

RESEARCH ARTICLE	Narratives: History from Below and Undermining the Official Record in the Novel “El Harki” by Mohamed Ben Djebbar	
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Abstract		
<p>This research paper addresses the issue of unspoken history by focusing on the voice of the “Harki” or the “traitor,” a forgotten entity in Algeria's official history. The latter has denied these marginalized figures the opportunity to speak for themselves and activate their memory to recount the past from their perspective. Unlike the official narrative, which glorifies the political history of the Algerian Revolution, novelist Mohamed Ben Djebbar gives the Harki - a repressed entity that holds a negative reputation in the collective Algerian imagination - a channel to express itself, activate its counter-memory, and reveal overlooked aspects of Algerian history, which has remained the monopoly of official institutions.</p> <p>The novel “El Harki” by Mohamed Ben Djebbar ventures into historical writing from below, characterizing new historical writing that shifts its focus toward the marginalized and the silenced.</p>		
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Introduction

In its latest turn, the new Algerian novel has turned toward new narrative approaches, distancing itself from the recurring themes that regurgitate rigid identity doctrines, explore the twists and turns of the Black Decade, and endorse official history, among other themes that have served as aesthetic garb for the ruling political ideologies that have always sought to perpetuate their hegemony, and thus their very existence. In the challenge it is currently facing at its final turning point, the Algerian novel has taken it upon itself, after this new generation of novelists has developed a counter-consciousness, to write alternative narratives. Through these narratives, it has attempted to deconstruct many of the logocentrism/centralities produced by the authorities in their efforts to produce truth as a grand narrative/Lyotard, with a single, congruent perspective that rejects any minor narratives that oppose it and expose its ambiguity. One of the alternatives that gives the present of power a solid foundation passes through the entrance of seizing the joints of history and exercising guardianship over the past, by imposing a single official history for the country, which is installed as a transcendent truth, starting from its crystallization as one of the state's sanctities that may not be touched under any pretext. There is no doubt that those texts marked with the “official history” mark were built on the ruins of many cases of exclusion and marginalization, and referral to the depths of oblivion, from selves that were marginalized and became outcast figures, or past events that conflict with the interests of power, so official history has bypassed them, but; The novel, and the new Algerian novel in particular, since it is the focus of our attention in this research, has focused its viewpoint on the marginalized and excluded, who bear a counter-consciousness that operates according to the dictates of their memory, which is opposed to official memory and history. This narrative

engagement, which the new Algerian novel has engaged in after engaging with a new critical trend that is enthusiastic about rewriting history, both in production and in questioning, has ensured that the Algerian novel places the history of the Algerian revolution in question, and digs into the memory of the past that has been deprived of its sanctity, after this transitional step that allowed for the interrogation of the unspoken, and gave priority to the subordinate and marginalized in the narration of their seized narratives, after the nationalization of their cultural representation certificates, and pushing them to the forefront. The novel "Al-Harkis" by the Algerian novelist (Mohamed Ben Djebbar) falls within this approach of deconstructing the metaphysics of history. It takes "Al-Harkis," or the traitor, that character who is rejected in most societies and is frequently mentioned in a disgraceful way, in a way tainted with violent contempt and disdain, as a main narrative voice, after Ben Djebbar granted him the power of narration, to be his narrative tool for deceiving the authorities.

Engaging in an effort to reproduce the political history of the Algerian Revolution, which had its flaws covered up by the official historical record, Ibn Sharf, that forgotten and reviled entity in Algerian history, who chose colonial France as his front, was brought to the fore by Muhammad Ben Djebbar, to be his narrative tool in rewriting the history of the Algerian Revolution with considerations whose details were absent from official history. By granting him a position that had been stripped of him within previous epistemologies, this allowed him to put forward justifications for his betrayal and expound his position on concepts and values, whose meanings were, until recently, settled, such as betrayal and honor, the homeland, the revolution and its leaders, and those who claimed to be its heroes and makers. This was after Ben Djebbar, through Ben Sharf/the harki, rescheduled them within new circumstances to be put to the test, as they were enshrined in the collective consciousness as axioms and certainties that are beyond doubt. The employment of (Mohamed Ben Djebbar) of the harkis or traitor who took a marginal position in society and in official history as a whole, as a main character that set in motion the wheels of his novel that bore the same title (The Harkis), where its purpose centered around rereading the political history of the Algerian revolution, through extending a new interpretation that questions the authenticity of official history, was in fact nothing but a continuation of the marathon of rewriting histories from below, which had been undertaken by critical schools and groups, betting on marginal voices and repressed selves that were dropped from official histories, instead of the routine withdrawal to the center, notables and prominent figures as was the custom of classical historical historiography, and the traitor, or harkis in the Algerian dialect, is one of the followers who were silenced within the circle defined by the institution, until a new era came in historical writing, which was called in historical critical studies (history from below, or The history of the marginalized and the oppressed), which reflects the depth of her interest in these individuals and the breath of life into them after a long slumber, is nothing more than her belief in the usefulness of utilizing the raw historical material amassed by these oppressed people. This material can change the past facts indicated in official historical records as absolute truth, which, in the customs of this new critical movement, has become "something that cannot be defended." In order not to get lost in the abyss of details that we postpone until the appropriate time, this research contribution, titled "Historical Narratives from Below in Muhammad bin Jabbar's Novel "Al-Harkī," will conclude with a brief theoretical presentation of this new critical movement, which is concerned with defending those expelled from history. This, in addition to other practical approaches that touch upon the novel's essential aspects, is part of the study's efforts to address this central problem: How did the novel "Al-Harkī" raise its questions about the history of the Algerian revolution while practicing its interpretation of history? And on what narrative basis did Ben Jabbar rely? What issues did the novelist put to the test, given that he engaged in his novel "Al-Harak" in the process of rewriting history from below, escaping the authority of the official text? Did Ben Jabbar, in his novel "Al-Harak", achieve the goal of writing a "comprehensive and comprehensive history" within the framework of new historical writing plans? Or did he, too, fall into the trap of fragmentation and the production of half-truths? Approaching the levels of these problems will be reinforced by framing reading approaches that range from descriptive to interpretive, as well as adopting the deconstructive categories of cultural studies and postcolonialism. 1_ History from Below... Limits and the Grounds for Formation:

