CHAPTER 5

IMPACT ON MAGHREBI LITERATURE AND JOURNALISM
The French education had a great impact on the *Maghreb* creative writings, and academic works, journalism and other cultural-products. Through the use of French language the writers have been successful in giving new vision to the traditional *Maghreb* society. Apart from being a more flexible language than standard Arabic, French is also a medium in which writers can express themselves more freely than in their mother tongue due to religious and linguistic constraints. The French language provided vast scope for writings on issues such as religion, women, revolt, language and gender, and personal discourses which was not possible in Arabic. This is of the colonial language that has created the new cultural forms within each society. Not only the *Maghreb*-settled French writers such as Frantz Fanon, Albert Camus, Susan Miller et al used French language but also the native writers like Abdel Kader, Fatima Mernissi, Driss Chraibi, Mohamed Dib, Meddeb, Abdullah Laroui and others preferred that for serious writings as well as literary works. Not only established authors but younger writers also choose French rather than Arabic as a more appropriate medium of expression which helped them to capture the wider readership outside the region. This is a contribution of the colonial language that has created new cultural forms within the *Maghreb* society.

This is an introduction we learn about *Maghrebi* Literature and discover the importance of language and much more. In the independent Maghreb, though there was a great opposition from almost all sections of the society against the French language use as a medium of instruction and writing, it can be observed that French magazines, journals as well as French newspapers have great readership throughout the region in present time. It is, perhaps, unusual to find a discussion of a multilingual body of literature that does not divide the literature linguistically which is Francophone, Arabic and Tamazight (Berber) in the case of the Maghreb. Yet this is precisely the approach that we have chosen to take in organizing this chapter.

*Maghreb Literature and Writers*

*Maghrebian* literature has been influenced by many cultures, including the ancient Romans, Arabs, French and Spanish, as well as the indigenous culture. The dominant
languages in *Maghrebian* literature are French and Arabic, but Berber is also represented. *Maghrebian* literature has played a vital role in the cultural transformation of North Africa, and its influence is felt throughout the world but francophone "*Maghrebian*" literature is neither indigenous nor national, and for this reason it poses a serious problem for Arabic-language critics as well as foreign observers (Dejeux, 1992).

The first novel written in French by an Algerian dates back to 1920 but since 1950s the francophone literature is considered to be first written in French by *Maghrebian* (as *Maghrebian* and not as French). Since then various literary terms have been coined to explain the *Maghrebian* literature: "*Litterature d'Expression Francaise*" and "*Litterature de Langue Francaise*" are the most commonly used ones. The terms coined to explain the *Maghrebian* literary works itself reflects the impact of French language on their writings. Although some critics find these terms cumbersome, nothing better has yet been suggested. Kacem Basfao has talked about "*Litterature Marocaine de langue vehiculaire Francaise*", Ahmed Lanasri has discussed "*Litterature Algerienne d'Expression Arabe mais de Langue Fran§aise*", and the late Jean Senac has proposed "*Litterature d'Ecriture Francaise*" or "*Litterature de Graphie Francaise*", but none of these terms has met with much success. If Andre Miquel's term "*Litterature Arabe Ecr"e en Francais*" accurately reflects a part of the situation, it misrepresents the works of Berber authors who know Arabic but continue to write in French.

If we analyse the *Maghrebian* literature on broader sphere then it comes out prominently that discussion of *Maghreb* literature uses the discourse of binary oppositions: Islamic/Christian, Colonial_Native and the one most relevant here, French/Arabic. But the linguistic scene in the Maghreb is much more complex than this simple dichotomy would suggest. It cannot be overlooked that it leaves out *Tamazight*, the language that predates both French and Arabic and which is still in usage. It also leaves out Spanish, which is still widely used in the North of Morocco. It also doesn't account for dialects: Dialectal Arabic vs. Standard and the dialects of *Tamazight*. 

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Moreover, the classification of writers linguistically is nearly impossible. There are a handful of writers who are equally comfortable writing in different languages and who have done so. Some of the writers like Rachid Boudjedra, were so much competent that it would be difficult to say with certainty whether they originally wrote his novels in French or Arabic, since he is often his own translator. Abdelfattha Kilito, Hedi Beraoui and Ali Siddiqi Azeyku are three other figures who have published in more than one language.

Many of the prominent writers are comfortable writing in only one language but of those who were educated in French schools during the colonial period, nonetheless have expressed the sense that they are translating their mother tongue, that is to say quite literally the language in which their mother communicates with them, into another language, most often French. Abdelkebir Khatibi and Assia Djebar are two who have expressed this sentiment. Then there are writers who, by virtue of their education, are only comfortable writing in French, but who resent having to write in the language of the colonizer. These writers made a conscious effort to infuse their language with Arabic or *Tamazight* (Berber) words and figures of speech.

Among the few, Mohamed Khair-eddine is the one who has expressed the sentiment that he is as comfortable writing in Arabic for French, but he chooses to write in French as his mother language, *Tamazight*, is forbidden to him, so as to avoid the danger of being assimilated. A North African that writes in Arabic is effectively Arabized, but a North African writing in French remains an outsider. There have been native writers who chose to write in French so that they could preserve their native identity different from Arabs and resist themselves of being assimilated. It was a method of guarding ones individuality and for that the French language acted as a tool.

The confrontation on the issue of language is not new for the Maghrebian writers as very often one can witness that in their writings. *Tamazight* is the indigenous language, but Arabic arrived more than a millennium ago and is deeply rooted, both in its dialectal and more standard written form. French, too, has become extremely important since the colonial era began in Algeria in 1830. All of these languages and
their dialects inform one another, jostling competing, permeating one another. Therefore, one cannot categories them on the basis of the language they chose for writing.

However, the quantity of works recently written in French by North African writers demonstrates that these literatures are alive and flourishing. In spite of enormous difficulties, new publishers have emerged in the Maghrebian countries to publish their works. Now even French publishing houses have been established in the region. New newspapers have been launched, especially in Algeria, where the national publishing firms continue to publish in French, and, as it has been mentioned earlier, worldwide interest in Maghrebian literature continues to grow (Dejeux, 1992).

