Reading and Translating Faiza's Guène's *Kiffe kiffe demain*: A Postcolonial Perspective

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Abstract

Situating itself in a Postcolonial Studies framework, the present article centres on Faiza Guène's 2004 debut novel, Kiffe kiffe demain*, and its 2006 English translation,* Just like tomorrow*, by Sarah Adams. After providing an outline of key trends in postcolonial theory and an overview of* Kiffe kiffe demain*, this study suggests how Guène's work lends itself to a postcolonial reading. Subsequently examining the multiple translation challenges to which Guène's novel gives rise and how these have been handled, this study argues that Adams' target text (TT) can be located within a postcolonial Translation Studies paradigm.*

Keywords: *Faiza Guène + Kiffe kiffe demain + reading and translating + postcolonial perspective.*

Introduction

i)Postcolonial Approaches within Critical Theory and Translation Studies

The wide-ranging and now flourishing field of Postcolonial Studies focuses on such issues as the history of former colonies, the effects of the unbalanced power relations which exist between colonisers and colonised peoples and the resistance of colonised peoples to the colonialist process. Postcolonial theorists with a specific interest in literature often view texts as vehicles for expressing dissent against the authoritarian regimes which persist in decolonised countries; such texts thus serve to further liberate the people of these countries by giving them a more powerful voice. Although the purpose of this study is not to provide a comprehensive review of postcolonial critical theory, it is nevertheless apt to cite here some of its most notable examples; these range from the anti-colonialist work of Frantz Fanon, whose *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952) critiques the effects of colonial racism on the human psyche, through Khatibi's *Le roman maghrébin* (1968), which views North African literature as a means of recording and analysing the drama of decolonisation, to Edward Said's highly influential *Orientalism* (1978), which denounces the West's patronising representations of 'the East'. Indeed, as Boehmer and Tickell (2015: 1) highlight, those critics who shaped and consolidated Postcolonial Studies in the 1990s, such as Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, also worked with the legacy of Said's thought.

Many of the texts which belong to the growing body of French-language, North African literature produced since Algeria's 1964 War of Independence and the subsequent decolonisation of the Maghreb, clearly reflect those countries' prevailing political and social issues. From the 1980s, *beur* literature,[i] that is, the writing of second- and third-generation French people whose parents or grandparents were immigrants from North Africa, has flourished. Following the economic migration of male North Africans, the then Président de la République, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, introduced in 1974 the concept of *regroupement familial* [family reunification], which encouraged North African women to relocate to France to be with their husbands. These women's struggle to integrate both linguistically and culturally resulted in large-scale ghettoisation in the suburbs of some of France's major cities. Indeed, the issues of problematic integration, xenophobia and the role and treatment of

women are thus recurrent themes in *beur* writing, as is exemplified perfectly in the first official *beur* novel, Azouz Begag's 1984 *Le Gône du Chaâba,* and in the work of contemporary, female *beur* writers, or *beurettes,* such as Saphia Azzedine (2009; 2010) and Leila Slimani (2015).

Following the 'cultural turn' which dominated the field of Translation Studies in the 1980s, elements of postcolonialist thought also became evident in this discipline. In the 1990s, a number of translation scholars began to apply the concept of colonisation metaphorically and likened source texts (STs) to colonised peoples whose identity is suppressed and overwritten by the coloniser; according to this line of thought, STs thus loose much of their identity when they are rewritten, particularly in a dominant, world language such as English. Cautioning against this, Tejaswini Niranjana (1992: 171) writes: 'We must identify the means by which the West represses the non-West and marginalises its own otherness'. This concept is also a major focus of the work of Antoine Berman (1985), who identifies 'deforming tendencies' in the way in which linguistic variety in STs is often erased in TTs and argues that 'arbitrary homogenisation' of such language should be avoided (1985: 243), so that the true character of the original work is visible to target readers. More political in focus, André Lefevere (1992) emphasises the interaction between a translation and a translator's ideology, or that ideology which is imposed on them by a commissioner or editor, and Lawrence Venuti (2008) argues that the decision to adopt a domesticating translation approach, which erases the identity of TTs and which is prevalent in American- and British-English translations, involves 'an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values' (2008: 15). This line of thought is also developed by feminist theorists in the field, notably Sherry Simon (1996), who draws a parallel between the status of translations, which are often considered to be derivative and inferior to original texts, and that of women, who are so often repressed in society and literature. Similarly, Gayatri Spivak (1993) not only stresses the ideological consequences of the translation of third-world literature into English and the risk of eliminating individuals and cultures which are less politically powerful, but also identifies women's double subordination by both colonisers and patriarchal societies.

ii)Structure of the present study

Against this theoretical background, the present article centres on *Kiffe kiffe demain*, [ii] Faiza Guène's 2004 debut novel which received much attention by the European press, in part due to the riots which occurred in France's heavily North African suburbs in 2005. After providing an overview of Guène's work, this study will detail the key themes which, when explored, suggest how Guène's work lends itself to a postcolonial reading, namely: the class divide within French society; immigration and xenophobia; and the role and treatment of women. It will then explore how these themes are reflected in the language of *Kiffe kiffe demain*, and the translation challenges which arise, within three main categories -- representations of French language and culture; representations of Arabic language and culture; and representations of attitudes to, and treatment of, women -- and a number of related sub-categories. Examining how these challenges have been handled by English-language translator, Sarah Adams (2006),[iii] this study argues that Adams' translation approach can also be located in a postcolonial Translation Studies paradigm.

