continuity of the previous generation of Algerian authors including Mohamed Ben Chérif, Mohammed Dib, Malek Haddad, Abdel Hamid Benhadouga, Tahar Wattar, Rachid Boudjedra and Mohamed Meflah – it is noteworthy that Arabophone and Francophone novelists are cited alongside each other here. Ismail Yabir is also

inspired by Middle Eastern writers, including the Sudanese novelist Tayeb Salih. This influence can be found in Ismail Yabrir's وصية المعتوه الموتى ضد الاحياء [The Commandment of the Simpleton: Book of the dead against the living] which extensively references Salih's موسم الهجرة الى الشمال [Season of Migration to the North]. Miloud Yabrir's جنوب الملح [South of salt] is set in a hospital as a metaphor for the nation – this is a common metaphor in Algerian fiction and film, for example the same metaphor of the hospital is used by Francophone writer Rachid Mimouni. Miloud Yabrir also uses the metaphor of blindness, which was put to powerful effect in the Algerian Francophone novelist Yamina Méchakra's *La Grotte Éclatée* [The Exploded Cave] in 1979.

At an early age, Khatibi states that he read Albert Camus' *The Stranger*, Antoine Saint-Exupery, whose *The Little Prince* is set in the Algerian desert, and Malek Haddad. Khatibi says that he was also immersed in the cultural heritage of the Arab world, including the Persian poet and theoretician Farid el Din el Attar and the Persian poet Al Hallaj. In Khatibi's novel أربعون عاما في انتظار إيزابيل [Forty Years Waiting for Isabell] he makes an extensive reference to René Pottier and Saad Ben Ali's *La Tente Noire, Roman Saharien* [The Black Tent, A Saharan Novel], published in Paris in 1933 with Les Oeuvres Representatives and representing the Algérianist school of this period. Khatibi also uses the paintings of the Orientalist Etienne Dinet in أربعون عاما في انتظار إيزابيل. Khatibi compares himself to Tahar Djaout and refers to his novel *Les Chercheurs d'O's*, he declares that he wants to dig deeper into Algerian history for the sake of uncovering the truth. Khatibi considers himself a universal writer for all humanity, to be identified as an Algerian writer for him is just a word on paper, writers according to Khatibi should not be bounded or identified by their geographical location: "for me if I will define myself, I am Saïd Khatibi writer followed by a full stop that's it. In my official documents yes, I am Algerian, and when it comes to defining me as a writer, I

am just a writer without belonging to any country”⁹⁹ (S. Khatibi, personal communication, October 28, 2017).

Djamila Morani is well-versed in the Abbasid period, which is the period of history where many of her historical novels are based. Amongst her literary influences, she cites the Jordanian Aymen el Athoum, the prolific Lebanese novelist Jurji Zaydan, Radwa Ashour, and the Japanese author Haruki Murakami. Meghzouchene cites Algerian Francophone and Arabophone authors including Yasmina Khadra, Rachid Mimouni, Rachid Boudjedra, Waciny Laredj and Amine Zaoui. Djafar states that his first encounter with books was when his father offered him Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, which he had found in the street. He also cites Naguib Mahfouz, Mustafa Lutfi-al-Manfaluti, and all the works of Rachid Boudjedra, Tahar Wattar and Abdel Hamid Ben Hadouga. For his contemporary inspirations, Djafar cites Samir Kacimi, Ismail Yabrir and Bachir Mefti. Abdelouaheb Aissaoui states that he is influenced not only by Algerian and Middle Eastern writers but also by the Serbian Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andrić. Mokhenache claims that Mosteghanemi encouraged him to write. He says that he is inspired by Mosteghanemi’s style and her resistance against those who accused her of plagiarism for her first novel. Amal Bouchareb’s first novel, *سكرات نجمة* [The Flickers of the Star], makes reference to the famous novel of the Algerian Francophone writer Kateb Yacine, *Nedjma*. All the authors refer back to previous generations of Algerian authors, either explicitly or implicitly, across the French and Arabic languages, but also locate themselves within a series of international reference.

Old themes with new outlook?

This thesis is not primarily based on thematic or aesthetic analysis of novels by Algerian authors but on the conditions of their production and circulation.

⁹⁹ أنا بالنسبة لي لو أعرف نفسي، سعيد خطيبي كاتب نقطة. أما في الأوراق الرسمية جزائري أما في الكتابة فأنا كاتب فقط بلا انتماء إلى أي بلد

Nevertheless, given that Algerian literature has, from its inception, been characterised as realist, and at times documentary-like, for either political or commercial reasons, it is worthwhile examining how this younger generation of authors relate thematically to the work of older generations. Speaking to me at the SILA event in 2017, Hadir stated that he is no longer able to read the previous generation of Algerian writers. In his words, they all wrote about the same themes, the War of Independence and the condition of women. According to Hadir, he can see new themes emerging in the writing of the younger generation of Algerian writers. However, as can be seen from the sketches of some of the themes of the novels below, “old” themes remain popular.

Saïd Khatibi’s *اربعون عاما في انتظار ايزابيل* [Forty Years Waiting for Isabell], is a novel about the life of the real-life traveler Isabell Eberhardt (1877–1904). In this novel, Khatibi revisited the period of the turn of the century, and themes such as transgressing social norms, homosexuality, the civil violence of the 1990s and Islamists, the absence of freedom, women’s oppression, tolerance and justice and the failure of the Arab world to achieve the promises of independence. These all seem like very classic themes for an Algerian novel, with the twist that it is centered around a French character who adopted Algeria as her homeland. In 2018, Khatibi published his second novel titled *حطب سراييفو* [Sarajevo’s Firewood], which focuses on the trauma of living in Sarajevo after the war, which he compares to the Algerian civil violence. To write this novel, Khatibi learned the Serbian language to interview survivors of the war. The novel was prompted by his discovery that some Algerians participated in the Balkan wars. *حطب سراييفو* [Sarajevo’s Firewood] was shortlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction in 2020. The novel takes a familiar theme in Algerian literature – the civil violence – and makes it less exceptional, less Algero-Algerian. Khatibi is not the first to do this: a similar kind of comparative writing can be found in Sansal’s *Le village de l’Allemand ou le journal des frères Schiller* 2008 [Unfinished Business].

Kacimi’s *الحالم* [the Dreamer], is a novel about philosophy and the dream of becoming a writer, mixing absurdity, mystery and digital miracles around the

repetitive motif of the number thirty. The twisted style and clustered narrative of Kacimi's *الحالم*, an existential exploration of the struggle of writing, is considered a new aesthetics by critics from Algeria and beyond, including Waciny Laredj, Chawki Arjun, El Yamin Bentoumi and Chama Darwish (*Thakafa*, December 12, 2012; *El-Raaed*, November 09, 2012; *Masserb*, December 31, 2012; *Al-Riwaya*, May 1, 2018). Kacimi's *حب في خريف مائل* [Love at the turn of autumn] is a story about two desperate characters who meet coincidentally in central Algiers and spend the day together talking philosophically about death, life after death, love and sex. It includes explicit sex scenes: "Sexuality is spoken about with total freedom, without virile boastfulness: women lead the game and men try to measure up (literally)"¹⁰⁰ (Dayan-Herzburn, 2017). Kacimi has stated that his novels have been banned from several Arab countries including Saudi Arabia (S. Kacimi, personal communication, July 4, 2017). The Jordanian critic Jalal Berjas published on the Jordanian newspaper *Al-Watan* (December 7, 2014) has praised Kacimi's ability to break with taboos of religion, politics and sexuality and make them closer to Arab readers who still find these prohibited topics obscure. The Algerian critic Amara Benyounes (2014), on the other hand, found the structure of the story in Kacimi's *حب في خريف مائل* underdeveloped, and the explicit sexual scenes unnecessary – he argued that this was aimed at Middle Eastern audiences with a poor understanding of the private lives of Algerians. Kacimi's *كتاب الماشاء* [has a more realist plot and is interested in "missing" parts of Algerian history – which also makes it more like the work of previous generations of Algerian literature. It is based on a character called Julian who is asked to digitalize the archive of an African magazine from 1956. A copy of this magazine reaches a French historian who discovers that there was a trial to repress information about the historian Sebastian Delacroix. The setting of the novel goes back to the massacre of the el Ouffia tribe committed by the French in 1831 as part of the colonial conquest (*Al-Araby*, November 16, 2016).

¹⁰⁰ La sexualité s'y dit avec la plus grande liberté, sans forfanterie virile : les femmes mènent le jeu et les hommes essaient d'être à la hauteur (au sens propre)

Morani's *تفاح الجن* [Djinn Apple] is described by Nadia Ghanem (2018, January 31) as

part crime novel, part historical fiction [...] it is a highly relevant reflection on pardon and vengeance in a society where the justice system is broken, and on the place of truth in a political environment whose key actors are bent twisting it. Set during the caliphate of Haroun al-Rashid and narrated in the first person [...] Morani's novella places the education of women and the struggle between scientific minds and obscurantism at the forefront of her protagonist's experience

Similar themes of the education of women and tolerance can be found in the works of the previous generation of Algerian authors such as Assia Djebar and Mohammed Dib.

Bouchareb's *سكرات نجمة* [Flickers of the Star] talks about the history of different ethnicities and religions in Algeria and among them the history of Jews in Algeria. She explores mixed marriage, religion, living conditions, bureaucracy and criticizes the absence of freedom of expression through a character who was not permitted to ask a question about existentialism by an Islamist teacher. She also talks about Sufism and freemasonry with reference to Amir Abdel Qadir, also a figure in works by Ryad Girod and Waciny Laredj. Bouchareb's novel is advertised as the first Algerian detective novel written by Algerian female writer. In a similar way, Abdellatif Ould Abdelallah's first work *خارج عن السيطرة* [Out of Control] was referred to in some reviews as the first detective novel in Algerian literature. These statements were made for marketing reasons and are not entirely accurate: the first detective novels in Algeria were written by Yasmina Khadra at the very start of his career. Bouchareb's second novel *ثابت الظلمة* [Enduring Darkness], published in 2018, takes place in the south of Algeria. In this novel Bouchareb re-visits Algerian history, and notably the Algerian War of Independence to criticize post-independence and contemporary Algeria, including crises around shale gas. Many references are made to the Greek

philosophers, notably Plato's *Timaeus and Critias*, and to the English theoretical physicist and cosmologist Stephen Hawking.

Ryad Girod's *La Fin Qui Nous Attend* [The end which awaits us] is described in the following terms by the blogger Labib Dadi: "In a hypnotizing style and narrative, Ryad Girod gives us a metaphysical mediation on the absurd, good and evil, love and the quest for the absolute. A short, enigmatic text, with cruel elegance"¹⁰¹ (2019). Girod's *Les Yeux de Mansour* [The Eyes of Mansour] is based in Saudi Arabia and connected to the history of the Amir Abd El Qadir, exploring political tensions in France as well as in the Arab world. The French critic Audrerie Sabine described it in the following terms: "Ryad Girod offers a romantic mediation about Arab identity and the paradoxes of the Muslim world"¹⁰² (Audrerie, 2019) as well as making parallels with the American novelist William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and the French writer Henri Michaux.

Ismail Yabrir's works always takes place between his hometown of Djelfa and Algiers. His first novel was *ياموندا ملائكة لافران* [Laveran Angels] in 2008. In this novel Ismail Yabrir talks about his experiences and the life of youth during the civil violence as well as revisiting Algerian history from 1880 to 2003. Ismail Yabrir pays tribute to the French physician Charles Louis Alphonse Laveran and the mathematician and supporter of the independence struggle Maurice Audin, but also to Ahmed Tijani in reference to Sufism. In his 2013 *باردة كأنثى* [Cold as a Female], Ismail Yabrir also revisits the civil violence and criticises the national reconciliation law of 2003 which supposedly brought it to an end. This criticism is a theme which can also be found in the work of the Algerian bilingual writer Bachir Mefti, as well as Waciny Laredj. Yabrir's *وصية المعتوه الموتى ضد الاحياء* 2013 [The Commandment of the Simpleton: Book

¹⁰¹ dans un style et une narration qui hypnotisent, Ryad Girod nous livre ici une méditation métaphysique sur l'absurde, le bien et le mal, l'amour et la quête d'absolu. Un text court, énigmatique, à l'élégance cruelle

¹⁰² Ryad Girod offer une méditation romanesque sur l'identité arabe et les paradoxes du monde musulman

of the Dead against the living] also explores the period of the civil violence. Five years later, in 2018, Ismail Yabrir was able to publish another novel *مولى الحيرة* [Chief of Confusion], again in this novel he questions the failure of postcolonial countries in the Arab world. In 2019, he published another novel *منبوذو العصافير* [Outcasts' Birds] that brings questions of identity, nationalism and the history of the Jewish presence in Algeria alongside the themes of love, tolerance and freedom. Djafar's recent novel *La Pointe* (2019) is also reference to Algerian history, specifically one of the most famous Algerian revolutionary figures, Ali La Pointe. In this novel, Djafar also revisited the crimes committed against Algerians by the Parisian police in France during the demonstrations of October 1961.

In very different genres, Ould AbdelAllah's *التبرج* (2018) is a novel about people who are diagnosed with cancer and their suffering in Algerian hospitals. Riad Hadir's *Pupille* [Pupil] is considered a science fiction novel. The novel talks about the future, underpinned with satire. The Maghrib Podcast described it as, "through the prism of a satirical dystopia, *Pupille* deals with faith going off the rails in a world organised by ideologies which are superficially opposed but unquestionably totalitarian. The social and human approach of *Pupille* breaks with the visions of other Algerian novelists, which are generally very politicized"¹⁰³ (2018, August 20). A similar kind of futuristic vision of the world can be found in the work of Sansal's *2084: The End of the World*, as the theme of a clash between modernity and tradition can also be found in the previous generation of Algerian authors.

To summarize, this new generation of Algerian authors engage in many of the same themes as previous generations: history (of colonialism, of the War of Independence, of the civil violence), gender relations, sex, existentialism and religion.

¹⁰³ à travers le prisme de la dystopie satirique, *Pupille* traite principalement des dérives de la foi dans un monde régi par des idéologies superficiellement opposées mais indisutablement totalitaires. À cet effet, le biais social et humain assumé de *Pupille* vient rompre avec les visions d'autres romanciers algériens, habituellement très politisées

That said, and even though it is hard to generalise, there is some shift away from dominant realist style and arguably these works are less Algero-Algerian than those of a previous generation.

Who are we speaking to? Beyond the Francophone vs Arabophone debate

The age of this group of young writers – unlike Mosteghanemi, Laredj, Sansal, Khadra and Daoud – means that they have gone through an entirely Arabised education system, up until at least the level of higher education. With the exception of Girod, they are much closer the profile of the demographic majority of Algerians (under 40, Arabophone and not necessarily bilingual) than the profile given by bookshops and publishers of those who buy books (Francophone and older). Ismail Yabrir, Miloud Yabrir and Abdelouhab Aissaoui come from the same province, Djelfa, located in the south of Algeria. All three authors come from Arabophone families and were educated in Arabic. Ismail learned French from his Francophone father. Miloud was obliged to learn French because he studied medicine, and scientific courses are still taught in French language in Algerian universities. Miloud Yabrir stated in our interview during the SILA event, October 31, 2017 that:

I chose [to write in] Arabic because I was monolingual, I was only good at speaking and writing in Arabic, so this choice was somehow incomplete, and I did not have the choice to choose the Arabic language; therefore, I learnt French , I wrote and read in French as well, and translated works from French into Arabic to feel that I have the choice to write in both languages and I think the journey that I have made from learning French to Arabic and to translate French into Arabic led me to perceive the Arabic language differently, from the structure of the sentence, of the words of the paragraph to the structure of the image to the general respiration of the language, I think that the language is also a rhythm, the language it is a special

harmony, trying to find it in the writing , *c'est une quête aussi* [it's a journey as well], the search for your own language is an act of research and not a given. When I write I look for my own language within the Arabic language as whole¹⁰⁴

Aissaoui describes Arabic as the only language he knows and masters well, despite the fact that he studied engineering in French at university. For Aissaoui, language is the honest transmission of human reactions and thinking: “my competencies will not allow me to write in another language, I can read in French, but I cannot write in French [...] I cannot think for example in the French language or in another language, because from the day I was born, I cried, and I asked for simple things from my mother or my father, it was in my language, the Arabic language, and the Arabic language can narrate even the things that are happening in our communities and societies[...]”¹⁰⁵ (A. Aissaoui, personal communication, October 28, 2017).

¹⁰⁴ أنا إخترت اللغة العربية لأني كنت وحيد اللغة لم أكن أتقن إلا اللغة العربية يعني خيارى هذا كان منقوصا ولم يكن الخيارى لي أصلا لكي أختار العربية لذا تعلمت اللغة الفرنسية وكتبت بها وقرأت بها وترجمت منها إلى العربية لأحس أنى عندي الخيار بطريقة ما للكتابة باللغة الفرنسية و اللغة العربية أعتقد أيضا أن المسافة التي قطعتها في تعلم اللغة الفرنسية والترجمة منها إلى اللغة العربية جعلني أرى اللغة العربية بصورة مختلفة ابتداء من تركيب الجملة من تركيب الكلمة إلى تركيب الفقرة إلى تركيب الصورة وإنهاء بالنفس العام للغة أعتقد أن اللغة هي إيقاع خاص أيضا أحاول أن أجده في الكتابة *c'est une quête aussi* أو البحث عن لغتك الخاصة هي بحث وليس معطى عندما أكتب أبحث عن لغتي الخاصة وسط اللغة العربية الكبيرة يعني لغتي التي في ما بعد ستصبح ميزة أو معطى مع الوقت

¹⁰⁵ قدراتي لا تسمح لي أن أكتب بلغة أخرى ربما أستطيع أن أقرأ بالفرنسية ولكن لا أستطيع أن أكتب باللغة الفرنسية [...] وأنا لا أستطيع أن أفكر باللغة الفرنسية أو لغة أخرى لأنني أول ما وعيت أتذكر أنى بكييت أو طلبت شيء بسيط مثلا من أمي أو من أبي كان باللغة بلغتي العربية [...] اللغة العربية تستطيع أن تستوعب حتى الأشياء المحكمة داخل المجتمع

When I asked Ismail Yabrir about the language he writes in, he said: “I was born into Arabophone surroundings. I had the chance for state and medersa schooling; I learnt the Quran and the Arabic language. I read about Algerian culture and heritage. I am attached to this language, all my thinking is in this language, my father is Francophone and he does not master the Arabic language. I was oriented or I oriented myself towards the Arabic language because I live her, I never thought of writing in another language apart from the Arabic language”¹⁰⁶(I. Yabrir, personal communication, July 04, 2017). According to Ismail Yabrir, as an Arabic-language writer, language now is outside the scope of identity. The identity is now in the text, texts written in French can still hold an Arab identity. He illustrated his argument by referring to the first Algerian novel *Le Goumier* written by Mohamed Ben Chérif – for Ismail Yabrir, this is a text written in French, but it has an Arab identity through the references used and the story told. This is an interesting statement as for a long time, as we have seen in chapter 1, authors such as Mohamed Ben Chérif were dismissed by subsequent generations of Algerian authors as stuck in a subservient, mimetic relationship with the French language and culture. For Ismail Yabrir, those Algerians who write in French produce works of Algerian literature, representing Algerians and representing Algerian literature (I. Yabrir, personal communication, July 04, 2017). This is a very different, much less political, argument than that of someone such as Tahar Wattar and indeed a much more generous interpretation of Mohamed Ben Chérif than previous generations in general. Ismail Yabrir brings Ben Chérif into the genealogy of Algerian literature.

Samir Kacimi makes a similar point about language, for him, it is a vehicle of communication not a marker of identity. For Samir Kacimi writing in Arabic is a matter of choice, the author finds intimacy within this language instead of the French

106 ولدت في بيئة عربية وتدرّجت في التعليم التقليدي قبل أن أكون منتسبا إلى المدرسة، حفظت القرآن وقرأت العربية قرأت كتب التراث كثيرا، لهذا فأنا مرتبط كثيرا بهذه اللغة أفكر بهذه اللغة، والذي فرانكفوني، لا يتقن العربية تعلّمت منه الفرنسية، لكنني وجهت أو وجهت نفسي إلى العربية بحبّ أجدي كثيرا العربية لم أفكر يوما أن أكتب بلغة أخرى

language, although he is also able to write in the French. However, he admitted that if he chooses to write in the language of the French author, poet and playwright Molière, his thinking will still be attached to Al Mutanabbi, a prominent Arab poet from Iraq (S. Kacimi, personal communication, July 4, 2017).

This younger generation of Algerian authors generally talk about the intimacy of the Arabic language more than its identity connotations. For Saïd Khatibi, it is in Arabic that he lives, dreams and loves. At the beginning of his career, Khatibi wrote in French, and then he made the switch to Arabic. He states that he considers multilingualism in Algeria a richness which does not always exist in other countries. He further added that Algerians had no problem in switching between languages, they use them spontaneously, and writers are free to use any language they want. For Djafar: "Writing in French or Arabic language or in any other language is no longer a source of disagreement, we need to distinguish and put the language aside, and we need to talk about the political orientation. They want to reach a specific goal, we mention Boualem Sansal, Yasmina Khadra, we cannot judge Kamel Daoud with his first novel, until we read his recent second published novel, so that we do not misjudge him with his single work [...]. Even those who write in Arabic, they have a particular political orientation. We need to read both works to tease out the difference, the difference is not in the language, but rather in the orientation of the writer, on what basis he wants to reach the international recognition is it at the expense of the principles? And local ideas?"¹⁰⁷ (M. Djafar, personal communication, July 09, 2017).

Amel Bouchareb is fluent in more than four languages, including Arabic,

¹⁰⁷ الكتابة باللغة الفرنسية والعربية أو بأي لغة اعتقد ان تجاوزنا فكرة الخلاف يجب أن نفرق بين ، أن نطرح فكرة اللغة جانبا ونتحدث عن التوجه هناك كتاب يكتبون عن توجه معين ، يريدون أن يصلوا إلى غاية معينة ، نذكر بوعلام صنصال ، ياسمينة خضرة ، كمال داوود لا نستطيع أن نحكم عليه من رواية واحدة ، حتى نقرأ روايته الصادرة مؤخرا ، حتى لا نظلمه ، بعمل واحد يعني [...] حتى الكتاب باللغة العربية ، هناك كتاب عندهم توجهات معينة فأنا اعتقد يجب ان نقرأ للذين يقرأون باللغة الأجنبية كما نقرأ للذين يكتبون باللغة العربية ، ما يشكل الاختلاف هو توجه الكاتب ، إلى أين يريد أن يصل ، إلى العالمية على حساب مثلا مبادئ وأفكار محلية

French, English, and Italian, but she has chosen to write novels in Arabic. She argues that she writes in Arabic in order to communicate with the maximum number of Algerians. This is the same for many of the Algerian writers studied in this chapter, most of them have (at least) two languages but they write in one only. Belkacem Meghouchene is another Algerian novelist who loves learning languages, and has published novels in English, Arabic as well as Tamazight. It is perhaps easy to choose Arabic freely when one has a choice. Sofiane Mokhenache, Djamilia Morani, and Mohammed Djafar master the Arabic language only, although they have some knowledge of French. These authors read international literature in Arabic only, and they are unable to write novels in French.

Miloud Yabrir has expressed some disappointment towards those writing in French. For Miloud Yabrir, this contributes more to French audiences than it does to Algerian ones. The French language nowadays makes a rupture in the Algerian cultural sphere, it is not the everyday language of most Algerians. Miloud Yabrir seems suspicious towards those who continue to write in French. He describes them as the sons and daughters of Algerian schools, taught in Arabic, but who have chosen nevertheless to write in French, it seems almost in a way that they are choosing to alienate themselves from their own society. The Algerian scholar and critic Abdelkader Chérif Bemmoussa (2017) agrees that there is a continuing domination and presence of the French language regardless of demographic change and overwhelming Arabic language literacy.

There does seem to be some consensus amongst this younger generation of writers that if a writer sufficiently masters Arabic to write a novel, then this should be the language of the novel. The exception to this would be writers who cannot do this. Riadh Hadir was educated in the Arabic-language education system but was born into a Francophone family and is married to a French-Algerian woman. He writes in French because it is the language that he is fluent in and all his readings were in French. In our interview, Hadir preferred to communicate in English. When I asked him why he chose to write in French, he replied that the question was “as if you are asking a painter why he is using a particular brush”. A similar story to that of Riadh

Hadir can be applied to Riad Girod. Girod was born into a Francophone family and studied in French because his university studies were in a science subject and then he moved to France to continue his studies. In follow-up discussion with Hadir about the use of the language, he stated that “When the language question is asked today in Algeria, it implies a supposed disdain for Arabic. Very sincerely, I think that anyone who holds a language in disdain has no place in the literary field. It is simply the case that I write in French, because it’s in this language that I really learnt to read. Read in the sense: plunge body and soul into a text in order to come out enriched when I finish reading”¹⁰⁸ (R. Hadir, personal communication, October 31, 2017).

Compared to the authors in previous chapters, these authors express a more unproblematic relationship with the language, whilst not having lost sight of the (shifting) connotations of either French or Arabic. Arabic tends to be the language to speak to Algerian audiences, whilst French is associated with international prestige. These authors do not face the dilemma of a first generation of Algerian writers who in the main had no choice but to write in French, nor are they forced to justify their choices in the highly politicized context of the 1990s, although they are fully aware of the underlying debates.

These debates are shifting, for example around the use of *darija* (Algerian Arabic) and Tamazight as languages of expression. Publishing in *darija* and Tamazight has yet to take place on any scale in Algeria, compared to Morocco, for example. As I do not speak or read Tamazight, I will just mention some of the authors’ views on *darija*. For most, *darija* is not seen as a language of literature which can convey meaning or can be an artistic tool, instead it is a device in reported speech to present

¹⁰⁸Quand la question de la langue se pose aujourd’hui en Algérie, elle sous-entend toujours une supposition de mépris pour l’arabe. Très sincèrement, je pense que quiconque méprise une langue n’a rien à faire dans le domaine littéraire. Il se trouve simplement que j’écris en français, car c’est avec cette langue que j’ai réellement appris à « lire ». Lire dans le sens : me plonger dans un texte corps et âme pour en sortir enrichi au terme de ma lecture

a character's background and social class. For Ismail Yabrir, "everything is related to the quality of the text and its creative needs and the reasons behind it use. Sometimes, the use of darija is the same as the implementation of unnecessary sexual scenes. It needs to be justified why I am using darija; because I am talking to a greengrocer, I do not think that he is going to talk about 'to be or not to be'"¹⁰⁹. Bouchareb says that she is not willing to write in darija, because it is not well developed, and does not have a rich vocabulary in comparison to Modern Standard Arabic. With the inclusion of darija and Algerian cultural heritage into his texts, on the other hand, Mokhenache states that he aims to introduce Algerian terms and references to readers who are unfamiliar with them, and he makes the point that the failure of Algerian writers to use darija and cultural references bounded to Algeria in their texts is part of the reason why international audiences are unfamiliar with them (i.e. it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy) (S. Mokhenache, personal communication, October 28, 2017).

However, darija can be a site of negotiation with Arabic-language publishers outside of Algeria. For example, Kacimi explains that he sent his manuscript *يوم رائع للموت* [A Great Day to Die] to twenty-five publishing houses and all of them accepted it, but the prestigious Lebanese publishing house Dar Al Adab asked him to change the dialogue in darija into Modern Standard Arabic. After several negotiations, the author refused to change it and published *يوم رائع للموت* in Algeria with El-Ikhtilef and Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc. According to Kacimi, there is always a sense of superiority and racism from the Mashreq towards the Maghribi writers, as they consider themselves the best and the center of Arabic language and culture. As one of Morocco's best known writers, Tahar Ben Jelloun, puts it : "Egyptians think that our Arabic language is not as good as the one they are writing in. As a result, they

¹⁰⁹ يتعلّق الأمر أساساً بنوعية النصّ، بالضرورة الفنية الإبداعية، والأسباب التي تدفعنا لاستخدامها، أحياناً استخدام اللّغة الدّارجة تماماً مثل استخدام الإيحاءات الجنسية غير مبررة، هو يتطلب أن يكون هناك تبريراً لماذا أستخدم الدّارجة؛ لأنني أتحدّث مع بائع خضر لا أعتقد أنه يحدّثني عن to be or not to be

have a little regard towards our literature”¹¹⁰ (Sefrioui, 2017 :86). Ironically – as Laachir (2015) demonstrates in “The Aesthetics and Politics of ‘Reading Together’ Moroccan Novels in Arabic and French” – for novels by Maghribi writers in Arabic to be recognised in the Mashreq, they often have to transit through, and be recognised by French-language publishers in Europe first. The views and experiences of some of these Arabic-language Algerian authors suggests that the language debate may have shifted somewhat to Modern Standard Arabic (fusha) vs darija.

Getting published: the importance of networks within and beyond Algeria: local and personal contacts based on trust, recommendations and friendship

The authors discussed in this chapter are overwhelmingly published in Algeria and therefore their work faces all the logistical, distribution and marketing issues outlined in chapter 3. This section explores these issues from the perspectives of the interviewed authors.

Discussing the publishing world in Algeria, Aissaoui categorized Algerian publishers into different categories: the first category, he says, are printing houses rather than publishers: they ask for money from the author to publish the work. This can take different forms. They take fifty to one hundred copy and give you the rest and it is up to the writer what he or she wants to do with those copies. Or they can print the book for a fee – Aissaoui gives the figure of around 500,000 DZD (£3363.88) for 1000 copies of a book of 200 pages. Or the publisher and author will enter into a collaboration, with the author asked to provide the publisher with capital. Aissaoui gives the example of 60,000 DZD (£403,61) for 100-150 copies which the author will need to sell. Writers do not necessarily feel that publishers are exploiting them through this model – after all, the publishers are making very little money too. For example, Aissaoui explains that when Ouamane [of the Algerian publishing house

¹¹⁰ les Egyptiens considèrent que notre langue Arab n’est pas aussi bonne que celle qu’ils écrivent. Du coup, ils n’ont pas grande considération pour notre littérature

Vescera], published his novel's *Cinema Jakob*, it was published on good quality paper and for only 30,000 DZD, which Aissaoui paid: "He told me that he helped me, he took only the price of paper, and I felt as if he gave me back my money when he provided me with 100 or 150 copies. I distributed some of them to bookshops. Therefore, I did make my money back; the 30,000 DZD"¹¹¹ (A. Aissaoui, personal communication, October 28, 2017).

The second publishing category is based on an agreement between the author and the publishing house. The author pays nothing, and the publisher makes money through sales and provides the author with a percentage. This type of publishing is devoted to famous names and holders of literary awards, authors who have demonstrated good sales and that they have a good number of readers (A. Aissaoui, personal communication, October 28, 2017).

Apart from some professional publishers including El-Ikhtilef, Mim, El-Hibr and Barzakh, Aissaoui argues that most publishers in Algeria are seasonal and they appear only during cultural events to take advantage of the funds provided by the Ministry of Culture. Added to this most of them they do not respond to emails, they do not have a reading committee and – as we have seen in chapter 3 – publishers lack a distribution network and effective marketing strategies (A. Aissaoui, personal communication, October 28, 2017). Publishers, according to Miloud Yabrir, believe that they are rescuing writers, and the writer has to thank them and not ask for his rights as an author to be protected. If the author complains, the publisher will find practical excuses: "I think there is a kind of contempt towards writing, toward the writer, as well as toward culture and art even from the people who work in this field [...]"¹¹² (M. Yabrir, personal communication, October 31, 2017).

¹¹¹ قال لي انا اساعد ولكن أنا آخذ قيمة الورق فقط، تلك 3 ملايين أعطاني حوالي 100 أو 150 نسخة يعني

انا استرجعت مالي، وضعت بعض النسخ في المكتبات، استرجعت تلك 3 ملايين

¹¹² أعتقد أن هناك un mépris هناك إحتقار للأدب والكتابة والفعل الثقافي حتى من قبل أولئك الذين

يشغلون في هذا الحقل في الجزائر

It is clearly easier for some authors to access the more prestigious and professional publishing houses than others, and personal contacts count. Aissaoui himself mentioned that because Mim's founder knows him, she accepted his work immediately (A. Aissaoui, personal communication, October 28, 2017). For Khatibi, it was also easy for him to get his manuscript published because he is a known journalist and translator. When I asked him about the process, he simply said that everything was clear from the beginning and everyone at the publishing house was involved in marketing (S. Khatibi, personal communication, October 28, 2017). Khatibi was able to publish his works with El-Ikhtilef publishing house Algeria because he is also a close friend of Bachir Mefti, and indeed considers himself of the same generation which witnessed the civil violence. Khatibi states that he chose to publish with El-Ikhtilef because it is a respected publishing house in the Arab world and also because it publishes with a Lebanese publishing house, Difaf, which means access to excellent transnational distribution networks (S. Khatibi, personal communication, October 28, 2017).

Being a known poet in his hometown and the holder of some regional and national awards facilitated the process of publishing for Ismail Yabrir when he first decided to publish a collection of poetry. It was the owner of Dar Oussama who took the initiative to publish his work: "at the beginning I signed my contract with the representative in a coffee shop without any terms or conditions, all I wanted at that time was to publish my book, and I was provided with many free copies"¹¹³ (I. Yabrir, personal communication, July 04, 2017). Ismail Yabrir states that he is thankful to his Algerian publisher El-Hibr whom he said effectively distributed his most recent novel. This included organising an invitation to SILA to sign and present his book *مولى الحيرة* [Chief of Confusion]. Ismail Yabrir was involved in each step of the publication process: design, the choice of cover and setting the price. *مولى الحيرة* was around 424 pages, expensive in printing terms, and the author said that he negotiated the price

¹¹³ في الأول أمضيت في مقهى مع ممثل دون أي شروط، فقط أردت نشر الكتاب ومنحت نسخ مقابل ذلك،

with the publisher because he knew that it would remain above the purchasing power of most Algerians (I. Yabrir, personal communication, July 04, 2017).

Other authors insist on the importance of chance. Mokhenache explains that he was sitting in a café with a friend discussing and debating literature, and he told his friend that he wished to publish a novel. This friend sent him the email address of the publishing house Mim. Mokhenache sent the manuscript to the email address provided by his friend and within two weeks, he had an acceptance. The only difficulty Mokhenache faced, according to him, was the title of his novel, لا يترك في متناول الاطفال [Keep it beyond the reach of children], which the publisher was keen to change, but he refused to do so.

Bouchareb did not wish to explain in any detail her publishing experience with Chihab and Anep, but did say that she had been disappointed with the quality of the paper and the front cover, mainly because the book was aimed at children (A. Bouchareb, personal communication, October 02, 2018). Bouchareb informed me that she approached the publishers via email and had a quick response from them. She described her relationship with Chihab publishing house as good. In a published interview, Bouchareb stated that it was her choice to publish with Chihab because they are considered in Algeria to be professional and that she preferred to publish her works in Algeria (Rabhi, 2018). The only problem she encountered was when she attempted to publish her theatrical writings; several Algerian publishers refused on the basis that theatre was not part of their editorial line and not lucrative (A. Bouchareb, personal communication, October 02, 2018).

Morani also declared that she did not face any difficulty getting her work published. Her تفاح الجن [Djinn's Apple] was published in 2016 by Dar el Mothakaff in Algeria and reached sales of 300 copies out of 500 copies printed. An agreement was made by the author with the first publisher to re-publish her work with an Egyptian publisher Dar el Walid who was able to print 1000 copies. The reason behind the re-publication with this Egyptian publishing house is to secure more extensive distribution. She says that she had easy access to publishing because publishers liked her novel. The capability of selling 200 to 300 copies is considered as a success, but

not one Morani can make a living from. Morani's second novel تاج الخطيئة [Crown's Sin] was published by Mim publishing house in Algeria. Morani's novel can be purchased online through Jarir Reader, which is an online bookshop and distributor, owned by the Arabian Book publishing industry.

Abdellatif Ould Abdel Allah was not so lucky, at first, as he explained in an interview with Huff Post Maghreb when describing his experience of trying to get his first novel خارج عن السيطرة [Out of Control] published: "I contacted several Algerian publishing houses, all of them asked me to pay in advance, some of them asked me to pay in advance before even reading my manuscript"¹¹⁴. He added that he was lucky that he then came to know the director of El-Ikhtilef (A. Ould Abdel Allah, personal communication, June 14, 2017). In an interview conducted in Arabic with Ismail Yabrir, translated and posted in French by Baala, under the title, "Malgré les difficultés à publier en Algérie, les nouveaux talents sont présents au SILA" [Despite the difficulties of publishing in Algeria, the new talents are present at the SILA], the author declared: "I suffered at the beginning of my career, I did not know who I should approach, the world of publishing was foreign to me especially here in Djelfa, where even the book is rare"¹¹⁵. Ismail Yabrir then added "But later, with the support of the state for book publishing, things became easier"¹¹⁶(Baala, 2016).

Talking about his publishing experience, Djafar described himself as unknown and isolated from the literary scenery. Indeed, Djafar raises another problem which is unequal geographies within Algeria meaning unequal access to culture. In Mostaganem, there is no publishing house, so Djafar approached those in Oran, but he had no response. With the help of Djafar's friend, Djafar's first manuscript was

¹¹⁴ j'ai contacté plusieurs maisons d'édition algériennes, tous m'ont demandé de payer une caution, certaines avant même de le lire le manuscrit

¹¹⁵ J'ai souffert au tout début de ma carrière, je ne savais pas à qui m'adresser. Le monde de l'édition m'était étranger surtout à Djelfa ou même le livre est rare

¹¹⁶ Mais plus tard, avec le soutien au livre par les pouvoirs publics, les choses sont devenues plus faciles

accepted and published in Oran in 2010 by the Dar el Ghareb publishing house, under the title ميدان السلاح [Battlefiled]. In 2012, the author decided to re-publish the same novel with an Egyptian publishing house, Dar el Qilada. When I asked the author why he made this choice, he told me that he was looking for a different kind of reader. Later the author decided to move to Algiers to better promote his work, and by chance he met the Arabophone writer Samir Kacimi who helped him to publish his novel هذيان نواقيس القيامة [Whistles of Resurrection] with El-Ikhtilef and Difaf in 2014. According to Djafar, once this work was published by these two prestigious publishing houses, he had easy access to publishing. Djafar agrees that publishers will not take risks to publish unknown writers, and indeed will not even respond to your emails. This does not apply only to Algerian publishers. Djafar stated that if you approach publishers in the Arab world, such as Dar al Adab or Dar al Saqi for example, the first thing they do is look at your profile online and if you are known and a holder of literary awards they will reply to your email. Djafar did not ignore the fact that some publishers are honest in their responses: he says that they will tell you immediately that they do not take risks publishing young authors, or that you need to pay to publish your manuscript because there is no market for it to be profitable (M. Djafar, personal communication, July 09, 2017).

Salah Badis (b.1994) argues that it can be easier to publish outside of Algeria from the outset. He wrote a collection of poetry in Arabic, ضجر البواخر [Ship weariness] which he decided to publish outside Algeria with Dar Al Mutawassit in 2016. Dar Al Mutawassit is a publishing house established by a group of intellectuals from the Middle East based in Italy. Badis faced some difficulties with publishing his work in Algeria: "Algerian editors only publish the writing of retired people or stars such as Chawki Amari or Kamel Daoud"¹¹⁷. He further added that his refusal to publish in Algeria is also due to the bad quality of the paper which most books are printed on (Baala,2016).

¹¹⁷ les éditeurs Algériens ne publient que les écrits des retraites ou des stars comme Chawki Amari ou Kamel Daoud

In many ways, these are universal problems for authors seeking to get published without cultural capital, but they are exacerbated by the particularly fragile economics of publishing in Algeria which encourage cronyism. Publishing in Algeria according to Miloud Yabrir is based on a set of criteria that can lead to easy access to publishing depending on the language you are writing in, your background and your origin. For Miloud Yabrir, “criteria and aesthetic judgement of the work does not exist. Sadly, there are several artless criteria not at the level of professionalism established by some publishing houses, based on friendship, based on recommendations from known people within the field, based on corruption, and they do not have any relationship with creativity, but we hope in the future the situation will be better. I think many issues in Algeria are ruled by friendships, by origins and belonging, by linguistic belonging, regional belonging and ethnicity”¹¹⁸ (M. Yabrir, personal communication, October 31, 2017).