Main body

Traditional historical writing has acquired a bad reputation in academic circles, which have branded it as elitistic, fragmented, and reductive, having neglected other actors represented by minorities and marginalized groups. Through its practices, it has fallen into a contradiction that has negated its inherent quality. Scientific objectivity, and the result was historical facts that were falsified and distorted by the official narratives approved by the historian's thought and ideology. In response to that reductionism, the new history trend turned to surround with its attention those groups excluded from official history, and focused on their customs and lifestyles, blasting with this shift in the trend of writing history, that differential hierarchy that

divided social groups into two categories: great actors, and marginalized people who were excluded from the historical movement, equating them, and even giving priority to the latter, as the history of ordinary individuals and simple people within this new type of opposing historical writing, has its significance and drama, like the history of the greats; Through their biographies, we are able to explore the human path more deeply (Lukov, *New History*, 2007, p. 59). Through this, the opportunity has been made possible for a comprehensive understanding of the historical facts of the past, from which those who were subjected to a dramatic surgical separation from major historical events are not excluded, as they are, according to classical historical literature, superfluous, their lives are simple and vulgar, and in this limited conception, they do not deserve a place in the collective memory of peoples. Contrary to this belief, the new historical school asserted that examining the biographies of these unthinkable individuals meant a comprehensive investigation of the facts, along with the development of a comprehensive understanding of the historical period under study. This was the challenge of this new historical movement, which primarily aimed to create a comprehensive history, based on an awareness of the importance of involving all those who were excluded and marginalized by studying what was "abandoned" from sources and the neglected social classes: the history of the insane, the history of shepherds, the history of thieves, and prostitutes. These were topics that were once described as "villainous subjects" (*sujets vils*), as opposed to "noble subjects" (*sujets nobles*) (Lukoff, *The New History*, 2007, pp. 12-13). With this historical movement, which revived the studies of those expelled from history, the French *Annales* School, in turn, came to reveal the depth of its interest in marginal studies. The most important feature of this school was its openness to different social groups, to include everyone without ostracizing or excluding any party, regardless of its rank or class. It changed the scope of its interests, the articles of which were documented by Marc Bloch and Lucien Favre in the journal *Les Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* in 1929 (Qassim, 2021), to the study of the neglected and the topics that the official, approved history considered marginal topics. This new trend in writing history, with its cognitive appeal, tempted other historians who shifted from their previous cognitive orientations and affiliations, in favor of adopting this line of thought, which, in the opinion of Jean-Claude Schmitt, caused a Copernican revolution in the history of historical writing, which witnessed the split of British Marxist historians from the traditional Marxist historical trend, to establish what the historical language previously called "history from below," which refers to a revolutionary revolution against its counterpart labeled history from above or from above, the official history of the elites. It—that is, history from below—is defined, as described by those interested in historical affairs, as a visionary alternative and a transitional process in the history of history, by shifting attention from the top to the vestibule, that is, from the history of rulers and leaders, and the ruling class, to the general classes, in establishing another perspective that starts from the base of society to write a more comprehensive history. It is History viewed from below, or grassroots history, or the history of the common people, in the words of Eric Hobsbawm (Al-Yaqoubi and Tahtah, 2019, pp. 68, 69).

