

Manipulation of Ideological Items in the Audiovisual Translation of Voiced-Over Documentaries in the Arab World

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Abstract—In a widely globalized world, the influence of audiovisual translation on the culture and identity of audiences is unmistakable. However, in the Arab World, there is a noticeable disproportion between this growing influence and the research carried out in the field. As a matter of fact, the voiced-over documentary is one of the most abundantly translated genres in the Arab World that carries lots of ideological elements which are in many cases rendered by manipulation. However, voiced-over documentaries have hardly received any focused attention from researchers in the Arab World. This paper attempts to scrutinize the process of translation of voiced-over documentaries in the Arab World, from French into Arabic in the present case study, by sub-categorizing the ideological items subject to manipulation, identifying the techniques utilized in their translation and exploring the potential extra-linguistic factors that prompt translation agents to opt for manipulative translation. The investigation is based on a corpus of 94 episodes taken from a series entitled *360° GEO Reports*, produced by the French German network ARTE in French, and acquired, translated and aired by Al Jazeera Documentary Channel for Arab audiences. The results yielded 124 cases of manipulation in four sub-categories of ideological items, and the use of 10 different oblique procedures in the process of manipulative translation. The study also revealed that manipulation is in most of the instances dictated by the editorial line of the broadcasting channel, in addition to the religious, geopolitical and socio-cultural peculiarities of the target culture.

Keywords—Audiovisual translation, ideological items, manipulation, voiced-over documentaries.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE boom in the production of audiovisual materials and state-of-the-art technologies of communication have taken research in Translation Studies to the next level and urged it to chaperon the proliferation of AVT and the issues related to its practice, training and research methodologies. Moreover, the audiovisual and multimodal nature of this branch of translation broadens the scope of its cultural, moral and ideological influence on the audience and consequently lends itself to a polemic debate on the process of adaptation to the target audience idiosyncrasies; a process known as ‘manipulation’.

In AVT, the overlapping of text and image, and the interaction of semantic and semiotic signs, verbal and non-verbal codes, add to the challenges of translation. In transfer modes like subtitling and voice-over, manipulative translation is much more conspicuous and palpable given the

simultaneous accessibility to both the source text and target text by the audience, in addition to the visual material. This bi-cultural situation challenges the translator’s subtlety, intelligence, vigilance and choices.

The audiovisual sector, within which AVT is carried out, has always been monopolized by the powerful. Political regimes and lobbies understood from the outset that audiovisual platforms remain the most effective and compelling method to implicitly spread their ideologies, maintain the ethical code and sustain their supremacy. Their ideological hegemony persisted even with the emergence of countless private-owned channels, by subjecting their audiovisual production to a heavy censorship [1]. This preponderant extra-linguistic factor, coupled with others, limits the freedom of the translator in the process of decision-making and puts their work under a permanent and heavy control.

Incontestably, media in general and audiovisual industry in particular, exert a sort of soft power that influences every individual’s life and orients their behaviors and choices. If this statement is true on local scales, AVT validates it on a larger scale. The power of AVT to disseminate values and circulate concepts among societies (as heterogeneous and diverse as those in the Arab World, where AVT is very popular, widely practiced and addresses all categories of the population) makes it a field worth investigating and scrutinizing in all its modes of transfer (dubbing, subtitling, voice-over, interpreting, localization, audio description, etc.) and genres (movies, soaps, cartoons, news, documentaries, etc.). The present paper deals in particular with the AVT of documentaries as a TV genre that is conventionally translated by means of voice-over.

Based on a prolonged period of first-hand observation of the practices of AVT agents in the Arab World and screening audiovisual materials translated into Arabic from French and English, it has been noticed that a considerable number of ideological references are not translated into Arabic but rather rewritten and fundamentally adjusted, even though they do not fall under the category of the untranslatable items and despite the existence of a valid means of providing a direct and faithful translation. The author of [2] explains that the practice of manipulation is commonly driven by ideological purposes, patronage and other socio-cultural factors with the chief objective of influencing the audience and attaining acceptance [2]. Amidst a lack of research in AVT in general and AVT of documentaries in particular in the Arab World, the case study

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of this paper illustrates the phenomenon of manipulation of ideological items in the Arab World based on a corpus of 94 episodes of the ARTE production *360 GEO Reports*, acquired and translated into Arabic by Al Jazeera Documentary Channel.

II. AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION

A. Background

Although the practice of AVT can be traced back to the advent of the talkies in the 1920s, or even earlier with the need to translate intertitles or title cards in silent movies for overseas distribution in the beginning of the 20th century, its study as an academic discipline has been traditionally ignored by scholars until very recently [3]. However, in the era of satellite channels explosion and the wide spread of electronic devices, it emerged as a booming field and a rapidly evolving discipline. In fact, AVT has now become “one of the fastest growing areas in the field of Translation Studies” [4].