Self-marketing and distribution

These authors, at least at the start of their literary careers, play a key role in physically distributing and marketing their work in Algeria, in the absence of distribution infrastructure and established publicity channels. As Hadir – who sets up his own literary events to promote his work - “the conflict between booksellers and publishers [means that] we end up with books scorned and poorly distributed or even

¹¹⁸ لا يوجد معايير وفي نفس الوقت يوجد معايير ساذجة أو غير احترافية النشر في الجزائر يتم عن طريق الصداقات يتم عن طريق التوصيات يتم عن طريق، عن طرق ملتوية ليست لها علاقة تحديدا بالإبداع للأسف الشديد يعني ربما تحسنت الأمور منذ العام الماضي إلى اليوم لكن أعتقد أن الكثير من الأمور تسير في الجزائر بالصداقات بالانتماء العرقي والانتماء اللغوي والانتماء الجهوي للأسف الشديد

not found, even if readers demand them from booksellers”¹¹⁹ (R. Hadir, personal communication, October 31, 2017).

Morani explains that she advertises her novels through Facebook and Instagram. She publishes reviews written by ordinary readers (as opposed to professional reviewers) and some extracts from her novels. She lists the names of the bookshops and the cities where they are located where her works can be found at the top her Facebook page, including Algiers, Biskra, Batna, Relizane and Ouargla. Bouchareb also takes advantage of social media to promote her work: she has a page for each novel, and around 6,582 followers. In these pages she posts reviews, interviews, and related activities, also informing her readers about the availability of her works in different bookshops around Algeria. She also interacts with her readers by replying to their comments. At the bottom of her Facebook page, Morani informs her readers that if any of them want a signed novel, they can order it via the post. The payment needs to be made in advance (bearing in mind that e-payment does not exist in Algeria), and once it is received, the author will send a copy for her customer. However, in a recent conversation which I had with Morani, she explained that she was no longer able to do this as it is time-consuming, and she faced several obstacles including trust. For the payment, for example, it is likely that she was reliant on someone who her potential customer knew living near her to pass the upfront cash on to her. Morani also uses Twitter to advertise the book fairs where her works can be found, for example she tweeted in May 2017 that readers could find her works at the Cairo Book Fair, and in a similar tweet she advertised the availability of her works at the Oman Book Fair. These are common marketing strategies for nearly all of the authors considered in this chapter, with only a few exceptions. On self-marketing, some authors such as Ismail Yabrir argue that marketing is part of the publisher’s job. Miloud Yabrir also states that he has no interest in marketing his work, to the best of

¹¹⁹ les conflits de couloirs entre libraires et éditeurs [mean that] on se retrouve avec des livres dédaignés et mal distribués voire introuvables, même si les lecteurs les demandent à leurs libraires

my knowledge he is the only one who has not established a Facebook page for his works although he himself is on Facebook and talks about his work on there.

Kacimi's first novel appeared in 2009, *تصريح بضياح* [Lost Declaration], which was first published by the Algerian publishing house El Beit. Kacimi took the initiative and distributed the novel himself, and provided his friends with some copies, gave free copies to journalists, and even placed some at a bookshop at the Algiers international airport. By chance, the novel was purchased by an Egyptian passenger (S. Kacimi, personal communication, July 04, 2017), who brought it to the attention of international publishers. The novel was later published by Arab Scientific Publishers Inc and was awarded in 2010 an Algerian literary award, the Hashemi Saidani Award for Best Algerian debut novel, which was created by the Algerian novelist Tahar Wattar. Kacimi's career took off from the publication of *تصريح بضياح* and he is no longer obliged to use the same strategies to promote his work. Arab Scientific Publishers Inc published his second novel *يوم رائع للموت* [A Great Day to Die] in 2009, as well as his third novel *هلابيل* in 2010. *في عشق امرأة عاقر* [In a Love with Barren Woman] appeared in 2011, published by the Algerian publishing house El-Ikhtilef, extracts from this novel were translated into English language by Banipal magazine. This is a literary magazine based in the United Kingdom for the promotion of Arabic language literature in English translation, which was founded in 1998 by Samuel Shimon and Margaret Obank. This novel appeared in its second edition through the Egyptian publishing house El Rawfeed and the third edition through the United Arab Emirates publishing house Dar Waraq. In 2012, *الحالم* [The Dreamer] was published by Arab Scientific Publishers and was longlisted for the Sheikh Zayed Book Award in the United Arab Emirates. In 2018, *الحالم* appeared in its second edition by Difaf and El-Ikhtilef. There are discussions to translate his work into English and French.

This explains why Algerian Arabophone authors are keen to re-publish their works with Middle Eastern publishers such as Dar Al Adab, Dar Al Jadeed, Difaf, Fadaat for Publishing and Distribution, Dar el Jamel, Dar El Ain, Arab Scientific Publishers Inc, Dar Al Saqi, Hachette Antoine and Al Mutawassit, as it guarantees a wider distribution of their works, including through online stores such as Amazon for

Arabic Kindle, Neel wa furat, Jarir Bookstore, and Naufal Hachette. These publishing houses dominate the book market in the Arab world. They have a well-developed distribution network, bookshops and online bookshops. “The UAE is already serving as a hub for publishers and books from across the globe”, the vice president of International Publishers Associations Boudoir bint Sultan Al-Qasimi declared in her interview with Catherine Jewell (2015). Djamila Morani stated that she decided to re-publish her first work تفاح الجن which was initially published by the Algerian publishing house Dar el Mothaqaf with the Egyptian publishing house Dar el Walid to secure a wider distribution. Dar El Walid publishing house belongs to the Lebanese publishing company Dar El Kitab Al Arabi which was established in 1962. Aissaoui also decided to re-publish his work *Sierra De Muiriti*, which was published in Algeria in 2014, with the prestigious Lebanese publishing house Dar Al Saqi, accompanied by a preface written by Waciny Laredj. The novel is available on Amazon Kindle Arabic, Neel wa furat, on Dar Al Saqi online bookstore and on Jamalon. Jamalon – to give an example – is the largest online bookstore in the Middle East. Established in 2010, it has more than 10 million titles in Arabic and English in all genres, with a delivery service offering different methods of payment. Dar Al Saqi as indicated on their official website already had already published Algerian authors such as Waciny Laredj, and Yasmina Khadra and Rachid Boudjedra in translation.

The absence of professional literary criticism as well as serious media coverage that is devoted to literary works in Algeria was a concern expressed by these authors. As the Arabophone writer and poet Amina Chikh puts in a text published on the official website of SILA : “as young writers we need criticism, because writers without criticism cannot breathe, and we are without literary journalism and cultural platforms, like a person without oxygen. I have noticed that the suffering of authors starts immediately after the closing of the SILA, where all the means of communication between readers and writers are interrupted”. For Ismail Yabrir, “criticism in Algeria is in trouble, we do not have professional journalists in this field, [...] What is happening is that we do not have journals devoted to literary criticism and we do not have even journalism for culture. In Algeria, we are suffering from the

absence of cultural journalism; therefore, the critic cannot not find a place. There is a type of criticism; an academic criticism, but it is also not successful. There is only a small number of good critics, they are not part of any institution, they represent themselves as individuals like el Yamin Bentoumi and Wahid Ben Bouaziz or Lounis Ben Ali or Mohamed Lamine Bahri, these are only few serious critics"¹²⁰ (I. Yabrir. personal communication, July 04, 2017). Algerian newspapers be it in Arabic or in French do review literature, these include *Quotidien d'Oran*, *Reporters*, *ALG24*, *El Moudjahid*, *Liberté*, *le Soir d'Algérie*, *El Watan*, *Al Khabar Dzair*, *Dostor*, *Annasr*, but the reviews written and published by these newspapers are very limited, short and sometimes not by professional critics.

Many of these authors rely on their friends who work in the media to review their books. The Algerian journalist and novelist Khier Chouar, for example, writes about and reviews the Algerian cultural scene and literature in general. His articles are published by several Middle Eastern media outlets including *Ultra Sawt*, *Al Jazeera*, *Al Jadeed*, as well as Algerian newspapers such as *El Hayat*. Middle Eastern online magazines and newspapers tend to produce reviews of higher quality, for example in *Al Araby UK*, *Al Riyadh*, *Aawsat*, *Al Arab UK*, *Thakafa*, *Nafha*, *Raseef*, *Al Jazeera*, *El Quds UK* and *Ultra Sawat*. These newspapers bring Arabophone and Francophone authors together, for example, one recent interview in Algeria with the Algerian bilingual novelist Mustapha Benfodil was done by the Algerian poet Aboubakeur Zemmal who contributes, in Arabic, to the Middle Eastern online

¹²⁰ التّقد في الجزائر هو في مآزق ليس لدينا منابر أو صحافة أدبية متخصصة عندما نقول الصحافة المتخصصة نحن لا نتحدّث عن صحافة ثقافية متخصصة، هذه يمكن أن تشمل كل الثقافة، أمّا الصحافة الأدبية أو التّقديّة المتخصصة، فهي جزء آخر مختلفٌ تماما، يعني هو يمكن أن يكون مكتملا للصحافة الثقافية، لكنّه مختصّ ومباشر. الذي يحصل هو أننا لا نملك صحافة أدبية متخصصة ولا نملك حتى صحافة ثقافية متخصصة، نحن في الجزائر نعاني، نشكو من غياب وضحالة الإعلام الثقافي، لهذا فالناقد قد لا يجد منبرا، هناك نقد جامعي أكاديمي، وهو أيضا نقد فاشل في مجمله، ما عدا بعض المحاولات للكتاب والنقاد الجامعيين المنفصلة لا تمثل الجامعة بل يمثلون أنفسهم كأفراد هناك اليامين بن تومي، محمد لمين بحري، وحيد بن بوعزيز؛ لونيس بن علي؛ هؤلاء يشتغلون، لكن يشتغلون بوصفهم أفرادا وليس مؤسسات تابعة للجامعة.

magazine *Al Arab*. In this interview, Benfodil declared that he reads Algerian authors of Arabic expression, as well as those of French expression, and among them, he mentioned Samir Kacimi, Bachir Mefti and Amal Bouchareb (Zemmal,2019). Indeed, one of the key sources of published literary criticism, where it exists, is this generation of writers reading and reviewing each other's work. Samir Kacimi also stated that he always attends the SILA event to buy Algerian novels published by the younger generation of Algeria authors. Abdellatif Ould Abdallah reads and reviews some of the works locally published, including the work of Sofiane Mokhenache and Mohammed Djafar. The latter also reviewed the works of Ould Abdallah.

The key role of prizes in getting published

Literary awards are a keyway for new Algerian authors to get published. In a number of cases, it is an unpublished work which is nominated for an award. Through winning the prize, or even being longlisted, the author can leverage a publishing contract in Algeria, including from publishers who perhaps when first approached refused to take the risk and publish a new and unknown author. In other cases, publishers put forward works they have published for prizes.

The biggest prizes attract international attention and make works travel. The significance of prizes in advancing an author's career is not specific to Algeria, or indeed the postcolonial world. In *Marketing the Literature: The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain*, Squires (2009) argues that "literary prizes can bring relatively unknown writers to public recognition, enhance the reputation of already established authors, turn the attention of the media to books, and so support the consumption of literature generally" (2009:97). In *The Economy of Prestige*, English (2005:51) argues, through a Bourdieusian lens, that "institutionally, the prize functions as a claim to authority – the authority, at bottom, to produce cultural value. It provides an institutional basis for exercising, or attempting to exercise, control over the cultural economy, over the distribution of esteem and reward on a particular

field". What is perhaps more particular to the condition of the postcolonial novel is that the most prestigious prizes lie outside of the country of origin of the novelist.

Amongst the biggest literary awards established by publishers in the Middle East is the Katara Prize for the Arabic Novel based in Qatar, founded in 2014. The value of this prize is \$200,000 and amongst its sponsors is UNESCO. The winners' works are translated into several languages including English and French. Algerian winners of this prize include Waciny Laredj, who won the main prize of \$200,000 for *مملكة الفراشة* [The Butterfly Kingdom] in 2015, and Saïd Khatibi who won \$60,000 for *اربعون عاما في انتظار اليزابيث* [Forty Years Waiting for Elizabeth] in 2017. Abdelouahab Aissaoui's unpublished novel *سفر أعمال المنسيين* [The Travel of the works of the forgotten] won \$30,000 in 2017. In an interview with the Algerian critic Nadia Ghanem in 2020, following his nomination, Saïd Khatibi commented on the contribution of this award to his career: "the International Prize for Arabic Fiction is one of the highest literary awards for Arabic. It also functions as a bridge for the Arabic novel and countries abroad. It is a window from which the West looks at contemporary Arabic literature [...] This award is an important annual event from the time the longlist is announced to when discussions and reviews start flowing" (2020).

The International Prize for Arabic Fiction was launched in April 2007 and is funded by the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism in collaboration with the Booker Prize in London. The main aim of this literary award is to encourage high quality Arabic novels and to promote reading culture in the Arab world in Arabic and in translation. Shortlisted authors win \$10,000, with the winner awarded \$50,000. Amongst the Algerian authors who have been shortlisted for this award are Waciny Laredj, Amine Zaoui, and Habib Sayeh. A number of the new, younger generation of Algerian authors examined here been longlisted and shortlisted, including Samir Kacimi (in 2010 and 2019), (in 2011, for *يوم رائع للموت* [A Great Day to Die], Saïd Khatibi, and Abdelouahab Aissaoui.

The Kuwaiti Saoud Al Sabah prize is reserved for writers under the age of 35, and all manuscripts must be written in Modern Standard Arabic. The prize value is \$24,000. A number of Algerian authors have put themselves forward for this prize,

and in 2017 it was won by Abdelouahab Aissaoui, for his unpublished novel الدوائر والأبواب [The Circles and Doors]. Aissaoui explained that he had initially submitted this novel to an Algerian publisher, who claimed to really want it and said that he would submit it to the Algerian Creativity Institution Fund for Art and Culture, established to help young Algerian writers publish their works in cooperation with publishers. The novel was submitted to the reading committee, but they refused the publisher permission to publish the works he had submitted, including Aissaoui's novel. As a result, the author decided to participate in the Souad Al Sabah literary award in Kuwait, which he won. He then decided to publish the novel with a more prestigious Algerian publishing house than the one with whom he had previously been in contact – Mim. The novel was published in Algeria by Mim and by Dar el Souad Sabah publishing house in Kuwait (A. Aissaoui, personal communication, October 28, 2017).

Outside of the Gulf states, and less visible, there is also a Sudanese literary award named after the Sudanese novelist el Tayeb Salih, devoted to novels and short stories written in Modern Standard Arabic. A number of Algerian writers have participated and won this award, which resulted in their work being published by the prize sponsor, the Zain Company. The value of this award ranges from \$6,000 to \$10,000. Algerian winners include Hadjer Kouidri in 2012, Ismail Yabrir in 2013, and Ahmed Taibaoui in 2014. Once Ismail Yabrir's وصية المعتوه-كتاب الموتى ضد الاحياء [The Commandment of the Simpleton: Book of the dead against the living] was published by Zain in Sudan it was republished by the Algerian publishing house Mim and went to four editions (4000 copies). In 2017, this novel was re-published by Dar al Waraq in Dubai and by Tanmia bookstore in Egypt in 2017.

Other examples of Middle Eastern prizes for Arabic-language fiction are the Sharjah Award for Literature and Creativity, which was awarded to the Aissaoui for his collection of short stories, مجاز السرو [Cypress Path] in 2013. In 2016, مجاز السرو was published by Dar Baghdadi in Algeria, and the author gained twelve per cent of sales in rights. In 2015, the UAE-based Sharjah Award for Literature and Creativity third prize was awarded to Miloud Yabrir's جنوب الملح [South of the Salt]. Before participating in this literary award, Miloud sent his manuscript to Barzakh publishing

house. However, he did not receive any response until the day he gained this award and was contacted by the publishing team:

My first novel came out of collaborative publishing between the two publishing houses of Dar Al Jadeed in Lebanon and Barzakh in Algeria. I think it was a really good experience, it was a satisfactory quality compared to what is available in Algeria. I assume that I had the chance to access excellent publishing based on a set of criteria. However, I only published with these publishers because I was a recipient of the Sharjah Arab Creativity award, maybe I would not have had the opportunity to publish without the award. Hence, the problem of publishing persists, most of the publishing houses lack a reading committee, there is a nonexistence of a scrutiny committee, and in the rare presence of these, it often lacks scrutiny and relies on a preferred style. This is not healthy at all. I think that the world of publishing in Algeria is in crisis. All these projects that you have noticed are individual projects; they are not institutionalized ones. They are individuals who publish, who love reading and writing and are doing it for the sake of literature, and this is a big issue. There is an absence of institutions either within the state or with the industry of publishing, unfortunately. There are some groups and individuals taking responsibility, overseeing these publishing houses. The moment they disappear, everything will disappear. Sadly, this is one of the negative aspects of publishing in Algeria [...]"¹²¹

¹²¹ أنا نشرت روايتي الأولى يعني بنشر مشترك في لبنان والجزائر؛ دار الجديد في لبنان و دار البرزخ في الجزائر أعتقد أنه كانت تجربة جميلة جدا كانت تجربة مقارنة بما هو كائن في الجزائر أو في بيروت اعتقد انه كانت لي فرصة ان انشر نشر ممتاز بمعايير كثيرة لكن للأسف ، أنا نشرت في دار البرزخ ودار الجديد لاني نلت جائزة وإن لم أنل الجائزة لربما لما نشرت روايتي في نشر مشترك بين الجزائر و لبنان جائزة الشارقة للإبداع العربي لذا هناك

It is notable that in the past decade the Gulf countries have created a growing number of lucrative prizes for Arabic-language fiction, as part of a strategy of consolidating their international standing and influence through cultural policy. In this context, the silver medal and unspecified cash prize of the American University in Cairo's Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature (established in 1996), which Mosteghanemi won in 1998, seems modest. The Lebanese poet and critic Abdo Wazen (2017) argues that "these heavily funded awards are turning into a magnet for Arab writers like never before [...] those awards are surely lending substantial financial support desperately needed by the writers, most of whom are financially distressed, some even on the poverty line. Indeed, these awards have enabled many novelists, poets, and thinkers to secure houses for their families, pay for the schooling of their children and meet their essential needs". These Middle Eastern literary awards also create categories and contribute to shaping what is considered to be the canon. For example, the website of the International Prize for Arabic Fiction presents Samir Kacimi's prize-winning novel *The Stairs of Trolar* in the following terms: "a daring and prophetic novel which re-imagines the political history of Algeria – and through it Arab history as a whole – in a satirical style, using fantastical elements to simulate reality". Of course, Western literary awards – the Prix Goncourt, Prix Renaudot, Prix de Cinq Continents de la Francophonie, Prix François Mauriac, Prix Fémina, Prix du roman arabe – have been doing the same thing for a long time to postcolonial fiction.

مشكل دور النشر أغلبها ليس لديها لجنة قراءة لجنة تمحيص الكثير من دور النشر تعتمد على أذواق أصحابها و على قراءاتهم الخاصة وهذا شيء ليس بالصحي كثيرا فأعتقد أن النشر يعاني مشكلا كبيرا فأغلب المشاريع التي تشاهدها في الجزائر هي مشاريع فردية ليست مشاريع مؤسساتية بقدر ما هم إلا أفراد ينشطون ويقراون ويحبون الأدب وهذا مشكل في الجزائر تماما لا وجود للمؤسسات لا في الأحزاب ولا في السلطة ولا في دور النشر ولا في أي ميدان آخر للأسف الشديد هناك أشخاص يحملون على عاتقهم هذه المؤسسات أو شبه المؤسسات وعند زوالهم سيزول كل شيء وهذا للأسف أحد النقاط السلبية في النشر في الجزائر

The Palestinian-Algerian poet, novelist and publisher Adi Chatat is entirely against these international literary awards. For him, Algerian authors are gaining recognition first and foremost outside their country and in doing so “the birth certificate” of the author, to employ his expression, is being given beyond Algeria. He prefers that writers win awards in their home country with a continuous investment for the promotion and the translation of their works (A. Chatat, personal communication, October 29, 2017). In a disparaging critique of the quality of works selected to win prizes, the Algerian scholar and critic Chérif Bemmoussa Abdelkader (2015) found 1165 grammatical and lexical mistakes, excluding spelling errors, in nine Arabic novels awarded the International Prize for Arabic Fiction between 2008-2015, including فرانكشتاين في بغداد [Frankenstein in Baghdad] by the Iraqi novelist Ahmed Saadawi and the novel of the Tunisian novelist Shukri Mabkhout’s الطلياني [The Italian].

At the same time, Algerian literary prizes are very much criticized by the authors whom I interviewed, the majority of whom were also recipients of these national awards. Algerian literary awards are relatively new and to my knowledge have not so far been awarded to non-Algerian authors. According to many authors, and publishers, these prizes do not accompany and encourage writers to continue writing. Mefti argues that some of the winners only write to gain these types of prizes, and then they disappear from the cultural scene (B. Mefti, personal communication, July 03, 2017). The absence of infrastructure associated with these awards and the lower value prizes in comparison to Middle Eastern and European prizes diminish their status, before one even adds in mismanagement, bureaucracy and the absence of a media strategy. They are not seen as a springboard into a literary career or a means of advancement as many former winners disappear into oblivion after winning a prize for an initial work. For example, one of the holders of Malek Haddad literary award, Yasmina Salah, has already disappeared from the literary field

Nevertheless, entering into a competition to win a national literary prize can be a publishing strategy. For example, it was with the encouragement of Hadir’s friend that Hadir was able to participate in the Ali Maâchi literary award. This award was created by the Algerian Ministry of Culture in 2006 and takes the name of the

Algerian Arabophone poet Ali Maâchi (1927–1958). It is devoted to young Algerian writers under the age of thirty-five years who have an unpublished manuscript – this can be a novel or a work of poetry, theatre, music or cinema. The value of this award is 500,000 DZD [£3440] for first prize. After winning this prize, Hadir had the opportunity for his work to be published with the state-owned Anep (R. Hadir, personal communication, October 31, 2017). However, this publishing experience following winning such a prize is not always smooth, as Aissaoui explains.

In 2012, the author submitted his unpublished manuscript *Cinema Jakob* [Cinema Jacob] to the Ali Maâchi award – and according to himself, was surprised to find himself amongst the winners. A few months later, he sought to publish *Cinema Jakob*. He described himself as knocking on all doors, in and beyond his country, without a response from any publisher. Then he gave up because he thought that the state-owned ENAG would take the initiative to publish *Cinema Jakob* as the prize was sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, but this turned out not to be the case. Two years later, Aissaoui remarked that other works which had won the Ali Maâchi prize were being published. In response, he called Anep on the phone, and they asked him to bring his work in Word format and on a CD. The author did so in person, and then was told he would need to await the evaluation of the reading committee. Sometime later, Aissaoui phoned Anep again and was provided with constructive feedback and was told that they had decided to publish his work. Then they changed their minds, supposedly as there were too many grammatical and lexical errors. After this disappointment, the author was contacted by a friend who told him about a new publishing house welcoming young writers, Vescera, which published *Cinema Jakob*. This publishing house, according to its owner Toufik Ouamane, was successful in establishing a distribution network with Dar el Jile in Beirut for the wider distribution of works (Zerkinne, 2016).

According to Ismail Yabrir, Algerian literary awards are known for their discontinuity – that is to say, a new award might be created, run for a few years and then disappear. In 2006, with his manuscript *باردة كائنى* [Cold as a Female], Ismail Yabrir participated in the Malek Haddad Algerian literary award. This award, created in

2001, is funded by Ahlam Mosteghanemi and organized by the Algerian publishing house El-Ikhtilef in collaboration with the Beirut Difa. It has a value of 400,000 DZD (£2750). The reading committee comes from the Middle East, including the Egyptian author Gamal el Ghitani and the Lebanese novelist Suhayl Idris. Ismail Yabrir was obliged to wait for five years to see his book in print (I. Yabrir, personal communication, July 04, 2017). In 2008, Mosteghanemi decided to close the award down citing several problems (Hadji, 2008). In 2018, Ismail Yabrir was awarded the Mohammed Dib Literary Prize for his novel *مولى الحيرة* [Chief of Confusion]. This award, taking the name of the Francophone Algerian writer Mohamed Dib (1920-2003) was established in 2003 and is organised by the Cultural Association of La Grande Maison in the city of Tlemcen, the author's hometown. Novels can be submitted in three languages, and in 2019, 31 Arabophone texts were submitted, in addition to six in Tamazight and 29 in French. Among the award criteria is the stipulation that the novel submitted should be previously published with a known Algerian publishing house. Yet *مولى الحيرة* was first published, not in Algeria, but by Masciliana in Tunisia and in Beirut simultaneously, and only then re-published by El-Hibr publishing house in Algeria. This novel reached its second edition (2000 copies).

In 2014, Aissaoui started to work on a historical novel, *Sierra De Muiriti* [Mountain of Death]. He submitted this unpublished manuscript for the short story award organised by the Regional Association for Thought and Creativity of Oued Souf, in the south of Algeria. After a few months, the author was informed that he was the winner. The award was composed of a certain amount of money, the publication of the work, and two hundred copies for the author free of charge. As promised by the organisers, everything went well and, according to Aissaoui, met his expectations as a novelist, but he faced a problem of distribution. To advertise his novel, the author sent fifty copies to his friends in and beyond Algeria. In 2015, Aissaoui decided to send *Sierra De Muiriti* to Dar Al Saqi publishing house in Beirut, their response was positive. In 2016, *Sierra De Muiriti* was published by Dar Al Saqi with a preface written by the widely known Waciny Laredj. According to the author, the novel had to be published outside of Algeria for wider distribution and online purchase.

As can be seen through the names of these Algerian prizes, there is a drive to create a canon by naming them after the great writers of the first generation of Algerian authors: Malek Haddad, Ali Maâchi, Mohamed Dib – and Assia Djébar. The Assia Djébar prize was created by the Algerian Ministry of Culture in 2015 after the death of the prolific Francophone Algerian female novelist Assia Djébar (1936–2015). The value of this award is around 1,000,000 DZD [£6,890] and novels are accepted in French, Arabic or Tamazight. In 2016, Kacimi was awarded the Assia Djébar prize, and Aissaoui was also a winner for his novel *الماشاء*, the second part of his first novel *هلابيل*.

In 2018, the Algerian Ministry of Culture in Algeria established another new literary prize in the name of the Algerian Francophone author Yamina Méchakra (1949–2013). The committee members for the latter are composed of Algerian female writers only, including the Arabophone Rabia Djalti (b.1954), the Francophone Maïssa Bey (b.1950) and the Tamazight and Francophone novelist Lynda Koudache. The prize, worth 500,000 DZD [£3440] is particularly aimed at those who have not won a prize before and submissions are accepted in the three languages of Algeria (*Casbah Tribune*, 2019, January 21). A further Algerian literary award holds the name of the Arabophone Algerian novelist Abdelhamid Ben Hadouga (1925–1996). This literary award was established in Bordj Bou Arréridj in the east of Algeria in 2016, sponsored by the Algerian Ministry for Culture and organised by the cultural association *نوافذ ثقافية* (Cultural Windows) under the supervision of Ryad Wattar. Its selection criteria are that texts should be submitted in Modern Standard Arabic or French. The value of this prize is around 500,000 DZD [£3440] for first prize, 300,000 DZD [£2065] for second prize and 100,000 DZD [£688] for third prize. Its reading committee includes Waciny Laredj and Algerian university lecturers and researchers. It suffers from funding shortages (Hadji, 2019). The prize criteria state that colloquial language should only be used where necessary and the content need to be humanist, universal and not transgress national principles and values (in short, should not be critique the War of Independence, its heroes or Islam, Arab or Tamazight identity). One might reasonably assume that the same criteria in terms of content, although

possibly not the same level of hostility towards darija, applies to all prizes sponsored by the Algerian Ministry of Culture.

It is worth underlining that these Algerian prizes are generally open to authors in the three languages of literature in Algeria (Arabic, French and Tamazight) even if the prize namesakes were generally monolingual for writing purposes. Strikingly, the prize with the requirement that the manuscript be in Arabic is, firstly, transnational and, secondly, named after a Francophone Algerian writer who talked about the pain of only being able to write in French. These references back to previous generations and a recognition of multilingualism is suggestive of the emergence of an Algerian literary field, even if these prizes have all kinds of practical problems and lack symbolic and cultural capital.

Conclusion

Djafar stated that since he first started writing up until the present, he has been unable to make a good living: "Impossible, almost I did not benefit of my writing, writing does not provide you with even a pack of cigarettes that you smoke on writing one page[...]. In the Arab world, only two writers who can protest their sales, only two, [in Arabic], Waciny and Ahlam Mosteghanemi, apart from these two names none of us can make a good living"¹²² (M. Djafar, personal communication, July 09, 2017). A rare one of these writers, however, does make a decent living. Kacimi states that when his novel was translated into French, he reached sales of 6,500. It is not necessarily the book sales which allow Kacimi to live, though. Kacimi stated that for the past three years, he has been making a good living because he is invited to numerous cultural events within and beyond Algeria. For example, for participating in an event in Berlin or France, the author will be paid for his presence, approximately

¹²² مستحيل، تقريبا لم أستفد ولا شيء من كتاباتي، الكتابة لا توفر لك حتى علبة سيجارة التي تدخنها على كتابة صفحة واحدة، في العالم العربي كاتبين فقط الذي يمكنهم أن يحتجو على مبيعاتهم، إثنين فقط، واسيني واحلام مسنغانمي، عدا ذلك أنا متأكد ولا كاتب يستطيع أن يعيش

1000 Euros (£890.40), with six events of this kind, the author will be able to have better living conditions. Kacimi also stated that he was satisfied with the amount he gained from the sale of the French translation of his novel as it covers all his living costs in Algeria for one year, which is not the case for the sales of the Arabic version.

French-language authors are still more likely to go on to be critically acclaimed internationally (Miliari, 2012 :57). This includes Adlène Meddi (b. 1975) and Kaouther Adimi – who were too famous to form part of the authors examined in this chapter – but also Girod, who was one of my interviewees. Entering into the world of novel publishing is not easy for any Algerian author. The poor book publishing infrastructure in Algeria means that aspiring authors are particularly reliant on personal contacts and chance encounters. State attempts to promote literary culture – such as through financial support or creating prizes – is often fragmented and short-term. It is particularly tricky for young Arabic-language authors whose contacts and networks are often weaker. Arabophone writers who acquire recognition and status in Algeria often do so by being published abroad, notably in Lebanon, winning the Middle East-based literary prizes, and then being re-published in Algeria by an Algerian publishing house. Francophone writers have more, albeit still limited, resources which are based in Algeria, such as the French-state funded Institut Français, which promotes Algerian authors of French expression, and the only Algerian literary magazine, *LivrEscQ*, which is published in French. This new generation of writers is nevertheless inventive, using social media to promote their books, physically taking them to be sold in bookshops, organising their own literary events as well as applying for prizes.

There are signs that an Algerian literary field exists, if not through infrastructure and institutions, then through authors' sense of community. Perceptions towards the use of Arabic or French, or Tamazight, or indeed English have shifted. More and more Algerian authors can, and feel more comfortable, writing in Arabic. The highly politicized and sometimes vicious rivalries between Francophones and Arabophones seem to have lessened. Language is presented by

these new authors more as a tool of expression than an ideological marker, although political connotations are far from having entirely vanished. Many of these authors argue that language is no longer knotted to identity; identity, as many authors agreed, is expressed through the content of the text, and not the place of publication or the geographical, ethnic or linguistic origin of the writer. Many writers feel much more comfortable using darija in their novels, and do not feel that they have to “prove” to readers and prize-givers in the Middle East that they master Modern Standard Arabic. These writers also very explicitly draw on a shared canon which they label Algerian literature, across Francophone and Arabophone texts.

Conclusion

Existing scholarship on Algerian literature has generally focused on its political contexts, linguistic debates and themes and aesthetics. This thesis sought to move away from these questions by focusing on the shifting conditions of production of French- and Arabic-language Algerian novels, both within Algeria and in their transnational contexts. It examined these through the perspectives of publishers, booksellers, authors and the media and scholarly gaze on and of some of these authors. From this point of departure, the thesis sought to evaluate the impact of these conditions of production on who and what gets published. This analysis was pursued through the following research questions:

1. What are the opportunities and limitations for Algerian authors and editors publishing fiction within Algeria, and how have these shifted over time?
2. What kinds of publishing opportunities are created by the transnational networks within which Algerian independent publishers are embedded? How do these contribute to determining what gets published?
3. What is the pathway to international success for Algerian fiction authors? What are the kinds of literary personas which they need to create, and what types of work are they expected to produce?
4. How do young Algerian authors who do not want, or have not had the opportunity, to create such personas see their place in the Algerian literary field?
5. How has the question of language choice evolved over time? What impact do transnational publishing networks had on reinforcing the idea of distinct “Francophone” and “Arabophone” Algerian literatures? What has been the impact of the shift in Algeria in the language of literacy, from French to Arabic?

6. Finally, bringing all these questions together, does an Algerian literary field exist, and if so, what defines it?

The opportunities and limitations for Algerian authors and editors publishing novels within Algeria have clearly shifted over time. During the colonial period, hardly any Algerians were published in Algeria, and when they published with metropolitan French publishers, this was generally an act of political resistance, “writing back” to the colonial power. Arabic-language publishing barely existed. Illiteracy meant that there was a very small Algerian reading public, and what small reading public existed was more likely to read in French than in Arabic. In the post-independence period, there was significant political will, and pressure from, the Algerian state to write in the sole national and official language, Modern Standard Arabic (*fusha*). The Algerian state created its own publishing houses to develop Algerian publishing in Algeria, although these had structural weaknesses and limited output. Most novelists continued to write in French, the language of their education, although some Arabic-language novelists emerged – as did a handful of genuinely bilingual writers. The “language question” was highly politicised with clearly demarcated “Arabophone” and “Francophone” fields. Those who continued to write in French critiqued the way in which *fusha* had been “imposed” on Algerians in the post-independence period and claimed that it was through French that they could challenge taboos such as sexuality, whilst those who wrote in Arabic implied that those who wrote in French were flirting with neo-colonialism, if not outright belonging to *hizb fransa* (the party of France), and that it was only through writing in Arabic that one could attain an “authentic” identity.

In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, many Algerian Francophone novelists preferred to publish with French publishing houses, which possessed greater symbolic and economic capital, and avoided the editorial line of the state-owned Algerian publishing houses. However, if the latter were keen on novels which promoted the War of Independence, its martyrs, and the “national values” of Arabity and Islam, French publishing houses equally had their own editorial expectations – realist, quasi-anthropological novels, which critiqued the post-independence state

and exposed societal problems such as the treatment of women. The “black decade” of the 1990s reinforced these expectations, as a French (and more broadly, Western) market emerged hungry for tales which would describe or explain the civil violence to them in bloody detail. Due to lack of investment and major security problems, publishing in Algeria was reduced to almost nothing during the 1990s.

The 1990s also saw the emergence of a group of new transnational literary stars, building on the success of Assia Djebar, Mohamed Dib, Kateb Yacine, Rachid Boudjedra, Tahar Djaout and Tahar Wattar. The success of these new stars continued into the 2000s and 2010s, and their names were Ahlam Mosteghanemi, Waciny Laredj, Boualem Sansal, Yasmina Khadra and Kamel Daoud. All of these authors’ careers – with the possible exception of Daoud – were made abroad: Mosteghanemi and Laredj in Lebanon and Syria, and Sansal and Khadra, and later Daoud, in France. Those who are keen for commercial success know that they cannot make it at home, so they develop strategies to be consecrated in “the World Republic of Letters” – be the centre of that world Paris, or Beirut/ Damascus. Indeed, even though Laredj and Mosteghanemi are published by Middle East publishers, they have both passed through Paris, through the Sorbonne University. Being consecrated in “the World Republic of Letters” means developing a literary persona – as interpreter of one’s society for international audiences, and at the same time, a rebel against its social, religious and political norms and traditions. These five writers have developed different versions of this persona, some more conservative, seeking to embody “authenticity”, others cultivating the image of the persistent crosser-of-red-lines. They are all, however, *postcolonial exotic* personas which in turn contributes to their *programmed success*.

In parallel to this, in the post-2000 period, several new Algerian publishing houses emerged, publishing Algerian authors in Algeria. These have been celebrated in the scholarly literature as bringing a new breath of life to the Algerian literary scene, foregrounding new voices, themes and aesthetics aimed at Algerian audiences. The research carried out for this thesis demonstrates that this is perhaps an over-optimistic evaluation of the margins of manoeuvre of these new publishing

houses. These new publishing houses face numerous obstacles, including sporadic and inconsistent state support, a lack of capital, a dearth of infrastructure (distribution network, e-payment and import/export difficulties), a shortage of bookshops and the lack of a thriving cultural scene in which to promote reading Algerian contemporary novels. As such, these independent publishing houses publish relatively little, or they survive (and in a few cases, thrive reasonably well) through co-publishing arrangements with more powerful European and Middle Eastern publishers. The latter are notably necessary for the circulation and marketing of the novels of these publishing houses beyond Algeria. This does not deny the initiatives taken by some publishing houses and individual publishers in Algeria to promote Algerian literature despite the administrative and economic difficulties. One of the most notable developments in recent years has been investment in translating French-language classics by Algerian novelists into Arabic to make them accessible to new generations of Algerian readers.

The reliance on transnational networks has to a certain extent privileged Francophone writers, even though the reading public in Algeria today is – in terms of numbers – more likely to be Arabophone. Those who publish in French tend to get support from the Institut français and other French cultural institutions. That said, there is a growing investment from the Gulf states to invest in Algerian Arabophone literature as part of its broader soft-power cultural strategy. The growing number of lucrative prizes which these countries offer is a magnet for Algerian Arabophone writers, who – if they win – can then leverage such awards to secure a publishing contract with an Algerian publishing house or, even better, a prestigious Middle Eastern one. Algerian authors are therefore still called upon to translate their society and culture to international readerships and to do so in international languages (French and Modern Standard Arabic) rather than write in Algerian languages, such as *darija* and Tamazight.

Younger, lesser known Algerian authors of French and Arabic expression, and especially Arabic expression, face numerous challenges. In a very economically constrained context, few Algerian publishers are willing to take a risk to publish an

unknown author. Those who do not live in the big cultural centres – and notably those who do not live in the capital, Algiers – will find it very difficult to get published as networks and personal contacts – i.e. trust, recommendations and favouritism – are key. Without a literary persona, media appearances in which they “explain” Algeria to the rest of the world and a large European or Middle Eastern publisher behind them, most of the generation of new, young Algerian authors studied in this thesis will not be able to live from their art. These authors are nevertheless resourceful: they participate in literary prizes to secure publishing contracts; they self-publicise, and they personally distribute their books in bookshops.

Algeria is undeniably a very minor player in the international literary field, with low symbolic and economic capital overall, dependent on French and Middle Eastern transnational networks, which in turn have their own editorial lines aimed at their own target readerships. These contribute to the foregrounding of certain themes, and into dividing Algerian literature into the “Arabophone” and “Francophone” worlds. In a basic, practical way, it can be challenging to buy and read contemporary Algerian novels in Algeria, making Algerian readerships very small – in the case of some novels which are prize-winning and considered “successful”, this could be just a few hundred readers. Based on this, one might argue that the Algerian literary field does not exist. These problems are not specific to Algeria as a postcolonial country. As Huggan (2001:50-51) argues in relation to publishing in sub-Saharan Africa: “this crisis [...] might itself be seen as a single component in the vast neo-colonial engine that drives relations between Africa and other Third World regions and their First World ‘benefactors’ today. The publishing industry in Africa, indeed, affords a rueful object lesson in how structural conditions of underdevelopment produce reliance on the very outside sources that reinforce cultural, as well as economic, dependency”.

