On the 'translatability' of ideology in multimodal texts : Orientalism in *Tintin au pays de l'or noir* 

حول "قابلية ترجمة" الأيديولوجيا في نصوص متعددة الوسائط: الاستشراق في *تان تان في بلاد الذهب الأسود* 

# <sup>1</sup> Latifa KHODJA<sup>1</sup> لطيفة خوجة

<sup>2</sup> Mohamed R éda BOUKHALFA محمد رضا بوخلفة

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Translation University of Algiers 2, Algeria latifa.khodja@univ-alger2.dz

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Translation University of Algiers 2, Algeria reda.boukhalfa@univ-alger2.dz DOI: 10.46314/1704-021-001-015

Received date: 01/06/2021	Revised date: 29/06/2021	Publication date: 20/07/2021

#### Abstract :

The present paper aims to investigate how the nature of 'language' and 'meaning', in multimodal texts, such as French-language comic books, defines the limitations of translating ideology, namely orientalism. Using a quantitative study of the occurrences of orientalist notions and imagery in Hergé's *Tintin au Pays de l'or noir*, findings showed that ideology can be identified on three main levels of communication : verbal, non verbal and graphic, operating on three textual levels : peritextual, microtextual and macrotextual. The results also showed that the majority of orientalist occurrences were on the macrotextual level, in the form of overarching themes that were based on the relationships between panels rather than their contents.

**Key words :** Translatability ; Multimodality ; Visual language ; Ideology ; Orientalism.

<sup>\*</sup>Corresponding author: Latifa KHODJA, latifa.khodja@univ-alger2.dz

ملخص:

يسعى هذا المقال إلى دراسة طبيعة "اللغة" و"المعنى" في النصوص المتعددة الوسائط، وعلى وجه الخصوص في سياق الشريط المرسوم الفرنكوبلجيكي، وأثرهما في قابلية ترجمة الأيديولوجية، ولا سيما الاستشراق. لذا قمنا بدراسة كمية لمظاهر الاستشراق في الشريط المرسوم "تان تان في بلاد الذهب الأسود" للمؤلف هيرجي بغية تحديد طبيعة المستوى التواصلي الذي ظهرت من خلاله الأيديولوجيا في القصة وقابليته للترجمة. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن غالبية مظاهر الاستشراق تمركزت على مستوى البنية النصية الكبرى للقصة، وكانت عبارة عن مواضيع سردية شاملة نتجت عن العلاقات بين مختلف خانات الشريط المرسوم وليس عن محتواها.

الكلمات المفاتيح: حدود الترجمة؛ النصوص المتعددة الوسائط؛ اللغات الشفوية؛ الأيديولوجيا؛ الاستشراق.

#### 1 - Introduction :

While translating a multimodal text is not an unfeasable task, in the sense that it can be translated in such a manner that it is understandable by the target reader, it does however invoke the concepts of 'translatability' in regards to some of its aspects. In such texts, meaning is formed by the interaction of different communication levels and modes. However, since the process of translation is usually concerned with textual elements only, other elements might be deemed 'untranslatable'. This unbalanced approach to translating multimodal texts is illustrated by comic book translation, where the decoding phase includes both text and image but the encoding phase means separating the two and only affecting the text. This approach to comic book translation, which favors text over image, contradicts the very nature of the medium. As Mila Bongco explains :

"Since both image and text are contained within one panel, taking this as a single unit attenuates the dispute regarding the advantage of one medium over the other. Instead, image and texte may be given equal interpretative weight as they need not be analysed separately." (Bongco, M., 2000:58) Moreover, despite giving both text and image equal interpretative weight within the panel, the comic book medium remains a visual medium, as some panels may not include text, but all panels include images.

Furthermore, the visual nature of the comic book language and its propensity to use stereotypes and iconography render it highly conducive to propaganda. Hence, if the comic book is ideologically charged in a significant manner, as is the case with Hergé's *Tintin au pays de l'or noir*, it is important to consider the nature of ideology in literary texts, which can be both implicit and explicit, and its 'translatability'.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the limits of translating ideology in a multimodal text, by studying the textual levels on which orientalism can be located in *Tintin au pays de l'or noir*. In order to do so, we investigated three possibilities :

1. Orientalism can be located mainly on the macrotextual level.

- 2. Orientalism can be located mainly on the microtextual level.
- 3. Orientalism can be located mainly on the peritextual level.