The 1990s are referred to as a turning point in the recognition of AVT as a domain in its own rights [5]. Until then, it had been considered a sheer technical practice in the film industry. Subsequently, the multitude of colloquia and forums held mainly in Europe and North America under the patronage of very important organizations, such as the UNESCO, and the release of publications compiling contributions of scholars, have propelled the rapid institutionalization of AVT studies as a fully-fledged field and recognized its practice as a core element in the audiovisual industry [5]. This institutionalization has been promoted by the visible proliferation and accessibility of audiovisual materials around the globe and the urgent need it created for translation to reach a heterogeneous viewership belonging to different linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. The overwhelming presence of state-of-the-art audiovisual products on TV, VoD, internet or smart phones not only called for a quick and accurate translation but also for the establishment of an academic discipline likely to bring together scholars and practitioners with the aim of covering AVT from a plurality of angles. This is reflected, for instance, in the role played by AVT in social integration and media accessibility as suggested by the author of [6]. AVT has created a new perspective of reception through audio-description for the blind and partially sighted and through subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing which have both ‘gained considerable impetus from technological progress and legal obligations’ in western countries [5].

B. Audiovisual Translation in the Arab World

Similar to the rest of the world, print translation in the Arab World is transcended by AVT. However, the landscape in the Arab World has been invaded by the overwhelming wave of digitalization and screens.

Since the 1990s, in the new age of satellite television and the decentralization of the national state-controlled media, audiovisual materials have proliferated in the Arab World driven by two main purposes: information and entertainment.

Hence, the new concepts of *infotainment* and *edutainment* were initiated by informative, educational and entertaining screens and fueled by the political landscape in the region marked at that time by the Second Gulf War (1991). AJD, the edutaining channel from which the corpus of the present study is borrowed, is one of those channels.

The birth of the Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) in 1990 announced the beginning of a new era with hundreds of thematic channels covering all aspects of life (information, education, sport, cartoons, drama, music and advertising...). Nevertheless, those channels were not a hundred percent Arabic. The globalized media platform forced the Arab World to introduce Arabic versions of international channels such as CNN, BBC Arabic, Russia Today, France 24 and National Geographic Abu Dhabi to name but a few. As advantageous as this might seem, it casts doubt amongst some about this ‘mode of versioning information and presenting its content in an audiovisual style’ to ‘serve the interests and ideology of those who promote the version’ [7].

In addition to those foreign Arabicized versions, the Arabic channels running 24/7 have resorted to subtitled, dubbed or voiced-over foreign programs (news shows, reality TV, sitcoms, soaps, documentaries, sport competitions...) to enhance the broadcasting schedule and to stay competitive. The entertaining needs of the Arab viewer have been met in their native language through the Mexican, Brazilian, Korean and Turkish drama dubbed into modern standardized Arabic (MSA), Syrian dialect and Egyptian vernacular, but also through a panoply of other subtitled genres. However, the abundance of audiovisual products has not stimulated research in parallel, leaving most of the production unexamined. Apart from a limited number of MA research papers and PhD theses, publications on AVT in the Arab World fall short of the aim. Besides few studious attempts to localize the discipline, like the studies conducted steadily from 1996 to 2014 by the Egyptian Mohammed Gamal from the University of New South Wales [7], [8] and the publications of Ali Darwish from Queensland University of Technology [9], only a handful of scattered articles published in several journals can be named.

Paradoxically, the shortage in AVT publications and research which reflects the lack of interest in the topic ‘continues despite [political, cultural, sport...] events and developments that show the relevance of the issue. This negligence may have emanated essentially from a prevailing unawareness of the peculiarities of AVT as compared to print translation and the lack of academic institutions that offer specialized training. As a matter of fact, with the exception of The American University in Cairo, The University of Balamand in Beirut, The Higher Institute of Translation and Interpreting in Damascus and The Translation and Interpreting Institute in Doha, there are hardly no other known institutions capable of providing a multidisciplinary course in AVT and producing polyvalent practitioners aware enough of the stakes, ‘able to use the technology aptly and reflect on practice to develop the necessary expertise to tackle local problems with solutions that are linguistically correct, culturally acceptable and pragmatically appropriate [8].

Another important aspect that should be highlighted in the attempt of mapping AVT in the Arab World is the diglossic nature of the Arabic language. With reference to the definition of diglossia by the author of [10], as the use of 'two or more varieties of the same language [...] by the same speakers under different conditions', 'with each having a definite role to play' [10], Arabic can certainly be qualified as a very diglossic language. The 22 Arab countries, stretching from North Africa to Iraq and including Gulf countries, the Levant and others, share a very rich and diversified cultural background governed mainly by the religion of Islam ever since its advent 15 centuries ago. Linguistically speaking, the youthful population of the region counting around 370 million in 2015 (according to the statistics of the United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division) use MSA as the only 'formal language [...] taught systematically in all schools and universities and used regularly by TV, magazines, newspapers and literature' [11]. MSA is a vulgarization of classical Arabic found in the Holy Quran, the preaching of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and the pre-Islamic poetry. Classical Arabic is currently used exclusively in religious and moral discourse, in law texts or in historical drama. However, in their everyday life and in informal situations, Arabs would not use their commonly intelligible lingua franca, but would code-switch to their respective vernaculars derived from the same source, MSA and classical Arabic, but very distinct from one another to the extent that North African vernaculars, for instance, might be incomprehensible in Gulf countries. Yet, some dialects, such as Egyptian, Syrian and Lebanese, have succeeded in finding their way to all Arab countries and enjoy a widespread popularity thanks to their prevailing presence in the media through drama, cinema, theatre, music and reality TV shows.