However, interviews with the new generation of Algerian writers, struggling in various degrees to make their way in this context, nevertheless reveal cause for optimism. Amongst these authors, there is a sense of belonging to one canon, the Algerian literary canon, which is both Francophone and Arabophone. Authors can

cite, have read works in and say that they are inspired by novels in both languages. This new generation also expresses a much less complicated attitude towards language, decoupled to a large degree from questions of identity, or at least not presented as two mutually exclusive identities of “Francophone” vs. “Arabophone”. Many authors state that they consider language as just a tool, often arguing that it just happened that those who were born into Arabophone surroundings feel more comfortable writing in Arabic and those writing in French feel comfortable writing in French because they were born into more Francophone families. This suggests that an Algerian literary field, if it does not exist in institutions, infrastructure and reading publics, might nevertheless exist as an imagined community amongst authors.

Contribution to knowledge

This thesis was inspired by various important works which locate the production of cultural works in their economic, political and social contexts. Although a number of these works look at postcolonial literature, and notably the unequal power relationship between former colony and former coloniser, these works do not specifically focus on Algeria. This thesis therefore demonstrates how key concepts of Bourdieu (about capital and market taste), Brouillette (about international market taste), Huggan (on the anthropological exotic) and Casanova (on the World Republic of Letters and programmed success) find parallels and echoes in the Algerian context. To a certain degree, this has been done before, notably by the French sociologist Kaoutar Harchi, although her focus was on Francophone Algerian authors of the 1950s, in addition to the much younger Kamel Daoud. This thesis significantly expands on this work, firstly, by bringing the analysis up to the present through the examination of a new group of authors who have not yet been the object of academic study. Secondly, this thesis innovates on the majority of previous work by bringing together Francophone and Arabophone authors in the same study, to gain a much more rounded and complete understanding of the Algerian literary field.

A key part of the contribution to knowledge of this thesis is the production of new empirical material. This consists of new interviews, in Arabic, French and English, with a wide range of publishers, book sellers and authors. Many of these authors had not been interviewed for an academic study before. This thesis also seeks to provide a useful resource to other scholars in the field through carefully tracking, via interviews and a wide-range search of Arabic- and French-language media (print, television, online), the career trajectories of a number of authors. Future scholars will be able to use this evidence base to make fine-grained analyses of the relationship between, on the one hand, creative output and, on the other hand, prizes, publishing contracts and media and other public appearances.

Future research directions

The Ministry of Culture, as this thesis demonstrates, plays a central but inconsistent role in the Algerian literary field. There is a definite need to interview stakeholders working in the ministry to better understand their decision-making processes from political, economic and indeed personal perspectives. It was not possible for me to do this as I was not well-connected enough to gain access, but it may well be possible for other researchers with personal contacts to carry out this kind of research. Another future research direction is to further investigate the relationship between Algerian and French/Middle Eastern publishers, from the perspective of the latter. A suggestive finding from my research is that French/ Middle Eastern publishers do not just have bilateral relationships with Algerian publishers, but that French/ Middle Eastern publishing houses also talk to each other, notably around the issue of translation. This is definitely worth further investigation as it suggests that there are not necessarily two powerful literary centres, one Francophone, the other Arabophone, which act as magnets, pulling Algerian authors in different directions, but rather that these two magnets pull in the same direction, as powerful players with weaker players in their orbit. Finally, although translation was initially within the scope of this thesis, there was not sufficient space or scope to explore it fully. This

too merits deeper investigation. In the course of my research, I found that many publishers and authors argued that the field of translation does not exist in Algeria, that is to say, that the translation of Algerian literature remains highly dependent on professional translators and initiatives based outside Algeria, often funded and supported by European, mainly French, publishers or cultural bodies (whether translating into French or Arabic). The question of translation appears particularly important to investigate more fully as the Algerian reading public, or at least potential reading public, becomes increasingly Arabophone and monolingual, or at least prefers to read in Arabic.

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Appendix

Oral Consent

Researcher details

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Oral Consent

I am Karima Bentoumi from the University of Portsmouth and I wanted to talk to you about the project I gave you an information sheet about before. To recap, the broad aims of my project are My PhD investigates the place of Algerian literature written in

French as well as in Arabic produced by younger Algerian writers, published and distributed by publishing houses after 2000.

- Are you still interested in taking part in the project? Now I would like to confirm some of the details of the project to make sure you understand what's involved for you:
- It's a project about the place of Algerian Literature market and it will be used for my postgraduate project
- If you take part, I'll need you to interview lasting approximately one hour I may also contact you for follow-up interviews
- You don't have to say yes to taking part; you can ask me any questions you want before or throughout; you can also withdraw at any stage without giving a reason and without any negative consequences.
- You are aware that Portsmouth University Research Ethics committee has approved this research project and how to contact me (in the first instance) or the committee in case of any concerns or complaints. I have given you the project's ethics reference number and relevant contact details on the consent format
- I won't keep any of your details for longer than necessary / I won't use your name next to data you provide, unless you insist on the opposite / I will ask your permission for quoting you directly in research publications
- I will safely store your data on my personal laptop, shared on google drive as well as files will be anonymised with passwords only me who will have access to it and will keep the research data for a minimum of ten years.
- With your permission, I would like to make an audio recording of our discussion to make sure I'm getting an accurate record of your thoughts. Alternatively, I can take notes in my notebook. Which would you prefer? I may want to re-contact

you to clarify information you gave me in your interview. In that case, I will ask you if you have time to answer some more questions

- You're aware that my written work will be published online for doctoral students or other qualifications or research where a thesis, dissertation or other research output will be published in Portsmouth University Research Archive
- Are you happy for me to collect detail sensitive personal data? The personal information you will share with me will not be passed to any third party.
- Are you still willing to take part? Do you give your permission for me to re-contact you to clarify information?

So, if you're happy with all of that, and have no more questions, let's start.

Researcher details

Name: Karima Bentoumi

Role title: PhD student at the University of Portsmouth

Department: School of Languages and Area Studies

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Address: Park Building, King Henry I Street

Portsmouth PO1 2DZ

Email: karima.bentoumi@port.ac.uk

Telephone: 07947677236

About me

I am Karima Bentoumi, a PhD student based in the School of Languages and Area Studies at the University of Portsmouth. I am currently conducting a study which I invite you to take part in. This form has important information about the reasons for doing this study, what you will be asked if you decide to participate in this study, and the way I would like to use your information about you if you choose to take part in the study.

What is the purpose of this study and why am I being asked to participate?

My PhD investigates the place of Algerian literature written in French as well as in Arabic produced by younger Algerian writers, published and distributed by publishing houses after 2000. You are being asked to participate in this study because you own/work for/work with represent/ have contact with one of these publishing houses and thus participate in/ have knowledge of the process of production and the distribution of Algerian literature on the national and international landscape.

What are my rights as a research participant ?

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question if you do not want to answer. If at any time and for any reason, you would prefer not to participate in this study, please feel free not to. If at any time you would like to stop participating, please tell me. We can take a break, stop and continue at a later date, or stop altogether. You may withdraw from this study at any time, and you will not be penalised in any way for deciding to stop participation. If you decide to withdraw from this study, the researcher will ask you if the information already collected from you can be used.

What will you do in this research project ?

It will be based on face to face, audio or audio-visual (e.g. Skype) interview, with questions related to language, funding, content, sales, distribution, production, editing and collaborative publishing. I would like to audio record this interview to make sure that I remember accurately all the information you provide. If you prefer not to be audio recorded, I will take notes instead. You can choose to participate anonymously. The interview is likely to last between 45 minutes to one hour only.

What are the potential risks or discomforts to you in taking part ?

There will be minimal risks to you in taking part in this interview, except taking some time from your time to the completions and to answer my questions. Your personal data will be treated respectfully and confidently. It will be included in my analysis and stored in my USB with a password, the data will be also shared on google drive to

ensure the security and to avoid technical faults in the future. You are free to decline to answer any questions you don't wish to, or to stop participating at any time.

How will you protect the information you collect about me, and how will the information will be shared ?

If you agree to be recorded, these recordings will be stored securely on University of Portsmouth servers (password protected). With your explicit permission, at the end of my PhD I will also make the interviews available online so they are accessible to a wider audience (open access data). I may quote your remarks in presentations, published articles and in my thesis. All personal information (telephone number, etc.) will be stored securely and will not be shared with any third party. Unless you give explicit permission for this, your views and experience are just what the project is interested in exploring.

What are the possible benefits for me or others ?

This is first and foremost an academic study is designed to learn more about Algerian literature production and its place and the increase of the number of younger authors and independent publishing houses. The study results may be used to help further research in the future. For you, the results of this study will contribute to greater knowledge of the Algerian publishing landscape, which you may find it useful and beneficial in developing your business.

Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about this research study ?

If you have questions, you are free to ask them now. If you have questions later, you may contact the researchers by using the details provided at the top of the form or the university. If you have any questions or concerns about me and my research, you can contact my PhD supervisor, Dr Natalya Vince at: Natalya.vince@port.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information and please ask any questions if you are unsure about what is written here.

Participant's Name (printed)

Participant's Signature

Date.....

Questions for authors:

Writing

1. Who are the authors that inspired your reading and your writing and why?
How did you encounter them?
 - a. Are there any Algerian authors who inspired you?
 - b. In what language you do prefer to read and why?
2. How and when did you start writing?
3. What does writing mean to you? Why do you write?

Language

1. How did you choose what language to write in?
2. How do you define the language write in? French? Algerian French? *Fusha*?
Darija?
3. How do you see writers writing in French? (For writers who write in Arabic) or
How do you see writers who write in Arabic? (for writers who write in French)
4. Do you see yourself as an Algerian author? Why /why not?
5. What other communities of writers do you see yourself as belonging to?
6. In your opinion, what is the place of literature in Algeria today? How are
authors seen?

Publication

1. What was your first step toward approaching a publisher? How did you identify who you would send your manuscript to first?
 - a. Did you contact an Algerian publisher/ a foreign publisher first – why?
2. In what ways do you contact them? Email, post or in another way? Does it take a long time to hear from them or they respond immediately?
3. What are the obstacles that you have faced when you were trying to find a publisher to accept your manuscript? Have you experienced a rejection from a publisher? Do they give the reasons why they rejected your work?
4. Have you faced censorship? From whom? Do you feel that your self-censor?
5. What do you think are the key criteria for getting published? (In Algeria/ France/ Lebanon?)

Funding

1. As a writer do you earn enough money from your books to live (i.e. without another job)?
2. Have you ever self-published your works? How did you raise funds for it?
3. How did you go about negotiating a contract with your publishing house? How would you describe your relationship with your publishing house? Do you know how many books you have sold so far?
4. Does the publisher inform you about your books' sales and prices and their location in the libraries?
5. Do you have any role in deciding the pricing of a book?
6. As an author, do you have any say in the cover design and the quality of the paper?
7. How and where was your work promoted, and by whom?

Audience

1. Who do you write for? Do you have a specific audience, who are they?

2. Who are your readers? (Do you know? Do you care?) Do they contact you online/ send letters? Have you met them, and if so, where?
3. What do you think about the Algerian writers' union? How important is it to you?
4. I have noticed through many Facebook accounts that several authors criticise each other (e.g. Samir Kacimi, Sofian Makhenash, Miloud Yabrir by post on their walls targeting other authors) have you noticed these phenomena? What do you think about it? What do you think are the causes?
5. Which magazines/ newspapers have reviewed your books (nationally and internationally)? Do you read your book reviews, and what do you think of them?
6. In your opinion, can a literature be "Algerian" if it is published outside Algeria?

Questions for the Booksellers

1. Why did you decide to open a bookshop?
2. Since you work in the bookshop, do you read? What type of books you read?
3. What are your biggest selling books, or type of books? Are there certain groups for whom certain types of books are particularly popular? (For example, families, students)
4. Do you have any figures on your bestselling books that you would be willing to share with me?
5. Do you have any figures on your bestselling novels that you would be willing to share with me?
6. From where do you purchase your books?
7. Do you work directly with the publisher? Or you purchase your books from resellers and distributors?
8. How do you decide what books to stock in your bookshop?
9. How do you decide what novels to stock in your bookshop?

10. How do you decide where to organise the books in your bookshop?
11. How do you promote the books/novels you sell? For example, book signings, meet the author events?
12. What little-known books would you like to see make it bigger?
13. What makes your bookshop special?
14. What is the hardest and the easiest thing for running a bookshop?
15. If you would like to invite an author for book signing at your shop, who would you choose?

Interview questions for publishers

1. Tell me a little about yourself, your career?
2. Could you tell me about how and where the idea to establish a publishing house came from? How did it start? Did you have any experience before you started?
3. Who supported you at the beginning, financially?
4. How did you find authors to publish at the beginning? What was your process of selection?
5. Now you are more established, what kinds of books do you seek to publish? (What is the “brand identity” of the publishing house?)
6. How do authors contact you? What kinds of manuscripts do you get sent? How many? How many do you publish? (What % are rejected?)
7. What is the balance French/ Arabic? How this is balance decided? i.e. do you have a policy (e.g. 50/50) or does it depend on what you receive in each language, or what sells more copies?
8. How long you take to give a decision on a manuscript?
9. Once the work is accepted, how do you see your role as publisher? Do you provide the author any critical feedback about the content, e.g. questions about structure, metaphors, characters, and plots used within the novel?
10. Once the final manuscript is received, how long does it take for it to come out in print?

11. What is the usual contract for an author? (royalties, advances, etc.)
12. In what ways do you market the books? Are there any limitations in marketing the books? (What obstacles do you face?)
13. What are the average production costs?
14. What is the average number of works sold for a first work of fiction?
15. Who is your audience for works of fiction?
16. To what extent are the authors knowledgeable about the process of distributions networks? For example, where their books have been sold and the number of copies?
17. What about censorship? Do you still need to submit the works for the Ministry of Culture for censorship certificate of agreement?
18. How do readers access your books? (Online, bookshops etc.) What is your national coverage/ regional/ international distribution? What partners/ distribution networks do you work with? How easy do you think it is to access your books?
19. How do you decide on pricing? Do you think the price of the book is reasonable in relation to average wages in Algeria? (i.e. in your opinion, can anyone buy a book, or is it a luxury product?)
20. What is your experience of the SILA? Why do you attend?
21. How are you taking advantage of the social media and technology to advertise your products?
22. What partnerships do you have with other publishing houses, and how do these function? Why do you have these partnerships?
23. Do you organise networking between your writers (e.g. workshops and conferences)?
24. I have noticed through the news that you are trying to buy again rights of the previous Algerian novels published abroad such as Kateb Yacine, Amara Lakhous, Ryad Girod and Salim Bachi. What is your aim in doing this?
25. What changes in the current set up do you think would make your business more successful?

Sample Transcript (not translated)

حوار كريمة بن تومي مع الأستاذ و الناشر و الشاعر عدي شتات خلال المعرض الدولي للكتاب بالجزائر 2018

السلام عليكم أستاذ: أعرف نفسي، أنا كريمة بن تومي متخرجة من جامعة أبو بكر بلقايد متحصلة على شهادة الماستر في اللغة الإنجليزية أدب وحضارات. تحصلت على منحة من الجزائر لإكمال دراستي بالخارج لنيل شهادة الدكتوراه. موضوع دراستي كما سبق وذكرت يعني يتحدث عن الأدب الجزائري المكتوب باللغة العربية والفرنسية الذي نشر من قبل دور النشر الخاصة هنا بالجزائر والذي كتب من طرف الجيل الجديد من الكتاب الجزائريين الأسئلة سوف تتمحور حول المبيعات النشر التوزيع الإنتاج اللغة والرقابة هل لديك أي استفسارات حول هذا المشروع هل لديك أي أسئلة؟

عدي شتات: أعرف نفسي قبل البدء، عدي شتات، قبل ما أكون ناشر يعني قبل ما أكون صاحب دار نشر للتوزيع بمدينة جيجل الجزائرية أنا شاعر وروائي، من الجيل الذين تبحثين عنه يعني الجيل بعد جيل السبعينات في الجزائر. بالنسبة لي حتى وإن فيه استفسارات ستكون خلال الحوار

كريمة: نبدأ على بركة الله، هل يمكن أن تحدثني قليلا عن نفسك يعني حياتك المهنية وكيف دخلت عالم النشر!؟

عدي شتات: أولا أنا متخرج من جامعة قسنطينة، اختصاص طب. أعمل حاليا في المؤسسة الاستشفائية بمدينة الجلفة. دخولي إلى عالم النشر كان على مراحل. دخلت لعام النشر أول مرة عام 1998 من خلال التدقيق اللغوي ومن خلال المساعدة في التصميم والإخراج. مع مرور السنوات قام الوالد رحمه الله بتأسيس دار ابن الشاطي الأولى عام 2004. بقينا نعمل فالدور الأولى إلى غاية 2008 تاريخ وفاته رحمه الله. بالأخص تعرفين بعد الوفاة و نحن عائلتنا مشتتة في كل مكان ومن الصعب أن تستمري بنفس السجل التجاري . قررنا في الأخير أن نلغي السجل الذي كان بإسم الوالد رحمه الله وانشأنا دار نشر ابن الشاطي الثانية كان هذا في سنة 2013. ابتداء من سنة 2013 كنت أنا المسؤول الأول على الدار قبل إلتحاقني بالوظيفة العمومي. خلال هذه الفترة ساعد ابن الشاطي أولا أن تكمل المشوار الثقافي الذي بدأه ابن الشاطي رحمه الله الشاعر والإعلامي والأستاذ المعروف الذي كون جيلا كاملا من الأدباء ومن الإعلاميين في الجزائر وخارجها. انطلاقا من هذه الفكرة، أصبحت دار الشاطر تبحث عن الكاتب الجزائري الذي يسكن في أقاصي الجزائر، الذي يبدع إبداعا حقيقيا ولا يجد فرصة لأن يتحقق حلمه بأن تتحول كتاباته إلى كتاب يطلع عليه القارئ ويستطيع من خلاله أن يتعرف عليه أدبيا. طبعا في خلال هذه التجربة إلى الآن نحن أزيد من أربع سنوات في المجال اصطدمنا طبعا بواقع النشر في الجزائر خصوصا نحن دخلناها في فترة التقشف فأثر على سوق النشر بصفة عامة كثيرا

عدي شتات: تفضلني إن كان لك شيء محدد

كريمة: نعم أستاذ من دعمك فالبداية!؟ مادياً يعني!؟ هل تلقيت دعماً من الدولة أم هو من مالك الخاص!؟

عدي شتات: والله دار النشر ابن الشاطي للنشر والتوزيع بدأت مديونة. ربما لهذا السبب لم تستطع الدار إلى هذه اللحظة أن تقف على رجلها. لا دعم من جهة رسمية ولا من جهة خاصة ولا كذا. كانت تحدي حقيقي، كان تحدي حقيقي يعني، أن ندخل هذا العالم الصعب جداً. لأننا لا ننتج أي بضاعة، نحن ننتج الكتاب. و للأسف الكتاب يعاني في الجزائر وفي الوطن العربي. يعاني سوق الكتاب من انتكاسات كبيرة

كريمة: يعاني الكتاب من حيث المقرئية، أو من حيث التسعيرة؟

عدي شتات: المقرئية هي أساس المشكلة. لأنه هنا حين نتحدث عن أي دار نشر، نحن نتحدث عن مؤسسة ثقافية اقتصادية. إذا تركنا الجانب الثقافي، وتحدثنا عن الجانب الاقتصادي، حتى فيما يخص السعر، سعر الكتاب سينخفض لو كان فيه قارئ، لو كان فيه سوق حقيقية. لأنه أنا سوف أضرب لك مثلاً بسيطاً. الكتاب كلما طبعت منه نسخاً أكثر، كلما انخفضت التكلفة. فلو أنني نحن في المجلد نطبع 1000 maximum نسخة، لو كان فيه سوق للكتاب، سوق حقيقي للكتاب أبيع 3000 و 5000 أو 10.000 نسخة

كريمة: الطلبية تساعد في تخفيض تسعيرة الكتاب

عدي شتات: نعم تنخفض تسعيرة الكتاب، وحتى في ما يخص بتسعير الكتاب، نحن نضطر في بعض الأحيان نرفع في سعر الكتاب، لأن هذا في المحصلة أنت تتحدثين عن مؤسسة فيها موظفين، فيها ناس تريد أن تعيش، يعني نحن نتحدث عن بيوت مفتوحة، لذلك أنا أضطر مثلاً عوض بيع الكتاب بـ 150 دج أو بـ 200 دج أضيف له 50 دج، أضيف له 100 دج إضافية لتبقى هذه البيوت مفتوحة، يعني من خلال كلامي، تستطيعين أن تستنجي مدى بؤس الناشر الجاد في الجزائر، و أنت إطلعتي على منشورات دار ابن الشاطي

كريمة: أكثرهم من الداخل

عدي شتات: نحن حتى جديتنا في العمل، هي التي جذبت إلينا المبدعين من كل أنحاء الوطن العربي، ورأيت كيف طبعنا لأدباء من السعودية من البحرين من سوريا من فلسطين من كندا من الإمارات من تونس أيضاً، فهمتي كيف، قريباً سوف نطبع لأدباء من المغرب، من موريتانيا، هذا هو الشيء الذي جذب إلينا، هو جديتنا في التعامل، نحن الأسماء التي أخرجناها لأول مرة للقارئ أسماء حقيقة، مبدعين حقيقيين، وربما ستسبح لك الفرصة للقاء بعضهم في جناح دار ابن الشاطي، وسترن كيف أننا فعلاً حين نقول أننا لدينا مشروع ثقافي نحن فعلاً لدينا مشروع ثقافي، ونسعى لنهضة الأدب الجزائري و رقيه، وحتى نحن في المشاركات الدولية، رغم بؤسنا و فقرنا كدار نشر، لا نترك أي مناسبة إلا و نوصل كتبنا بطريقة أو بأخرى إلى المعارض الدولية والمحلية، و بالأخص الكتاب الجزائري، للأدباء الجزائريين يعني

كريمة: للتعريف بالأدب الجزائري

عدي شتات: أكيد لأننا أولا للتعريف بالأدب الجزائري وثانياً بأننا نؤمن بهذه الأسماء التي طبعنا لها

كريمة: ناس مثابرة مش تحاول تنشر نصوص فقط

عدي شتات: أكيد

كريمة: أستاذ وكيف وجدت الكتاب فالأول لكي تنشر لهم كبداية؟! كيف كان بداية المشوار؟! هل كانت سهلة لإيجاد الكتاب أو كان هناك صعوبة!؟

عدي شتات: لا، هو فالحقيقة حتى أكون صريح وصادق، رصيد ابن الشاطي رحمه الله في الجزائر ساعدنا كثيرا، لأن محبينه وطلابه كثر في الجزائر، فالحقيقة بهذه المناسبة أشكر أسماء معينة ساعدتنا في بداية المشوار كنا ما نزال في البداية وأصرو أن يطبعوا عندنا من أجل اسم ابن الشاطي، من أجل أن تبقى هذه الدار تستمر وتواصل مشوارها، فلا أدعي أنا دار ابن الشاطي في مشوارها عانت كما عانت دور النشر الجديدة في أول

كريمة: ولا زالت تعاني

عدي شتات: نحن معاناتنا الحقيقية هي ماديا، لأن التسويق، لأن دار النشر لا تستطيع أن تستمر، أي دار نشر في العالم دون سوق الكتاب، أنا لو تأتيت إلى مقر الدار إلى المخزن ستجد الكتب مكدسة هناك وكأن الجهد الذي نبذله وهو أصعب جهد التوزيع نحن في بعض الأحيان نصرف ماديا في التوزيع أضعاف ثمن الكتب ليقبل المكتبي أن يعرضها عنده لا أن يشتريها لما أخذ كتابي من جيغل إلى ورقلة، حقيقة أصل إلى درجة ترجي صاحب المكتبة لكي أعرض كتي ليس ليشتري وهنا إسمحي لي أن أوجه انتقاد للقارئ الجزائري، للأسف الشديد وهذه أحداث كثيرة يعني حدثت لنا، وهذه أحداث محزنة ومؤسفة، يعني حتى القارئ الجزائري بالرغم من قلة عدد القراء في الجزائر، هذا القارئ يحتقر المنتج الجزائري ويحتقر الكاتب الجزائري

كريمة: هل تظن أنه يحتقر اللغة العربية!؟

عدي شتات: لا لا ليس هكذا والدليل على هذا سوف أعطيك مثلا، هذا حصل واقعا، في أحد المعارض في مدينة سطيف، كانت كتبنا متنوعة، ليس منشورات ابن الشاطي، ولكن منشورات أخرى وكتب مستوردة، كنا نبيع كتيبة ودمنة نسخة طبعتها دار نشر جزائرية لن أسميها طبعا والنسخة الأخرى، طباعة مصرية، طبعا النسخة الجزائرية أقل سعرا عن النسخة المصرية بحوالي 150 دج، المفاجأة أنا أعرفه ككتاب تراثي لا فرق بين إذا طبعت الصين أو الجزائر أو كذا هو كتاب محتواه هو محتواه أتفاجأ أنه يرفض الكتاب لأنه مطبوع بالجزائر لا يشتري، ونفذت كل النسخ المصرية هذه ملاحظة وهذه حقيقة حدثت لنا منذ عامين في دار الثقافة بسطيف، حدث آخر في معرض بقسنطينة جاءت أربع نسوة، 3 وتقودهم إحداهن، طافت على دور النشر وصلت عندنا بدأت تقرأ الأسماء على أساس أنها دليل لمن معها، تقول لهن بطريقة إستخفافية، تلعب بيدها، تقول لهن جزائرية جزائرية جزائرية إذا تحبو أن تشتري هذا أسلوب مستفز جدا جدا

كريمة: كيف تفسر هذه الظاهرة هل هو إحتقار للأدب الجزائري؟

عدي شتات : هو ليس إحتقارا بالمعنى الحرفي للكلمة ، هو جهل بالأدب الجزائري ، طبعا الناشر هو مجرد حلقة في سلسلة طويلة أقصى ما يستطيع الناشر أن يفعله خصوصا حين تكون إمكانياته محدودة ، و يحاول أن يطبع و أن يقدم هذا العمل المطبوع قدر الإمكان ، لكن فيه عمل طويل وشاق ، هذا العمل الطويل و الشاق ، ربما الإعلام تقع عليه المسؤولية أكبر ، يعني سوف أعطيك مثالا ، بالأمس حين شاهدت التغطية لصالون، كان كل التركيز على دكتورنا الحبيب أمين الزاوي صديقتنا زوجته ربعة جلطي واسيني الأعرج ، صح هذه أسماء كبيرة ، أحترمها و نقدرها، لكن هذه الأسماء لا تحتاج أصلا إلى هؤلاء الإعلاميين أصلا يعني، إبرازها كما يقول المثل العربي ، نار على علم لا تأتي انت بتغطية تلفزيونية راك رايع ضيف له حاجة يعني من المفروض خاصة كتليفزيون رسمي جزائري يخدم كل ما هو جزائري ،طبعا في مقدمتها الثقافة الجزائرية من المفروض يبحثون على شاب صغير رشدي عمره 16 سنة يطبع كتاب ، يركزون على واحد آتي من سيدي خالد واحد آتي من تبسة المناطق البعيدة عن الجزائر العاصمة ، تعرفين الأضواء كلها في الجزائر العاصمة والصالون الدولي هو فرصة لكي يبرز هؤلاء الكتاب الجزائريين المهمشين ، فيهم من همشتهم الجغرافية ، فيهم من همشتهم وظائفهم ، حقيقة أنا لا أرى بأن الإعلام يقوم بواجباته إتجاه الأدب الجزائري لهذا نجد أنا بكل صراحة أنا لا أؤمن في قارئ حقيقي ليس فقط في الجزائر في الوطن العربي ربما القراء الحقيقيين قلة يعني في قارئ موجه أتحدث عن نفسي حين أظهر ظهور إعلامي ولو قصير دقيقتين ثلاثه ويكون معرض في كذا تباع كتبي حتى أستغرب نحكي للأخ المدير التنفيذي أقول له ماذا جرى !!!! فهمتي كيف لماذا لا نعطي كل أديب و كاتب جزائري فرصة ظهور إعلام تعرف به بإنتاحه حتى يحترم القارئ الجزائري الكاتب الجزائري عندنا أسماء يعني نقولك في دار ابن الشاطي للأستاذ زكية علال مثلا الأستاذة زكية علال أنا أتحدى بها و بكتاباتها وبأسلوبها أتحدى كبار الكتاب في الوطن العربي هذا كمثال هذه طبعا هيا من جيلي من الجيل الجديد توجد أسماء راقية جدا وفي شتى المجالات هل ترين ذلك، طيب لماذا لا نمد أيدينا لهؤلاء الناس نعرف بهم للناس نحن أصبح الإنسان المعاصر أصبح رهين الإعلام يعني على حساب المثال ظهور الشاعر الفلسطيني تميم البرغوثي في أمير الشعراء ثم ظهوره في قناة الجزيرة جعل مبيعات كتبه خيالية

كريمة:الإعلام له دور التهميش أو الشهرة

عدي شتات :نعم نعم المشكلة في واقع النشر بصفة عامة يجد الناشر نفسه في صدام مع الكاتب، لانو الكاتب لما يطبع كتابه يحلم ويطن أن العقبة بينه وبين القارئ وبينه وبين الشهرة هو الكتاب، يطبع الكتاب يجد أنه لاشيء تقريبا تغير، عوض أن يصب جام غضبه على من يبعدون عنه الأضواء تجديه يدخل في صراع مع الناشر، هو بالنسبة لي، أنا أرى أن الكاتب والناشر ضحايا في هذا الوسط، ولكي أكد كلامي لماذا الكتاب الشبه المدرسي يباع؟! لماذا كتاب الأطفال يباع، لماذا كتب التنمية البشرية يباع، والثقافة العامة يباع، لماذا الكتاب الجزائري والأخص الأدبي لا يباع؟! المشكلة ليست في الناشر وليست في الكتاب، هناك المشكلة يجب أن نبحت بعيدا عنها عن هذا الثنائي، حتى إن تحدثنا أنا أحاول أن أتوقع قدر المستطاع ربما قد يغيب عنك سؤال تنسين شيء أو كذا. مثلا أشياء أخرى يعاني منها عالم النشر في الجزائر أيضا ، أن الناشر هو عبارة عن حلقة وسطية ؛ عندك مؤلف، عندك ناشر، عندك مطبعة ؛ وعندك مؤلف وعندك ناشر وعندك موزع ، هنا نتحدث عن جودة

المنتوج على (la finition) جيدة للكتاب للأسف ، كثير من المطابع الموجودة هنا ، العاملين فيها كفاءتهم ضعيفة جدا لأن على سبيل المثال حين يتعب الكاتب في التأليف ويراجع و يعيد ويزيد ثم يرسل كتابه للناس ، الناشر عنده أيضا لجنة قراءة تقرأ تصح ما يجب تصحيحه وتقدم ملاحظاتهم و من بعد الإخراج الداخلي للكتاب للتصميم في الأخير هذا الجهد كله قد يضيع بقصة سكين لعامل في المطبعة لا يحترم قياس الكتاب في كثير من الأحيان لا يحترمون حتى الشروط البسيطة للطباعة يعني على حساب المثال لو تحدثنا على الورق انا اقول أريد ورق (extra blanc 80g) هو من بعد يحضر لي الكتاب أجده (70 des fois 60g)

أنا أريد أيضا أن أسلط الضوء على المشكلة هذه أيضا عندنا مطبعيون كثير لا يحبون طباعة الكتاب يقول لك أنا أطبع مطبوعات الدولة والبنوك وكذا هيا ورقة أمورها وأتعب عليها لأجل 2 دورو في كتاب هذه من الأشياء التي يغفل عنها الناس كامل كاين واقع صعب نحن لدينا السلسلة التي تحدثنا عنها فيها أكثر من خلل حتى نحاسب مثلا الكاتب أو نحاسب الناشر علينا أن نرى هل الظروف التي يعمل فيها الطرفين وهل هي ظروف طبيعية أم لا؟! حين ترسلين مثلا لمطبعة لكي يخفف عن نفسه التكاليف مثلا هذا الكتاب الذاكرة الحزينة ترين فيه أسود ، هو في أصلا فيه (une couche; layers) الأرض متشققة في تصميم الغلاف المطبوعي أزال (la couche) هذي حتى يخفف تكاليف و التعب عليه ، الأسود راه يفوت فيه الآلة وحدة و خلاص ، يتصرف بما لا يحق له أن يتصرف ، ربما تسألين تقولين لماذا لا توقعون عقود فيها شروط مع المطبوعي ، حين تقولين له تعالى لنوقع عقد يرفض ، أغلبهم يرفضون ، أو يرفع في السعر ، لديهم حساباتهم الخاصة مع الضرائب و أشياء خاصة أخرى الله أعلم ، أنا لا أفتي في هذا الأمر ، كل هذه الأشياء التي أتحدث عنها ، تأثر على ، لأنو نعود في الأساس إلى موضوعنا ؛ الأدب الجزائري و الأديب الجزائري في الجزائر لأنه أيضا (marketing) مهم جدا

كريمة: في تسويق الأعمال يوجد مجلات للكتاب باللغة الفرنسية ولا يوجد مجلات للأدب المكتوب باللغة العربية لقد بحثت يوجد مجلة واحدة تابعة لوزارة الثقافة ولكنها اندثرت من الساحة وتوجد واحدة فقط هي LivresQue **عدي شتات:** نعم حقيقة هذه أشياء مؤسفة و في محصلة الأمر نحن بهذه الطريقة نتأثر عن الركب كل يوم ربما نتأخر سنة عن ركب الآخرين ، و أكثر ما يحز في نفسي ، أنا أتحدث هنا كشاعر وأديب ، لا أتحدث كناشر ، أكثر ما يحز في نفسي ، أن ننتظر لجهة أجنبية ، من جهة أجنبية تعطي شهادة ميلاد للأديب جزائري ، من خلال جوائز عربية ودولية وكذا ، أنا تحزني نفسي أنو إسم لم يسمع به أي إنسان أجده فاز بجائزة (Katara) للرواية أو فاز بجائزة البوكر أو كذا ، يعني الأدب الجزائري أدب جزائري أعطيه شهادة ميلاد جزائرية ، ليس شهادة ميلاد إماراتية أو بريطانية أو كذا ، لكي نستعرف بيه لكي نقول أنه (exister) نقول أنه يوجد ناس عندها مستوى حقيقي

كريمة: يعني تأمن أن الأدب الجزائري يجب أن ينشر هنا في الجزائر ويكرم هنا في الجزائر؟ **عدي شتات:** طبعا وليس فقط ، أنا شخصيا ضد الجوائز ، أنا أو من في مجال الجوائز ، أو من بالترشيح ، لا أو من أن يأتي الكاتب ويقول هذا ديواني أشركه في مسابقة ، لا ، أنا أو من أنه يجب أن تكون لدينا لجان عليا في شتي المجالات ، هذه اللجان كل سنة تختار مجموعة من الأعمال الأدبية و العلمية وووو ، وبناء على مقاييس علمية

وكذا ، وفي الأخير جائزة السنة لفلان و فلان موجودة في مصر موجودة ، هذا ليس للابتداع ، جائزة الدولة التقديرية في مصر ، تقدم بهذه الطريقة ، لا يأتي كاتب يقول خذوا روايتي شوفوني إذا نفوز ولا لا ، أنا بصراحة أرى التقدم للجوائز فيها إهانة للكاتب

كريمة: وكيف تفسر ظاهرة الجوائز هنا جائزة علي معاشي، بن حدوقه، آسيا جبار؟! كيف تفسر هذه **عدي شتات:** والله هيا الجوائز هذه جيدة، ولكن ما الفائدة إذا لم يكن هناك استمرارية، ما الفائدة إذا أنا نأخذ جائزة رئيس الجمهورية هذه السنة ويامن عاش كما يقولون جيجليزية، يندثر من الساحة حتى يجي الثاني نفس الشيء يدي جائزة علي معاشي ولا يعد إلى الساحة حتى إذا فاز بجائزة عربية، هذا مهين، أنا بالنسبة ليا نحس بالإهانة أنو أنا أنتظر شهادة ميلادي كاتب جزائري أن توقع في دولة عربية أو أجنبية، أظن أنك فهمت ما أقصد، و من بعد نجد صعوبة في شراء الحقوق و أعمالنا الناجحة حقوقها ليس بيدنا

كريمة: نعم، وهذا ما يسعى إليه الكثير من الناشرين، هل تسعى أنت أيضا لشراء حق من حقوق كتاب آسيا جبار كاتب ياسين

عدي شتات: والله نعود الآن لنقطة البداية، التي هيا الوضع المالي للدار، يعني بودنا، نحن بالنسبة إلينا كدار الشاطي، على الأقل فزنا بأعمال ابن الشاطي رحمه الله التي هي فقط في مجال الشعر 76 ديوان شعري في النقد وقواعد اللغة العربية يوجد مؤلفات هذا الحمد الله ربما هذه ورثة ورثناها

كريمة: أي اهتمام اتجاه الجيل القديم الذي نشر أعمالهم في الخارج يعني هناك كاتب محمد ديب، كاتب ياسين؟

عدي شتات: والله للأسف أنت لا تتحدثين عن الجانب الثقافي فقط للدار، أنت تتحدثين عن الجانب المادي **كريمة:** يعني في المستقبل؟

عدي شتات: أنا كثير من دور نشر تتصل بي العربية والدولية إن أردت شراء حقوق كذا أو شراء حقوق كذا يعني حتى يأتي لبيع لي حقوق كاتب جزائري أو أكاديمي جزائري بالنسبة له مبلغ الحقوق تافه لكن بالنسبة لنا بالجزائر مع فرق العملة هذه السنة اشترينا حقوق طباعة 7 كتب للناقد السوري عصام شاتح يعني رغم بساطة المبلغ مقارنة كيف تباع الحقوق ولكن كانت ضربة كبيرة للدار ماديا ولحسن الحظ الدار هنا كأننا استغلينا ظروف سوريا يعني لو كان في بلد آخر لا نستطيع حتى شراء كتاب واحد فهمت كيف

كريمة: الوضع في سوريا هو الذي ساعد

عدي شتات: طبعا طبعا مؤسف ، يعني أنا لا أريد كنت أتمنى أن أسلط الضوء على الجانب المشرق في تجربتنا نحن الحمد الله في تجربتنا باعتراف حتى زملائنا الناشرين باعتراف الأدباء و الإعلاميين أن تجربتنا رائدة و الحمد لله ، ولكن دائما الشيء الذي ينغص عليك حياتك دائما هي التي تسيطر على الإنسان نحن دائما ، يعني ننتظر