2)*Kiffe kiffe demain*: Overview[iv]

This work of fiction focuses on the life of its narrator, Doria, a 15-year-old French girl of Moroccan descent, who lives in a socially-deprived suburb of Paris with her mother, a single parent. Written in the first person and the present tense, this linguistically hybrid novel, which contains much contemporary French slang and Arabic vocabulary and transcribed pronunciation, often reads as a personal diary and, at times, addresses its readers directly ('Ah oui, je vous avais pas dit…' (105)). Indeed, Doria occasionally appears to confide in her audience ('Ouais, on a vraiment discuté de tout. Même du… du truc qui me faisait un peu honte, quand même. Ce que vous savez' (180)). Adopting a sometimes anxious and caustic, but consistently witty, tone, Doria describes her relationships with family members – her close, respectful connection with her mum (26), who speaks little French but who works long hours as a chambermaid in a motel to support herself and her daughter (14), and her acrimonious feelings towards her father, who returned to Morocco to marry a younger woman when her mum was unable to have more children (10). Doria writes affectionately of other members of her estate, some of whom are involved in drug dealing (102) and car thefts (141), but she is much more critical of the middle-class professionals -- psychologists, social workers and school teachers -- who nevertheless do try to help her. She also mentions repeatedly how she and other females of North African origin are considered to be inferior to men and are subjected to abusive, sexist behaviours (91). Despite this fundamentally serious subject-matter, Doria's telling of amusing anecdotes -- which cover a broad range of subjects, including boys (46), puberty (49), the unfashionable, second-hand clothes which she is mocked for wearing at school (74), her father's drink habit (156) and her vocational hairdresser training (173) -- and her ultimately positive attitude, ensure that the work is both a humorous and a positive read. The novel ends on a particularly optimistic note as Doria is hopeful regarding her future and that of the people about whom she cares.

At this juncture, it is apt to examine in more depth three of the work's key themes -- the class divide within French society; immigration and xenophobia; and attitudes to, and treatment of, women -- which, when explored, suggest that *Kiffe kiffe demain* can, arguably, be read from a postcolonial perspective.

3)Reading the Source Text: A Postcolonial Perspective

i)The Class Divide in French Society

Kiffe kiffe demain is set in the notorious *banlieues* [suburbs] to the north east of Paris, in an economically-deprived *cité* [housing estate] in which social problems are rife. Doria's descriptions of this *cité* are sometimes poetic ('Dehors, il faisait gris comme la couleur du béton des immeubles et il pleuvait à très fines gouttes, comme si Dieu nous crachait dessus' (70)),[v] and are often highly descriptive and evocative of the environment in which she lives (37):

> Le gardien de nos immeubles, il s'en fout de l'état des tours, on dirait. Heureusement que des fois Carla la femme de ménage portugaise nettoie un peu. Mais quand elle vient pas, ça reste bien dégueulasse pendant des semaines, comme là ces derniers temps. Dans l'ascenseur, il y avait de la pisse et des mollards, ça sentait mauvais, mais on était quand même contentes que ça marche. Heureusement qu'on connaît l'emplacement des boutons par rapport aux étages, parce que la plaquette est grattée et ça a fondu. On a dû les brûler au briquet.

Although very young, the narrator is socially aware and reflects on the reasons why local councils appear to neglect these housing estates and their residents (‘Je me dis que c’est peut-être pour ça que les cités sont laissées à l’abandon, parce que ici peu de gens votent’ (96)). Doria has first-hand experience of the social implications of her own poverty; she is repeatedly mocked by other young girls due to the unfashionable, second-hand clothes which she wears (109). She also describes the stark divide between her own social housing estate and a neighbouring, middle-class suburb; a divide which is both literal and figurative (‘Il y a quand même une séparation bien marquée entre la cité du Paradis où j’habite et la zone pavillonnaire Rousseau. Des grillages immenses qui sentent la rouille tellement ils sont vieux et un mur de pierre tout le long. Pire que la ligne Maginot ou le mur de Berlin’ (90)).

Understandably, Doria feels some acrimony towards members of the middle class and she is aware that she has a tendency to be judgemental of others (‘Elle a peut-être raison Mme Burlaud quand elle me dit que je ne supporte pas qu’on porte un jugement sur moi mais que je le fais tout le temps avec les autres’ (64)). Although a number of professionals try to help her, Doria seriously doubts that they have good intentions or really care about her. Her criticisms are levelled at her teachers (‘M. Werbert […]. Il se la joue prophète social. Il me dit que si j’ai besoin, je peux prendre rendez-vous avec lui… Tout ça pour se donner bonne conscience et raconter à ses potes dans un bar parisien branché comme c’est difficile d’enseigner en banlieue. Beurk.’ (26)); mental-health specialists (‘C’est ça qui est relou avec les psychologues, psychiatres, psychanalystes et tout ce qui commence par ‘psy’… ils veulent que tu leur racontes toute ta vie et eux, ils te disent rien’ (40)) and social workers (‘[…] même si je la trouve conne, elle joue mieux son rôle d’assistante sociale de quartier qui aide les pauvres. Elle fait vraiment bien semblant d’avoir quelque chose à cirer de nos vies. Parfois, on y croirait presque’ (69)). Indeed, it is with irony that Doria suggets that a male social worker who has recently left the profession has done so in order to pursue an easier, more stereotypically bourgeois, way of life (19):

> […] il a arrêté le travail d’assistant social. Il s’est installé à la campagne à ce qu’il paraît. Si ça se trouve, il s’est reconverti en maître fromager. Il passe avec sa camionnette bleu ciel dans les petits villages de la bonne vieille France, le dimanche après la messe et vend du pain de seigle, du roquefort tradition et du saucisson sec.

ii)Immigration and Xenophobia

A large proportion of the residents in Doria’s *cité* are of North African origin. In addition to her own family which is of Moroccan descent, the narrator mentions friends and neighbours from Algeria and Tunisia. Doria’s descriptions of the cultural traditions (35) and professional activities (77) of these people paint a convincing picture of the culturally hybrid environment in which she lives, adding depth and authenticity to her narrative. If these North African peoples coexist harmoniously, they are nevertheless subjected to instances of blatant racism by native French people. This occurs both on the streets of the *cité* (‘[…] quand je vois les policiers qui fouillent Hamoudi près du hall, quand je les entends le traiter de ‘p’tit con’, de ‘déchet’, je me dis que ces types, ils connaissent rien à la poésie’ (28))
and in Doria’s mother’s place of work (14):

