

This is a preprint of: L. Molina (2016) “The *mahjar* comes home: Arab references in Arabic translations of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*” in L. Molina & L. Santamaria (Eds.) *Traducción, Interpretación y Estudios interculturales*, Granada: Editorial Comares, Colección Interlingua 109-125. ISBN 978-84-9045-432-9.

The *mahjar* comes home: Arab references in Arabic translations of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

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Abstract

This article looks at the notion of foreign interference, the term we use to define the situation that arises between a source text and its translation when the former contains elements from the target culture. To analyse this kind of “conflict”, which is similar to what has been referred to as the perspective of the Other, we will review Arabic translations of Gabriel García Márquez’s novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. As part of Colombian society, the *mahjar*, the chiefly Syrian and Lebanese Arab diaspora that settled in the Americas between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is present in the novel in question, as well as others by the same author (e.g. Santiago Nasar, the main character of *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*). Despite the target language references contained in the source text being distant from the cultural context of the translations, in terms of geography (Colombia) and history (a hundred-year gap in relation to the reader), we will see that the phenomenon of foreign interference is evident in the translations.

Keywords

Foreign interference, cultural interference, *mahjar*, otherness, norm

1. Presentation: corpus and methodological considerations

Gabriel García Márquez is one of the authors whose works have been most translated into Arabic. The five translations of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* we will analyse, all

of them titled *مائة عام من العزلة*, are testimony to that. The translation to which we will refer as TT1 was carried out by the brothers Sami and Inam al-Jundi, who established Dar al-Jundi, the publisher that published the translation in Damascus in 1992¹. The second translation, TT2, was performed by Mohamed Masoud for the Lebanese publisher Dar al-Auda in 1989. It should be noted that TT2 is an abbreviated version rather than a complete translation, and thus does not contain some of the segments we wish to analyse. The third target text, TT3, is Sulayman al-Attar's translation, published in 1993 by Dar Suad al-Sabah, a publisher with branches in Egypt and Kuwait. It was also in 1993 that TT4, the translation undertaken by Mohamad Al-hajj Khalil, was published in Beirut by al-Muassasa al- Arabiyya lil-Dirasat wa-al-Nashr. The last of the translations, TT5, was performed by Salih al-Ilmani and published by the Syrian publisher Dar al-Mada in 2005.

We will begin our analysis by contextualising the phenomenon of foreign interference, before looking at various passages of the novel in which such clashes between the source text and its translations occur. We will then present a number of segments of the original text in Spanish with their five Arabic translations in each case. To highlight the references we wish to analyse, each Arabic translation will be accompanied by an English translation. Each English translation will be taken directly from Gregory Rabassa's English version of the novel, published by Harper & Row in 1971, which we will call TTEN, except where we want to emphasise specific aspects of the Arabic translation for analysis purposes. The number of the page on which the corresponding segment appears in TTEN will be indicated after the English translation of TT1 in every case.

2. Categories of foreign interference

The Arab cultural references in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* which cause the phenomenon of foreign interference in the novel's Arabic translations can be grouped into two different categories. The first is related to the novel's setting. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is unequivocally set in a geographical place, a point in history, a society and a culture. The town of Macondo is a fictitious version of Aracataca, the town in which the author was born, and the novel recreates a century of its history. In

¹ While not mentioned in the text, it seems that this translation was first published in Beirut in 1979 by Dar al-Kalima, for which reason we call it TT1.

Macondo and Aracataca alike, there was a colony of Arabs who had mainly arrived from Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. That colony, the *mahjar*, is a source of foreign interference between the source text and its Arabic translations. We have called the second category *Arab references*. The corresponding section of this article includes the example of the author applying the adjective *Arab* to people of non-Arab origin for descriptive purposes, along with a number of terms that belong to the Arab cultural system and, likewise, generate foreign interference in the Arabic translations.

2.1. Macondo's Arab colony

As stated previously, the novel's clear geographical and historical setting is a cause of foreign interference, particularly where the association made between the terms *Arabs* and *Turks* in the source text is concerned.

