

**SEMANTIC DISPARITIES AND DISCREPANCIES IN
TRANSLATIONS OF THE HOLY QUR'ÂN INTO ENGLISH**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signature.....Date

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“...and say: “My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.” (the *Holy Qur’ân, Sûrah Ta Ha*, 20: Verse 114)

وقل ربى زدنى علماً

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the souls of my parents “Sulieman and Mahdia” and to my family.

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ABSTRACT

This is a comparative analysis of selected verses from a number of *Sûrahs* (or Chapters) in six English translations of the *Holy Qur'ân*, at a sentence, clause, phrase, word and, where useful, the morpheme level, using the original Arabic version as the Source Text. The translated version of the *Holy Qur'ân* of the Complex of Madinah Munawwarah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be used as a Control Text in order to determine the significant semantic disparities and discrepancies between the translations, as well as to identify the possible reasons for differences. It was important, further, to ensure that the translators chosen for this study have different educational, cultural and social backgrounds in order to establish, for instance, the consequences when Arabic is the native language of a translator in comparison to the other extreme where a translator is a native-speaker of neither Arabic nor English. Special attention is paid to the way in which the translations reflect the poetic prosody of the original source text as well as to the influences of the aims, the approaches, the techniques, the styles and the common problems of translation in general, such as the incongruities of languages, the cultural barriers between the communities, the concepts of accuracy, loyalty and fidelity to the original text.

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GLOSSARY

“ﷺ” This image is an invocation which mean “Oh Allâh, bless Muhammad”. It is always linked to the name of Prophet Muhammad whether it is mentioned in compound or not. In respect of the different Western spellings of the Prophet’s name Muhammad ﷺ it must be noted that this results from the difference in the pronunciation of the name “محمد”. The correct spelling of the name “محمد” should be based on the sound of the Arabic letters that formed it, which is /mohAMAdâ. Therefore, any Western spelling such as “Mohamed”, “Mehemet” and “Mahammad” is a misspelling because it is not based on the correct transcription of the letters.

Allâh: The name of God among Muslims and Arab Christians.

Alif al-Athnân “ا”: a linguistic devic, used to change the singular masculine form into a dual masculine form.

At-Tafsîr: The interpretation of or commentary on the *Holy Qur’ân*.

At-Tanwîn: Arabic grammatical device that connected with the last letter of the indefinite article if it is a singular, a specific plural, or a collective noun as well as a name of specific lexical form in a different grammatical structure. It is has three types: The *ḍammatân*, “الضمتان”, used with the nominative form, the *fathatân*, “الفتحتان”, used with the accusative form and the *kasratân*, “الكسرتان”, used with a genitive form.

Caliphate: The system of governance in Islam. It is a marker of a specific period of ruling in Islam as well.

Hadîth: The traditions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Ḥaḡḡ-recitation: The most dominant of the 7th main types of recitation of the *Holy Qur’ân* in the Muslim World

Islam: The last divine religion.

Muslims: Followers of Islām.

Nūn an-Niswa “ن”: a grammatical device connected with the feminine plural form, used as a subject in the amalgamated sentences.

Rukū` الركوع: “Kneeling down”, a part of the performance of *Ṣalâh*.

Ṣalâh “الصلاة”: The second pillar of Islām. It is obligatory five times a day.

Ṣalât: A specified *Ṣalâh* such as *Ṣalât Al-Fajr*, the early morning *Ṣalâh*, *Ṣalât Al-Isha*, the last obligatory *Ṣalâh* in a day.

Sujūd السجود: Prostration, a part of the performance of *Ṣalâh*.

Sunnah: All that is said or done as well as that which was agreed upon by Prophet. Muḥammad ﷺ.

Sūrah: Any one of the 114 chapters of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

Sūrat: A specified chapter of the *Holy Qur’ân* such as *Sūrat Al-Fâtiḥa* (The Opening)

Ṭâ Atanīth: the closed one “ة”, used to change a singular masculine form into a singular feminine form.

Ṭâ Atanīth, the open one “ت” and “*Alif al-Athnīn*” “ا” used in the combination “تا” to change a singular feminine form to a dual feminine form, such as the word “*Muslima*” “مسلمة” will be “*Muslimatan*” “مسلمتان” for a dual feminine form when we add the combination “تا” to it.