في اليومين المقبلين رواية باللغة الفرنسية عنوانه *Livre de Châtiment* هذه رواية أستطيع أن أتحدى بها العالم صدقا دون مبالغة أستطيع أن نقول أن (Jules Verne) الجزائري قد ولد ، هي رواية عجائبية فيها مغامرات فيها السحر وفيها رابعة جدا *Livre de Châtiment* هذه من كتبها!؟ كاتب هذه الرواية هو صياد جيغلي أفنى عمره في البحر وفي نفس الوقت هو عازف بيانو ، من أحسن العازفين ربما الأول وطنيا ، كتب رواية ، هي عبارة عن ثلاثية ، كثنائية محمد ديب صدقا من أروع ما يكون ، يعني مجهودات واصله حتى للناس اللي ، يعني هذا الأخ صاحب الرواية اسمه عبد النور عبود ، قالي لي حين بدأت الكتابة أصدقائي أصبحوا يقولون عبد النور خرف وبعد عمر طويل ويقعد يكتب و لما يشرع في حكاياته كذا وكذا تجدينه كطفل فنحن عندنا ثروة والله العظيم بدون مبالغة دون عنصرية دون كما نقول عصبية للجزائر عندنا ثروات فكرية وإبداعية ، لا أريد أن أكون مبالغ أحسن من الوطن العربي بصح نصنف *très bien* لست أحكي على دار الشاطي ، أنا أحكي بصفة عامة . علينا أن نهتم بالدار النشر الجزائرية ، دار نشر جزائرية كي تهتم فيها الدولة أنا حين تساعدي الدولة مثلا وأنا لا أطلب المساعدة ، ياخي ليس أنا ، نقول دار نشر أخرى حين تطلب المساعدة من الدولة هذا استثمار هذا حين يخرج كتاب جزائري مطبوع بأحسن طباعة و مخرج بأحسن إخراج وفيه محتوى رائع هذا الكتاب يدخل العملة الصعبة كالبترول بغض النظر عن الفائدة الثقافية و الأدبية التي تجنيها الجزائر لكن أيضا في عملة صعبة تدخل للبلاد من خلال الكتاب لماذا نصدر البطاط و الفول السوداني يوجد الكتاب عوض ذلك ولكن يجب أن تكون هناك مساعدة نحن أغلب المطابع في الجزائر متهالكة كاي مطابع أرسلت لهم هذه موسوعة القصة القصيرة في الجزائر أرسلتها لمطبعة يتصل بي إن كان بإمكانني تغيير قياس الكتاب

كريمة: اللي يمشي عليه هو يعني

عدي شتات: اللي يمشي عليه هو ، هو ليس تعنت منه ، لكن الآلة اللي عنده يجب علي أن أ نقص منه هو 24/16 لازم أغيره ، 15/23 لكي يستطيع أن يطبع على إمكانية الآلة التي عنده ، يجب أن نهتم بهذا ، مثلا التجليد مشكلة لكي تجدين ، عليك بالتنقيب كما تنقيب على البترول ، لكي تجدين مجلد ، تجدين هنا في الصالون الدولي يوجد دور نشر عربية كل كتبها مجلدة سوى كرتونية أو جلدية وأسعار مناسبة كان في العام الماضي مقابل جناح دار ابن الشاطي دار نشر أردنية تباع مجلد فيه أكثر من 300 و 400 صفحة مجلد جلدي ب300 دج ب 350 دج هذا جاء ليكسرنى

كريمة: حتى التجليد يلعب دور حتى القارئ

عدي شتات: نحن الآن أحببنا أو كرهنا، الإنسان أصبح لا يبحث عن المحتوى بقدر ما يبحث عن الجانب الشكلي، في كل المنتجات لا أتحدث عن الكتاب فقط يعني (Shampoo) لا تشتري (Shampoo) لا يعجبك العلية

كريمة: يعني مرات غير القارورة تجذبك

عدي شتات : إيه (l'emballage) حنا فالكتاب الغلاف هو (l'emballage) ناعو صح فهمت كيف لو اهتamina صدقيني ، على حساب المثال ، كم مدخول مصر بالعملة الصعبة التي تطبع في مصر وكذلك لبنان و الأردن دخلت بقوة في سوق الكتاب ، الإمارات ، حنا شحال ندخلو من كتاب ، حنا الكتاب ناعنا يفسد في المطابع ، في المخازن تأكله الرطوبة (déplacer) بيه من ولاية إلى ولاية العام الماضي زرت 25 مكتبة : في بومرداس ، تيبازة ، في العاصمة والمدية والبلدية ، 5 ولايات ولا مكتبة قبلت أنا تعرض ولو كتاب واحد بدون أن يراها ، مكتبة واحدة أمام الجامعة المركزية في العاصمة إختار عنوانا واحد قال لي أن أعرضه قلت له (c'est pas la peine) أكتاب أكاديمي بحثي ، في البلدية ، أحد أصحاب المكتبات يقول لي أنت تريدني أن أنني جانبنا الكتب الشبه المدرسية الأكثر مبيعا ونحط الشعر و الرواية و ماعلاباليش الذي لا يباع ، من بعد يلومك الكاتب أنك لا توزع أعماله؛ أنا أصرف على التوزيع أضعاف أضعاف ما يخسره الكاتب جئت هنا إلى الصالون الدولي للكتاب العام الماضي سرقنا وخسرنا أكثر من 17 إلى 18 مليون هذه السنة نحن أدرى بأننا سوف نخسر أيضا ، نحن هنا في الأساس من أجل هؤلاء الكتاب ، من أجل عفيصة ، من أجل الكتاب الذين طبعنا لهم ، يحبون أن يروا كتبهم في الصالون الدولي ، يحب البيع بالتوقيع ، يحب يتعرف ، صدقا أنا لا أبالغ أنا أعطيك الواقع بكل صراحة

كريمة : ما هي الإجراءات التي تتخذها لاختيار كتابك؟

عدي شتات : سوف أحكي لك عن صيغ الطباعة في الدار ، لأنه لدينا عدة صيغ في الدار ، يوجد صيغة أين الكاتب يجب عليه دفع تكاليف النشر كاملة ، يوجد صيغة أخرى ، مبنية على الشراكة بين الناشر و الكاتب ، هو يدفع النصف و نحن النصف ويوجد صيغة ثالثة على حساب الدار ، ونحن عموما على حساب الدار نشجع الأقلام الجيدة و التي أوضاعها المادية سيئة ، بناء على هذا نحن عندنا المقياس الثابت هي لجنة القراءة ، هذا هو الثابت في بعض الأحيان نضطر إلى التنازل ، نحن عندنا مقاييس معينة مثلا نحن اللغة لا نتسامح مع اللغة ، لا أنا و لا حتى إي واحد في دار الشاطئ أنو أكون أدبيا و لغتي ليست جيدة ، يجب على كل من يتقدم للدار أن يجيد اللغة كتابة و إملاء و نحوا و صرفا ، وطبعا أكيد الجمالية للغة هذا شرط لا نتنازل عنه ، يبقى تقييم العمل من الناحية الفنية هنا des temps en temps اللي مرات يجب علينا التفاوضي عندما نمر بظروف صعبة يعني على سبيل المثال لما تأتي الدار تمر على 6 أو 7 أشهر بلا مدخول و لا دينار ، و نحن أجورنا في الوظيفة العمومية ندفع بها رواتب الموظفين الذين يشتغلون معنا في الدار ، يصبح راتبي يعني أنا كطبيب أو زوجتي أستاذة في الجامعة ، هذا الراتب ينقسم على أكثر من عائلة طبعا لما تأتي تحت هذا الظرف الصعب ، يأتيك عمل لا يمكن أن تكون متشددة معه كما البقية ، يعني هذا بكل صراحة حتى لا أقول كل الأقلام التي طبعت عندي مستواها واحد و فوق فالسما ، يوجد الأغلبية في المستوى و يوجد تحت أقل درجة من

كريمة : ما هي الهوية التجارية لدار النشر ماهي الهوية التجارية التي تسعى إليها دار ابن الشاطئ؟

عدي شتات : ماذا تقصدان بالهوية التجارية؟

كريمة : الهوية هي أدب جزائري يكتب باللغة العربية يمثل الجزائر؟

عدي شتات: هيا في عالم النشر الاختصاص جيد لكن بكل صراحة من الصعب أن تكوني دار نشر متخصصة ، نحن دار الشاطي كانت دار أدبية بحثة وإلى الآن لا تزال يعني لدينا عناوين جد محدودة خارج الأدب عدنا ، في التهيئة العمرانية كتاب ، الهندسة المعمارية ، كتاب المدرسي عندنا 3 عناوين ، و لكن من الصعب الاختصاص في الجزائر ، إلا إذا كان اختصاصك الشبه المدرسي ، لأنه لديه سوق ، هذه تقديري ، أما أن تختصي في كتاب معين أو مجال معين صعبة جدا في الجزائر ، لأنه أعود إلا ما طرحنا سابقا ، مشكل المقرئية ، مشكل سوق الكتاب ، نعم أيضا أنا دار نشر صحيح تخدم اللسان والحرف العربي لا جدال فيه ، ولكن حدود الأدب و الإبداع لا نتوقف عند لغة معينة ، لهذا نطبع باللغة الفرنسية وقريبا سوف نطبع باللغة الإنجليزية ، و هذه رواية عادل الماضي ، الآن هي تحت الترجمة الإنجليزية فسوف نطبعها ، ليس لدينا عقدة اللغة ، نحن نصر على المستوى ، ونحاول دائما تحسين النوعية في إطار ما هو متاح ، يعني في إطار ما هو متاح الآن أحيلك إلى المطابع لكي تري ماذا يوجد ، طبعا من ناحية التركيز على الأدب الجزائري إنه واضح ، في أبسط ما يكون أنا أطبع لآسيا وبدخانها ، و أطبع لأمير ظهير و أطبع لبلقاسم فقيصة وغيره وغيره لأسماء طبعنا لهم على حسابنا الخاص ، من أبسط ما يكون أستطيع أن أطبع بنفس المبالغ هذه أطبع الكلاسيكية ، أطبع الأدب العالمي المترجم ، أشياء التي عندها سوق ، أقدر أيضا أن أطبع الكتاب الشبه المدرسي ، أستطيع أن أقول أن دار النشر تستطيع أن تعيش به 50 سنة ، فهمت كيف ، أظن أن الخيارات موجودة لكن نحن مصريين أن نقاوم بكل صراحة ، مازلنا نقاوم لإغراء الواقع ، هذا الإغراء ليس بالإيجابية ولكن سلبي ، الواقع يضغظ علينا ، لكن نسعى أن لا نستسلم

كريمة: كيف يتصل المؤلفين بك وماهي أنواع المخطوطات التي تحصل عليها؟

عدي شتات: نتحدث عن وسائل الاتصال شيء جيد ، نقطة جيدة ، طبعا أهم وسيلة الاتصال حاليا هي الانترنت وهي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي ، كما تم التواصل بيني و بينك ، حقيقة يوجد أيضا مثلا الحاج جغلوش تعرفت عليه البارحة لم التقيه ، تعاملنا افتراضيا ، طبعنا له ، أخذ كتبه ، تعرفنا على بعض البارحة ، فقط يوجد أيضا مونيا عياط من 2014 حتى التقينا أمس بالمعرض ، فهمتي كيف ، هذه طريقة التواصل يسرت أمور كثيرة ، حتى بالنسبة للتعامل مع أدباء و كتاب خارج الجزائر ، الكل عن طريق التواصل الاجتماعي ، وعن طريق البريد الإلكتروني . هذا بالنسبة للعلاقة أو التواصل بعد الطباعة يختلف من كاتب إلى كاتب ، حيث يوجد بعض الكتاب يبقى ملتصق مع الدار و تبقى الدار ملتصقة به على مدار الأيام ، ويوجد بعض الكتاب يأخذون كتبهم و لم يشكروا حتى مثل الحاج جغلوش وصلوه كتبه من بعد لا حس ولا خبر ، لدرجة أن حينما قررت أن أرسله لأعلمه بالبيع بالتوقيع ، تخوفت أنه يصدني قلت ربما هو غضبان علينا لم يعجبه العمل ، نحن نحاول أن نكون أسرة ، يوجد من هم مستوعبين هذا الشيء أدباءنا ، ويوجد من يتعامل معك تعامل نفعي ، عندما يطبع كتابه لا تسمع منه مرة أخرى ، نحن طبعا نميل للأسرة ، لأننا نعود ونقول بأن مشروعنا ثقافي بالدرجة الأولى

كريمة: وما هي أنواع المخطوطات التي تحصلت عليها؟

عدي شتات: والله هيا بالنسبة للمخطوطات طبعا ، أكبر نسبة هيا للكتاب الأدبي ، ولكن تأتينا أيضا مخطوطات في شتى المجالات ، في الطب والهندسة ، كذلك في شتى المجالات ، حتى مخطوطات كثيرة في الدين ، لم نطبع ولا واحد ، أكثر مخطوطات تصلنا طبعا هيا الأدبية ، حتى و إن أردت أن افصل بينهم ، يعني عندنا الشعر بدرجة

أولى وربما هذا بأنه ابن الشاطئ شاعر، فيسعد الشعراء أن يطبع و تحت إسم ابن الشاطئ و كذا، يليها القصة القصيرة، تليها النثریات بكل أنواعها، الخواطر وغيرها، من بعد الرواية. الرواية سبق وتحدثنا أن ربما كل عشرة نصوص يدعي أصحابها بأنها روايات لانجد أكثر من نصين أو ثلاثة حقيقة مستوفية لشروط الرواية، عندنا أيضا في مجال الدراسات نستقبل أعداد كبيرة

كريمة: ما هو الرصيد بين الفرنسية والعربية؟

عدي شتات: إلى الآن يعني لدينا فقط أربع منشورات باللغة الفرنسية والباقي كله باللغة العربية

كريمة: هذا يعني أنك لم تتلق مخطوطات باللغة الفرنسية؟

عدي شتات: نعم، (les arrières pensé) تلعب دور، الكتاب باللغة الفرنسية، خاصة إذا كان أكبر من هذا الجيل عندما يقرأ ابن الشاطئ، يفكر ابن الشاطئ عندما كان في الإعلام والصحافة، يعرف أن هذا الإنسان معرب، يقولك أكيد هذه الدار تنشر بالعربية فقط لا تطبع فرنسية، أنا قلت لك لا فرق بين أي كتاب أو كاتب باي لغة إلا بالمستوى الجيد، الحاجة التي تسعد رغم قلة القارئ، يسعد القارئ بقراءته

كريمة: ما هي المدة التي تأخذها في التصحيح والتدقيق والموافقة على المخطوطة

عدي شتات: أولا هي التكنولوجيا ساعدتنا كثيرا في جانب أساسي وهو التحقق من حقيقة ملكية صاحب المخطوط للمخطوط، قبل من الصعوبة أن تتأكد من أن هذا الديوان الشعري بأنه حقيقة وملكة لفلان وما أدراني يمكن سرقوه أو شيء آخر، هذا يسر علينا كثيرا من الأمور، من خلال محركات البحث وكذا، نبحت نتأكد من أن هذا العمل حقيقة لفلان. طبعا بالنسبة للمدة حسب ضغط العمل؛ يعني مثلا حينما تكون لدى لجنة القراءة ، لجنة قراءة الشعر ، مثلا سوف ارسل لهم ديوانا واحدا في الشهر ، هذه اللجنة سوف تتفرغ لقراءته و لن تأخذ وقت أطول بإدلاء رأيها ، لكن حين يكون ضغط ، هنا المدة تصبح متفاوتة ؛ لكن بالمجمل والحمد الله ربي يديمها هكذا ، لانو نحن حقيقة معنا دكاترة و استاذة ، كل الاحترام و التقدير لهم ، من أكثر من دولة عربية ، إلى هذه اللحظة هم متطوعون ، لم يأخذوا فلسا واحدا من دار الشاطئ ، بالإضافة إلى خدمات أخرى في التدقيق اللغوي وتقييم الأعمال و في بعض الأحيان كتابة مقدمات لبعض الكتاب كل الشكر لهم ، و من بينهم الدكتور عامر غاوي عراقي ، حقيقة هو رئيس اللجنة ، صدقا يعني إلى الآن لم يتقاضون فلسا واحدا ، طبعا لا يوجد كتاب أصدرته دار الشاطئ وأخذ مدة طويلة من لحظة استلام الى لحظة تسليم لمدة أكثر من 3 أشهر ، باستثناء كتاب واحد هو عيناك تغمرني ، هو ديوان قعد تقريبا 6 أشهر بسبب صاحب المطبعة أخذ فترة طويلة ؛ أصبح يقول لنا الخميس سوف ارسله ، السبت سوف أبعثه ؛ الخميس سوف ابعث ؛ وفي كل مرة ننقل للكاتب الخميس سوف يكون ، السبت سوف يكون ، و في الأخير ماذا نكتشف ، حين أن الألوان لطباعتها حقا ، كشفه الله عز وجل ، الذي صمم الغلاف ، صممه بدون أن يحسب هوامش القطع ، فاضطر صاحب المطبعة أن يتصل بنا لكي نقوم بإضافة وتصحيح هوامش القطع ، فانكشف ، ولم يطبعه اصلا ، وكانت مطبعته معطلة في الأساس ، وخوف من أن اننا نسحب الكتاب من بين يديه أصبح يطمع فينا

كريمة: وما هو القرار في النهاية؟! إقطع العلاقة أو ماذا؟

عدي شتات: قطعت العلاقة معهم، ولكن أثرت على العلاقة مع الشاعر أيضا، أما في المجمل عندنا يعني هذه الموسوعة للقصة القصيرة جدا في الجزائر صممت وأخرجت وطبعت في ظرف اسبوع، في أول نوفمبر يجي الدكتور علاوة إسئليه في ظرف أسبوع كانت جاهزة

كريمة: وبعد قبول العمل، كيف ترى دورك كناشر؟! هل تقدم أي تعليقات على المحتوى؟

عدي شتات: ليس فقط ملاحظات، أحيانا نرفض أعمالا كثيرة في بعض الأحيان، يوجد كثير من الأعمال سواء كانت لا تراعي الأخلاق العامة، أو لا تراعي الخط العام للبلاد، يوجد أعمال بسبب المستوى، بسبب عدم احترامها للغة عدم توفر اي شرط من شروط الإبداع في أعمال كثيرة ترفض

كريمة: من حيث المحتوى؟! ماذا تعني بالمحتوى الطابوهات

عدي شتات: قلت لك ترفض بسبب مستواها المتدني، ويوجد أعمال ترفض لأنها خادشه للحياء، يوجد من يمجد العنف، يوجد مثلا في يوم من الأيام بعثوا لي رواية تحكي عن الربيع العربي وتمجد في الإرهاب في سوريا في دول عربية أخرى، طبعا هذه الأعمال نرفضها. لأننا نحن نؤمن أنه لا يوجد شيء اسمه حرية مطلقة، لا يوجد شيء اسمه حرية مطلقة

كريمة: وماذا عن تسويق الكتاب يعني؟ هل لديك أي قيود؟

عدي شتات: بالنسبة لتسويق الكتاب تحدثنا عنه كثيرا من خلال الكلام في الاول ، طبعا أصعب شيء ، أصعب حلقة في سلسلة النشر التسويقي؛ لأنه في التسويق لا بد من وجود فضاءات للعرض ، لكي تقام المعارض ؛ مثل سيلا مثلاً ، وإما يجب وجود موزع متخصص في تسويق الكتاب ، وهذا تقريبا لا يوجد ، و إن دعى بعضهم أنهم يوزعون الكتاب ، لكن في رأي من يرفض أن يأخذ كل أنواع الكتب لكي يوزعها هذا لن اعتبره موزع ، الذي يأتي يسألني عن المدرسي لكي يأخذه ، أنا لا اعتبره موزع ، فهمت كيف ، موزع الكتاب الحقيقي هو الذي يأخذ جميع أنواع الكتب ويجول بها من ولاية إلى ولاية و من مكان إلى مكان . نحن في دار ابن الشاطئ احكي تجربتنا في التوزيع ، تجربتنا في التوزيع حاولنا التعامل مع هؤلاء الذين يدعون بأنهم موزعين ، وكانت النتيجة لا شيء ، حتى لا يوجد هناك امانة في نقل الكتاب ، على سبيل المثال ، حينما اتواصل مع مكتبة في باتنة أقول له سوف يأتيك الموزع الفلاني بكتاب كذا أو كذا ، الموزع لن يذهب اصلا باتنة ، أو تلك المكتبة اصلا، ويأتي لكي يقول لي انه المكتبة رفضوا أن يأخذ و الكتب ، ليس هناك امانة ؛ الشيء الثاني جربنا التوزيع بأسلوب كشيء ترميه في الماء ، بدأنا بمدينة جيجل ، ثم نواحي جيجل ثم بالولايات المحيطة ثم ثم ، أيضا ، لم تكن النتائج إيجابية لماذا؟! لأنه كما سبق و ذكرت الكتاب الأدبي يرفضون شراءه ، يتكرم المكتبي يقول لك أعرضه ، العرض لا يهتم به ، حتى إن باع لا نستلم حقوقنا، نحن في المحصلة كتاب المؤلف نحن ندفع له من أموالنا الخاصة ، يطبع بماله الشخصي ، يزودني بمبلغ مالي، مثلا 10 ملايين كلفته الطباعة ، أنا بالمحصلة أدفع له

من مالي الخاص، الهدايا التي أهديتها للمؤسسات و الناس ، أرجع كذلك التالف التي تمسه العفن ، وتدفع الضائع ووروو، وندفع تكاليف التنقل من ولاية إلى ولاية ،

كريمة: ماهي تكاليف الإنتاج؟

عدي شتات: هذا سؤال صراحة لن أستطيع أن أعطيك جواب دقيق عليه لماذا! لأنه هناك عناصر تتحكم بسعر الكتاب؛ هناك كما قلت لك عدد النسخ، نوعية الورق، عدد الصفحات، قياس الكتاب،

كريمة: في تونس ولبنان الدولة تدعم الكتاب

عدي شتات: والله الورق في الجزائر لا نستطيع أن ندعي أنه غالي الثمن ، بكل صراحة ، وأظن أظن أن الطباعة في الجزائر أقل تكلفة مقارنة بالدول العربية ، ولكن قلت لك (la finition)، ليست في المستوى ، الشيء الثاني ، لا يوجد تسويق ، مثلا دار نشر جزائرية هنا في الصالون تضطر إلى رفع السعر ، ربما تخفض السعر إضافة إلى هذا ، كل مطبعة و لها تسعيرتها ، لا يوجد سعر موحد أيضا ، كل دار نشر لديها تسعيرتها، يعني مثلا كثيرا من الناس الذين أرادوا أن يطبعو عندنا، يقول لك في المحصلة كم يكلفني ، يرسل لك الكتاب و تقولي له كم يكلف، لا يرجع ، يقول لك باهض الثمن ، لماذا لأنه يوجد دار نشر أخرى تطبع له بأقل تسعيرة ، هيا مستحيل أن يكون الفرق أكثر من 1 أو 2 ملايين إلا إذا كان هناك طرق التوائية لا نعرفها. للأسف الكاتب لا فرق بين دور النشر، دار النشر الذي يستعمل CD or USB يأخذه كما هو لمطبعة، ليس كبار نشر التي تقرأ العمل وتصلحه والتي تسهر عليه ليس متشابهها، للأسف بعض الكتاب أغلبهم لا يقدررون هذا الشيء. البارح فقط أنت إحدى الأخوات وقالت لي بأنها أتت لنا وقلت لي أن الكتاب يطبع 11 مليون، قد طبعته في الدار الفلانية ب 10 ملايين فقط وهذا الأسبوع لدي بيع بالتوقيع. لكن الإنسان يقارن من حيث المحتوى، لا أقبل مثلا خطأ مطبعي بأي نوع في كتاب، أصححه وابعث لك نسخة إلكترونية، أول مرة وثاني مرة وثالث مرة، أصمم الغلاف مرة واثنين وثلاث حتى وإن لم يعجبك، أصمم آخر ليس متاح في كل دور النشر. أحكي لك عن دار ابن الشاطئ، فأیضا هذه من الأشياء التي تتحكم في السعر، انا شخصيا طبعته عند ناشر، أنا صححت كتابي ونسخته، كذا وكذا والكتاب على مقياس معين، طبعه كما هو لم يتعب عليه حتى، بالإضافة وضع لي غلاف فيلم، الذي لا يقدر أن يميز، بالأمس كذلك زارنا أديب سألني عن ثمن الطباعة قلت له اسمع، حين يأتينا اي شخص عبر الفايس بوك يسألني عن ثمن الطباعة، نقدم له كل النصائح والخدمات، لكن نحب أن لا نطبع له

كريمة: هذا لا يبحث عن مراحل المشروع لكنه كل ما يريد هو طباعة الكتاب؟

شتات: أكيد، كاي نص مكتوب واجد، عندنا يسألني اي واحد نبعثه له، لا يأخذ الوقت حتى لقراءته، يسأل عن الثمن النهائي فقط، أنا بالنسبة الي لا أطبع له، هو اصلا أول إنسان غير محترم لكتابه. قد زارني إنسان متقاعد من جيجل، قد كتب كتاب على الشبيبة الرياضية الجيجلية، النادي العريق الرياضي الجيجلي عام 1936، أتى لي قال لي أريد أن أطبع هذا الكتاب، لا تهمني التكلفة؛ يهمني منظر الكتاب يكون على مستوى التعب الذي تعبته انا لجمع الوثائق والبحث، بالعكس نضحك مع أهل الدار، نقولهم راه كتب رواية. الجانب، أرجعك للأصل، حتى

عندما تقابلي دور نشر أخرى ، حتى عندما تكتبين ، أنه في الأساس عندما نتحدث عن أزمة المقرئية ، عندما نتحدث عن مشاكل التسويق و التوزيع ، الكاتب يشكي من الناشرين ، الناشر يشكي من المطبعي ، كلها في الأساس ، مثلها مثل قناة المياه ؛ الماء في طريقه وبعدها يوجد حاجز ، نفس الشيء مع سوق الكتاب ، كدس كدس ، يوجد دور نشر في الأخير تغلق ، يوجد من يدعي الإغلاق ، لكي يتخلصون من طلبات الكتاب ، هناك دار نشر ، لا أذكر اسمها ؛ حتى قد وضعوا إعلان قد أفلست الدار و أغلقت أبوابها ، لكي يتخلصو من ضغط الكتاب ، أنا ارجع الآن للدولة ؛ عندما يكون 60 مكتبة في ولاية واحدة ، أحكي عن مكاتب البلدية ، و أنا دار نشر في ولاية صغيرة ، و يوجد معي ناشر آخر ، لحد الان قطاع الثقافة بكل أجنحتها و قطاع التربية وغيره ، لم يشترت من دار ابن الشاطئ الجيلية كتاب واحد ، بالعكس في كل مناسبة ، يتصلون بنا لكي يقدمون هدايا من كتبنا ، طيب كيف نستمر؟! عندما يكون هناك كتاب وتريد أن تطبعه مديرية المجاهدين أو مديرية الثقافة أو كذا ، يذهبون إلى ناشر خارج الولاية ، و لا يأتي إلى ناشر داخل الولاية ، يدعون على الأقل رغم أن تعليمية رئيس الحكومة واضحة ، أن الأولوية في كل المجالات ، باختصار أن أموال الولاية تصرف في الولاية لا خارجها ، فكيف سأقول أن الناشر مخطئ أو الكاتب مخطئ ، في حين أن كلاهما ضحيتين ، هذا الجانب مرتبط بالفرس ، لكي أختصر كل كلامي ، الإعلام مقصر جدا في حق الأقلام الجزائرية ، خاصة الأقلام الجزائرية الداخلية ، الجديدة ، الجديرة بالدعم ، التقصير ربما كقطاع الثقافة يكمن في غياب التشجيع ، في الأول كان هناك صندوق لدعم الإبداع ، وكانو يطبعون ، نحن الحمد لله ، دار ابن الشاطئ إلى هذه اللحظة لم تشغل مع الدولة بكل قطاعاتها إلا كتاب واحد ، مع مخبر في جامعة باتنة ، و طبعنا لهم على حسب المبلغ المتوفر لهم في صندوق المخبر الجامعي. كانوا يطبعون للذين يستحقون و الذين لا يستحقون ، الآن انقطعت هذه الأنواع من الدعم تماما ، كيف انا اقول أن دوري الأساسي في خدمة الثقافة الجزائرية؛ ترين هنا أسماء جزائرية ، أتحدى إذا يوجد مكتبة واحدة من مكاتب البلدية أو الولائية فيها نسخة من هذه الكتب ، بإستثناء بعض النسخ التي أهديناها ، ها هو أدب جيجلي وغيره ، أنا أحكي معك بصراحة يعني ، أنا طبعي هكذا ، لا أحكي نصف الحقيقية ، لا ألف و أدور ، لا أستطيع ، كلامي إذا لم يقال لك مباشرة نفس الكلام ، تستنتجين من بين السطور ماذا يقولون لك الناشرين

كريمة: هل نشرت لأعمال الخيال من قبل يعني

عدي شتات: قلت لك عمل واحد فقط من الاردن ليس بجزائري ولكن الترجمة جزائرية ، القضية مرتبطة بما هو متوفر

كريمة: يعني إلى أي مدى يكون الكتاب على دراية بمكان و عملية توزيع كتبهم

عدي شتات: يسألون ، يوجد بعض منهم ، يوجد من يتخطون ما هو غير مسموح لهم ، يعني انت طبعت عندي كتاب لا يعني هذا أنك أصبحت وصيا على دار النشر ، يعني مثلا تأتي إحداهن وتقول لي ان المكتبة الفلانية فيها كتب لماذا لا تأخذون كتبتي إلى تلك المكتبة؟! هذا أمر لا يخصك ، وما أدراك لعلنا زرنا هذه المكتبة ورفضوا ، لعلنا لا نتفاهم معه ، لعله لا يساعدنا ، زد على ذلك ، بعض الزبائن يعني للأسف . يعني ماذا اقصد ، الإنسان يحاول أن يظهر بأي طريقة ولكن لا يحاول أن يخسر أي شيء ، اعطيك حاجة تقدرني تتأكدي منها بكل بساطة ، حاولي أن تزور بعض المكتبات ، خاصة في الرفوف السفلى أبحثي ، ستجدين كتب أغلبها أدبية ، وضعها مزري ، هذه

الكتب ليست ملك صاحب المكتبة، هذه كتب دور النشر أو لكتاب مباشرة قدموها وبعد سنة و2 و5 يرجعها لك في حالة مزرية، يرجعها للرمي. أنا شخصيا في 2013 ديوان شعري، وضعت 20 نسخة في مكتبة كبيرة في قسنطينة، وأعلنتها عن حساب الفيس بوك للأصدقاء كتابي موجود بالمكتبة الفلانية، مباشرة يعني، مكت بقسنطينة يومين رجعت بجيجل وقلت الإعلان هذا، أخبرني بعض الأصدقاء والزميلات والزملاء، ذهبوا لأقنتائها، فوجئوا لا يوجد، ليس لدينا، على الأقل 7 أشخاص، رجعت إلى قسنطينة قتلوا ديوان كذا، قالي لا يوجد، قالي إنهم يأتون للبحث عنه ولكن لا يوجد لدينا، سألته كيف هذا؟! قلت له أنا من سلمتك إياهم بيدي هذه، فراح يبحث في المكتبة يبحث فوجده في الأخير، أين وضعه في رأيك! وراء الباب الأساسي للمكتبة، طبعا وجدتهم مبلين كلهم، إذا هنا الكاتب هو يلح عليك لكي تضع كتبه في المكتبة، حين يتلف يكلفك حقه، يقول لك بالنسبة لي عندهم 100 نسخة من كتابي اعطيني حقه

كريمة: ماذا عن الرقابة أستاذ؟

عدي شتات: لا لا هذه من أجمل مزايا الجزائر، لا في رقابة، مؤخرا نعم هناك رقابة على الكتاب الديني، وهذا يشمل الكتاب المدرسي كذلك وكتاب الطفل سوف تكون عليه رقابة كذلك، نحن نتمنى أن لا تكون هناك رقابة صارمة مثل الشبه المدرسي، كما قرأنا في الإعلام، يجب على الناشر طبعة، يسلم 10 نسخ لوزارة التربية، تدفعين مبلغ 1000 دج على كل صفحة، وينتظرون اللجنة أن ترد عليك في ظرف أقصاه عام، هذا الكتاب يدور كل هذه الدائرة و في الأخير أنت لست على ضمان أن الكتاب سوق يقبل من طرف اللجنة، يعني حتى الكتاب المدرسي الذي فضله بعض دور النشر استطاعت أن تفتح أبوابها به، تصبح لا تستطيع، الرقابة في هذه المجالات نحن نؤيدها، لازم تكون سلسلة وناعمة. الطفل، أنا انتقد الكثير من الأعمال الموجهة للطفل، أميز هذا مع أطفال، من سنتين، ابنة اختي في عمرها 6 سنوات أو أكثر، تقرا في قصة الأطفال، ثم أتت لي سألتني بأنها لم تفهم، سألتها كيف لم تفهمين، اطلعت على القصة و وجدت الصفحة الأخيرة ليس لها علاقة بالقصة، أنا مع الرقابة لكن بطريقة مرنة، ليس أن تاخذ مني سنة لكي تفرج عن كتابي، أما الرقابات الأخرى لا يوجد، فقط المكتبة الوطنية التي تشترط أن نزودها بأربع نسخ فقط، هذه علاقة الدولة بالكتاب هذا ما كان

كريمة: كيف يصل القراء لكتبتك؟

شتات: عن طريق الانترنت

كريمة: أستاذ يعني وكيف تقرر بشأن التسعيرة؟! هل توافق أن سعر الكتاب يبقى فوق متوسط الدخل الجزائري؟

عدي شتات: والله هو الكتاب ليس فقط في متناولهم، غير اللي ما يحبش يقرأ، سوف اقول لك لماذا. أنا أحكي موقف حدث بحضوري بجامعة ميله كنا في معرض محلي للكتاب، أخذنا، المعرض كان لنا فقط، قررنا بما أنهم طلبة، وكان لدينا كتب دراسات وكذا قلنا نشارك بتخفيضات وفعلا خفضنا سعر الكتاب الحقيقي الذي سعره 1200 دج كنا نبيعه 300 دج. هذه اللقطة محزنة، كان في مجموعة قصصية ب 100 دج، فأتوا بنئين شافو شافو، ثم أخذت واحدة منهما القصة وصارت تحقق بها، تجدونها مترددة من بعد ذلك، قالت لها صديقتها إذا أعجبك خديها، قالت لها أشتريها أو أعبي بها رصيد هاتفي؟! لكي يقول لي الكتاب غالي! مرات تسعيرة كتبنا

مثلا في فضاءات علمية يعني أين يوجد طلبه و تلاميذ 20 دج لكي يشتري الناس ، لكن لا تباع هذه بكل صدق و صراحة ، طبعا هذا نحكيك على الكتاب الإبداعي ، في المقابل الكتاب الديني من الثرات تسعيرتها تفوق 5000 دج تجدين من يشتريه، فالقضية ليست قضية أسعار، لا يحق لأي إنسان الإحتجاج على الأسعار ، ربما الأسعار يشعر بها الوالدين المجبرين على شراء الكتب المدرسية ، و الشبه المدرسية ، لكن القضية و الله ليست بقضية أسعار، ليش المشكل في أن يأتيني أحدهم و يسألني عن سعر الكتاب و لن يشتري ، لا لا ، يأتي لكي يتفقد ثم يذهب لا يشتري ، بالعكس إذا سألتني أحدهم عن تسعيرة الكتاب إذا كان فعلا 250 دج أقول له 200 دج فقط ، تقريبا لا يوجد أحد يشتري من عندي الا وازوده بهدية ، مرات رأيت طالب أعجبي، بدى لي مهتم بالقراءة و ينتقي في العناوين ، و 800 دج حاجة كبيرة للطالب الجامعي ، و الله أهديته 43 عنوانا ، أنا مدابيا يقرأو ، في الاول و ال خير ما يهمني هو القراءة ، نحن سلمنا أمرنا في قضية الأرباح

كريمة: تجربتك في سيلا، بما يخص العام الفارط؟ ولماذا تحضر؟

عدي شتات: والله تجربتك سيلا العام الماضي كانت تجربة سيئة جداً ، ليس لها علاقة بإدارة سيلا ، العام الماضي كنا على مستعدين لاستئجار stand à لوحنا فإقترح أحد الناشرين صديق كذا وكذا ، قال ما رأيك أن نشترك في جناح واحد، قلنا له نعم ، لأن منشوراتنا في المحصلة ليست بالكثير ما يقارب 100 عنوان ، في المهم اتفقنا ، ولكن لم يلتزم بالاتفاق ، لا أريد أن أقول ماذا فعل هذا الناشر لكن ، ربما يعاقب عليها القانون ، ولكن في المحصلة، دار الشاطي وجدت نفسها في متر مربع و نشاطات حافلة و البيع بالتوقيع وندوات و هيا عندها متر ، لم نستطع أن نستمر بالصالون ، فتركنا كتبنا، و سرقت منا بعضها . هذه السنة وضعونا هنا، نحن آداب و فكر ودراسات، وضعونا في جناح الأطفال و الكتب المدرسية، مشاركة من أجل مشاركة لا أكثر و لا أقل، وقد رأيت بأمر عينيك يعني في القاعة كلها لا يوجد جمهور، فما بالك بشخص اتى لكي يشتري لطفلها كتب مدرسية ليس بشراء رواية

كريمة: كيف تستفيد من وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يعني؟

شتات: والله حقيقة استفادة كبرى، والحمد لله كما قلت لك اسم ابن الشاطي ساعدنا كثيرا و اكد حتى لا أخصص نفسي حقها، أيضا اسمي محترم يعني على الأقل في الوطن العربي، وكثير من الناس تحبنا و تحب دارنا، والحمد لله، هذا التعويض المعنوي

كريمة: هل لديك شراكات مع دور النشر محلية أو خارج الوطن؟

عدي شتات: هو حاولنا ، أنا كنت قد طرحت مشروع و لازلت مصرا ، طرحت مشروع لدور النشر الصغيرة ، التي نسمي أنفسنا ، دور نشر صغيرة ، أن نقيم مثل تحالف مع بعضنا على الأقل في مجال التوزيع ، طرحت أيضا فكرة تبادل المنشورات ، مثلا اعطيك 5 ملايين كتب من دار ابن الشاطي و تعطيني 5 ملايين من دار فاصلة ، فهمت كيف ، هكذا يصبح أعمال دار فاصلة من قسنطينة متوفرة في جيجل و العكس كذلك ، لكن للأسف وجدنا الأنانية تطغى و رغم هذا مازلنا مستعدين باي طريقة ، بالنسبة للخارج عرضت علينا شراكات

مختلفة ، العام الماضي في سيلا ، دار نشر مصرية وأردنية ، عرضو علينا شراكة ، و إنا نأمن بأن الإنسان إذا راح يدير شراكة يجب عليه أن يكون قويا ، ليس أن يتحول من دار نشر حرة بنفسها ، عنده خط وسياسة ملتزم بها ، عنده رسالة يدافع عنها ، في الأخير يتحول إلى مجرد جامع الأعمال لصالح دار نشر كبيرة لأن الكبير كبير والصغير صغير ، فهمتي كيف ، هذا العام ربما سوف تكون شراكة بيننا و بين دار الكتب القانونية ، التي هي اصلا دار يملكها أبن عمي ، هيا دار كبيرة في الوطن العربي . نحن دار ابن الشاطي رغم صغرها ومعناتها تأتينا عروض كبيرة جدا، لهذا قلت لك صمعتنا جيدة ، يكفي اقول لك ان لا يوجد إنسان طبع عندنا و راح تكلم عنا ماعدا شخصين فقط ، شخص يتكلم عنا لانو طبع على حسابه ولم يدفع لنا تكاليف ظنا منه أننا سوف نشهر له ، وهو اصلا لم نطالب له بحقوقنا ، والشخص الثاني ، إنسانة كما يقولها رأسها تبدأ تتكلم ، دارت لنا مشاكل السنة الماضية ، و كدنا أن نأخذها للقضاء

كريمة: شكرا جزيلاً أستاذ

عدي شتات: اول شيء اتمنى لك كل التوفيق، انا سعيد جدا بقلائك، سعدت أكثر ظنا مني أنك أكثر في العمر، وسعدت جدا أكثر بأنك متفوقة وأنت في بعثة جزائرية في بريطانيا، اتمنى لك كل التوفيق، موضوعك جيد جداً مهم جدا، اتمنى ان حتى لغتك تستخدمها في خدمة الأدب الجزائري، دار ابن الشاطي تفتح أبوابها لك ولكل إنسان طموح ونتمنى أن حال الكتاب، لأن الأمة التي لا تقرأ لا تفكر وشكرا جزيلاً

حوار كريمة بن تومي مع الأستاذ و الشاعر والروائي الجزائري إسماعيل يبرير

كريمة: السلام عليكم أستاذ اسمي كريمة بن تومي طالبة جامعية متخرجة من جامعة أبي بكر بلقايد بتلمسان، متحصلة على شهادة الماستر في اللغة الإنجليزية أدب وحضارات تحصلت على منحة من الجزائر لإتمام دراستي في بريطانيا لنيل شهادة الدكتوراه، كما سبق وذكرت موضوع الدكتوراه يتمحور حول الأدب الجزائري المكتوب باللغة العربية والفرنسية الذي نشر بعد 2000 من طرف دور النشر الخاصة المستقلة هنا بالجزائر، والذي كتب من طرف الشباب الكتاب. أستاذ هل لديك أي أسئلة أو استفسار حول الموضوع؟

إسماعيل يبرير: أريد أن أعرف مجال بحثك بالضبط أعدي لي من فضلك

كريمة: نعم البحث هو كل ما يتعلّق بالأدب الجزائري المكتوب بالعربية والفرنسية الذي تم نشره من قبل دور النشر الخاصة، يعني كل ما يتعلّق بالرواية الجزائرية ما هو الجديد من طرف الشباب؛ حيث رشيد مختاري ما قاله في كتابه *le nouveau souffle de la roman algérienne* يعني في ثيمات جديدة بالأدب المعاصر الجديد

إسماعيل: ok نعم أنا فهمت ومستعد للإجابة نجواب على أسئلتك تفضلي

كريمة: شكرا أستاذ هل توافق على التسجيل

إسماعيل: أوافق على التسجيل تفضلي

كريمة: أستطيع أن آخذ نقاط ملاحظات

إسماعيل: أوافق

كريمة: شكرا أستاذ يمكن أن تعرف نفسك

إسماعيل: إسماعيل يبرير روائي جزائري صدرت لي مجموعة من الروايات أولها "ملائكة لافران" ثم "باردة كائثي" ثم "وصية المعتوه" ثم "مولى الحيرة". و(منبوذو العصافير) بالإضافة إلى أعمال أخرى في الشعر والمسرح صدرت لي بالموازنة قبل أو بعد هذا، حصلت على بعض الجوائز من بينها جائزة الطيب صالح العالمية للرواية سنة 2013 وجائزة الإبداع العربي سنة 2012 بعض رواياتي طبعت أكثر من طبعة ملائكة لافران طبعت أربع طبعات وصية المعتوه 4 طبعات مولى الحيرة طبعتين وحققت بعض النجاح في عالم الرواية في العالم العربي.

