

The Ideological dimensions and cultural patterns in the Maghreb feminist novel

The novel "I owe everything to forget to Malika Mokaddem model

الأبعاد الأيديولوجية والأنساق الثقافية في الرواية النسوية المغاربية

رواية أدين بكل شيء للنسيان لمليكة مقدم أنموذجا

Diaf Messaouda, ¹*University Abbès Laghrour -Khenchela-massaoudadiaf12@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2675-1526>

Mahmood Thear Mahdi, ²University of Babylon -Babylon altaemahmood12@gmail.com

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Abstract

Ideology plays a significant role in French-language novels by female writers. Maghreb novelists, for example, portray real life, expressing their difficulties and sharing their perspectives on national, social, and political matters. Ideology appears within the novel's world, blending the imagined with the real to show the writer's personal and social views. This text aims to explore the ideological and cultural aspects in Malika Mokaddem's novel, "I Owe Everything to Forget." The novel highlights the realities of society, conveying the author's viewpoint. This analysis will use cultural criticism to identify the underlying cultural patterns.

Keywords: Novel; Ideological dimension; Cultural patterns; Malika Mokaddem; I owe everything to forget.

ملخص

لقد احتلت الأيديولوجيا حيزا هاما داخل المتن الروائي النسوي المكتوب باللغة الفرنسية، إذ عمدت الروائيات على تصوير الواقع، فعبرن عن مشاكلهن وهمومهن وكشفن عن وجهة نظرهن تجاه القضايا الوطنية والاجتماعية والسياسية، وتتمظهر الأدلجة من خلال امتزاج عوالم الرواية بين المتخيل والواقعي، للكشف عن الرؤى الفردية والاجتماعية التي تعيشها الكاتبة. تحاول هذه الدراسة الكشف عن الأبعاد الأيديولوجية والأنساق الثقافية في رواية "أدين بكل شيء للنسان" لـ "مليكة مقدم" التي حاولت من خلالها أن تبرز واقع المجتمع الصحراوي الجزائري، مقدمة بذلك أيديولوجيتها ووجهة نظرها تجاه هذا الوضع معتمدين في ذلك على النقد الثقافي باعتباره آلية فعالة في استخراج الأنساق الثقافية المضمرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرواية؛ الأبعاد الأيديولوجية؛ الأنساق الثقافية؛ مليكة مقدم؛ أدين بكل شيء للنسيان.

* Corresponding author

Introduction

The Moroccan feminist novel, written in French, has become a significant literary phenomenon. Though it initially faced challenges, particularly in its early stages, the novels explored issues stemming from political failures. They incorporated their ideological, intellectual, and cultural viewpoints, drawing on social, political, cultural, and religious realities to shape their stories.

Many female novelists wrote in French. One of the most important topics they addressed was the marginalization of Algerian society, which was denied its basic rights within its own country. They also wrote about women who were deprived of their rights and dominated by men. These women were inspired by the heritage of the Maghreb people, which remained strong in their minds even while in exile. They presented these issues in a way that realistically inspires us, a realization that often comes only at the end of the novel, because the ideology is often implied.

Malika Mokaddem" is one of the Moroccan novelists who was influenced by Algerian society, even though she lived in France. In her novel, "I Owe Everything to Forget," she presents a realistic picture of Algerian society, focusing on its intellectual and cultural aspects. She used a clear ideology in her writing, which filled the novel with hidden cultural meanings, prompting the reader to understand and discover these meanings. The novel raises questions about why the writer incorporates their own beliefs into the story. How did Malika Mokaddem use her ideas in "I Owe Everything to Forget," and did she convince the reader of them? What hidden cultural styles did she employ?

The reasons for employing the writer's ideology in the novelist's body

The novel is one of the most absorbing arts of society's issues ,as it monitors its problems and issues in a creative and realistic way ,as the novelist resorts to express a specific issue or topic according to what serves his ideology .The novel ,as a genre ,is considered a form of ideology for expressing ideologies within the novel . It does not demonstrate: **"The relationship that connects characters inspired by reality with a diagnostic character of an aesthetic nature in order to generate a holistic perception ,of the writer"** (Lahmidani, 1990, p. 35) The novelist's ideas in their work come from the society they live in. The writer might disagree with this society and subtly share their own beliefs. This is shown through the novel's story and artistic style.