Despite their importance in the day-to-day life and their role in giving each and every Arab country its idiosyncratic linguistic identity, dialects remain institutionally unacknowledged and continue to be considered as a 'bastardization of the original, *pure* language' and a 'lower code' as opposed to the high code of MSA or to the even higher code of the Western colonial languages like English, French or Spanish [12].

In AVT, while MSA has been for long the only option for translating informative contents as well as drama (Brazilian and Mexican soaps), cartoons and other genres, there is today a proliferating interest in dubbing international audiovisual products into dialects like the rendering of Turkish drama into Syrian, Indian drama into Gulf vernaculars or Disney cartoons into Egyptian. However, voice-over continues to be practiced in MSA as the privileged mode of transfer for non-fictional contents especially in documentaries and news reports and interviews.

C. Audiovisual Translation of Documentary Films

Despite pressing calls for the necessity of viewing documentary translation as a specific activity involving ad hoc parameters and strategies, research on this particular genre remains modest. Franco, Espasa and Matamala seem to be the

most established references in the field in their attempts to highlight its specificity and emphasize the lack of terminological and conceptual consistency with respect to AVT of informative contents. Other slight hints to documentary translation occur restrictedly while listing the genres covered by AVT or while dealing with voice-over mode of transfer insofar as it is traditionally and obviously associated to non-fictional content.

To the author of [13], this status quo can only be justified by two main facts: 1) the strong tradition of literature, which has certainly influenced AVT researchers' preference for the fictional genre and consequently for the modes of transfer mostly found in it (i.e. dubbing and subtitling); 2) the *false belief* among researchers that translating facts is *a straightforward, non-problematic activity*. From her part, the author of [14] throws light on two myths related to this 'not yet fully acknowledged' field: 1) a documentary is not a film; 2) documentary translation is not specifically audiovisual, both of which she came to prove wrong.

Translation of documentaries is clearly far from being a challenge-free or non-problematic task. In her article, *Main Challenges in the Translation of Documentaries* [15], one of the rare articles discussing AVT of documentaries as a specific genre, Anna Matamala enumerates three major challenges that translators encounter while rendering a postproduction script depending on the audience it addresses and its *skopos*. The first challenge is the '**working conditions**' under which the work is done; in addition to pressure and time constraints, translating documentaries necessitates 'research and investigation' bearing in mind the factual nature of the genre. The translation of documentaries is, usually, done from postproduction scripts that are, sometimes, poorly written and contain many mistakes and inaccuracies that are to be corrected. The absence of a script means that the translation has to be done directly from the audiovisual material if the translator wants to avoid transcription.

The second challenge highlighted by Matamala is the wide spectrum of '**terminology**' employed in documentaries dictated by the wide range of topics dealt with. In documentaries there are two levels of language: the 'spontaneous natural' and the 'standardized', which call for more efforts from the translator. Matamala suggests that this hindrance can be overcome by "1) extracting the maximum amount of clues from the image, 2) referring to the spoken discourse provided by the program itself [...] and 3) consulting all kinds of specialized references such as books, databases, internet and specialists".

The third and last challenge consists in '**speakers and translation modes**'. Other than the off-screen narration that is often done in third person, documentaries might be presented in the first person and include interventions of guests and interviewees expressing themselves spontaneously using various registers (formal, informal, jargon, vernacular). Documentaries are also constituted of various sequences extracted from archives, movies or reality, of which might require a specific mode of transfer.

Besides the ample description of Matamala to the

challenges of AVT of documentaries, the author of [16] draws attention to some highly decisive challenges that affect the translation of documentaries; namely faithfulness to the original, audience, time and space constraints, and stylistic choices. The author of [16] managed, as well, to spotlight some meaning alteration in documentaries translated by ARTE and ascribes this alteration to the network's editorial policy. Another investigation of a number of documentaries carried out by the author of [17] led him to conclude that cognitive processes influence a lot the translation of cultural markers and constitute a big challenge in translation.

AVT of documentaries is widely practiced in the Arab World, be it in television (e.g. voiced-over or subtitled documentaries on documentary channels like AJD, National Geographic Abu Dhabi and other news or educational channels), in documentary film festivals projecting Arabic and non-Arabic productions (e.g. Docu-Days in Beirut, Cartage Film Festival, Asilah Europe-East Documentary Festival, Khouribga Film Festival, Agadir Film Festival, Abu Dhabi Film Festival and Dubai Film Festival), or on web channels (e.g. YouTube, Daily Motion or Vimeo).