The combination “ات”: a linguistic device, used to change a singular feminine form into a plural feminine form within the same singular feminine form.

the *Holy Qur’ân*: The Book of Islām.

Zakâh الزكاة: Alms, the third pillar of Islām.

Warsh-recitation: a form of recitation of the *Holy Qur’ân*, dominant in Africa.

Waw al-Jama`a “ج”: a linguistic device, used to change the singular masculine form into plural masculine form within the same singular masculine form.

The signs of waqf: obligatory, optional and forbidden stopping in recitation of the *Holy Qur`ân*, so as to make it comprehensible to the reader.

An Addendum, which contains all the translated versions of the selected verses, as well as the original, is provided to facilitate the comparative reading and discussion.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research problem and its significance, rationale and objectives, the hypotheses, principal theories and the methodology used in the research.

1.1 Research Background, Problem and Delineation of Study Area

The translation of holy or numinous texts is fraught with danger, and *al-Qur'ân al-Karim* - the Arabic title of the *Holy Qur'ân* - is no exception. It is, after all, a text that forms the basis of faith, informing Muslims, the followers of Muhammad ﷺ, of the commandments of Allâh Almighty - the name of God among Muslims - that ought to be upheld, and the consequences for ignoring divine imperatives.

All the references to the *Holy Qur'ân* in Arabic are from The King Fahd Complex for Printing the *Holy Qur'ân*, the Original Arabic text 2009, Madinah Munawwarah which will be used as a Source Text (ST). With the exception of the references from the selected translations for comparison, all the other references to the translated *Qur'ân* in this study are from The King Fahd Complex for Printing the *Holy Qur'ân*, '*The Noble Qur'ân.*' *English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary* 2009, Madinah Munawwarah, which will be used as a Control Text (CT). However, because the Control Text (CT) is only another translation and is not sacrosanct, the researcher uses the relevant Arabic verses of the original text to give readers of Arabic the opportunity to evaluate the translation.

Regarding the transliteration and spelling of Arabic words, there is little consistency among scholars regarding the transliteration of words, and so the writing will differ among scholars. It should be remembered that Arabic is in itself also not a homogeneous language: even the Arabic writing of words may differ. For the sake of convenience the original transliteration with its diacritical marks is kept as it was originally. All the quotes from the Control Text, with exception of the transliterated individual Arabic words like *Sûrah*, *Zakâh*, etc. are not written in italics.

According to the faith of Muslims, Allâh bestowed miracles upon His Prophets to convince the people to whom a particular prophet was sent that this was indeed a prophet. In his interpretation of verse 49 in *Sûrat Âl-‘Imrân* (The Family of Imran), Ibn Kathîr writes:

The miracles performed by Moses appeared to be sorcery, since sorcery was highly regarded in Moses’ time. The miracles performed by Jesus were related to healing, since medicine and healing were important issues in his time. (2010: 227)

As for Muhammad ﷺ, Hashim Yahya al-Mallâh argues:

In the time of Muhammad ﷺ (571-632 AD), the dominant skill was literary ability – linguistic competence in the form of poetic and oratory skills’... The Arabs were so deeply enamoured of the use of their language that they organized annual competitive fairs to choose the best poet and the best poem. (2008: 383)

In that competitive period focusing on literary ability, the *Holy Qur’ân* was revealed to Prophet Muhammad in a defiant message to Arab pagans. the *Holy Qur’ân* challenged Arab Pagans to write not only a book, or ten *Sûrahs*, but just to compose a single *Sûrah* (chapter), similar to one of its many chapters. The example of the first challenge occurs in *Sûrat Al-Isrâ’* “The Journey by Night”:

Say, If the mankind and the Jinn were together to produce the like of this *Qur’ân*, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another. (CT 17:88)

قل لئن اجتمعت الإنس والجن على أن يأتوا بمثل هذا

القرآن لا يأتون بمثله ولو كان بعضهم لبعض ظهيراً.

The example of the second challenge occurs in *Sûrat Hûd* “Prophet Hûd”:

Or they say, “He (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) forged it (the *Qur’ân*).” Say: “Bring you then ten forged *Sûrahs* (chapters) like it, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allâh (to your help), if you speak the truth! (CT 11:13)

أم يقولون افتراه قل فأتوا بعشر سور مثله مفتريات وادعوا من استطعتم من دون الله إن كنتم صادقين.