To verify or disprove these hypotheses, we have conducted a quantatitive study of the occurrences of orientalist notions within the panels of Hergé's *Tintin au pays de l'or noir*, which represent the smallest unit of meaning in comic books. This process was carried out on three levels : the macrotextual level, on which we highlighted all related panels that enclosed echoing orientalist notions and imagery, the microtextual level and the peritextual level, which were divided into three sub-categories, namely verbal, non-verbal and graphic.

Moreover, the choice of case study was determined by the ideological notions concealed within the pages of *Tintin au pays de l'or noir*, as well as the context, history and background of the creation of this comic book. As the fifteenth volume of *Les aventures de Tintin, Tintin au pays de l'or noir* was initially serialised in 1939, in the newspapers supplement *Le* 

Petit Vingtiène. After the end of World War II, Hergéreprised the comic book, which was mainly rewritten and serialised again in 1948 and 1949 (Thompson, H., 1991). However, in 1971, the story was modified one final time, at the request of Methuen Publishing Ltd, Hergé's british editors, removing references to the British Palestinian mandate, the Zionist paramilitary organisation known as Irgun and replacing the pseudo-Arabic script with real Arabic text (Farr, M., 2001). These modifications might further confirm the pro-imperialistic, orientalist influences of *Tintin au pays de l'or noir* by highlighting the author and publishers' awareness of its most controversial content by removing it, at least partially. The nature of the remaining orientalism concealed within the volume's pages reflects the widespread inherent notions of the Orient that many westerners, especially from colonizing nations, have adopted, whether consciously or unconsciously.

### 2 - Orientalism as an ideology :

First and foremost, it is important to define what is meant by 'orientalism' in this paper, as the term encapsulates various meanings and connotations.

According to Said, there are three "interdependant" meanings attached to the term 'orientalism'. He defines the first, which can be labeled as 'academic orientalism', as follows :

"Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient – and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian or philologist – either in its specific or its" Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient – and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian or philologist – either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism." (Said, E., 1979 : 2)

While it is the most easily aknowledged meaning, academics and specialists alike have since elected to use terms such as 'oriental

studies' and 'area studies' rather than 'orientalism'. This shift can most likely be linked to two factors : (a) the vagueness of the term 'orientalism', and (b) its association with European colonialist endeavors.

The second meaning of orientalism according to Said is more general and can be defined as:

"A style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) the Occident." (Said, E., 1979 : 2)

Thus, any writer, regardless of field or style of expression, can be regarded as an orientalist as long as the distinction between Orient and Occident is the fundamental principle of their work.

Finally, Said defines the third meaning of orientalism, which will be the basis of this paper, as :

"The corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it : in short, Orientalism is a Western style of dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient." (Said, E., 1979 : 3)

This 'Orientalism' is a discourse about the Orient, based on, and serving the purpose of reinforcing, an imbalanced dichotomy between East and West, where the latter has authority over the first. Therefore, Orientalism is the ideology that accompanied, facilitated and justified European colonialist entreprises in the Orient, since the eighteenth century. Orientalism contributed in accomplishing these objectives by promoting four core principles : (a) the East-West dichotomy ; (b) the superiority of the Occident ; (c) the otherness of the Orient ; and, (d) the Orient's dependence on the West.

(a) Firstly, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines 'dichotomy' as "a division into two especially mutually exclusive or contradictory groups or

entities." Nevertheless, in orientalist discourse, the East-West dichotomy does not only serve the purpose of dividing the world into two opposing entities, the Orient and the Occident, it also links them inextricably by defining one in contrast to the other. As Said states that

"as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West. The two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other." (Said, E., 1979 : 5)

Moreover, this imbalanced dichotomy is based on an imbalanced power relationship between East and West, which systematically favors the latter.

(b) As a matter of fact, the superiority of the Occident was the result of both real and manufactured realities. On one hand, it was based on the fact that the Occident was both the academic authority, being the one studying the Orient, and the military one, as colonialist entreprises progressed. On the other hand, as the source of 'knowledge' about the Orient, orientalists were able to not only define but more importantly create both the Orient and, as a result, the Occident. Said explains that :

"Orientalism depends for its strategy on this flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand." (Said, E., 1979 : 7)

(c) Furthermore, and despite being its subject matter, the Orient is naturally presented as the 'other' to the Western 'self' in orientalism. This characterization is due to the fact that orientalism is the knowledge of the Orient through the Western lense. The latter being the point of reference only reinforced its superiority. Consequently, the Orient assumed all opposing attributes to the Western values.