Conversely, the literature suggests that these abundant corpora have not stimulated enough case studies pertaining to AVT even though they are rich in terms of debatable linguistic, terminological and ideological issues. This situation is quite logical taking into consideration the paucity of research in AVT in the Arab World in general and the scantiness of academic programs related to the field. With this respect only one undergraduate elective course entitled *Translating Films and Documentaries* has been launched by the Department of Translation at Yarmouk University, Jordan in 2008-2009 [18].

III. IDEOLOGY AND CENSORSHIP IN AVT

A. Ideology

The present paper addresses in particular the AVT of ideological items in documentaries, hence the necessity of attempting to define the concept of ideology.

Ideology is one of the key concepts in the literature of social science whose semantic scope and definitional ramifications have stirred a great deal of debate since the aftermath of WWII and led to a proliferation of definitions by established scholars [19]-[23].

Attempts to define ideology have thereafter developed from light and superficial descriptions of the set of attitudes and beliefs of an individual toward life in general and social life in particular [24], [25], to more politically-oriented and power-related denotations. To the author of [26], for instance, ideology constitutes a set of coherent beliefs that drive the exertion of power, attitude towards historical facts and choice of political stand. A blunter definition following the same line is put forward by Sartori [27] for whom ideology is "a typically dogmatic, i.e., rigid and impermeable, approach to politics".

A contemporary and more elaborated and comprehensive definition can be found in Rejai's *Political Ideologies* [28],

where he perceives ideology as "an emotion-laden, myth-saturated, action-related system of beliefs and valued about people and society, legitimacy and authority, that is acquired to a large extent as a matter of faith and habit. [...] Ideologies have a high potential for mass mobilization, manipulation, and control; in that sense, they are mobilized belief systems". Amidst this controversy, calls have raised for a core definition 'universally agreed upon' more coherent and more consistent far from political contexts. In an endeavor to come up with a holistic definition, Gerring [29] suggests a comprehensive definitional framework including decisive criteria such as the location, the subject matter, the subject, the position, the function, the motivation and the cognitive structure. To him, "defining the concept of ideology as sophisticated political cognition may deprive us of a way to talk about the political beliefs and values of many members of the public".

These definitions draw attention to the ability of ideology to control people and manipulate them no matter how coherent, articulate or open to new perspectives it is. This power is doubled when the ideology in question is conveyed via mass media, making it accessible to a wide spectrum of audience with a larger impact. In the present study, ideology is conveyed through the interference of broadcasting institutions in the translation of acquired content with the objective of maintaining the status quo and sustaining the established paradigm. It contrasts the Western-European ideology (represented by ARTE) and the Arab-Muslim ideology (represented by Al Jazeera Documentary Channel) through the shifts operated in the translation from French into Arabic of ideological items.

B. Censorship

Regardless of the mode of transfer, the language or the medium AVT is conveyed through, the entire process is subject to a multitude of extra-linguistic factors imposed by the state, political lobbies and religious authorities that censor the audiovisual industry with an iron hand.

Censorship is an old process in time practiced by censors ever since 443 B.C. Although its form has radically changed from the Roman practice of counting, assessing and evaluating the populace, to the act of intentionally restricting access to information with the view of preventing troubling ideas from reaching the public, the essence of censorship remains the same: monitoring and validating [30]. Be it exerted by governments, authorities or individuals, censorship has been practiced in various fields especially in the platforms addressing the masses such as newspaper, books, radio, TV, internet, music and all sorts of art. In [31], researchers discuss the external and internal constraints experienced by both authors and translators through various case studies, and came to the unanimous conclusion that those constraints affect the outcome and the creativity of both authors and translators.

A considerable number of studies have focused on censorship in AVT. In fact, a whole project called TRACE (TRANslation and CENSORship) has been launched in Spain around the year 1997 to coordinate research in translation and censorship, including studies in AVT to which two panels of

the project have been dedicated: TRACEc for Cinema and TRACEtv for TV. The dedication of a whole project to censorship in AVT stems from an understanding of the technical and editorial peculiarities of the field. Scandura [32] claims that in AVT, censorship is 'sometimes present when dubbing and subtitling mask the deletion or replacement of erotic, vulgar or inconvenient sentences, allusions or references' via 'deleting a scene', 'changing the language to a non-vulgar one', 'omitting references' or 'directly changing the plot'. Remail & Neves [33] add that it is more conspicuously applied in dubbing which is 'traditionally associated with ideological conservatism and domesticating translation practices'.

Censorship in AVT might have often been perceived as a foe to freedom of expression. Yet, the reasons behind it turn to be much more imposing. In her article [32], Scandura names four reasons behind censorship in AVT: 1) *politics*, which drive governments to hide or substitute any items which are not in conformity with the political system; 2) *political correctness*, which is a concept applied by both governments or parents towards tolerating or rejecting a particular content such as homosexuality and swear words; 3) *religion*, which dictates what to permit, replace or omit; and 4) *self-censorship*, by means of which translators allow themselves to intervene in the translation and decide for the audience what items to keep and what items to delete.