كريمة: نعم من هم المؤلفون الذين ألهموا كتاباتك؟

إسماعيل: أنا بدأت بالأدب الجزائري عكس الكثير من الناس الذين بدأوا بكتابات عالمية، أنا كنت مهووسا بالأدب الجزائري، في البداية منحتني المؤسسة الوطنية للكتاب SNED في أواخر الثمانينات فرصة أن أشتري وأفتني الكثير من الكتب الجزائرية، وكانت قراءتي مقتصرة على الأدب الجزائري، لم أكن أعرف الأسماء كنت مهموما بالأدب بحد ذاته، عرفت بن هذوقة عرفت الطاهر وطار عرفت نورة سعدي وأسماء كثيرة في ذلك الوقت نشرتها المؤسسة الوطنية للكتاب، تعلمت وتربيت على هذا الأدب أولا، لاحقا اتجهت إلى التراث العربي بشكل عام تعلقت كثيرا بأبي العلاء المعري، وأعجبت بمشاركته للحياة، فأصبحت مهووسا به، التراث أيضا فتح لي أفقا من خلال كتب كثيرة موضوعية، قرأت الأغاني في بداياتي قرأت ألف ليلة وليلة، قرأت نوح الطيب على غصن الأندلس الرطيب، قرأت العقد الفريد، قرأت الكتب التراثية و تواريخ عديدة وتصنيفها للأدب العربي، إذن كنت مهووسا بكتب التراث بمرحلة ما ثم أصبحت مهووسا بالشعر إلى أن وصلت اللحظة الزاهنة، أنا أقرأ الآن للأدباء و الكتاب جميعا ولكن بشكل انفصالي أصبحت قارئنا ناقدا، أرفض أحيانا ما يجتمع عليه الرأي، وأقبل ما يرفضه الرأي.

كريمة: نعم أستاذ كيف ومتى بدأت الكتابة يعني؟

إسماعيل: بدأت الكتابة صغيرا في البداية كنت أكتب قصصا قصيرة للأطفال، أكتبها للقارئ الوحيد الذي هو أنا، كنت أكتب عن بديل لغياب الكتب لأقرأها بسبب غياب والدي الذي كان يقتني لي كتباً ويعمل في الصحراء بعيدا عن المدينة الجلفة، حيث كنت أسكن ثم من كتابة قصص للأطفال أو للطفل الوحيد الذي كنته اتجهت للشعر وما أزال أكتب الشعر إلى اليوم، ثم كتبت رواية بعد لحظة تاريخية مفصلية في حياتي عندما شعرت أن كل العالم تخرب من حولي، وأني لا أساوي شيئا، وشعرت أن الفشل هو مصيري، لم أكن متزوجا ولا عاملا ولا موظفا لا طالبا، لم أكن شيء يذكر، فكتبت رواية "باردة كائثي"، كانت أول رواية انتقدت فيها وضعيتي كشاب عصفت به ظروف الحياة، ظروف الجزائر الأمنية في ذلك الوقت .

كريمة: نعم هل هذا يعني الأزمة ما يسمى بالعشرية السوداء في التسعينات أثرت في كتاباتك؟!؟

إسماعيل: أجل هي موجودة في أغلب رواياتي معاذا "ملائكة لافران"، لا يوجد فيها الأزمة أما باقي كتاباتي فكلها حاضرة فيها هذه الأزمة التي أثرت في تشكيل وعينا، وأثرت في رؤيتنا للآخر وأثرت وأجبرتنا على قبول الآخر، علّمتنا الكثير من الأشياء هذه الأزمة.

كريمة: حتى رؤيتنا للمستقبل يعني؟

إسماعيل: أكيد بعد الأزمة أصبحنا ننظر للأمن كمكسب وإلى الإنسان كقيمة

كريمة: نعم؛ أستاذ ماذا تعني الكتابة لك؟! لماذا تكتب؟!؟

إسماعيل يبرير: أنا أكتب لعدة أسباب، لكن يمكن ذكرها وقد تكون ألف، لكن السبب الأعظم بالنسبة لي أنّ الكتابة هي حياة، لا أعرف أن كان هذا ما يقاسمني إيّاه الكتاب، ولكن أنا لا أتصوّر هناك عملا آخر يمكنني أن أفكر به، الحياة مثل الكتابة.

كريمة: نعم أستاذ، من حيث اللّغة كيف اخترت اللغة التي تكتب بها؟! كيف اخترت الكتابة باللّغة العربية؟

إسماعيل يبرير: ولدت في بيئة عربية وتدرّجت في التعليم التقليدي قبل أن أكون منتسبا إلى المدرسة، حفظت القرآن وقرأت العربية، قرأت كتب التراث كثيرا، لهذا فأنا مرتبط كثيرا بهذه اللّغة أفكر بهذه اللغة، والذي فرانكفوني لا يتقن العربية تعلّمت منه الفرنسية، لكنني وجهت أو وجهت نفسي إلى العربية بحبّ أجدي كثيرا العربية، لم أفكر يوما أن أكتب بلغة أخرى.

كريمة: كيف تعرف اللغة التي تكتب بها؟

إسماعيل: كيف أعرف اللغة؟

كريمة: اللغة التي تكتب بها هل هي تعبر عن هويتك أم وسيلة؟

إسماعيل: الهوية الان أصبحت خارج اللّغة، الهوية هي للنص، أحيانا النصوص تكتب بالفرنسية وهي عربية لدينا النصّ الأول الذي نشر في الأدب الجزائري وهو le Goumier الخيال الذي كتبه محمد بن شريف في مطلع القرن الماضي، هو نص كتب بالفرنسية، لكن هويته عربية؛ فأعتقد أن الهوية الآن ليست اللّغة، الهوية هي في روح النصّ، فيما يتشكل به النصّ لهذا فأنا لا أعتقد أن لغتي هويتي، لكن أتصور أن هويتي ما أنا عليه من تشكل من أشياء كثيرة، أحبّ لغتي، لكن لا أعتبر بأنها هويتي

كريمة: أستاذ ما رأيك في إدراج الدّارجة بالتّصووص؟

إسماعيل: يتعلّق الأمر أساسا بنوعية النصّ، بالضرورة الفنية الإبداعية، والأسباب التي تدفعنا لاستخدامها، أحيانا استخدام اللّغة الدّارجة تماما مثل استخدام الإيحاءات الجنسية غير مبررة، هو يتطلب أن يكون هناك

تبريرا لماذا أستخدم الدّارجة؛ لأنني أتحدّث مع بائع خضر لا أعتقد أنه يحدّثني عن to be or not to be الكينونة +و عن الإنسانية والوجود وعن المأزق الوجودي، أتصوّر أنّ استخدام العامية يكون أفضل في أوضاعها العامية، أما مشهد معرفي أو مشهد عالي أو مشهد عاطفي، فهو يحتاج منا أن نبرّره إذا استخدمنا فيه اللّغة العامية.

كريمة: نعم أستاذ كيف ترى للكتاب للذين يكتبون باللغة الفرنسية! هم جزائريين ويكتبون باللغة الفرنسية!؟

إسماعيل: هم كتاب يكتبون أدبا جزائريًا باللّغة الفرنسية

كريمة: نعم، يعني هم يمثلون الأدب الجزائري والجزائريين!؟

إسماعيل: نعم يمثلون الجزائريين ويمثلون الأدب الجزائري، هذا أدب جزائريّ يكتب باللّغة الفرنسية، ولا يمكن أن ننسبه للفرنسية، وقد أعطيتك مثلا محمد بن شريف عندما كتب روايته الأولى le Goumier كتبها بلّغة فرنسية، لكنه كتب عن الجزائر وروح جزائرية وعربية حتى استشهاده كانت أبيات شعرية من التراث العربي العميق الذي لا يعرفه آنذاك الناس، أعتقد أنّ محمد بن شريف هو نموذج لمجموعة من الكتاب الآخرين مالك بن نبي محمد ديب ومشاريع عظمى على هذه الشاكلة

كريمة: نعم، وهل ترى نفسك كاتب جزائري؟

إسماعيل: طبعاً؛ أنا كاتب جزائري أكتب عن الجزائريين وهويتي تبرز من خلال نصوبي لا من خلال لغتي فقط، قد تكون اللّغة جزءا من الهوية، لكن من خلال نصوبي أيضا عندما أكتب عن الجلفة فهو خيار لأنني أعرف هذه المدينة ترعرعت فيها، أعرف طقوسها أعرف أشياءها وزواياها وأيضا لأنني أعتقد بأن المكان فيه حس روائي، هو مكان مهيب لا استقبال الحكاية، ثم الانتماء الذي احتفظ به نفسي، فالجزائر تعبر عن روايتي أكثر مقارنة بالروايات التي صدرت في نفس الحقبة، فأنا اهتمت كثيرا بالمكان بينما كان الكثيرون يهتمون بالحكاية، وعندما تقرئين النصوص الكثيرة التي صدرت بالجزائر لا تجددين أثرا للجزائر، تجددين أثر للحكاية حتى أنه يمكنك العبث بالأماكن والأسماء تغيرين أسماء الأبطال وتمنحهم أسماء إيطالية والأماكن تمنحهم أسماء إيطالية، فيتحول النصّ إلى نص قادم من إيطاليا، لهذا فأنا أعتقد بأنّي كنت من الناس الذين راهنو على المكان وكتبت فيه وأنا أراهن على المكان في النص في الكتابة، والمكان هو جزء من هويتنا، خاصة وأن التصوّر يقول بأنّ الإنسان العربي بشكل عام والجزائري خصوصا لم يكتمل وجوده وانتمائه إلى الأرض يوما، فكلما تشكّل بوصفه كائن، عصفت به حواجز ما، فعاد ليبحث عن أجزائه وشظاياها وأسئلة اليقين والوجود بينما شكّل المكان يقينه ووجوده، لهذا ينبغي أن ننتبه إلى المكان وندرجه كعامل أساسي ومهم في المنجز الرّوائي

كريمة: نعم شكرا أستاذ؛ وما هي مجتمعات الكتاب التي ترى نفسك تنتمي إليها؟! هل هناك تيار خاص ترى

نفسك تنتمي إليه؟

إسماعيل : في الجزائر أنا أنتمي لتيار أنا إلى إسماعيل يبرير الذي يهتم بكثير من الطقوس في الكتابة والكثير من الأمور راهنت على أشياء وأصبحت عيبا لدى البعض راهنت على لغة مميزة، لغتي من أكثر اللغات نضجا في الكتابة في المشهد الجزائري، وهذا ليس فخرا هذه ملحوظة شخص أكاديمي باحث أكاديمي يحدثك، يعني إسماعيل الأكاديمي هو الذي يتحدث يقول لك هو المختص linguist اللساني يقول لك لغتي أفضل من لغة الكثير من الكتاب، لكن لم أقل أفضلها على الإطلاق أعتقد أن اشتغالي على اللغة وهو جزء من هذه الخصوصية التي يريد أن يشكلها إسماعيل كمستوى أو كcouloire كرواق إذا شئنا، كرواق جديد في الكتابة السردية الجزائرية، فلهذا لا أعتقد أنني أنتمي لأي شيء، بالعكس أنا استمرارية لمنجز سردي عميق يعود إلى محمد بن شريف، رشيد بوجدره، محمد ديب، مالك حداد، بن هدوقة ثم إلى وطار ثم إلى آخرين نعيش معهم: محمد مفلح، الذين كتبوا قبلي أنا امتداد لهم، قرأت وتربيت على أدب جزائري كما ذكرت من قبل، بالموازاة مع التراث العربي

كريمة: بنظرة مستقبلية أنا متأكدة بأنك سوف تكون سفير الأدب الجزائري وسوف يكون لك رسوخ فيه؛ ما رأيك أستاذ في مكانة الأدب الجزائري اليوم! كيف ينظر إليه المؤلفين؟!

إسماعيل: مكانة الأدب بالنسبة للكتاب دائما على أنه ليس بخير، مثل وجود الثقافة بشكل عام لأنه جزء من الثقافة؛ الثقافة ليست بخير والأدب ليس بخير هناك محاولات فردية لا توجد مؤسسة تهتم أو توظّر أو تشرف على الفعل الثقافي بشكل عام، هناك سلوك فردي إنجاز فردي الآن هناك ناشطون جادون، كتاب حقيقيون ورغبة لدى الجميع بما فيهم قراء حقيقيون من أجل صناعة مشهد مختلف، أعتقد أن القادم سيكون أفضل ويكون أفقر؛ أفقر من حيث العدد، لكنه أفضل من حيث النوع

كريمة: فيما يخص النشر، ما هي الخطوة الأولى للاقتراب من أحد الناشرين؟! هل تلقيت صعوبات في البداية!

إسماعيل: في البداية لم أكن أعتقد أن النشر صعب، لكن أنا جئت في فترة بدأ النشر يزدهر؛ ثم وجدت اهتماما من كثير من دور النشر، الآن أنا مطلوب أغلب الناشرين الجزائريين وغير الجزائريين، لكن أنا متردد دائما، في البداية لم أجد صعوبات التي يتحدث عنها عادة الكتاب الشباب، لكن أعتقد أن هناك من واجه صعوبات

كريمة: وكيف كان الاتصال يعني؟! عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني

إسماعيل: إطلاقا، عبر دار نشر اتصلت بي لنشر ديواني الشعري الأول، الناشر هو من اتصل بي ونشر لي وأهتم بي وأرادني أن أكون موجودا بالمشهد الأدبي، وهو منشورات أسامة هي دار نشر محلية جزائرية في مدينتي الجلفة

كريمة: نعم أستاذ وما هي المعايير الرئيسية في نظرك التي يجب اتباعها في النشر في الجزائر؟!

إسماعيل : النشر ليس بخير في الجزائر لأنه لم تتشكل مؤسسة النشر بشكل جيد بعد في سلسلة الكتاب la chaîne de livres ما يزال الموزع غير موجود والمكتبي غير موجود، هؤلاء غائبون لحد الآن، القارئ موجود وان قلّ، والكاتب موجود و إن قلّ، والناشر موجود وإن قلّ، لكن مبادرات التوزيع والمكتبة هي دائما ما تجعل

الأمر يوفق، أعتقد أن سعر الكتاب مقارنة pouvoir d'achat القدرة الشرائية للجزائريين هو مرتفع، حتى وإن كان عاديًا جدًا، لكنه يبقى مرتفعًا، أعتقد أيضا توزيع الكتاب غير متوفر وان المكتبات غير متوفرة بالشكل المطلوب .

كريمة: لقد لاحظنا أن مكتبات جد غنية اضطرت للإغلاق وفتحوا مقاهي ومطاعم يعني على عكس الكتاب يعني

إسماعيل: لأن الناس يبحثون عن أرباح ولا يكتفون بما لديهم، وان كانت المكتبة في مكان جيد وإستراتيجي سوف تكون مطمعا لاستثمارات أخرى غير الكتاب

كريمة: من حيث التمويل ككاتب، هل تكسب ما يكفي للعيش مثلا؟

إسماعيل: الكتابة بشكل عام لا تمنحني حتى حياة كريمة ولا حياة إطلاقا، الحياة غير مطلوبة ولا موجودة في الكتابة ou tour de l'écriture يعني لا توجد حياة في الكتابة، ما تجدينه هو الموت، لهذا أنا أعمل في الصحافة، أكيد في مجال آخر وأنا من بين الناس الذين يحصلون على مال مقابل نشر الكتب، لكن ذلك المال بسيط جدًا لا يمكن أن يوفر حياة كريمة لي ولأبنائي وزوجتي، لا أستطيع لهذا أنا أعمل في عالم الصحافة أنا محرر بوكالة الأنباء الجزائرية.

كريمة: كيف ذهبت بالتفاوض مع دار نشر الخاصة بك يعني؟

إسماعيل: في الأول أمضيت في مقهى مع ممثل دون أي شروط، فقط أردت نشر الكتاب ومنحت نسخ مقابل ذلك، نسخ كثيرة وكأني دفعت مالا، فكان احتفاء غير معهود، منحي الناشر مئة نسخة دون أن يحصل على مقابل مني، وشجعتني ونشر لي كتابا أولا هو "طقوس أولى".

كريمة: قد رأينا ظاهرة الكتاب يوزعون أعمالهم للمكتبات؟

إسماعيل: لم يحدث معي هذا ولست مهتمًا بتوزيع كتابي، حتى وإن لم يكن موجودا في أي مكتبة فأنا لا أعتقد أنها مهمتي، خاصة في وضعي الحالي لست مهتمًا بتوزيع الكتاب هذا مهمة الناشر وأنا ناشري منشورات حبر نشر لي روايتي مؤخرا ووضعها بشكل جيد.

كريمة: يعني كانت هناك معلومات عن مكان تواجد كتبك

إسماعيل: بالطبع فيه

كريمة: أستاذ هل لديك أي دور في تسعيرة الكتاب؟!

إسماعيل: نعم في كتابي الأخير فاوضت الناشر على السعر، اقترح هو سعرا وتفاوضنا ووافقنا معا

كريمة: ماذا عن الغلاف؟

إسماعيل: كنت حاضرا في كل تفاصيل الغلاف أنا الذي أحضرت الصورة وحضرت الخطاط الذي كتب، أنا الذي كنت حاضرا في كل جزئيات الكتاب وتفاوضت في هذا الشأن.

كريمة: نلتقي يقدم لك الناشر نقد على مطبوعاتك؟!!

إسماعيل: إطلاقا هو يقبل عملي في المرحلة الحالية؛ أنا أقول لك أنا من ضمن الأسماء التي لا يمكن أن يتفاوض بهذا الشأن، العكس هم يريدون نصي فقط فأنا نصوصي متزنة لحدّ ما، لن يجدوا فيها هفوات أو تجريح أو إساءة.

كريمة: من يروج لأعمالك !

إسماعيل: لا إطلاقا، دور النشر لا تروج لأعمالي، أعمالي يروج لها الأصدقاء في عالم الصحافة والكتابة في العالم العربي والجزائري؛ في الجزائر أقلّ

كريمة: كيف ترى حالة التّقد في الجزائر؟!!

إسماعيل: التّقد في الجزائر هو في مأزق ليس لدينا منابر أو صحافة أدبية متخصصة عندما نقول الصحافة المتخصصة نحن لا نتحدّث عن صحافة ثقافية متخصصة، هذه يمكن أن تشمل كل الثقافة، أمّا الصحافة الأدبية أو التّقديّة المتخصصة، فهي جزء آخر مختلف تماما، يعني هو يمكن أن يكون مكتملا للصحافة الثقافية، لكنّه مختصّ ومباشر. الذي يحصل هو أننا لا نملك صحافة أدبية متخصصة ولا نملك حتى صحافة ثقافية متخصصة، نحن في الجزائر نعاني، نشكو من غياب وضحالة الإعلام التّقافي، لهذا فالناقد قد لا يجد منبرا، هناك نقد جامعي أكاديمي، وهو أيضا نقد فاشل في مجمله، ما عدا بعض المحاولات للكتاب والنقاد الجامعيين المنفصلة لا تمثل الجامعة بل يمثلون أنفسهم كأفراد هناك اليامين بن تومي، محمد لمين بحري، وحيد بن بوعزيز؛ لونيس بن علي؛ هؤلاء يشتغلون، لكن يشتغلون بوصفهم أفرادا وليس مؤسسات تابعة للجامعة.

كريمة: من حيث القراء، لمن تكتب؟! هل لديك جمهور محدد معين تكتب له؟!!

إسماعيل: لا أعتقد أنه من السّهولة أن تجد جمهورا في العالم العربي، بقدر ما نكتب الثيمات نكتب لمواضيع لها أنصارها، نكتب لفئات معينة قد تكون مهتمّة بهذه القضية قد تخدم هذه القضية، ونكتب أيضا لجرح أو لمداواة جهة ما.

كريمة: هل لديك معرفة القراء؟!!

إسماعيل: نعم أحبّهم، لدينا علاقة صداقة أكيد أتواصل معهم عبر الفايسبوك عبر الايميل، عبر الهاتف، لديّ صداقات مع القراء، أحترمهم وأعتبر أنّي محظوظ لأنّهم منحوني وقت لقراءة ما أكتب

كريمة: وما رأيك في اتحاد الكتاب الجزائريين يعني، ما أهميته بالنسبة لك؟!!

إسماعيل: وجوده مثلا! أعتقد أنه مؤسسة تاريخية، أعتقد أنه الآن لا يقوم بأيّ دور مؤسسة مضافة مثل الزائدة الدودية، يمكن بترها في أيّ لحظة، فقط الحمى لم تصعد بعد بالشكل الذي يدفعهم إلى بترها. لا أحترم اتحاد الكتاب في وضعه الحالي، لكنّي احترم منتسبيه ومسيريته، أحبهم واحترمتهم، وأكّن بهم كلّ الاحترام، لكن لا أحترم اتحاد الكتاب بالشكل الحالي لأنّي أعتبره بلا دور.

كريمة: كيف تفسر ظاهرة الجوائز الكثيرة التي ظهرت بالجزائر؟!

إسماعيل: بسيط جدًا هو في الحقيقة كثيرا ما تغنينا بوجود جوائز في العالم وبكيننا لعدم وجودها، الآن تشكّلت هذه الجوائز ما عليها ومالها، يمكن أن تكون تقليدا، لكن لا أضمر بأيّ أعتقد بأنّها لن تدوم، أغلب الجوائز سوف تتوقّف في مرحلة ما، فلدينا تجربة طويلة عميقة في إطلاق جوائز وتوقيفها، ومن منظور آخر الجوائز فرضتها حركة الكتابة والنشر كمكمل لهذه الحركة.

كريمة: ما رأيك أستاذ في الظاهرة الفايبروكية كتاب ينتقدون بعضهم البعض عبر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي؟!

إسماعيل: أنا لا يهمني شخصية الكاتب، لكن الكتاب ينتقدون بعضهم لأنه بينهم حساسيات، بينهم صداقة وعداوة، يمكن أن ينتقدوا بعضهم البعض، أمّا القراء فليس من المفروض يدخلوا في خصوصية الكاتب ما يجب ما يكره ما يقبل ما يرفض، بل بخصوصية النصّ هو ما يهمهم أكثر.

كريمة: كيف ترى مكانة الأدب الجزائري مستقبلا!

إسماعيل: أعتقد أنه سوف يكون للأدب الجزائري وجودا أفضل في العالم العربي والغربي، وسيكون مزدهرا أيضا هنا في الجزائر، ويمكن أن نحقق وضعًا أفضل بكثير من الأوضاع التي حققناها تاريخيا وحاليا.

كريمة: هل هناك رواية يعمل عليها الأستاذ في الوقت الحالي؟!

إسماعيل: لدي رواية أشتغل عليها ممكن تصدر خلال أشهر قليلة، هي رواية تعود إلى تاريخ قديم جدًا إلى عشرات أو مئات السنين على هذه الأرض، كون حكاية بطلي عبارة عن شخصية مرسومة في النقوش الصخرية يخرج من النقوش الصخرية ليتحوّل إلى كائن عصريّ معاصر وينتقد هذه الصخرية التي نعيشها الآن وليس الصخرية التي عاشها هو؛ هو إنسان مصدوم من بشاعة الإنسان في هذا العصر، هو جزائريّ يخرج من صخرة جزائرية.

كريمة: هل يمكن أن تحدثني عن ماذا يرمز الكبد في رواية وصية المعتوه؟! وما حكاية المقبرة؟! هل هيا يعني التعايش؟!

إسماعيل: نعم التعايش الديني وقبول الآخر هي رسالة إنسانية لكي يصبح هناك تعايش، لكن رمزياً وكأنه هذه الأديان لا ينبغي أن تتضامن أو تتسامح إلا إذا انتهت تماما إلى موات، فأنا قلت بأن الموتى مطمئنين لبعضهم لأنه نحن الأحياء نملك الحياة، وهي شيء جميل، ولكن لسنا مطمئنين لبعض هذا كل ما أردت أن أقوله.

حوار كريمة بن تومي مع الأستاذ مكتبة ابن باديس؛ وهران 2018

كريمة: السلام عليكم أستاذ، أنا كريمة بن تومي من جامعة بورتسموث وأردت أن أتحدث معكم عن المشروع الذي سبق وأعطيتكم ورقة المعلومات عنه، خلاصة القول إن الأهداف والخطوط العريضة لهذا البحث لنيل شهادة الدكتوراه التي تدرس مكانة الأدب الجزائري المكتوب باللغة العربية والفرنسية من طرف الجيل الشباب الكتاب التي نشرتها ووزعت من طرف دور النشر التابعة للقطاع الخاص بعد عام 2000. أستاذ هل مازلت مهتما بالمشاركة في المشروع؟

أستاذ: أكيد نعم

كريمة: الآن أود أن أؤكد بعض تفاصيل المشروع للتأكد بأنك تفهم كل ما يتعلق بك كمشارك، انه مشروع حول مكانة سوق الأدب الجزائري والذي سوف يتم استخدامه في دراسة العليا، إذ كنت سوف تشارك احتاج لإجراء مقابلة لمدة ساعة او 45 دقيقة تقريبا كما قد اتصل بك لاحقا لإجراء مقابلات للمتابعة، لا داعي لأن تقول نعم للمشاركة يمكنك أن تسألني اي سؤال قبل أو خلال المقابلة يمكن الانسحاب أيضا في أي مرحلة من البحث دون إعطاء سبب و دون أي عواقب سلبية عليك كما أنت على علم أن جامعة بورتسموث لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث لقد وافقت على هذا المشروع و كيفية الاتصال باللجنة ستجدها في ورقة المعلومات في حالة أي مخاوف أو شكاوى لقد زودتك بالرقم المرجعي وتفاصيل الاتصال. لن احافظ عن التفاصيل الخاصة بك لفترة أطول من اللازم ولن استخدم اسمك بجانب البيانات التي تقدمها إلا إذا كنت تصر على العكس وسوف أطلب الإذن الخاص بك للاقتباس عنك مباشرة في المنشورات البحثية، سوف أأخذ من بياناتك الخاصة على حاسوبي المحمول الشخصي و تخزين كل الملفات على Google drive بالإضافة سوف يتم إخفاءها بكلمة السر فقط انا من يمكنه الوصول إليها و سوف تبقى بيانات البحث لمدة لا تقل عن عشر سنوات عن إذنتكم أريد أن أسجل هذه المقابلة للتأكد أنني أحصل على تسجيل دقيق لأفكارك بدلا من ذلك يمكنني تدوين ملاحظات في دفترتي. فما الذي تفضله؟

أستاذ: تسجيل ليس فيه مشكل

كريمة: وقد أرغب في الاتصال بك لاحقا لتوضيح المعلومات الذي قدمتها لي في المقابلة، في هذه الحالة سوف أسألك إذا كان لديك الوقت الكافي للإجابة عن بعض الاسئلة الأخرى.

أستاذ: ليس لدي أي مشكل

كريمة: شكرا. كما انت على علم أن أعمالي سوف تنشر على الإنترنت لطلاب الدكتوراه ومؤسسات والبحوث الأخرى حيث سوف يتم نشر الأطروحة وغيرها من مخرجات البحوث في أرشيف البحوث بجامعة بورتسموث،

أستاذ هل أنت سعيد بالنسبة لجمع التفاصيل والبيانات الشخصية عنوان المكتبة، البريد الإلكتروني، العنوان، المبيعات

ليس هناك أي مشكل

كريمة: شكرا لن يتم تمرير المعلومات الشخصية لأي طرف ثالث، إذا كنت سعيد استاذ بكل هذا وليس لديك المزيد من الأسئلة

أستاذ: نعم تفضلي

هل لديك أي استفسارات استاذ

أستاذ: لا لا تفضلي

كريمة: شكرا، السؤال الأول استاذ لماذا قررت فتح هذه المكتبة

استاذ: المكتبة هذه تندرج في إطار توسعة النشاط التجاري لدار العزة والكرامة، في البداية كنا جد مهتمين بالمكان كون أن المكتبة سوف تكون ضمن عقارات مسجد ابن باديس، الجامع القطب، طبعاً وهذا اكيد من الناحية التجارية سوف يجلب الزوار من داخل وهران وخارج الولاية وحتى من الخارج، فاعتنما فرصة تواجد المسجد لكي لفتح المكتبة يعني استغلال لعقارات المسجد

كريمة: هل تلقيت دعماً من طرف الدولة أو من مالك الخاص يعني

استاذ: هي الفكرة في الاول ان يتم استغلال العقارات التابعة للمسجد وهذا اكيد سوف يجعل المسجد يستفيد من أموال الكراء لكل التجار الموجودين ضمن عقارات المسجد، طبعاً الفكرة كانت جيدة من طرف الوالي الأسبق لولاية وهران، على أساس أن اختيار النشاطات التجارية الخاصة بعقارات المسجد تم وضعها من طرف الولاية، على أساس أن تكون هناك مكتبة تكون هناك صيدلية نشاط تجاري على ما يخص Algérie Télécom الخ يعني نشاط تجاري متنوع يعني ونحن كنا جد سعداء أن ضمن هذا التنوع التجاري توجد مكتبة

كريمة: كونك تعمل في المكتبة يعني هل تقرأ وما أنواع الكتب التي تقرأها؟

استاذ: أنا مهتم كثيراً بكتب علم الاجتماع ؛ التاريخ كوني أزاول دراستي وأنا في السنة الثالثة علم اجتماع و طبعاً تواجدي في المكتبة هو شيء يعني كما السمكة في الماء ، وأنا جد مهتم بقضية مناقشة الزوار في التخصصات الأخرى ، ربما يأتي الزبون يبحث عن كتاب في تخصص تقني أو في تاريخ أو في علوم سياسية فتكون لي فرصة للحديث معه حتى استفيد من قضية المعلومات التي سوف أمررها لزبون آخر ، اكيد لأن الإلمام بما كل ما هو موجود في المكتبة آلاف العناوين شيء صعب فبالتالي نحن نريد أن نأخذ ولو فكرة عن كل تخصص ، أشهر الكتب ،، الجديد سواء كان في العلوم الاجتماعية ، أو الأدب أو التاريخ؛ حتى في مجال الطفل تكون لدينا فكرة يعني و لو عامة حول ما يطلبه الزبون و ما هو مطبوع يعني ، عالمياً أو محلياً ونحن نتابع حتى ، خاصة يعني في قضية الأدب ، أو القصة أو كتاب مشهورين على المستوى العالمي نحن نتابع ، لأنه شأنها شأن القارئ ، القارئ كذلك يتابع و يأتي ليسأل عن الكتاب الفلاني أن كان متواجد ، فبالتالي لابد أن نواكب يعني، ما هو مطبوع في السوق نحاول قدر الإمكان أن نجلبه إلى المكتبة

كريمة: إذا جاء الفرد يبحث هنا عن عنوان كتاب و لم يجد، توجهوه أو تقنني له

استاذ: أكيد ، في البداية نرى أن كان موجود في المكتبات الأخرى التابعة لدار العزة و الكرامة ، سواء كانت في تلمسان أو العاصمة أو هنا في مدينة وهران ؛ إذا لم يكن موجود و الكتاب مطبوع هنا من طرف دار نشر جزائرية فيتم الاتصال بالدار النشر من أجل جلب ذلك الكتاب ، الحال يصعب إذا كان الكتاب مطبوع خارج الوطن في دار نشر أجنبية ، فهنا يكون نوعا ما صعبا ؛ لأن الآليات جلب الكتاب من الخارج نوعا ما فيها من الصعوبة ، خاصة عندما يكون عنوان أو عنواني ، صعب لأننا نطلب دار نشر تبعث الكتاب في نققات الإرسال يعني تعود ، يصبح ثمن الكتاب؛ نوعا ما مرتفع للزبون وهذه هيا المشكلات المتعلقة بالكتاب المطبوع خارج الوطن

كريمة: وما هي أكثر الكتب مبيعا؟

استاذ: و الله الكتب أكثر مبيعا، عندنا سنة من افتتاح مكتبة ابن باديس التابعة لدار العزة و الكرامة؛ الأكثر مبيعا هو الكتاب الديني هناك بعض من الزبائن ما يسميه بالكتاب الديني ، نحن نفضل أن نسميه بكتاب الثقافة الإسلامية ؛ على أساس حتى كتاب الطفل هو يدخل في الكتاب الديني ، كتاب الفيزياء هو كتاب ديني لأنه ، لأن الدين ليس محصور في فقه و صلاة نحن نسميه جناح الثقافة الإسلامية كل ما يتعلق بالفقه و السيرة هذه أكبر الكتب التي يعني مطلوبة و هذا شيء طبيعي ، على أساس أن الطبيب يحتاج الفقه ، الاستاذ يعني في تخصص من التخصصات يحتاج في حياته الخاصة كإنسان مسلم طبعا هنا بعض الأحيان بيدون استغرابا خاصة في معرض الكتاب الدولي ، يعني كثرة الزبائن موجودة بكثرة في جناح الكتاب الديني وهذا شيء طبيعي على أساس أن الكتاب الديني هو ملتقى كل التخصصات ، كل العلوم ، الذي مختص في التاريخ يحتاج الكتاب الديني له كشخص يحتاجه سواء من ناحية السيرة لمعرفة سيرة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أو الفقه من أجل تحسين عبادته ولذلك شيء طبيعي ان يكون الكتاب الثقافة الإسلامية أو الكتاب الديني هو الأكثر مبيعا في المكتبة حتى في المعرض الدولية التي تقام في الجزائر الكتاب أكبر مبيعا هو الكتاب الديني

كريمة: هل هناك مجموعة أو أنواع معينة تحضي بشعبية خاصة، على ماذا يتوافدون بكثرة القراء، الأسر؟

استاذ: نعم؛ الآن الذي هو تستطيعين أن تقولي يتصدر المبيعات هو كتاب لا تحزن يطلبه الكبير والصغير عائض القرني والذي يأتي من بعده هو مئة من عظماء الإسلام غيروا من مجرى التاريخ، كذلك كتاب مطلوب موجود هنا في المكتبة، بعد ذلك بالتدرج يأتي الكتاب الفقه المصحف خاصة في شهر رمضان هو يتصدر المبيعات، المصحف في شهر رمضان، الناس في شهر رمضان يعني تتصدق على موتاهها، على الأب على الأم، مصاحف تهدى للمساجد أو لأشخاص

كريمة: أستاذ وماذا عن الطلبة؟

استاذ: هو نستطيع أن نقول أن الطلبة حسب التخصص ، الطلبة يعني لو نأخذ تخصص طب ، تواجد الطلبة، الذين يدرسون تخصص طب قليل جدا ، لأن ربما من بين الأسباب أن الكتاب المجلوب من الخارج سعره نوعا

ما مرتفع الطالب يصعب عليه شراء كتاب يعني يتكلم عن مجال من مجالات الطب سعره يتراوح من بين 2500دج إلى 3000 دج نوعا ما صعب ، التخصص الذي يجلب الطلبة هو تخصص القانون بحكم أن كل الكتب مطبوعة في الجزائر، فبالتالي ؛ عندما يطبع الكتاب في الجزائر يأتي سعره أقل تكلفة من الكتاب المطبوع في الخارج ، بحكم أن القانون هو قانون جزائري و الكتاب هم أساتذة في الجامعة فبالتالي الكتاب نستطيع أن نقول في معظمه في متناول الطالب ، بعد ذلك يأتي كل ما يتعلق بالروايات، نحن نرى خاصة طلبة الماستر في الأدب ، في بعض الأحيان يقتنون نفسى الرواية لكاتب جزائري تكون شرط تكون مترجمة ، على سبيل المثال يأخذون ياسمينة خضرا و يأخذون بشرط أن العنوان المأخوذ بالفرنسية يكون مترجم إلى العربية ، ربما هذا متعلق بالبحث الذي يقومون به ، على أساس أن الرواية مكتوبة باللغة الفرنسية و العربية لكاتب جزائري ، طبعا هنا نوعا ما فيه صعوبة ، أنا يوجد كتب مكتوبة بالفرنسية غير مترجمة إلى العربية و العكس صحيح تكون مكتوبة بالعربية وغير مترجمة إلى الفرنسية، الاتجاه من الفرنسية إلى العربية هو أكثر تداول من العربية إلى الفرنسية ، بمعنى أن الكتاب عندما يكون مطبوع بالفرنسية يكن له حظوظ كبيرة على أنه يترجم إلى اللغة العربية بخلاف الكتاب المكتوب بالفرنسية يعني يصعب ، أنا لا أستطيع أن أقول لك بكل موضوعية أن أذكر الأسباب لكن الكتاب الذي يطبع أو صاحبه يكتبه بالعربية يعني قليل ان نجده مترجم إلى اللغة الفرنسية ، ربما هذا يتعلق أيضا بالقراء ذوي اللسان الفرنسي ، ربما لأن الفكرة تبقى المعبر عنها باللغة العربية يصعب ترجمتها إلى اللغة الفرنسية ، وربما قد لا يتفاعل معها القارئ الفرنكوفوني