The fascination of Maghrebian literature in French might well have something to do with its unique qualities and broader vision with different themes. The mixing of language and culture in literary production has contributed in creating the uniqueness of this literature and has carved its way to success.

**Establishment of French in Maghrebian Literature**

The involvement of France in the region was not even throughout the region. So, there is difference in opinion towards the use of French in different Maghreb countries. The French presence in Tunisia, from 1881 until 1956, for example, was certainly not as penetrating or as disruptive as it was in Algeria. Indeed, Tunisia sees herself today as essentially an Arab country rather than an African Arab country, and Mediterranean emerged into the post-colonial era in 1956, with a confident sense of her own identity, as a modern, secular society.

The use of Arabic never interrupted a French acculturation programme, as it was in Algeria and to a lesser extent in Morocco, but rather was used alongside French in the newly-introduced French schools. After Independence in 1956, the State made a conscious decision to introduce a bilingual policy in schools. Because of this, choice of language has not been seen as such a thorny and emotive issue as it is elsewhere in the Maghreb. Although Tunisian literary output is mainly in Arabic, writers also publish in French, admitting to feeling culturally enriched by their bilingualism.
Morocco, somewhat like Tunisia, suffered less than Algeria at the hands of the French, mainly because the period of occupation was shorter; Morocco became a French Protectorate only in 1912 and gained its independence in 1956. Having learned hard lessons in Algeria, French policies in Morocco were informed mainly by the work of the administrator Lyautey (1854-1934), who argued, as a result of colonial ethnography, that the French could only gain control of the whole country if they adopted a dual policy of government, executed through local leaders, one policy for the urban districts or "makhzan", and one for the rural areas or "siba" (Burke, 1973, Flahiane, 2006, 61). Thus by keeping the largely Berber rural regions distinct from the Arab cities, it was believed that the further Arabisation and Islamisation of Morocco would be prevented. This strategy, however, unwittingly helped to keep intact both the languages and cultures of the two main native groups in the territory, the Arabs and the Berbers. Even after Maghreb countries emerged from its colonial period still Arabic and Berber languages were spoken with a newly-grafted Francophone element among the elite. But it was hoped that, through the Arabisation programmes introduced after Independence in 1956, French would die out and that a modernised form of Arabic would become the foundation stone of the Maghrebian literature.

However, the realisation of this has been constantly frustrating because, although Moroccan literature since the 1960s has been mainly published in Arabic and has reflected the unbroken poetic tradition of both Arabic and Berber, it continues to display a persistent Francophone link. This is due, in no small measure, to the fact that the most prominent Maghrebi writers, who began their careers in the 1960s, a significant period for Maghrebi literature, belonged to the Francophone middle classes who still have influence among the cultural elite. But, under the Arabisation programmes, much Francophone writing, especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s, was rejected by the religious authorities and Arab publishing houses because of its inherently, and sometimes offensive, Western nature. In these circumstances, Francophone writers became rebellious but were forced to realise their limitations within the new system. They were left with two options of either to choose self-
censorship if they wanted to stay or to opt for exile if they wished to continue writing freely and being published in French.

Attitudes, however, were different in Algeria which was one of France’s "colonies de peuplement" (settlement colonies) (Jack, 1996) from 1830 until 1962 and suffered more acutely than the other countries in the Maghreb from aggressive colonisation. An ever-encroaching French bureaucracy, with its allegiance to Paris, replaced the traditional Arabo-Muslim or Berber patriarchal councils with secular, civic institutions imbued with the Napoleonic Code. Everywhere the use of Arabic or Berber was discouraged and debased, with only French being taught in the schools, that also to bourgeois elite who could afford to send their children to school (Pennell, 2000, 186). From the outset, France was determined that Algeria should be de-Arabised and a far-reaching was put in place in all spheres. As a consequence of French acculturation programme, young writers emerged after Independence with no deep knowledge of Arabic, but were fluent in French and schooled in French literature and thought. But, when the War of Independence broke out, they were urged to commit themselves politically to the cause of creating modern Maghreb and to reassess their use of French in an increasingly Arabised society. This placed writers in an untenable position and hard choices had to be made about the language in which one should write and the arena in which one should work.

The rush to Arabise Algerian society after the War of Independence was inevitable as there was an urge to free oneself of an oppressor. However, because of the success of the French acculturation programme, it was difficult to find enough fluent, Arabic-speakers in the higher echelons of government to put the Arabisation programme fully into effect. Therefore, this had to be done by Francophone, either indigenous or imported. And so, paradoxically, French has continued, over the years, to be the dominant language of the professional and cultural elite, in spite of the political moves towards enforcing Arabisation in recent years.

This general situation, in Algeria, has led, according to Rachid Boudjedra to a "dyslexie sociale" ("social dyslexia") (Boudjedra, 1995), for he argues that it is flying in the face of the linguistic reality for the Government, zealously informed by the
Arab nationalism of the FLN, to insist on a totally Arab education system. Indeed, many reformers believe that the Arabic language, in the modern global world, does not have the same currency as French, which has long represented, for the young, modernity and progress and a ticket to the West.

**Themes in Writing**

In the Maghrebian literature one can find wide range of variation in the selection of topics and issues. The French language has widened the scope and broadened the sphere of ideas on which writers could reflect. The themes can vary from national to international, social to psychological, traditional to modern etc. but some of the common issues which is persistently there in the Maghreb writings is that of colonial era.

The legacy of colonisation and the horrors of the anti-colonial struggle are another theme, particularly in Algeria where the struggle was especially long, bitter and bloody. This was a theme in the writing of some of the earliest novels and poems by Mohamed Dib, Tahar Ouettar and Driss Chaibi and it remains a topic of interest even today in the fiction of contemporary writers. Often, however, newer writers are reassessing the normative history of the anti-colonial struggle as it has been taught to them in schools. Assia Debar and Leila Abouzeid, for example, seeks to highlight in fiction the role played by women in the war whereas others such as Tahar Djaout sought to interrogate narrative that centre the role of the elite who would rule the region in the post-colonial era.

