Traces of Translators' Occidentalism in the Translations of Post-Colonial Novels into Farsi: The Case Studies of Burmese days, A Passage to India and Heart of Darkness

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Abstract

The cultural turn in Translation Studies puts the emphasis on the role of social and political factors in translation. After the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, anti-Western discourse became dominant in the country. Given this change, the present research aimed to study the representation of colonizers in the translations of post-colonial novels into Farsi. To this end, Burmese Days by George Orwell, Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad, and A Passage to India by Edward Morgan Forster and their translations into Farsi were studied, and the parts representing colonizers were discerned and compared with their Farsi translations. The results show that translators used amplification, modulation, particularization, and generalization to represent their anti-Western ideologies. The findings indicate how anti-Western discourse of society was reflected in the translations of post-colonial novels.

Keywords: Ideology, Occidentalism, Post-colonialism, Postcolonial novels, Translation strategies

INTRODUCTION

With the advent of the cultural turn in Translation Studies, translation, at its macro level, has been seen as an activity controlled by lin-guistic as well as extra-linguistic factors such as ideology, culture, gender, economics, and politics. All of these factors play vital roles in translators' choice of translation strategies (Nord, 2003). Literary works have been consi-dered as cultural symbols of a nation so much so that many scholars (e.g., Cortes, 2014; Robin-son, 2015; Tymoczko, 2014) believe that these works function exclusively as "cultural icons supporting particular ideological frameworks, regardless of literary merits" (Cortes,2014, p.50). Therefore, the translation practice of these lite-rary works makes it possibleto "both interrogate

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and engage the hegemonic discourses and practices both epistemologically and institu-tionally " (Selim, 2009; p.5). In this way, polit-ical factors made inroads into Translation Stu-dies so much so that Sakai (1997, p.51) pro-poses the term "regime of translation" and de-fines it as "an ideology that makes translators imagine their relationship to what they do in translation as the symmetrical exchange be-tween two languages".

An offshoot of the cultural turn in Transla-tion Studies is the application of postcolonial theory, pioneered by Edward Said, to Transla-tion Studies. Said"s (1978) concept of "orien-talism" is an important touchstone for postco-lonial theory. Orientalism refers to the stereo-typical discourse about the East as constructed by the West. These stereotypes of Easterners include "irrational, depraved (fallen), child-

like, different". Nevertheless, this discourse allows the West to portray itself as "rational, virtuous, mature, and normal". An essential concept of postcolonial theory is "othering", which refers to the construction of "self" against an "other". Accordingly, "othering" refers to the false image of the orient fabricated by Western thinkers as primitive "other" against civilized west (Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman, Willingham, 2011; p.363).

A postcolonial approach to translation recognizes that translation is not neutral and is subject to ideological and discursive manipulation. To represent "other" fairly in translation, translators need to pay respect to the right of equality of all languages (Hui, 2013). In this relation, Jacquemond (1992, p.156) suggests that translation be situated within the framework of "Occidentalism" which contrary to "Orientalism", refers to the process of othering the West. The translator is necessarily affected by the ideological position of the target culture which has an impact on factors such as what they translate or delete from the translated material, how to transfer tone and translate a literary form and cultural concepts. All of these factors are also impressed by the political, social, aesthetic and ideological context of the receptor culture (Tymockzo, 2003).

Political factors play essential roles in the work of Iranian translators too. Two major factors are responsible for Iranian "occidentalisation" of the West: Imperialism and colonialism. Jalal Al-e Ahmad's book *Occidentosis: The Plague of the West* established the beginning of an anti-Western discourse in Iran. In his book, he blamed Westoxication, which had made the country dependent on the West. The discourse of Westoxication called for return to Islamic traditions and lifestyle. Such a discourse created an ideology of anti-Westernism after the revolution which created the West as the "other" and the East as "us". Jalal Al-e Ahmad viewed the concept of the West as something beyond geopolitical factor and by the West, he meant those countries that are able to process the raw materials by machines and distribute them to the market as a commodity (Bakhshandeh, 2014). Like Jamalzadeh, Ayatollah Khomeini's (the founder of the Islamic Revolution) concern was also the issue of Westoxication among Muslims. Therefore, he led protests against the increasingly powerful influence of the USA and UK in Iran. In his sermons, he warned against the spread of Westoxication and the dangers of Westernism. In his book, *Sahifey-e Nour*, he described the West as the "source of many calamities of Muslims and Iranian nation" (Khomeini, 1986, p.183). He also emphasized the significance of media in Iran's anti-West drive, and maintained that Iranian television should have acted as a "general university to raise people who can fight against the Western hegemony and propaganda and save the cultural apparatus of the country from Westoxication and imperialistic training" (Bakhshandeh, 2014; p.185). This policy led to the formation of an anti-Western discourse in Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini's successor Ayatollah Khamenei, the present leader of Iran, also continued the anti-Western approach of Ayatollah Khomeini, and maintained that anti-Western ideology of Iran after the 1979 revolution is a political issue. Ayatollah Khamenei believes that Western governments are opposed to the influence of religion in politics and society.

