

## ASSIA DJEBAR'S MUSICAL EKPHRASIS

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The trope or genre of ekphrasis is conventionally understood as the verbal representation of visual representation.<sup>1</sup> However, critics such as Mack Smith<sup>2</sup> and Siglind Bruhn<sup>3</sup> have recently argued that verbal representations of music or musical representations of both visual and verbal art may also be considered ekphrastic. Ekphrasis exposes the mutability of forms since, by definition, it is the expression of one form of representation in terms of another. Any form that is expressed in terms of another always sweeps elements of its former composition along with it even as it is itself substantially transformed. In this sense, ekphrasis always involves an “exchange” or what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari would describe as a double movement of “deterritorialization.”<sup>4</sup> Deleuze and Guattari argue that music in particular has the capacity to unhinge the overly stratified connection between voice and language, enabling the voice to perform outside the confines of any conventional or dominant grammar, idiom, or form, with implications that extend beyond generic transgression (371).<sup>5</sup>

This essay will examine some of the links between the notion of musical ekphrasis and Deleuze and Guattari's theory of deterritorialization in relation to the work of Algerian writer Assia Djébar. In numerous texts, but especially in *L'Amour, la fantasia*, Djébar utilizes ekphrastic features as a way of negotiating the problematics of the encounter between France and Algeria. Djébar's turn to musical form deterritorializes the objectifying power of French history and language by refusing to follow the conventional logic of sense upon which the efficacy of such power depends. By listening to texts that normally solicit visual responses—namely, documents, letters, autobiographical accounts, and paintings—Djébar is able to pick up otherwise indiscernible sounds of struggle, resistance, fear, fascination, and even love. As we shall see, Djébar constructs musical ekphrases to formally reg-

ister the conjunctions and disjunctions that characterize relationships of exchange between positions that seem to be irreversibly opposed.<sup>6</sup> As a musical ekphrasis, *L'Amour, la fantasia* textually traces the often paradoxical double movement that can occur between aesthetic forms and genres and, by extension, between languages, between histories, between a written/visual culture and an oral one, and between the sexes. By scrambling the codified alignment of particular aesthetic forms with specific senses, Djebbar's ekphrases not only contest the structure of power these alignments legitimate ideologically; in addition, her textual transmutations express the potential for such rigidly structured sense—including colonial sense, patriarchal sense, and traditionalist sense—to become deterritorialized.

### *Why Ekphrasis?*

Assia Djebbar is not the only postcolonial writer to feature musical ekphrasis as a key structural and thematic component of her writing. A number of recent novelists—including Hanif Kureishi in *The Black Album*, Hanan al-Shaykh in *Beirut Blues*, Vikram Seth in *An Equal Music*, Salman Rushdie in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, and Yasmin Zahran in *A Beggar at Damascus Gate*—have also utilized musical ekphrasis as a form through which to articulate, among other things, the inevitable entanglements and exchanges that occur between lovers, languages, cultures, and histories.<sup>7</sup> The obvious question this undeniable postcolonial tendency forces us to ask is: Why ekphrasis?

The actual practice of ekphrasis can be traced back as far as the eighth century B.C.E. to Homer's description of Achilles' shield in the *Iliad*. Unlike later ekphrastic practice, early examples such as Homer's were not limited to poetic descriptions of sculpture or paintings but included a wide range of objects (Mitchell 165). The more restricted sense of ekphrasis as a verbal representation of visual representation does not become standard until the fourth century C.E. at the earliest. From this later perspective, ekphrasis brings together the sister arts of painting and poetry, transgressing generic boundaries, even as its existence ultimately relies upon the material distinctions between the two forms.

G.E. Lessing's take on the sister arts in his 1766 *Laokoon* is often cited as the aesthetic position ekphrasis fundamentally undermines. Against the slippery correspondence between the sister arts that had come to dominate

artistic practice by the eighteenth century, Lessing argues that each form must occupy its own separate domain.<sup>8</sup> He maintains that the differences between the two domains must be respected in order for each artistic form to fulfill its own particular function and avoid “falschen Geschmacke” (5) [“false taste”].<sup>9</sup> On Lessing’s understanding, the underlying difference between painting and poetry and the reason why they cannot successfully cross into each other’s realms is because the former is spatial and the latter temporal (129). In his seminal 1967 essay on ekphrasis, Murray Krieger extends Lessing’s association of space with painting to include poetry.<sup>10</sup> From Krieger’s formalist perspective, ekphrasis as a principle of literature spatializes—read: stills or arrests—the inherent temporality of language emphasized by Lessing (266). Almost twenty years after Krieger, W.J.T. Mitchell continues the challenge against Lessing’s categorical division by arguing that the arts are fundamentally transgressive of all generic boundaries including those Lessing attempts to codify.<sup>11</sup> According to Mitchell, ekphrasis demonstrates this general tendency of artistic practice by revealing the flexibility of forms. Ekphrastic writing reminds us that verbal signs can be made to perform in visual ways and that the reverse is also possible. As Mitchell explains, “While it’s true that Western painting isn’t generally used to perform these sorts of speech acts, there is no warrant for concluding that they could never do so, or that pictures more generally cannot be used to say just about anything” (*Picture* 160-161). Significantly, however, Mitchell points out that Lessing’s own argument linking temporality with the verbal and spatiality with the visual is not as seamless or even as essentialist as it might at first appear (*Iconology* 100-102). In fact, the moment Lessing asserts that bodies—which exist in space—are “die eigentlichen Gegenstände der Malerei” (114) [“the true subjects of painting”] (78) and that actions—which unfold in time—are “der eigentliche Gegenstand der Poesie” (114) [“the true subjects of poetry”] (78), he concedes that bodies also exist in time and that actions cannot be understood independently of bodies. As it turns out, therefore, the true subjects of painting may also include actions suggested through bodies depicted on canvas while, on the other hand, the true subjects of poetry may also include bodies suggested through actions recounted in words (114-115). As Mitchell explains, Lessing’s association of painting with space and poetry with time has more to do with convenience than necessity (*Iconology* 102). While Lessing claims that it requires less “Mühe” (123) [“trouble”] (86) and “Anstrengung” (123) [“effort”] (86) for the eye to take in and retain various details “mit einmal übersiehet” (123) [“at a single glance”] (86) than it does for the ear to do

the same, Mitchell argues that “degree of effort” is insufficient reason to keep painting and poetry qualitatively opposed (*Iconology* 102).