A novelist doesn't usually try to directly state their beliefs. Instead, they hint at them through characters with different, clashing ideas. These characters might have opposing viewpoints. The writer uses dialogue and the hero's self-awareness to explore the world of the story: **"or the multiplicity of voices of the novel can only dialogue another consciousness ,as his field of vision can only be placed on the side of another field of vision ,and his ideology is only on the side of another ideology"** (Lahmidani, 1990, p. 63) The dialogue between different social groups and their diverse ideas is important. When a novelist writes about society, they present real-life issues in a creative way, showing either acceptance or rejection of

them.

The novel, as an ideology, reveals the author's perspective and their viewpoint on these ideological conflicts. The writer's ideology, for example, can only be understood fully by reading the entire novel. The characters in a novel have different beliefs, ideologies, attitudes, and obsessions. These differences arise from unique human natures. This variety in character positions may reflect the author's rejection of certain ideologies, showcasing their own stance on a particular issue. This can often result in conflict between different groups within the story.

The Ideological Dimensions of Malika Mokaddem's "I owe everything to forget"

The novel "I Owe Everything to Forget" is a French-language feminist novel that uses new narrative techniques. It reveals the author's intellectual leanings and beliefs. The story's events reflect these beliefs and highlight the struggles of people in the Algerian desert, particularly those living in the city of Bashar.

The author's ideology is shown in the story by blending the real and imagined worlds. This overlap between them is a key: **"This is in order to reveal the individual and social visions that the writer's reality and imagined is what contributed with other artistic elements to the achievement of the literary novel. Ideology enters the novel as aesthetic component because it becomes in the hands of the writer a means to formulate his own character"** (Lahmidani, 1990, p. 35)

"Malika Mokaddem" also focused on the role of women in spreading awareness in her community, and this is between the specificity of women's writing in the writer who was interested in the issues of women because of the value and importance she holds within her community. "Salma Moufid", the protagonist of the novel, the doctor who specializes in maternal cardiac trauma, moved from arid desert, to study medicine in Oran and continue her medical career in France and be the shelter that the women of her tribe resort to, says the narrator: **"after dinner, the guest room transforms to a treatment hall, cousins and aunts Salma are waiting with the intention of steadfastness and resistance. This time, she has no way to get away from them with their analyzes, radiographs, charts"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 106) Through this story, the novelist shows the protagonist's ability to treat patients without medical equipment. The author wants to highlight the medical advancements in France compared to other parts of the world.

The novelist's social views are also evident in the novel "I Owe Everything to Forget," through the issue of Algerian women whose rights are denied. The story reflects the author's stance on the period between "terrorism" and "political officials," also known as the "black decade." The novelist rejects both sides, believing the conflict primarily victimized the people. Furthermore, the author views Boumediene's military rule as a failure, which set Algeria back. **"The ideological dimension as a realistic element in the novel was manifested through its political connotation as a component of the artistic structure"** (Maliki, 2020, p. 55)

Writing expresses the problems and concerns of a thriving society within its homeland. This shows its national commitment, even when living in exile. It uses popular, religious, political, and historical heritage to highlight its connection to cultural and intellectual roots. This helps the reader understand life and the people's secrets in the region.

The novelist has presented social and national events to us in a creative and beautiful way. This is achieved through an ideological discussion that dominates the novel, focusing on: **"ideological writing for a long time has manifested with two aspects the first is that ideology in the novel is inevitable, different personalities express different ideological visions, and the second is the novel as an ideology that is deduced after the completion of the vision of all the backgrounds forming the personality"** (Batqa, 2013, p. 43) she revealed to us the reality of living in the desert despite its vastness, but its residents have narrow houses that can only accommodate them she says: **" in the house only two rooms overlooking the courtyard. Yesterday, Aunt Zahia gave birth to a newborn, she is laying in one of the corners of the kitchen and boy sleeps in our lap"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 13) The novelist aimed to expose social problems within the health sector, where people are denied their basic rights. This happens because officials often neglect and ignore those in the health sector compared to people in central areas, such as the capital city.

Another key issue the novelist tackles is "sex." She questions old rules about women and men by looking at male homosexuality. She believes this is normal, and opposing it shows a lack of progress **"you son of the rich yeah, but I gave up on my parents to stop thinking about marrying me. Because I feel comfortable. I am homosexual, do I say my children are retarded whether they are rich or not: I will never get married, I am a homosexual"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 20) This passage reveals the novelist's perspective on the Islamic religion. She seems to disagree with its stance on homosexuality, viewing it as a matter of normal and personal freedom. This aligns with the novelist's atheism, which she has expressed in her other works and shows her position on the Islamic faith.