The Arab characters in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and other novels by "García Márquez, Jorge Amado, Ernesto Sabato and many other great writers" (Martín Muñoz 2009: 8) represent the emigrants, mainly of Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian origin, who settled in the New World in the final years of the 19th century and the first third of the 20th century, or their descendants. In the period in question, the Middle Eastern area of *Bilad al-Sham* was part of the Ottoman Empire, and the people of Latin America consequently called the Arab settlers Turks (their descendants are still referred to in the same way today). Contemporary Arab readers find this association strange, and it results in a lack of equivalence between the two cultures involved.

Some of the translations of the segments dealt with in examples 1 and 2 avoid the association between the terms *Arabs* and *Turks*, opting instead to use translation techniques to nullify it.

Example 1

"(...) estaba instalando un almacén de instrumentos músicos y juguetes de cuerda, en el mismo sector donde vegetaban los árabes que en otro tiempo cambiaban baratijas por guacamayas, y que la gente conocía como la Calle de los Turcos." (ST: 96)

[TT1: 86]

"(...) أقام مخزنا لبيع آلات الموسيقى والألعاب ذوات النوايض في نفس الحي الذي كان يزرعه العرب وكانوا في الماضي يبادلون فيه الألعاب بالبيغاوات، الحي الذي دأب الناس على تسميته بشارع التركو."

[“(...) had set up a store for musical instruments and mechanical toys in the same section where the Arabs had lingered in other times swapping knickknacks for macaws, and which the people called the Street of the *Turku*.”] (TTEN: 41)

[TT2: 42]

“(...) حيث افتتح محلا لبيع الآلات الموسيقية واللعب الميكانيكية في حي التجار الشرقيين...”

[“(...) had set up a store for musical instruments and mechanical toys among the eastern traders...”]

[TT3: 140]

“(...) وكان يؤسس محلا للآلات الموسيقية والألعاب ذات الزنبر، في نفس القطاع حيث يعيش العرب مثل النباتات بعد أن كانوا في زمن آخر يستبدلون البيغاوات بالحلى. وكان القطاع المذكور يعرفه الناس باسم شارع الأتراك.”

[“(...) had set up a store for musical instruments and mechanical toys in the same section where the Arabs had lingered in other times swapping knickknacks for macaws, and which the people called the Street of the Turks.”]

[TT4: 91]

“(...) وفتح مخزنا لبيع آلات الموسيقى والألعاب الآلية، في نفس الحي الذي كان العرب يمكنون فيه في الماضي ويقايضون البيغاوات بالألعاب، والذي أطلق الناس عليه اسم «شارع الأتراك».”

[“(...) had set up a store for musical instruments and mechanical toys in the same section where the Arabs had lingered in other times swapping knickknacks for macaws, and which the people called the Street of the Turks.”]

[TT5: 94]

“(...) في القطاع نفسه الذي كان يعيش فيه العرب، ممن كانوا يقايضون بعض الحلي الرخيصة بالبيغاوات، والذي صار الناس يعرفونه باسم «شارع التوركو».”

[“(...) had set up a store for musical instruments and mechanical toys in the same section where the Arabs had lingered in other times swapping knickknacks for macaws, and which the people called the Street of the *Turku*.”]

Three of the five translations neutralise the association between Arabs and Turks. Neither term appears in TT2, with the translator having omitted both of them and opted for the generalisation *eastern traders*. The other two translations that avoid such interference, TT1 and TT5, take a common approach to doing so. While each of them writes it in a different way, both translations use a strange transcription to render the

word *Turks*, one that does not even correspond to Spanish phonetics and which we have transcribed as *Turku*². The two remaining translations see no problem in transferring the association to the target culture. They use established equivalent terms for *Arabs* and *Turks*.

Example 2

“La Calle de los Turcos era otra vez la de antes, la de los tiempos en que los árabes de pantuflas y argollas en las orejas que recorrían el mundo cambiando guacamayas por chucherías hallaron en Macondo un buen recodo para descansar de su milenaria condición de trashumantes.” (ST: 403)

[TT1: 278]

"وعداد شارع التركو إلى ما كان عليه من قبل شارع الغرباء وأخفافهم والأقراط في آذانهم، أيام كانوا يجوبون العالم يبدلون الببغاوات بالألعاب، أيام وجدوا في ماكوندو زواية صغيرة من الأرض يرتاحون فيها من عناء رحيلهم التاريخي."