This was before it became a popular term in the early 1980s, attracting historians who drew on the lives of ordinary individuals and those "without a history" as unique models to enrich their historical research. This was a bold step toward democratizing history (Tahtah, 2014, p. 51), breaking with the centralized perspective established by the traditional historical school, whose narrow-mindedness and sectarianism had exhausted its full potential in interpreting and explaining the past. Within this context, Subaltern Studies has increased the cognitive legacy left by the *Annales* and History School from below in its confrontation with colonial historical texts, and its sowing of discord with the official history written under the guardianship of the British colonial authority and its agents from the national elites, who were eager to support and adopt colonial policies, the latter of which seized the Indian archives and harmed national history, claiming that there was nothing that could be called a pre-colonial Indian history/existence, thus attributing, in this case, the honor of making Indian history to itself. Therefore, the name "Subaltern Studies Group" was associated with its celebration in its opposing writings of the active historical roles played by the marginalized indigenous classes, and it took it upon itself to explain their social reality, after it was absent from the official historical scene with a central vision of history that was hostage to a handful of colonists. and the subordinate national bourgeois elites. 2_ Counter-memory and undermining the official text:

Mohamed Ben Djebbar relies on the meta-narrative technique (meta-naratoine) to breach the pillar of official historical writing, specifically through the imaginative use of a narrative text, within which the story of Ibn Sharf, the harkis, is molded. The novel (*harkis*) is an autobiographical text, recording events from Ibn Sharf's life during a sensitive phase of colonial rule in Algeria before it gained independence. This was the writer's entry point for constructing a counter-awareness of the history of the Algerian revolution, and presenting his own interpretation, free from the official narratives of history and truth, through the buried methods of the history of the harkis or traitors. He also places many axioms and self-evident truths in question and doubt. In this historical text, the traitor is no longer viewed with contempt and disdain, nor the revolutionary mujahid with

pride and honor. The aura of sanctification and veneration surrounding the revolution has been lifted. We are in a text (The movement) is facing a re-examination of values and the construction of other facts by writing an alternative narrative to those official narratives that the authorities have approved and signed in the name of truth. This fictional narrative text places itself in the category of historical texts, and extends a strong lineage to history. Ibn Sharif, in explaining the reasons for writing this text, which are mainly related to preserving his memory from forgetfulness, after the onset of symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, says the following: "This historical text that I wrote is an attempt to overcome the disease that began to destroy my memory" (Jabbar, 2022, p. 180). To prove the strong connection of Ibn Sharif's memoirs to history, Muhammad bin Jabbar, in his novel, recounted the events according to a sequential chronological line, adopting it as a division of the novel, which was distributed into several chapters, each of which covered a specific historical space and specific events, according to this narrative detail: (The first chapter in 1960, the second chapter in January 1961, the third chapter in February 1961, the fourth chapter in 1961, the fifth chapter in April 1961, Chapter 6 May 1961, Chapter 7 June 1961, Chapter Eight July 1961, Chapter Nine August 1961, Chapter Ten 1961, Chapter Eleven October-December 1961, Chapter Twelve January-May 1962).

The historical spirit that Ben Djebar sought to imbue his (Harak) text with is evident in the mastery of (Ibn Charef), the first author of this text, of the art of history and writing diaries and notes, documenting the historical moment he experienced. He also pored over the personal papers of Captain Montreuil. This text, he claims, was the result of his recording of the details of that period. He says: I was registering, numbering, classifying, and archiving mail, which made it easier for me to track the political, military, and civilian progress of my area of jurisdiction. I was indeed lucky; I imitated Captain Montreuil in writing diaries. I record my notes in an old notebook that was originally a Jeep gas consumption log (Jabbar, 2022, p. 46). Ibn Sharif, as the first author, or Muhammad Ibn Jabbar as the second author of this text, sought, by drawing on memoirs and diaries while producing this "historical" text, as he puts it, to lend meaning and plausibility to the historical event he narrates, which contrasts with the historical incident narrated by official narratives. He also emphasized the value of narrative as a creative practice that produces knowledge, not merely an intellectual luxury. Through this narrative medium, Ibn Jabbar engages in the postmodernist project that sought to resist totalitarianism and confront the violence of truth into which we are plunged by paradigms that issue statements of absolute truth and support a politics of certainty of meaning, considering them the solid foundations upon which authorities and ideologies seeking to maintain hegemony stand. The novel, in one of its assigned functions, exposes those ideas and meanings centered around the logos. History was one of the wills of knowledge and interpretation through which power expressed itself. Ibn Jabbar did not rely in the novel (The Harkis) on piling up historical analyses and statistics framed metaphysically, but rather tended to dismantle the historical representations and narratives created by the institution, relying on the mechanisms of counter-memory, in the expression of (Michel Foucault), corresponding to the concept of the historical meta-novel (historical metafiction) in (Linda Hutcheon), where (The Harkis) becomes in its post-modern moment a presence of the history of the oppressed and absent, and a transcendence of historical epistemological violence based on the oppositions of presence and absence. In its opposition to the adopted history, it becomes a process of reading history against its innate tendency, and undertaking an effective and recognized role in interpreting history, instead of merely being satisfied with the role of passive observation. Counter-memory challenges history and does not merely record its events. This challenge, specifically, is the role of postmodern literature, which Linda Hutcheon calls "historical metafiction." The writer of the historical metafiction rejects the possibility of viewing and writing about the past as it were, but instead assumes an active role. He "produces" the past, participating, questioning, and interrogating it (Marshall, 2010, p. 195). At the heart of this postmodern moment, which calls for a reinterpretation of history and a rethinking of the nature of utilitarian and instrumental truth, Ibn Jabbar approaches the history of the oppressed harkis, granting them a position of selfhood, so that the latter can tell their story by constructing a counter-narrative. Ibn Sharf, while presenting his justifications for joining the colonizer's front, does not see his betrayal as a crime for which he is to be condemned, but rather he considers it a personal position, born out of complete conviction after he killed his uncle in revenge for him, after he seized the plot of land that was the family's only source of income. As for true betrayal, In his concept, it is the one that the herd society follows, and the Arab governments that betray their people and their homelands, which did not protect the dignity and sovereignty of the homeland. According to his statement, he is not embarrassed by the nickname (harkis) that has remained attached to him. Because what I see now in the Arab country of self-destruction and the destruction of the capabilities of their peoples and the selling of their countries and wealth and sometimes the use of Western armies is ridiculous. Betrayal only occurs if it is collective, while individual betrayal is a position. I took a position one day and joined the French ranks (Jabbar, 2022, p. 8). Ibn Sharif believes that the most horrific betrayals are those that are collective and cause harm to homelands and peoples. As for individual ones, as is the case with him, it is nothing more than a personal conviction, even despite his involvement in the ranks of the colonizer. Therefore, he frantically wished that not a single traitor