In AVT both acoustic and visual channels are used in parallel. Therefore, when censorship occurs on the sound track alone in dubbing and voice-over or on the text alone in subtitling it is obvious that the viewer would notice the inconsistency and asynchrony between the image and what is being heard or read. This is the point that Rachel Flynn tries to highlight in [34] when she argues that "there are different reasons for which an institution would prefer subtitling or dubbing, and the decision is usually economically, politically or culturally motivated". She also demonstrates how media institutions opt for a mode of transfer or another in order to censor ideological and culture-specific items or to reach a particular audience.

In the Arab World, similarly to everywhere else, censorship is tightly linked to the powerful and their desire to maintain control over all sources of knowledge and information. Yet, in the Arab World, this form of power aiming at muting the opposition is doubled by, and overlaps with, the desire to sustain the ethical code and moral values [1]. However, while the second purpose has become less of a priority with the booming in privately owned channels, the first purpose remains strong and prompts governments to heavily censor any audiovisual product.

Censorship exerted by governments in the Arab World has been recently fueled by the winds of the Arab Spring that have dethroned a number of rulers and continue to threaten others. Still, with social media networks and internet channels gaining more ground, knowledge and information have become available to everyone and everywhere limiting the effects of censorship, raising public awareness and calling into question the notion of the *speakable*. In her article, *Optical Illusions:*

Television and Censorship in the Arab World [35], Naomi Sakr lists a number of incidents that occurred across the region in the era of the spread of Arab satellite channels, namely in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Qatar and Yemen, each of which proves the perpetuity of heavy-handed censorship albeit promises made by governments to surrender control over television.

Clearly, the extrinsic constraints that direct the translator's decision have a lot to do with the ideological and cultural context within which the translation is done. Those censoring constraints are most of the time dictated by political ideologies, however, they could be sometimes driven by the translator's cultural and ideological motives. Most censorship is of a moral kind, reflecting the dominant conservative cultural and religious values – values that exist in more democratic and liberal countries as well. Thus, there is also an important political/ideological component in censorship, however it is not necessarily the most preponderant.

IV. MANIPULATION

Censorship, be it exerted moderately or heavily, leads to the adoption of techniques and strategies likely to provide the translation agent with a paradigm where they dispose of a margin of maneuver in the act of translation.

Theorizing within the scope of polysystem theory and DTS, and evolving more particularly around the concept of translational norms put forward by Toury [36], a group of scholars (Lefevère, Hermans, Lambert, Snell-Hornby, Leuven-Zwart and Naaijken) approached translation as a literary genre and examined it within a social, historical and cultural context.

In [37], Hermans makes the standing point of the school very clear by confirming in the influential book he edited, *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, that 'all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the ST for a certain purpose'. This implies that importance here is given to the TT and its reception by the target audience in conformity with their cultural specificities. Herman's statement is consolidated by Snell-Hornby who sees translation essentially as 'a text-type in its own right, as an integral part of the target culture and not merely as the reproduction of another text' [38].

Along the same lines, Bassnett and Lefevère [39] define translation as an act of ideological manipulation by excellence. A manipulation that is not necessarily negative but that rather can be considered as a shaping force of societies.

Building on Even-Zohar and Toury's work, José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp continued to enrich the Manipulation school literature with a paper where they introduce a descriptive methodology for case studies comparing 'the ST and TT literary systems' and describing 'the relations within them'. The scheme is broken down into four sections [40]:

Preliminary data: information on title page, metatexts (preface, etc.) and the general strategy (whether the translation is partial or complete). The results should lead to hypotheses concerning level 2 and level 3.

Macro-level: the division of the text, titles and presentation

of the chapters, the internal narrative structure and any overt authorial comment. This should generate hypotheses about the micro-level.

Micro-level: the identification of shifts on different linguistic levels. These include the lexical level, the grammatical patterns, narrative, point of view and modality. The results should interact with the macro-level and lead to their ‘consideration in terms of the broader systemic context’.

Systemic context: here micro- and macro-levels, text and theory are compared and norms identified. Intertextual relations (relations with other texts including translations) and intersystemic relations (relations with other genres, codes) are also described.

Taking into account the great deal of social, cultural and ideological norms and constraints under which translators operate, manipulation becomes unavoidable and almost inherent to the act of translation as argued by Katan [41]. Katan refers in his argument to the literal meaning of manipulation as denoted in Collins English Dictionary (1991): 1) to handle or use, especially with some skill; 2) to negotiate, control, or influence (something or someone) cleverly, skillfully, or deviously. The author of [42] differentiates in the same vein between two types of manipulation: a conscious manipulation that occurs intentionally for ‘various social, political and other factors’, and unconscious manipulation that ‘occurs under the influence of psychological factors’ [42].