[“The Street of the *Turku* was again what it had been earlier, the street of foreigners with slippers and rings in their ears who had gone about the world swapping knickknacks for macaws and had found in Macondo a good bend in the road where they could find respite from their age-old lot as wanderers.”] (TTEN: 161)

[TT3: 564]³

"وكان شارع الأتراك مرة أخرى مثلما كان من قبل، شارع الأعصر التي كان فيها العرب المنتوفلي وأقراط الأذن الذين يقايضون بعقود الزجاج الببغاوات، قد وجدوا في ماكوندو مكانا يعرجون إليه كي يستريحون من جو الانتظار اللانهائي لقوم يضربون في الأرض على غير هدى."

[“The Street of the *Turks* was again what it had been earlier, in the days when the Arabs with slippers and rings in their ears were going about the world swapping knickknacks for macaws and had found in Macondo a good bend in the road where they could find respite from their age-old lot as wanderers.”]

[TT4: 419]

"وعداد كان شارع الأتراك إلى ما كان عليه من قبل، عندما كان العرب بأخفافهم وأقراطهم في آذانهم، يجوبون العالم، يبدلون بالببغاوات الألعاب، أيام ووجدوا في ماكوندو بقعة صغيرة من الأرض يحطون الرجال فيها، يستريحون من عناء رحيلهم التاريخي وتجوالهم في أنحاء المعمورة."

[“The Street of the *Turks* was again what it had been earlier, in the days when the Arabs with slippers and rings in their ears were going about the world swapping knickknacks for

² In the transcriptions, we have not indicated the slight difference between the two forms of the word in Arabic. The difference is that the first “u” in TT5 is a long vowel.

³ This segment does not appear in TT2.

macaws and had found in Macondo a good bend in the road where they could find respite from their age-old lot as wanderers.”]

[TT5: 400]

"وكان شارع الأتراك قد عاد مجدداً إلى ما كان عليه، شارع الأزمنة التي كان فيها العرب ذوو الأحفاف والأفراط في آذانهم، يجوبون العالم مستبدلين بضائعهم الرخيصة بالبيغافات، ووجدوا في ماكوندو ركنا مناسباً للاستراحة من شرطهم القديم كأناس متنقلين."

[“The Street of the Turks was again what it had been earlier, in the days when the Arabs with slippers and rings in their ears were going about the world swapping knickknacks for macaws and had found in Macondo a good bend in the road where they could find respite from their age-old lot as wanderers.”]

This second example shows another way of rejecting the author’s synonymous use of the terms *Turks* and *Arabs*. It appears in TT1, where the former is diluted through the transcription *Turku* and the latter becomes *foreigners*.

The only proper noun attributed to any of the members of Macondo’s Arab colony in the novel is Jacob, in reference to the Hotel Jacob.

Example 3

“Se bajó en el Hotel Jacob —instalado por uno de los primeros árabes que llegaron haciendo cambalache de chucherías por guacamayas—.” (ST: 75)

[TT1: 56]

"نزل في أوتيل جاكوب، الذي أقامه العرب الأوئل حين جاءوا يبادلون بالبيغافات بضاعتهم."
[“He put up at the Hotel Jacob —built by one of the first Arabs who came to swap knickknacks for macaws—.”] (TTEN: 33)

[TT2: 32]

"نزل في فندق يعقوب الذي بناه أحد العرب الوافدين للتجارة."

[“He put up at the Hotel Jacob, built by one of the first Arabs who came to engage in trade.”]

[TT3: 112]

"نزل في فندق يعقوب — المؤسس على يد واحد من العرب الأوائل الذين وصلوا لعمل مقايضات الببغاوات بالحللي—. "

["He put up at the Hotel Jacob —built by one of the first Arabs who came to swap knickknacks for macaws—."]

[TT4: 69]

"أقام في فندق جاكوب، الذي بناه أحد العرب الأوائل الذين جاؤوه يقايضون بالببغاوات بضاعتهم. "

["He put up at the Hotel Jacob —built by one of the first Arabs who came to swap knickknacks for macaws—."]