> Au Formule 1 de Bagnolet, tout le monde l’appelle ‘La Fatma’. On lui crie après sans arrêt, et on la surveille pour vérifier qu’elle pique rien dans les chambres. Et puis le prénom de ma mère, c’est pas Fatma, c’est Yasmina. Ca doit bien le faire marrer, M. Schihont, d’appeler

toutes les Arabes Fatma, tous les Noirs Mamadou et tous les Chinois Ping-Pong. Tous des cons, franchement…

iii)Attitudes to, and Treatment of, Women. Doria peppers her narrative with examples of the ways in which North African and *beur* women [*beurettes*] are treated and viewed by men. These not only relate to her own upbringing but also draw on the experiences of other local women. Before returning to Morocco to marry a woman who was younger and more fertile than Doria's mother (10), the narrator's father made his view of women clear ('Mon père était comme celui d'Hamoudi, il pensait que les filles, c'est faible, que c'est fait pour pleurer et pour faire la vaisselle' (135-6)). Understandably, this had a detrimental effect on his daughter's sense of self-worth ('J'ai aucune photo de moi jusqu'à l'âge de trois ans. […] Ca me rend triste de repenser à ça, j'ai l'impression de pas exister complètement. Je suis sûre que si j'avais eu un zizi, j'aurais eu une grosse pile d'albums photo' (101)). Other anecdotes which Doria tells relate to patriarchal attitudes prevalent in Morocco (22) and events which have occurred in her immediate neighbourhood (91). In spite of such adversity, Doria's mother's hard work pays off and she inspires her daughter to follow her example ('C'est en voyant [Maman] aller mieux tous les jours, se battre pour nous faire vivre toutes les deux que j'ai commencé à me dire que tout se rachète, et qu'il va peut-être falloir que je fasse comme elle' (173)). Over time, Doria finishes her therapy (175), meets a boyfriend (180) and attends her professional training regularly (173). Other, oppressed female neighbours also demonstrate courage and escape from the abusive, domestic situations in which they are trapped, eventually flourishing (147; 166). As Adams so aptly writes: 'Guène's point is that, in abandoning these women, the father releases them to fulfil their own potential' (2006: 3).

4)Translating the Source Text: A Postcolonial Perspective

Against this background, Sarah Adams' 2006 translation of *Kiffe kiffe demain*, entitled *Just Like Tomorrow*, will now be examined. Guided by the above-discussed themes, the following analysis will work with three categories: i)Representations of French Language and Culture; ii)Representations of Arabic Language and Culture; iii)Representations of, and Attitudes to, Women. Within each of these, a number of sub-sections will focus on a representative sample of the translation challenges which Guène's ST presents, and Adams' corresponding solutions to these, in order to establish how Adams' translation approach may also be deemed postcolonial in nature.[vi]

i)Representations of French Language and Culture

In the interests of clarity and concision, discussion of the ways in which French language and culture are represented by Guène and rendered in English by Adams, will be divided into six sub-categories: i)Slang vocabulary; ii)*Verlan*; iii)Vulgar language; iv)Grammar; v)Mockery of the middle class; vi)French cultural references.

In his *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929), Mikhail Bakhtin rightly identifies that, when spoken language features in a written work, it is not used as spontaneously as it would be in an everyday, extra-literary context (ibid: 62). In an interview given to her translator (Adams 2006), Guène acknowledges that such careful representation of spoken language was, indeed, inevitable in her *Kiffe kiffe demain* (ibid: 2): 'If I'd wanted to create a ghetto language, you wouldn't have understood anything – there'd be too many

Arabic words'. Nevertheless, as Adams herself writes, it is thanks to Guène's judicious 'dosage' of slang that her work is so accessible, while remaining wholly authentic (ibid).

a)Slang vocabulary[vii]

In Adams' TT, there are very occasional instances in which register is under-translated; 'ses ongles un peu crados' (107) is, for instance, rendered as 'his filthy nails' (99), where 'gross' may have been a more accurate translation, and 'Hamoudi fricote avec Lila' (134) is translated as 'Hamoudi is sleeping with Lila' (126), where 'bedding' may have been a more appropriate choice in the TL. Nevertheless, Adams preserves much of the slang nouns and verbs employed in *Kiffe kiffe demain* by using contemporary, TL equivalents (all my emphases):

On lui doit *du flouse* (25)	We owe her *dough* (17)
Je crois que *j'ai gaffé* (17)	I guess *I messed up* (9)
Tu fraudes à la Gare du Nord (148)	*You're fare-dodging* at the Gare du Nord (140)

On yet other occasions, some over-translations of the SL can be noted; arguably, these serve to compensate somewhat for the occasional instances of under-translation. In the following example, 'Ah bon?' could, for instance, have simply been rendered with '*Really*?':

Ah bon. Elle appelle ça carrément un épisode ? (72)	Come again. Straight up, she calls it an episode. (64)

Adams' task becomes more complex when Guène employs slang which can be rendered variously in English, according to the context in which it is used. Repeated examples of this phenomenon include the expression *c'est trop l'affiche*, which describes something which is very obvious and therefore causes embarrassment, the term *grave*, which refers to a large quantity or degree of something, and *de ouf*, from the French exclamation *ouf* [phew], which describes something impressive. In all of the following examples, Adams succeeds well at recapturing effectively in the TL the individual contexts in which this language was originally used (my emphases):

C'est trop l'affiche (25)	*How embarrassing is that*? (17)
Déjà, vu l'aspect du paquet, *c'est trop l'affiche* (83)	Even just the packaging is *like big shame* (75)
Dans les moments où il y a *grave* du monde (25)	When there's *this many* people around (17)
On était *grave* en galère de thune (112)	It was *a nightmare* us being skint (104)
J'imagine un super mariage, une cérémonie *de ouf* (41)	I'm picturing a big fat *wedding, with the whole works* (33)
Là, ils annonçaient un gros cyclone dans les Caraibes, un truc *de ouf* qui se préparait à faire pas mal de dégâts (31)	So there he was, talking about this huge cyclone in the Caribbean, and *it was like oh my days, this crazy thing* getting ready to do loads of damage (73)