would remain except him, so that he could maintain the individual character that covers his betrayal, turning it into an individual position and not betrayal from the perspective of the general people, as he stated in his dialogue with (Ahmed Ballout), one of the Makhzen members, I want to be a Harakit on my own. The presence of a hundred Harakit makes the "Harakat" a general position! (Jabbar, 2022, p. 159)

Ibn Sharif relies on a dualistic perspective in his approach to the concept of betrayal. His discussion of betrayal was coupled with another discussion of honor and patriotism. Those who claim to be imbued with the national spirit and attribute to themselves the honor of defending the homeland and sacrificing oneself for it, according to Ibn Sharif's reading of the situation, are nothing more than a group of opportunists, "heroes of the last quarter of time." Many Algerians who joined the French army preferred to change direction and join the National Liberation Front after the collapse of the French front in occupied Algeria. According to his theory, they have no religion or stance. Their sole motive is their personal interest, and their sole concern is to obtain privileges and material gains, ignoring the party behind which they entrench themselves. Their sole loyalty is to personal gain. As for their joining the front in the last quarter of time, according to Ibn Sharif's interpretation, it was motivated by a desire to erase the past from history, of bad reputation, and a barter. His betrayal with a French machine gun. Most of the Makhzen think the same way: whitewashing, clearing responsibilities, buying honor, and silencing the voice of conscience. Everyone knows them. They joined the Liberation Army with a French spirit and a malicious opportunistic spirit, but they won the battle of conscience and won over the remnants of the people and quelled their revenge and resentment. Instead, they were given the title of heroes, heroes of the last quarter of time (Jabbar, 2022, p. 123). History will forgive the betrayal of these people and will whitewash their record by immortalizing their memory as heroic mujahideen and revolutionaries who sacrificed their lives for the land. They will bear medals and be decorated with honor and bravery. It is no wonder that we found them holding high positions in the state after independence and enjoying many privileges. However, this same history will not forgive Harkis like Ibn Charef and his followers, despite the passage of time, for the crime of their renunciation of the homeland and their shedding of their skin, whatever the justifications for their betrayal. This distancing, in the words of Paul Ricoeur, or this intermediate distance established by Mohammed Ben Djebbar between the revolutionary history of the institution, which was an expression of the will to power, and his novel (*Al-Harkis*), which was not merely a passive observation and narrative repetition of the former, enabled him to pose confusing questions about the concepts of honor and betrayal, and their transformation into a mixed area, in the vision of Ben Djebbar, in which the two meanings intersect. Honor is revealed in betrayal, and honor often carries the seeds of betrayal (Djebbar, 2022, pp. 10, 11). Wasn't Ben Djebbar's crime of betrayal motivated by the desire to recover his land, which his uncle had seized after his father's death? Wasn't his will to Ibn Aicha, whose plot of land had been unjustly seized by Si Wahab, to redeem the land with your own hands (Djebbar, 2022, p. 42), then Was the motivation behind the enlistment of many of the Harkis who had reneged on their treason, heroes of the last quarter of the century, and those sentenced by the judiciary, with the National Liberation Front, related to honor, and obsessed only with the homeland? Weren't they driven by their greed, opportunism, and frenzied pursuit of power? Therefore, Ibn Charef addressed this text specifically to those who claim honor and love of the homeland, who, deep down, wish to die in the embrace of the old colonizer, in his bed and on his land (Jabbar, 2022, p. 10). Wasn't the enlistment of these and those to the two fronts (the French army and the National Liberation Front) more of a refuge than a belief in a cause? Don't treason (Ibn Charef's treason) and honor share the will to reclaim usurped land, with a slight difference: Ibn Charef revolted against an internal colonizer (his uncle), while the members of the Front struggled against an external French occupier. Regardless of whether we accept or reject these propositions, what we must realize through this dialogue created by Mohammed Ben Djebbar in his novel (*Al-Harkī*) is that honor and betrayal, as identity categories, are merely representations and narratives we continue to create around ourselves and others. These narratives are used performatively by ascribing certain attributes to the self and denying them to the other. This calls for an essentialist understanding of identity and a claim that there are constant, stable truths.