كريمة: ومانوع الروايات التي يبحث عنها الطلبة، محلية أم أدب عالمي؟

أستاذ: هو يوجد عدة مستويات ، على مستوى الثانوي ، الإكمالي؛ هو يوجد كتب مطلوبة ضمن البرنامج وهي كتب كلاسيكية ، النظرات ، العبرات ، المنفلوطي ، طه حسين ، صادق الرافي، هذه كتب مطلوبة ويوجد بالفرنسية ، يوجد مولود فرعون مولود معمري ؛ هؤلاء كلهم بالفرنسية جزائريين ، وعندما نروح للمجال أو المستوى الجامعي ، هو بكل مرارة نقول ان الطالب قليل التردد على المكتبة ، لا يأتي إلى المكتبة إلا إذا كان متابعة معين متعلق ببحث فقط، أما إذا كان هكذا من باب الفضول انه يأتي إلى المكتبة و يقتني كتاب هذا تقريبا لا بكل مرارة نقول انه نادر. أكيد انه الأسباب متعددة ، لأننا أن أردنا أن نعد الأسباب فالأسباب متعددة ، مثلا القدرة الشرائية للطالب ، الطالب له منحة 4000 دج ، الكتاب إذا كان سعره يتراوح ما بين 400 دج و 500 دج فصعب انه يأتي ، زيادة عن ذلك ، يمكن قضية تكوين الطلبة يمر على الابتدائي و المتوسط و الثانوي خلال هذا المشوار الدراسي لا يوجد ربما أو قليل قضية الاهتمام بالمطالعة غرس حب الكتاب في التلميذ في سنوات الابتدائي لأن سنوات الابتدائي هي التي تحدد نوعا ما مستقبل الطفل ومستقبل الفرد بصفة عامة ، يا إما يكون محب أو غير محب ، فضولي أو غير فضولي ؛ وهذا يتم صناعته في سنوات الابتدائي طبعا الآن لما يروح الطالب إلى الجامعة لا يكثر لا يلجأ حته إلى الكتاب الموجود في الجامعة ، لا يلجأ إلى الكتاب حتى إذا كان الكتاب المعين متعلق ببحث ، حتى في الكتاب الطالب يبحث في الفهرس مباشرة عن الفقرة التي لها علاقة بالبحث يعني ، أما هو لا يكثر بقراءة الكتاب وهذا طبعا في الأخير يعني يعيق المقرئية في الجزائر هذه من

بين الإعاقات ، عدم الاهتمام والأرقام تؤكد ذلك يعني المقروئية في الجزائر نسب تقدر تقول ضعيفة مقارنة بدول أخرى وربما حتى مقارنة بدول الجوار الآن نحن أقل مقروئية من غيرنا

كريمة: واحد من الأسباب التي ذكرتها يعني سعر الكتاب يفوق الدخل الشهري للفرد الجزائري

أستاذ: أكيد ، ليس لدي ارقام لكن أستطيع أن أقول خلال السبعينيات و الثمانينات كانت أكثر من الآن ، لأن في تلك السنوات الكتاب كان مدعم من طرف الدولة ، في قضية دعم الكتاب هي من بين الأسباب التي تشجع القارئ ، هنا نعرف أصدقاء يأتون هنا إلى المكتبة ، عندهم مرتبات شهرية يدخل لا يستطيع أن يشتري كتاب بسعر 500 دج ، إذا ممكن نقول انه يتقاضى 30 ألف دينار و لا حتى 40 ألف دينار وله أسرة تتكون من خمسة أفراد مستحيل أن يقتني الكتاب وهذا من بين الأمور لا بد على السلطة السياسية أو الدولة أن تلتفت إليها ، يوجد حقيقة اجتماعية و اقتصادية لا بد من أن نأخذها بعين الاعتبار ، الإنسان يعني كثر له الفضول يحب الكتاب لكن عندما يكون المرتب محدود ومقيم على فواتير الغاز و الكهرباء و الملابس الأطفال والدخول المدرسي الخ، التقسيم لا يمكن القارئ الجزائري الذي له مرتب معين أن يأتي إلى المكتبة بصفة دورية

كريمة: هل لديك أرقام عن أكثر المبيعات يمكن أن تشاركها معي لاحقا يعني

أستاذ: والله بالأرقام يعني ممكن لاحقا لا تحضرني الآن لكن كما قلت لك، مثلا إذا أخذنا شهر رمضان، شهر رمضان الذي يتصدر المبيعات المصحف الشريف وبعد ذلك تأتي كتب لها علاقة بالثقافة الإسلامية كل ماله علاقة بالحج العمرة فقه السيرة تاريخ إسلامي، هذه الأكثر مبيعا هنا عندنا في المكتبة

كريمة: ليس لديك مشكلة ان تشارك معي هذه الارقام يعني

أستاذ: نعم ليس لدي مشكلة لاحقا نشوف أن شاء الله

كريمة: أستاذ من أين تشتري الكتب للمكتبة

أستاذ: دار العزة والكرامة، هي عملها النشر والتوزيع والاستيراد، يوجد كتب نتعامل مع دور نشر جزائرية؛ ونتعامل مع دور نشر خارج الوطن ويوجد كتب تصدرها دار العزة والكرامة

كريمة: وهل تتعامل مباشرة مع الناشرين أم تشتري مباشرة من الموزعين؟

أستاذ: إذا كان الكتاب طبع من طرف دار العزة والكرامة اكيد سوف تتعامل مباشرة مع الكاتب، وإذا كان الكتاب موجود في دار نشر أخرى أكيد نحن سوف نتعامل مع دار نشر

كريمة: كيف تخزن الكتب في المكتبة؟

أستاذ: يعني قضية التخزين في المكتبة و الله يعني نحن في عدة مستويات ، في ما يخص الكتب الأكثر طلبا الكمية تكون أكبر متواجدة ويوجد متوسطة فما هو مخزن يكون كذلك ويوجد كتب الطلاب عليها قليل جدا فأكد نحن نحفظ بنسخة أو نسختين 3 و حتى 5 نسخ ، ربما يأتي من يطلبها و طبعا هذا يدخل في إطار اننا نريد قدر

المستطاع أن نوع من المستحيل، لا يمكن أن نعرض إلا الكتب المطلوبة هنا سنوسع، سنضيق واسعا بالتالي نريد أن تلبي كل الأذواق يوجد كتب مشهورة تعرض في التلفاز و الأنترنت أصحابها معروفين ويوجد كتب مغمورة لا يلتفت إليها إلا القليل حتى تلك الكتب نجتهد على أساس توفرها

كريمة: وكيف يمكنك تحديد مكان تنظيم الكتب في المكتبة؟

أستاذ: هو حاليا في مكتبة ابن باديس، الجناح الأوسع والذي يأخذ حصة الأسد هو جناح الطفل، جناح الطفل هو بحكم التنوع يعني، يوجد كتب الطفل يعني من سنة حتى 16 سنة وربما نمدد ربما حتى للثانوي، فترة عمرية مهمة جدا، المطالب متنوعة فالتالي مجال الطفل يكون هو الأوسع في المكتبة

كريمة: هل هو مجال علمي أكثر ما هو

أستاذ: كتب الطفل فيها معارف علمية، فيما يخص التربية، التعليم فيها ما يخص بعض المهن، الاختراعات، متنوعة

كريمة: ماذا عن الرواية بصفة عامة؟

أستاذ: والله إذا رحنا إلى الرواية، الرواية أسلفنا الذكر الإقبال عليها نوعا ما قليل، كما ذكرنا الأسباب متعددة، هذه السنة الفارطة لا حظنا أن الإقبال عليها كان نوعا ما مرتفع بالسنوات الفارطة؛ خاصة عند الطلاب الإجمالي والثانوي ربما هذا يرجع على أساس أن هناك كتب معينة أدخلت في البرنامج من أجل تلخيص الكتاب الخ

كريمة: كيف تروج للكتب؟

أستاذ: نحن المكتبة لها صفحة على الفيس بوك ودار العزة والكرامة لها cite d' Internet نعروض كل ما هو موجود في المكتبة، الصفحات الفيسبوك الموجودة على مستوى مكتبة ابن باديس يعني كل ما هو جديد نروح له في الصفحة

كريمة: فيما يخص الرواية؛ هل تنظم البيع بالتوقيع

أستاذ: البيع بالتوقيع لحد الان قمنا به مرتين، المرة الأولى مع ياسمينه خضرا، السنة الفارطة 4 أوت 2016 ومؤخرا مع احمد يجازي المخرج السينمائي ونعاود الكرة مع احمد بجاوي ربما أواخر سبتمبر بداية أكتوبر أن شاء الله

كريمة: كيف ترى أهمية هذا الحدث بالنسبة للمكتبة، للكاتب

أستاذ: يعني هو إذا أخذنا أي نشاط تجاري إلا وله خصوصية معينة؛ الخصوصية المتعلقة بالكتاب أو الأشياء التي تبقى لصيقة بالكتاب هي قضية أن المكتبة لا بد أن تبقى فضاء للنقاش فكري ، لعرض أفكار جديدة لعرض كتب جديدة ، من بين هذه النشاطات و من خلاصتا : الاختيار كان يتكلم بكل صراحة ؛ فكرة البيع بالتوقيع كانت موجودة ، صدفة زارنا ياسمينه خضرا عرضنا عليه البيع بالتوقيع وافق فأجرينا أول بيع بالتوقيع ، بالنسبة لأحمد بجاوي ، اتصلت بنا دار الشهاب ، هي دار التي تطبع الكتب فنحن وافقنا، ليس لدينا اعتراض ، أي إنسان له

إبداع فكري في أي مجال كان فهو مرحب به، طبعاً يوجد مجالات معينة من الناحية الأخلاقية والواجبات واحترام القانون لا نستطيع أن نفتح لهم الباب منها الأفكار التي تدعو إلى التطرف أو الأفكار التي تدعو إلى الميوعة ، هؤلاء لا نستطيع نتعرف على كتاب جدد، البيع بالتوقيع، البيع بالتوقيع هناك تجارب نحن أن شاء الله هذه السنة الأولى لكن في البرنامج المسطر، سوف يكون البيع بالتوقيع سيكون العدد أكبر و سوف لا يخص الكتاب المعروفين ، ممكن نفتح فرصة للكتاب الجزائريين الناشئين، سواء كان في مجال الرواية أو مجال التاريخ ، في مجالات متعددة ، طبعاً هذا يعطي مصداقية أكبر للمكتبة ، ثراء علمي وثقافي بالنسبة للمكتبة ، يجلب زوار أكبر للمكتبة و هو كله ربح ان شاء الله

كريمة: لماذا كان الاختيار باسمينة خضراء، هل لأنه ترعرع في مدينة وهران

كريمة: نرى بأن هذه الأفكار التي تميل للتطرف، المسمون بالمتطرفين عن المجتمع، وعن الأخلاق في العادة يكونون bestsellers ، تكون عندهم مقروئية ومبيعات كثيرة

استاذ: حتى و إن كانت عندهم مقروئية كبيرة و مبيعات كثيرة لكن نحن نلتزم مبدئياً ، المبدأ قبل قضية المال والشهرة ؛ فما فائدة المال يعني الإنسان من خلال المال يروج لأفكار تجعل المجتمع يختل هذه ليست من أخلاقيات المهنة و لا من مبادئ العزة و الكرامة نحن نفتح المجال لكل الأفكار التي حتى و لو كانت متضاربة في ما بينها ولكن في الأخير تزيد من تقارب الأفراد المجتمع وتزيد من ثراء الثقافي و العلمي والفكري داخل المجتمع وربما تفتح آفاق فكرية للمجتمع انا الأفكار التي سواء كانت تدعو إلى الميوعة ، يوجد كتاب يعني يكتبون في مجال الرواية و كلها كتب تدعو إلى الإباحية هذه كلها كتب لا تدخل المكتبة بتاتا ، الكتب التي تدعو إلى التطرف ، سواء كان ديني أو فكري ، لأن التطرف لا يخص المجال الديني يعني ، يوجد أيضا ربما متطرفين على سبيل المثال تقسيم الجزائر هذا بالطبع كتابه مرفوض ،

كريمة: يعني في رقابة عنز الكتب المتواجدة بالمكتبة

استاذ: أكيد، كل الرقابة موجودة يعني من طرف مؤسسات الدولة وكذلك حتى على مستوى دار العزة والكرامة، الكتاب الذين يمس الهوية الجزائرية لا يدخل المكتبة بتاتا

كريمة: ماهي الكتب التي ترى أو تريد أن تجعلها أكثر رواجاً في المجتمع أو المكتبة

استاذ: هو طبعاً اذا جاوبت عن السؤال هذا سوف اجاب عن ميولي الذاتي وسوف أدخل في الذاتية وهذا صعب أن نسير المكتبة بذاتية معينة، إذا سيرناها بذاتي معينة أكيد أن المكتبة سوف يكون فيها لون واحد ، وهذا لا يشجع ، نحن اعطيك مثالا : عندنا كمال داوود وعندنا بن سعادة ، بمعنى كمال داوود يكتب في اتجاه و بن سعادة ينتقده ، وانا ذاتيا لا أميل إلى كمال داوود وما يطرحه، عتابي عليه أنه في كتاباته يسب، طبعاً هذا ليس مانعا حتى يكون كتاب كمال داوود موجود ، يوجد كتاب آخرين لا أميل إلى توجههم الفكري لديهم و هذا لا يعني أن لا يمكن أن يستأنس بالقراءة لهم ، كما قلنا و نؤكد أن هذا الإنتاج يصب في الوحدة الوطنية والفكرية الخ

كريمة: ما الذي يجعل مكتبتني متميزة عن باقي المكتبات؟

أستاذ : نحن ربما يوجد الموقع الجغرافي ، كونها لصققة لمسجد القطب ، يجلب زوار حتى من خارج الوطن، المساحة هي الأكبر على مستوى الجزائر، المكان الذي نجلس فيه هذا فضاء الطفل ، هو التجربة الأولى على مستوى الوطن ، نحن حريصون جد الحرص على قضية الاستقبال ، الزبون يستقبل نحاول قدر الإمكان أن نساعد في الاختيار لأن زبائننا يعني يختلفون هناك من يأتي للعنوان محدد طبعاً نريده أين يوجد ، وهناك من يأتي ، طبعاً هو يريد عنده فكرة عن المجال ولكن الكتب التي لها علاقة بالمجال الذي يعرفه فحاول قدر الإمكان أن نريده سواء إلى الكتاب الكلاسيكي أو المعاصر

كريمة : ما هو أصعب شيء في تسيير المكتبة

استاذ : والله أصعب شيء نجد في المجموعة التي تقوم على المكتبة أصعب شيء أن نجد العامل الذي يهتم بالكتاب هذا شيء نوع ما صعب لأن المكتبة تختلف عن كل الأنشطة التجارية الأخرى ، مثلاً في سوق خضر أو مواد غذائية يعني، العامل يختلف عن الموجود في المكتبة ، العامل الموجود في المكتبة، من المعايير لابد أن يكون له اهتمام بالكتاب يحي الكتاب ، طبعاً هذا المحبة والفلول تجعله في وقت وجيز يعرف ما هو متوفر في المكتبة، هذا يساعد الزبون ، في بعض الأحيان إذا يكون عندك انت عامل لا يهتم ربما يكون الكتاب موجود ونحن نقول للزبون أن الكتاب غير موجود ، هذه من بين العقبات الكبيرة ، عندما يتوفر العنصر المهم بالكتاب و العنصر المبتسم العملية تبقى سهلة

كريمة : وما هو أسهل شيء لتسيير مكتبة؟

أستاذ : والله بالنسبة الذي يسهل العمل في المكتبة هو الفضاء واسع ، فالبتالي العملية تصعب ، قضية المكان الجغرافي بلعب دور ، كل مجال محدد بخلاف مكتبات أخرى ، نجدها في عمارات ، تلك عمارات قديمة ، هناك قضية الرطوبة تؤثر على الكتاب تؤثر أيضاً على الزبون عندما يدخل يشم الرائحة يؤدي إيجاز المدة التي يمكنها في المكتبة بخلاف المكتبة هنا يأتيون هنا ، فضاء الطفل الموجود هنا بالمكتبة ، عندما يأتيون الأولياء مع أطفالهم ، يدخلون هنا للمطالعة و الأولياء يتجول في المكتبة ، لأن الإنسان لما يزور المكتبة ، يأخذ وقت على الأقل ساعة او ربع ساعة يبحث ، يتصفح الخ من بين الأمور التي نجعلها حقاً معنوياً بالنسبة للزبون هو أنه يقرأ الكتاب ؛ يعني لما نذهب إلى محل مواد غذائية لا نستطيع أن نتذوق، الذي يأتي للمكتبة عنده هذا الحق المعنوي ، أنه يستطيع أن يقرأ في المكتبة و يتصفح ويخرج من دون أن يدفع أو يشتري و لا أحد يكلمه بالعكس نحن نشجع على ذلك

كريمة : نرجع إلى نقطة الاستيراد، الاستيراد طغى على الإنتاج المحلي

استاذ : أكيد هو بالنسبة من بين المطالب كل من يشتغل في مجال الكتاب يعني من الضروري أن يكون دعم للكتاب ، يعني لا نستطيع أن نرفع من مستوى المقرئية لدي أفراد المجتمع بدون دعم الكتاب، من مطالب الأخرى في قضية التربية و التعليم نحن بلدنا أن الوزارة تهتم بقضية غرس محبة المطالعة و الكتاب لدى الأطفال الناشئين، كانت لدينا تجربة ، في إحدى الجمعيات فتحوا المجال لأطفال صغار في سنة أولى و سنة ثانية ابتدائي وجعلوا هؤلاء الأطفال يتنافسون على المطالعة الآن هؤلاء الأطفال تقريبا معظمهم الآن سنة أولى ثانوي و سنة

ثانية متوسط ، طبعاً هؤلاء عندنا تواصل مع عائلاتهم ، يعني لا يفارقهم الكتاب ، بعملية بسيطة ، من الصغر من يقرأ عدد أكبر من القصص جعلهم يتنافسون، وجعل الكتاب أنيس لهم ، الدراسات الحديثة بينت كل ما كان الاهتمام بالكتاب في سن مبكر، كلما كان الاهتمام بكل ما هو انترنت وفايس بوك، واتس اب الخ أقل ، الطفل تلقائياً يتصفح الكتاب و نفتح أمامه الانترنت، تلقائياً لا يهتم به ، لأن قضية ، أنه موضوع فلسفي ، اللغة و التفكير ، اكيد كل ما كان الرصيد اللغوي قوي كلما كان التفكير قوي ، كل من استطاع الإنسان أن يعبر عن ما بداخله، بعض الأحيان ، ترين أن واحد في المجتمع لا يعرف أن يعبر ، أو لا يستطيع أن يعبر، يلوي يديه ، يعبر بالإشارة لغياب المفردات ، اكيد في اللغة العربية توجد كلمات التي تعبر و ترمز إلى ذلك الشيء ، فالبنتالي كل ما زاد الرصيد اللغوي كل ما زاد التفكير كل ما استطاع الإنسان أن يعبر عن ما في داخله ، كل ما استطعنا يعني كمجتمع أن نعرف الطاقات الموجودة في المجتمع ، كم من أناس نودعهم يومياً يرمى عليهم التراب وندفهم مع مواهبهم ، ندفن الكاتب و الرسام ، الموسيقي وربما المخترع ؛ لماذا لأننا كمجتمع لم نستطع أن نوفر المجال هذا ، مجال يعني هذا مثل مسابقات فكل سوءاً في شعر او في كتابة القصة يعني ترين نماذج ، نحن ليس لدينا ، سوف ابعث لك لاحقاً ، كانت هناك جمعية أقاموا نشاط ، أسموه نحن نقرأ على غرار المسابقة التي قامت بها الإمارات العربية المتحدة، تحدي القراءة ، من هؤلاء الأطفال يعني اختيرت مجموعة من نحن نقرأ ومن بين الشرطة الأساسي كان قراءة 50 كتاباً و يلخصه، دارت اللجنة من خلال الأساتذة وصاروا المسابقة و أقمنا الحفل هنا في شهر رمضان ، طبعاً الأطفال سألتهم الأستاذة ، كانوا جليسا هناك و تسألهم ، يعني كيف إهتمتم بالكتاب ، يتكلمون بكل طلاقة، يعبرون عن أفكار يعني لا نجدها عند الكبار ، هو عندما نراه لأول وهلة نقول أنهم موهوبين ولكن هو شيء بسيط ، مثابرة على الكتاب فقط ، ليس قضية موهبة ، اكيد عنده ميول ولكن كثير من الناس يعني الذين نصادفهم سوءاً في العائلة أو في محيط العمل أو في المجتمع بصفة عامة في الحافلة ، في الحافلة عندما نتصفح الوجوه نقولين اكيد ، كل وجه وله إبداع معين وميول معين ولكن الفرص حتى بيدع الإنسان لا يوجد ، هنا من قبل يعني في المسجد كانت هناك فرقة الأناشيد، لأول مرة ، كان هناك شخص لديه صوت رائع ، دربهم خلال شهر رمضان ، يوم الحفل تقشع الأديان لجمال صوتهم و تعرف الدموع ، سبحان الله تقول هذا لولا تلك الفرصة لما عرفناه وربما يجي وقت هو اصلاً ينسى ، تروح الموهبة هديك، يا إما تنجح يا أما تنتهي ، تروح بحكم متطلبات الحياة ، السيد سوف يخدم يتزوج تكون له مسؤوليات ، لكن المواهب تكتشف في الصغر وتنمى عبر الزمن و الفرص، طبعاً هذا محورين أساسيات الدعم و عملية التلقين داخل المؤسسة التربوية ، شيء مهم والوزارة لها من الإمكانيات ما تجعل من كل قسم مرتين في الأسبوع قاعة للمطالعة و التنافس ، و المناقشة ما قرأت، نرى مثلاً طفل لم يبلغ السنتين ، لما تعطيه كتاب ، ترين سلوك الذي يقوم به كل طفل، يتصفح ، من علمه هذا ، الفطرة التي فطر الناس عليها حب المعرفة و الفضول ، يمكن لك أن تميزي إن وضعنا طفل ذو 8 شهور او اكثر ، ترين كيف سوف يبحث في هذه الكتب و الأشياء مثل الكبير، طبعاً هذا فضول ، طبعاً نحن نأتمنوا ككبار كمؤسسات لا بد أن نوفر الجو الملائم

كريمة: وماذا عن الرواية! ما هو الأكثر رواجاً الرواية المكتوبة بالعربية ام الفرنسية؟

أستاذ: والله، هنا كذلك يجب التكلم بكل موضوعية، الكتب التي تخرج من هذه المكتبة أكثرها بالفرنسية، يوجد فيها الجزائري ويوجد فيها الغربي

كريمة: مقارنة الجزائري بالغربي؟

أستاذ: الغربي يخرج أكثر من الجزائري، وربما لا أعرف، الإنسان، كتليل مبدئي؛ لأن الفئة في المجتمع الجزائري المفرنسة ربما القدرة الشرائية لها أكبر من الفئة الأخرى، هذه حقيقة، هذه من الأسباب في قضية الاقتناء، الفئة هذه تهتم بالكتاب من الخارج لأنه ممكن عن طريق القنوات التلفزيونية، عن طريق كل ما يتداول في الإعلام هي أكثر التصاقا بما وراء البحار من المحلية، ربما هيا تشوف انه في المحلى انه لا يلبي طموحاتها الفكرية أو والتطلع دائما إلى هناك و إذا رجعنا إلى الرواية المكتوبة باللغة العربية،، الإقبال ضعيف و من بين الأسباب هي القدرة الشرائية الضعيفة، فنحن عندما يغيب الدعم ينقسم المجتمع، عندما يأتي الدعم يجعل الناس سواسية في المرحلة هذه عندما يكون الدعم نستطيع أن نحكم فئات المجتمع المختلفة بموضوعية، أما في غياب هذا، لا نستطيع أن نقول أن المعرب لا يقرأ، لأنه هناك من يجازي و يصدر هذا الحكم، أن المعرب لا يقرأ، المفرنسة هو من يقرأ أكثر منه، لأن ذاك مثقف وذاك ليس بمثقف، أنا أظن، أنا رأي الشخصي، إذا رحنا في هذا المسار هذا مسار خطأ، أوفر نفس الفرص و من بعد نقوم بدراسة ومقيم الحكم، اكيد في غياب تكافؤ الفرص لا نقدر أن، لأنه يوجد حقيقة أخرى أنه حتى مستوى الشباب، الذي لسانه فرنسي أكثر اهتمام بالكتاب من الذي لسانه عربي، طبعا عندما نبحث عنه نجده درس في المدارس الخاصة الآن نقدر أن نقول يعني أن الحجم الساعي للغة الفرنسية ربما يتساوى مع العربية أو يفوق، وهذا من بين الاختلالات الموجودة و التي تترك من بعد الفئات تختلف من حيث النسب المقروئية، الاختلالات الموجودة في التربية و التعليم كذلك تأثر على الآن الفرص غير متكافئة على أساس أن الآن الذي يدرس و ينجح إما أن أولياء عندهم الأموال أو عندهم مستوى علمي يساعدي أو عندهم أموال تصرف عليه لدراسه، أنا الفئة الأخرى الذي أبويه غير متعلمين و المال محدود اكيد لو تجرى دراسات في هذا الجانب علم الاجتماع نستطيع أن نجد حقائق في المجتمع نوعا ما مرة، يهמש لأنه لو نرى أن الدراسات التي تخص التسرب المدرسي يخص اي فئة، اكيد انه سيخص الفئة هذه، التي تكلمنا عليها، الفئة التي متوسطة الدخل الفئة التي أولياءهم ليسوا متعلمين، الذي والديه متعلمين سوف يفعل كل ما بوسعه لكي يدرس ابنه أو ابنته، يدفع له الدروس الخصوصية، المهم لا يتسرب من المدرسة في سن 16 سنة، يواصل دراسته، أما الفئة التي طفلهم يخرج مباشرة من المدرسة نسبة كبيرة من هذه الفئة التي تقدرين تقولين المعوزة والمحرومة.

كريمة: يعني، في اتجاهات الجامعة يعني هناك أولياء هم من يدفعون أبناءهم لمتابعة دراستهم في الجامعة **أستاذ:** نعم؛ هو التفكير أصبح بحكم عوامل متعددة أصبح تفكير مادي بالدرجة الأولى، منصب شغل مرتبط بشهادة إذن الشهادة لا بد أن نتحمل عليها مهما كانت الظروف حتى يوجد دراسات بينت أن قضية عملية الغش هي عملية أسرة، الأسرة كلها تداخل و تشجع الولد كيف يغش لماذا لكي يصل إلى الجامعة لكي يكون عنده مستقبل، يوجد دراسات أخرى بينت أن مشروع الحرقه هذا هو مشروع أسري، تجدين الأم تبيع كل الحلي التي تملكها لكي تساعد ابنها على أن يعبر حدود البحر المتوسط، تقول لك لكي اسلكه، هذا تعبير المجتمع (باش

نسلكه)، باش بيدير situation طبعاً حقائق مرة ، طبعاً هنا نروح قضية مؤخرًا في البكالوريا ، عندما ترين ماذا يوجد في الداخل خارج الكواليس ، ينهض الطالب، أكرمك الله يذهب إلى بيت الخلاء ، الأستاذ يرافقه ، هو هنا ويوجد طالب آخر في الجانب الآخر ، يدقق عليه ويسأله ، هل أنت ادبي ام علمي ، يشرعون في التصحيح ، في بيت الخلاء يوجد الإجابات ، التاريخ التربوية الإسلامية ملقعة في الحائط ، التلاميذ لما يرجع للقسم عادة لا يتعرفون ، لأن نسبة قليلة أن التلميذ يلتقي بصديقه في نفس القسم ولكن الملاحظ أن يوجد تضامن بينهم و هم ارقام فقط لا يعرفون بعضهم البعض ، ارقام فقط ولكن تضامن كبير يجمعهم هدف واحد هو نيل شهادة البكالوريا بأي طريقة كانت ، واحد يقول لهم انا واعي بأني لم أعمل جيداً ولكن سوف اساعدكم، يبحثون عن أساتذة أكثر صرامة ، يقول له استاذ أريدك أن ترافقتي، عندما يخرج ذلك الاستاذ الجو نوع ما يخلو للطالب هنا يعني من بين التحاليل المختص يقول ان هناك فجوة كبيرة بين الفرد و المؤسسة ، المؤسسة إذا أخذنا مجال التربية و التعليم ، أن المؤسسة التربوية لا تحتويه، عندما يأتي الطفل تصبح المؤسسة التربوية للمدرسة نوعاً ما هي عدو له ، هي مرادف ممكن للإهانة، للوجبات الكثيرة ، مرادف للتعب، كثير من الأحيان لما نقول للطفل أن المعلمة لم تأتي يفرح فرحاً شديداً وربما يقول لوالديه لكي لا يحضر الدرس يقول لهم المعلمة مرضت ، طبعاً نحن هنا نتساءل ، لماذا لأن الجو غير مهين لاستقبال أبناءنا داخل المدارس ، طبعاً هذا الكلام انا اتحمل مسؤوليته، الطفل لما يأتي نقول له انت لديك ميول معين نحن سوف نغيره ، لأن البرامج الموجودة يعني لا تتلأم مع ثقافة المجتمع ، مع مبادئ المجتمع مع الدين السائد داخل المجتمع بتاتاً فبالتالي يبقى الإنسان دائماً في غياب ، لأن هذه المؤسسة تريد أن تغير لي ديني أن تحارب لغتي ، هذا موجود ، ينفر من المدرسة ، من الأساس أن المدرسة هي مؤسسة من مؤسسات التنشئة الاجتماعية فبالتالي لابد أن تحتوي هذا الطفل ، كيف تحتوي هذا الطفل أن تعترف به جزائري مسلم لسانه عربي له تاريخ ممتد هذه المبادئ لكن هو لما يشعر أن هويته منتقصة، خلاص ينفر وذلك النفور سوف تكون له انعكاسات أخرى فيما بعد ، العنف في المدارس ، العنف ضد الأساتذة ، يعني نفور حتى في الجانب المعرفي ، أقرأ ذلك الكتاب لا أقرأ ، يقرأه فقط إن كان مضطراً، نحن نلاحظ رسالة هؤلاء الذين يخرجون بشهادة ماستر ربما إذا قرأ كتاب ولا كتابين في التخصص راه مليح. يوجد في الجامعة مثلاً بعدين ؛ الفئة الأولى الذين يأتون إلى الجامعة وغير مؤهلين تماماً ، هذه الفئة تبحث عن النقاط و تحصيل السنة و يوجد فئة قليلة متحمسة للدراسة، هذه الفئة القليلة خاصة في العلوم الانسانية و الاجتماعية ستواجه عقبات أخرى في قضية كيف تفكر، يأتي هو لكي يختار موضوع ، يأتي الأستاذ يوجهه توجيه معين ، في قضية المنهجية على أساس المنهجية على أساس هي طريقة التفكير، الأستاذ يتدخل يقول لا خذ هذا المسار و لابد من هذا المسار ، فبالتالي هنا الإبداع اندثر سوأاً عند الذي عنده ميول أو ليس الذي عنده ميول ، الإنتاج داخل المجتمع يتوقف لا يوجد أفكار داخل المجتمع لا يوجد إبداعات داخل المجتمع ، تجديدها في حلقات و لا يسلط عليها الضوء، أفكار هكذا تصعد وتسقط حتى تموت . الجامعة هي مكان للإنتاج الفكري و العلمي لا يوجد فيها مجموعة من الناس التي تريد أن تفرض، كان هناك مؤخرًا طالبتين، من سعيدة موضوع دكتوراه يتمحور حول الحجاب، و كان مشروعها الأسبق على الحجاب ، دراسة بينت أن الحجاب، ربما ما نقوله الآن خارج موضوع بحثك لكن نحن نتكلم بصفة عامة ، الإنسان و علاقته بالمعرفة و الإبداع اكيد و له علاقة بالمكتبة و ما يروج في المكتبة ، فهي بينت في الدراسة أن الحجاب هو اختيار شخصي بالنسبة له 85 % للعين المختارة طبعاً يوجد أساتذة يرفضون

هذه النتائج على أساس يريدون أن يبين العكس أن الحجاب هو مفروض من طرف الأسرة من طرف الأخ من طرف الأب ، إذا كانت الدراسة اي دراسة علمية بينت نتائج معينة خلاص علينا أن نحترم تلك النتائج مهما كانت مرارته تلاشت أو لم تتماشى مع توجهنا الفكري يعني الأيديولوجي هذا الشيء آخر

كريمة: أستاذ يعني مقارنة بالأدب الحالي والقديم

استاذ : الإقبال على الأدب يخص الأدباء المعروفين في الجزائر عندما نقول معروفين ربما مخضرمين ربما جيل قبيل أو بعد الاستقلال هم من كبار السن الفئة التي لم تجد ضالتها هي الفئة الناشئة ، يعني الكتاب الناشئين ، قليل من دور النشر التي تشجع هؤلاء ، حتى وزارة الثقافة أرى في بعض الأحيان تجارب معينة لكتاب جدد غير معروفين على الساحة ولكن هذا يبقى نوعا ما مجهود متواضع ، من المفروض تفتح الأبواب لهؤلاء المجال لأن هذا الكاتب المعروف في وقت معين لم يكن معروف أتاحت له الفرصة أن يجلس في قاعة من القاعات أو يحضر برنامج من أحد برامج تليفزيوني، خلاص أعطوا له الفرصة ، يعني من المفروض أن تمنح الفرصة للكتاب الناشئين سواء في مجال الرواية القصة أو حتى الشعر لعرض أفكارهم على الجمهور على القراء، القارئ في الخير هو الذي يحكم ، ليس المؤسسة هي التي تحكم، فبتالي قضية الندوات البيع بالتوقيع المساعدة على الطبع ، هذه كلها تدخل في إطار التكافؤ الفرص

كريمة: نرى بأن الجزائر خصصت بعض الجوائز الأدبية لهؤلاء الكتاب الناشئين

استاذ: صح، ولكن يبقى دائما جهد مت أضع المفروض أن يزيد، يدعم أكثر حتى نمنح فرصة أكثر في المشاركة في التظاهرات التي يجب أن تتعدد خلال السنة وتتنوع لأن يبدو لي وأنا متأكد من أن الطاقات الموجودة في المجتمع طاقات كبيرة انا ارى بانه لدينا رصيد قوي سواء في مجال الرواية أو حتى في مجال العلمي أو تخصصات الأخرى يوجد ولكن ربما المتواضع ربما الأليات هذه لإبراز تلك الطاقات يبقى جهد متواضع

كريمة: نعم أستاذ، آخر سؤال يعني إذا كنت تنوي دعوة كاتب للمكتبة من سيكون

استاذ: في اختيار الكاتب، نرجع إلى ما تطرقنا إليه في البداية؛ أي يكون ذو مبادئ الوطنية وجزائرية؛ يعني نحن كعرب ومسلمين وجزائريين، إذا كان في هذا الإطار فهو مرحب به، تبقى في قضية الاختيار تبقى في توفر إمكانيات الوصول إلى الكاتب و فقط، ليس هناك أي مفاضلة، الكاتب حينما يكون في هذا الإطار، في هذا الحيز فهو مرحب به

كريمة: آخر سؤال استاذ يعني هل يمكن أن نأخذ صور للمكتبة لموقع الروايات

استاذ: طبعاً، يعني منذ البداية يمكن أنك لاحظت منذ البداية كان فيه انفتاح لم نعرض على أي شيء، لا ضد التسجيل ولا شيء آخر، هذا يدخل في إطار يعني نريد كذلك تشجيع البحث العلمي من بين رسائل المكتبة أن تشجع البحث العلمي؛ كما ترين أن الثراء العلمي الموجود في المكتبة هو نتاجه بحث علمي، في الأخير يعني، إذا المكتبة وانغلقت على نفسها وجعلت بينها وبين المجال العلمي والبحث العلمي حاجز اكيد. إنها لم تفهم الرسالة

كريمة: يعني حتى فكرة إنشاء فضاء للطفل يعني يبقى وفيا للمكتبة ويبقى زبون و صديق للمكتبة، شكرا جزيلاً

Date of publication	Title	Publisher and place	Re-publication	Genre	Sales figures (where known)	Other adaptations	Translations	Goodreads Rating	Key themes
Kamel Daoud									
1980-1988	Journalist during the October riots in Detective newspaper								
1994	Journalist in the highly read Algerian Francophone newspaper <i>Quotidien d'Oran</i> Daoud was also engaged with some political movements against the political situation in the country among them <i>Bazzef</i> , [Enough] with other journalists and writers such as Adlène Meddi, Mustapha Benfodil and Chawki Amari.								
2003	<i>La Fable du nain</i>	Dar el Gharb-Algeria							
2004	<i>O Pharaon</i>	Dar el Gharb-Algeria							
2008	<i>La Préface du Nègre</i>	Barzakh Algeria	Sabine Wespieser-France	Novella					
Awarded the Algerian Mohammed Dib literary award									

2011	<i>Je rêve d'être Tunisien</i> 2010- 2016	Cérès Edition; Tunisia		Collections of essays				1 rating & 1 review	The Tunisian revolution The Arab spring
2013	<i>Meursault, Contre-Enquête</i>	Brazakh Algeria		Novel-fiction					Religion; Islam Women Language Politics and Franco- Algeria relations
Winner of the Prix de littérature François Maurice									
Awarded the Prix des cinq continents de la Francophonie									

2014	<i>Meursault, Contre-Enquête</i>		Actes Sud-France	Novel- fiction	100,000 copies	Theatre de Vidy by Nicolas Stenmann	Yes, English, Spanish, Arabic, Dutch, and 30 other languages	5,099 ratings & 841 reviews	55 editions	Religion Women Language Politics Franco-Algeria relations
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 24 February, opened his Twitter account + May, before the release of his novel by the French publisher Actes Sud, Daoud was invited to the Berber Television channel, based in Paris, to speak on the Awal program. Talked about his childhood, language, reading, French literature, eroticism, Islamists, October Riots and the Berber Spring, suspicious about Algerian history towards Messali Hadj and Houari Boumediene, his journalistic writings, theory of the Algerian people + 11 May. Invited to <i>MOE program, TV5 Monde, France</i>. Talked about identity crises, his novel and the legislative elections of 2014, the Algerian and French media + 27 May. Invited to France Culture Radio in cooperation with Tansfuge magazine. Algerian scholars according to Kamel Daoud consider the figure of Albert Camus as a taboo in Algeria. Talked about the philosophy of religion, women and sexuality, the identity question, reception of the novel in Algeria as well as the question of language 									
17 October, Lauréat du Prix Escales littéraires d'Alger										

27 October, Lauréat du prix Omar Ourtilane (El Khabar) pour la liberté de la presse



- ✚ 26 October. Invited to the Algerian Arabic speaking channel, *El Djazairia 3*. Fully aware about the debate surrounding the French writer Albert Camus, Daoud played the role of the analyst of the Algerian character, the language issue, demonstrating full awareness that the topics he is writing about are not welcomed by some, as well as being aware that there is no way to make success at home
- ✚ 30 October. Invited to the *SILA* (International Algerian Book Fair, Barzakh stand)
- ✚ 4 November. Invited to *France Inter, Boomerang program* (30 min), France. Talked about the anniversary of the Algerian Revolution; suspicious about Algerian history, religion and the Arab world, language, writing as crime, Arabism, and identity
- ✚ 13 November. Invited to the La libraire du Tiers Monde, central Algiers, to promote his work
- ✚ 22 November Invited to Oran, Algeria for the promotion of his novel
- ✚ 29 November, Invited to *France Culture, Repliques programme*. Talked about Albert Camus and his absence from the Algerian curriculum. Reading Albert Camus secretly. French colonialism in Algeria, and suspicious about Algerian history.
- ✚ 13 December, Invited by Laurent Ruquier, *Matin Radio France*. Talked about Albert Camus and Algeria
- ✚ 13 December, *Invited to France2 (On n'est pas couché)* made some explicit and provocative declarations about religion and language in Algeria

16 December, Daoud Tweeted the following 'fatwa pour me tuer émise par le mouvement salafiste Algérien , signé par le Abde El Fettah Hamdache [...]’, reTweeted by 158 persons and 47 comments

- ✚ 20 December. Invited to the Algerian TV channel, KBC el Khabar. Responded to Abdel Fattah Hamadache’s accusations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 22 December. Invited to the Algerian TV channel, Echourouk, Algeria. Defended and emphasised his ideas on the Algerian identity, language and Islamists
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 2 January. Invited to <i>Hors Champs</i>, a French radio program. Talked about his childhood memories, his relationship with his father, the choice of writing in French, reading French literature, transgression, women's bodies, eroticism. Revolution and the Algerian history, liberty, religion, Albert Camus. Debate about Arabism and identity. Fatwa, freedom of expression, Francophones vs Arabophones ✚ 4 February, invited to Librairie Ombres Blanches, Toulouse, France for the promotion of his novel ✚ 5 February, invited to Kleber library, Strasbourg, Germany ✚ February, invited to 21st of Maghreb des livres [Book fair], Paris, France for the promotion of his novel ✚ 13 February, Invited to La France au 21^{ème} SIEL (Salon International de l'édition et du Livre) in Morocco. Themes of writing, reception of the novel within and beyond Algeria ✚ 6 May Invited to <i>France24</i> in Arabic language. Talked about the history of Algeria ✚ 22 May, Invited to Bucharest by The French institution in cooperation with the French Embassy in Romania. Talked about Albert Camus, freedom of expression, religion, language, and the Algerian past ✚ 30 May Daoud's first article appears in <i>New York Times</i> ✚ 17 June, invited to Phap.fr. Organized by the Institut français, Vietnam. Gave a public talk and then went to meet students and academics at the University of Hanoi. Talked about Algerian history and suspicious about it (before 1945), the debate about the language and the reception of Albert Camus in Algeria, compared Algerians with Vietnamese; how women are treated, their freedom and safety

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 5 November, Invited to the Festival Albertine, United States of America. Daoud declared that his novel is about human conditions; Algeria, freedom of expression and religion, Algerian history and suspicions about it, the past, the Arab world and history, religion and what does mean to be an Algerian these days and the question of women ✚ 9 November, invited to the Yale University Department of French, in collaboration with the Council of European Studies and Council for the Middle East Studies, United States of America. Talked about his novel, and its reception within Algerian and beyond as well as about Albert Camus ✚ 10 November. Invited to Harvard University ✚ 12 November. Invited to Columbia Maison Française. Talked about Albert Camus as a debatable figure, language, religion, identity, ✚ 17 November. Invited to the Department of French Studies at Brown University. ✚ 4 December. Invited by Orient XXI to The International Francophone Book Fair in Beirut, Lebanon. <p style="background-color: #fff9c4;">Awarded the Prix Jean-Luc Lagardere du Journaliste, with 10,000 Euros</p> <p style="background-color: #fff9c4;">Awarded the Prix Goncourt du premier roman</p>
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 31 January, Daoud published an article for the French Newspaper <i>Le Monde</i> about the New Years Eve incident in Germany 2015 entitled ‘Cologne, lieu de fantasmes’, targeting refugees, making provocative declarations about Muslims, sexism, and women’s situation in the Arab world ✚ 12 March, Invited to Literaturhaus Frankfurt, organized by German French Society Frankfurt in collaboration with the Frankfurt Journal at Schone Aussicht. This event was cancelled because Daoud had a car accident

	 13th of March. Invited to Lit.Cologne International Literature festival in Cologne, Germany. Talked about the situation of women in the Arab world, women freedom through Skype video call								
	<i>Mes Independances</i>	Barzakh; Algeria	Actes Sud France	Selected essays			Yes, Spanish German, Swedish	22 ratings 7 editions	Journalistic writings; his previously published essays and articles
2017	<i>Zabor ou les Psaumes</i>	Barzakh, Algeria	Actes Sud, France	Fiction; autobiography			Yes, English	115 ratings & 18 reviews 10 editions	Questions the act and Freedom of writing, criticism of those who criticised him
	 18 ^t -19 February. Invited to 23ème Maghreb des Livres, Paris, together with other Algerian Francophone authors such as Maissa Bey, Akram el Kébir, Sarah Haidar, Koudache Lynda, Adlene Meddi, Bachir Mefti, Djamel Mati, Mekhali Amina, Sari Mohamed, Nedjib Stambouli, Kaouther Adimi, and Amine Zaoui.								