The manifestation of this linguistic phenomenon which poses the greatest translation difficulty is undoubtedly the use of the Arabic-inspired, French expression, *c'est kif-kif* [it's the same] and the verb, *kiffer* [to like], on which the book's title itself plays. When these uses occur throughout the work, Adams employs a number of techniques in order to recapture them accordingly in the TL. At times, she renders the verb closely, sometimes also italicising it for emphasis, and to add a certain connotation:

Elle kiffe Bertrand Delanoe (162)	She's been in love with Bertrand Delanoe (154)
Olivier et Trav, ils se kiffent (144)	Olivier and Trav *like* each other (136) (Adams' emphasis)

At other times, Adams employs an idiomatic TL equivalent:

Olivia est toujours *en kiffe* (144)	Olivia's still *feeling the moment* (136)

On yet other occasions she borrows the original term in her TL (Vinay and Darbelnet's 1958 'emprunt'), explaining the term obliquely (ibid):

Alors que pour moi, c'est kif-kif demain (76)	With me, it's just kif-kif tomorrow, AKA different day, same shit (68)

It is only on the penultimate page of her narrative that Doria explains the evolution of her use of the words *kif-kif* to *kiffe kiffe*. This highly self-conscious paragraph, which clarifies the linguistically hybrid and bitter-sweet nature of the novel's title, gives rise to further translation difficulties, largely due to its metalinguistic nature. In response to these challenges, Adams rewrites elements of the ST in order to ensure that the language is preserved for the TL reader, despite the different linguistic and cultural context in which the TT is read. If she retains the Arabic *kif-kif* (line 1, below), she nevertheless eliminates self-reflexive references to the SL (lines 2 and 3) and then modifies the semantic content of line 4, from the SL sense of her being impressed by her own linguistic explanation, to viewing the future more positively in the TL. In doing so, Adams also justifies her very apt, polysemic, translation of the book's title, *Just Like Tomorrow.*

1)C'est plus kif-kif demain… […] 2)Maintenant, kif-kif demain, je l'écris différemment. 3)Ca serait kiffe kiffe demain, du verbe kiffer. 4)Woah. C'est de moi. 5)(C'est le genre de truc que Nabil dirait…) (188)	1)No more '*kif-kif* tomorrow' […] 2)Now I'd say it differently. 3)I'd say I just *like* tomorrow. 4)Yeah, I'd give that ratings. It's more me. 5)(Plus it's the kind of thing Nabil would say.) (177-78)

b)*Verlan.* Pilard (2002: 89-90) provides an accurate and succinct explanation of *verlan*, and its presence in *l'argot des cités*, as it is represented in *Kiffe kiffe demain*, when he writes:

> This code-language is formed by inverting the syllables of words and making any spelling changes necessary to aid pronunciation. The word verlan is itself the inverted form of 'l'envers' ('back to front'). Some verlan terms have passed into spoken French generally and are used or understood by a great many speakers, e.g. laisse béton (laisse tomber: 'forget it') […] and meuf (femme: 'woman'). […] Verlan is an extremely generative form of slang. Though it has always existed, it has become extremely popular with the young over the last twenty years or so, and it accounts for the vast majority of words used in 'l'argot des cités'.

In this vein, Guène selectively peppers Doria's speech with uses of *verlan*. It would clearly be impossible to translate closely language which is so context-bound and culturally loaded. As Landers (2001: 117) writes in his discussion of the translation of dialect: '[…] [It] is always tied, geographically and culturally, to a milieu that does not exist in the target-language setting. Substitution with an equivalent dialect is foredoomed to failure […]'. He nevertheless concedes that (ibid): 'It *is* possible to hint at unorthodox ways of speaking, if done sparingly. […] Where extended passages in dialect are the case, the best we can hope for is a kind of generalised adaptation to spoken discourse […]'. It is precisely this approach which Adams adopts in her translation of *verlan*. When rendering *keuf* [*flic*: policeman], for instance, she employs the highly colloquial TL verb 'squeal': 'S'il m'invite pas, j'le balance aux keufs' (163) therefore becomes 'If he doesn't, I'll squeal on him' (155). In her translation of *chelou* [*louche*: odd], she compensates for the semantically correct, but stylistically more standard, 'weird', by supplementing her sentence with the colloquial expression, 'oh my days': 'Mme Burlaud vient de me proposer un truc chelou' (39): 'Oh my days, Mrs Burlaud's just suggested something weird' (31). Similarly, when local girls laugh at Doria due to her second-hand clothes, one of them remarks: 'Téma la fille, habillée encore plus mal que sa daronne' (109), Adams renders the *verlan* term *téma* [mater: look at] with the idiomatic TL 'check out' and increases the informality of register by using the term 'garm' rather than clothes. The SL sentence thus becomes: 'Check out the daughter, her garm's even worse than her old lady's' (101). Furthermore, when Doria uses the expression *du chinois* [double Dutch], then verlanises it herself to produce *du noich*, Adams translates the expression as 'Chinese'. While this solution itself does not preserve the semantic content of the original SL utterance, Adams compensates for this by adding the oblique explanation 'Gobbledygook': 'Du chinois. Du noich.' (158): 'Chinese, you get me. Gobbledygook.' (150). It is interesting to note that Adams also provides a one-page explanation of *Verlan* on the final page of her text (2006: 184). This inclusion of paratextual material makes both the non-standard uses of the TL, and herself as translator, distinctly visible (Venuti 1995).[viii]

c)Vulgar language. Doria is aware that her use of language is sometimes vulgar, and occasionally tones this down herself, which Adams preserves closely in English (my emphases).

[…] ça me donne *la chiasse*. Pardon, *la colique*. *Ca fait moins dégueulasse.* (153)	[…] it gives me *the squits*. Sorry, *butterflies*. *Sounds less disgusting*. (145)
Quelle **** (*c'est de l'autocensure*)! (138)	What a **** (*I'm doing some censoring here*)! (130)

When the SL itself is more vulgar, Landers (2001: 151) stresses the importance of preserving this closely in translation:

> What you cannot do is apply your own standards of decency or morality, or those of any hypothetical audience, to the task […]. A prissy or sanctimonious translator, or an unscrupulous one, can totally skew the target-language reader's perception of a writer; as translators, we do not have that right.