The historical dimension (colonization, the struggle for liberation, social change in the post-war period, aspirations for a better future) and the cultural dimension (a North African reality emanating from a distinctive sensitivity marked by a religiously-based Islamic education and influenced by Arabo-Berber oral traditions as well as by assimilated foreign ideas) have been paramount in *Maghrebian* francophone novels. Various permutations of the Franco-*Maghrebian* have manifested themselves in these works, and new mix syntheses have emerged. During
the colonial era, the use of French gave many *Maghrébins* access to modernity and enabled them to link its values with ancestral traditions. By allowing their first language to speak through French, some of them created works of literary genius, not because they forcefully broke apart the French language, but because they, in Khatibi's words, regained contact with their own imaginary space. His own writing thus speaks "in tongues," although all francophone *Maghrébian* writers obviously did not attain his level of literary achievement.

Migration has been an important result of the French education and their administration during the colonial period. The issues related to emigration abroad and its implications on the Maghreb society has often been treated in novels by great writers including Driss Chraibi's, *Les Boucs* (1955); Chabane Ouahioune's *Conquérants du parc rouge* (1980); and Rachid Boudjedra's *Topographie idéale pour une agression caractéristique* (1975) (Dejeux, 1985). But at present the focus on this topic has now largely been taken over by young *Maghrébins* who were born in France or who went there early in their childhood with their parents. They were distinctly called "*Beurs*", and for them France or Europe is their starting point. They understand the world from the inside of otherness. They are not interested in immigration, as were their elders because they have never emigrated, at least as an adult. (Djaout, 1987; Hargreaves, 1990)

It is not that the Maghrebian writers were busy writing the philosophy and history about the world outside the region, a substantial body of literature addresses the ills of the post colonial nations of the Maghreb, attacking the authoritarian leaders of their states, either directly or allegorically. Their concern for the society remained focused even after the independence. Writers such as Abdelhak Serhane and Leila Sebbar use their fiction to denounce and demonstrate the effects of patriarchal family structures. The role of religion in society and the dangers of radical Islamists have been explored by nearly every writer who continued writing during the terrible civil conflict that began in 1993 in Algeria, and the build up to it: Rachid Mimmouni, Abdelkader
Djemai, Leila Marouane, Tahar Djaout, Malika Mokaddem and Aissa Khelladi to name just a few. There are many other themes that could be listed here.

It is very interesting to notice that the topics explored by North African writers are by no means unique to them. Maghrebi writers have explored nearly every topic that has interested modern writers of any culture, and they have done so with all the styles of writing available to the 20th century writers, including a few that are unique to the Maghreb that are reflective of the region's cultural traditions. The narration may be linear or non-linear, omniscient or first-person, literal or allegorical. The style may be prosaic or lyrical, reflective of oral tradition or highly erudite and literary, etc.

Unfortunately, North African literature remains virtually unknown to most of the English-speaking public. Surprisingly little of it has been translated into English, even though it is, in our opinion, among the most interesting bodies of literature in the contemporary world.

**Problem with the Francophone Writers**

A significant number of Maghrebi writers use French as their first language to express their identity as a legacy of French acculturation. But their identity is sadly clouded by colonial domination. In the determination discover their identity, some writers have resorted to cataloguing and detailing the degradation suffered by their people at the hands of the French and re-examining their country's complicity, or otherwise, in the sad affair. Yet, in a post-colonial atmosphere, when apparent hostilities have ceased and reconciliation has been attempted, what is the writer's role? As a bard or a soothsayer, he is expected to shape some vision of a future, but the obstacle of "Francophonie" blocks the creation of a distinct cultural identity.

The danger for the writer in continuing to use French is that, to some minds, he is perpetuating the old unequal relationship of coloniser/colonised. Thus, however successful he may be, he can never be anything more than a 'fêté protégé', or, as the Moroccan writer, Driss Chraibi, remarked: "un petit singe, habillé à l'européenne" (Dejeux, 1973) ("a little monkey, dressed in European fashion") and his work, if
greatly acclaimed for whatever reason, perhaps Orientalism or exoticism, will be appropriated for the French literary canon in which Albert Camus is enshrined as a celebrated exemplar, of North African writing. Also, the more successful a writer is in the West, and in France in particular, the more he is treated with caution in his home country, by those eager to prove that they can develop their own literature without accolades or interference from France.

The continued use of French as a literary medium and the socio-political engagement of the writer have also raised questions about the unresolved status of *Maghrebi* Francophone literature in relation to the dominant body of French literature. In fact, Francophone writers are all too painfully aware that writing in French, rather than in a native language, has created a rupture between themselves and their compatriots. Yet, at the same time, whilst acknowledging that their bilingualism widens their horizons, they realise that to work in a local or regional language would exclude them not only from a wider global readership, but would aid the further marginalisation of *Maghrebi* literature.

By force of circumstance, only a limited number of *Maghrebian* writers are widely available in French or in translation, and they are always the same ones. Ironically, at the very moment when this literature, or at least that of its most important authors, is becoming more broadly known throughout the world, the reading and dissemination of francophone North African literature is encountering greater obstacles in the *Maghreb*, where it tends to be known largely in intellectual or academic milieux. *Maghrebian* publishers show little interest in distributing francophone literature in the region, although the Algerian *Societe Nationale d'Edition et de Diffusion* (SNED) and its successor, the *Nationale du Livre* (ENAL) have published more Maghrebian works Enterprise than have Parisian firms such as Seuil, Gallimard, and Denoel. Nevertheless, the most well-known North African authors continue to be published in France. The works of the Prix Goncourt winner Ben Jelloun were imported in large numbers to Morocco, but other authors have not been so fortunate in their countries of origin.
Women Writers and their Identity in French

One of the very important developments took place in *Maghrebi* Francophone literature during the years of crisis and turmoil, both after the end of the Second World War and after Independence, when the voices of women began to be heard. Even though their role had been one of silent subject, or subaltern (Ilahiane, 2006) in their respective colonial and patriarchal cultures, they were called upon to fight alongside male compatriots during times of conflict. This gave them a sense of identity, often for the first time, and a taste of freedom, creating a desire to speak, not only of their experiences, but to speak out against the injustices women suffered in their societies.

