

*Hospital geocriticism in Tombéza and La Malédiction  
(The Curse) of Rachid MIMOUNI: From individual  
disappointment to social disintegration*

جيولوجية المستشفى في تومبيزا ولعنة رشيد ميموني: من خيبة

الأمل الفردية إلى الانحلال الاجتماعي

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**Abstract:**

This article is a geocritical study of the hospital in the work of Rachid Mimouni. Starting from the concepts of referentiality and spatial polysensoriality, we propose to examine the modes of representation of this universe and their symbolism in both novels Tombéza and La Malédiction. It is a question of seeing the anchoring and the topology of the hospital then its individual, social and historical allegory.

**Keywords:** Spatiality; geocriticism; referentiality; designed space; lived space; space of representation; representation of space; violence; domination.

ملخص:

هذا المقال عبارة عن دراسة للمستشفى في أعمال رشيد ميموني، انطلاقاً من مفهومي الإحالة وتعدد الحيز المكاني، نقترح دراسة أنماط تمثيل هذا الكون ورمزيهما في كليهما روايات، إنها مسألة رؤية الإرساء وطوبولوجيا المستشفى ثم قصة رمزية فردية واجتماعية وتاريخية. الهدف من هذا المقال هو الدراسة الجيوقنقدية للمستشفى في روايتي "

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تومبيرا" و" اللعنة" للكاتب رشيد ميموني من خلال تصوير المكان المقصود دراسته وتحديد مكوناته وصفاته الأساسية من حيث المقومات الهندسية والبنوية، كذلك ماهية العلاقات الشخصية بين الأفراد المتفاعلة في هذا المكان .

كاتب النص صور المستشفى كمثال مصغر للمجتمع الجزائري وأبرز مختلف طبقاته الاجتماعية وعلاقات السيطرة والخضوع، العنف اللفظي والجسدي الذي يتعرض له قاطنوا المستشفى بمختلف رتبهم أطباء او مرضى كانوا كلهم ضحايا الانهيار والتفكك الاجتماعي الناتج عن غياب اشكال التطور الاقتصادي الفكري في البلاد الذي أدى الى صدام أيديولوجي نجم عنه إرهاب دموي وكان المستشفى مسرحا أساسيا للأحداث الدامية في فترة التسعينات.

كلمات مفتاحية: المرجعية، التمثيل، العنف، السيطرة، الهوية، الإرهاب، الانهيار الاجتماعي، المستشفى، صدام أيديولوجي.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since 1980, space has been the privileged object of study of the social sciences and humanities, until then abandoned in favour of temporality. This spatial turn or Turn Space according to Edward Soja: *"serves to qualify on the one hand the new attention paid by the human and social sciences in general to the spatial conditions of cultural, social and historical processes (...). On the other hand, it indicates a qualitative leap in research.* » (Besse, Clerc, & Robic , 2017) In literature, Maurice Blanchot began the reflection on spatiality with his book entitled *the literary space* (Blanchot, 1955) where he questions the aspects of the literary text (textual spatiality).

Henri Mitterrand published in 1980 *Le discours du roman /The discourse of the novel* (Mitterrand, 1980) which offers a semiotic study of space based on its sensitive attributes (smell, sight) and its dimensions (verticality, polarity): "on the one hand, space is included in the universe told (...), on the other hand, it is the subject of an explicit or implicit discourse, part of a conception, a vision" (Mitterrand, 1980, pp. 189-212). This approach to space corresponds to the polysensory analysis proposed later by Bertrand Westphal.