Within the descriptive paradigm of Translation Studies, Lefevere (1992) explored the embedding of translations in social, ideological and cultural contexts. He believes that ideology is closely linked with power and politics and is often determined by the 'patrons', i.e. the people and institutions who publish translations. Moreover, ideology governs the strategies the translator uses, as well as the solutions to problems related to the translation process (Lefevere, 2004). In view of the emergence of anti-Western discourse in Iran after the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and the significant role of ideology of translators shaped within society, the current research aims to study the effect of anti-Western discourse in Iran on translating postcolonial novels. According to Bassnett and Lefevere (2004), all rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a

certain ideology and poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. Rewriting is manipulation undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspects can help in the evolution of a literature and society. Lefevere (1992) introduces the concept of patronage to shed light on ideological pressures. In this relation, he explains that two factors basically determine the image of a work of literature as projected by a translation. The first is the ideology of translators, and the second one is the poetics dominant in the receiving literature at the time the translation is made. The ideology imposes the basic strategy the translator is going to use. It is noteworthy that ideology concerning translation is closely linked with power and politics, and Lefevere considers it as the dominant concept of what society should be or can be allowed to be. Viewing the role of the ideology in the choice of translation strategies by translators, the current study aims to identify the strategies translators employed to represent colonizers in the translation of postcolonial novels translated from English into Farsi.

The current study aims to address the following question:

> What are the strategies translators used to represent colonizers in Farsi translation of English postcolonial novels?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With the beginning of the cultural turn in Translation Studies, the scope of these studies widened and covered aspects like culture and politics. Lefevere (1992, p.192) viewed translation as a kind of' rewriting'. In this relation, he states that "manipulation denotes the rewriting of text (the production of plays) in order to make them acceptable for a new audience." During this process every aspect of the original text may be changed. These changes can be categorized into three groups: linguistic change, ideological change, and the change of poetics of the source language (i.e. the presuppositions as to what is or is not literature).

Nord (2003) believes that almost all the decisions taken in the process of translation are affected by ideological criteria consciously or unconsciously. Different types of ideology such as gender, political, cultural, religious and postcolonial ideologies play a vital role in defining translation scope, and choosing appropriate translation strategies. The scope of this study is concerned with the ideological changes of translated texts. Ideology, in this study, refers to "general and abstract social beliefs and opinions of group" (Perez, 2003). In this respect, Zauberga (2004) states that the translator's work may have a clearly defined political message in which the translator acts visibly and the text qualifies as a politicized translation. However, the manipulated text can be described as "systematic rather idiosyncratic." (p.67). This means that it has its roots in social, cultural and political factors.

In the field of Translation Studies, postcolonial literature provides the scholars with a framework to judge the dynamics of political power between language, as well as the situation of translation in a given cultural context. Postcolonial literature is written to present the "unequal relations of power based on binary opposition: "us" and "them" "first world" and "third world", "white" and "black" "colonizer" and "colonized" (Said,1993). Therefore, in postcolonial novels, the Orient and Orientals are viewed in western writer"s point of view which can manipulate, construct and represent the Orient. Postcolonial literature straddles two cultures; however, the translator's domain is restricted to one text (Tymoczko, 1999). In this relation, Fanon (1967) introduced the key concept of "othering" in postcolonial studies. "Othering" refers to the process by which the empire defines itself against those it colonizes (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2004). Translating postcolonial literature aims to find out the way translated texts represent "other" vs. "self", and the principal motive for these representations is political (Niranjana, 1992; Robinson, 1997; Spivak, 1993;).

A postcolonial approach to translation poses the critical question of how power differentials have influenced the practice of translation, and how translation might contribute to "exposing, challenging and decolonizing the legacy of colonialism." (Hui, 2010, p.200). In this relation, Niranjana (1992) criticized colonial and postcolonial translations and described the ways Britain achieved and increased control over India and created the distorted image of the Eastern "other". Niranjana advocates the kind of translation which aims to explicate the cultural differences between two cultures by making the source text visible even in the colonizers' language.