When they finally did speak, they chose to speak in French not only to be published and be heard beyond the confines of their own culture, but also, to veil their voices against censure from their own patriarchs. Yet, it has only been through the development of a feminist critique within post-colonial literature, in the last few decades, that one can see the paradoxes inherent in their still unequal situation; for their writing is often classed as Third World feminist literature and disseminated as such, in the West, by publishing houses run by men. Thus, the framework in which they are allowed to circulate is still circumscribed by patriarchal structures. (Woodhull, 1993, 73)

The definition of the terms used and the questions of feminine identity has been analysed in some of the founding texts of ‘francophone literature of the Maghreb’, written by male authors such as Kateb Yacine, Mohammed Dib, and Nabile Fares and Tahar Ben Jelloun. It is true to say that several male writers have indeed used the position of women to criticise their traditional societies and the roles in which both men and women are often constrained. The near fetishistic portrayal of women's bodies is an essential aspect of the debate surrounding male/female relations in North African societies and is explored in a very different perspective by several women writers and critics. Assia Djebar provides a solid analysis of the rewriting of history and of feminine identity in *L'Amour, la Fantasia and Vaste est la Prison*. In the work of Leila Sebbar, the problems of identity of the young *Beur* both in France and in the
Arab world, and Hajer Djilani, *Et Poutant le CielEetait Bleu* .. and *L'Interdite* by the Algerian Malika Mokkedem, the author sees ‘forging new parameters for feminine identity in the *Maghreb*’ through their use of current socio-cultural and political ideas. This open-endedness looking to future developments of ‘francophone literature of the *Mahgreb*’ is, however, entirely in keeping with the overtly positive tone which could be said to under-play the problematic nature of asserting a feminine identity and agency everywhere and not only in North African societies.

Yet, there still remains the central dichotomy of *Magrebi* identity. Some intellectuals believe that the use of French means that one is still in thrall to the old oppressor, but, ironically, to use Arabic is to put oneself into another kind of linguistic and cultural straight jacket. According to Belinda Jack, since independence, Arabic has increasingly been regarded by some as the language of tradition and a new oppressive conformism. French is thus proposed by some intellectuals as the language of liberation (Jack, 1996).

This is precisely the stance taken by many writers concerning the use of French in their work. By using it as a literary tool, they argue that they can confront the ‘Other’ in their own language. It has even been suggested that a new Francophone language could be fashioned which would give greater freedom of expression for the Arab mind in a French body. Therefore, it is no longer, according to some, a question of being compromised; language choice is rather a conscious one. Apart from the obvious value of being published abroad, the use of French for women writers, like the Algerian Assia Djebar, is particularly liberating, given the suppression of women’s voices in some Arab countries. Thus, according to many, French should be seen as a “double enracinement” (“double rootedness”) (Jean Dejeux). Indeed, Kateb Yacine declared that French represented “l’un de ces mariages entre peuples et civilisations qui n’en sont encore qu’a leurs premiers fruits, les plus amers” (“one of those marriages between peoples and civilisations that has only just borne its first fruit, the most bitter”) and would eventually bear sweeter fruit (Woodhull).
Cultural Production from Writers in Exile

The writers who live and work abroad, of bad faith and seek to discount their claim to be called Maghrebi writers were categorised as in ‘exile’. Writing by exiles seems to be one of the thorniest issues within the debate, even critics accuse them. Yet, one cannot deny the attachment of these writers to their native countries. According to Algeria's most celebrated writer, Kateb Yacine (1929-1989), the sense of loss on being wrenched away from his Arab culture, and sent to a French-speaking school, where one's language and culture were excluded, even forbidden, was a "seconde rupture du lien ombilical" (Yacine, 1966) ("a second rupture of the umbilical cord"), an alienation which affected the whole of his life. He was acutely aware that France had tor his generation from their roots and disrupted his culture and his work; *Nedjma* (1956) was a project to reclaim his lost heritage. However, Yacine's voice became increasingly anti-colonial after the suppressed uprising at Setif in 1945. He always desired to write in colloquial Arabic for his fellow countrymen but from 1947 onwards he was forced to spend most of his life in exile in Europe. Finally, he returned to Algeria to do this, having been shamed by the fact that *Nedjma* had been published in France when his country most needed him. But gradually he found that his vision could not be realised, as consecutive governments pursued policies of Arabisation and favoured the use of classical Arabic. He thus became a permanent exile by choice, declaring, in 1962, that he would henceforth write “only in French,” (Yacín, 1986) so disillusioned was he by his failure to play his part in his country’s cultural renaissance. In *Nedjma*, even though the author denies that the novel is autobiographical, he seems to be defending the Francophone writer's position, when his character declares:

\[ J'ecris en francais parce que la France a envahi mon pays et qu'elle s'y est taille une position de force telle qu'il fallait ecrire en francais pour survivre; mais en ecrivant francais, j'ai mes racines arabes ou berberes qui sont encore vivantes. (Yacine, 1956, 131) \]

I write in French because France invaded my country and carved out such a strong position for herself there that I have to write in French to survive; but even though I write in French, I have my Arab and Berber roots which are still thriving.
This duality lies at the heart of the Maghrebi Francophone literature. Writers were often forced to write in French, because it became their first language under colonial rule, yet they also needed to express their cultural difference by writing in a Maghrebiised French and choosing particular subjects that would distinguish them from native French writers. But, there was also another reason for choosing to use French and living in exile, and this was as a means of escaping the straight jacket, mentioned earlier, of the traditional patriarchal Arabo-muslim society which, after Independence, was attempting to circumscribe the freedom of the writer. Both Chrabi’s *Le passé simple* (1954) and Boudjedra’s *La Repudiation* (1969), and later works by the eminent Moroccan writer, Tahar Ben Jelloun, treat of the brutal suppression of women and children in their societies, highlighting the “*sclerose et l'étroitesse de la haute bourgeoisie musulmane traditionnelle*” (Dejeux, 1956) (“the sclerosis and narrowness of the traditional Muslim high bourgeoisie”) which must be guarded against if the Maghreb were to be modernised and hold equal discourse with the West.