Several literary approaches to space subsequently emerged such as:

-the literary geography of Michel Collot (2014): "*Literary geography is based on the very general assumption that there are necessarily relationships between any human work and the terrestrial environment in which it is located (...) the geography of literature can designate two very different things: the study of space in literature and that of literature in space*". (Collot, 2014, p. 70)

- Ecopedics that emerged in the United States of America by its founder studies: "*literary practices that echo the environmental issue in its multiple dimensions — social, political, ethical, philosophical, aesthetic, scientific. Represented in literary studies, under the name of ecocriticism, since the 1970s in the United States*". (Jaquier, 2015)

*Geocriticism, on the other hand, was designed in the 2000s in France by the theorist Bertrand Westphal. She is interested*

in: *"interactions between human spaces and literature.* (Westphal, 2000, p. 17)

From this inventory of literary approaches to space, the relationship between literature and spatiality is obvious. Roland Bourneuf considers space: *"in the same way as the plot, time or characters as a constitutive element of the novel"*. (Bourneuf, 1970, p. 82). In addition to being a novelistic component, the space guarantees the likelihood and effect of reality in fiction: *"The place says that the text is true. What is told there, he declares to be representation. This text thanks to the place makes reference, is defined as relationship, image, mimicry,* "said Charles Grivel. (Camus & Buvet , 2011, p. 87)

Literary texts in turn can be a source for the recognition of the world: *"researchers in the humanities and in particular historians have often resorted to literary sources to find information about places or times gone by. Travel stories have always been a valuable source providing first-hand accounts and compilations of distant countries and cultures."* (Brosseau, 1996, p. 29)

This paper will look at the study of the Hospital space in the Mimounian work, more precisely ***Tombéza*** and la ***Malédiction (The Curse)*** which, twenty – six years after the death of the writer still arouse a lot of interest.

The topos of the hospital is omnipresent in Algerian literary productions\* and that of Rachid Mimouni. In his second novel, *Le Fleuve détourné*, he wrote: *"nurses and housewives eat*

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\* We cite as an example: L'insolation of Rachid Boudjedra, *Le Serment des barbares* of Boualem Sansal.

*desserts for the sick*" (Mimouni, 1982 & 1984). This initiated us to begin this geocritical reflection of this space within the two Mimounian writings: How is it represented? What are its symbolic features? Can it be conceived as a denunciation space; he says the unspoken?

We assume that the hospital would be the appropriate space to describe a society beset by poverty, corruption, violence and terrorism. This closed universe was open to issues of domination and enslavement, submission and revolt.

Our objective is to describe the spatial configuration of the hospital on the one hand. On the other hand, examine the impact of his topological traits on the subjects that animate this universe and finally the symbolism of this referentiality.

To achieve this, we adopt a geocritical approach, which provides the appropriate methodological tools such as referentiality, polysensoriality, and others.

Bertrand Westphal emphasizes the conception of referentiality in these terms: "*The referential space of literature, 'the literary space,' as a transposition of the sensory or an imaginary elsewhere from a deconstructed and reconstructed reality, appears as a privileged means of engaging the imagination of the reader or the viewer.*" (WESTPHAL, 2000, p. 10). The founder of geocriticism also calls on the work of Henri Lefebvre, in particular his text entitled *La Production de l'espace* (The Production of Space): "*Probably the most important book ever written on the social and historical meaning*

*of human spatiality and on the specific points of the imagination"*(Westphal, 2007, p. 23)

Henri Lefebvre distinguishes referentiality into two main categories: first, the study of the representation of space, which includes spaces designed by urban planners, architects, and writers through their works; and second, representations of space, which involve the description of lived spaces through images and symbols. To conduct our geocriticism of the hospital, we organize our analysis according to Lefebvre's classification.

## **2. Geography of the Mimounian hospital**

By imagining space, placing it in fiction and describing it, the writer transforms himself into an architect who designs, draws and then realizes a plan. Rachid Mimouni offers his reader a topical place that is both the place we are talking about and inside which we are talking.

### **2.1 Hospital Anchoring and Mapping**

The representation of the hospital in Tombéza\* and *La Malédiction*\*\* obeys a progressive description. The hospital is introduced first by a spatial anchoring or localization and then a sensory perception.

It appears from the incipit in Tombéza , it is the hospital of Riama, more precisely a room that serves as a storage room where the main character Tombéza was: "*Since noon, I have been in this room that serves as a storage room (...).The*

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\* We cite as an example: L'insolation of Rachid Boudjedra, Le Serment des barbares of Boualem Sansal.