If Adams occasionally under-translates instances of vulgarity -- 'leur conne d'assistante' (18) is rendered as 'their stupid social worker' (9), where 'stupid bitch of a social worker' would have been a more apt rendering --, on many occasions she recaptures perfectly the semantic content and linguistic register of the SL in her translation:

De toute façon, le ski, ça pue la merde (40)	Whatever, skiing stinks of shit (31)
[…] anonyme et couillonnée, comme tous les autres (72)	[…] faceless and fucked over, like all the rest (64)

d)Grammar. The urban slang which Doria uses is also characterised by multiple, non-standard uses of French grammar. (All of the emphases in the following examples are my own.) In addition to omitting the French negative *ne* and eliding vowels, the inaccuracy of which is, admittedly, not easy to preserve in the TL ('J' m'en fous, j'suis proper, j'ai rien à me reprocher' (119): 'I don't care, I'm clean, I've got nothing to blame myself for' (111)), Doria misuses tenses in *si* clauses, which Adams recaptures with the inaccurate TL 'wouldn't *of*' as opposed to the correct 'wouldn't have': '*Si j'aurais su*, j'aurais même pas eu mes règles' (85): 'If I'd known, *I wouldn't of had* my period' (77)). Furthermore, the narrator uses the rarely used French *passé surcomposé* [double compound past] tense, instead of the much more standard pluperfect tense, which Adams recaptures with an informal TL usage: 'Dès qu'on *a eu fini*' (96): 'When *we'd done*' (88).

e)Mockery of the French Middle Class. Doria's aversion to, and consequent mockery of, the French middle class is reflected in her discourse and presents its own set of translation challenges; these require that the translator adopt a linguistically creative approach if they are to be preserved accurately in the TL. When Doria's friend, local drug-dealer and likeable rogue, Hamoudi, begins a new relationship, his partner gives him the affectionate new nickname, Moudi. Partly jealous of this new woman, Doria criticises the nickname which she finds both meaningless and 'middle-class'. If Adams recaptures the linguistic playfulness of the original very accurately, the class connotation present in the SL is nevertheless lost in translation; 'ça fait couple bourgeois' [that makes them sound like a middle-class couple] is rendered as 'nicknames are *so* smug-married':

C'était signé 'Moudi'. Un surnom. C'est nul comme surnom […]. Mais 'Mou dit quoi ?' Il dit rien, plus rien du tout. Les surnoms, ça fait couple bourgeois (159)	It was signed 'Moudi'. A nick-name. A crap nickname […]. Moudi. Mooody… schmoody… what? Doesn't mean anything. Doesn't say anything. Nick-names are *so* smug-married (151)

On another occasion, Doria recollects how, when reading aloud a passage from the Bible in her French class one day, her teacher, Mme Jacques, reproached her for mispronouncing a name and corrected it, employing a highly exaggerated and middle-class French accent. Despite mistranslating *notre belle langue* as 'our beautiful literature', Adams

provides a useful oblique explanation of the correct pronunciation of the name 'Job' and succeeds well at both reproducing the volume of the original utterance by using capital letters, and reproducing the exaggerated French pronunciation by transposing a stressed 'r' onto the TL:

[Madame Jacques] m'avait engueulée parce qu'à mon tour de lecture, au lieu de prononcer Job, j'ai dit 'Job'. Je l'ai prononcé à l'anglaise. Et cette vieille folle de Mme Jacques, elle m'a accusée de 'souiller notre belle langue' et d'autres trucs aussi débiles. J'y peux rien, je savais pas qu'il existait, ce type-là, Job. 'Parr votrrre faute, le patrrrimoine frrrançais est dans le coma !' (150)	[Mrs Jacques] shouted at me because when it was my time to read, instead of pronouncing it Job-rhymes-with-globe, I said 'Djob'. Like the English word for work. And that crazy old bag accused me of 'sullying our beautiful literature' and other moronic stuff. Wasn't my fault. I didn't even know this Job guy existed. It's because of PEOPLE LIKE YOU that our Frrrench herrrritttage is in a coma!' (142)

Doria's dislike of, and disrespect for, her social worker is also reflected in her use of language, as she cannot even be bothered to remember this lady's surname. Assuming that her social worker's name suggests her belonging to the upper-middle class, Doria deliberately distances this woman. On the first mention of her social worker, Doria mentions a number of possible French names and Adams transposes these directly into her TT (Adams' emphasis):

La nouvelle [assistante sociale], je sais plus son nom. C'est un truc du genre Dubois, Dupont ou Dupré, bref un nom pour qu'on sache que tu viens de quelque part (17)	I don't remember what the new [social worker]'s called, but it's something like Dubois or Dupont or Dupré, a name that tells you she's from somewhere *nice*, you get me (9)

However, on subsequent mentions, Doria creates a range of names to further suggest her lack of esteem for this professional. In turn, Adams chooses a range of TL equivalents, which she uses interchangeably when the names are used in isolation throughout the text, and when they appear in a more concentrated fashion in the concluding pages of the novel. For instance, *Mme Dumachin* is rendered as 'Mrs Thingumyjig' (31/23) and 'Mrs Wotsit' (18/7); *Mme Dutruc* appears as 'Mrs Thingumyjig' (18/10; 111/102) and 'Mrs Wotsit'(31/23; 67/59) and *Mme Dubidule* is recaptured as 'Mrs Thingumyjig' (68/60) and 'Mrs Wotsit' (57/49; 80/71). By contrast, *Mme Duquelquechose* is translated as 'Mrs Thingumybob' (19/10).