However, even though these authors paid the price of criticising both their own cultures and the French occupation, by being forced into exile, their work overwhelmingly displays a concern and fascination with the trauma and restrictions of their pasts, colonial and cultural, to the point where it becomes a repetitive mantra and offers no solutions for a way forward. One could perhaps argue against this, in that *Nedjma* seems to create a mythic blueprint for the future, offering, on a psychoanalytical level, a measure of healing and confirmation of identity. But, somehow, this seems too far removed from reality to be effective and one could be more persuaded by Assia Djebar’s project to give women a voice. For she attempts in her work, written mostly in exile, to reappropriate some of the territory that men have always taken for granted and even gained at the expense of silencing their women. Indeed, Clarisse Zimra states, in her Afterword to Djebar’s *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment*. (Clarisse Zimra, 1992)
Writings from Home

They are the francophone writers who opted to stay back to their native place and contribute to the *Maghrebian* literature, even though they had to go through very hard times. As colonial subjects, they had to tread warily in their criticism of colonial occupation, but after Independence, they could see that the continuation of a Francophone literature would inevitably undermine the emergence of a national literature in Arabic. However, they also recognized that the French language could be used to their advantage, as a link between cultures, whilst a new, modern society was formed. Fortunately, they were aided in this enterprise, by the fact that many writers and intellectuals, at this time, were united in a profound antagonism towards “the universal humanism proposed by Western discourse” (Jack, 1996). And it was this that urged the Moroccan, Abdellatif Laabi, with several companions, to found the magazine, *Souffles*, in 1966, a periodical which strongly supported the movement for an Arabic literary revival and was to have a profound impact on *Maghrebi* literature in the late 1960s and 70s. Originally published in French, it became bilingual in 1968 and was later published solely in Arabic, but, because of its strident tone, it was closed down and Laabi was imprisoned in 1972.

*Souffles* articulated the core beliefs of many *Maghrebi* writers of the time, who considered that progress was only to be made by moving gradually from French usage, through an interim period of bilingualism, to a situation in which Arabic was used in all public spheres. However, as she points out, the desired movement from French to Arabic did not take place, as some critics had wished. Rather what happened was that prominent writers, such as Abdelkebir Khatibi and Driss Chraibi, became consumed by Francophone projects, which “fundamentally violated the French language, or forms of French and the genres and conventions of French writing” (Jack, 1996) in an attempt to forge a discrete and distinct body of *Maghrebian* literature, which reflected the true essence of their society. It was argued by many that a new, physically material society had to be built and if one had to use the language of the coloniser to bring this about, one must break it, bend and remould it with a violence that would make it their own creation: a new tool with which to
construct a new identity. Indeed, this deconstruction of the French language was felt to be, by many prominent writers, such as Abdelkebir Khatibi, a powerful way of decolonising the mind (Woodhull, 1993; Khatibi, 1983). Not only would this represent a positive assault on the very citadel of French and politicise forever the use of language, but the exercise itself would create a whole new critical approach to literature. This movement highlights the way in which authors were attempting to deal with an understanding of their individual identities as writers, whilst at the same time addressing key issues and remaining committed to a socio/political cause.

However, some writers felt themselves freed from the constraints of their society and at liberty to criticise their tribe iconoclastically (Dejeux, 1992). But, many have countered this, arguing that this was a necessary freedom if they were to be instrumental in modernising and reforming their backward-looking cultures. Indeed, Tahar Ben Jelloun declared that, by using French, one was able to speak the unspeakable, cathartically, and "rend possible la transgression de tous les tabous" (Jelloun, 1985) ("make it possible to break all taboos"); something which would be impossible to contemplate in Arabic. But, paradoxically, this use of French, to explore the deepest secrets of the collective psyche, in order to effect a measure of healing, might lead possibly, according to Basfao, to "le meurtre rituel de la mere" (Basfao, 1988) ("the ritual murder of the mother") which, unfortunately, would fatally silence one's own maternal language. The sense of insecurity is quite prominent from the above statement. So, instead, the writers appeals for another way out where they can maintain the equilibrium.

Ambivalence Towards Using French

There was a great confusion among the writers, who were natives and French educated, about the use of language for their writings. They were fighting against French and Arabs for their linguistic identity. Albert Memmi was not alone in displaying ambivalence towards the use of French for cultural and personal reasons. And, indeed, writers, like Kateb Yacine, saw the fact of French within their societies as a fait accompli and deemed it a retrograde step to discard it after Independence.
Even Rachid Boudjedra, a well-known critic of the French occupation, testified to the continuing seductive power of the French language and its literature, admitting in *Lettres Algériennes*:

> *Pour moi, Algérien, je n'ai pas choisi le français. Il m'a choisi, ou plutôt il s'est imposé à moi à travers des siècles de sang et de larmes et à travers l'histoire douloureuse de la longue nuit coloniale. Mais c'est grâce aux grands écrivains français que je me sens en paix dans cette langue avec laquelle j'ai établi un rapport passionel qui ne fait qu'ajouter à sa beauté, en ce qui me concerne.* (Boudjedra, 1995)

As an Algerian, I did not choose French. It chose me, or rather it was imposed on me throughout centuries of blood and tears and during a long and painful colonial history. Yet, it is thanks to celebrated French writers that I feel at peace with this language, with which I have established a passionate relationship that can only add to its beauty as far as I am concerned.