The example of the third challenge is found in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

And if you are in doubt concerning that which We sent down (the *Holy Qur’ân*) to our slave (Muhammad ﷺ) then produce a chapter of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) beside Allâh, if you are truthful. But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Hell whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers. (CT 2:23-24)

وإن كنتم في ريب مما نزلنا على عبدنا فأتوا بسورة من

مثلته وادعوا شهداءكم من دون الله إن كنتم صادقين.

فإن لم تفعلوا ولن تفعلوا فاتقوا النار التي وقودها الناس

والحجارة أعدت للكافرين.

This is despite the fact that the *Holy Qur’ân* was revealed in their Arabic language, the verse 44, in *Sûrat al-Fussilât* states:

And if We had sent this as a *Qur’ân* in a foreign language (other than Arabic), they would have said: “Why are not its verses explained in detail (in our language?) What! (A Book) not in Arabic and (the Messenger) an Arab? “Say: “It is for those who believe, a guide and healing, And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears, and it (the *Qur’ân*) is blindness for them. They are those who are called from a place far away (so they neither listen nor understand. (CT 41:44)

ولو جعلناه قرءاناً أعجمياً لقالوا لو لا فصلت آياته، أعجمى وعربى،

قل هو للذين آمنوا هدى وشفاء، والذين لا يؤمنون فى آذانهم

وقر وهو عليهم عمى أولئك ينادون من مكان بعيد.

1.2 Research Problem

Because of the above-mentioned challenging spirit, the *Holy Qur’ân* is considered by Muslims as a miracle of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Translations of texts of this nature, however, provide extremely useful research material, as

it can be argued that the need to keep on translating such texts might well result in interesting and revealing differences.

According to Hussein Abdull-Raof (2004:106)

The Qur'anic message will always be inflicted with inaccuracies and skewing of information that can only be accounted for by the inclusion of informative exegetical footnotes. An English Qur'an is translational impossibility.

Given the sacrosanct nature of the recorded revelation, the idea of translating the text into another language had initially been resisted. Understanding the *Holy Qur'ân* would be a matter of faith, supported by an old and established tradition of explication: the *Tafsîr*. The latter is a concordance which in its interpretation presents a first "translation" of sorts. But it exists in addition to the original the source text. The concept of a formal translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* was understood to be the translation of the meaning of the text, the text itself being deemed to be too intricately composed to make translation possible.

However, it seems necessary for Muslims to translate the *Holy Qur'ân*, as Abdur Rahim Kidwai writes:

The Muslim need for translating *the Qur'ân* into English arose mainly out of the desire to combat the missionary effort... to present a faithful translation of the Qur'anic text as well as an authentic summary of its teaching to the European world and to serve even those Muslims whose only access to the Qur'anic revelation was through the medium of the European languages. (2011: 1)

As such, the twentieth century witnessed a growth of English translations, fuelled by the growing interaction between the Islamic countries and the West.

With the spread of Islâm into Western society and the global mobility of people adhering to the faith it became clear that accessibility of the *Holy Qur'ân* in an authoritative English text was required.

It was for this reason that a team of translators of the Translation Centre at the King Fahd Complex for Printing of the *Holy Qur'ân* in Madīnah Munawwarah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia undertook the task, starting after 1980 CE.

This translated version of the *Holy Qur'ân* of the Complex of Madīnah Munawwarah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be used as a Control Text (CT) when comparing the different translations this study will be scrutinising.

The reasons for selecting this version as a Control Text for comparison are the following:

1. The first translations of the *Holy Qur'ân* were full of errors and artifices because they were done by Christian missionaries with a hostile attitude towards Islâm.
2. The first translations by Muslims were also characterized by inaccuracies, because they were done by non-native Arabic speakers and were based on the medieval interpretation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.
3. This translation is meant to present an accurate, faithful translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân*.
4. This translation is done in contemporary English.
5. This translation was done under the very strict supervision of the Translation Centre.
6. The Complex specializes in translations of the *Holy Qur'ân* and the *Hadith* (Prophetic Traditions).
7. It has translated the *Holy Qur'ân* into 44 different languages. Just as important is the fact that present-day Saudi Arabia was the birthplace of the *Holy Qur'ân* and the homeland of Arabic, the *Holy Qur'ân's* original language. In this respect the cultural and social dimensions of life in Saudi Arabia may be significant.