[TT5: 73]

"نزل في فندق يعقوب — الذي أقامه أحد أول العرب الذين جاؤوا يقايضون بضاعتهم التافهة بالببغاوات—"

["He put up at the Hotel Jacob —built by one of the first Arabs who came to swap knickknacks for macaws—."]

In this case, the translations are divided as to how to deal with the presence of a target culture reference in the source text. Three of them (TT2, TT3 and TT5) choose to recognise and recover the character's Arabness by writing his name as it would normally be written in Arabic. The other two translations opt for a transcription (marked in bold) of his name. It should be noted that the transcription corresponds to English rather than Spanish phonetics.

2.2. Arab references

We shall now analyse a number of Arab references placed in the context of the source culture. Some examples involve the use of the adjective *Arab* to describe characters in the novel. Despite those characters not actually being Arabs and, consequently, the distance in relation to the target reader being greater than in the case of the examples involving Macondo's Arab colony, the syntagms *Arab heart*, *Arab eyes* and *sadness of a Saracen* are sufficiently emotive to cause varying degrees of foreign interference.

We will also analyse three other Arab cultural references, specifically the words *mosque* and *jellaba* (the name of a garment), and the title of the epic poem *Jerusalem Delivered*. In these cases too, the references are inserted into the context of the source culture in the novel. Despite the distance in relation to the context of the target culture,

the target texts again show that translating the references involves some degree of difficulty.

Example 4

“Petra Cotes era tal vez el único nativo que tenía corazón de árabe. Había visto los últimos destrozos de sus establos y caballerizas arrastrados por la tormenta, pero había logrado mantener la casa en pie.” (ST: 403)

[TT1: 278]

"كانت بيترا كوتيس الوحيدة من السكان التي لها قلب عربي. لقد شهدت خرائب الحظائر الأخيرة وكيف أخذتها العاصفة، لكنها جاهدت حتى يظل البيت قائما."

[“Petra Cotes was perhaps the only native who had an Arab heart. She had seen the final destruction of her stables, her barns dragged off by the storm, but she had managed to keep her house standing.”] (TTEN: 161)

[TT2: 167]

"كانت بيترا موتيس هي أكثر سكان البلدة تجلدا فقد شاهدت الدمار الشامل لأسطبلاتها، واكتساح العاصفة لمخازن حبوبها، أنها أفلحت في استبقاء بيتها قائما."

[“Petra Cotes was the most resolute, determined inhabitant... She had seen the total destruction of her stable and her barn swept away by the storm, but she had managed to keep her house standing.”]

[TT3: 565]

"لقد كانت بيترا كوتيس هي الوحيدة من أهل ماكوندو التي تملك قلبا عربيا."

[“Petra Cotes was perhaps the only native who had an Arab heart. She had seen the final destruction of her stables, her barns dragged off by the storm, but she had managed to keep her house standing.”]

[TT4: 419-420]

"ربما كانت بيترا كوتيس الوحيدة، من السكان الأصليين، كان لها قلب عربي."

[“Petra Cotes was perhaps the only native who had an Arab heart. She had seen the final destruction of her stables, her barns dragged off by the storm, but she had managed to keep her house standing.”]

[TT5: 401]

"ربما كانت بيترا كوتيس هي الوطنية الوحيدة التي كانت لها قلب عربي. فقد رأت وقائع الدمار الأخيرة في حظائرها وإسطبلاهما التي جرفتها العاصفة، ولكنها تمكنت من إبقاء البيت منتصباً."

["Petra Cotes was perhaps the only native who had an Arab heart. She had seen the final destruction of her stables, her barns dragged off by the storm, but she had managed to keep her house standing."]

In this segment, the syntagm *Arab heart* refers to being capable of overcoming any adversity, a quality that the author repeatedly attributes to Macondo's inhabitants of Arab origin. Upon coming across the expression *had an Arab heart* in the novel, however, an Arab reader is very likely to wonder what that might mean to a Colombian. Only one of the target texts, TT2, has nullified the cultural interference, opting to convey the image by describing the character as *resolute, determined*.

Example 5

"(...) Aureliano Segundo y Santa Sofía de la Piedad vieron los ojos árabes de José Arcadio Segundo..." (ST: 379)

[TT1: 263]

"(...) رأت القديسة صوفيا التقيّة وأوريليانو الثاني عيني جوسيه أركاديو الثاني العربيّتين..."