Despite their quarrels with Lessing, both Krieger and Mitchell share his sense of the material singularity of the sister arts. For Krieger, poetry’s singularity lies in its capacity to freeze (that is, spatialize) the temporality of language (266). For Mitchell, texts and images, while not essentially distinct at the semantic level, retain some difference “at the level of sign-types, forms, materials of representation, and institutional traditions” (*Picture* 161). It is this material or semiotic singularity of verbal, visual, and, I would add, aural representations that is simultaneously foregrounded and undone by ekphrasis. On the one hand, any ekphrastic representation presumes an irreducible formal or material difference between itself and whatever representation it attempts to re-present. If it didn’t, it would cease to be recognized as a trope or figure distinct from other forms of verbal representation. On the other hand, and paradoxically, ekphrasis reveals the correlation of all representations by allowing no special dispensation to any one form over others and by exposing the contingency of associating specific characteristics (such as time or space) or specific senses (such as sight or hearing) with any one form unilaterally. An ekphrastic poem about a visual representation unleashes an oblique verbal component that already inhabits whatever painting the poem re-presents. Concurrently, though in reverse, the ekphrastic poem underscores the visual dimension or capacity of language to do what is conventionally done by retinal art. As such, the challenge to generic limits—or to use Lessing’s more territorial term, “Reiche” (129) [“domains”] (91)—can be understood to emerge from within the borders themselves. This paradoxical aspect of ekphrasis makes it an effective tool with which to trace unexpected, sometimes even unwanted, conjunctions and disjunctions between all manner of conventionally opposed categories of historical, linguistic, and identic understanding. In part, this might explain why so many postcolonial writers concerned with these issues, including Djébar, choose to use it.

### *Ekphrastic Exchange as Deterritorialization*

According to Deleuze and Guattari, deterritorialization is an irrepressible and unavoidable characteristic of any territory or process of territorialization (635). Territorialization is the ordering, stratification, specialization,

or systemization that happens to occur to certain aspects or components of life. Territorializations are never fixed or final, though they might come to be perceived and experienced as such over time. Any territory into which life becomes organized or habituated is constantly traversed or worked upon by “vecteurs de déterritorialisation” (635) [“vectors of deterritorialization”].<sup>12</sup> Deterritorialization involves an escape or “une ligne de fuite” (636) [“a line of flight”] (510) out of any such rigidly ordered systems of being, understanding, or perception. It is a transformation or transmutation of life in its currently codified form. Deterritorialization activates the unpredictable power of becoming, which enables life to reorganize along lines other than those that have come to dominate existence. As Deleuze and Guattari demonstrate in their study on Kafka, the concept of deterritorialization is especially relevant to uses of language and the production of literature.<sup>13</sup> Certain writing practices affect language with “un fort coefficient de déterritorialisation”<sup>14</sup> [“a high coefficient of deterritorialization”].<sup>15</sup> Through such practices, language is subjected to strange, unconventional uses, or what Deleuze and Guattari call “usages mineurs” (30) [“minor uses”] (17). A minor or deterritorializing employment of a major language invents strange utilizations that register the unacknowledged fissures and instability at the heart of any “territory” (read: dominant language, culture, identity, nation, etc.). Deleuze and Guattari emphasize that such usage is always both political and collective. It is political because it draws attention to the conditions that make one language or form of expression majoritarian and others not (30-31). It is collective because it expresses shared resistance, which inevitably occurs in response to domination, linguistic or otherwise, and because it embodies an emergent sensibility while pointing to the possibility of a community to come (31-33).

It is important to keep in mind that major and minor, on the one hand, and territorialization and deterritorialization, on the other, are not opposed or mutually excluding terms. Minorities, for example, are not always minor, in the sense that they may sometimes embody, represent, or advocate orthodox or normative positions and values. Conversely, it is not impossible for majorities to put into effect minor transformations. Deterritorialization or becoming-minor has to do with unhinging dominant or stratified sensibilities, perceptions, and conceptions. It is a process that can occur in both major and minor social, cultural, political, or economic fields. Deterritorializations are rarely absolute and minor becomings are seldom, if ever, totally independent of major orders or systems of existence. There is a continuous resonance, vibration, interaction, or what Henri Bergson might

describe as “une zone d’indétermination”<sup>16</sup> [“a zone of indetermination”]<sup>17</sup> between the major and minor, between territorializations and deterritorializations. Bergson contends that all habituated action—what Deleuze and Guattari would call a “territory” or “territorialization”—is surrounded by a zone of indetermination which constantly threatens to interrupt or divert such action, though it doesn’t often do so.<sup>18</sup> From Bergson’s perspective, certain memories and art may, at times, impinge upon or arrest habituated perceptions, thereby interrupting automatic responses. When such a traversal takes place, the world no longer appears fixed or ordered in quite the way we had tended to presume. Suddenly, the potential for action not directed toward the expediency of utility and profit seems possible. But this zone is not just composed of indeterminate actions and potentialities. It also includes those same rigid or habituated recollections that limit responses. This double entanglement of potentiality with the often overpowering pressure of habit is what makes alternative perceptions and transgressive actions so infrequent, as Bergson is well aware. Similarly, deterritorialization (or becoming-minor) involves a detachment from habit, categorization, identity, totality, or any other preexisting forms, behaviors, or systems of being or understanding. But while such a detachment is always, in a sense, productive and singular, opening up unexpected avenues of perception, action, or conception, it is less effective if it brings about a total split. Deleuze and Guattari warn that such absolute deterritorializations or cracks often end in destruction or death (*Mille* 636). Thus, paradoxically, any truly effective deterritorialization remains doubly entangled, in part to the territory it happens to escape or detach from and, in addition, to the new territory it happens to become or assemble with.

In a well-known metaphor regarding the sister arts, Lessing compares painting and poetry to “Nachbarn” (129) [“neighbors”] (91) and utilizes the rhetoric of national frontiers and borders to argue that the limits between the two must be respected. While Lessing’s main argument is that painting and poetry must respect generic restrictions, he admits that “auf den äußersten Grenzen” (130) [“on their extreme frontiers”] (90), “kleinen Eingriffe” (130) [“slight aggressions”] (91) are inevitable. It is along this extreme zone that painting and poetry are, so to speak, deterritorialized. Despite the contrary thrust of Lessing’s argument, his begrudging acknowledgment of these inevitable border crossings implies that, even from his dualistic position, transgressive genres such as ekphrasis are unavoidable.

Whether understood in its ancient and broader sense as a vivid description of almost anything or in its later and more restricted sense as a

verbal representation of an art object, ekphrasis is fundamentally a trope of transmutation. Transmutation, from Deleuze and Guattari's transvaluative perspective, is the capacity of all forms of actualization to diverge and take shape along different lines; needless to say, deterritorialization is the mode of transmutation par excellence.<sup>19</sup> Ekphrasis makes explicit the potential of any form of representation to become something other than it happens to be at present; and it is precisely this characteristic of the trope that Assia Djébar develops so effectively in *L'Amour, la fantasia* and elsewhere. By transforming a visual representation into a verbal one, ekphrastic literature exposes, by making actual, the verbal component "virtual" to any visual representation.<sup>20</sup> Ekphrasis deterritorializes the senses by detaching hearing from its conventional association with poetry and making it do what is usually relegated to the sense of sight and vice versa. By scrambling representational orthodoxies, ekphrasis multiplies our sense of what any one form can do. For example, verbal representations can operate visually; visual representations can have verbal functions. Ekphrasis also draws attention to the powerful capacity of representations to constitute life (that is, organize sense) in ways that usually become ossified and unyielding but that nonetheless retain the potential to change.