From this approach, Ben Djebbar penetrates the impenetrable wall of the revolution's sanctity, inaugurating an untold history within the texts of the official code, which has long viewed the history of the revolution with sanctity and reverence. This approach has its roots in the era of postmodernist criticism, as history in postmodernism becomes histories and questions. [...] Postmodernism revolves around untold histories, retelling histories, and untold histories. History as it never was, forgotten, hidden, invisible histories (Marshall, 2010, p. 15). The mistakes of the revolution were one of the forgotten and invisible histories that official history preserved, and were revealed by the history of the abandoned movement. This historical meta-narrative, or counter-memory in another description, exposed the flaws of the revolution through the tongue of Ibn Sharif, who was an eyewitness to the events of the Algerian revolution. He witnessed some of the transgressions that occurred in the

Algerian revolution, and through them he revealed its bloody and brutal aspects. Ibn Sharif referred in more than one place to what was called (the mistakes of the revolution), especially in that transitional phase of the guardians of the temples of honor and positions taking over the nation before the departure of the colonizer, which witnessed unprecedented chaos, as the arena was transformed with the angry masses into a military court to settle scores and heap accusations, under the guise of executing enemies of the revolution and traitors to the nation. The fabrication of some false stories is enough to direct serious accusations. The coming days will tell us of more tragic crimes, for which the elders shirk responsibility, blaming them on the younger ones, calling them "the mistakes of the revolution" (Jabbar, 2022, p. 177).

In the same vein of the "mistakes of the revolution" narrative, Ibn Sharif pointed to the killers of the revolutionary government and the divisions within its ranks, presenting another version freed from the grip of official history. Through it, he stirred its stagnant aspects, not least of which was his approach to forcing the Front's peasants and locals to provide aid to the revolution and taking revenge on the Harkis by killing their families and relatives, innocent people who had no fault. These are all events that traditional history remained silent about, but which Ibn Sharif's memoirs, searching the labyrinths of historical memory, revealed. They transformed into a task of reviewing the interruptions and gaps within the official historical discourse, which the ideological machine, in its attempt to establish its vision, undertook to fill, making it appear more realistic and logical, in that it—that is, ideology—is, in one of its definitions, a set of omissions. Gaps, not lies, smooth over contradictions, appearing to provide answers to questions we exclude from reality (Marshall, 2010, p. 117). The Harkis' novel, as a historical narrative from below, is in line with the logic of the postmodernist project in its reinterpretation of history. It is an interpretation that stands outside the queue of re-imagining the official narrative that attempted to subject history to the standard of a single perception. This departure was embodied in a transformation that affected the structure of cultural discourse, changing the circle of its interests and expanding it to research beyond official history, and to thinking about historical actors. This postmodernist moment, which is intertwined with postcolonial theory and which has called for what they carry within them of implications related primarily to history and identity, distances itself from that traditional vision of history as a true and objective representation of the facts of the past, to position itself within new theories that look forward to history as an interpretive narrative driven by historical actors who control the writing of what are called past historical facts. Therefore, these post-theories emphasize the importance of looking at history as a discursive formation with the understanding that it has granted. Foucault's view of discourse; history, from their point of view, is no longer a place for telling the truth, because it is entangled with the will to power and authority. Therefore, the strategy of these metanarratives, in the words of Edward Said, is based on the necessity of liberation from the official narratives of history and (truth) by constructing an awareness of (buried histories) that contain the actual truth that is often suppressed (Walia, 2007, p. 15). Emphasizing the rhetorical aspects of history, and its being one of the formulas imposed by power as a transcendent truth, is equally emphasizing that the text, and the historical text, is a product of its historical and cultural context within whose conditions it was produced. This worldly vision, in Edward Said's terminology, which refuses to isolate the text from its surrounding cultural, historical, and political structures, seeks to confuse and undermine the pillars of accepted history, and asserts that history as knowledge is nothing more than a diagnosis and a not-so-innocent imitation of past events, which presented a pale image of the original event, which disappeared to be replaced by a subjective interpretation subject to the person of the interpreter and his interpretations. Narrated history/Paul Ricoeur takes the form of a narrative/literary piece, in which the real and the imaginary intertwine, to weave and narrate past events with disparate parts, falsely and untruthfully called "history" or historical facts, whose narrators strived to achieve a kind of appropriate harmony with the documents and evidence presented. History, understood in this way, directly and indirectly, is the history of people who are elements, bearers and victims of the powers, institutions, functions and structures in which they are integrated. Ultimately, history cannot break with the action that entails actors, goals, circumstances, interactions and intended or unintended results (Ricoeur, 2003, p. 11). History is never a divine, superhuman teleology, nor is it an innocent mirror-transmission of past events. But instead, it is a cultural creation of men and women, with the addition of the Italian historian (Vico), who considers history to be what humans have made by their will, not as is common in religious thought, that it is a superhuman dogma that transcends the understanding of human will (Akoush, 2016). This vision, which looks forward to history as a worldly human creation, not as an objective truth outside of human will, is the same vision that governs the perspective of (Antonio Gramsci), who, for his part, emphasized that history is a concept of a geographical and regional nature related to the land (Saleh, 2009, p. 227). History, with this understanding, is an invention, an imaginary narrative, and a story that is fabricated and concocted within a specific historical moment.