["(...) Aureliano Segundo and Santa Sofía de la Piedad saw the Arab eyes of José Arcadio Segundo..."] (TTEN: 152)

[TT2: 159]

"(...) أبصر أوريليانو الثاني وأمه عيني أخيه لجوسيه أركاديو الثاني..."

["(...) Aureliano Segundo and his mother saw the eyes of his brother José Arcadio Segundo..."]

[TT3:532]

"(...) رأى أوريليانو الثاني والقديسة صوفيا ذات الرحمة العيون العربية لجوسيه أركاديو الثاني..."

["(...) Aureliano Segundo and Santa Sofía de la Piedad saw the Arab eyes of José Arcadio Segundo..."]

[TT4: 394]

"(...) شاهد سانتا صوفيا (التقيّة) وأوريليانو الثاني عيني خوزيه أركاديو الثاني العربيّتين..."

["(...) Aureliano Segundo and Santa Sofía de la Piedad saw the Arab eyes of José Arcadio Segundo..."]

[TT5: 377]

" (...) ورأى أوريليانو الثاني وصوفيا قديسة الرحمة عيني خوسيه أركاديو الثاني العربيين..."
[“(...) Aureliano Segundo and Santa Sofía de la Piedad saw the Arab eyes of José Arcadio Segundo...”]

As in the case of the previous example, only TT2 chooses to nullify the Arab reference. While the idea of an *Arab heart* might puzzle an Arab reader, both the source and target cultures would understand *Arab eyes* to mean dark, beautiful eyes. Nonetheless, in what we regard as an extreme example of resistance to foreign interference, TT2 removes the reference.

Example 6

“Era lineal, solemne, y tenía un estar pensativo y una tristeza de sarraceno, y un resplandor lúgubre en el rostro color otoño.” (ST: 320)

[TT1: 224]

"كان طوبلا نحيلاً وقور الهيئة، دائم التفكير حزينا كفارس مسلم وعلى وجهه لمعة كثيبة بلون الخريف."
[“He was linear, solemn, and had a pensive air and the sadness of a Muslim warrior, and a mournful glow on his face that was the colour of autumn.”] (TTEN: 129)

[TT2: 141]

"كان (...) أدنى إلى النحول والجد والسهوم والوجوم."
[“He was (...) he tended to be solemn and melancholic.”]

[TT3: 453]

"كان فارعا وقورا وله هيئة متأملة، وأحزان مسلم، وإشراقة براقاة في لون وجهه خريفي."
[“He was linear, solemn, and had a pensive air and the sadness of a Muslim, and a mournful glow on his face that was the colour of autumn.”]

[TT4: 331]

"فقد كان طوبلا نحيلاً وقور الهيئة، دائم التفكير حزينا جاد كفارس عربي مسلم وعلى وجهه لمعة كثيبة بلون الخريف."
[“He was linear, solemn, and had a pensive air and the sadness of a Muslim Arab warrior, and a mournful glow on his face that was the colour of autumn.”]

[TT5: 318]

"كان نحيلاً، وقوراً مستغرقاً في التفكير، حزيناً كمسلم في أوروبا وبريق كأبة في وجهه الذي بلون الخريف."

[“He was linear, solemn, and had a pensive air and the sadness *felt by* a Muslim in Europe, and a mournful glow on his face that was the colour of autumn.”]

The word *Saracen* is generally used in a historical context, specifically as the term employed by Christians to refer to Arabs in the time of the Crusades. According to the dictionary, it means both *Arab* and *Muslim*. The target texts put forward various solutions. The term *Arab* only features in TT4, as part of the compound adjective *Muslim Arab*. Two of the translations, TT1 and TT4, opt for the technique of amplification, adding the term *warrior*. Another, TT5, applies the same technique, adding *in Europe*. Our conclusion is that all five translations (including TT2, which omits the reference) seek to distance the reference from target readers, i.e. to avoid foreign interference.