Manipulation is, accordingly, a reality and is justified in many ways. Yet, no matter the reason driving it, the ideological motivations remain the most plausible. In an analysis of a corpus of subtitled French films, Peter Fawcett [43] claims that manipulation cannot be uniquely related to the technical constraints conditioning AVT, but has a lot to do with other forces that form a ‘translational ideology’. This ideology includes but is not limited to: ‘the moral, political and legal concerns of the translator and/or the translation commissioner, which is a measure of authority rather than power (power is ‘might’, authority is ‘right’)’ and ‘the translators’ often fluctuating perception of their task as communicator, mediator and author and their positional attitude to their role in the translation chain and responsibility to its various elements’.

In any case, be it conscious or unconscious, positive or negative, ideologically-directed or subject to human arbitrariness, the legitimate question to ask is, how are the translators supposed to act in this situation? Kramina [44] asked the same question and concluded that translators need above all to be ‘aware of the phenomenon of manipulation in all its manifestations’ if they were to control it in accordance with ‘ethics, professionalism and common sense’.

V. CASE STUDY

A. Study Corpus

The scarcity of corpus-based research in the field of AVT in the Arab World is the driving force behind the decision of investigating a long series. The corpus consists of 94 episodes of the culturally oriented and multiple award-winning long

series *360° GEO Reports* produced by ARTE, one of the main TV and distribution networks in Europe, and aired in Arabic by AJD.

Since 2007 up to this date, ARTE GEIE has been steadily producing, in partnership with MEDIEN KONTOR Movie GMBH, and distributing a documentary series consisting of 52-minute-episodes baptized *360° GEO Reports*. The episodes, that have reached 256 in 2017, were filmed worldwide in different languages including but not limited to English, French, Arabic, Spanish, German, Korean, Japanese, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian and Vietnamese [45]. Every episode depicts insightfully, from a European angle, the lifestyle of men and women from different socio-cultural environments and descending from different ethnic groups.

While portraying distinct lifestyles of diverse populations in far-flung territories of the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe and Oceania, a preliminary first hand observation of this series revealed that it is loaded with ideological items likely to constitute a rich corpus for the study of the phenomenon of manipulation in voiced-over documentaries translated from French into Arabic for Arab audiences.

B. Sub-Categories of Ideological Items

There is a wide and obvious discrepancy between the ideological paradigm within which the series *360° GEO Reports* was initially produced by the French German distributor ARTE and the ideological paradigm of the target audience in the Arab World for whom it has been re-versioned into Arabic. This discrepancy has been conspicuously alleviated during the process of translation commissioned by AJD.

The scrutiny of the corpus revealed the manipulation of 124 ideological references that fall under four main sub-categories: religious issues, geopolitical issues, women issues, and racial & stereotypical issues. The sub-categories are ascendingly ordered according to their frequency code, as shown in Table I.

TABLE I
 FREQUENCY OF IDEOLOGICAL ITEMS

Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage
Religious Issues	81	65.3
Geopolitical Issues	20	16.1
Women Issues	15	12.1
Racial & Stereotypical Issues	8	6.5
Total	124	100

Religious & Existential Issues

Religion is a preponderant aspect in the history and present of the Arab World where 95% of the population are Muslims [46] and where Islam is the official religion in the majority of the countries. It is not only the main source of state laws and regulations, but also the regulator of most individuals’ daily life. According to a recent study conducted in Morocco, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Tunisia, Egypt and Lebanon, an average of 80% declared that religion was important in their lives [47].

In the study corpus, the weight of religion is clearly noticeable, as 81 (65.3%) out of the 124 ideological items spotted refer to religious and existential issues that have been manipulated while rendered from French into Arabic. Examples 1 and 2 illustrate two instances of manipulation of religious references.

Example 1 is extracted from Episode 42: *Jordan, The Horse Dynasty*. The episode is a portrait of Jordan purebred dynasty of horses adopted especially by Princess Alia bint Hussein in her royal stables. The statement *Jordan is not*

blessed by the gods has been entirely omitted in the Arabic version. Even though idiomatic, the expression not only clashes with the monotheistic beliefs of the majority of the target audience among whom are Jordanians, but might also prove to be offensive if literally interpreted as assuming that Jordan is suffering from a lack of water because it is not a blessed country. Omission and economy have been largely resorted to especially in religious references where there is invocation or glorification of other gods.

TABLE II
EXAMPLE 1

Source Text (in French)	Translation (in English)	Target Text (in Arabic)	Translation (in English)
La Jordanie n'est pas bénie des dieux. Le pays souffre d'un cruel manque d'eau.	Jordan is not blessed by the gods. The country suffers from a cruel water shortage.	تعاني الأردن من نقص حاد في المياه.	The country suffers from a severe water shortage.

TABLE III
EXAMPLE 2

Source Text (in French)	Translation (in English)	Target Text (in Arabic)	Translation (in English)
Il y a un petit air de famille, n'est-ce pas ? Au Sumatra, nos ancêtres, Orang-utans, sont menacés d'extinction.	They look a bit like family, don't they? In Sumatra, our ancestors Orang-utans, are threatened by extinction.	ما أشبه هذا الحيوان بالإنسان، أليس كذلك؟ في (سومطرة)، قرود الأورانغ أوتان مهددة بالانقراض.	This animal looks so much like men, doesn't it? In Sumatra, Orang-utans are threatened by extinction.