Assia Djebar, too, admits the attraction French as a language, of seeing it positively as “the booty of the colonial war,” (Zimra, 1992) by which she could liberate herself. Indeed, it gave her a writing space where she was freed, to some extent, from the cultural confinement of a male-dominated society. Here, she could experiment and develop her talents as a writer, and thereby articulate the injustices that both women and men have suffered throughout the centuries at the hands of the French and, more importantly for her, address the wrongs that women have endured under the Arabo-Muslim patriarchs. In fact, a large part of her work is devoted to the idea of giving voice to the silent ones. She forces her women to speak and breathes life into forgotten tongues in an effort to remind her sisters of what has been done to them. She employs in her work both French and Arabic to explore diverse notions of liberation, weaving into her French texts Arabic cadences and stylistic devices in order to show how particular the two cultures have become inextricably linked. Above all, she has helped to raise the profile of women in the Maghreb as “agents of social transformation, and of gendered social relations as both targets and forces of progressive change.”(Woodhul, 1993)

This idea of hybridity is at the centre the debate about the ability of one language to express ideas specific to another culture and, indeed, the Moroccan writer, Mohammed Berrada, posed this question in the periodical *Lamalif* in 1988:
"L'ecrivain en langue francaise peut-il reellement produire une oeuvre universelle en
investissan toute la richesse de l'imaginaire marocain?" (Dejeux, 1988) But, such
arguments were repeatedly refuted by the Algerian, Mourad Bourboune, both before
and after Independence. He declared that people should cease talking of double
cultures in a pejorative sense and see bilingualism as a "double enracinement: arabe
et franqais" ("a double rootedness: Arab and French") (Dejeux, 1988) and celebrate
one's ability to use French to express sentiments and ideas that were incontrovertibly
one's own. Moreover, he pointed out that no one has universal rights over a language;
a language belonged temporarily to the person using it. Yet, at the same time, it
especially expressed his identity and his singularity if it were fashioned to meet his
needs, as Maghrebi French had indeed become by usage. A writer, therefore, did not
demean himself by using the French language. In fact, a language imposed by a
coloniser did not have to be a colonising language (Bourboune, 1965).

Nevertheless, Mourad Bourboune felt quite strongly that the bilingual issue was a
false one, for it obscured the real problem of language itself. Even if a Maghrebi
writer used French words, he was not actually using the French language of the
Academie Franqaise, with its particular syntax and grammar. Therefore, his identity
could not be said to be threatened by the use of another's language, because he was
not actually using a foreign language. What should matter to a writer was not whose
language he spoke, but rather the actual skill of manipulating language itself, any
language, to express what he intended. By this, Bourboune wanted to demonstrate, in
a Bakhtin sense (Emerson, 1981), that the most important use of a language was to
communicate with others through a shared language in one's own voice. In this way,
one pursued one's profession as a writer and, as Mouloud Mammeri argued with
Abdallah Mazouni, French would no longer be a language of shame rather a language
of "liberation, de communion avec le reste du monde" ("liberation and communion
with the rest of the world"). (Mammeri, 1965)

This view was hotly contested by Malek Haddad, however, who, according to Sara
Poole, rejected this idea of being liberated by the French language, saying that,
instead of being freed, one became embroiled in the words and syntax of a language,
imposed from above, as soon as one tried to express one's thoughts. Also, he claimed
that when Francophone Algerian writers, who were in effect Arabs, tried to articulate, in French, ideas that were specifically Algerian, their thoughts would perhaps be given much fuller and clearer expression if they were framed in the Arabic tongue (Bhakhtin, 1981). Thus, in his view, the use of French amounted to an inhibition. But, as Sara Poole argues, Haddad, like other Francophone writers, was actually articulating the much greater philosophical question of the metaphysical impossibility for the writer to say anything meaningful at all because of the difficulty of translating thought into action (Poole, 1996).

Measured against this intractable problem, the French versus Arabic issue seems to pale into insignificance. These arguments echo those of Mouloud Mammeri from earlier decades, who claimed that the very act of speaking or writing represented some kind of accommodation, whether it be to Arabic or French. At best, one could say, in any language, almost all one wished to say, meaning that there was a certain amount of slippage between what one intended to say and what was actually said because of the ambivalent nature of communication. It was, thus, not a question of accommodating just to French, for the problem was a philosophical one common to all language exchanges (Mammeri, 1971).

**Language and Identity of Maghrebian Writers**

It is often forgotten that there is quite a sizeable population of Berbers, in both Algeria and Morocco who speak both Berber and Kabyle and for whom neither French nor Arabic is their first language. As previously discussed, the Berber language was not subjected to the same kind of marginalization in Morocco as it was in Algeria during the colonial period. Nevertheless, when Independence came, Berber was marginalised in relation to Arabic, when Arabic replaced French as the state language. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that Berber writers, such as Mouloud Feraoun, Mouloud Mammeri and Nabile Fares, preferred to use French. This put them, at least, on an equal footing with Francophone writers of Arab origin. Indeed, Mammeri declared that through French acculturation, he had been forced to
consider not only his Berberity but also his Algerian nationality and his regional *Maghrebi* identity. (Dejeux, 1988).