In the way in which they are used in the novel, the final three references we are going to analyse have less cultural and emotional weight than the previous ones. In the case of *mosque*, the word is used to refer not to an actual mosque but to the appearance of such a building, which the author associates with the colour white. In the second case, that of *jellaba*, the function of the reference in the novel has even less cultural weight, as the individuals wearing the garments are people in disguise during a carnival and are thus also part of the source context. Likewise, the cultural weight of the last of our examples is minimal in the context of the novel, with the title of the epic poem *Jerusalem Delivered* merely being mentioned to indicate another book’s position on a shelf.

Example 7

“La antigua mansión pintada de blanco desde los tiempos en que llevaron la pianola, adquirió el aspecto equívoco de una mezquita.” (ST: 237)

[TT1: 170-171]

"وغدا البيت القديم الذي طلى بالأبيض منذ الفترة التي أتوا بها بالبيانو الميكانيكي، وله مظهر غريب."

[“The old mansion, painted white since the time they had brought the pianola, took on a strange look.”] (TTEN: 98)

[TT3: 340]⁴

"الدار القديمة المطلية بالأبيض منذ أن دخلتها البيانولا، أصبحت مسجدا في مظهرها الجديد الغامض."

[“The old mansion, painted white since the time they had brought the pianola, took on the strange look of a mosque.”]

[TT4: 246]

"فصار البيت القديم، الذي طلوه باللون الأبيض، منذ الفترة التي جلبوا البيانو الآلي، ذا مظهر غريب،..."

[“The old mansion, painted white since the time they had brought the pianola, took on a strange look.”]

[TT5: 236]

"فاكتسبت البيت القديم، المطلي بالأبيض منذ الزمن الذي جلبوا فيه البيانولا، المظهر الخاطئ لمسجد."

[“The old mansion, painted white since the time they had brought the pianola, took on the strange look of a mosque.”]

It is clear that the term *mosque* does not have the same function in the source and target cultures. An *old mansion painted white* is very unlikely to take on *the strange look of a mosque* for members of the target culture. Consequently, two of the translations, TT1 and TT4, have opted to remove the reference, thus avoiding the foreign interference it entails.

Example 8

“(...) Los forasteros disfrazados de beduinos (...) era un escuadrón del ejército regular que debajo de sus ricas chilabas escondía fusiles de reglamento.” (ST: 248)

[TT1: 178]

"... الغرباء الذين تخفوا في زي البدو (...) كان مؤلفا من كتيبة من جنود الجيش النظامي وأخفوا تحت جلابياتهم الفخمة أسلحتهم الرسمية."

⁴ This segment does not appear in TT2.

[“(...) The strangers, disguised as Bedouins (...) was a squad of regular army soldiers who were concealing government-issue rifles under their rich jilbabs.”] (TTEN: 101-102)

[TT2: 123]

"... الغرباء المتنكرون في أزياء بدوية (...) كانوا من الجنود النظاميين الذين أخفوا بنادقهم الحكيمية تحت العباءات البدوية الفضفاضة."

[“(...) the strangers, disguised as Bedouins (...) was a squad of regular army soldiers who were concealing government-issue rifles under their loose Bedouin abayas.”]

[TT3: 354]

"... أولئك الغرباء المتنكرون في زي بدو (...) عبارة عن فصيلة من الجيش النظامي أخفت بنادقها الرسمية تحت ثيابها الفخيمة."

[“(...) The strangers, disguised as Bedouins (...) was a squad of regular army soldiers who were concealing government-issue rifles under their rich robes.”]

[TT4: 256-257]

"العرباء، الذين تخفوا بزى البدو (...) كان مؤلفا من كتيبة من جنود الجيش النظامي، أخفوا تحت ملابسهم الفخمة أسلحتهم الرسمية."

[“(...) The strangers, disguised as Bedouins (...) was a squad of regular army soldiers who were concealing government-issue rifles under their rich robes.”]

[TT5: 246]

"العرباء المتنكرين بزى البدو (...) أنهم كانوا يخبئون بنادق رسمية تحت عباؤهم البدوية."

[“(...) The strangers, disguised as Bedouins (...) was a squad of regular army soldiers who were concealing government-issue rifles under their Bedouin abayas.”]