One way to consider the ekphrastic process is as an exchange. On the one hand, exchange might seem an inadequate way to describe the kind of deterritorialization I am suggesting occurs in ekphrasis since it emphasizes the flattening, homogenizing, or equivalency of difference rather than its multiplication. From this perspective, painting and poetry are equated—one could say fixed or territorialized—as representations with exchangeable attributes or characteristics, and ekphrasis becomes the figure through which the exchange of some of these attributes occurs. Thus understood, the force of ekphrasis as a deterritorializing trope would be insignificant since it would do nothing to actually expand our sense of what representations do outside or in addition to the aesthetic circuit of exchange. But, on the other hand, exchange can also have a more productive dimension or potential since it involves the interaction of things that are normally considered distinct, separate, and unrelated. In Deleuze's sense of "une double-capture" ["a double-capture"] or "un double-vol"<sup>21</sup> ["a double-theft"],<sup>22</sup> what can occur in an exchange is not simply a quantitative trade of elements reduced to a single unit of measure but, rather, a qualitative transformation or deterritorialization that affects both sides and creates something altogether different in the process. Deleuze describes double-capture as "même pas quelque chose qui serait dans l'un, ou quelque chose qui serait dans

l'autre, même si ça devait s'échanger, se mélanger, mais quelque chose qui est enre les deux, hors des deux, et qui coule dans une autre direction" (13) ["not even something which would be in the one, or something which would be in the other, even if it had to be exchanged, be mingled, but something which is between the two, outside the two, and which flows in another direction"] (7). It is an encounter through which elements aren't so much traded as they are conjoined or coupled in unexpected ways and through which "un bloc asymétrique, une évolution a-parallèle" (13) ["an asymmetrical block, an a-parallel evolution"] (7) emerges.

In an ekphrastic exchange, then, representations transgress their traditional boundaries—suddenly, painting is not restricted to space and vision nor poetry (or literature more generally) to time and legibility. More importantly, however, the interaction between forms which occurs through such an exchange can produce effects that remain imperceptible when focus is limited to either one side or the other. This resonance not only produces a deterritorialized sense of each form respectively; it also creates or becomes something not entirely reducible to either. As Deleuze and Guattari iterate, and as we shall see in Djébar's case, the implications of such an exchange or double-capture always extend beyond the formal to the social and political.

### *Djébar's Ekphrastic Turn*

Ekphrasis is a trope Djébar uses as a method of tracing the complex relations that exist not only between France and Algeria but also and relatedly between the sexes, between cultures, between languages, between histories, and between classes. Ekphrasis provides Djébar with a suitable form through which to explore the complex, often paradoxical conjunctions and disjunctions that shaped the colonial encounter and which continue to constitute neocolonial life today. Djébar includes two types of ekphrasis in her work, neither of which are conventional. The first type is a verbal representation of an ekphrastic representation; the second, a verbal representation of music (or musical form). This section examines the deterritorializing effects and implications of what we might call Djébar's once removed ekphrastic practice on historical discourse and gender relations. The following section will discuss Djébar's musical ekphrasis as an attempt to invent a minor language. As we shall see, her musical ekphrasis intensifies the deterritorializing



effects of the first type of ekphrasis and constructs a divergent sense of the exchange that occurs between conflicting territories or, to use Lessing's term, domains.

In the Postface to *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement*, a collection of short stories published in 1980, Djebbar gives an ekphrastic account of both the 1834 and 1849 paintings by Eugène Delacroix after which her book is titled. As a chronicler of French colonialism, Delacroix freezes certain images of an Algerian harem.<sup>23</sup> Not surprisingly, Delacroix's frozen images of Algerian women correspond with the generally orientalist image of Algeria constituted through other representational forms (240). When it comes to representing what he sees, Delacroix works with "une fièvre de la main" (225) [a "feverish hand"] (134)<sup>24</sup> and "une ivresse du regard" (225) [an "intoxicated gaze"] (134). His "regard volé" (229) ["stolen glance"] (137) of the "exotic" forbidden harem yields a static "image pure" (225) ["pure image"] (134) of an orientalized Algeria which Djebbar's rearticulations attempt to put back in motion.

Similarly, in *L'Amour, la fantasia*, Djebbar declares that with regards to the occupation of Algeria, not unlike Delacroix, other chroniclers are also infected by "[u]ne fièvre scripturaire"<sup>25</sup> ["a feverish scribblomania"].<sup>26</sup> Of the first few months of occupation alone, Djebbar locates thirty-two French chronicles, including reports, memoirs, letters, and paintings (66). She notes, "Le conflit n'est pas encore engagé, la proie n'est même pas approchée, que déjà le souci d'illustrer cette campagne importe davantage" (17) ["The battle is not yet joined, they are not yet even in sight of their prey, but they are already anxious to ensure a pictorial record of the campaign"] (8). Painters, including Major Langlois and Eugène Fromentin, all contribute to the imaging of the colonial landscape. After the battle of Staouéli on the nineteenth of June 1830, the war artist Langlois pauses "pour dessiner des Turcs morts, 'la rage de la bravoure' imprimée encore sur leur visage" (29) ["to draw dead Turks, their faces still bearing the imprint of their frenzied valour"] (17). Djebbar informs us that he makes several drawings and preliminary sketches for a painting "destiné au Musée" (29) ["destined for the Museum"] (17). She records the words of Amable Matterer, first officer of the *Ville de Marseille*, regarding Langlois' work: "Le public amateur en aura des lithographies" (29) ["The public will be able to obtain lithographs"] (17). Thus visual images of Algerian defeat, passivity, brutality, savagery, fanaticism, and even courage begin to justify the conquest of Algeria to the French. These chronicles are circulated and consumed as true and unbiased reflections of colonial actualities. Djebbar's ekphrastic representations of the paint-

ings of Delacroix and others reanimate these frozen, pure images that have functioned historically as ideological weapons to oppress the colonized and to legitimate the colonial project. In her deterritorializing expressions, such representations come to signify something quite different from and even contrary to what they once did. For example, the shockingly violent actions of an Algerian woman who pulls out the heart of a French soldier with her bare hands and another who crushes her own child's head with a stone—as witnessed and recorded by Baron Barchou de Penhoën during the first clashes—are re-presented as heroic, courageous, and even maternal acts (30-32). Djébar also re-presents the apparent “religious fanaticism” attributed by J.T. Merle—man of letters, secretary to the GOC, and chronicler of the early battles—to an Algerian father who refuses to give French doctors permission to amputate his son's leg and save his life. As it turns out, it isn't because of his Muslim beliefs that the father withholds his permission but because the French military interpreters “se révèle incapable de traduire les premiers dialogues” (52) [“prove incapable of translating these first exchanges”] (33). The son dies because of French bungling not Muslim dogmatism. Yet, because Djébar's verbal transmutations occur in French, language of the colonizer, the relationship between the numerous male French chroniclers of colonial History—with a capital “H”—and the female Algerian spelaeologist of missing Algerian histories is not simply oppositional or antagonistic (113).<sup>27</sup> In Djébar's ekphrastic exchanges, the transmutation of forms becomes more than just an analogy for a triumphant Algerian subversion of French colonial authority or a replacement of one representation and its chain of ideological associations with another that might be more progressive or precise. Instead, Djébar's ekphrastic exchanges register the complex and paradoxical intermingling between forms and, by extension or analogy, between France and Algeria, which continues even after such transmutations occur. After all, as Djébar often points out, her narrative transmutation would not have been possible without these French accounts.