- ✚ 20 February. Invited to radio show *Matinal d'Europe 1*, France. Talked about Franco-Algerian relations
- ✚ 20 February. Invited to *TV5 Monde, Invité program*, France. Talked about the history of Algeria, and colonialism, the refugee incident in Germany 2015, women, sexuality in the Arab world, religion, civil violence, the political tensions; Saudi Arabia and Daech, Islamism, freedom of expression,
- ✚ 21 February. Invited to *Arte channel, 28' engagement program*, France. Talked about his security, life and death, Islamism, French language, women's bodies and their situation in the Arab world. Daoud was asked why he did not write the article about the refugee in Arabic. Talked about the Algerian *harraga*, about his fascination with the parrot in Robinson Crusoe's novel. Algerian history and the crimes committed by the French coloniser in Algeria and Macron's denouncement and confession of the crimes committed by the French, the debates about the written history of Algeria and France, its inclusion and exclusion from schools in France. Daoud was asked about the teaching of Algerian history in Algerian schools. Accompanied by a short video mocking on the declaration of the former prime minister of Algeria Ahmed Ouyahia.
- ✚ 31 March. Invited to the French channel *Entrée libre*, to comment on Algerian society, women, Islamists and religion and the Arab world problems
- ✚ 31 March. Invited to the Tunisian channel, *Leaders Tunisie*. Talked about the importance of literature and art, freedom of expression, as well as about Albert Camus
- ✚ 10 May. Invited to *Drôle d'Endroit pour une rencontre*, France. Talked about the history of Algeria
- ✚ 27 May. Invited to *Festival Oh Les Beaux Jours*, France.

- ✚ 5 June. Welcomed by the mayor, Claude Renoult, for the event of Etonnants Voyageurs, St Malo. Was praised for his courage and determination, talked about how to deal with the Other. Played the role of the mediator
 - ✚ 5 June. Invited to Saint-Malo Etonnants Voyageurs. Talked about language, Islam and Islamists, Algeria, and Politics, Donald Trump, refugees and the article he wrote in 2016, freedom of expression and the fatwa issued against him, journalism in Algeria and the place of journalists
 - ✚ 24 August. Invited to *Tiddukla Tadelsant TliΣinin*, in the Kabyle region. Talked about the place of intellectuals in Algeria, the necessity of publishing his works firstly in Algeria. Talked about *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, semi-autobiography, the love of the literature, books and French literature, freedom, importance of writing and reading, intimacy. Daoud was asked about the Tamazight identity, freedom of expression in Algeria, Arabism discourse, questions about the previous generation of Algerian writers, singularity and its relation to religion, 2001 Kabyle uprising, absence of Algerian authors from the Algerian educational system, the question of the Other, the article he wrote about the refugees in 2015, women and violence, Islamists and Salafists
- 31 August, Awarded le Prix du Magazine Transfuge de la rentrée littéraire
- ✚ 7 September. Invited to *La Grande Librairie program* at the French television channel France5 together with the Moroccan Francophone writer Leila Slimani with whom he shares similar ideas, particularly about the statue of women in the Maghreb region in addition to other themes such as women freedom's to sexuality and desire
 - ✚ 9 September. Invited to *Le Livre sur la Place*, talked about literature, fiction, and reception of his literary works
 - ✚ 11 September. Invited to *Or Norme* magazine event in Strasbourg, at *Ideals library*. Talked about writing being knotted to his own story, and experiences, books, reading and culture, sexuality, eroticism, and French literature and language

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ 23 September. Invited to the French television program <i>C'hebdo</i> at the France5 channel together with Michel Onfray. Talked about politics, the Algerian educational system, the role of women, the Islamists, writing, the place of Islam, the West vs the Orient, modernity, democracy, feminism. <li>✚ 24 September. Invited to <i>L'entertien d'Audrey</i>, France. Talked about the civil war in Algeria, religion, women's freedom, Islamists, language, being the child of the independence, freedom of expression in Algeria knotted to the Arab world, the regime feeding the Islamists, fatwa and the situation of justice and laws in Algeria, the article he wrote about refugees. Shed light on his new publication <i>Zabor ou les Psaumes</i>, with focus on writing, women's respect is urgent, burka, the veil, the West and the Orient, was asked about Franco-Algerian relations and history, was asked his opinion on the declaration of Macron regarding colonial crimes committed in Algeria. Was asked about his future vision of Islamists. <li>✚ 25 September. Invited to <i>France24</i>. Talked about importance of writing, reading, his latest novel knotted to language and French literature as well as to eroticism, desire and sexuality, the debate around the language in Algeria and identity, in addition to the role of women's bodies. <li>✚ 13 October. Invited to the Frankfurt Book Fair, Germany. <li>✚ Invited to 1st salon international de la Rentrée Littérature, at les Grands Salons de d'Hôtel de Ville, France. <li>✚ 7 November. Invited to 20th Rendez-vous de l'histoire de Blois, France. Talked about language and history. 								
2018	<i>La Peintre dévorant la femme</i>	Stock. France	Barzakh; Algeria	Fiction			Yes, Taiwanese	24 ratings & 7 editions	Women Sexuality Desire

									Painting
✚	14 February, invited to Alili Bookshop in Tlemcen, Algeria by the Institut français for the promotion of his recent novel <i>La Peintre dévorant la femme</i>								
✚	17 February. Invited to Morocco by the Institut français together with the Moroccan novelist Leila Slimani								
✚	18 February. Invited to International Book Fair and Edition in Morocco								
✚	6 March. Invited by Österreichischer Intergrationsfonds in collaboration with the Institut français in Vienna, Austria. Talked about the absence of Albert Camus from the Algerian curriculum and educational system, debate and controversies about him in Algeria, women, the West and the Orient, refugees. He was asked about Tariq Ramadan, Islamists, and about the difference between the French and the Algerian editions of his novel								
✚	11 March. Invited to Moroccan 2M TV, in French. Talked about freedom of expression, language, human condition								
✚	12 April. Invited to the 34 th Tunisian International Book Fair, welcomed by the former president of Tunisia Beji Caid Essebsi								
✚	4 May. Invited by the Institut français in Sweden, at Malmo Stadsbibliotek library. Talked about the idea of writing the novel and its reception, the question of writing, Albert Camus. Talked about the Islamists in Algeria and in the Arab world and their relation to intellectuals. The fatwa, exile, sexuality and women in the Arab world, as well as eroticism in French literature								
✚	5 May. Invited to the Internationelle Forfattarscen at Stadsbibloteket, Goteborg, Sweden. Talked about importance of writing, books, literature, and freedom, truth and reading, differences between fiction and reality, the question and the debate around the language in the Maghreb, suspicions about Algerian history, past and present, debate around Albert Camus and the question of the other								

✚ 7 May. Invited by the Institut français in Denmark, at Det Kgl Bibliotek. Talked about Albert Camus, the novel and its reception in Algeria, women's situation in the Arab world, fiction, the French language, eroticism, and emptiness of the Arabic language in his imaginary. Reading, writing, and the importance of literature in our life, particularly against totalitarian regimes. Freedom of expression, Islamists annoyed by fiction because it challenges their discourse, was asked about his relation to the French president Macron, further added his relation to the Tunisian president because they share the same view on the liberation of women, his admiration towards Albert Camus, the absence of Camus from Algerian's institutions. Talked about religion, asked about his opinion on Islam, Islamists and radicalism; stated that Islamism is a politicised project, a project of domination. Was asked about the article he wrote about the refugees in 2015, migration and sexuality.

✚ 8th and 9th of May, Invited to the French Institution in Oslo, Norway. Talked about women in the Arab and the Muslim world

29 June, Awarded Grand Prix de la Francophonie ; Medaille de vermeil de la ville de Paris by Académie Française

- + 23 July, invited to *France Culture, Les Masterclasses* Radio program.
 - + 17 September, invited for a dinner with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Algeria
 - + 7 October, invited together with the poet Salwa Al Neimi, Nadia El Bouga and Tareq Oubrou by *Le Monde* newspaper, France. Talked about women's condition in the Arab and Muslim world
 - + 9 October, invited to Strasbourg to present his work, *Le Peintre dévorant la femme*
 - + 1 November, invited to the Algerian TV channel, *El Djazairia One, Mazel el Hal* program.
 - + 8 November, invited to *Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse, France*. Talked about the impact of religious extremism in Algeria and Algerian identity
 - + 1 November, invited to Theatre Vidy-Lausanne, organized by Payot library in cooperation with the Algerian independent publishing house Barzakh and the Foundation of Jan Michalski for writing and literature. Talked about life of intellectuals in Algeria, civil war and the Islamists' discourse, considers himself as a victim. Islam and the refugee crises, the West and the Orient; Nous vs Je and the absence of dialogue between the two cultures, civil violence in Algeria and its absence from the Algerian official history, Desire, sexuality, and the discovery of the body, art and resistance to one's idea(s), literature and metaphors, fiction
 - + 13 November, invited to Gymnase du Bugnon School, France.
 - + 1-23 December. Invited to Taiwan for the Singapore Writers Festival
- 6 October, awarded Prix Mediterranee for his second novel *Zabor au Les Psaumes*
- 18 November received The Cutuli Prize in Italy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 19 November. Invited to Maison de la Poésie, Paris, France, by Actes Sud + 28 November. Invited to the Institut français in Oran, Algeria
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 11 January. Invited to Café littéraire in Algeria, Béjaïa, organised by Barzakh + 12 January. Invited to Sétif, in Algeria, organized by Barzakh + 30 January. Invited to SciencePo university together with Pierre Assouline, Aurelie Filippetti and Leila Slimani + 14 February, Invited to Alili bookshop, Tlemcen, Algeria. + 21 February. Invited to <i>Arte channel, 28' engagement program, France</i>. Talked about his security, life and death, Islamism, French language, women's bodies and their situation in the Arab world. Daoud was asked why he did not write the article about the refugees in Arabic. Talked about the Algerian <i>haragga</i>, about his fascination of the parrot in Robinson Crusoe' novel. The Algerian history and the crimes committed by the French coloniser in Algeria and Macron's denouncement and confession of the crimes committed by the French, the debates about the written history of Algeria and France, its inclusion and exclusion from schools in France. Daoud was asked about the teaching of Algerian history in Algerian schools. Accompanied by a short video mockery on the declaration of the former prime minister of Algeria Ahmed Ouyahia. + 8 March. Invited to <i>France Inter</i>. Talked about politics, elections and the Algerian political situation, the civil war, religion in Algeria during the popular street demonstrations which began in Algeria on 22 February, the future of Algeria, the role of Algerian women during the demonstrations and the family code + 10 March, Invited to France5, programme <i>C Politique</i>. Talked about Islam and Islamists, recent Algeria political tensions and women's participation in demonstrations, knotted these topics to the French colonialism and language

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 12 March. Invited to <i>C à Vous</i> program, France. Talked about the recent Algerian political problems + 28 March. Invited to <i>Campus Protestant</i>, Strasbourg, together with Delphine Horvilleur, France third female rabbi and editor in chief of the quarterly Jewish magazine <i>Revue de pensée juive Tenou'a</i>. Talked about freedom, religion and rethinking of religion, literature and art, the future of Algeria, the philosophy of life, spirituality + 28 March. Invited to Salle de l'Aubette in Strasbourg. Presented his novel <i>Zabor ou les Psaumes</i> + 6 April. Invited to <i>Europe1</i>, France. Talked about the political tensions in Algeria, the Algerian army from the time of Ben Bella, the Algerian revolution and the question of the veil + 12 April. Invited together with Raphael Jerusalmy to <i>Librairie le Rameau d'Or, France</i>, by Actes Sud. + 16 April. Invited together with the Turkish journalist Ece Temelkuran to <i>La Maison de la Poésie</i>. France. Talked about Turkey's political situation. Against the NOUS; he describes himself as insulted by people. The Islamists in Algeria, democracy under the liberal domination, human dignity, Islam, Islamophobia, and the Islamists discourse and language, legitimacy of the individual; NOUS against JE. The debate around language, talked about hope, fear and truth all knotted to the political situation in the world, women, art, and fiction
	<p>22 April, awarded the Prix de la Revue des Deux Mondes</p> <p>5 June, awarded the Prix Mondial Cino Del Duca with 20,000 Euros</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 7 June, Interviewed by le <i>Web Radio des Académies</i>. Talked about his novel, considered as humanist. The place of intellectuals in the Arab world, the West and the Orient, talked his admiration toward Paris, fascination towards the West, against the idea of NOUS, monolithic, the importance of body, art and French literature and eroticism, the choice of writing in French language, sensuality, sexuality, desire, the place and the freedom women

<p>✚ 14 June, Interviewed at the Institute of Advanced Study in Toulouse, France. Talked about identity, language and religious extremists</p> <p>19-20 July invited together with the Algerian Francophone writers Ryad Girod, Maïssa Bey and Adlène Meddi to the South Corsica Festival of Literature France</p>
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Date of publication	Title	Publisher and place	Re-published	Genre	Sale figures (where known)	Other adaptations	Translations	Goodreads rates	Key themes
Yasmina Khadra									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 14 of Yasmina Khadra's novels are translated into English ✚ His work is translated in more than 50 countries, most of his works are translated into Spanish, English, Polish, Italian and German ✚ He has 10 million readers around the world, 4 million readers in France ✚ Author of two film scenarios, <i>La Voie de l'Ennemi</i> (Two Men in Town), a 2014 coproduction between Algeria, France and the US and in 2015 he wrote <i>Road to Istanbul</i> with the Algerian Film maker Rachid Bouchareb ✚ Khadra contribute to the Spanish newspaper <i>El País</i>, the French <i>L'Obs</i>, and <i>The Guardian</i> newspaper, ✚ Facebook followers: 58,347 ✚ Khadra's works are reviewed by several English, French, Algerian, American and Middle Eastern newspapers and magazines including: <i>The New York Times</i>, <i>News Week</i>, <i>The Independent</i>, <i>L'Express</i>, <i>Qantara. de</i>, <i>The Guardian</i>, <i>Morocco World News</i>, <i>Ultrasawt</i>, <i>Al Quds Al Arabi</i>, <i>Al Awsat</i>, <i>The Independent Arabia</i>, <i>Al Hayat</i>, <i>Echorouk Online</i>, <i>Al Ittihad</i>, <i>Nafha Mag</i>, <i>Al Bayan</i>, <i>Al Araby UK</i>, <i>Al Jazeera</i> in Arabic, <i>Le Monde</i>, <i>Al Ain</i>, <i>Al Ajaras Culture</i>, <i>Le Parisian</i>, <i>Jeune d'Afrique</i>, <i>Al Watan</i>, <i>le Soir l'Algérie</i>, <i>Le Devoir</i>, <i>Humanité</i>. 									
1984	<i>Houria</i>	ENAL Algeria		novel					Took 8 years to get

Mohammed Moulessehou									published by ENAL in Algeria
	<i>Amen</i>	La Pensée Universelle; Paris		novel					Self-funded to publish this work under his real name, without any knowledge how the world of publishing works (AWAL, 2015)
Awarded le Prix de la Ville d'Oran									

1985 Mohammed Moulesse houl	<i>La Fille du Pont</i> [The Daughter of the Bridge]	ENAL Algeria	2003, Chihab	Collection of Stories					Unachievable dreams during French colonialism
1986 Mohammed Moulesse houl	<i>El- Kahira cellule de la mort</i> [El Kahira: cell of death]	ENAL Algeria	Chihab 2003	Novel- Fiction					Algerian prisoners during French colonialism
1988 Mohammed Moulesse houl	<i>De l'autre Côté de la Ville</i> [The Other side of the city]	L'Harm attan, Paris		Novel- Fiction					This novel addresses themes of misery and poverty
1988	Uses his wife name Yasmina Khadra as a pseudonym								

1989	<i>Le Privilège du Phénix</i> The Privilege of the Phoenix]	ENAL- Algeria	Chihab; Algeria 2003	Novel- Fiction					Algeria's first years of the colonial rule
Awarded Le Prix Joseph Peyre- Renaissance Aquitaine									
1990	<i>Le Dingue au Bistouri</i>	Lapho mic, Algeria	Flammarion ,1999 (J'ai Lu 2001)	Fiction/ Mystery		Comic by Mohamed Bouslah, Algeria 2009	Yes	58 ratings 7 reviews 8 editions	Algeria during the civil violence, and Islamists
Awarded Le Premier Prix de la Nouvelle Professionnelle									
1993	<i>La Foire des enfoirés : Les enquêtes du Commissaire Llob</i> [The Idiots' fair: The Investigations	Lapho mic; Algeria		Fiction/ Thriller					

	of Commissioner Llob]								
Received the International Funds for the Promotion of Culture by UNESCO									
1997 Commissaire Llob	Morituri	Baleine, Paris 2002, Gallimard- Folio Policier		Novel, detective fiction	30,000 in France	Cinema in 2007 by Okacha Touita	Yes, to German and Spanish	193 ratings & 27 reviews 4 editions	This novel addresses the civil violence and the Algerian political system as well as the Islamists
Awarded Trophée 813 du Meilleur Polar Francophone [Trophy 813 Best Francophone Thriller]									
1997 Commissaire Llob	Double Blanc [Double White]	Baleine France	2000, Gallimard,	Thriller			Yes, English, Spanish,	79 ratings & 10 reviews	The Algerian civil violence Criticism of Islamists

1998 Yasmina Khadra	<i>Les Agneaux du Seigneur</i> [In the Name of God]	Julliard; France	Pocket 1999	Fiction			Yes, German, English Arabic	380 ratings 60 reviews	Civil violence in Algeria, youth, radicalism, friendship, injustice
1998 Commissaire Llob	<i>L'Automne Des Chimères</i> [Autumn of the Phantoms]	Baleine France	Pocket 2000	Political Fiction/mystery			Yes, Spanish, English, German,	65 ratings & 4 reviews	Khadra's experience with the reception of his previous published works and Algeria during the civil violence
Awarded Prix Allemand du Roman Noir International [The German Literary Award for International Crime Fiction]									

1999	<i>À quoi Rêvent les Loups</i> [Wolf Dreams]	Julliard; France	Pocket 2000 2012 SEDIA-Algeria	Fiction	500 copies in Algeria	Theatre by Jeanne Marie Garcia	Yes, English, Spanish, German	635 ratings & 59 reviews	October Riots, 1988, the civil violence, terrorism, corruption, radicalism,
2000	Left Algeria for Mexico, supported by The International Parliament of Writers								
	Left the International Parliament of Writers placement in Mexico for France								
2001	Revealed his real name to French audiences on the French TV Program Bouillon de culture								
	<i>L'Écrivain</i> [The Writer]	Julliard France	Pocket 2003	Autobiography	30,000		Yes, German	307 ratings & 37 reviews 12 editions	Khadra's autobiography. Khadra's upbringing and the beginnings of his military career

Awarded Prix d'Académie : Médaille de Vermeil									
2002	<i>L'Imposture des Mots</i> [The Imposture of words]	Julliard; France	Pocket 2004	Autobiography			Yes, Spanish	108 ratings & 75 reviews 4 editions	Khadra's autobiography
	<i>Les Hirondelles de Kaboul</i> [The Swallows of Kabul]	Julliard; France	Pocket 2004, France Loisirs 2003, SEDIA, 2006	Fiction		Theatre and into an animation film by Zabou Breitman and Eléa Gobbé Mévellec	Yes, English, German, Italian, Spanish	6.616 ratings 765 reviews 47 editions	Afghanistan War, the Taliban and women's rights and oppression
2003	<i>Cousine K</i> [Cousin K]	Julliard; France	2004, Pocket 2008,	Fiction			Yes	467 ratings & 75 reviews	Semi-autobiograph

			SEDIA; Algeria					9 editions	y; Khadra's childhood
Awarded Prix de salon littéraire de Metz for his novel <i>The Swallows of Kabul</i>									
Awarded Prix des Libraires Algériens, Algeria <i>The Swallows of Kabul</i>									
Awarded Prix de la Société des Gens de Lettres French Voices Award, United States, for his novel <i>Cousin K</i> , with 1500 Euros									
2004	<i>La Part du Mort</i> [Dead Man's Share]	Julliard; France	Gallimard Folio,2005	Fiction			Yes, English, German, Spanish,	110 ratings & 14 reviews 17 editions	Autobiograph y, Khadra's childhood
Awarded Prix Littéraire Beur FM Méditerranée for his novel <i>Dead Man's Share</i>									
Awarded Prix du Meilleur Polar Francophone for his novel <i>Dead Man's Share</i>									
Invited to the 8th edition of the International Book Fair at Tangiers, together with Jean Baudrillard and Bruno Etienne									
2005	<i>L'Attentat</i> [The Attack]	Julliard; France	Pocket 2006, SEDIA; Algeria 2006,	Fiction	750, 000 copies in France	Film in 2013 by Ziad Doueiri	Yes, English, German, Italian, Spanish	6.670 ratings & 828 reviews	Palestine- Israel conflict, terrorism,

			France Loisirs,2006			and Theatre		27 editions	the West and Orient
2006	<p>Prix des Libraires [Bookseller Award], France, for <i>The Attack</i></p> <p>Prix Tropiques, France, for <i>The Attack</i></p> <p>Prix Gabrielle d'Estrées, 900 Euros, France for <i>The Attack</i></p> <p>Grand prix des Lectrices Côté Femme, France for <i>The Attack</i></p> <p>Prix Découverte Figaro Magazine, France for <i>The Attack</i></p> <p>Prix des lecteurs du Télégramme, Prix Jean-Pierre Coudurier, France for <i>The Attack</i></p> <p>Prix de la Jeune critique, Austria</p> <p>Prix Littéraire des lycéens et apprentis de Bourgogne</p> <p>Shortlisted for CWA International Dagger for <i>L'Automne des Chimères</i>, 1998</p>								
	<i>La Rose de Blida</i> [The Rose of Blida]	Après la Lune; France	2006 SEDIA Algeria					30 ratings 1 review 4 editions	
	<i>Les Sirènes de Bagdad</i> [The Sirens of Baghdad]	Julliard; France	2006 SEDIA 2007 Pocket 2007 France Loisirs	Fiction	90,000		Yes, English, Hindu, German, Spanish	2,066 ratings & 215 reviews	Terrorism and the Middle East, Iraq invasion.

								58 editions	The west and The Orient
	<p>✚ 30 September. Invited to <i>On n'est Pas Couché</i> programme, France2. Explained and praised Arab civilisation and its contribution to science and the production of knowledge. Explained the mentality of the Arab Muslim world, terrorism and terrorists, the West vs the Orient, American soldiers. Defended Islam and modernity in the Arab world against Eric Zemmour. Talked about the Algerian corrupted political system, talked about his experience in the Algerian army during the civil violence.</p>								
2007	Shortlisted for CWA International Dagger for The Attack								
2008	<i>Ce que le jour Doit à la Nuit</i> [What the Day owes the Night]	Julliard; France	SEDIA, Algeria 2006, and Pocket 2009, France Loisirs 2009, Grand livre	Fiction	800,000 copies in France alone	Film in June 2012 by Alexandre Arcady at France 2 with 2 602,000 viewers	Yes, English, Russian, German Spanish and Italian	3,280 ratings & 330 reviews 45 editions	1930s Algeria, love during the time of French colonialism, friendship between the European settlers and Algerians, the

			du Mois, 2008						rural and the city life
Shortlisted for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award for <i>The Attack</i>									
Elu Meilleur livre de l'Année, (Happenheim), Germany for <i>The Attack</i>									
Prix Roman France Télévisions, France for <i>What the Day Owes the Night</i>									
Khadra was appointed by the Algerian president Abdel Aziz Bouteflika as director of the Algerian Cultural Centre in Paris									
2009	Awarded Prix Segalen des Lyceens d'Asie, Singapore for <i>The Attack</i>								
	Awarded Prix des Lecteurs de Corse for <i>What the Day Owes the Night</i>								
2010	<i>L'Olympe des Infortunes</i>	Julliard; France	2010, Média Plus; Algeria 2011, Pocket	Fiction		Theatre, by Serge Arnaud and Vinciane Hansberger	Yes	257 ratings & 29 reviews 9 editions	
Awarded "les Dérochères", Canada for <i>What the Day owes the Night</i>									
Shortlisted for Prix de La littérature Internationale, Berlin									
2011	The French Academy awarded Yasmina Khadra le Grand Prix de la Littérature Henri Gal, for all his works, with a prize of 40,000 Euros								

	<i>L'Équation Africaine</i> [The African Equation]	Julliard; France	2011, Média Plus; Algeria	Fiction			Yes, Polish, English, Spanish,	720 ratings & 107 reviews 22 editions	A story about a German doctor dwelling on themes of love, war, terrorism, Africa, the human condition, kidnapping, death, life, resistance and determination
25 January, the start of the Arab Spring, revolutions in Egypt and in Tunisia									
 5 February. Invited to France24 in French. Was asked about his feelings towards the revolutions in the Arab world. Talked as a political analyst about the revolutions taking place in Egypt and other Arab countries. Was asked about Tunisia and Khadra praised Tunisians and their peaceful revolutionary actions. Was asked about corruption, and hypocrisy in Algeria, Khadra revisited the October riots in 1988 and									

	<p>the civil violence. Was asked about the danger of Islamists, and democracy in the Arab world. Talked about the frustration of falling into the tropes of violence.</p> <p>✚ 9 February. Invited to France24 in Arabic. Was asked about the choice of using his wife's name, was asked about the revolutions in the Arab world, was also asked about the difference between Tunisia and Egypt. Explained the Arab leaders and their addiction to power, was asked about the situation of Algeria. Was asked about the future of these revolutions. Received questions from the audience about language, the role of the intellectuals in Algeria, and about the domination of the Algerian president Abdel Aziz Bouteflika.</p> <p>✚ 28 May. Invited to KTOTV, a French language Catholic Television channel V.I.P program. Was asked about the choice of using a female name, using a feminist discourse. Talked about censorship imposed on him by the Algerian army, talked about his autobiographical works. Was asked about Algeria and its relation to his trilogy. Talked about his origins, proud of being a Bedouin and Saharan. Talked about his family, father, mother and his childhood memories in the Algerian army. Talked about the Bible and Jesus. Talked about his admiration of the French language. Was asked about his position toward Albert Camus.</p>								
2012	<i>Les Chants Cannibales</i> [Cannibals Songs]	Casbah; Algeria		Nouvelle				24 ratings & 0 reviews	
	<i>Algérie</i> [Algeria]	Michel Lafon		(Beau Livre), Coffee table book					Khadra together with his wife and Reza the

									photographer published this work about Algeria which was part of their journey together in some Algerian cities
<p>✚ 24 January. Invited to Al Arabiya, Rawafid program. Talked in Arabic. Talked about his origins, was asked about the Revolutions in the Arab world. Was asked about the role of North African intellectuals. Was asked about his experience in the Algerian army, and his fight against terrorism, fundamentalism. Was asked to explain the reasons behind youth radicalisation and how they are brainwashed to join terrorists' groups. Khadra was asked if he had killed anyone. The war in Algeria destroyed his hopes and dreams, he said, because he used to see Algeria and Algerians with an optimistic eye. Was asked about his childhood memories. Talked about his favourite authors. Was asked about the use of a female name.</p> <p>✚ 16-19 March was Invited to 32nd of Salon du Livre de Paris, to promote and present his novel <i>The African Equation</i>, Khadra said that within this novel is a voyage to Africa, a voyage into African mentalities and the cultures to open the doors for those who do not know about Africa and its people.</p>									

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 21 March. Invited to the Algerian Francophone TV channel Canal Algérie, for the Expression Livre program. ✚ 19 December. Invited to France24, L'Invité program, France. Talked about the published book in collaboration with the photographer Reza. Talked about Algerians and their determination to reach and realise their dreams, the landscape of Algeria and his return to Algeria after being in exile 								
Khadra awarded by the American Foundation, Time for Peace Award									
2013	<i>Les Anges meurent de nos blessures</i> [The Angels Die from our wounds]	Julliard; France	Casbah; Algeria	Fiction			Yes, Italian, Spanish	440 ratings & 59 reviews 19 editions	A story of a child, addresses themes of love, revisiting Algerian history from 1930s, colonial life in Algeria and voyage to the West to realize dreams

<p>✚ 23 December. Invited to talk about <i>Les Anges meurent de nos blessures</i> on the Invité French TV program. Talked about <i>What the Days Owes the Night</i>, set during 20s and 30s Algeria. Was asked about the choice of this period. Khadra stated that he had chosen to write about this period to understand contemporary Algeria. Talked about Algerians and their determination</p>									
Yasmina Khadra was added to the French dictionary Le Petit Robert des Noms Propres									
2 November, Yasmina Khadra runs in the Algerian presidential elections against Abdel Aziz Bouteflika									
2014	<i>Qu'Attendent les Singes</i> [What are the Monkeys waiting for?]	Julliard	Casbah, Algeria	Fiction			Yes, German, English, Italian,	294 ratings & 34 views 13 editions	This novel addresses the civil violence in Algeria, the condition of women and the absence of justice, reveals and unmask the reality of the Algerian political elites, the

									opportunists, the predators, including certain members of the Algerian intelligentsia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 15 April. Al Jazeera in Arabic interviewed Khadra. Talked about his childhood memories, the importance of Oran, language, North African writers and their success in France, using a female name and using a feminist discourse ✚ 17 April. Invited to the French TV channel C+ together with Fateh Titouche, an Algerian activist. Talked and commented on the Algerian president Abdel Aziz Bouteflika as well as on the Algeria political system, the presidential election. By the end of the program declared “if you want to know what is happening in Algeria, I advise you to read this novel”, ✚ 23 October. Invited to Sharjah International book Fair, communicated in Arabic. Talked about reading culture in the Arab world. Khadra stated his disappointment that his works are unread in the Middle East. A member of the audience apologised for Khadra and compared him with Mosteghanemi. 									
Khadra’s term at the Algerian Cultural Centre in Paris came to an end following his brief attempt to run against Bouteflika in the Algerian presidential elections									
Khadra wrote the scenario for the film of <i>La Voie de l’Ennemi</i> (Two Men in Town)									

2015	<i>La Dernière Nuit du Rais</i> [The Dictator's Last Night]	Julliard; France	Simultaneously published in 10 countries and among them Algeria with Casbah publishing house	Fiction		Theatre by Belgian actor Roland Mahauden Italy	Yes, English, Italian, Spanish, Indian, German to Arabic language by Dar el Saqi In Beirut	677 ratings & 141 reviews 18 editions	Voyage into the Libyan president Muammer el Gaddafi's mentality and life, and the Libyan Revolution
7 January 2015, Paris terrorist attacks (Charlie Hebdo)									
<p>✚ 17 January. Invited to Al Jazeera English to talk about Paris terrorist attacks. Was asked about his opinion on terrorism, he defended Islam and Muslims, was asked about freedom of speech and democracy. Explained the continuous cultural and religious clash between the Orient and the West. Was asked if he agreed with Salman Rushdie's opinion on Islam. Was asked to talk and explain the psychology of youth and how they became radicalised. Talked about the danger of the Internet. Was asked about his experiences in the Algerian presidential elections in 2014. Knotted the Paris terrorist attacks to the Algerian civil violence.</p>									

- ✚ 23 January. Invited to the French program *On n'est pas Couché* to talk about *L'Olympe des Infortunes*. Was praised for his trilogy by Eric Zemmour but there was mockery about Khadra's writing, *an absence of philosophy*. Khadra defended his works and style
- ✚ March. Invited to China at the Fangsuo library
- ✚ 13 May. Invited to London, 7th edition of European Literature Night. Accompanied by his translator, talked about his experience in the Algerian army and the choice of using a female name, censorship, paid tribute to his wife, declared his feminist positions. Asked about his work *L'Équation Africaine*
- ✚ 7 June. Invited to the BBC's World Book Club. Asked about his aspirations, talked using feminist discourse. He was asked about his rituals while writing. Was asked about the choice of using his wife's name, he defended the rights of women. He was asked about the characters of his novels, Islam, solutions to fight terrorism and fundamentalism, how to fight fake Muslims. He also received questions about Algerian intellectuals living in France, the future of Africa and the Talibas and their supporters. Khadra was asked about his experience in the Algerian presidential elections in 2014. Was asked about language and the future of the French language in Algeria.
- ✚ 24^t June. Khadra was Invited to China
- ✚ 3-6 September, Khadra on tour in Switzerland
- ✚ 5 September. Invited to Télévision Suisse TRS [Switzerland Television, TRS]
- ✚ 6 September. Invited to L'Invité program at TV5 Monde channel. Talked about the character of the Libyan president Mouammar Gaddafi (1942-2011). Khadra talked as an expert about Mouammar Gaddafi's background because both are coming from the same region, North Africa.
- ✚ 6 September. Interviewed at RTL Radio

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 12-13 September. Invited to Salon du Livre du Nancy + 18 September. Invited to Strasbourg at Kléber Library with the presence of 650 persons. + 29 September. Invited to the 17th edition of FNAC de Ternes Paris + October. Invited to l'événement Littéraire Internationale à la Foire de Frankfort [The International Literary Event at Frankfurt Book Fair]. + 21-22 of November. Invited to the 26th edition of Colmar Book Fair [26^{ème} Salon du Livre de Colmar], France. + 15 November. Invited to Genova, Italy. + 25 November. Invited to Berbère Télévision based in Paris, to speak on the AWAL program. Talked about his career as writer, about the use of his wife's name, and paid tribute to his wife for her unconditional support, praised the previous Algerian generation of writers, talked about the market, translations, publishing of his works, and his ability to travel to ten countries in one month for the promotion of his work + 24 December. Invited to La Grande Librairie program at France5, together with the Algerian Francophone Boualem Sansal, the English writer Martin Amis and the French writer, Mathias Enard. Talked about their novels only. But Khadra did not agree with Boualem Sansal, that there was a problem with Islam as a religion
	<p>Khadra wrote the scenario for the film <i>Road to Istanbul</i>, for the Algerian filmmaker Rachid Bouchareb</p>
	<p>11 October, Khadra was recognised as Honorary Citizen of Palermo, Sicily, by the European deputy and the Mayor of the city Leoluca Orlando, Italy</p>
	<p>27 September, Awarded 55^{ème} Grand Prix Littéraire de Provence, à Ventabren [55th Literary Award of Provence at Ventabren, France]</p>

2016	<i>Dieu N'Habite pas à la Havane</i> [God does Not Live in Havana] (18 August)	Julliard; France	Casbah, Algeria	Fiction	Bestseller. 1200 copies in Oran, Algeria		Yes, Italian, Spanish, and into Arabic by Dar el Saqi (Hachette-Antoine, Beirut), reached 18 editions	372 ratings & 50 reviews	About Cuba's people, culture, love, life, friendship and determination
8 March. Awarded Prix Friuladria									
9 March. Awarded Le Sceau de la Ville by the mayor of Pordenone, Italy									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ 25 January. Invited to Mulhouse and Alliance Française de Bale, Switzerland <li>✚ 29-31 January. Selected together with Irene Frain as the president of Le Festival de la Biographie de Nimes [The Festival of Biography at Nimes]. <li>✚ 20-21 February. Invited to Book Fair in Brussels <li>✚ 5 March. Invited to 22nd edition of Dedicca Festival, Italy. Talked about his childhood memories, his relation to his father, narrated his experience in writing, publishing, censorship, the reason behind his choice to use his wife's name, revealed his admiration toward the French 									

language. Narrated his experience in the Algerian army and his participation fighting against terrorism, explained the phenomena of Islamists in the Arab world as well as in Europe, talked about the civil war in Algeria, about his experience in the presidential election of 2014, he explained the Algerian political system, talked about the importance and the role of women. Questions of the audience were about secularism, and refugees.