f)French Cultural References. Kiffe kiffe demain teems with references to a range of French items and institutions, and these play a significant role in depicting the dominant cultural context of the SL narrative. On a number of occasions, Adams handles these by adopting a 'foreignising' translation approach (Venuti 1998: 242), thereby preserving the French context of the original work for the TL reader. Occasionally, Adams merely transposes the reference into the TL, when she deems that this will be known to her readers (*Paris-Match* (138/130). More often, however, she both transposes the reference and provides an oblique explanation of it (Vinay and Darbelnet: 1958), to ensure that the references are accessible to TL readers (all my emphases):

Il m'avait emmenée à *Hippopotamus* (24)	He'd take me out for a meal at *the Hippopotamus Steak House* (16)
Je croyais que *Zadig*, c'était une marque de pneus (47)	I thought that *Voltaire's Zadig* was a brand of car tyre (39)
Je me disais qu'elle devait travailler *aux Galeries Lafayette* (60)	I pictured her working *at a department store like Galeries Lafayette* (52)
Elle est caissière *au Continent* de Bondy (60)	She's a cashier *at Continent supermarket* in Bondy (52)

This said, Adams' principal approach to rendering such references is a contrasting, 'domesticating' one (Venuti 1998: 241). While always ensuring that their basic semantic content is preserved, Adams frequently eliminates such references, a technique which erases much of the French identity of the ST (all my emphases):

J'y vais, *c'est remboursé par la Sécu* (10)	I go, *it's free* (1)
Ca se passe pas comme *au Carrefour* (10)	It's not like *at the supermarket* (2)
[…] ça sent *le vin de table Leader Price* (13)	[…] it smells of *cheap wine* (5)
C'est *un agent de la RATP* (148)	[He] *works for Paris transport* (140)

On other occasions, Adams employs alternative references which are semantically similar, but exist in both the SL and TL cultures ('Son gobelet en carton *Quick*' (30): 'His *McDonald's* paper cup' (22)) and, very significantly, she occasionally recaptures SL cultural references with TL ones, thus creating a certain cultural displacement in her translation (Landers 2001: 117):

J'aurais bien voulu changer de père et récupérer *Tony Danza* dans *Madame est servie*, mais il était déjà pris (117)	I'd of given anything to swap Dad for *Joe McGann* in *The Upper Hand*, but he was already taken (109)

4)Translating the Source Text: A Postcolonial Perspective

ii)Representations of Arabic Language and Culture

a)Vocabulary.

On a number of occasions throughout *Kiffe kiffe demain* Doria uses Arabic words, either explaining these literally for her French-language reader, or ensuring that the context in which they are used makes their meaning explicit. This decision to infiltrate the French text with the language of its North African, immigrant people could be interpreted as subversive, and as a linguistic attempt at decolonising, and therefore empowering, the latter. On each occasion, Adams not only transposes the Arabic term into her English translation, but she also italicises it, exoticising the term somewhat. In doing so, she makes the Arabic language more visible and valorises it, as the following three examples illustrate. In addition to this, English translations of all Arabic words features in the TT are provided in a separate glossary at the end of the main text.[ix]

Quel destin de merde. Le destin, c'est la misère parce que t'y peux rien. Ca veut dire que quoi que tu fasses, te te feras couiller. […] Chez nous, on appelle ça le mektoub (19)	Fate stinks. It's a pile of shit because you've got no control over it. Basically, whatever you do you'll always get screwed […]. Back home, we call it *mektoub* (11)
Si […] fait ça, c'est la honte. La 'hchouma' (107)	If […] did that, it'd be big shame. We call it '*hchouma*' (100)
Il n'a pas dit au revoir, ni salut, ni beslama (156)	Didn't say goodbye, see you, *beslama* (148)

b)Arabic pronunciation of French. Many of Doria's family members and friends are of North African origin and their native tongue is therefore Arabic. At times, the French spoken by these characters is transcribed phonetically in the novel, and is done so to humorous effect. In such instances, Adams preserves some of this, and also adds grammatical inaccuracies, in her TT. Such is exemplified in the following extract which presents the speech of Algerian shop owner, Azziz:[x]

L'institoutrice elle demande à Toto : 'Combien ça fait douze bouteilles de vin, à dou euros la pièce ? Et il répond quoi, le p'tit ? Il répond 'Trois jours Madame' (77-8)	Ze teacher ask Toto : 'What it iz twelve bottles of wine, at two euro ze bottle?' And the little boy he say wot? He say 'Three dayz, Meez' (69)

At times, Doria's anecdotes centre on instances in which her family and friends' mispronunciation of French words results in confusion and, subsequently, humour. In order to recapture these in the TL, Adams rewrites the original plays on sounds very successfully, as the following two examples illustrate (all my emphases):

Cet enfoiré de *M. Schihont*, il a cru que Maman se moquait de lui parce qu'avec son accent elle prononce son nom *'Schiant'* (15)	That bastard *Schmidt* thought Mum was disrespecting him because, with her accent, she pronounced his name *Shit* (7)
Une fois, il y a longtemps, [Tante Zohra] expliquait à Maman qu'elle a inscrit Hamza au *'gigot'*. Maman, sur le coup, elle n'a rien compris. Et quelques jours plus tard, à la maison, elle se met à rigoler toute seule. Elle a compris que Tante Zohra voulait dire qu'elle avait inscrit Hamza au *judo* (35-6)	Once, way back, [Zohra] was telling Mum how she'd signed Hamza up for *'carrots'*. Mum didn't have a clue what she was talking about. Then, a few days later, she started giggling. She realised Aunt Zohra had meant *karate* (27-8)

c)North African Cultural References. A number of North African cultural items are named discreetly in this novel, as it is likely that they will be familiar to French, SL readers. However, as was the case above, Adams italicises these terms, making them immediately more visible for her TL audience, and also includes translations of them in her glossary. Once again, this approach also makes herself more visible in her role as translator (Venuti 1995).