Djébar directly underscores the gendered nature of colonial images and documents. Part One of the novel is entitled “La prise de la ville ou L'amour s'écrit” [“The Capture of the City or Love-letters”]. Djébar reads French accounts of the initial encounter and invasion as love-letters which speak “d'une Algérie-femme impossible à apprivoiser” (84) [“of Algeria as a woman whom it is impossible to tame”] (57). Orientalist images of “La Ville Imprenable” (16) [“the Impregnable City”] (7) as a woman are recurrent and widespread. On the thirteenth of June 1830, day of the “[p]remier

face à face" (14) ["first confrontation"] (6) between the French colonizers and Algeria, first officer Matterer writes, "J'ai été le premier à voir la ville d'Alger comme un petit triangle blanc couché sur le penchant d'une montagne" (15) ["I was the first to catch sight of the city of Algiers, a tiny triangle on a mountain slope"] (6). There is no doubt that Matterer's description of Algeria is sexual in nature. Djebbar puts herself in the position of this French fleet encountering Algeria for the first time, seeing her as a woman shedding her veils, emerging as "un corps à l'abandon, sur un tapis de verdure assombrie" (14) ["a figure sprawling on a carpet of muted greens"] (6).

Yet Djebbar is also carefully attentive to the correspondence between the masculinism of colonial discourse and the sexism of Algerian customs and traditions, and she links the two.<sup>28</sup> For example, in Part One, she intersperses four sections that recount pivotal events of the first year of the French invasion based on the many documents, letters, and reports she draws upon with four other sections that deal with issues pertaining to the oppression of Algerian girls and women—including segregation, veiling, cloistering, imposed immobility, and forced silence. She reappropriates the orientalist metaphor comparing Algeria to a woman constructed by French historical discourse by using it to represent the inferior position that Algerian women have been forced to occupy as a result of Algerian and Muslim traditions. She states: "on peut se rendre compte qu'à l'intérieur de cet Orient livré à lui-même, l'image de la femme n'est pas perçue autrement: par le père, par l'époux et, d'une façon plus trouble, par le frère et le fils" (*Femmes* 230) ["we have been able to realize that within this Orient that has been delivered unto itself, the image of woman is still perceived no differently, be it by the father, by the husband, and, more troublesome still, by the brother and the son" (*Women* 138)]. Like a colonized Algeria, Algerian women have been (and continue to be) fixed and objectified by masculinist representations and discourses. Because she establishes this conjunction, Djebbar's ekphrastic representations have implications that extend beyond the deterritorializing of standard colonial History. Djebbar's ekphrasis is at the same time a deterritorialization of sexism within the Algerian milieu, as well as an expression of the paradoxical entanglement of both issues together.

In the first two parts of *L'Amour, la fantasia*, Djebbar traces the histories of Algerian women hidden in the interstices of French colonial representations. She rewrites and reshapes these histories by placing special emphasis on what to the French are marginal details. An offhanded comment here and a casual observation there become revealing images in Djebbar's often plaintive elaborations. Djebbar singles out the artist Eugène Fromentin as

“le peintre qui, au long de mon vagabondage, m’a accompagnée en seconde silhouette paternelle” (313) [“the painter who has accompanied me throughout my wanderings like a second father figure”] (226). Yet, significantly, it isn’t Fromentin’s paintings Djébar describes but, rather, his verbal rendering of colonial events in his account, *Un été au Sahara* (“A Summer in the Sahara”). She surveys his verbal accounts as though they were paintings and represents his invisible paintings verbally in what can be described as an ekphrasis once removed.<sup>29</sup> Djébar’s verbal representations of Fromentin’s missing paintings exchange absence for presence while nonetheless acknowledging the necessity of this very absence or invisibility to the success of her project. Invisibility offers a degree of flexibility that might otherwise have been restricted by or limited to the existing visual image. Fromentin’s invisible paintings permit Djébar to create ekphrases in addition to his that frame details either marginal to or absent from Fromentin’s own representations.

For example, in *Un été au Sahara*, Fromentin writes about two naylettes (dancers or prostitutes) called Fatma and Meriem, killed during the siege of Laghouat in 1853. Djébar, in turn, writes about how she told his story to Lla Zohra, a peasant woman who fought in the Algerian war of independence. Djébar translates the written French words into an oral Arabic even as she notes that Fromentin’s written words had been initially recounted to him orally by a lieutenant, his friend. So a once oral French account, written in French, is then told again orally, this time in Arabic, only to be republished, with changes, in French. At first, Djébar quotes directly from Fromentin, who quotes the lieutenant; but then she begins to intersperse his words with her own, and she also includes Lla Zohra’s interruptions in her retelling. The polyphony of Djébar’s representation unhinges the guise of univocity assumed by colonial History and unveils the impossibility of any such claims to authority. Fromentin’s text opens with the lieutenant’s words. The lieutenant mentions a house where there lived “deux Naylettes fort jolies” (235) [“two very pretty *Naylettes*”] (165). Djébar immediately begins to invent a history for Fatma and Meriem in an attempt to explain why these two young girls have become prostitutes. Djébar’s narration picks up where Fromentin’s leaves off. She adds explicit details and visceral descriptions which emphasize the rapacious nature of the naylettes’ murder by French soldiers. Fromentin, the painter, makes no actual painting of this scene, but he depicts it in words as though ekphrastically reconstructing one of his own paintings. About this missing painting Djébar states, “Fromentin ne dessinera jamais le tableau de cette mort des danseuses. . . .

Comme si la main de Fromentin avait précédé son pinceau” (237) [“Fromentin was never to paint the picture of the death of those dancers....As if Fromentin’s pen had taken precedence over his paint-brush”] (167). Yet his verbal representation, while certainly not central to French colonial History, makes visible two young women at the fringes of Algerian society who otherwise would have disappeared from the historical account forever. By foregrounding such marginal images of Algerian women, Djebbar actualizes what has for so long remained an indeterminate sliver of potential visibility in Fromentin’s writing. Algerian women reappear in an ekphrastic exchange that verbally makes visible what has been mostly invisible to colonial and patriarchal perceptions.