\*\* MIMOUNI, Rachid, *La Malédiction*, Paris, Stock, 1993, Algiers, Chihab éditions, 2012.

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*operating theatre located a few meters from the place where I rest "(T.p9).*

Meanwhile, *La Malediction's* genesis occurs in Mustapha Pacha Hospital of Algiers, the main character of which is Kader, an obstetrician. The interior of these two hospitals is laid bare by the characters who occupy it.

The residential architecture of Riama hospital or that of Mustapha is organized into two distinct categories: medical department closely dealing with patients and general departments specific to the management of the hospital (administration).

Like Zola Gervaise's heroine whose painting of her laundry shop represents the phases of her life (poverty- wealth-misery), Tombéza transposes each event of history or moment to a meticulous description of a pavilion or a resident of the hospital. For example, the emergency room which appears in a lamentable state: "*A wounded man on the bed of earthenware where he will remain to agonize, to consume mountains of pain*". (T,p10). Then the malfunction of appliances and materials: "the radiator out of service" (T, p10).

Contrary to this pavilion, the one reserved for notables triggers the astonishment of police officer Rahim, who comes to visit Tombéza: "*What a beautiful little pavilion, I will have spent my holidays*"(T.p, 31). Then he draws an exotic landscape: "*clean and shining like a brand-new penny*", *its rooms " single ones, air-conditioned, each equipped with a bunch of chrome appliances where all the buttons work, including the one*

*intended to call the nurse".(T.p,31)*

Rachid Mimouni in an ironic tone denounces the social injustice dramatized in the hospital by his character-narrator Tombéza recounting a conversation with the director of the institution: *"What do you think of the idea of setting up a small reserved pavilion, let's say for notables and people we want to receive. One department is worth another, of course, so is life today."* (T.p, 246).

In opposition to this small clean pavilion, the rest of the hospital is *"a sanctuary for flies that could grow and multiply safely"*. (T.p, 27).The infectious diseases ward\* where Tombéza was a room boy at the beginning of his professional career reveals that:*" There is never anything that is done correctly (...) vomiting spread over half the bed (...).Here we talk about buying a scanner when we first need to acquire enough sheets, renovate the laundromat that can't stand it anymore, install a water tank, a fridge to store certain serums and vaccines, change these lame carts "*(T.p, 170).

In the absence of equipment, the patient must take care of himself by his family:*"You have better go get for your patient sheets and also a towel, and what is needed for the toilet, a plate, a fork, a glass, a spoon"*. (T.p, 170)

At Mustapha Hospital, whose situation is more problematic because it is experiencing a new regime of fundamentalist order, the emergency pavilion is deserted by its on-call doctors who *"were many to refuse to provide their night service because they*

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\* MIMOUNI, Rachid, *La Malédiction*, Paris, Stock, 1993, Algiers, Chihab éditions, 2012.



were often attacked or even assaulted by the relatives of the patients. Despite the multiple complaints filed, the police remained indifferent "(LM, p102).

We notice that the topology of the hospital in these two novels is identical and reveals anarchy, dirt, injustice.

## **2.2 The sensory attributes of space**

Poly sensoriality or the sensory approach is an enriching modality of description that can participate in the apprehension of space as Bertrand Westphal asserts: "*sensoriality allows a confrontation of the individual with the world. It contributes to the structuring and definition of space*" (Westphal, 2007, p. 216). From the incipit, Tombéza structures his description of the hospital according to the different senses: "*I perceive (...), I feel (..), I breathe.* (pp. 10-11) We have summarized some manifestations of the sensory attributes found in the study corpus in the following table:

Sensory Attribute	Excerpts from the corpus
Smell	<i>"Since noon, I have been in this room that serves as a riddance (...).The passing nurses only open the door, before ebbing back, quickly suffocated by the miasmas of shit and rancid urine that I breathe "(T.p, 9).</i>
Hearing	<i>"A great silence invades the room (...), I know it's time for lunch (...).Knife and fork tinkling "(T.p,12) "After the hospital, the streets are quiet" (LM,p,115) "During his nights on duty, Kader loved these moments before dawn, full of serenity as the moans</i>