Cultural styles appear in the novel" I owe everything to forget"

The novel has been opened to a group cultural style evoked by the "Malika Mokaddem": **"cultural in its anthropological from, it includes in its narrative world and its artistic formation, as the system of beliefs, standards, values, common imagery, customs and ethics. It also includes various topics of daily life and aesthetic and expressive values"** (Mikchelli, 1993, p. 23) and has been manifested in:

Social and Psychological Pattern

This pattern is shown through Salma Mofidi's memories of childhood. She remembers the mother strangling her illegitimate child because she believed his birth would shame the family. This painful event haunted her, and she couldn't find a way to understand it. The text describes the scene: **"The mother's hand seizes a white**

pillow covering the face of the infant lying on the ground near the aunt Zahia, and presses, this hand that tightens the pillow and continues to press, muscle contractions of the boy barely realizes he is documented with a letter tightening from the root of the hands to the soles of the feet, the silence shouting of Zahia that looks frozen” (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 13)

The novelist explores the theme of male authority, a significant social issue in Moroccan novels. This authority is often represented by the father, husband, or brother. Through this, the novelist aims to highlight the marginalization of women. Before the father, other men, and society, women often face pointing fingers and shouts, causing great suffering. The novelist states: **“the mother responds, her body was frowned upon, and finally, when she muttered three words, he took a kettle and beat it”** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 89)

The novel shows the social conditions of people in the Bashar desert. It focuses on their lives of poverty and hardship, like not having good homes to protect them from the southern heat. Because of this, people, including those in Bashar, often stay inside. The story says: **“in the kitchen until a sand wind blew, Salma fainted from the sand wind, suffocated her, prevented her from seeing, erased the sky, extinguished the world with her hustle, looked terrified at the dust flowing between the separate door and frame, and among the wooden door openings”** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 13) To reveal this pattern of different pairs: love, heat/poverty, wealth/ deserts, seas/ presence, absence/ question, answer/ courage, fear/ truth, lies/ status, margin, these contradictory pairs express the bitter social and psychological frustration of the “Salma” family. It also reflected for us the image of the lack of coexistence with parental authority, which was the source of terror for the heroine's family. These are some of the clips that refer to it as exposure by the action of The childhood stage of the heroine is a key factor in the fragmentation of her identity and breakage: **“Multiple educational, social, and cultural factor of distortion and breakage”** (Mikchelli, 1993, p. 08) Emotional harm was a way in which she did not feel family security and felt mentally alienated from the behavior of her mother, who hid the fact that the infant suffocated this scene that has always haunted her.

Popular Heritage Patter

The format is strong in the novel. The writing was inspired by heritage and comes from everyday life. It captures the heart of the people, considered the essence of life experience **“certain area for people and derives its themes and perspectives from the manifestations of their various lives, and the work of many generations of humanity of the necessities of their lives, relationship, happiness and sadness”** (Shammari, 2022, pp. 1143-1152) It was invoked by the novelist to emphasize her clinging and belonging to this heritage, from customs, traditions, beliefs, religious rituals and folk dancing in the area of desert of Bashar, whose population used to live in the form of tribes, as each tribe as each tribe adheres to its own principles. An example of this is the imposition of marriage on girls with a man from the tribe, This is what happened with “Zahia”, one of the people who **“must be settled in her country of origin, and this is what everyone wants,**

The characters of the novel who saw the marriage of Zahia in the ancestral countries so that she could give births of two young Algerians, a year after she arrived in the desert, she married a neighbor from a tribe of Oniomania without shrieks of joy and without drums" (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 22) The writing describes the main beliefs of the people in this region, focusing on the belief in "magic." It also shows how the protagonist, Salma, is connected to these beliefs. She was leaving the house, and I thought: **"was touched by a jinn saying that I am insane, they tried to decipher the magic of Hijaz (...) In the end, everyone was convinced that I was crazy, and so they left me alone"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 24)

Tea is prepared and presented differently by desert people compared to other Algerians. Desert tea has a unique flavor that many Algerians enjoy. The writer became very enthusiastic while describing this drink that women often share in the evenings, and Salma says: **"sitting in middle of half the population of the neighborhood in the shadow Tea is prepared and presented differently by desert people compared to other the smell of tea and mint (...) swallows each in this regard a teapot of at Tea is prepared and presented differently by desert people compared to other Algerians. Desert tea has a unique flavor that many Algerians enjoy. The writer became very enthusiastic while describing this drink that women often share in the evenings, and Salma says: twelve to fourteen pieces of sugar (...) the teapot bends and rushes to pour as it rises to make the drink sing, lathering and falling into the cup, he clicks for a soft kiss, the last drop on the amber surface, moves away and then returns the ball with the neighboring cup"** (Mokaddem, 2012, pp. 42-44) From this, it's clear the novelist understands the desert people's heritage. She creatively includes it in her story, giving the reader knowledge about desert life and how people live there.