Through his paintings, journal entries, and books, Djebbar follows Fromentin’s lead and resurrects images of those who have been missing from dominant discourses including the naylettes, Haoua (a woman murdered by her rejected lover during a fantasia), and an anonymous Algerian woman.<sup>30</sup> Fromentin offers Djebbar “une main inattendue, celle d’une inconnue qu’il n’a jamais pu dessiner” (313) [“an unexpected hand—the hand of an unknown woman he was never able to draw”] (226). Again, Djebbar takes Fromentin’s invisible painting of “un détail sinistre” (313) [“one sinister detail”] (226) encountered in Laghouat and transforms it ekphrastically into a verbal image with deterritorializing potential. Djebbar writes, “au sortir de l’oasis que le massacre, six mois après, empuantit, Fromentin ramasse, dans la poussière, une main coupée d’Algérienne anonyme. Il la jette ensuite sur son chemin” (313) [“as he is leaving the oasis which six months after the massacre is still filled with its stench, Fromentin picks up out of the dust the severed hand of an anonymous Algerian woman. He throws it down again in his path”] (226). Djebbar transmutes this marginal detail into an offering she cannot turn down: “je me saisis de cette main vivante, main de la mutilation et du souvenir et je tente de lui faire porter le ‘qalam’” (313) [“I seize on this living hand, hand of mutilation and of memory, and I attempt to bring it the *qalam*” (pen)] (226). Fromentin’s unpainted image becomes, in Djebbar’s verbal transmutation, a symbol of her attempt to make legible those features of Algerian history he and others could never draw. Her ekphrastic verbal renderings deterritorialize the one-dimensional pure image of Algeria French representations, such as Delacroix’s and Fromentin’s, have managed to freeze. By foregrounding the fragments and details occupying the margins of her French sources, Djebbar excavates alternative narratives of history. At the same time, because her representations of Algerian women would not have been possible without

these colonial representations, her once removed ekphrases utilize the same ekphrastic form (a verbal representation of a visually imagined representation) and are produced in the same language (French) as her colonial sources, perhaps as a way to mark her indebtedness to them. As we shall see, however, Djébar's shift from visual to aural sense undermines the authority of any masculinist discourse—whether colonial or patriarchal—reliant upon the objectifying power of the gaze.

### *L'Amour, la fantasia as Musical Ekphrasis*

In *L'Amour, la fantasia*, sounds represent the unwritten oral histories of Algerians, especially of Algerian women. If the narrative of History does not adequately represent Algerians, it is at least in part because the French are deaf to the sounds of Arabic, Berber, and the Algerian oral tradition. Djébar insists that her role is to listen to and register these long-ignored sounds. She must “*laisser les chuchotements immémoriaux remonter, géologie sanguinolente*” (69) [*lend an ear to the whispers that rise up from time out of mind, study this geology stained red with blood*] (46). It becomes Djébar's prerogative to represent these sounds by lending her voice to those who have been forcibly silenced or have simply remained unheard. But it is specifically her representation of sound as music that creates a deterritorializing line of flight out of rigid colonial and patriarchal orders of perception and understanding. As a musical ekphrasis, *L'Amour, la fantasia* invents a new language and form through which to present missing fragments left out of dominant discourses and orthodox representations. Djébar declares, “*Sur l'aire de la dépossession, je voudrais pouvoir chanter*” (202) [*On the territory of dispossession, I would that I could sing*] (142). Her autobiographical novel realizes this aspiration.

From Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, compared to painting, “*la musique ait une force déterritorialisante beaucoup plus grande, beaucoup plus intense et collective à la fois, et la voix une puissance d'être déterritorialisée beaucoup plus grande aussi*” (*Mille* 371) [*Music seems to have a much stronger deterritorializing force, at once more intense and much more collective, and the voice seems to have a much greater power of deterritorialization*] (302). Djébar's passion for music, especially ancient Algerian folksongs, is clearly evident in the structure and thematic of her two films, *La nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua* (1978) and *La zerda et les*

*chants de l'oubli* (1982).<sup>31</sup> As critics have noted and as Djébar herself has stated, it was only after the production of her two films that she was able to go back to writing novels, which she hadn't done for over a decade.<sup>32</sup> After her films, Djébar's writing starts to take shape as a kind of musical ekphrasis, transferring the deterritorializing force of music and the voice to her written texts. Réda Bensmaïa has argued, "The universe that *La Noubia* invites us to contemplate is offered not as a closed or fully realized world but rather as a world in progress, in gestation. In other words, this universe is not a totality that preexists the elements that constitute it; rather, it is an apparently chance juxtaposition or dissemination of dispersed fragments (of [hi]stories and events) in search of a unity to come (or to be created)" (84). In her novel, *L'Amour, la fantasia*, as in her films, music provides the most enabling form through which to construct and express this sense of a universe impossible to fix in place or freeze in time. Advancing this sense of the universe in writing becomes Djébar's way to actualize those virtual lines of becoming that have remained mostly imperceptible to colonial, neocolonial, patriarchal, and traditional sensibilities.

In *Musical Ekphrasis*, Siglind Bruhn describes three forms the verbal transmutation of music can take, and Djébar's novel reflects all three. Bruhn suggests that a written text may "thematize" music by "transforming a musical event into something akin to its verbal equivalent" (82, 94). Djébar's title immediately alerts readers to the musical dimension or thematic of the novel. The entire text can be understood as a musical ekphrasis since it attempts to represent a musical fantasia.<sup>33</sup> The epigraph to the third part of the novel is Beethoven's instruction for his Sonatas 1 and 2 (opus 27)—"*Quasi una fantasia*" (159). A fantasia is usually a contrapuntal composition, and, as we shall see, it is this double shifting that is especially conveyed through Djébar's text. Like a musical piece, Part Three is divided into five "Movements" and ends with a "Finale." The final sub-section is entitled "Air de nay" ["Air on a *Nay*" (an ancient flute)]. Along with these direct references to music are various other allusions scattered throughout the text. The initial encounter between the French and Algerians is called "une ouverture d'opéra" (14) ["the overture"] (6). The early interactions are described in explicitly musical terms: "Les guerriers s'observent de loin, se servent mutuellement d'appeau, tentent de synchroniser leur rythme meurtrier" (26) ["The warriors eye each other from afar, serving as mutual decoys in an attempt to synchronize the tempo of every movement that foretokens mutual slaughter"] (15). She goes on: "une rupture de tons se manifeste dès l'ouverture" (26) ["after the overture, a change of tune"] (15).

With regards to Bedouin resistance she states that “l’allégresse du défi s’y mêle, puis culmine dans une crête de cris suraigus” (27) [it is “accompanied by jubilant cries of defiance that culminate in a crescendo of blood-curdling shrieks”] (15). Djebbar’s effort to represent Algerian histories becomes a “song” she is composing (63, 88, 202). The sounds of her ancestors “assurent l’orchestration nécessaire” (302) [“provide . . . orchestral accompaniment”] (217). She declares, “Ils m’interpellent, ils me soutiennent pour qu’au signal donné, mon chant solitaire démarre” (302) [“They summon me, encouraging my faltering steps, so that at the given signal my solitary song takes off”] (217). Djebbar’s attempt is not to write a straightforward story in French but rather to compose a piece of verbal music that captures the complexities of the colonial encounter. By using French to put together in aural terms what has conventionally been held together by visual sense, Djebbar manages to sidestep some of the ideological and affective pitfalls of using the oppressor’s language.