8. It is accompanied by a parallel original Arabic text of the *Holy Qur'ân*.
9. This translation was done by a collective of translators and for this reason comes closest to an “Authorized” translation.

In respect of the other translations used in this study, it was important to ensure that the translators chosen for this study had different educational, cultural and social backgrounds in order to establish, for instance, the consequences when Arabic is the native-language of a translator in comparison to the other extreme where a translator is a native-speaker of neither Arabic nor English.

The translators range from scholars born and bred in Arab countries to those of European and American descent.

Where it is useful, reference will be made to any pertinent information provided in the frontispiece or introduction of each of these publications.

In this respect the essence of the theory underpinning translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* would be close to Eugene Nida's (1964: 159) idea of dynamic equivalence where “the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message.”

The ground-breaking contribution of Nida remains particularly significant, precisely because he, too, was grappling with the translation of a holy, sacrosanct text, The Bible. It is the special relationship between the receptor and the message, which plays an important part in these texts.

Of specific interest is the poetic tradition in which the *Holy Qur'ân* was cast. It is an undisputable fact that the change to the poetic structure of the original would result in loss or, at best, diminishing returns. When reading the *Holy Qur'ân*, it is important to remember that the text was originally intended to be read aloud and that this is still its most effective form. Recitation to listeners gives the text a dimension that does not come across in silent reading,

frequently showing up lines of thought that do not stand out clearly when one peruses the text. This aural effect explains why Pagans accused Prophet Muḥammad of being a magician and the *Holy Qur'ân* was deemed magic. the *Holy Qur'ân* mentioned that accusation in many verses such as in *Sûrat Al-Ṭûr* “The Mount”:

Is this magic or do you not see? (CT 52:15)

أفسحُرُ هذا أم أنتم لا تبصرون .

Another example in *Sûrat Al-Muddaththir* “The One Enveloped”:

Then he said: “This is nothing but magic from that of old.

(CT 74:24)

فقال إن هذا إلا سحر يؤثر.

Stylistically, the *Holy Qur'ân* consists of four main registers that were current in the Pre-Islamic Arabia: the clipped and gnomic, the admonitory, the exhortative and the argumentative styles. Because the Muslim community turned into a state during the Madīnah period, the verses containing social legislation appear to be close to the style used in formal agreements. An example occurs in *Sûrat An-Nisâ*’ “The Women”:

They ask you for a legal verdict. Say: “Allâh directs (thus) about Al-Kalâlah (those who leave neither descendants nor ascendants as heirs). If it is a man that dies leaving a sister, but no child, she shall have half the inheritance. If (such a deceased was) a woman, who left no child, her brother takes her inheritance. If there are two sisters, they shall have two-thirds of the inheritance: if they are brothers and sisters, the male will have twice the share of the female. (Thus) does Allâh make clear to you (His Law) lest you go astray. And Allâh is All-Knower of everything. (CT 4:176)

يستفتونك قل الله يفتيكم في الكلالة، إن امروء هلك ليس له ولد وله أخت فلها نصف ما ترك، وهو يرثها إن لم يكن لها ولد، فإن كانتا اثنتين فلهما الثلثان مما ترك، وإن كانوا إخوة رجالاً ونساءً فللذكر مثل حظ الأنثيين، يبين الله لكم أن تضلوا والله بكل شئ عليم.

It is accepted view that many of the earliest *Sûrahs* have a vigour that is terse and abrupt and that, as time passed, the terseness, and to some extent the abruptness, gradually diminished. An example of gnomic and admonitory style of the Makkī *Holy Qur'ân* can be found in *Sûrat Al-Masad* "Palm Fibre":

1. Perish the two hands of Abû Lahab (an uncle of Prophet) and perish he. 2. His wealth and his children will not benefit him! 3. He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames! 4. And his wife, too, who carries wood (thorns of sa'dân which she used to put on the way of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, or used to slander him). 5. In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad (palm fibre) (CT 111:1-5).