"The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, "different"; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, "normal"." (Said, E., 1979 : 40)

(d) Lastly, from the orientalist perspective, the Orient's inferiority rendered it unable to govern itself and required corrective intervention from the West. As Said points out :

"[...] at the outset one can say that so far as the West was concerned during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an assumption had been made that the Orient and everything in it was, if not patently inferior to, then in need of corrective study by the West. [...] Orientalism, then, is knowledge of the Orient that places things Oriental in class, court, prison, or manual for scrutiny, study, judgment, discipline, or governing." (Said, E., 1979 : 40-41)

This reasoning not only justified colonization, with all that it entails, during the post-colonial era, it helped set in place and maintain colonial rule.

"To say simply that Orientalism was a rationalization of colonial rule is to ignore the extent to which colonial rule was justified in advance by orientalism, rather than after the fact." (Said, E., 1979: 39)

Together these notions form an alarming ideology that serves the purpose of dehumanizing the Orient and warranting violence against it. Moreover, acknowledging the perils of such an ideology is all the more relevant when it is directed for consumption and assimilation towards its subject matter, i.e. the Orient itself.

### 3 - Language and meaning in comic books :

Although the term 'translation' encapsulates a wide range of types, depending on the media, codes, contexts, individuals and functions involved in the process, it does nonetheless, most often than not, designate the transfer of meaning from a code to another. However, what it the nature of 'code' in comics books, and therefore how is meaning conveyed in such a medium ?

According to Jack Kirby, comics books are themselves a language. As quoted by Neil Cohn, Kirby states :

*"I've been writing all along and I've been doing it in pictures."* (quoted by Cohn, N., 2012 : 93)

This quote highlights the mostly visual nature of the comic book language, where both image and text are used to convey meaning. Similarly, Duncan and Smith use the term 'image' to identify units of meaning in comic books, explaining that :

"Pictures and words have different characteristics and functions, but they both appear on the comic book page as images." (Duncan, R., Smith, M., 2009 : 155)

These images are contained within the boundaries of a panel, which, comparably to the morpheme, is the smallest unit that can carry meaning. The contents of the panels and their layout on the page of the comic book create a narrative that can be understood by the reader. Additionally, the repetitive use patterns of 'images' create the 'grammar' through which the reader can decode meaning in comic books. This repetition is the basis of what Will Eisner calls 'Sequential Art' :

"In its most economical state, comics employ a series of repetitive images and recognizable symbols. When these are used again and again to convey similar ideas, they become a language – a literary form, if you will. And it is this disciplined application that creates 'the grammar' of Sequential Art." (Eisner, W., 1985: 8)

Moreover, Duncan and Smith explain that decoding comic books is determined by the meaning of each image as well as its relationship with other images, within the same panel, in other panels or even in other texts. Therefore, we can distinguish three levels of meaning in comic books : the microtextual, the macrotextual as well as the intertextual level. In this study however, we shall focus on the microtextual, the macrotextual and the peritextual levels.

On the microtextual level, the panel is considered a totality and meaning is formed by the interaction between the images within it, whether these are verbal, non-verbal or graphic images.

On the macrotextual level, meaning is formed by the interaction between panels, which is not limited to the interaction between consecutive panels. As Duncan and Smith write :

"The reader performs an ongoing construction of meaning by considering each panel in direct relationship to the immediately previous panel and in the context of all previous panels. The understanding of the next panel can also be influenced by a number of the panels yet to come [...] And each next panel has the potential to provide new information that creates a "retroactive determination" of the meaning of one or more previous panels. " (Duncan, R., Smith, M., 2009 : 166-167)

Therefore, in a comic book any two panels can determine each other's meaning, regardless of their placement in the story. Every panel affects, and is affected by, all previous or following panels.

The peritextual level encompasses all elements in the book that serve the purpose of introducing it and preparing its reception. These include cover, title, preface, etc. (Labarre, N., 2020)

### 4 - Ideology in comic books :

In the words of Alan Moore, as quoted by Sabin, "all comics are political" (Sabin, R., 1993 : 89). As a sequential art, the comic book has been an ideological medium since its inception, dating back to William Hogarth's paintings.

"Hogarth produced seven sets of sequential narratives on "Modern Moral Subjects." The first three of these sets were originally done in the form of paintings: "A Harlot's Progress" (1731), "The Rake's Progress" (1735), and "Marriage a la Mode" (1743). " (Duncan, R., Smith, M., 2009 : 20)

Through his treatment of the modern moral subjects of early eighteenth century England, Hogarth seeked to spread his moral views and ideas through his art, by using a succession of scenes that depicted cautionary tales.