	<i>ceased" (LM.p,117)</i>
sight	<i>"Come and enjoy the show. A young girl was twisting on her bed "(T.p,212). "Kader was scandalized to see his master thus reduced to this humiliating expectation. "(LM.p 221).</i>

The hospital's sensory approach also denotes dirt: *"you had to jostle around a basin open to all bastards (.)waitresses who no longer even bother to wipe the tables "(T.p, 248)*. She alludes to the reports of domination on the one hand and violence suffered by the sick on the other: *"Luisa watered the room with insults as soon as she entered"(T.p, 244)*.

This referential and sensory reading of the hospital in the two Mimounian fictions allowed us to confirm that this space is par excellence the image of the Locus horribilis according to the expression of Gaston Bachelard. The hospital, this degraded and nauseating space, exercises its domination by force over the subjects that populate it.

### **3. Symbolic of the hospital: from individual disappointment to social decline**

For Henri Lefebvre, the space represented can in turn become a place of representation, that is to say a symbolic, metaphorical universe that *"lives, speaks (...), it contains the places of passions, action... » (Lefebvre, 2000, p. 52)*. From the above, a triad emerges that brings together space, being and society because *"space is projected and produced by a subject who selects and focuses his objects within the limits set by his own competence"*. (Bertrand, 1985, p. 69)

#### **3.1 The hospital, from social ascension to death**

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The two Mimounian texts analyzed make the hospital appear as an emblematic place where the fate of beings is played out. For some like the director of the Riama hospital, Aissa the janitor, Luiza in Tombéza or El Msili in The Curse is a euphoric space since their social conditions have remarkably evolved.

Person	Previous Status	Hospital Status
Luiza	"Quarantine started- twice married and divorced	A nurse promoted to midwife
El Msili	Peasant from Msila	Ambulance worker. Party activist, elected to the section bureau. Department head under the new integrist order.

On the other hand, this same place imposes the feeling of despair and promotes violence for others, especially for those who aspire to the triumph of peace and human values. Professor Meklat , head of the surgery pavilion in Tombéza: "*from his distant office, he remache the bitterness, outraged by the behavior of the director of the hospital*"(T.p, 25.). His compatriot in *La Malédiction*, Doctor Meziane can do nothing against the fundamentalist regime reigning at Mustapha Hospital: "*he was especially shocked by the lack of mercy of these men*" (LM.p,141).

This sense of hopelessness is fueled by the violence in which the hospital is bathed, ranging from verbal abuse, neglect to torture and murder.

Before examining the forms of violence that exist in the hospital, it is useful to think about their psychological and social

causes.

We take as a first example Tombéza who was a victim of social exclusion becomes in turn an executioner. This character, born to a raped mother: "*My birth was not the subject of any traditional rejoicing that celebrates the arrival of a male child in the family*"(T.p, 34), suffering from a physical anomaly: "*deformed by a muscular contraction that closes my left eye to three quarters*"(T.p, 33) and rejected by his entourage and even forbids the learning of the sacred word: "*What are you doing here, son of a devil? You dare come and defile this sacred place? Out of here bastard*"(T.p, 53)

The Tombéza revolt and its violence became externalized from his childhood, he became: "*hard and snarling without an ounce of mercy (...), the much older boys learned to fear long and dirty nails*"(T.p,38 ).

At the hospital, the experiences and manifestations of violence are plural:

- a)- The sexual harassment suffered by Amria, the housekeeper at Riama Hospital, by her adoptive father.
- b)- The rape suffered by a young girl in the surgery department (victim of her director)
- c) Corporal punishment is depicted in both novels.