تبت يدا أبي لهب وتب، ما أغنى عنه ماله وما كسب، سيصلى ناراً ذات لهب،
وامراته حمالة الحطب، في جيدها حبل من مسد.

We can find an example of exhortative style in *Sûrat Al-Ghâshiyah* "The Overwhelming":

... (other) faces that Day will be joyful.9. Glad with their endeavor (for their good deeds which they did in this world, along with the true Faith of Islâmîc Monotheism). 10. In lofty Paradise.11. Where they shall neither hear harmful speech nor falsehood... (CT 88:8-11)

وجوه يومئذ ناعمة. لسعيها راضية. فى جنة عالية. لا تسمع فيها لاغية.

An example of argumentative style can be found in *Sûrat Al-Qiyâmah* "The Resurrection":

Does man think that he will be left neglected (without being punished or rewarded for the obligatory duties enjoined by his Lord Allâh on him)? 37 Was he not a nutfah (mixed male and female sexual discharge) of semen emitted (poured forth)? 38. Then he became an *'Alaqah* (a clot): then (Allâh) shaped and fashioned (him) in due proportion.39. And made of him two sexes, male and female 40. Is not He (Allâh Who does that) Able to give life to the dead? (Yes! He is Able to do all things.) (CT 75:36-40)

أيحسب الإنسان أن يترك سدى. ألم يك نطفة من منى يمى. ثم كان علقة فخلق
فسوى. فجعل منه الزوجين الذكر والأنثى. أليس ذلك بقادر على أن يحيى الموتى.

It is most striking in the earlier revelation, particularly when the verses are very short, but still effective, and in the late verses in *Madīnah* when they may well be about the legal matters and composed in a flat documentary style. Unfortunately there is no realistic possibility of conveying this feature in translation, because even the famous commentators interpreted such verses differently, look at the verse 282, in *Sūrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

“O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down...But if the debtor is of poor understanding, or weak, or is unable to dictate for himself, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you are agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women (errs), the other can remind her...” (CT 2:282)

يا ايها الذين ءامنوا اذا تداينتم بدين الى اجل مسمى فاكتبوه، وليكتب بينكم
كاتب بالعدل... واستشهدوا شهيدين من رجالكم، فإن لم يكنا رجلين، فرجل
وامرأتان ممن ترضون من الشهداء، أن تضل إحداهما، فتذكر إحداهما
الأخرى...

In *Tafsīr* al-Qurṭubī (2001: 319), there is no mention to a relegation of women in general to a lower status in concern with giving a testimony in court, but there is such a mention in Ibn Kathīr (2010: 203) when he says: “so that if one of them (two women (errs)), the other can remind her, this because the woman is less than a man in concern with the intellectuality.”

However, translators have to tackle this problem by adding to their translations bridging phrases that they normally draw from the numerous, and lengthy commentaries on the *Holy Qur’ān* that have been written over the centuries in Arabic.

The research will be focussing on six specific English versions of the *Holy Qur’ān*. These versions are the following:

- *The Glorious Qur'ân*, 1930, a translation by a scholar of European origin, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall. It was chosen because Arabic was not the translator's native-language, although he lived in Arab countries. The latter fact means that he acquired some knowledge of the Arab culture. Because this was the first translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* that was done by a British Muslim, it resulted in a very heated religious debate between the author and the scholars of Al-Azhar. The latter, located in Cairo, the capital of Egypt, has always been the leading religious authority in the Muslim world in respect of rules pertaining to acts of worship and rules pertaining to dealings with others in all aspects of daily life from the Islamic point of view.
- *The Holy Qur'ân*, 1934-1937, a translation by a scholar of Indian origin, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, was chosen because neither Arabic (the source language) nor English (the target-language) was his native language and because, interestingly enough, he translated the *Holy Qur'ân* into Shakespearean English.
- *The Message of The Qur'ân*, 1980, a translation by a scholar of European origin, Muhammad Asad, was chosen because neither Arabic nor English was his native-language, but he had spent many years in Arabia.
- *The Qur'ân*, 1992, a translation by an American Muslim scholar, Thomas Ballantyne Irving, was chosen because Arabic was not his native language, and to look at the influence of American cultural and social dimensions of the late 20th century on his translation of the Holy Qur'ân.
- *The Majestic Qur'ân*, 2000, a translation by a Turkish scholar, Ali Ozek, and his colleagues, Abdal Hakim Murad (British), Mostafa al-Badawi (Egyptian) and Uthman Hutchinson (American). This was chosen because it was done by a team from different nationalities, and to look at the possible influence of these different cultural and social dimensions on their translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.
- *The Qur'ân*, 2005, a translation by a native Arabic-speaker, Muhammad Abdel-Haleem, was chosen because Arabic is his native