Bruhn also suggests that a verbal musical ekphrasis may “imitat[e] the sound, the typical surface patterns, or the aesthetic self-sufficiency of music” by emphasizing the rhythmic aspect of language (82). The rhythmic quality of language is certainly something Djebbar’s text accentuates. Djebbar transmutes the conventional cadence and sound of French by intersecting it with Arabic and Berber, creating what Deleuze and Guattari call “une langue mineure” (*Kafka* 43) [“a minor language”] (23). Djebbar proclaims, “Je cohabite avec la langue française” (297) [“I cohabit with the French language”] (213). She admits that she has stolen the enemy’s language (302). Out of this theft or, to use Deleuze’s term, double-capture, emerges a minor French with deterritorializing or transvaluative implications. Toward the end of *L’Amour, la fantasia*, Djebbar writes that French “est passée des conquérants aux assimilés; s’est assouplie après que les mots ont enveloppé les cadavres du passé” (300-1) [“has passed from the conquerors to the assimilated people; has grown more flexible after the corpses of the past have been enshrouded in words”] (216). Djebbar demonstrates the flexibility of her stolen French by using it to tell the stories of the Algerian rural women who fought against the occupier. In Part Three, in the eight sub-sections entitled “Voix” [“Voice”] or “Voix de veuve” [“A Widow’s Voice”], Lila Zohra and Cherifa narrate their accounts of the war of independence uninterrupted and in the first person. But because their Arabic words are translated into French, Djebbar is at least virtually present in the narrative. The audience is not allowed to forget that these women’s words are mediated despite their seeming immediacy. At the same time, Djebbar’s written French



account is always haunted by an oral Arabic and Berber. Such double-edged, virtual shards interrupt the flow of the narrative and alert the reader to the complicated linguistic history of colonialism.

Djebar's text manages to deterritorialize French through the verbalization of musical attributes such as rhythm and tempo. For example, Djebar does not attempt to smooth over the awkwardness of the rural women's synecdochic designation of the French as "la France," which occurs throughout their verbal accounts: "La France arriva jusqu'à nous, nous habitons à la zaouia Sidi M'hamed Aberkane . . . La France est venue et elle nous a brûlés" (167) ["France' came right up to our doorsteps; we were living at the Sidi M'hamed Aberkane *zaouia* . . . 'France' came and burnt us out"] (117); "la France fit faire une poussée en avant à ses troupes" (245) ["France' sent her troops up into the hills"] (173); "La France, continuait à multiplier les gardes" (264) ["France' kept on increasing the number of guards"] (187); "La France se mit à monter quasiment matin et soir chez nous" (264) ["France' began to come up the mountain to our place nearly every morning and evening"] (187).<sup>34</sup> In addition to the awkwardness introduced by the insistent repetition of "la France," Djebar's inclusion of untranslated Arabic words also intrudes upon the rhythms of conventional French. When she includes words such as *zaouia*, *qalam*, *jihad*, *Moujahidine*, *haïk*, *naylette*, *medresa*, and *taleb*, to list just a few selected at random, Djebar slows down the tempo of reading for those unfamiliar with Arabic and thereby subtly reshapes the rhythm of French itself. Djebar's repetition of Islamic idioms, which become oddly prominent in French, similarly affects the rhythm and tempo of the colonizer's language by interrupting conventional syntactical patterns. For example, the rural women whose stories Djebar chronicles often repeat the following Islamic phrases: "que Dieu ait son âme" (168) ["may the Lord have mercy on his soul"] (118); "Je me suis fiée à la protection de Dieu!" (172) ["I put my trust in God's protection!"] (120); "Remets-toi à Dieu" (210) ["Put yourself in the hands of God"] (146); "Dieu a bien fait!" (211) ["That's God's doing!"] (147); "pour Dieu et son Prophète" (215) ["in the name of God and his Prophet"] (150); "Louange à Dieu!" (264) ["Praise be to God!"] (187). By translating these frequently used Islamic idioms into French, Djebar draws attention both to the brutal events that have forced such linguistic transmutations to occur and to the determined Algerian resistance to colonial domination. Djebar's stealing or capturing of French is an inherently violent and historically loaded act that echoes the violence done to her land and language. Djebar's minor usage of a major language interrupts habituated utilizations and unhinges familiar

perceptions or associations perpetuated by such uses, including the moral and legal authority of those in power. Paradoxically, however, because French has also been for Djébar “d’embrasure pour le spectacle du monde et de ses richesses” (180) [“a casement opening on the spectacle of the world and all its riches”] (126), using it, albeit in transmuted, deterritorialized form, becomes her contribution toward the construction of a less sexist, more egalitarian Algerian community to come. By forcing French to perform outside its habituated bounds and to follow unfamiliar rhythms, Algerians, including Djébar and the women warriors she quotes, transform the language of the enemy into a medium with the capacity to arrange an altogether different composition.

Bruhn also contends that a verbal musical ekphrasis may “emulat[e] a compositional technique or type of structural organization typical for music” (82). It is at this formal level that Djébar’s text is most convincingly a musical ekphrasis. As already mentioned, the fantasia is a contrapuntal musical form that is essentially double (but which may also be plural). The main melody is accompanied by one or more other melodies with which it combines or diverges according to certain rules. Counterpoint in music involves listening to more than one musical line of development at once. Furthermore it entails listening for the relationships that grow between the two or more musical lines. As a fantasia, Djébar’s novel establishes numerous contrapuntal doubles that are best apprehended in relation to each other. For example, in the first two parts of her text, an autobiographical chapter is followed by an historical account of Algeria, followed by another autobiographical section, and so on. Read together, in counterpoint, as it were, these autobiographical and historical chapters reflect on each other so that the story of one Algerian woman begins to make sense only within the context of Algeria’s colonial history. Djébar’s personal childhood stories—about her studying French, her non-cloistered adolescence, her friendship with the French policeman’s daughter, and the non-traditional love between her parents—are presented as outcomes of a colonial past. The very first paragraph presents a few of the paradoxical connections (or contrapuntal musical lines) her novel will develop: “Fillette arabe allant pour la première fois à l’école, un matin d’automne, main dans la main du père. Celui-ci, un fez sur la tête, la silhouette haute et droite dans son costume européen, porte un cartable, il est instituteur à l’école française. Fillette arabe dans un village du Sahel algérien” (11) [“A little Arab girl going to school for the first time, one autumn morning, walking hand in hand with her father. A tall erect figure in a fez and a European suit, carrying a bag of school books.

He is a teacher at the French primary school. A little Arab girl in a village in the Algerian Sahel"] (3). By juxtaposing the fez and the European suit, the Arab girl and the French primary school, the father and daughter, Djebbar makes concurrent seemingly discrepant elements and immediately introduces the novel's contrapuntal form.