First , it was Tombéza who told the story of her mother's fate after her rape .He describes the violence of his maternal grandfather Messaoud, who made Messaoud's daughter mad and caused her death afterwards: "*Upon hearing the news, Messaoud's face remained impassive(...).Without a word, the*

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*man went to unhook his cane, which was hanging from a nail in the wall (...). This skilled brawler aimed at the head, the joints of the limbs, well aware of the sensitive areas of the body where pain radiates to the brain, where the blows leave indelible sequelae "(T.p,30)*

Like Messaoud, El Msili, the former ambulance driver at Mustapha Hospital, knew only violence as the only language of communication. His victims are many, including his family members too: *"He terrorized his wife who often had to go and treat his swollen face. A furious dew made his youngest daughter dumb. His eldest son, aged seventeen, for having often been assaulted, slept only with a knife at hand "(LM,p,136).*

Doctors are in turn victims of attacks, which is why they refuse to provide their night service. LM

d)- Terror: Fear envelops the hospital compound. She saw herself in the eyes of patients subjected to men and women in white coats *"The patient understands that it is in his interest to share especially if he is in a serious state, immobilized or disabled"(T.p,11).*

Luisa the midwife *"overwhelms with sarcasm those who dare to make a request to her, locks herself in her office despite the reminders of her who has just seen her pocket of water burst"(T.p, 192).*

Aissa, the janitor had fun *"terrorizing the visitors of the hospital, hoodwinked, bullied them, under the slightest pretext, forcing them to wait on the other side of the street under the sun"(T.p, 172).*

Death: Like the dramatic stories, the protagonists of Rachid Mimouni end up dying. Their death is a deliverance from the cruel reality they live. Tombéza, following a suspicious accident submitted to a deadly injection, Brahim, the nurse in Mustapha is stabbed by two thieves at the exit of the bar. Kader indulged in a death sentence pronounced by the Islamic court before the eyes of his brother.

This balance sheet of images of violence, domination, disorder is hardly exhaustive because Mimouni has used this place to represent a pain of personal life and a real social failure. This is a real descent into hell and the Mimounian heroes perfectly embody the myth of Orpheus.

Tombéza, a victim of a physical and social defect, promoted himself to the position of warden, then the right arm of the hospital director finally atoned for himself by accepting a pernicious injection.

Kader the obstetrician and hero of *La Malédiction* fought against the disorder, injustice and fanaticism of the fundamentalists who controlled the hospital. His opposition to their orders earned him a death sentence executed by his brother Hocine.

The table below summarizes this descent into hell of the two protagonists.

<b>Tombéza</b>	
<b>Improvement process</b>	
<b>1-Identity:</b> "You will have the exceptional opportunity to choose your name Tombéza" T.p,130	<b>3-Status:</b> "he proposed to me to become responsible for the village" (T.p130). -Room brick at the Infectious

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	<p>Diseases Pavilion. (T.p.130)          - The director's right arm: "<i>I pointed out that I would be more useful to him (..) so I became his handyman</i>"(T.P.246)</p>
<p><b>2-Knowledge:</b> "<i>I want to learn to read and write in French</i>"(T.p,9) "<i>As soon as I arrived at the hospital I tried to find out where the levers of power were</i>"(T.p ,175)</p>	<p><b>4-Triumph:</b>"<i>I was enjoying my triumph(..).I like to play great lord. You feel fat when you know you are important</i> "(T.p254).</p>
<p><b>Degradation process</b></p>	
<p><b>1-Sterility:</b> "<i>Let's say a condition of your body... Uh, no, rather a malformation. No hope, doctor? Never a child? Never.</i>"(T.p,151)</p>	<p><b>2-Despair:</b> "<i>At the bottom of my chest, I feel being born of deaf sobs would I be feeling sorry for myself</i>"(T.p, 13)</p>
<p><b>3-The mysterious accident:</b> One winter night, returning from an evening with his friend Batoul, Tombéza lost control of his car and was evacuated to the hospital where he worked: "<i>After five days of coma, Commissioner Batoul visits him to determine the nature of the accident. Is it an unforeseen misfortune? Or an attempted assassination?</i>"(T.p,265)</p>	<p><b>4-From the pavilion of notables to the storage room.</b>          “<i>Around noon, this nurse I don't know came into my room pushing in front of her a trolley (..). Not a word, not a smile, not even a look. As a cumbersome burden was being cultivated, she took it upon herself to transfer me to the cart (..).We leave along the corridors until we reach this storage room where, with a push, she sends the trolley rolling, the amount of which will bump against the wall. She comes out pulling the door behind her</i> "(T.p,270)</p>
<p><b>5-Death:</b> "<i>You can laugh, dark scoundrel, I'm not afraid of death. In the state I am in, this is the best thing that can happen to me</i></p>	