Translation is not exclusively viewed as a channel of colonization; it can also be considered as a tool for active resistance against colonial and neocolonial powers. A number of studies adopting postcolonial perspective as their framework of study revealed examples of resistance in translations conducted in colonial contexts. For instance, Rafael (1988) showed how translations of the Spanish words of Christian missionaries wrongly helped the Tagalogs in the Philippines to communicate the terms of their conversion under Spanish rule. His study demonstrates that translation is not a site where on language-culture can claim dominance over the other (Bhabha, 1994). Tymoczko's (1999) analysis of Irish literature in English translation demonstrates how metonymies used in Irish hero tales have been omitted, amplified or changed by Irish translators to advance resistant translations against colonizers' translations. Her findings suggest that resistant translations can apply various strategies to downgrade the colonizer and upgrade the colonized.

Since the objective of 'decolonized' and 'decolonizing' translation is to communicate with other cultures, the concept of 'thick translation' developed by Appiah (1993) can be relevant. Thick translation locates translated texts in a rich cultural and linguistic culture of the "other". The goal is going beyond translating individual texts and to understand the tradition behind the text by contextualizing it.

Postcolonial translation aims to preserve the alterity of dominated languages and cultures. When translating dominant-language texts, the task of the postcolonial translator is to resist neocolonial linguistic and cultural hegemony. In this respect, Jacquemond (1992, p.156) states that in the postcolonial period "translation should be situated within the framework of an 'Occidentalism' that is Western intellectual production should be selected, appropriated and naturalized in the service of dominated languages/cultures".

In the Middle East, including Iran, there is an interplay between translation and social, political and historical factors (Selim, 2009). Translation, within the framework of the postcolonial nation-state, makes it possible to "both interrogate and engage the hegemonic discourses and practices that have structured this space both epistemologically and institutionally" (Selim, 2009, p.5). Taking this into view, the current study aims to analyze the ways that translators interrogate the hegemonic discourses in the translation of postcolonial novels in Iran.

METHODS

Corpus

hree postcolonial novels formed the corpus of this study: *Burmese Days* written by George Orwell and translated by Zohreh Roshanfekr in 2010, *Heart of Darkness* written by Joseph Conrad and translated by Saleh Hoseyni in 2014 and *A Passage to India* written by E. M. Forster and translated by Hassan Javadi in 2014. *Burmese Days* is a novel authored by British writer George Orwell. First, it was published in the United Kingdom in 1934. It is a novel from the waning days of British colonialism when Burma was ruled from Delhi as a part of British India. Orwell spent five years from 1922 to 1927 as a police officer in the Indian Imperial police force in Burma. *Burmese Days* is well known as one of George Orwell"s major novels. In this novel, Orwell elaborates on concepts such as implications of poverty, suffering, imperialism, racism and totalitarianism. *Burmese Days* proposes anti-

colonial discourse and represents the dark side of British colonialism. This novel is largely based on Orwell"s own experiences in Burma. Furthermore, Orwell believes that, this novel represents a resistance against colonialism in Burma.

Joseph Conrad"s *Heart of Darkness* is about the story of Marlow who is an ivory transpor-ter in Congo. It was first published in 1899. This novel is considered as an anti-imperialism one and criticizes immoral beha-viours of the European colonizers in Africa in the 19th century. According to Booker (1996), the novel concerns issues such as imperialism, capitalism, race, and gender. Besides, Achebe (2006) states that, racism in Conrad"s *Heart of Darkness* explains that, *Heart of Darkness* delineates the image of Africa as „the other world" and different from Europe. In this nov-el, Africans are shown as "other", primitive, barbaric, voiceless and marginalized.

A passage to India (1924) is a novel by the English author E. M. Forster and is concerned with British Raj and the Indian independence movement in the 1920s. It was chosen as one of the 100 great works of 20th century English lite-rature which won the 1924 *James Tait Black Memorial Prize* for fiction. The reason for select-ing these novels stemmed from the circumstance that these novels contain both the colonizer and the colonized characters; therefore, the transla-tors' strategies used to represent colonizers as "other"can be discerned.

Procedure

To discern the strategies employed by transla-tors to represent colonizers (English charac-ters) as "other" in Iran*,* the original English books were compared with their Farsi transla-tions and were analyzed using four constitu-ents of Molina and Albir's (2002) model. This model was used because the findings of a pilot study revealed that the strategies employed by the translators are of the types proposed by this model which provided a system for com-paring ST and target text (TT) literary systems as follows:

- Amplification strategy refers to add-ing details that do not exist in ST or information, explicative paraphras-ing.