TABLE IV
EXAMPLE 3

Source Text (in French)	Translation (in English)	Target Text (in Arabic)	Translation (in English)
Demain, Samira s'envolera pour une semaine en Israël où elle donnera une série de concerts.	Tomorrow, Samira will fly to Israel where she will stay for one week to give a number of concerts.	غداً، سوف تسافر سميرة لمدة أسبوع إلى الشرق الأوسط حيث ستقدم سلسلة من الحفلات الموسيقية	Tomorrow, Samira will fly to the Middle East where she will stay for one week to give a number of concerts.

TABLE V
EXAMPLE 4

Source Text (in French)	Translation (in English)	Target Text (in Arabic)	Translation (in English)
Le monument d'une femme libérée: une musulmane se débarrasse de son voile.	The statue of a liberated woman: a Muslim getting rid of her veil.	تمثال لامرأة تمييط الحجاب عن رأسها.	The statue of a woman taking her veil off.

Similar instances reoccurred throughout the 94 scripts, namely in Episode 70: *The Last Orang-utans in Sumatra* from which Example 2 was extracted. Reference to Orang-utans as 'our ancestors' has been modulated to "our look-alikes". The Darwinist theory about the origins of man constitutes a contradiction with the precept of Islam which traces back the origin of human beings to Adam, hence the act of manipulation operated in this example.

Geopolitical Issues

Of the ideological items extracted from the scripts, 16.1% pertain to political issues; that is, 20 items out of 124. The manipulation that occurred in this area is inescapably dictated by the geopolitical context within which the translation is received. Example 3 illustrates an instance of manipulation driven by the geopolitical context.

Implication is a procedure that has often been utilized in the translation of the scripts. In Example 3, implication has been called for in the rendering of "Israel" by "the Middle East". In Episode 39: *The News Man of Azerbaijan*, Samira is a popular singer who performs traditional songs locally and internationally to promote the legacy of Ashik singers in Azerbaijan. Israel is one of the destinations where she plans "to give a number of concerts". However, bearing in mind the

old and ongoing conflict between Arabs and Israel, her destination has been implied to avoid the provocation of the Arab audience, in the midst of the story of an artist whom the viewer is supposed to appreciate for the art she presents and the traditions she promotes.

Women Issues

Debate over gender issues has recently gained lots of momentum. Unlike Western countries where the debate about gender has transcended women's rights and the questioning of conventional roles of men and women, to LGBT community rights and the legislation of same-sex marriage, focus in the Arab World is mainly on the valorization of the status of women in society and the recognition of her most basic rights. In the study corpus, references to women issues represent 12.1% of the totality of ideological item that have been subject to manipulation, being 15 references. Example 4 is an instance of manipulation of references related to women issues.

The source sentence in Example 4, from Episode 39, contains elements that implicitly link the emancipation of the Muslim woman to the removal of the veil emphasized by the use of the colon, which refers to a cause and effect relation. Before broadcasting the episode to a society where the veil is worn by a large number of women, the statement has been

voided of those items via a combination of economy and omission. With "liberated woman" reduced to "woman", "a Muslim woman" completely omitted and "getting rid of" toned-down to "taking off", the translation agent produced a target statement free from any reference associating the status of the Muslim woman to the wearing of the veil: *The statue of a woman taking her veil off*.

Racial & Stereotypical Issues

Racial and stereotypical items subject to manipulation did not exceed 6.5% of the totality of ideological references extracted from the study corpus. Even though they occurred in very rare occasions in the corpus, in eight instances precisely, those items were either adapted, omitted or particularized. The references extracted were not necessarily prejudicial vis-à-vis the Arab World only but exceeded it to other nations and cultural groups.

TABLE VI
EXAMPLE 5

Source Text (in French)	Translation (in English)	Target Text (in Arabic)	Translation (in English)
Les hommes d'ici veulent avoir beaucoup de femmes, ils rêvent d'être comme le roi Salomon, et d'avoir trois cents épouses et trois cents maîtresses.	Here, men want to have many women, they dream of becoming like the king Suleiman and take three hundred wives and three hundred mistresses.	يريد الرجال هنا أن يحصلوا على كثير من النساء، يحملون أن يكونوا كالمملك شهریار، أن يحصلوا على ثلاثمئة زوجة وثلاثمئة عشيقه.	Here, men want to have many women, they dream of becoming like the king Shahrayar and take three hundred wives and three hundred mistresses.

TABLE VII
EXAMPLE 6

Source Text (in French)	Translation (in English)	Target Text (in Arabic)	Translation (in English)
C'est un peu le défaitisme en général des Français.	It is somehow the French defeatism in general.	إنه سلوك انهزامي.	This is a defeatist behavior.