This example constitutes a double homecoming, as the original reference in Spanish is Arabic; it is an Arabism. Like the English word *jellaba*, the Spanish term *chilaba* comes from the Arabic word "جلابة" (*jallbab*). Three of the five translations convey the Arab reference by means of one of two Arabic words. The first, as used in TT1, is "جلباب" (*jilbab*), which has the same root as "جلابة" (*jallbab*). The other is "عباء" (*abaya*), which appears in TT2 and TT5. There is no difference between the two words in terms of form and function, especially in the context of carnival costumes, and the three translations thus employ the same technique, that of using an established

equivalent. In contrast, the other two target texts apparently detect foreign interference. They opt to remove the Arab reference and replace it with a generalisation with no cultural connotations, specifically "ثياب" (*thiyab*) in one case and "ملابس" (*malabis*) in the other, both of which mean robes.

Example 9

Although this final example only applies to one of the translations, we have included it here as we feel that it clearly shows the presence of the phenomenon of foreign interference.

“(...) Aureliano le pidió que le llevara un libro que había de encontrar entre la *Jerusalén Libertada* y los poemas de Milton.” (ST: 432)

[TT1: 298]

“(...) طلب منها أوريليانو أن تأتية بالكتاب. ولقد وجدته له بين «تحرير القدس» و«أشعار ميلتون».”

[“(...) Aureliano asked her to bring him the book that could be found between *Jerusalem Delivered* and Milton’s poems.”] (TTEN: 173)

[TT2: 179]

“(...) طلب منها أوريليانو أن تجيئه بالكتاب الذي يمكن العثور عليه بين مجلدي «تاريخ أوشليم» و«أشعار ميلتون».”

[“(...) Aureliano asked her to bring him the book that could be found between the *History of Jerusalem* and Milton’s poems.”]

[TT3: 605]

“(...) طلب منها أوريليانو أن تشتري له الكتاب الذي يمكنه أن تجده بين كتب: القدس المحررة وكتاب قصائد ميلتون.”

[“(...) Aureliano asked her to bring him the book that could be found between *Jerusalem Delivered* and Milton’s poems.”]

[TT4: 452]

" (...) طلب منها أوريليانو أن تأتيه بالكتاب. وقد وجدته له فعلا بين كتابي «تحرير القدس» و«أشعار ميلتون».

[“(...) Aureliano asked her to bring him the book that could be found between *Jerusalem Delivered* and Milton’s poems.”]

[TT5: 430]

" (...) طلب منها أوريليانو أن تأتيه بالكتاب الذي ستجده بين كتابي تحرير القدس وأشعار ميلتون... "

[“(...) Aureliano asked her to bring him the book that could be found between *Jerusalem Delivered* and Milton’s poems.”]

To the best of our knowledge, Torquato Tasso’s work has not been translated into Arabic. In our translations, we thus regard both the option used in TT3, "القدس" (*Tahrir al-Quds*), and that used in TT1, TT4 and TT5, "تحرير القدس" (*Tahrir al-Quds*), to be established equivalents. In this example, only one of the target texts, TT2, perceives interference stemming from the target culture reference in the source text and proceeds to neutralise it. Despite none of the other texts doing likewise, we consider this to be a highly illustrative example of the phenomenon of foreign interference. To translate the name of the city of Jerusalem, TT2 uses an older word, "أورشليم" (*Urshalim*), rather than "القدس" (*al-Quds*), which is the more usual name, one used by all Arabs regardless of their religion and that which appears in the other translations. We believe that TT2 uses the older word for Jerusalem with a view to distancing (in time, in this case) the reference from the target culture. As far as the change of *Delivered* for *History of* is concerned, we feel that the intention is to reduce the substantial cultural weight that the adjective *Delivered* has when used in relation to Jerusalem, particularly in the context of an Arab readership. Tasso’s work evokes Jerusalem’s delivery as a consequence of the Crusades. In brief, the combination of *Urshalim* and *History of* has less cultural weight for the target culture than that of *al-Quds* and *Delivered*.

3. Evaluation and analysis of foreign interference

Given that the target language references present in the source text are geographically and historically distant from the cultural context of the translations, the

degree of conflict they generate ought, in principle, to be non-existent or very low. Nonetheless, the target texts show that there actually is conflict, i.e. that the translations are affected by foreign interference, and that, furthermore, the degree of conflict involved is not always low.