The claim that history is a cultural industry has led to other implications that question the identity of those who control the writing of history. Ranajit Guha, the spiritual father of the Subaltern School, answers by saying that the force behind the

narration of history is the ideologies of a selective nature, which exclude and eliminate anything that does not submit to its system of facts and standards, thus allowing some events to appear and excluding others, or what Guha described as (statism), as whoever holds the authority to attribute history is in most cases nothing but an ideology that sees the life of the state as being attributed entirely to history. This ideology, which we will henceforth call statism, is what gives the prevailing state values the authority to determine the standards of what is historical (Gha, 2019, p. 276). What history entails is not merely objective knowledge that faithfully recounts the past. Rather, this history, which functions as a discourse according to these recent theories, becomes the result of a coherent collusion between knowledge and power, and the historian's subordination to power. Truth, on the other hand, is what can be considered true within a system of rules for a particular discourse. Power is the one that attaches, defines, and establishes truth. Truth never exists outside of power, nor is it denied it. The production of truth is a function of power (Ashcroft et al., 2006, p. 275). The assumptions of truth are the same as what power assumes and imposes. History, like truth, is a political act.

But what about the "activist" narrative, and thus what about historical metanarratives? Can it be considered an accurate history, symmetrically identical to the past, making it an absolute truth encompassing a comprehensive and inclusive history? Has this historical meta-narrative succeeded in democratizing history, as Geha puts it? The Harkis' novel attempted to present a historical narrative in the voice of the oppressed Harkis, excluded from official historical narratives and, with rare exceptions, from narrative texts. It is an attempt to present an alternative narrative that avoids the blind repetition of the dominant historical narrative. However, does its movement against the current, and this evocation of oppressed voices, enable it to be an accurate discourse that avoids the traps of subjectivity and distances itself from the polarizations of ideology? Or is it, too, merely a possible form of history, and a mere assumption among many assumptions of truth, leading us to a conflict of interpretations and even their contradiction? Couldn't the Harkis, in addition to being a history from below, be interpreted as sympathy for agents and traitors, an attempt to exonerate them, remove them from the circle of the unforgivable and the imprescriptible, and lift the historical injustice from them, after they failed to escape the guillotine of history and the people's court? What we learn from the postmodern critical lesson is that even these historical meta-narratives, which came as a refutation of the representation presented by official history of the past, are also merely points of view and a particular interpretation of history. From this perspective, we are called upon to reflect on these historical meta-narratives and on the Harkis narrative as one of the ways we look at things. And now, here is another way, and another, and another. [...] The contribution made by the historical meta-narrative is not its condemnation of ideological perspectives, but rather its increase in our awareness of the manipulation that lies behind every perspective (Marshall, 2010, p. 201); The postmodern moment does not contemplate the sanctification of historical metanarratives, nor does it seek to make them reign supreme over the authority of truth. Rather, its assigned function is to revolutionize consciousness and mobilize it to reveal the manipulation that lies behind every epistemological perspective believed to be involved with political power. However, what about the place of truth if both the historical narrative and the historical metanarrative are mere speculations, one possibility among many conflicting possibilities of truth, and an explicit or implicit manipulation of historical fact? In this view, truth will become a Nietzschean metaphor, games woven by The linguistic mediator is not innocent in its transmission of facts and events. For this reason, Nietzsche expressed the truth by saying: "It is a mobile army of metaphors, of metaphors, or human similes, or, to put it briefly, a set of human relationships that have been sublimated in a poetic and rhetorical manner, which, after prolonged use, appear to a people to be entrenched and binding. Truths are illusions that have forgotten that they are such, metaphors that have lost their sensory power, and coins that have lost their inscriptions" (Belagrouz, 2019, p. 124). Ibn Charif preferred to join the colonizer's front, even though another alternative existed. So why didn't he join the revolution, as many others, such as Ibn Aisha and other terrorists and felagha, did, based on the colonizer's description of revolutionaries and those involved in liberation efforts? Or was it that Ibn Charef and the rest of the agents and harkis were so confident in the infinity of colonialism that they chose his side, captivated by his resonant rhetoric about freedom, justice, equality, and unconditional friendship with the local people? Were these rhetorical ideals realized in practice, or did they remain locked away in their drawers, mere slogans boasted by the colonial establishment? 3_ The Colonizer, the Colonized, and the Illusion of Unconditional Friendship: The colonial authority and the orientalist structures that support it in its struggle over Third World lands are based, while claiming to be a modernizing and preparatory project for the rest of the world's peoples. They are loyal to their humanitarian principles and determined to move forward toward completing the project of building a just and equal society within the colonized lands, far from duplicity and the policy of discrimination between settlers and indigenous peoples on racial and ethnic grounds. The imperialist West has continually promoted the narrative of Europe, bearing the message of enlightenment, aimed at bringing those peoples trapped in long eras of backwardness and barbarism into a more advanced context. These cultures are invited to join the Western world, synonymous with civilization, and to sign a friendship contract