(T.p,270)	
<b>Kader</b>	
<b>Improvement process</b>	
<b>1-Sickness:</b> Kader <i>“hated to open his eyes and find himself in the world”</i> (LM.p,71)	<b>2-Opposition to fundamentalism (represented):</b> <i>“El Msili wanted to confiscate our patients' files. I took advantage of the time of prayer to steal them ”</i> (LM.p,174) <i>“I fight against injustice”</i> (LM.p ,237)
<b>Degradation process</b>	
<b>1-dismissed from work:</b> <i>"You must consider yourself suspended while waiting for our managers to rule on your case"</i> (LM.p,196)	<b>2- Kidnapping by the extremists:</b> <i>" You're going to have to follow me," ElMsili announced. "You didn't heed my warnings. You're wrong."</i> <i>A van was waiting outside the pavilion door. Kader climbed into it under ElMsili's push.</i> <i>Two armed men were seated inside.</i> <i>"Islamic trial and death sentence: "you are condemned to death”</i> (LM.p,279)
<b>3-Fatal death:</b>	
The assassination of Kader by his brother Hocine (Metaphor of Cain and Abel): <i>"By pronouncing the death penalty and taking charge of executing the sentence, which Hocine wanted to punish (..)Kader suspected an obscure murder impulse in Hocine ”</i> (LM.p,289). By accepting a walk by the sea, Kader voluntarily engages in the execution of the death penalty: <i>"Kader lay on the sand, fingers crossed under the neck" (LM.p,282)</i>	

Fatal death brought an end to the journeys of the Mimounian protagonists. In the hospital, Kader and Tombéza come to understand their fate: to combat injustice—Kader on the social front and Tombéza against extremism. Their paths



diverged as their struggle unfolded: Tombéza, combating marginalization, ultimately becomes an executioner himself, ensnared by his own compatriots. Meanwhile, Kader, driven by humanism, defends the oppressed against fundamentalists—a commitment that ultimately leads to his demise.

### **3.2 The Mimounian hospital, microcosm of a ruined society**

Although a decade differentiates the appearance of the two Mimounian works *Tombéza* and *La Malédiction*, they seem to bring together in a common way the ills of Algeria in the different fields: economic, social, historical and cultural.

Rachid Mimouni, in his interviews, calls for a committed literature that participates in the awareness of the people: "*I believe in literature as a Trojan horse to corrode from the inside of the fortress of the mystifiers who tell us that our sky is always blue. I believe in literature that puts its finger on the wound.*" (NAJIB, 2012, p. 162)

Rachid Mimouni inscribes his texts in this literature of disenchantment that emerged a few years after independence to denounce the abuses of power in place, to fight against sclerotic mentalities. His compatriots are numerous, including Boudjedra and Nabil Farès.

In his work *Tombéza*, the author makes the indictment of political and social discourse by unveiling the economic and social crisis that ravages the country.

The shortage of essential products such as water "*water cuts, quite innocuous, all the cities of the country know (..) summer and winter where we receive water only for one hour*

*every two days*"(T.p ,177), vaccines "*Like this anti-D vaccine for the treatment of the Rhesus incompatibility of a pregnant woman whose delivery was expected to be rather difficult, and that it was necessary to travel to Algiers, in the middle of the night, to obtain this drug normally not found*"(T.p,59).