Historical Pattern

The novel reflects the historical pattern by addressing the "bloody decade," also known as the "black decade." This difficult period in Algeria during the 1990s saw tragedies and violence. The community experienced bloody images as a result of a terrorist group that showed no humanity, taking the lives of innocent people. **"adopted Recruitment policy linked to religion, this sacred vital linked to the people and the Islamic nation closely where adopted as an outlet to his ideas and ideologies to power"** (Yayouch, 2005, pp. 29-53) However, the novel "I Owe Everything to Forget" didn't describe this ordeal in detail. Instead, the protagonist, Salma, only hinted at it through her own experiences. This approach created contrasting pairs: Conflict and Surrender, Courage and Fear, Strong and Weak, Life and Death, Homeland and Migration. The text acts as a cultural marker, with its meaning derived from the novel's historical context.

French feminist novelists approached the subject of the black decade differently. Some openly expressed their views, while others addressed it indirectly, rejecting the harsh realities. In "I Owe Everything to Forget", The novelist showed us her strong dislike and hatred of terrorism. Terrorism takes away safety and peace, and it kills and destroys. Terrorists use religion to hurt people, and they use fear and

repression. This is what "Salma" understood, and she showed the fear that "Zainab" felt towards these fundamentalists. She says: **"she talked about her desire during the bloody decade that Algeria went through, this useless fear she says the name of the man with whom she crossed or walks behind her without seeing his face that planted the dagger in her neck"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 98) This led the country into a civil war and an ideological conflict. This caused terrible crimes, dissent, and division. People couldn't tell friend from enemy anymore, which is what Salma remembers. While traveling to the High Plateaus, she thought about that sad time, saying: **"she didn't know anything about this, because the desire to go there would not have increased. This desire contributed to the assassinations that bloodied the country seven years ago"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 83) The writing showed us the terrible situation in Algeria during that violent time. It described some scenes of tyranny that Algerian society suffered because due to the struggle between those in power and terrorism.

Political Pattern

The political system is one of the most prominent cultural patterns used by the writer to put forward the relationship between literature and politics :**"a dialectical and continuous relationship, as long as the writer found himself within a particular society through which he expresses his role, rights and status, constantly and continuously searches for his freedom and humanity"** (Abed-ELazim, 1998, p. 30) The novelist clearly showed her political views, rejecting the political systems in Algeria. She aimed to expose the oppression faced by society, where people should have enjoyed their full rights, not be humiliated. In the story, the novelist highlights the injustice of the security forces towards the Algerian people and the military regime. This led "Salma Moufid" to flee the country, seeking security and stability in Europe **"prevail Images of the past, the airport has not changed, Salma lived her different situations, arbitrary security, insults, exaggerated interrogations for any rudeness, Farouk and Salma agreed to flee from suffocation, from repression Algeria, from its prohibitions, from its censorship and its military regime"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 30) Hence, we find that the novelist expresses her outright rejection of the regime of former president "Boumediene", who was establishing a military regime, not democracies. This was at the beginning of the disappointments that this led to violent patrons inside the homeland who say the narrative: **"was caused by the regime's blackmail. The confrontation began between progressive students and the fundamentalist cl excessive manipulation of the ropes of religion and politics that led to the division of society into conflicting groups, and the forces would have swallowed the country, she took over the scene"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 31)

"Malika Mokadem" didn't stay silent. She saw that Algeria didn't change; only its leaders changed. In her view, the opportunists who ruled chose what was best for themselves and their children. They focused on providing a good life for their own personal gain, while the ordinary people lived in the neighborhoods, she said: **"in Algiers the marginalization surrounding them from all directions, the**

embassies, the paths of the official figures are all calcified, protected, and Oran remains an exile of its population in contempt and filth, demographic growth is added to the humiliation inflicted on Oran" (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 56)

The novelist's view was a dissatisfied and bemoaned view of the situation experienced by the residents of Oran. Although it is one of the largest cities in Algeria, rather than being a point of attention by officials, it was vulnerable to political marginalization. Despite the development in the field of globalization and technology, officials benefited from it for themselves and not to serve their society.