with it in order to bring about a qualitative shift in these cultures and countries located overseas, even if the price of this alleged friendship is that the parties are brought under the direct or indirect tutelage of colonial Europe. Ibn Charef's memoirs examine, on one level, the nature of the relationship between colonizer and colonized, by observing the former's cultural representations of their counterparts and examining the nature of the bond that unites the indigenous people with the colonial other. Within this context, Ibn Charef and the rest of the agents of the Makhzen and those loyal to the French government, before the facts became clear, believed in their absolute Frenchness. They believed, by virtue of this proximity to the Western metropole, that they were first-class French citizens, enjoying full French citizenship rights. Ibn Charef affirmed, in the first pages of his diaries, his French ancestry and his complete denial of his Algerian identity. He wrote: "I loved the captain and gained his trust. He took me as a son, a friend, and a companion. [...] I felt that 'Lasas' was my only family and Captain Montreuil was my father." (Jabbar, 2022, p. 9). Si Wahab, one of the loyal agents of the colonial establishment, called on the French army every time he felt threatened by his fellow citizen (Bouamrane/Ibn Aicha). But what about mother France? Does it feel the same attachment to its adopted Algerian children as they do to it? Colonialism was engaged in an effort to establish a group that would declare its absolute loyalty to it, in exchange for eternal, unconditional friendship, in which these complicit parties would receive material and moral support. However, this organic bond was temporary and circumstantial, as its bond quickly dissolved upon the end of service. This is what Ibn Charf and his colleagues, who declared their absolute loyalty to the colonizer, observed, especially after the passage of time. Colonialism in occupied Algeria. Colonial France deals with these agents as extras and appendices, summoning them when needed and turning its back on them as if they were "nothing" once the interest has expired. They are merely tools and pawns for immediate use. Fear and danger are the two main factors determining this illusory friendship, and in their absence, the falsity of the call for unconditional friendship issued by the French government in Algeria is exposed. Brotherhood and camaraderie, or as the French call it, transcendence of friendship with Algerians, are subject to the circumstances of the situation outside the barracks. Whenever the danger from the front intensifies and security deteriorates, they overlook their grudges, and whenever peace and relative security prevail, hatred, animosity, and malice return to the ranks of both sides. (Jabbar, 2022, p. 70)

For the colonial authority, the harkis acquire a dual and contradictory meaning, closely related to the connotation of the term "addition" itself, as referenced in the works of the Indian-born theorist Homi K. Bhabha, who borrowed it from Jacques Derrida's deconstructive uses in his undermining of Western metaphysics, which always prioritizes one meaning over another. In this Derridaian understanding of addition, the harkis are essential elements within the colonial formation in times of crisis and fear. They are surplus and easily dispensable, as they have no value in times of peace and truce. Supplement refers to what comes to be added to, to be attached, and to serve as a surplus. At the same time, it refers to what comes to fill a deficiency, to bridge a gap, to change, and to serve as a surplus that is supposed to exist in the first place. (Baba, 2004, p. 57), colonial France does not treat the Algerians or the Harkis as a purely French product or even as human beings, but rather looks at them with contempt and disdain, and considers them an inferior race compared to its own race and noble culture. With this description, they do not deserve to be on the same level as the French. Even the killing of Si Wahab at the hands of Bouamrane, the faithful servant of France, was considered by the French leadership to be a non-event, a mere passing assassination incident that did not require investigation. The mask of illusory French friendship and brotherhood falls at the first opportunity, allowing the self-centered colonizer to express his hatred and deep-seated hostility towards the non-French other. This is what was revealed by the swimming pool incident, which ended with a French officer shooting an Arab Makhzen who approached the French girl, along with a barrage of insults, expressing the extent of the hatred the colonists hold for the indigenous people, even those who cooperate with them in the same military unit. He began by insulting the Makhzen and the Arabs without discrimination. It was a terrible insult, a shameful insult: "Nation of pigs, sons of monkeys and pigs, dirty seeds..." (Jabbar, 2022, p. 68). This was the way of the colonial West, working to confine its Eastern others within stereotypical images and essentialist characteristics that strip them of their humanity, so that they become synonymous with animality and eroticism in a comprehensive manner, without taking into account the diversity and difference of that East. Emphasizing these essential qualities of the East is, in fact, the corresponding image The inverse that Western ideology seeks to attach to the European self, enabling it to assert the West's superiority and dominance over the world, framed by the law of difference between the self and the other, founded on the natural superiority of the Western other. If the other's difference is absolute, it can be turned upside down in a second as the basis of the self. In other words, the evil, barbaric, immoral, and debauched qualities of the colonized other become what make the qualities of goodness, kindness, civilization, and modesty of the European self possible (Michael and Negri, 2002, p. 198).