Highlighting and studying ideology in comic books is an important endeavor due to three reasons :

First, it is necessary to acknowledge the power of ideology in fiction to reinforce power structures. As Duncan and Smith explain :

"Why is identifying ideology an important intellectual undertaking? Because issues of ideology are entwined with issues of power. Those who benefit from a dominant idea often wield power in a society." (Duncan, R., Smith, M., 2009 : 247)

Second, the nature of comic books and its multimodality makes a pertinent ideological case study. Most notably, the medium's complexity is illustrated by its embrace of creative freedom and its spatial limitations. As McAllister, Sewell and Gordon explain in *Comics and Ideology*:

"The nature of comic art makes the form ideologically interesting. Comic art combines printed words and pictures in a unique way. [...] The limited space in which the artist/writer has to work, for example, may entice the creator to use stereotypes to convey information quickly. Similarly, the use of storytelling devices such as captions and thought balloons can make themes and values in a comic especially ecplicit." (Mcallister, M., Sewell, E., Gordon, I., 2001 : 3-4). Third, it is necessary to recognize the social significance of comic books. The power of influence of the comic art is further illustrated by its appeal to not only the masses (regardless of age, sexe, or level of education) but most importantly to a young and impressionable audience. As McAllister, Sewell and Gordon further explain :

"Although comics are dismissed as the insignificant 'funnies', they are highly-involving for many readers, children and adult. [...] How these comics fit in with the socio-political context of these countries, given the different roles that the comic may play in these countries, it a question of ideological import, as is the potential of the role of the comics in the creation or resistance of cultural identity and imperialism." (Mcallister, M., Sewell, E., Gordon, I., 2001 : 4-5).

Moreover, not only reading but translating comics to masses of readers, among which are young readers, is also an act of ideological import and renders inquiry in the medium's ideological implications all the more necessary.

## 5 - Orientalism in *Tintin au pays de l'or noir* :

The volume *Tintin au pays de l'or noir* comprises 64 pages, including a front cover, inside title page and a text block of 62 pages. The total number of panel within the comic book is 475. The story spans over two countries : first Belgium, then the fictional arab emirate known as *Arabie Kh én édite*, where Tintin travels to investigate the mysterious case of the exploding petroleum which threatens to further exacerbate international tensions, catalysing the beginning of another war in Europe.

The quantitative study of the occurrences of orientalist notions in *Tintin au pays de l'or noir* had the following results, summarised in Table  $1^{*/**}$ .

Table 1: Summary of the quantitative study of panels includingorientalism categorized by textual and communication level in *Tintin au*pays de l'or noir

number of	Total number of panels including orientalism	On the peritextual level			On the microtextual level			On the	
		Verbal		Non erbal	Graphic	Verbal	Non verbal	Graphic	macro textual level
475	415	3		3	2	76	11	34	360

As showcased above, the peritextual level included 3 panels : the front cover, the inside title page and the title on page 1, where the title of the volume was displayed above the panels. Orientalism on the paratextual level included :

- verbal elements, in the use of the expression 'or noir', which reflected the orientalist notion of the 'otherness of the Orient', by painting the arab location as an exotic, far away land, full of riches.
- non verbal elements, through the use of different font styles, which reflected the orientalist notions of the 'dichotomy of the East and West' and the 'otherness of the Orient'. As such, the upper part, that included the name of the author 'Hergé', the name of the series 'Les aventures de Tintin' and the first half of the title 'Tintin au pays de', was written in a plain font, while the second part of the title 'or noir' was written in a custom font meant to imitate Arabic characters. Moreover the otherness of the Orient and its exotic and mysterious nature was accentuated by the repetition of that second part in Arabic (الذهب الأسود), in spite of the fact that it incomprehensible for most French readers.
- graphic elements, which mainly reflected the orientalist notion of the Otherness of the Orient, and included : Arabo-islamic inspired page border ornaments, including the front cover's which was reminiscent of a Mihrab\*\*\* or a horseshoe arch, and the inside title page's which included a border ornament imitating the Arabic form of the shahada. The front cover centered around a picture of the protagonist (Tintin), his companions (Dupont, Dupond and Milou) and his german

antagonist (Dr Müller), riding in a red jeep across the desert. The composition of the cover further highlights the orientalist notion of the Superiority of the West and its precedence on the Orient, that is not an independent entity, but only acts as a battlefield for western conflicts.