Example 5 is the most representative illustration of stereotypes attributed to the Eastern society in the study corpus. It represents one of the most frequent images conceived in the Western popular culture about the Ottoman Emperor Sultan Suleiman Al Kanuni (Suleiman the Magnificent in the Western literature). While the latter is glorified in the Muslim world for heroically leading his armies to conquer the Christian world and expand the Ottoman Empire, for rigorously enforcing Sharia law and justly ruling his empire, he is mostly evoked in the western popular culture as a polygamous monarch and is brought to mind for his harem. This image has been recalled in the corpus by an angry woman from Panama in Episode 41, *Panama Hat, the Style Icon*. Accusing men in her village of promiscuity, she says: *they dream of becoming like the king Suleiman and take three hundred wives and three hundred mistresses*. The analogy has been adapted in the Arabic text through the fictional character *King Shahrayar* drawn from the famous tale of *One Thousand and One Nights* who would take a new wife every night. The TT goes: *they dream of becoming like the king Shahrayar and take three hundred wives and three hundred mistresses*.

Likewise, Example 6 is a stereotype but this time attributed to the French people attitude described as being [*defeatist*] in general. The cliché was mentioned in the original version of Episode 83: *Brittany of Bees and Lighthouses*. However, it has not been anchored in the Arabic version where the "defeatist" attitude is particularized and contextualized, using the demonstrative pronoun "this" and omitting both the reference to French people and the sweeping expression "in general". This instance of manipulation has obviously not been determined by the reception of the documentary in the Arab World as it does not offend, shock or upset the Arab viewer. However, it could have been a decision taken by the translation agent or dictated by the channel's guidelines.

C. Techniques of Translation

The 124 instances of manipulative translation from French into Arabic extracted from the 94 examined scripts pertain to four subcategories: Religious and Existential Issues, Geopolitical and Diplomatic Issues, Gender Issues and Racial and Stereotypical Issues.

TABLE VIII
FREQUENCY OF IDEOLOGICAL ITEMS

Procedure	Frequency	Percentage
Modulation	52	34.9
Omission	30	20.1
Economy	12	8.1
Amplification	12	8.1
Particularization	9	6.0
Generalization	9	6.0
Explicitation	7	4.7
Adaptation	7	4.7
Correspondence	6	4.0
Implication	5	3.4
Total	149	100

With reference to Vinay and Darbelnet taxonomy (1958/2000) [48], the translation procedures deployed to render those items were varied, namely modulation, omission, economy, amplification, particularization, generalization, explicitation, adaptation, correspondence and implication. All of them fall under the category of oblique translation. Translation agents resorted sometimes to the combination of two procedures or three to rewrite the source statement and come up with an ideologically 'acceptable' translation.

Table VIII recapitulates in figures the translation procedures utilized in the rewriting of the 124 ideological references identified in the 94 scripts that served as a study corpus.

D.Extra-Linguistic Factors of Manipulation

The extra-linguistic factors that could have dictated the manipulation of ideological and culture-specific items in these samples of AJD's voiced-over documentaries can be preliminarily speculated based on the text analysis results and those of previous studies conducted with this regards, namely [27], where the author lists four extra-linguistic factors of censorship in AVT: 1) *politics*; 2) *political correctness*; 3) *religion*; and 4) *self-censorship*.

Religious Factors

Despite the presence of Christian, Jewish and other religious groups and communities, it goes without saying that the Arab World region is deeply rooted in the Arab Muslim culture and that Islam motivates and drives practically all aspects of life. Audiovisual industry is part and parcel of this landscape and gives way to the Arab Muslim culture both in local productions and acquired productions from international distributors.

Geopolitical Factors

The geopolitical landscape in the region, inherited from a history of western occupation, is currently marked by a sweeping change brought about by the winds of the Arab Spring and its revolutionary repercussions on each and every Arab state. It is also shaped by the intervention of international coalitions, rebellious militias and terrorist groups and fueled by the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The conflicts over sovereignty and interests are unmistakably reflected in the language of media networks and institutions driven by the ideologies they adopt and the parties they support.

Editorial Censorship

The editorial line is generally dictated by the political system in the case of state-owned media or the owner's ideology and political orientation in the case of private-owned media. Conventionally, their linguistic and extra-linguistic positions are compiled in stylebooks that serve as a reference in both produced and acquired programs, and guide producers, editors and translators in the process of decision making.

Self-Censorship

Guidelines in stylebooks contain most of the time broad guidelines and evidently do not cover all instances. In this case, the decision is left to the translation agent. All the same, the decision in this case is molded by the translation agent's background and orientations, which might not necessarily be in line with those of the institution they work for.

VI. CONCLUSION

Language is definitely a carrier of ideology and in a cross-ideological context like the process of translation, ideology-bound constraints are more preponderant. In the present study, attention was especially given to the manipulation of ideological items extracted from documentary films as a non-fiction genre.

The subcategorization of ideological items subject to manipulation in the study corpus and the analysis of the

procedures of translation used in their rendition helped pinpoint a number of extralinguistic norms and factors that regulate the task of translation agents and orient their decisions, including censorship imposed by patrons, religious and socio-cultural constraints dictated by the target culture and translators agency.

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