Part Three complicates this structure even further as her autobiographical accounts are interspersed with the voices of Algerian women recounting the war of independence, the voices of cloistered Algerian city women, and more written French accounts. What starts out as a conventional autobiography, the story of a little girl going to school, becomes an expression of collective female Algerian presence. Djebbar's subjective "I" becomes a collective "we." In addition to these sections (or musical lines) are poetic chapters printed completely in italics that can be read as Djebbar's autobiographical voice. In these italicized chapters with titles that refer to sound or the absence of sound, the various lines of development are brought together and are allowed to resonate.<sup>35</sup> The italicized sections in the novel construct an alternative sense of autobiography, biography, history, and fiction by allowing exchanges to occur between genres conventionally held apart. Djebbar reflects on her project, on her position between multiple forces, on her relationship to language and sound, on what she has learned through French documents, on what Algerian women around her have revealed, on whether or not it is possible to resolve the dilemma of her own and her people's colonial and patriarchal experiences. In the last italicized chapter, "Soliloque" ["Soliloquy"], Djebbar struggles to make sense of the fragments, the images, the voices she has captured and expressed in French writing: "*Un thrène diffus s'amorce à travers les claires de l'oubli, amour d'aurore. Et les aurores se rallument parce que j'écris*" (303) ["*The first strains of a dirge well up, penetrating the barriers of oblivion, at once a plaintive song and song of love in the first light of dawn. And every dawn is brighter because I write*"] (218). She thus envisions her novel as both a song of mourning and a song of love; but it is, significantly, because this music is transmuted to writing that the dawn is brighter. It is in the exchange between music and writing—through the deterritorializing force of each form in relation to the other—that the possibility of a more flexible world can be imagined by Djebbar.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to the autobiography-history pair, Djebbar's text couples France and Algeria; men and women; city women and rural women; French and Arabic/Berber; stasis and movement; veiling and unveiling; war and love; and the written and oral. Just as autobiography and history come to mean something different once they are presented in counterpoint, the same

holds true for these other pairs. In juxtaposition, each of the various sides resonate in relation, and through this resonance emerges a transformed or deterritorialized sense of both. French is undeniably the colonizer's language; however, in counterpoint with an Arabic that has denied women use of the first-person pronoun, it embodies the possibility of freedom even as it remains a tool of oppression: "Quand j'écris et lis la langue étrangère: il voyage, il va et vient dans l'espace subversif, malgré les voisins et les matrones soupçonneuses; pour peu, il s'envolerait!" (260-261) ["When I write and read the foreign language, my body travels far in subversive space, in spite of the neighbors and suspicious matrons; it would not need much for it to take wing and fly away!"] (184). Djébar's contrapuntal form highlights numerous other such parallels and paradoxes that colonial documents, accounts, historical narratives, and paintings do not manage to express explicitly. With regards to thinking and reading contrapuntally, Edward Said states: "[W]e must be able to think through and interpret together experiences that are discrepant, each with its particular agenda and pace of development, its own internal formations, its internal coherence and system of external relationships, all of them coexisting and interacting with others."<sup>37</sup> He adds, "In juxtaposing experiences with each other, in letting them play off each other, it is my interpretative political aim (in the broadest sense) to make concurrent those views and experiences that are ideologically and culturally closed to each other and that attempt to distance or suppress other views and experiences" (32-33). It is, I would argue, precisely this effect that is achieved by Djébar's contrapuntal form. In bringing together doubles conventionally held apart, Djébar utilizes the musical form of counterpoint to disrupt univocity and to advance in its stead a less static "polyphony" of sorts (Said 51). Said explains that there are two forms of historiography, "linear and subsuming," on the one hand, "contrapuntal and often nomadic," on the other (xxv). Djébar's project—which she describes as an intervention with "la mémoire nomade et la voix coupée" (*L'Amour* 313) ["nomad memory and intermittent voice"] (226)—constructs the latter. Djébar's contrapuntal method does not fix either side, nor does it erase the space that exists between one side and the other. Rather, her contrapuntal form reveals that the vertiginous abyss that separates the sides is navigable and provides a space through which an asymmetrical block of life may evolve.

Djébar's musical ekphrasis challenges Murray Krieger's "ekphrastic principle" because it is through rhythm and contrapuntal movement rather than arrest that *L'Amour, la fantasia's* ekphrastic dimension surfaces (266).

The ekphrastic exchange between the domains of language and music deterritorializes generic orthodoxies by scrambling habituated expectations about what representational forms can or should do. Along Lessing's extreme frontiers or within Bergson's zone of indetermination are produced alternative forms that possess the capacity to transmute automatic perceptions and conceptions about history, language, and identity. In Djebbar's text, ekphrasis expresses some of the conjunctions and disjunctions constituted through the colonial encounter between France and Algeria. Her verbal transmutations of orientaling images, such as those by Delacroix, Langlois, and Fromentin, depict historical events from a double perspective. Djebbar's ekphrastic representations register the inevitable hatred and sense of injustice she feels as an Algerian whose country has suffered under a colonialism legitimated in part by such images. Simultaneously, her ekphrastic representations express an unexpected love or at least gratefulness toward these images which have made possible her meticulous construction of missing histories. But it is especially as a musical ekphrasis that *L'Amour, la fantasia* captures the productive and transformative aspects of these and other paradoxical entanglements. Djebbar's verbal music laments a past that has remained invisible and has gone unheard for generations. At the same time and perhaps more importantly, Djebbar's song actualizes and even celebrates the indeterminate potentialities unleashed by a past composed anew.

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### Notes

1. W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1994) 152.

2. Mack Smith, *Literary Realism and the Ekphrastic Tradition* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1995) 246-249. Smith discusses the role of the "ekphrastic musical phrase" in Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*.

3. Siglind Bruhn, *Musical Ekphrasis: Composers Responding to Poetry and Painting* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon P, 2000) 82-104. The bulk of Bruhn's massive study focuses on the musical representation of visual or verbal representations. However, a brief section of Bruhn's text discusses the reverse phenomenon—visual or verbal representations of music. My essay is aligned with this latter sense of musical ekphrasis.

4. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux: Capitalisme et schizophrénie* (Paris: Minuit, 1980) 377. Deleuze and Guattari's notion of deterritorialization and its relation to double movement will be discussed shortly.

5. For an analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of music see Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2003) 1-76. For a recent

collection of essays addressing the relevance of Deleuze's thought to music see Ian Buchanan and Marcel Swiboda, eds., *Deleuze and Music* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2004).

6. A number of fine studies have analyzed Djébar's identic and aesthetic dilemma of residing between cultures and writing between languages. See Michèle E. Vialet, "Between Sound and Fury: Assia Djébar's Poetics of 'L'entre-deux-langues,'" *Symposium* 56.3 (2002): 149-162; John Erickson, "Women's Voices and Woman's Space in Assia Djébar's *L'Amour, la fantasia*," *Islam and Postcolonial Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 37-65; Anne Donadey, "Rekindling the Vividness of the Past: Assia Djébar's Films and Fiction," *World Literature Today* 70.4 (1996): 885-892; and Valérie Budig-Markin, "Writing and Filming the Cries of Silence," *World Literature Today* 70.4 (1996): 893-904. My essay also deals with the problematic of the in-between, so central to studies on Djébar's work, but focuses specifically on the function and effects of musical ekphrasis in relation to this issue.