- Generalization is to use a more gen-eral or neutral term in TT comparing toST.
- Particularization is to use a more precise or concrete term in TT com-paring to ST.
- Modulation is to change the point of view, focus or cognitive category of TT; it can be either lexical or struc-tural.

Finally, the way the colonizers were represented were analyzed.

DATA ANALYSIS

Frequency and percentage of changes in all novels

Table 1 below indicates the frequency and percentage of the translation strategies applied by translators in representing colonizers in all the three novels.

Table 1.

Translation Strategies Applied to Represent Colo-nizers

Translation strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Amplification	12	54.5%
Modulation	6	27.2%
Particularization	2	9%
Generalization	1	4.5%
Total	21	100%

Demonizing colonizers through amplifica-tion

The aim of the study is concerned with analyz-ing the ways colonizers were represented in the translation of postcolonial novels. The findings revealed that amplification strategy was used in 54/5% of cases in target language and was the most frequent strategy used to translate post-colonial novels in order to show

colonizers as "other". The following examples will shed some light on this :

1. They had killed a white man, killed a white man, the bloody sods, the sneaking. <u>Cowardly hounds</u>! (*Burmese Days, 217*)

آن ها سفید پوستی را به قتل رَسانده بودند. چه قدر وقیح! یک سفید پوست را، <u>آشغال های لعنتی، خائن</u> <u>ها، نامردهای بی همه چیز!</u>

[Roozhaye Bermeiee translated by Zohreh Roshanfekr, p. 311]

They had killed a white man, killed a white man, the bloody sods, the sneaking. <u>Damned trashes, traitors, cursed ones, son of bitches.</u>

Ellis, a European character in Burmese days, utters the above sentence (1). While he refers to Burmese as cowardly hounds, the translator amplifies these words and adds some expletives to this sentence to demonize the European character (Ellis).

2. The cultivator- he's another story. The Pathan- he's a man if you like. But <u>these people</u>-don"t imagine they"re India. (*A Passage to India, 36*)

ولی این حَضَرات چنین افرادی را هندی واقعی به حساب نمی آورند.

[Gozar be Hend, Hassan Javadi, p.85] But these <u>gentlemen</u>- don't imagine they're Indian.

As the original sentence indicates, the source language author has used the term "these people" to refer to English people. However, in the Farsi version, the translator used ironic term "حضرات" to show his nega-tive attitude toward English people.

Modulation
Another strategy used by translators to represent their ideology regarding colonizers is modulation which was used in 27/2% of cases.

3. The destiny of the English seems to resemble their predecessors', who al-

so entered the country with intent <u>to refashion it</u>.*(A Passage to India, p. 199*)

کسانی که <u>به قصد غربی ساختنِ</u> این کشور آمده اند.
[Gozari be Hend, Hassan Javadi, p.341]
who also entered the country with intent <u>to westernize</u> it

As example 3 indicates, the translator [Hassan Javadi] modulated the word "refashion" to "westernize". The word "refashion" simply means change; however, the word "westernize" connotes change plus westernization. This modulation, once more, attests to the negative attitude of the translator towards colonizers, and indicates how the translator is under the influence of the anti-western discourse of the society.

4. The dark "interlopers" of the Eastern trade, and the <u>commissioned "generals"</u> of East India fleets. (Heart of Darkness, 5).

پشـت صحنه ی تجارت شرقی و <u>ژنرال های اجیر</u> ناوگان هند شرقی.

[Del-e- Tariki, Saleh Hosseini, p. 5)

The dark "interlopers" of the Eastern trade, and the <u>hired "generals"</u> of East India fleets.
The word commissioned was modulated to the word [اجیر] in Farsi which has the negative connotation of enslavement. This change in the connotation of the translated word also can also show how the translator can be influenced by the anti-western discourse of the society.

Particularization
In 9% of cases the translators used particularization to enforce their anti- western ideology in their translations.

5. In some ways they are getting almost as bad as the <u>lower classes</u> at home.
و یا به عبارت دیگر، آن ها درستَ همچون آدم های پایین دست <u>انگلیسی</u>، بد می شوند.
[Roozhaye Bermeiee translated by Zohreh Roshanfekr, p. 38]

In some ways they are getting almost as bad as the <u>English lower classes</u> at home. (*Burmese Days, 24*)

As the translation of example 5 indicates, the translator has added the word English to the translated version.