language. His translation affords the researcher the opportunity to ascertain the effect of modern Arabic as a native language on the translation and to look at the cultural and social dimensions of his translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

The reasons for the choice of these versions can be summarised as follows:

1. To limit the scope of the research.
2. To ensure that the samples cover a considerable period of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, from the early decades of the 20th century to the first decade of this century.
3. To engage with translations which were done into current English, American and a rather archaic English.
4. To establish the influence of Arabic as the native language of a translator on the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, and
5. To establish the influence of his language in case of a translator who is a native speaker of neither Arabic nor English on the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

For the comparison between the selected texts, the study will refer to the Control Text as CT when quoting verses, and simply to the names of the translators for the other texts: Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Irving, and Abdel-Haleem. In the case of the collective team, the reference used will be Ozek. Although this is not a normal way of reference, it will help in avoidance of confusion between the translated titles of text such as the *Qur'ân*, an English title that was used by both Abdel-Haleem and Irving.

Despite the absence of a text translated by a woman or women, their contribution to the field is significant. The only comprehensive related study, for example, is the unpublished M.A. dissertation “*Gâbiliyat Tarjamat Alfâth al-Imân fî al-Qur'ân al-Karîm*” (Translatability of Words of Faith of the *Holy Qur'ân*), (2009) which was written by Nasreen Abdul-Arazâg Thabit Al-

areegi, University of Taiz, Yemen. One of the main primary sources, “*Tarjamat Mâ'ni al-Qur'ân al-Karîm wa al-Hukum Alaiha*” (Translation of the Meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân* and the Islamic Legal Opinion on It) was written in 1993 by Muhga Ghâlib Abdul-Rahmân, a professor of *Tafsîr* and the studies of the *Holy Qur'ân* at University of Al-Azhar, Egypt.

Taking into account the sheer size of the *Holy Qur'ân*, the research will concentrate only on the specific below chapters, or *Sûrahs*, of the *Holy Qur'ân*. The chapters all have specific names, indicating the subject matter:

- The 1st *Sûrah* (The 1st Chapter or The opening)
- The 3rd *Sûrah* (The 3rd Chapter or The Family of `Imrân)
- The 12th *Sûrah* (The 12th Chapter or Joseph)
- The 61st *Sûrah* (The 61st Chapter or The Ranks)
- The 112th *Sûrah* (The 112th Chapter or Purity of Faith)

I chose these specific *Sûrahs* because they include, among other categories of the Qur'ânic themes, the following:

1. 1.The core of the Islamic belief, ‘*Tawhîd*’, that is to say, the Oneness of Allâh, and the exclusive worship of Allâh as expressed in *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha* “The Opening”:

You ‘Alone’ we worship, and You ‘Alone’ we ask for help
‘for each and everything. (CT 1:1-5)

إياك نعبدُ وإياك نستعين.

- 2.The Makki *Sûrahs*, which refers to those *Sûrahs* and verses that were revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ in Makkah;
3. The Madanî *Sûrahs*, which refers to the *Sûrahs* and verses that were revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ while He was in Madinah; Rules pertaining to acts of worship;
- 4.Rules pertaining to dealings with others in all aspects of daily life;
- 5.The detailed *Holy Qur'ân*;

6.The concise *Holy Qur'ân*;

7.The short *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur'ân* and

8.The long *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Knowing these themes in the *Holy Qur'ân* helps a translator to identify the reasons for and the circumstances of revelation of each verse. It will help him/her to understand the Islamic terminology of each category. It also allows the interpreter to recognise the social and cultural dimensions of the revelation that play a significant role in the translation.