For him to be counted among a group of well-known *Maghrebi* Francophone writers meant recognition and this had only been made possible by his use of French. When questioned, in 1958, why he used the French language when he was in fact Berber, he replied that one could be an Algerian nationalist and still write in French. Indeed, he did not envisage ever using another language. (Mammeri, 1958) He foresaw that, with Independence, rather than being regarded as a mark of continuing domination, French would be the instrument by which the country would be modernised. The *Maghrébian* writers who had begun to publish in the early 1950s were asking questions about their own identity: Who am I? Who are we? One result of this self-questioning was a reaction against the presence of non-*Maghrebians* in the region. In fact, the emergence of a novelistic “I” in their works was implicitly that of an "I-We" addressing itself to a foreign “You” (Charpenter, 1977). Senac argued that an Algerian writer is one “who had definitively opted for the Algerian nation”. Henri Krea (the pseudonym Cachin, the grandson of Marcel Cachin, of and the child of a Franco-Algerian marriage) declared that the term “Algerian writer” signifies “in the absolute that one has chosen the Algerian mother land no matter what one's racial origin or religious or philosophical adherence might be” (Marissel). Malek Haddad had remarked earlier that “the indelible mark of Islam distinguishes us, but it must not separate us”. In the same 1961 essay, he affirmed, “We write French, but we do not write in French”. He meant, of course, “We do not write as French men”. These writers were defining themselves in opposition to colonialism the enemy that had provoked them into a sense of national solidarity and national identification. At the same time, their words reveal an awareness of the cultural and religious dimensions of the struggle. The situation is different today. Almost sixty years after independence, there are more and more francophone *Maghrébian* authors who have never experienced direct colonial rule. If they live in the Maghreb, they are less subject to the complexes and identity problems associated with the colonized; however, those who emigrated from the Maghreb to France continue to live with these identity problems in a very complex manner.
Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia are constitutionally separate and national writers unions have been organized in each of them. But such associations do not bring together all the writers from these countries, especially in light of the fact that they are dominated by Arabic-language writers. Obviously, a writer’s nationality cannot be determined by his or her membership in one of these unions. In all these countries, literary expression occurs in both Arabic and French, which often serves as a privileged second language or as a working language. In discussing nations emancipated from French and British colonialism, Tibor Klaniczayde scribed this situation aptly when he wrote: “The identity revealed by language is, purely and simply, insufficient to include these literary creations in the national literature of the English or the French” (187-88). The emergence of a national literature can be observed, according to him, in creative works that have been composed in different languages. Whether written in French or in Arabic, Maghrebian novels deal with the same national realities. Furthermore, although Berber is not recognized as a national language in Algeria or Morocco, at least three Kabyle novels have been written in Berber.

Although the official representatives of the writers unions continually affirm the existence of national literatures, their positions are ambiguous with regard to francophone writing. In Tunisia, they talk only about works in Arabic and remain silent about French-language works by Tunisian writers. In Algeria and Morocco, the renown of some francophone authors is so great that they cannot be ignored. In such cases, Arabic-language critics often dismiss francophone literature as “inauthentic”.

During the poetry festival of Mohammed Laid Al Khalifa in 1982 at Biskra, for example, Abdallah Hamadi frivolously maintained that, “despite its genius,” Kateb Yacine’s Nedjma “isn’t an Algerian work” and that Rachid “an authentically Algerian writer,” even though he has written Boudjedra isn’t in Arabic since 1982. Hamadi concludes by arguing that Algerians who write in French are not “representative of the national literature” Some critics at the Biskra colloquium refused to include francophone works as part of “The Algerian School of Literature,” where as others accepted them. In general, however, the most enlightened Arabic-language writers recognize that francophone writers are creating works that must be taken into
consideration when discussing the national patrimony. In any case, Maghrebian writers who receive prestigious foreign prizes are usually accepted into the national pantheon.

Nationalism Through Journalism

Like any other literary or literature work journalism too have a great role to play in the transformation of the society through right guidance and information. But for that free hand should be given to the media houses from the government side. Journalism is not new to the Maghreb people but the freedom it availed during the French rule gave new meaning to it. The major reforms in Maghreb journalism came under the French control of the region. Though Freedom was given to the press very rarely one can see voice against the French. Later on in the first half of the 20th century the revolutionary groups took advantage of the press freedom and through journalism they started raising voice against the ills of French rule and filled the notion of nationalism in the youths.

In the mid 1920, members of the Tunisian, Algerian, and Morocco nationalist movement began to use Paris as a meeting place. Many organizations were established to defend the interests of workers from the Maghreb in France. In 1923, a group calling itself L'Etoile Nord Africaine was established in Paris to help those workers. Later on in 1926 it became a political association which worked to defend the Arab Maghreb and published the French-language newspapers (Gillespie, 1960, 40-41). Almost all the members of this organisation were French educated and had good exposure of modernity.

Later in 1929, L'Etoile Nord Africaine was dissolved by the French government. But it was once again started in 1939 under the name of. This group still included all of North Africa and had taken part in struggle of French working class against the government and journalism remained there medium of interaction with the large mass.
Influenced by the ideas of modernity propagated through journalism by The National Union of North African Muslims, Salafiya and Wahabist movement, the society of Reformist Ulema was formed in 1931. From Constantine three men, Ben Badis, Sheiks El Okbi and Ibrahimi led an extensive campaign to modernize Algerian Muslim Practices. Ben Badis edited a monthly magazine entitled the vision of the future, in addition to writing frequently for the magazine published by Chokib Arslan, The Arab Nation. (Gillespie, 1960, 44)

The nationalist forces were not aided only by the native people but also got support from the foreign groups. Nationalists received a great help from the Four Foreigner’s group consisting of Robert Longuet, his father Jean (a socialist dynasty and a grandson of Karl Marx), Georges Monnet and the left-wing Minister of Education of the Spanish Republic, Fernando de los Rios. In July 1932, they financed a journal, ‘Maghreb’, that was first published from Paris (Pennell, 2000, 229). The main contributors were the Moroccans only. The journal was very loud in conveying the message of nationalism. The back of the cover displayed an elaborate Moroccan style design and an appeal in Arabic that announced:

Moroccans, this journal has been set up to defend your rights and to make your voice be heard, to express your demands and your experiences, in the knowledge that your country needs such a project to be brought to fruition.