The French consider their agents and lackeys, despite their work for them, to be mere miserable traitors who have sold their consciences and accepted the exchange of the homeland for material gains and a few dirhams. In their view, they are at the bottom of the human ladder. Even those Harkis, in a moment of self-revelation after much contemplation, admit that what unites them with France is not a sense of belonging, but rather the wages they receive at the end of the month in exchange for their military and non-military services with the French army. The bond that unites them with the colonizer is exactly what connects the latter to the Algerian agents. It is the interest and service, which, when they expire, the supposed relationship between the two parties ends. That alleged unity between the colonizer and the colonized is a temporary unity. Because it occurred under specific historical and security conditions (danger and fear), and by removing that special condition, that unity is dissolved and loses its necessity. This is exactly what the theory of articulation, which has a central presence within the field of cultural studies, says. Articulation, as defined by Stuart Hall, means a form of connection that can form a unity between two different elements, under certain circumstances. It is a non-essential connection, defined absolutely or fundamentally at all times. We must ask: Under what conditions can a connection be created or created? So, what is called the unity of discourse is in fact the interconnection of distinct and different elements that can be linked in different ways because they do not have any inevitable affiliation. The unity that matters is the connection between coherent discourse and social forces that can, but do not necessarily, interrelate under certain historical circumstances (Krossberg, 2019, pp. 198, 199). Articulation is an expression of an emergency situation and stands against essentialism and reductionism. It is merely a temporary unity that is dismantled when necessary, so that the similar and dissimilar elements of that unity can be positioned, according to new conditions, within another unity, and so on, far from the necessary and permanent cohesion. However, articulation in the wrong place dragged Ibn Sharf and his colleagues in the service into a double rejection. Betrayal of the homeland, which Ibn Sharf calls a personal position, produced a torn existence and an annihilated entity, captive to fragmentation and disunity. His Algerian identity, which he denied, was rejected by him, and he became like the rest of the agents and traitors wanted for liquidation, paying the price of collaboration with his life. His belief in his French affiliation was shattered, as France, to which he pledged allegiance and on which he bet, expelled him in its few remaining rounds on the Algerian lands that had regained their freedom, after the collapse of the trust contract between them. He and those with him became suspected in their loyalty, as even the Europeans began to consider them traitors and apostates working secretly for the National Liberation Front. He and those who supported him became, for France before the evacuation of its forces, a "problem" that had to be eliminated, and a quick solution had to be found for it, either by demobilizing and abandoning them and leaving them to certain death, or by integrating them into mixed local forces led by the FLN. Both solutions included dangerous and undesirable consequences, as the lackeys of France had become, in an eloquent metaphor launched by Ibn Charf, documenting their complex situation, a difficult problem, like a cow that gave birth to a hedgehog, which it could not approach. And to breastfeed him, nor could she turn away from him and leave him to die of hunger (Jabbar, 2022, p. 169). Ibn Sharf's hedgehog status, inherited from his history burdened with the stain of betrayal, prevented him from belonging to either party, neither to Algeria nor to France. He became a doubly outcast, neither preserving his national identity nor attaining the status of master, despite siding with the colonizer as a solid fortress. This state of fragmentation pushed him into the abyss of exile and disaffiliation with any party, where hybridity and fragmentation are the masters. This state of hybridity expresses a pathological condition, as observed by Frantz Fanon in the Negro who identifies with the white, rather than a healthy condition, as described by Homi Bhabha in his presentation of the hybridity of cultures and interstitial locations.

Conclusion:

The novel "Al-Harkis" by its author, Mohammed Ben Djebbar, opens up a new interpretation of history, delving into the paths of history from below and focusing on the narrative of the harki, who has remained a repressed subject in the official historical record. This restoration of the voice of the traitor enabled the novel "Al-Harkis" to position itself as a counter-memory, or a historical meta-novel, which did not accept the negative imitation of official history. However, within the context of prioritizing the subaltern, it undermined the grand narratives woven by the establishment. This undermining positioned the reader against aspects neglected by the official historical narrative, immersing him in the postmodern moment, confronting multiple histories, not a single history. This problematization of history, in which Ben Djebbar engaged, was consistent with a reconceptualization of certain concepts and statements, foremost among them the concepts of betrayal and honor, and the corresponding related concepts. There is no unconditional friendship between the colonizer and the colonized. The bond that unites them is based on interest and necessity, dictated by the current situation. Even the agents and the Makhzen, who have sold their consciences, are seen by Europeans themselves as traitors and mercenaries, unreliable. For those who sell out their homeland, everything becomes negotiable and barterable. This negative image, conveyed by Ibn Charf of the French

colonizer, had its counterpart in the image of the French human being, represented by his commander, Captain Montreuil, whom he considered his inspiration and father, along with Mademoiselle Massie, who helped him find answers to his difficulties. In France, after he sought refuge with her mother-in-law, Madame Fanny Bourque represented the model of the human other. She supervised him during his treatment for Alzheimer's disease and encouraged him to write his memoirs.

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