On marche en babouches à la maison (18)	Seeing as we wear *babouches* at home (10)

Y avait plein de jeux pour gamins, de stands de thé à la menthe et de pâtisseries orientales, le barbecue frites-merguez d'Elie, un animateur socio-culturel du quartier […] (51)	There were loads of stalls with mint tea and cakes, barbecued *merguez* with fries cooked by Elie the community coordinator […] (43)

d)Representation of Attitudes to, and Treatment of, Women. Doria and her single mother, Yasmina, experience some challenging times on their own; the narrator's descriptions of these sometimes have a poetic quality and are recaptured very accurately by Adams:

[…] on a un peu parlé mais des fois même les mots, ils suffisent pas. Juste, on regardait par la fenêtre et ça voulait tout dire. Dehors, il faisait gris comme la couleur du béton des immeubles et il pleuvait à très fines gouttes, comme si Dieu nous crachait dessus (70)	[…] we talked a bit, but sometimes words aren't enough. We just stared out of the window and that said it all. It was grey outside, the same colour as the concrete of the tower blocks and there was a fine drizzle, like God was spitting on us (61-2)

Doria repeats the words of her mother, who is obliged to work long hours as a chambermaid in a motel to support herself and her daughter. Yasmina's anxiety can be felt in this indirect speech, as can Doria's anger at the end of the following extract. Again, Adams preserves these tones closely in her translation:

C'est [Fatouma] qui a commencé à dire tout haut que les femmes de l'hôtel se faisaient exploiter. Maman m'a dit qu'elle aurait bien aimé faire la grève avec les autres filles de l'hôtel mais qu'elle peut pas. Fatouma et les autres, elles ont leur mari qui les aide, mais nous, on est toutes seules. Résultat : comme la plupart des autres femmes de chambre sont en grève, Maman a mille fois plus de boulot (63-4)	[Fatouma] was the person who started making a noise about the women workers being exploited. Mum told me she'd like to go on strike with the girls from the motel, but she can't. Fatouma and the others, they've got their husbands to help them, but we're on our own. Result: seeing as most of the other cleaners are on strike, Mum's got a thousand times more work (55)

As well as causing financial problems, Doria's father's departure left his daughter with a sense of sadness, guilt, a wish that she was male, yet a sense of disappointing resignation to the fact that she is a girl. Once again, Adams preserves all of these sentiments in her translation by adapting a semantically close, yet linguistically concise, approach:

[…] si j'étais un garçon, ce serait peut-être différent… Ce serait même sûrement différent. Déjà mon père serait encore là. Il ne serait pas reparti au Maroc. […] J'aurais bien aimé être un garçon. Mais bon, il se trouve que je suis une fille. Une gonzesse. Une nana. Une meuf, quoi. Je finirai par m'y habituer (168-9)	[…] if I was a boy, maybe it'd be different. Matter of fact, I bet it'd be different. For a start, my dad would still be here. Rather than in Morocco. […] I'd have had no problem being a boy. But what can you do, I'm a girl. A babe. A chick. I'll get used to it in the end (160)

Throughout this work, there is nevertheless a marked and very positive shift in tone which is, once again, preserved very closely by Adams. As the narrator comments, very significantly: '[…] je me disais que la vie, franchement, c'est trop injuste. Mais là depuis quelque temps, j'ai un peu changé d'avis… Plein de choses sont arrivées qui ont changé mon point de vue' (173). When her Mum leaves her strenuous job at the motel and starts to feel much better, there is relief, and some pride, in Doria's tone:

Maman s'est enfin cassée de ce putain d'hôtel pourri où elle tirait la chasse d'eau derrière les riches, tout ça pour être payée trois fois rien (79)	Mum's finally split from that over-stinky hotel where she got paid twice nothing for flushing the loo after rich gits (71)
[…] elle va mieux. Elle est libre, lettrée (enfin presque) et elle a même pas eu besoin de thérapie pour s'en sortir (188)	She's doing better, by the way. She's independent, she can read and write (or nearly) and she didn't even go through therapy to get sorted (178)

As regards her own personal progress, Doria writes with slightly self-deprecating humour:

[…] ce qui me rassure, c'est que je me débrouille pas trop mal à l'école cette année. Remarque, si j'avais été nulle en CAP coiffure, je me serais inquiétée (173)	The one thing that comforts me is knowing I'm coping all right with school this year. Mind you, if I'd been useless at hairdressing, then I really would have been worried (163)
Mme Burlaud m'a dit que la thérapie était terminée. Je lui ai demandé si elle était sûre. Elle a rigolé. Ca veut dire que je vais bien. Ou alors qu'elle en a marre de mes histoires. Elle doit péter un câble avec tous les trucs que je lui raconte (175)	Mrs Burlaud told me my therapy was finished. I asked if she was sure. She laughed. That means I'm all right. Or else she's had enough of my stories. She must be flipping her lid with everything I tell her (165)

For Doria, the icing on the cake is the prospect of a holiday by the sea with her Mum, thanks to special funding from social services which will be approved by her social worker. The narrator's excitement and gratitude are particularly apparent in the following extract, and are preserved closely by Adams in her corresponding translation:

[Mme Dutruc] a dit qu'elle essaierait de débloquer encore un peu de sous au service social pour qu'on parte en vacances l'été prochain, sans doute au bord de la mer. Alors là… j'suis épatée. Peut-être qu'en fait Mme Dubidule, c'est la fille naturelle de l'abbé Pierre et de sœur Emmanuelle et qu'elle est la générosité incarnée… Soudain, je l'aimais notre chère et adorée assistante sociale. Au bord de la mer ! Si c'est pas beau… Je retire	[Mrs Thingumyjig] said she'd try and squeeze a bit more money out of the social services so we can go on holiday next summer, probably to the seaside… Well… what can I say? Maybe Mrs Wotsit's actually the secret daughter of Mother Theresa and St Francis of Assisi. Generosity personified… Suddenly, I liked our dearly beloved social worker. A beach holiday! Oh my days… I take back everything I said about you, your

tout ce que j'ai dit sur toi, ton mari et ton bébé Dutruc. Pardon. T'es peut-être une gentille fille au fond (184-5)	husband and little Thingumyjig. Maybe you're nice after all (174)

5)Reading and Translating *Kiffe kiffe demain*: A Postcolonial Perspective

Analysis of Findings / Conclusions

In her *Kiffe kiffe demain,* Faiza Guène focuses primarily on an economically deprived social housing estate in the north-east suburbs of Paris, but also makes a number of critical references to members of the French middle class. It could thus be argued that Guène thereby seeks to validate, and in some way 'decolonise' the former. Similarly, in this work, France's North African immigrants, amongst which many *beurs*, are represented and the racism to which they are subjected is exposed; descendants of these former colonies are therefore also given a voice. The patriarchal, misogynistic North African attitudes which Guène depicts in her work additionally lend themselves to a comparable, postcolonial, and indeed feminist, reading.