In the first category of examples we have analysed, the association between Turks and Arabs poses difficulties in some of the translations. We have observed different strategies for nullifying that interference, namely the use of generalisations, such as *eastern* and *foreigners*, which increase the distance between the relevant reference and target readers; and the use of transcriptions that simply neutralise the reference. These interventions by the translators are evident and have a purpose, which can only be to prevent their readers from misinterpreting ideas, and from doing so in a way perhaps regarded as negative. We believe that the aim of the translators who have opted to distance the references from their target context is to avoid the Latin American association between Turks and Arabs being interpreted as a case of the widespread confusion that exists between the Arab and Islamic worlds. The case of the Arab settler Jacob is similar. Despite the source text explaining that the character is an Arab, two of the translations do not write his name in Arabic; they refrain from putting it back into Arabic upon its homecoming. Instead, they translate the name by means of a transcription that ensures it remains foreign.

Where the application of the adjective *Arab* to non-Arab characters is concerned, only one of the translations rejects and removes the resulting interference. The situation is rather different in the case of the term *Saracen*, a reference with a specific cultural weight that is particularly sensitive in translations into Arabic. Although some etymologies attribute it to an earlier period, the term *Saracen* is associated with the name used in medieval Christendom to refer to Arabs and Muslims, and is part of the western imaginary in relation to the Arab world. It should be noted that the textual context (*the sadness of a Saracen*) contributes to the complexity of translating the term. The solutions put forward in the translations are testimony to the difficulty involved. While those solutions vary, they all keep the term *Saracen* distant from their target contexts. Not one of the target texts simply translates the term as *Arab*. Two of them, TT1 and TT4, add *warrior*, while another, TT5, even makes use of its European conceptual basis to come up with the translation *a Muslim in Europe*.

With regard to all the other cultural references analysed, which, according to an *a priori* evaluation, entail a low level of conflict due to them being situated in the context of the source culture, analysis reveals certain misgivings as far as their

translation to the target culture is concerned. In the case of the word *mosque*, two of the target texts perceive the source text's interference in the target culture and omit the term. In the case of the word *jellaba*, meanwhile, a different pair of texts reject the option of recovering its original Arabness.

Conclusions

Our first conclusion consists of the point made at the beginning of the evaluation and analysis section. Despite the novel's Arab references being geographically and historically situated far from the context of the target culture, all the translations, to one degree or another, reflect the phenomenon of foreign interference.

We feel that the observation that the five target texts react differently to the phenomenon of foreign interference is an interesting result. Finding that each of the translations adopts a different criterion in relation to foreign interference shows that the interrelation between the cultures involved in a translation process is not a static parameter. The five translations we have studied have the same target language, Arabic, yet the options they choose are different. That is because each of them follows different norms, despite them being inserted into the target context of the Arab culture. We subscribe to Toury's (1995) idea that a target text is the product of a set of norms that shape it, and thus consider the degree of acceptance or rejection of foreign interference to constitute a norm. Based on the classification of norms, we believe that the matter discussed here is related to the initial norm, given that it corresponds to the dilemma between ensuring *adequacy* in terms of the norms of the source culture and making a translation *acceptable* to the target culture.

We feel it is important to highlight the contrasts between the notions of foreign interference and otherness. While both reflect one's image of the Other⁵, they are significantly different concepts. In translation, otherness is linked to the principles of the post-colonial approach and its condemnation of the use of translation as a tool for Eurocentric and colonial ideas and practices. Robinson (1997) masterfully explains such practices on the basis of St. Jerome's well-known metaphor. According to the said author, describing translation as "taking the original captive" not only portrays the source culture as inadequate and the target culture (and the translator, as its representative) as superior, but also reflects the idea of translation as a power struggle,

⁵ Term taken from Carbonell Cortés (1997) and (2006).

as “a conflict or contest, a question of ‘bind or bound’, ‘chain or be chained’, ‘capture or be taken captive’” (Robinson 1997: 56). *Foreign interference*, on the other hand, is a term for a special type of cultural interference, that which is generated between the source text and the target text when the former contains elements from the target culture. In the case of foreign interference, in other words, the Other is in the source text and is oneself, the reader of the target text.

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