- ✚ 19-20 March. Invited to Paris Book Fair.
- ✚ 11-15 April. Khadra on tour in Spain for the promotion of his books.
- ✚ 29 April- 1 May. Invited to Salon du Livre de Genève.
- ✚ 4-7 May. Invited to Tanger, Morocco for 20th edition of Tangiers International Book Fair and Art for the promotion of his, work *The Dictator's Last Night* organised by the Institut français in Morocco.
- ✚ 15-16 May. Invited to Salon du Livre de Turin, Italy.
- ✚ 12-13 June. Invited to Salon du Varsovie, France.
- ✚ 6 August. Invited to Algeria, Dar el Aizza w el Karama, Ibn Badis Bookshop, Oran. According to the author, he sold 1200 copies in 5 hours.
- ✚ 30 August. Invited to France24, A *L'Affiche* program, France. Talked about his recent novel, *Dieu n'Habite pas à la Havane*, his choice, impressions and admiration for the Cuba's people and culture as a setting for his novel. Talked about his experience in writing.
- ✚ 2-3 September. Invited to Salon le Livre sur les Quais, Switzerland
- ✚ 4 September. Invited to FNAC livres Paris, Carreau du Temple, France.
- ✚ 4 September. Invited to Vivement dimanche prochain, France2. Talked about his novel *Dieu n'Habite pas à la Havane*

- ✚ 15 September. Invited to l'Invité program, TV5 Monde. Talked about and commented on politics in France, Islam and Muslims' situation in France, defended the Muslim community in France and their exclusion from the political. When he was asked about the veil and the burqa, Khadra refused to comment and considered this debate beneath him. Talked about the novel and characters.
- ✚ 27 September. Invited to France24, in Arabic. Talked about *Dieu n'Habite pas à la Havane* and the choice of Cuba as a setting for his novel. Was asked how we came to write about people that he did not know, and whether his short stay in Cuba was enough to write about this country and its people. He replied that he wrote this novel before the official visit of the former American president Barak Obama, and the Pope, when it was attracting less attention. Cuba shares several similarities with Algeria notably its determination. Khadra was asked about the Arabic language, and the Arabic reader. Are you going to write something different, not always knotted to the Arab world? Maybe Algeria I will still write about it but on the Arab world I do not think so, because I already wrote about it in other books
- ✚ 6 October invited to FNAC de Ternes Paris. Talked about the importance of travel, the contact between cultures, peace and comprehension in the world we are living. Khadra not supportive of the idea of revolutions. Talked about his novels; *Ce Que le Jour Doit à La Nuit*; theme of love
- ✚ 24 October. Khadra announced his absence from the SILA event in Algeria. He did not receive an invitation from the authorities
- ✚ 3-4 December. Khadra attended Salon de Boulogne- Billancourt
- ✚ 13 December. Invited to Foundation Alliance Française for the promotion of his work *Dieu n'Habite pas à la Havane*
- ✚ 17-22 December. Khadra's tour in Algeria was cancelled due to the refusal of the authorities to provide a space for the events

2017	<i>Ce que le mirage doit à l'Oasis</i> [What the Mirage owes to the Oasis] (8 November)	Flamm arion, France		Autobiograp hy			Yes, Arabic, Italian, Spanish, Greek	15 ratings & 1 review	This book is about the Algerian desert, by Khadra and the Tunisian writer Lassaad Metoui (Illustrator)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 26 February. Khadra was selected as the president of the 6th edition of Historical Novel of Levallois City [6ème Salon du Roman Historique de la Ville de Levallois], France. ✚ 3-7 March. Invited and participated in the Festival Littéraire des Emirates Airlines [Emirates Lit Fest 2017], Dubai. ✚ 25 March. Invited to Paris Book Fair, Paris. [Salon du Livre de Paris]. ✚ 1 April. Invited to France24 in French, 'Le Paris des Arts de Yasmina Khadra', Paris. ✚ 19-21 May. Tour in Montpellier, France. ✚ 24 June. Invited to Salon de Livre de Poche, Saint-Maur, France. ✚ 10-17 July. Invited to Djanatu al Arif, Mostaganem, Tizi Ouzou, Algiers and Cherchell, Algeria for the promotion of his work. 									

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ 30 September. Invited to The African Book Fair at Charleroi, Belgium ✚ 12-16 November. Invited to Kinshasa Book Fair ✚ 24 November-2 December. Invited to Mexico with the attendance of 250 persons ✚ 25 November. Invited to <i>Salut les Terriens</i>; a French program. Talked about the Algerian economic crises in Algeria, talked about the future of Algeria and frustration with falling into the tropes of extremism, and praised the bravery and resistance of Algerians during the civil war. Abdel Aziz Bouteflika and his relationship with his brother. Talked about the natural resources in Algeria, Khadra shows his opposition against foreign countries' decision to invest in shale gas in Algeria. Talked about Islamists in Algeria. ✚ 6 December. Invited to France24 in Arabic, Paris. Talked about France's plan to intervene in Algeria's problems, civil war, Khadra was asked how and why he was appointed to the Algerian cultural centre, Was asked to talk about and describe this experience, and why he ended his contract. Was asked if he lost some of his close friends when he decided to take this position. Was asked about his experience in the presidential elections in 2014. Was reminded about his optimistic vision toward the revolutions that took place in the Arab world in 2011 And then the journalist moved to talk about Khadra novels: <i>The Dictator's last Night</i>, <i>Angles Die</i> and <i>God does not exist in Havana</i> ✚ 9 December. Invited together with Lassaad Métoui to Librairie VOYAGEURS for the promotion of their book <i>Ce que le mirage doit à l'Oasis</i> <p>17th of November awarded Prix Makomi de l'Union Européenne in the Democratic Republic of the Congo</p>								
2018	<i>Le Baiser et la Morsure</i> (4 April)	Bayard; France		Autobiograph y				4 ratings & 1 review	A collection of interviews by Catherine

									Lalanne. A detailed biography about Khadra's childhood memories in Algeria and ancestors, his vision of Islam, dialogue between the west and the Orient
	<i>Khalil</i> [Khalil]	Julliard; France	Casbah; Algeria, and ten countries	Fiction			Yes, English, Spanish Italian	468 ratings & 74 reviews	Inspired by Paris terrorist attacks in November

								12 editions	2015 as well as in Spain, a novel about terrorism
April, awarded le Grand Prix des Associations Littéraires, Cameroon in the category Belles-Lettres (Beautiful Letters) for his novel <i>Khalil</i> nominated by the Cultural Association of la Grande Maison in Tlemcen									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 10 January. Invited to FNAC des Ternes, Paris for the promotion of <i>Ce que le mirage doit à l'Oasis</i> + 26-28 January. Participated in Festival de la Biographie de Nimes + 17 March. Invited to Salon du Livre Paris. + 27 March. Invited to Festival Corps de Textes, Theatre de Liège, Belgium. + 12 April. Invited to FNAC BERCY, Paris for the promotion of his work <i>Le Baiser et la Morsure</i> together with the journalist Catherine Lalanne + 13 April. Invited to Librairie Gilbert Joseph, Saint Michel, Paris for the promotion of his work <i>Le Baiser et la Morsure</i> + 17 April. Invited to France24, <i>A l’Affiche! Program</i>. Talked about his childhood memories and his relation to his father, writing and literature, his experience during the civil war as a witness to the violence during this period, talked about the adaption of his novel to film animation + 23 April. Invited to Librairie Kléber (Strasbourg) + 27-29 April. Invited to Lire à Limoges, France. + 5-6 of May. Participated in Rencontres Litteraires BIBLIOTOPIA de la Fondation Jan Michalski, Montricher, Switzerland + 10 May. Invited by Gregoire Courtois, Kibrairie Obliques 									

- ✚ 19 August was invited to Oran, Hôtel Liberté. Was asked about the choice of the title, *Khalil* and compared to Daoud's *Zabor*, was asked also about his thematic preoccupations, Islam and radicalism.
- ✚ 25 August. Invited to Sidi Bel Abess.
- ✚ 26 August. Invited to Tlemcen at Hotel Grand Bassin organised by Mrs and Mr. Lachachi.
- ✚ 6 September. Invited to FranceInter.fr radio, France. Was asked about the choice of using a female pseudonym, talked about his childhood memories, asked about his experience for the Algerian legislative election in 2014, was asked about his novel *Khalil* and the Paris terrorist attacks November 2015. Talked about his experience during the civil war in Algeria as an army officer
- ✚ 12 September. Invited together with Salman Rushdie to the French program la Grande Librairie, France5. Talked about his novel, talked about terrorism, talked as an analyst of the terrorist's mind, the fears of the terrorist and the difficulty to integrate into their societies, Islam and Islamists, talked about his experience as officer during the civil war
- ✚ 7-16 September. Invited to Idéal library at Strasbourg for the promotion of *Khalil*. Talked about his experience as former officer in the Algerian army and his fight against terrorism in Algeria
- ✚ 16 September. Invited to the French program Vivement Dimanche. Talked about his novel *Khalil*. Was asked about his childhood memories
- ✚ 2 October. Invited to Foundation of CECIN'ESTPASUNECRISE, Brussels.
- ✚ 3 October. Interviewed by Willy Lefevre. Was asked about his childhood memories, friends. Youth radicalisation. His friends read his stories. His dream was to be a sociologist. Talked about his mother. He thought of breaking with the army in 1984. Talked about his preferred

authors, well read into French literature. He imposed on himself self-censorship, but his intelligence let him to transgress. Musicality of his writings.

- ✚ 4 October. Invited to Midis de la Poesie, the National theatre, Brussels.
- ✚ 15 October. Invited to Belgium for the promotion of *Khalil*. Talked about the mentality of terrorists, Khadra put the blame on the absence of justice and knotted this to the Algerian civil war.
- ✚ 22 October. Invited to Médiathèque George Sand d'Enghien-les-bains together with Catherine Lalanne. Explained the reasons behind why youth joined terrorists groups talked about his childhood memories, his relation to his father, narrated the life of his ancestors in the southern part of Algeria, talked about the importance of friendship, talked about the role and the importance of women, was asked and talked about his admiration of the French language. Was asked by an Algerian woman about his choice in writing in French language. Asked about his inspirations and was praised by the audience for his books. Was also asked about his experience in 2014 with the lpresidential elections
- ✚ 1-3 November. Presented at the Algerian International Book Fair, invited by Casbah publishing house
- ✚ 4 November. Invited to Bejaia, Algeria.
- ✚ 14-19 November. Invited to Tunisia, appeared in TV program: El Hiwar, conducted interviews with journalists and radio, gave lectures at some schools, institutions and universities.
- ✚ 15 November, Invited to *Tounes El Youm* program, Episode 39. Talked about his latest novel *Khalil*. Talked about Paris terrorism attacks, as well as in Spain. Youth and the future, tolerance, war and racism. Familial relations in North Africa. Talked as expert of the terrorist's

	<p>character, women's right and oppression in the North of Africa. Talked about North African political leaders, Islam, and peace. Praised the Tunisians</p> <p>✚ 21 November. Invited to Tunisia, City of Culture. Talked about the role of intellectuals. Was asked about his recent novel <i>Khalil</i>. Praised Tunisians for their peaceful revolutions and their ability, determination and power to change things.</p> <p>✚ 5 December. Invited to Librairie les Beaux Titres, Levallois, Paris.</p> <p>✚ 7-9 December. Khadra president of the 1er Festival du Livre de la ville de Marseille qui aura lieu le 7, 8 et 9 décembre 2018 au château de la Buzine</p> <p>✚ 25th of December. Invited to l'enceinte de la Fondation méditerranéenne du développement durable (Djanatu al Arif) sise Vallée des Jardins Sayada</p> <p>✚ 27th of December. Invited to Ain Temouchent, au niveau de la librairie Bachir El Ibrahimy, 3, chemin du 1er Mai.</p>								
2019	<i>L'Outrage Fait à Sarah Ikker</i>	Julliard; France	Casbah, Algeria Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, Suisse	Fiction			Yes, Spanish	27 ratings & 9 reviews	Algerian- Moroccan relations, radicalism
22 February, massive demonstrations against the political system begin in Algeria									
✚ 12 January. Invited to Siège de l'Ecole Supérieure de l'Hôtellerie et de la Restauration d'Oran, Akid Lotfi									

- ✚ 24 January. Invited to Librairie la Galerne, France for the promotion of his novel *Khalil*. Was asked about the reason behind writing this novel. Was asked about the November 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris.
- ✚ 16 February. Invited to The International Book Fair in Brussels, Belgium
- ✚ 22 February. Invited to French Book Fair
- ✚ 25 February. Invited to CNews to comment on the Algerian demonstrations together with the historian Benjamin Stora.
- ✚ 13 March. Invited to BFM TV, Grande Angle. Talked about the demonstrations in Algeria and its political leaders. Was asked about the feelings and the emotions of his friends and family members towards the awakening of Algerians. Talked about the future of these demonstrations, and the Algerian discourse and explained his frustrations towards the failure of these demonstrations. Was asked to explain how these demonstrations are run without violence. Khadra explained the mentality of Algerians. Khadra was asked to comment on the speech delivered by the current president of the French democratic republic Emmanuel Macron about Algeria. Khadra showed his opposition to Emmanuel Macron's speech.
- ✚ 25 March, Invited to France24 in French, *Le Monde dans tous ses Etats* program, 23:14 out of 23:46 minutes the discussion was about the political situation in Algeria, Abdel Aziz Bouteflika, Algerian youth's maturity, explained the Algerian situation, talked about women's participation in these demonstrations, democracy in Algeria and the civil violence
- ✚ 10 April invited to the International Book Fair, Quebec, Canada and was named as The Humanist president
- ✚ 7 May. Invited to FNAC des Termes, Paris for the promotion of his novel, *L'Outrage fait à Sarah Ikker*
- ✚ 17 May Invited to Festival de Cannes, for the projection of *Hirondelles de Kaboul*,
- ✚ 11 June, Invited to Librairie l'Alinea, France

- ✚ 15-18 June, invited to the International Festival of Litterature Xchange, Denmark, invited to the University of d'Aarhus, Denmark. Talked about the importance of women's role
- ✚ 24 November. Invited to the 30th edition of the Festival of Book in Colmar, France to present and dedicate his work *L'Outrage fait à Sarah Ikker*
- ✚ 17 December 2019. Invited to Amman, Institut de l'information with the presence of the Princess Rym Al-Ali and the Prince Ali- Ibn al-Hussein. Delivered his speech in Arabic
- ✚ 4-8 December invited to Italy to attend the festival PIU LIBRI PIU LIBERI the conference *Le paure, gli estremismi e I ponti tra Oriente e Occidente*. The first question he was asked about was about the use of a female pseudonym, Khadra revisited his early career as writer as well as an officer in the Algerian Army, then moved to pay tribute to his wife, "it's because of this name that I am known in the world", moved to talks about the role and the importance of women, performed the role of the feminist. Was asked about the motivation behind writing, and his interest in writing *The Last Night of the Dictator*, talked about freedom of speech, the corrupted political systems in the Arab world, " I am helping people to reflect well, I have two cultures, one Occidental and the other Arabophone and I am trying to go to the Orient and the Occident to build bridges of culture; when I visit the Arab world, I try to explain the Occident" asked and talked about the Islamists, the Palestinian-Israeli problem, talked about his work *the Attack*. Talked about the media and its role in perpetuating false images, fundamentalism, jihadism, religion, how people radicalize, was asked about the protest movement in Algeria.

5 June, Awarded le Prix Méditerranée du Livre d'Art for Ce que le Mirage Doit à l'Oasis

7-8 February 2020, attended the Barcelona Negra Crime Writing Festival; Spain

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature	
Ismail Yabrir (b.1979), Djelfa; Algeria		French & Arabic	Toni Morrison, Tayeb Salih, Mahmoud Darwish,	Mohamed Ben Chérif, Mohammed Dib, Malek Haddad, Abdel Hamid Ben Hadouga, Tahar Wattar, Rachid Boudjedra, Mohamed Meflah.	
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>ṭqws ā ālāwlā</i> [First Rituals]	Poetry	2008, Dar Oussama, Algeria		In 2006, awarded a prize by the Ministry of Mujahidin for a collection of short stories	In 2012, Ismail was the first prize winner at the Sharjah Arab Creativity competition intended for his piece of theatre <i>ālrāwy fy ālhkāyh</i> [the Narrator in the Tale]
<i>ṭāšā</i> [Inquisitiveness]	Theatre	2017, The regional Theatre of Djelfa			
<i>yāmndā mlā'kī lāfrān</i> [Laveran Angels] 7500 copies	Civil violence, youth, psychological and unstable life, revisited Algerian	First edition in 2008, by Moufām & second edition in 2011, by ENAG	Third edition in 2017, by Bardia, Egypt	In 2007, won the Abdel Hamid Ben Hadouga literary award for a collection of short stories	In 2013, winner of the Sudanese Al Tayeb Salih Literary Prize for Creative

	history from 1880 up to 2003			2008, The Best Poetry Award by the National Forum for Literary and Artistic Creativity	Writing intended for <i>wṣyht ālm'twh ktāb ālmwtā ḍida ālāhyā</i> [The Commandment of the Simpleton: Book of the Dead against the living]
<i>bārdġ kāntā</i> [Cold as a Female] 1500 copies	Civil violence and criticism of the reconciliation program	2013, El-Ikhtilef, Algeria and Difaf, Beirut and Kul-Shee Bookshop, Palestine		In 2018, awarded Mohammed Dib Literary Prize for <i>Moula el Hira</i> [Chief of Confusion]	
<i>wṣyht ālm'twh ktāb ālmwtā ḍida ālāhyā</i> [The Commandment of the Simpleton: Book of the Dead against the living] 3600 copies	Tolerance towards religions, criticism of the state and the living conditions of the people of Djelfa, the civil violence, criticism of capitalism, writing,	2013, Zain Company, Sudan	2013, Mim, Algeria		
<i>mwā ālhyrġ</i> [Chief of Confusion] 4000 copies	From 1954 to post-independence and contemporary	2018, El-Hibr, Algeria	2018, Masciliana in Tunisia and Beirut simultaneously		

	Algeria and the marginalisation and the estrangement of people, setting Djelfa, knotted the situation of Algeria to the Arab world, belonging, civil violence				
<i>mnbwdw āl'āşfy</i> 3000 copies	Identity, history,	2019, Dal Al Ain, Egypt	2019, El- Hibr, Algeria		

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature		French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Abdellatif Ould Abdallah, (b.1988); Mascara; Algeria		French, Arabic and English	George Orwell, Virginia Woolf, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Joseph Conard, Ernest Hemingway, Colin Wilson, Ernesto Sabato, Chinua Achebe, Walter Stace, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Jacques Derrida, Richard Dawkins, Georges Battaile, Ibn Sina, El Farabi		Ismail Yabrir, Amine Zaoui, Mohammed Djafar, Hadjer Kouidri, Sofiane Mokhenache, Samir Kacimi, Bachir Mefti,
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>Hārġ 'n ālsyṛṛhārġ 'n ālsyṛṛ</i> [Out of Control]	A detailed description of ordinary people in Algeria and their daily struggle, sheds	2016, El-Ikhtilef; Algeria & Difaf; Beirut		2018, Winner of Ali Maachi literary award intended for his novel, <i>Hārġ 'n ālsyṛṛhārġ 'n ālsyṛṛ</i> Out of Control]	

	light on crimes in order to criticise all levels of corruptions in Algeria				
<i>Āltbrġ</i> [Shamelessness]	This novel is about people diagnosed with cancer, and their daily suffering	2018, El-Ikhtilef; Algeria & Difaf, Beirut			

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature	
Miloud Yabrir (b.1985), Djelfa, Algeria		French & Arabic	Michel Foucault, José Saramago	Mohammed Dib, Jean Sénac, Kateb Yacine, Tahar Wattar, Frantz Fanon, Malek Haddad, Ali El-Kenz, Ben Hadouga, Mohammed Harbi, Rachid Boudjedra, Abdelallah Sherit, Mostefa Lacherf, Abdelkader Gaghoul, Abou Kassem Saad Allah	
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>ǧnwb ālmlḥ</i> [South of the Salt]	A novel about post-Independence Algeria, the civil violence, history, love,	2015, Barzakh, Algeria & Al-Jadeed, Beirut			In 2015, Recipient of the third prize of Sharjah award for Arab Creativity aimed at his first novel <i>ǧnwb ālmlḥ</i> [South of the Salt], in the United Arab Emirates

					In 2018, won the Samir Kassir for Freedom of Press in Beirut intended for his piece of writing " <i>A Seat in the Dark</i> "
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Author's name, date and place of birth		Language		Reading Inspiration (s)	
				International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Sofiane Mokhenache (b.1984) Sétif; Algeria		Arabic & French		Naguib Mahfouz	Ahlam Mosteghanemi
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>Lā ytrk fy mtnāwl ālātḥāl</i> [Keep it beyond the reach of Children]	Love	2013, Mim, Algeria	Reached 4 editions, total of 4500 copies	2012, Winner of the Algerian Ali Maachi literary award intended for his novel <i>Lā ytrk fy mtnāwl ālātḥāl</i> [Keep it beyond the reach of Children] 2016, Winner of Abdel Hamid Ben Hadouga literary prize sponsored by Condor	
<i>mḥād slḥfāt</i> [Tortoise Birth]	Writing: this novel was written in response to those who accused him of plagiarism, love, the arrival of Jews refugee in Algeria from Spain,	2016, Mim, Algeria			

	use of the Algerian language, French and English, use of Algerian proverbs and songs				
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Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature		French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Abdelouhab Aissaoui (b.1985), Djelfa; Algeria		French & Arabic	Tayeb Salih, Abudl Rahman Munif, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, Milan Kundera, Roger Garaudy, Max Aub, Ivo Andrić, Gamal El Ghitani, Naguib Mahfouz, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Rainer Maria Rilke, Abdeljelil Temimi, Boleslaw Prus		Waciny Laardj, Abdel Hamid Benhadouga, Tahar Wattar, Mohamed Sari, Nasr El Dine El Saadani, Kateb Yacine, Mohammed Dib
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>synmā ġākwb</i> [Cinema Jacob]	Memory, Algerian cinema in the past, Djelfa, tolerance and religion, the relation between the colonised and	Vecesara; Algeria		June 2012, winner of Ali Maachi literary award intended for his unpublished manuscript [Cinema Jacob]	In 2013, winner of the Sharjah Prize for Arab Creativity intended for his collection of short stories, <i>majaz al saru</i> [Cypress Path]

	the coloniser, nostalgia			2014, Winner of the Short Novel Award organised by the Regional Association of Thought and Creativity of Oued Souf; south of Algeria	14 March 2017, winner of Souad al Sabah literary Award, Kuwait intended for his unpublished novel <i>āldwā'r w ālābwāb</i> [The Circles and Doors]
<i>Sierra De Muiriti</i>	Story about three Spanish opposers of Francisco Franco's regime after the end of the Spanish civil war 1936-1939, they moved to France and then were deported to French prisons in Algeria, Djelfa. It is a story about the life of these detainees and their relationship with each other as well	2014, The Regional Association of Thought and Creativity of Oued Souf	2015, Dar Al Saqi; Beirut	In 2016, winner of Assia Djebar literary award for <i>Sierra De Muiriti</i>	In 2017, winner of the Katara Prize for the Arabic Novel for <i>sfr ā'māl ālmnsyyn</i> [Travel works of the Forgotten], value \$30, 000 In 2019, <i>āldywān āl'sbrṭy</i> [The Spartan Court] shortlisted to the International Prize for Arabic Fiction

	as with the local people, philosophy, love, existence and death, tolerance and religion				
<i>āldwā'r w ālābwāb</i> [The Circles and Doors]	Algeria during the 1970s and the impact of colonialism on Algeria's architecture, Sufism, nostalgia, father's vs sons, clash of generations	2017, Mim Algeria	2017, Dar el Souad Sabah, Kuwait		
<i>majaz Al saru</i> [Cypress Path]	Re-reading of the paintings of the Dutch painter	2016, Dar El- Baghdadi, Algeria			

	Vincent van Gogh, suicide and loneliness				
<i>āldywān āl'sbrṭy</i> [The Spartan Court]	Algerian past 1815- 1833, Algeria during the Ottoman Empire and French colonialism, the end of the Ottoman empire and the beginning of the French invasion, disagreement between Algerians those who were in favour of the revolution and those who were	2018, Mim, Algeria			

	against it. Revisited the Battle of Waterloo, identity, religion and freedom				
<i>Safar'aemal Almunsyiin</i> [Travel works of the Forgotten].	Algeria pre-and post-independence, nostalgia, the Algerian revolution, mujahidins, and humanist themes	2018, Katara, Doha			

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature	
Riadh Hadir (b.1982); Oran; Algeria		French & Arabic	Humberto Hugo	Mohammed Dib, Mouloud Feraoun, Kateb Yacine	
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>Pupille</i> [Pupile]	Futuristic vision of the world, considered science fiction	2017, Anep, Algeria		In 2017, winner of Mohammed Dib literary award for <i>Pupille</i>	

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature		French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Belkacem Meghouchene (b.1979) Tizi Ouzou; Algeria		French-Arabic, English, Tamazight	Victor Hugo, Walter Alva Scot, Alexander Dumas, Leo Tolstoy, Honre de Balzac, Radwa Ashour, Jurji Zayden, Dan Brown, Levi Strauss, John le Carré		Tahar Wattar, Waciny Laredj, Amine Zaoui and Rachid Boudjedra, Mouloud Benzadi, Aicha Bennour, Rachid Mimouni, Yasmina Khadra
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>Sophia in the White City</i> [English], written in 2007	A story about the arrival of a German woman to Algiers, the perception of Europeans of Algeria during the civil violence	2010, l'Odyssée publishing house, Tizi Ouzou; Algeria		In 2011, Winner of Ali Mâachi Literary award 2017, Winner of Tahar Wattar literary award	

<i>Tazemmurt tcudd s akal- is</i> ; Tamazight [The Olive tree attached to its root]	Revisited the Algerian history notably those exiled to Caledonia by the French	2017, Achaab, Tizi Ouzou, Algeria			
The Overcoat of Virginia [English]		2013, Edilivre, France			
<i>ālmḥrwsṭ lā tšbh ḡrnāṭṭ</i> [The Guardian Does not look like Granada]	Revisited the invasion of Algeria, 1504-1833, the glories of the Casbah, the use of legends, and rumours used at that time, epic, historical facts, fiction,	2016, Dar el Quds El Arabi, Oran, Algeria			

<i>m'bn ālmḥrwsṯ y'ḏn fy flwrnsā</i>		2018, Anep; Algeria			
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Author's name, date and place of birth		Language		Reading Inspiration (s)	
				International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Mohammed Djafar (b.1976), Mostaganem; Algeria		Arabic & French		Victor Hugo Rachid Boudjedra Tahar Wattar Abdel Hamid Benhaddouga	
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>miyydān ʿsilāḥ</i> [Battlefield]		2010, Dar el Gharb, Oran, Algeria	2012, Dar el Qilada, Egypt		3 December 2018 awarded Al Multaqā Prize for Arabic Short Story, Kuwait, for his collection of short stories <i>ābtkār ālālm</i> [The Innovation of Pain], 2017
<i>ḥḍāyyyn nwhdyān nwāqys</i> <i>ālqyāmġ</i> [Whistles of Resurrection]		2014, El-Ikhtilef; Algeria & Difaf; Beirut			
<i>ābtkār ālālm</i> [The Innovation of Pain]		2017, El Ikhtilef and Difaf, Beirut			

<i>lā bhwānt</i> [La Pointe]	Revisited Algerian history from 1962, references to the crimes committed by the French police, e.g. Maurice Papon against demonstrations in Paris in 1961, 1988 and the civil violence with a focus on left-wing politics in Algeria as well as in the Arab world,	2018, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc, Beirut			
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Author's name, date and place of birth		Language		Reading Inspiration (s)	
				International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Ryad Girod (b.1970), Algiers; Algeria		French		Claude Simon	Nina Bouraoui, Rachid Boudjedra
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>Ravissements</i>		2008, Jose Corti, France	2010, Barzakh, Algeria	2018, Assia Djebar literary award intended for his novel <i>Les Yeux de Mansour</i>	2019, After the republication of <i>Les Yeux de Mansour</i> by the French publisher P.O.L. the novel was nominated for Prix des cinq continents de la Francophonie within the same year 2019, Nominated for la Sélection du prix Révélation run by La Société des Gens de Lettres (SGDL)
<i>La Fin qui nous Attend</i> [The End Waiting us]	The Algerian and French political relation	2015, Barzakh, Algeria			
<i>Les Yeux de Mansour</i> [The Eyes of Mansour]	Politics, Franco- Algerian relations, Amir Abdel Kader, Saudi Arabia	2018, Barzakh, Algeria	2019, P.O.L, France		

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature	
Djamila Morani (b.1988), Relizane, Algeria		Arabic	George R. R. Martin, Saud Alsnaoui, Ayman Otoom, Shin-Kyung-Sook, Haruki-Murakami, Ahmed Mourad, Radwa Ashour, Naguib-Al Kilani	Ahlam Mosteghanemi, Abdellatif Ould Abdallah	
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>tfāḥ ālġn</i> [Djinn Apple]	Revisited history	2016, Dar el Mothakaff, Algeria, sold 500 copies	2017, Dar Al Walid, Egypt, printed 1000 copies	Refused to participate in these literary awards because she cannot wait for a year to hear about the result	
<i>tāġ ālhṭy'ī</i> [Crown's Sin]		2015, Mim, Algeria	Sold 300 out of 500 copies		

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language		Reading Inspiration (s)	
				International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Samir Kacimi (b.1974), Algiers; Algeria		Arabic & French		Najib Mahfouz, Jack Kerouac, Paul Sussman, Paul Auster, Lord Byron, Joseph Conrad	Malek Haddad, Tahar Wattar, Fadhila El Farouk, Yasmina Salh, Sarah Haider, Zahra el Dik
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>ḥob fy ḥryf mā'l</i> , [Love at the Turn of autumn]	Philosophy of death, love, sex, life, writing	2014, El-Ikhtilef, Algeria & Difaf, Beirut	2017, Barzakh, Algeria & Seuil, France in French	In 2010, Awarded Hashemi Saidani prize for Best Algerian Debut novel <i>tṣryḥ bdyā'</i> [Declaration with Lostness].	2011, Shortlisted for the International Prize of Arabic Fiction for his novel <i>Ywm rā'</i> <i>llmwt</i> [A Great Day to Die]
<i>tṣryḥ bdyā'</i> [Declaration with Lostness]	Philosophy of death, love, sex, life, and writing	2009, el Beit, Algeria	2010, Arab Scientific Publishers Inc,	In 2016, the Assia Djebar Prize was awarded to his novel <i>ktāb ālmāšā'</i>	2012, The <i>Dreamer</i> longlisted for the Sheikh Zayed Book award in the United Arab Emirates
<i>ywm rā'</i> <i>llmwt</i> [A Great Day to Die]	The living conditions under which Algerian marginalised people live, suicide,	2009, Arab Scientific Publishers Inc, Beirut	2018, El-Ikhtilef, Algeria and Difaf; Beirut		

	underpinned with sarcasm, homosexuality, prostitution, breaking with taboos				2019, Longlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction
<i>halabil</i>	Philosophical and thought-provoking novel about love, sexuality, homosexuality, existentialism, religion, politics, life, death, fate and destiny and the understanding of marriage	2010, Arab Scientific Publishers Inc, Beirut			

<p><i>Fy šq āmrāh ‘āqr</i> [In a Love with Barren Woman]</p>	<p>A political novel about Algeria</p>	<p>2011, El-Ikhtilef, Algeria</p>	<p>Second edition by el Rawfead, Egypt, Third edition by Dar el Waraq in United Arab Emirates</p>		
<p><i>ālḥālm</i> [The Dreamer]</p>	<p>The question of writing, existentialism, death and life, nothingness, the marginalisation of the intellectual</p>	<p>2012, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc</p>	<p>2018, El Difaf Beirut & El-Ikhtilef Algeria (second edition)</p>		
<p><i>ktāb ālmāšā’</i>, second part of <i>Halabil</i></p>	<p>Breaks with taboos, banned in the Gulf region</p>	<p>2016, Anep, Algeria state publishing</p>			

<p><i>slālm trwlār</i> [Trular's Ladders]</p>	<p>Post-Independence Algeria and its political system from 1962 to 2018, regions and languages, racism, criticism of the politics of the Ministry of Culture in Algeria, but also the Arab world, the 2019 demonstrations in Algeria</p>	<p>2019, Barzakh Algeria & Al Mutawassit, Italy</p>			
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Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature	French and Arabic Algerian Literature	
Saïd Khatibi (b.1984), Bousaada, Messila; Algeria		Arabic & French	Albert Camus, Antoine Saint-Exupery, Farid el Din el Attar, al Hallaj, Claudio Magris, Slavoj Žižek, Natacha Appanah, Boris Pahor, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Marcel Paul, Ahmadou Kourouma, Emmanuel Todd	Malek Haddad, Tahar Djaout, Kamel Daoud, Dihia Louis, Youcef Sebti, Kateb Yacine, Yamina Méchakra, Alice Cherki, H'mida Ayachi	
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>ārb'wn 'āmā fy āntzār āyzābyl</i> [Forty Years Waiting for Isabell]	Identity, memory, the Other, the life of the traveller Isabell Eberhardt (1877-1904) and Étienne Dinet (1861 – 1929).	2016, El-Ikhtilef; Algeria & Difaf; Beirut	Translated to Spanish language as [Cuarenta Anos Esperando a Isabel]		In 2012, Awarded the Arab Press Prize In 2015, Awarded the Ibn Battuta Prize funded by Ahmed Mohamed Ben

	<p>Eberhardt presented as a homosexual character; Individualism, transgression of the institutional and the social norms, the use of painting to criticise post-independence Algeria, civil violence, absence of freedom, tolerance and justice. The failure of the Arab world to achieve the</p>				<p>Khalifa al Suwaidi at the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>In, 2017, Winner of the Katara Prize for the Arabic Novel for his published work <i>ārbʿwn ʿāmā fy āntzār āyzābyl</i> [Forty Years Waiting for Isabell] with value of \$60,000</p>
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	promises after their independence				
<i>ḥṭb srāyyfw</i> [Sarajevo's Firewood]	Based on archival research; diaries, newspapers, printed and visual, Algeria's civil violence, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnian war	2018, El-Ikhtilef, Algeria & Difaf, Beirut			
<i>ā'rās ālnārr: qsh ālrāy</i> [Fire Wedding: The Story of Rai]	A documentary book about Algerian traditional music	2010, by Dar el Beit, Algeria			
<i>kitab al khataya</i> [The Book of Sins]		2012, Anep, Algeria			

<i>ǧnā'n ālšrq ālmlthbġ</i> [The Burning Eastern Garden]	Stories about his journey to Balkans				
' <i>brt ālmsā' ḥāfyā</i> [On Barefoot I Crossed the Evening]	A collection of interviews conducted with Algerian Francophone writers by Khatibi	Vescera, Algeria			

Author's name, date and place of birth		Language	Reading Inspiration (s)		
			International Literature		French and Arabic Algerian Literature
Amal Bouchareb (b.1984), Damascus-Algeria		Italian, English, Arabic & French	Nelson Mandela, Virginia Woolf, Stephen Hawking		Kateb Yacine
Publication (s): Novels/poetry/theatre	Themes	Published	Re-published	Literary Awards	
				National	International
<i>tābt ālzmġ</i> [Enduring Darkness]	A detective novel, Algeria's desert, darkness of Algerian society; corruption, a novel full of puzzles	2018, Chihab, Algeria		In 2015, <i>skrāt nġmġ</i> [Flickers of the Star] was nominated for Assia Djebar literary Prize In 2016, <i>skrāt nġmġ</i> was longlisted for Mohammed Dib literary award	
<i>'lyhā tlatġ šr</i> [Thirteen Upon Her]	Women's problems inspired by The Devil Wears Prada by Lauren Weisberger	2014, Chihab, Algeria		In 2016, was awarded by the International Forum of the Algerian Arabophone	

<p><i>skrāt nğmġ</i> [Flickers of the Star]</p>	<p>Detective novel, the living conditions of people in Algiers, Algeria after the war of independence, mixed marriage; French and Algerians, the history of Jews in Constantine, the Algerian educational system, Sufism, Freemasonry</p>	<p>2015, Chihab, Algeria</p>		<p>writer Abdel Hamid Ben Hadouga.</p>	
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Table 3: Websites for free books download

Name of the webs	Links to free books download
Foula Book	https://biturl.top/ieMbUr
Noor Book	https://biturl.top/Rfyagm
Online Books Sharing Community	https://biturl.top/zA7B7i
Gallica	https://biturl.top/BBNrui
Al Kottob	https://biturl.top/mEfQv2
Books Library Online	https://books-library.online/d-740-download
8 Gharb	https://biturl.top/Mba2me
China	https://uae.kinokuniya.com/bw/9786140126909
Books 4 Arab	https://www.books4arab.com/
Tolaitila	https://www.tolaitila.com/
Kutub	https://biturl.top/UNJZJz

Image 1: Bestseller Algerian books at SILA event 2018



Reference:

Aggar, S. (2018, November 10). Le Top des Livres Les plus vendus au SILA 2018.

Dernières Infos d'Algérie. [Image post]. Retrieved from

<https://biturl.top/nQBzMn>

Image 2: Algerian Francophone authors invited by Barzakh publishing house to the SILA event



Reference: Viny Culture (2017, October 26). Programme des éditions Barzakh au SILA. [Image post]. Retrieved from <https://biturl.top/63Mjlf>

Image 3: Ahlam Mosteghanemi at Beirut International Book Fair



Launch of Nessyan.com (Art of Forgetting) at Unesco, Beirut 2009.

Reference: Mosteghanemi, A. [Image post]. Retrieved from

<https://biturl.top/fYnYBb>

The favourable letter from the Ethics Committee

Professor Matthew Weait, BA (Hons), MA, MPhil, DPhil
Dean

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FAVOURABLE ETHICAL OPINION

Name: Karima Bentoumi

Study Title: Beyond 'Francophone' and 'Arabophone' Algerian Literature? Authors, Texts, Publication and Readership after 2000.

Reference Number: 16/17:49

Date Resubmitted: 02/06/2017

Thank you for resubmitting your application to the FHSS Ethics Committee and for making the requested changes/ clarifications.

I am pleased to inform you that FHSS Ethics Committee was content to grant a favourable ethical opinion of the above research on the basis described in the submitted documents listed at Annex A, and subject to standard general conditions (*See Annex B*).

Please note that the favourable opinion of FHSS Ethics Committee does not grant permission or approval to undertake the research/ work. Management permission or approval must be obtained from any host organisation, including the University of Portsmouth or supervisor, prior to the start of the study.

Wishing you every success in your research

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Winstone'.

Chair

Dr Jane Winstone

Email: ethics-fhss@port.ac.uk

Annexes

A - Documents reviewed

B - After ethical review

www.port.ac.uk

FORM UPR16

Research Ethics Review Checklist



Please include this completed form as an appendix to your thesis (see the Research Degrees Operational Handbook for more information)

Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Information		Student ID:	789772
PGRS Name:	Miss Bentoumi Karima		
Department:	SASHPL	First Supervisor:	Dr. Natalya Vince
Start Date: (or progression date for Prof Doc students)	2015-2020		
Study Mode and Route:	Part-time <input type="checkbox"/>	MPhil <input type="checkbox"/>	MD <input type="checkbox"/>
	Full-time <input type="checkbox"/>	PhD <input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Doctorate <input type="checkbox"/>

Title of Thesis:	Power and Publishing: Contemporary Arabophone and Francophone Algerian Literature and its National and Transnational Conditions of Production
Thesis Word Count: (excluding ancillary data)	79,562

If you are unsure about any of the following, please contact the local representative on your Faculty Ethics Committee for advice. Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University's Ethics Policy and any relevant University, academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study

Although the Ethics Committee may have given your study a favourable opinion, the final responsibility for the ethical conduct of this work lies with the researcher(s).

UKRIO Finished Research Checklist:

(If you would like to know more about the checklist, please see your Faculty or Departmental Ethics Committee rep or see the online version of the full checklist at: <http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research/>)

a) Have all of your research and findings been reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have all contributions to knowledge been acknowledged?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have you complied with all agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
d) Has your research data been retained in a secure and accessible form and will it remain so for the required duration?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
e) Does your research comply with all legal, ethical, and contractual requirements?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Candidate Statement:

I have considered the ethical dimensions of the above-named research project, and have successfully obtained the necessary ethical approval(s)

Ethical review number(s) from Faculty Ethics Committee (or from NRES/SCREC):	16/17:49
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If you have *not* submitted your work for ethical review, and/or you have answered 'No' to one or more of questions a) to e), please explain below why this is so:

Signed (PGRS):	Miss Karima Bentoumi	Date: 07/12/2020
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UPR16 – April 2018