In truth, a right that is lost because no effort is made to seek it or an injustice that is suffered in silence are a form of death. To seek a right is to live. It is your duty to take note of the content of this journal, to immerse yourself in its breath, to broadcast its principles and to help in distributing it. (Pennell, 2000, 229-30)

Despite this provocative words the people of Morocco could not do anything because it was banned by the government as it was all jin French. Latter on Ouazzani, one of the contributors of ‘Maghreb’ published a little Book about the Berber, published in Paris in 1931. In 1932, Quazzani started First nationalist newspaper to be published in Morocco itself was in French. In the newspaper the protectorates were blamed to have betrayed the ideals of protectorates but soon it was banned. But they allowed Arabic-language journal ‘Majallat al-Maghrib’ in 1932 (Pennell, 2000, 230). The ideas and
the subjects which the ‘Maghreb’ and ‘L’Action du people’ wanted to convey to the Maghreb people were reflected in the journals and papers even which were in Arabic.

**Journalism in Independent Maghreb**

These experiences abroad had influenced the new generation to a great extent and had inspired nationalism in them to unite for their own region and peoples welfare but under the Arab control the media had lots of restrictions mainly due to religious constrains. And even after independence it could not come out of it. The media that is considered to be one of the four pillars of democracy has no role to play other than being a mouth piece of the ruling government when we consider the situation of Maghreb region. The press do not enjoy its freedom in Maghreb. Media plays an important role in highlighting the corruptions prevailing in the system to some extent. Somehow the existing government did not find it comfortable for guiding the system. Since, independence media acted as a voice of the Maghreb peoples' suffrage. Various reforms had been passed in the Maghreb countries for their development but the role of media has always been curtailed. Though the elite section of the society, those who are French educated and exposed to the French media, have been in regular support of reforms in the media field the government in the region responded differently to it. The freedom of press in Tunisia was almost null since Independence till 1980s.

Observations made by journalists, students, academics and media administrators in these three Maghreb states reveal that a variety of political, legal, structural and cultural constraints are adversely affecting the professional practice of journalism and contributing to the disillusionment of an increasing number of professionally trained journalists. As a result, many of them turn away from journalism to enter advertising and public relations. A “bottom-up” approach to journalism is proposed, meaning that journalists focus on politically neutral news values to be able to practice journalism professionally.
Professionalism in Maghrebian Journalism

The views of various journalists in Morocco and Tunisia regarding professionalism in the media is that the news policy in the entire Arab world, including North Africa, needs to open up so that the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) can facilitate a free, objective and balanced flow of information. The most compelling dilemma faced by professional journalists, increasingly graduates of journalism degree programs, in the four Maghreb states is how to reconcile their preference for press freedom and objectivity with constraints imposed by political and legal factors that point to a pro-government journalism. Since reconciliation between these two opposing forces is inherently impossible, the frustration level among a number of journalists and students, and some academics and administrators interviewed was palpably high. Media structure imposes additional constraints on professional journalism. The party-affiliated press in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria has forced journalists to toe the party line, thus negating the journalistic values acquired through journalism education. The recent history of insurgency in Algeria had made the job of professional journalists particularly difficult there.

Several journalists in Tunisia and Morocco left the profession because of their inability to really practice what they had learned in journalism institutes and taken public relations or advertising positions with the industry and even with government agencies. Journalism graduates do not mind doing government public relations because they do not feel professionally compromised in that role, which they do in print and broadcast journalism. Besides, salaries are said to be often higher in PR and advertising.

So as professionally educated and trained journalists are said to be increasingly opting to become "communication specialists" in public relations and advertising fields, journalism continues to reflect the status quo through its pro-government or pro-party orientation. Educated Tunisians, Moroccans, and Algerians look to outside media for serious and credible treatment of issues in their respective countries.
This situation obviously raises serious questions for journalism and journalism education in these countries. In controlled-press systems, should the curricula continue to emphasize the inculcation of journalistic values such as objectivity, balance and reportorial neutrality, which are predicated on free press systems? The "Development Journalism" philosophy, often seen as the answer in controlled-press, developing countries, apparently has not helped in improving either the credibility or the quality of journalism in such countries.

Most of the students from the media line those who opt for French media got exposure to global society and even they were highly paid. Whereas, their counterpart in native land works as a stereo type issues. One can find large support of French media in the region and people relates it with the class. The important issues are many times missing in the local newspaper as they are not relevant to the region directly or sometimes the issues are not acceptable in the society. Irrespective of so many complications and oppositions from the native people, the French media has been successful in establishing itself strongly in the region.

**Conclusion**

Geographical closeness to Europe and historical relationship with Europeans and French occupation that lasted for almost 120 years have left their enduring imprints on the literature and journalism in the region. Like any other aspect of Maghreb life in the fields of arts and literature and other cultural products too, the French language and education in general has exerted a great impact. Though Arabic was the first to contribute in literary production, it was French education that led to the revolution in literary field. The exposure that French contributed through its education system not only helped the population in developing new ideas for writing but also gave freedom in using terms and subjects which were not possible in Arabic itself due to religious constraints. The writings in the French for the first time acknowledged the contribution of Maghrebian writers in literary world outside the region.
Due to the importance of French language in the literary world, the Maghrebian writers prefer to work in French instead of Arabic. Most of the French writers from the region are bilingual and have equally good command on both the languages, Arabic and French. Some of the good writings have been translated into French keeping in view the larger size of readers abroad.

Majority of the writers from the region who have proved themselves in the field of literary writings are either France-based or French-educated. Very often one can find a fine mixing of Arabic and French words in their writings. The understanding of the writers on language can be measured from the fact that they have developed their own vocabulary which is more close to native language. As it has been already discussed in the chapter, the native people do not use the normal form of Arabic and French, but instead they use standard form of both the languages in literary writings.

The French education system has been successful in creating a class within the Maghrebian society that has assimilated French in every aspect of daily life. There are a large number of native populations who act as a French audience in the region, hence supports the production of French journals, newspapers, films etc. The magazines in the French for women have broadened their world by enlarging their views on various subjects i.e. family planning, job opportunities, modernization, healthcare etc, which perhaps was not possible through native language.

The issues which are generally covered in the French magazines are restricted in Arabic due to religious constraints. The French education has not only helped the Maghrebian writers to establish themselves by providing varied areas of literary and other cultural production but has also helped them in getting recognition outside the region in global arena.