7. Salman Rushdie's use of conventional ekphrasis in *Midnight's Children* is discussed by Neil Ten Kortenaar. See his "Postcolonial Ekphrasis: Salman Rushdie Gives the Finger Back to the Empire," *Contemporary Literature* 38.2 (1997): 232-259. Also, see Michael Trussler, "Literary Artifacts: Ekphrasis in the Short Fiction of Donald Barthelme, Salman Rushdie, and John Edgar Wideman," *Contemporary Literature* 41.2 (2000): 252-290.

8. G.E. Lessing, *Laokoön: oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1964) 129.

9. Lessing, *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, trans. Edward Allen McCormick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1984) 5. This translation will be used for all subsequent quotes from *Laokoön*, with pages indicated parenthetically.

10. Murray Krieger, *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1992) 266. Krieger's 1967 essay, "Ekphrasis and the Still Movement of Poetry; or *Laokoön* Revisited," is included as an appendix to his book.

11. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986) 98.

12. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1987) 509. This translation will be used for all subsequent quotes from *Mille Plateaux*, with pages indicated parenthetically.

13. For an analysis of Deleuze's theories of literature see Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2003). For a collection of essays addressing the relevance of Deleuze's thought to literature see Ian Buchanan and John Marks, eds., *Deleuze and Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2000).

14. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka. Pour une littérature mineure* (Paris: Minuit, 1975) 29.

15. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986) 16. This translation will be used for all subsequent quotes from *Kafka*, with pages indicated parenthetically.

16. Henri Bergson, *Matière et Mémoire* (Genève: Editions Albert Skira, 1946) 34.

17. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone, 1991) 32. This translation will be used for all subsequent quotes from *Matière*, with pages indicated parenthetically.

18. In *Matière et Mémoire*, Bergson also describes this indeterminate zone as "une zone obscure" (87) ["zone of obscurity"] (85); while in *L'Évolution créatrice*, he describes it as "une zone des virtualités" (187) ["zone of virtualities"]. See Bergson, *L'Évolution créatrice* (Genève: Editions Albert Skira, 1945) 187.

19. For further work on Deleuze that addresses the transvaluative power of language see Paul Trembath, "The Ethology of Reading," *Strategies* 15.1 (2002): 43-70.

20. In Deleuze's Bergsonian sense, virtuality has to do with the capacity of life to actualize along alternative lines of becoming than those dominating the existing order. Unlike the possible, the virtual is real; although it is often ignored or overlooked since it does not accord with our habituated sense of the world. See Deleuze, *Le bergsonisme* (Paris: Quadrige/PUF, 1966).

21. Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues* (Paris: Flammarion, 1996) 13.
22. Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia UP, 1987) 7. This translation will be used for all subsequent quotes from *Dialogues*, with pages indicated parenthetically.
23. Assia Djébar, *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002) 224.
24. Djébar, *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment*, trans. Marjolijn de Jager (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1992) 134. This translation will be used for all subsequent quotes from *Femmes d'Alger*, with pages indicated parenthetically.
25. Djébar, *L'Amour, la fantasia* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1995) 66.
26. Djébar, *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*, trans. Dorothy S. Blair (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1993) 44. This translation will be used for all subsequent quotes from *L'Amour, la fantasia*, with pages indicated parenthetically. It should be noted, however, that Blair actually translates Djébar's "[u]ne fièvre scripturaire" as "a veritable scribblomania" and not a "feverish scribblomania." I have replaced Blair's "veritable" with "feverish" in my quote since I would like to highlight the subtle link Djébar establishes between the scribblomania of the officers in the first year of occupation and Delacroix's "feverish hand" (*Women* 134).
27. For a discussion of Djébar's ambivalence concerning her use of the enemy's language see Soheila Ghaussy, "A Stepmother Tongue: 'Feminine Writing' in Assia Djébar's *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*," *World Literature Today* 68.3 (1994): 457-462.
28. Mildred Mortimer discusses Djébar's attempt to establish parallels between the oppression of Algerian women both by colonialism and by Maghrebian patriarchy, as well as her effort to resist this dual oppression through a reappropriation of the gaze in her work. See Mortimer, "Reappropriating the Gaze in Assia Djébar's Fiction and Film," *World Literature Today* 70.4 (1996): 859-866.
29. Fromentin's representations are examples of what John Hollander labels "notional ekphrasis." Hollander distinguishes two types of ekphrases: "actual ekphrasis" and "notional ekphrasis." Actual ekphrases represent recognizable and identifiable art objects. Notional ekphrases portray non-existent works of art as if they really do exist. Djébar's ekphrastic passages are representations of Fromentin's notional ekphrases which is why I describe them as being once removed. See Hollander, *The Gazer's Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995) 4-5.
30. The title of Fromentin's journal covering his stay in Algeria, *Chronique de l'Absent* ["Chronicle of the Missing"], reflects the failure of the colonial attempt to write, paint, and chronicle Algeria into discursive existence. The implication of Fromentin's title is that Algerians remain fundamentally missing or absent from colonial perception despite his own and others' best efforts. Djébar's transmutation of these efforts becomes her attempt to intervene—"Lors j'interviens, la mémoire nomade et la voix coupée" (313) ["And then I intervene, with nomad memory and intermittent voice"] (226)—and thus to render the missing at least textually present.
31. For an analysis of *La Noubia* as a "musical suite" see Réda Bensmaïa, "Assia Djébar's *La Noubia des femmes du Mont Chenoua*: Introduction to the Cinematic Fragment," *Experimental Nations: Or, the Invention of the Maghreb*, trans. Alyson Waters (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003) 83-97.
32. Clarisse Zimra, afterword, *Women of Algiers* 183.
33. Both Dorothy S. Blair, in the introduction to her translation of *L'Amour, la fantasia*, and Winifred Woodhull have noted the connection between the musical form of the fantasia and the structure of Djébar's novel. My study similarly foregrounds the musical features of Djébar's novel, though focusing specifically on their ekphrastic implications. See Woodhull, "Wild Femininity and Historical Counter-memory," *Transfigurations of the Maghreb: Feminism, Decolonization, and Literatures* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1993) 50-87.
34. It should be noted that, unlike the English translation, the original French does not include quotes around "La France" nor are Arabic words such as "zaouia" italicized. Further-

more, while the translation provides a glossary of unfamiliar words, the original does not. By supplying marks and tools to assist the reader, the English reduces some of the awkwardness introduced by Djébar into the French language as well as the sense of discomfort a reader might experience as a result.

35. Part One ends with an italicized section called "*Biffure*" ["*Deletion*"]. Part Two concludes with the second italicized section called "*Sistre*" ["*Sistrum*"]. Each of the five movements in Part Three includes one italicized section. In order, they are titled: "*Clameur*" ["*Clamour*"]; "*Murmures*" ["*Murmurs*"]; "*Chuchotements*" ["*Whispers*"]; "*Conciliabules*" ["*Dialogues*"]; and "*Soliloque*" ["*Soliloquy*"].

36. Given the rise of anti-feminism and anti-secularism in many parts of the Middle East and North Africa today, Djébar's progressive images of a community to come provide an encouraging, though virtual, counterpoint or counter-articulation.

37. Edward W. Saïd, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994) 32.



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