6. We would have provided <u>whiskies and other European refreshment</u>. (*Burmese Days, 90*).

خبر داشتم، برایتان ویسکی و دیگر <u>مشروب‌های شادی بخش انگلیسی</u> تهیه می‌کردم.

[Roozhaye Bermeiee translated by Zohreh Roshanfekr, p. 136]

We would have provided <u>whiskies and other English refreshment.</u>

The word European was replaced with the word English in the translated version.

4.4. Generalization
Generalization strategy was used in 4.5% of cases.

7. Houses belonging to <u>Eurasians</u> stand on the high ground by the rail way station. (*A Passage to India, 5*).

و قطعه زمینی مرتفعی در کنار راه آهن، خانه های <u>اروپاییان</u> را در بر می گیرد

[Gozari be Hend, Hassan Javadi, p.38]

Houses belonging to <u>Europeans</u> stand on the high ground by the rail way station.

In the translated version of sentence 7, the word "Euroasians" was substituted with "Europeans".

DISCUSSIONS
The aim of this study was concerned with the representation of the colonizers as "other" in the translation of post-colonial novels into Farsi. The findings revealed that, based on Molina and Albir's (2002) model, translators used amplification, generalization, particularization and modulation strategies in order to show colonizers as "other". The findings of the current study revealed that according to Tymoczko (2003), the ideology of translation is determined by the political factors of the receptive environment, and the decisions of other participants such as editors or commissioners also influence the image and impact of a translation in its target culture (Beaton ,2007). The findings of this study also indicate that how political context of society can affect the translation strategies employed by translators.

The idea that translations are affected by social and political factors is not new. What is new, however, is the focus on culture as a site of ideological struggle, a view of translators as motivators of resistance of dominant influence and a focus on how meaning in texts serve to setup and maintain relations of power and domination. Before the Islamic Revolution in Iran, translators avoided using strategies to demonize west (Karimi-Hakkak,2010). Following the Islamic Revolution of 1979, a Cultural Revolution also occurred in Iran. In this period, the government"s supportive policies of the publishing field affected translation (Had-dadian- Moghadam, 2012). The findings of this study show how translation can be employed as a place for active resistance to colonial and neocolonial power.

Traces of Occidentalism in the translations of Postcolonial novels is influenced by the current discourse which represents the west, through media, as a Satanic imperial power. It is combined with anti-Americanism and rebellion against the west, and is related to the history of colonialism and imperialism in Iran (Bakhshandeh, 2014).

The use of Occidentalism as a counter to western colonialism and hegemonism has been stressed by Ning (1997). In this relation, she argues that occidentalism can be used as a decolonizing and anti-colonizin strategy and a challenge to "those western hegemonists who have always had a bias against the orient." (Ning, 1997, p.62). In this way, occident is also constructed as "other" and the Occidentalism in the Oriental"s point of view is clearly characterized by the Third world"s anti-colonialist and anti-hegemonic tendency.

The findings of this study can have implications for translation training courses, and translators of post-colonial literature. The results of the current study can give some guidelines regarding the way resistant strategies can be used in translation since translators are required to have sufficient knowledge to transfer culture. Furthermore, the findings it show how the individual choices made by translators can provide evidence for underlying ideologies or taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs and value systems which are shared collectively by social groups.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to demonstrate how colonizers are represented as "other" in translated Postcolonial novels in Farsi. The findings of the study revealed that translators used amplification, modulation, particularization and generalization to represent a negative image of colonizers and show them as "other". The findings of the study put attest to Tymoczko's claim that in the dialectic between source and target cultures the translator is not neutral, but rather engaged in what is at the very least a symbolic struggle, that is, a struggle for symbols. In Tymoczko"s (1999) point of view, resistant translation can benefit from a wide variety of strategies for undermining the colonizer and empowering the colonized. Translation becomes a tool of which both oppressor and oppressed can make use. It is the possibility of translation to select and reform which constitutes its importance as an object of research (Tymoczko,2003). The idea that translations are affected by social and political factors is not new. What is new , however, is the focus on culture as a site of ideological struggle, a view of translators as motivators of resistance of dominant influence and a focus on how meaning in texts serve to set up and maintain relations of power and domination. Researchers mainly believe that anti-Westernism in Iran was triggered by imperialism and colonialism which could be regarded as two main factors leading to the Iranian occidentalisation of the West.

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