On the microtextual level :

- The verbal elements mainly included the repetition of :
  - The spoof Arabic names used to designate characters, such as Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab ('liquorice juice' in Brussels dialect), Bab El Ehr ('babbler' in Brussels dialect), Yussuf Ben Mulfrid (referring to the famous belgian dish 'moules frites'), and locations, such as Wadesdah ('what is that' in English) and Bir El Ambik ('bière-lambic'). The use of spoof Arabic names with western meanings and references highlights both the notions of the Orient's otherness and the West's precedence over the East, by highlighting how different and comical Arabic names sound.
  - The choice of using words of Arabic origin, such as émir, cheik, Khamsin, Simoun, in order to instill a sense of exoticism and otherness in the story.
  - The mention of the word 'mirage' (which was repeated thirteen times throughout the story, spanning over fourteen pages), an optical illusion, used to refer to an unrealistic or unattainable endeavor. The repetition of the word further underlines the exoticism and otherness of the Orient.
- The non verbal elements included the use of Arabic text, in spite of the fact that all characters speak French perfectly and that most French readers do not understand Arabic. The purpose of its use to highlight the exoticism and otherness of the Orient.
- The graphic elements included explicit orientalist imaging, that function within the limits of one panel, as an independent unit. These included :

- representations of the protagonist or his companions (dressed in light colors) next to Arab characters (mainly law enforcement members, dressed in dark colours) which referred to the dichotomy of East and West.
- a representation of an Arab woman as a veiled and mysterious beauty, of whom we can only see a hand that holds a red ball of thread and her eyes who seemingly look directly at the reader. The inclusion of this nameless background character at the foreground of the panel refers to the otherness of the Orient by way of representing the exotic and hyperfeminine Oriental woman.
- the disrespectful representations of the relationship between the West and Islam which refer to the Superiority of the first and its precedence on the second. On two instances, Dupond and Dupont are seen unwittingly interrupting the islamic prayer, by kicking an arab man in the posterior while he is prostrated, having been mistaken for a mirage, and crashing into a mosque and destroying its wall after falling asleep at the wheel.

The macrotextual level included the following overarching themes :

- Themes of East and West dichotomy were represented by similar settings and situations in which the protagonists were depicted. Some examples include : Dupond and Dupont driving through the belgian countryside and wandering through the arab desert, Tintin having a meeting with oil company Speedol's director and with Prince Ben Kalish Ezab, and depictions of western and eastern women.
- Themes of the Orient's otherness were represented by the way previously mentioned dichotomous representations portrayed the Oriental entities as different, exotic, luxurious and ultimately inferior. As such, if Dupond and Dupont were able to call for help after having been stranded in the belgian countryside, using a telephone

cabin, they roamed aimlessly through the desert for days. Furthermore, if Tintin's meeting with Speedol's director was professional on all accounts, his meetings with the Prince were held in a more informal and colorful setting and included cigars and drinks. Finally, the western women depicted were both speaking characters and included a telephone operator and the opera singer Bianca Castafiore, while the only depiction of oriental women included a nameless, non speaking, veiled character.

- Themes of Western superiority were mainly highlighted by the depiction of the character of the Arab ruler, Mohammed Ben Kalish Ezab. Characterised by his ruthless dictatorship, emotiona immaturity, luxurious penchants and permissive parenting, the Prince's adequacy pales in comparison to Tintin's quick-thinking, ingenuity, moral values and emotional intelligence. Tintin's superior status in the Orient is further highlighted by the ease with which he introduces himself to the Prince and into his confidence, in spite of his foreignness and young age, as opposed to distrustful attitude of the Captain of the Speedol ship, on which he worked as a telegraphist.
- Themes of the Orient's need for the West were quite literally represented by the character of Prince Abdullah, son of Prince Ben Kalish Ezab and heir to the throne of Khemed. Prince Abdullah's depiction reflects the impetuous, childlike Orient, in need of the West to be rescued and disciplined. In the story, Abdullah is kidnapped by Dr Müller and must be forcefully rescued by Tintin, and Captain Haddock later (who is also seen spanking the child in one panel), as he prefers remaining with his abusive kidnappers.

#### 6 - 'Translatability', need for translation and loss of meaning :

The transalatability of Orientalism in *Tintin au pays de l'or noir* is determined by the level and sub-level of communication on which it is located, as well as its function, i.e. the orientalistic notion it promotes.