The above pages have illustrated that, when faced with the multiple, non-standard uses of language which are represented in *Kiffe kiffe demain* -- including slang vocabulary, *verlan*, vulgar language and non-standard grammar -- and the contrasting mockery of the language employed by members of France's middle class, Sarah Adams does an admirable job of recapturing these in the TL. Her decision to append the text with a detailed explanation of *verlan* constitutes a further attempt to draw attention to that which is non-standard and is significant as it also makes her 'visible' in her role as the translator (Venuti 1995). Most significantly, when dealing with the multiple French cultural references which feature in Guène's ST, Adams adopts a blend of distinct approaches, at times 'foreignising' her TT (Venuti 1998: 242) and thus again making herself visible, but mostly 'domesticating' (Venuti 1998: 241) the references by replacing them with oblique, culturally neutral explanations and thereby erasing the identity of the dominant culture, the metaphorical coloniser. Of course, it is important to acknowledge that it may not have been Adams' decision to adopt this approach. In Western society, translation decisions are often guided by key figures, including those in the publishing industry (Lefevere 1992)

Adams' approach to the translation of Arabic language is quite different. If she succeeds at transposing an exotic accent onto her English-language translation in order to render instances of Arabic-accented French, which inevitably involves an element of rewriting, she is at pains to ensure that all Arabic words and cultural references are both italicised in the TL and translated into English in her accompanying glossary. Some believe than the inclusion of English glossaries reduces the 'Afrocentric' aspect of Franco-African texts (Sellin 1989: xxxi) and that all intervention should be avoided in order to give a precise denotation of African reality (Gandonou 2002: 27). However, in the present case it could be argued that, by consistently exoticising Arabic words, Adams gives priority to the Arabic language (the language of the colonised) rather than to French (the language of the coloniser) and validates her own role as translator, when the work of these linguists is often invisible. By adopting such an approach, Adams restores the North African flavour of the original work while making the language and topic fully accessible to her TL readers and therefore furthering Guène's agenda.

When rendering the ways in which attitudes to, and the treatment of, women are represented in *Kiffe kiffe demain*, Adams adopts a similarly valorising approach. On occasions when these representations are negative, Adams gives women an extended voice by making their plights known to a wider, Anglophone readership. However, when the tone of the ST becomes increasingly positive, Adams preserves this in her translation and shares their progress. It could thus be argued that Guène and Adams illustrate the female protagonists' freedom from individual father figures and from the patriarchal, metaphorically colonising, hierarchy which still prevails in North Africa to this day (Slimani 2015). In sum, Faiza Guène's 2004 *Kiffe kiffe demain* and Sarah Adams' 2006 English-language translation thereof, *Just Like Tomorrow,* can undeniably be viewed from a postcolonial perspective. Indeed, both are not only responses to the phenomenon of colonisation, but also accurate reflections of related issues which continue to exist in twenty-first-century France.[xi]

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[i] The word *beur* was coined using the *verlan* term for *arabe* [Arab / Arabic]. It is applied specifically to those people who have a hybrid culture between their North African roots and their status as someone who was born and raised in France or Europe. *Verlan* is discussed in some depth at a later stage in the present article.

[ii] Faiza Guène was born in Bobigny, France, in 1985 to parents of Algerian origin. After growing up in the north-eastern suburbs of Paris, she has established herself as a writer and director. To date, she has published three novels and has also directed several short films.

[iii] Sarah Ardizzone (née Adams) is a prolific, award-winning translator of French literature. She has translated in excess of 40 titles, including the work of Gael Faye and Daniel Pennac, and has been awarded a number of prestigious prizes, including the Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation (2005/2009) and the Scott-Moncrieff Prize (2007).

[iv] All page references in this section of the present article refer to Guène's 2004 *Kiffe kiffe demain.*

[v] This view is shared by Lucinda Rosenfeld (2006: 2)

[vi] Henceforth, all double page references will refer to Guène's 2004 *Kiffe kiffe demain* and Adams' 2006 *Just Like Tomorrow*, respectively.

[vii] While 'slang' may be defined as 'a type of language that consists of words and phrases that are regarded as very informal, are more common in speech than writing, and are typically restricted to a particular context or group of people' (*OED* 1998: 1748), Pilard (2002: 90) stresses that *l'argot des cités* '[…] is a type of slang spoken by young people in the underprivileged areas on the periphery of large cities, mainly Paris. [It] is noticeably different from the more traditional type of slang that used to be spoken up until thirty or thirty-five years ago. It has kept a number of terms from that traditional slang but […] it has added a great many *verlan* words as well as English words (mainly from American rap songs) and terms from Arabic (this is because of the big influx of immigrants from North Africa after the Second World War, when France needed labour for its expanding economy)'.

[viii] In his *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995), Venuti argues that translators who work in contemporary American and British cultures are often invisible in their work; they have a tendency to translate 'fluently' into English in order to produce an idiomatic, readable TT which creates an 'illusion' of transparency.

[ix] This approach is very similar to that adopted by Alec Hargreaves in his 1985 translation of Azouz Begag's *Le Gône du Chaâba* (1985).

[x] For extended discussions of the creative challenges presented by transposing foreign accents onto the TL, see Ellender (2013; 2015).

[xi] This stance aligns closely with opinions expressed by Pavel Medvedev. In his *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* (1928), Medvedev identifies that literature constitutes both an accurate reflection, and an integral part, of the society in which it is produced.

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