Since the novelist is committed to the issues of her homeland, she had to offer solutions to get out of Algeria only this situation, which Algeria lives in a creative way and this is what she has shown by saying: **"that when equipped with fair and secular laws, when the darkness of the country is removed. When the schools of the Republic will not be places where children are drowned in darkness, but how can we adequately describe a real condition, with a qualitative education that develops the critical mind, with the freedoms and responsibilities that result from this to eliminate the source of obscurantism in people? A violent event there without justice, many traumas he died a hideout, he died a scary"** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 109) We understand that in her novel "I Owe Everything to Forget," Malika Mokadem strongly criticized the old and new systems that have kept the country in a constant state of turmoil. She bravely highlighted the lack of justice in Algeria, showing that democracy is just a saying in the Algerian Republic, not actually practiced. The novel also discussed the state of education in public schools, where critical thinking is lacking. Mokadem warned readers that if society doesn't quickly fight for its rights in a fair and modern way, it will stay under the control of unfair justice and self-serving officials.

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Religious Pattern

The religious system is one of the most important cultural systems that prove the identity and belonging of nations, as religion is a fundamental constant for the existence of the individual and a motive for strength to resist the other, and the theme of religion within the Maghreb feminist novelist body was a basic theme. Most of the novelists dealt with the religious taboo, including "Malika Mokaddem" in her novel "I owe everything to forget", as the novelist used a number of explicit styles, criticizing the religious faith in which Algerian society believes, and announcing its atheism on the tongue of the protagonist.

"Malika Mokaddem" is among the boldest novelists who address the taboo within their fiction, as we find her posing the idea of her atheism in a clear and frank decision-making manner and considering the Islamic religion shrouded in

imperfection and ambiguity: **“it is considered as one of the Algerian writings that enjoy freedom in novel writing, this freedom made her talking about the religious taboo without restrictions or barriers which made her question religion at times and describe it as foolishness at other times”** (Shammari, 2022, pp. 1143-1152)

She's seen as one of the Algerian women writers who have freedom in writing fiction. This freedom allowed her to discuss religious taboos without limits. Sometimes, she questioned religion and described it as foolish.

The novelist didn't just criticize religion. She also seemed to belittle religious practices and supported actions against Islamic beliefs. She even used the religious ritual of "Eid al-Adha," a major religious event that we celebrate to remember Prophet Ibrahim, whom God saved with a great sacrifice. This holiday takes place in the month of Dhu al-Hijjah, a sacred month when God made Hajj mandatory for those who can. So, we see her crossing ideological boundaries and expressing her views. She uses the arrival of refrigerators to further her point regarding this significant event.

She is considered one of the Algerian women writers who enjoy freedom in writing fiction. This freedom made her talk about religious prohibition, without restriction or barriers, which made her question religion at times, and describe it as foolishness at other times.: **“The arrival of refrigerators did not change the matter, if the sacrifice on Eid Day is linked to Ibrahim, then... the slogan of... the time consumed for each part of the animal is inevitably due to a pagan rite”** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 96)

The novelist targeted the moral and educational function taught to us by the Holy Quran and the Prophet's hadith, which urges us to adhere to faith and customs and to stay away from hypocrisy and repentance when talking about her friend “Rachid” and his wife “Zainab” who went to perform: **“the Hajj Mecca for faith and wine camp for the liver. I hope not to wait for my liver cirrhosis to drink wine in my house on Eid Day, with public condemnation, but today we have become pilgrims, and we have become obliged to come in order to hold Vome for some drink”** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 97)

The first reader of a novel that owes everything to oblivion realizes that the novelist supports the Jewish religion, and agrees that with her principles and adhere to her rituals and oppose those who do not believe in her, she say: **“It is an opportunity to force the mother discovery of her daughter for the first time, so Salma did not retreat to kiss her non-Muslim friend in front of her mother, and knocked glasses and drank wine on table”** (Mokaddem, 2012, p. 30) The first reader of a novel, which takes inspiration from oblivion, realizes the novelist supports the Jewish religion. The reader agrees that the novelist emphasizes her principles, adheres to her rituals, and opposes those who don't share her beliefs. The narrative passage shows the novelist's reliance on the idea of religions overlapping. She deliberately tries to impose her religion on her mother. The novelist mocks the

Islamic religion, hoping to change her mother's views. By doing so, the novelist devalues the Islamic religion, promoting the Jewish religion instead.

Conclusion

In this research, we explored the ideological and cultural aspects of Malika Mokaddem's novel, "I Owe Everything to Forget," using cultural criticism. This approach examines cultural products, focusing on their relationships as signs of cultural patterns. The novel is rich with cultural styles, each revealing the author's ideology and her views on society, history, and politics. It depicts the difficult lives of desert people. Inspired by the unique folklore of Bashar, we also interpreted the author's stance on past and present political situations. This includes a complete rejection of authoritarian policies and her views on Islam, Judaism, and atheism.

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