Verbal elements, on both peritextual and microtextual levels, can, and need to, be translated. They therefore allow the potential manipulation of meaning in some instances but also entail loss of meaning, especially if the function is to highlight the Orient's otherness linguistically. In other words, if Arabic inspired spoof names or words of Arabic origin might be considered as 'other' by a French reader, they lose that characteristic within an Arabic text. Conversely, if the function is to highlight the Orient's otherness semantically, as is the case with the use of 'or noir' and 'mirage', loss of meaning can be avoided, unless the translator chooses to modify the meaning.

Non-verbal elements, on both peritextual and microtextual levels, and similarly to the language-based Orient's otherness function of verbal elements, entail loss of meaning, as the use of Arabic or Arabic-imitating characters is not considered as 'other' in an Arabic text.

Graphic elements, on both peritextual and microtextual levels, cannot be, and need not be translated, as the translation process does not affect the images within a comic book. Nevertheless, there is no loss of meaning as the notions of East and West dichotomy, the Orient's otherness and the West's superiority can be understood, and even assimilated, by the Arabic reader.

Overarching themes, on the macrotextual level, are both 'translatable' and 'untranslatable', as they are mostly based on depictions, character building and are an inherent part of the narrative. While the microtextual and peritextual translations might affect the translation of the macrotextual themes, loss of meaning on this level would not be significant.

## 7 - Conclusion :

As a multimodal literature, the comic book format incoporates traditional verbal elements and unique non-verbal and graphic elements to create a singular visual language. As such, it constitutes fertile ground for ideological imagery, both implicit and explicit. Considering the power of influence of the comic book and the implications of importing potentially harmful orientalistic notions into the Arab consciousness, through translation, it was important to determine the 'translatability' of ideology in comic books and, subsequently, the potential scope of text manipulation and loss of meaning.

In order to do so, we conducted a quantitative study of the occurrences of orientalist notions in panels on three textual levels : the peritext, the microtext and the macrotext. In addition to that, both peritext and microtext levels were divided into three sub-levels : verbal, non verbal and graphic.

Results showed that a majority of the orientalist notions present in the comic book were on the macrotextual level, confirming hypothesis 1, and and disproving hypotheses 2 and 3.

Furthermore, the analysis of the results showed that while the 'translatability' of the orientalism present in *Tintin au pays de l'or noir* depended on the sub-levels of communication, loss of meaning was determined by the function of the ideological notions. As such, if graphic elements are inherently 'untranslatable', they do not induce loss of meaning. However, non-verbal elements included were deemed 'untranslatable' in this instance as they relied on the use of Arabic or Arabic-inspired characters to accentuate the otherness of the Orient, which entailed loss of meaning for the Arabic reader who cannot see Arabic as 'other'. Similarly, while verbal elements are 'translatable', loss of meaning concerned verbal elements that relied on Arabic-imitating spoofs to highlight the otherness of the Orient.

#### Notes:

\* For the purposes of the study, peritextual elements (i.e. front cover, inside title page and the title on page1) were regarded as whole units (panels) : unit 1 = front cover, unit 2 = inside title page, unit 3 = title in Page 1.

\*\* Note that some panels may include more than one level.

\*\*\* Encyclopaedia Britannica defines Mihrab as the "prayer niche in the qiblah wall (that facing Mecca) of a mosque; mihrabs vary in size but are usually ornately decorated."

### **References :**

- Bongco, Mila (2000) *Reading Comics: Language, Culture and the Concept of the Superhero in Comic Books*, London: Routledge.
- Cohn, Neil. (2012). "Comics, Linguistics and Visual Language: The Past and Future of a Field" In *Linguistics and the Study of Comics*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp.92-118.
- Duncan, Randy. & Smith, Matthew. (2009), *The Power of Comics: History, Form and Culture*, New York : Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.
- Eisner, Will (1985). Comics and Sequential Art, Florida : Poor House Press.
- Farr, Michael (2001). Tintin: The Complete Companion. London: John Murray.

Herg é(1971), Tintin au Pays de l'or noir, Casterman.

- Labarre, Nicolas (2020). Understanding Genres in Comics. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mcallister, M., Sewell, E., & Gordon, I. (2001). *Comics and Ideology*, New York: Peter Lang.
- Sabin, Roger (1993). Adult Comics: an Introduction, New York: Routledge.
- Said, Edward (1979). Orientalism, New York : Vintage books.
- Thompson, Harry (1991), *Tintin : Herg é and his creation*, London : Hodder & Stoughton.