

## **The Persian translations of the novella "Memories of my melancholy whores" by Gabriel García Márquez and the translation strategies used before censorship**

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### **Abstract:**

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the three available translations of this unique short novel ("Memory of my sad whores") by Gabriel García Márquez, which addresses a topic that has also been dealt with in classical Persian literature, such as the love of an old man for a young maiden, with whom he initially maintains a mere sexual relationship assisted by a matchmaker (*procuress*). The 5,000 copies of this first edition in Persian of the novel were sold out, three weeks after distribution in bookshops. The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance banned further reprints on the basis of its immorality.

The choice of this novel encourages a discussion on the impact of censorship in the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding literary works that contain obscene, bawdy or erotic passages and the different strategies employed by the translators to render such works into Persian.

Marquez is one of the modern authors who has received a wide acclaim in Iran and most of his works have been published in Persian. His masterpiece, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* has merited the efforts of ten different translators and provides also a case study of the impact of political circumstances in Iran and the extent of censorship considering that such translations have been published in different periods.

In the novella examined, we are faced with different approaches followed by each of the native translators that opt to suppress certain passages or provide a summarized account avoiding the use of coarse language or sexual overtones. The controversial passages in this work for the relentless Iranian censors also imply that under such criteria much of Classical Persian literature would have to be banned or rewritten to comply with such standards.