The housing crisis is a psychosis to the citizen "*Samira who will join her fiancé in the emergency room (..).For five years they have been hoping and waiting*"(T.p, 53), embezzlement and corruption are specific to the administrative system "*they consider that some sums have been diverted from the budget of their intended destination to devote them to the development of management premises*"(T.p, 247)" *the sums requested were not very high, you understand, I consider you as a friend, I ask nothing for myself, but we must obtain the benevolence of the head of department,* "(T,p54).

The status of women is also mentioned by Rachid Mimouni. Humiliation, repression, violence are the hallmarks of the female experience despite her age or intellectual level. Thus the commissioner Batoul in Tombéza makes the portrait of his wife: "*obedient and faithful woman who only knew how to open her legs to allow herself to be impregnated at the first blow(..), who only opens her mouth to tell me that she is short of oil, sugar, coffee, potato, or milk for her last born*"(T.p, 184) "*With us, a woman has only one status , that of wife. Without this... there is not much hope! And, business is just a hobby, a way to wait. There is no respectable person except the married woman*"(T.p,144).

In *La Malédiction*, the situation is aggravated by the rise of extremism that Mimouni symbolized through the new order that

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governs the hospital "You should know that many things will change here (the hospital) and throughout the country(..) the room was swarming with bearded people wearing green armbands (..). The era of laxity is over." (p.140)

Supporters of the new extremist order act violently by driving single mothers out of the hospital, prohibiting male doctors from treating patients.

In this writing, Mimouni not only points to the wound with his finger, but also takes a closer look at its origins, which date back to the country's past centuries. This return to origins, history and criticism of power are recurring themes in the literary production of this author "It is from the third novel that Mimouni begins to evoke the disturbing themes for the political situation of the time: falsification of history, the destruction of society, questions of power (...). *La Malédiction* points to the burning news of the country at the beginning of the 90s" (Mehanna, 1999).

If Maurice, former resistance fighter of the Algerian Revolution plunges into the depths of his memory to restore an unknown past of Kader and friends and which contradicts everything they learned from the texts of History or lessons at school.

Through his testimony, The Revolution and the fight against the colonizer are tinged with internal conflicts between the brothers of the maquis: "It was a horrible butchery. The wounded were killed with knives. Yet it was a troop of companions. For what absurd reason did we decide to eliminate

them?"(LM.p,128). These disagreements and clashes are perpetuated after independence when supporters of the same cause killed each other to satisfy their desire for domination: "*Obviously, the most ambitious of you will soon tear each other apart, recovering their ferocity from the times of the forest and the revolt*"(LM.p,252).

The extremism that shook the country in the 1990s is well explained through the metaphor of the hospital where the intolerance and sectarianism of the new leaders are seen. If Maurice, Mimouni's spokesperson in his fiction, considers that this scourge of political violence is only the culmination of previous misunderstandings "*The hour of settling all old scores. The time has come to clear up these fraternal conflicts that have been accumulating for decades*"(LM.p,259)

The trial of Kader by the Islamic court at the end of the story is the conclusion of all the historical falsifications and the answer to all the problematic issues of the country. Kader claims that revenge and intolerance cannot "found a nation" (LM.p,279). He concluded his speech and put an end to the Mimounian indictment with these words: "*But who are you? Do you really fear the wrath of this God whose name you keep mentioning? There's nothing human about you. You look like the hideous creatures that populate our nightmares.* »." (LM.p,238)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

To conclude this geocritical study of the hospital in Rachid Mimouni's two novels, Tombéza and La Malédiction, we consider it essential to highlight the following characteristics of this space:

- The hospital is represented as a space of confinement, anarchy, dirt and violence, it is in this way that Mimouni conceives the space of his two novels
- The hospital is the metaphorical representation of Algerian society impoverished in its wealth and values.

Rachid Mimouni, himself declared: "*I am a committed writer; do not count on me to say that my country is the best in the world(..). The novel is a discourse that aims to convey a message*". (Najib, 2012, p. 166)

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