Grasping the reasons for and the situation of the revelation of the *Holy Qur'ân* also assists in capturing the implicit meanings of some verses: some meanings were pronounced directly in the *Holy Qur'ân*, while others were included for the benefit of the listeners, such as in *Sûrat Al-Isrâ* “The Journey by Night”:

And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.
And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour. (CT 17:23)

وقضى ربك ألا تعبدوا إلا إياه وبالوالدين إحساناً، إما يبلغن عندك الكبر
أحدهما أو كلاهما، فلا تقل لهما أفٍ ولا تنهرهما وقل لهما قولاً كريماً.

Being aware of these themes or categories will also enable translators to comprehend the style and structure, “intertextuality”, of the *Holy Qur'ân*. In respect of these features, Abdel-Haleem (2005:xx) writes:

One of the obvious stylistic features of the Qur'an is the use of grammatical shift from one personal pronoun to another (e.g. third to second to first person speaker; from singular to plural of majesty), and in the tenses of verbs. This is an accepted rhetorical practice in Arabic, similar to features in some European literature. It is called in Arabic “*iltifat*” (i.e. ‘turning’ from one thing to another)” for this type of the Qur'anic style.”

The text features frequent shifts in tense or person, for example: a shift from the first person to the third person, a shift from the third person to the second person and then back to the first person or a shift from plural to singular

within a given person may not be easy to tackle in translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

An example can be found in *Sûrat Al-Aḥqâf* “Curved Sand-hills”:

Or say they: He (Muhammad ﷺ) has fabricated it. Say: 'If I have fabricated it, still you have no power to support me against Allâh. He knows best of what you say among yourselves concerning it (this *Qur'ân*)! Sufficient is He as a witness between me and you! And He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful. (CT 46:8)

أم يقولون افتراه ، قل إن افتريته فلا تملكون لي من الله شيئاً هو أعلم بما تفيضون فيه
كفى به شهيداً بيني وبينكم وهو الغفور الرحيم

1.3 Rationale for the Study and Underlying Hypotheses.

Rationale for this study stems from the pivotal role of the *Holy Qur'ân* as an initiation of a series of fields of study that were to develop into the Islamic sciences, among them, of course, the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* the field of this study, In chapter 3 entitled “*The Qur'ân: sacred text and cultural yardstick*”, Roger Allen (2003: 34) argues:

The status of the *Qur'ân* as a canonical text served as the basis for the initiation of a series of fields of study that were to develop into the Islamic sciences and therefrom into Arabic literary scholarship. The text itself contained numerous individual words and phrases that reflected the linguistic and religious environment of the Arabian Peninsula in the pre-Islamic era. Such words had to be codified, and their meanings and origins had to be investigated.

Therefore, the researcher is motivated to investigate the semantic disparities and discrepancies in translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* into English.

In fact, disparities and discrepancies have always been central to the problems experienced by translators and have been addressed by theorists in the field of translation over many years and with differing perspectives.

The matter of choosing a suitable equivalent plays a significant role in creating semantic discrepancies and disparities:

According to Gregory Rabassa:

It is this matter of choice that bedevils the translator as he seeks to approach the language he is working from as closely as possible. In certain cases it comes down to such elemental things as articles. I have always maintained that translation is essentially the closest reading one can possibly give a text. The translator cannot ignore “lesser” words, but must consider every jot and tittle. In the case of Latin and Roman, for example, there are no articles. Bringing them into English and many other languages, the translator must decide what the author “wanted to say.” Is it “the dog” or “a dog?” The important difference between the two concepts (as far as we who work in English are concerned) was left to the unspoken imagination of the Romans. (1989: 6)

The same idea of translators’ choice is also held by William Weaver who argues:

Faced with a choice between ‘perhaps’ and ‘maybe’, the translator does not put the words on trial and engage attorneys to defend and accuse. Most probably, he hears the words in some corner of his mind, and likes the sound of one better than the other. (1989: 117)

The implication of these arguments is that semantic dissimilarities may occur because of the slight differences in the meanings of the words and the slight mistakes that are sometimes made by translators.

As far as “the slight differences in the meanings of the words” is concerned, the Qur’anic term “نزل”. In verse 3, of the third *Sûrah* or *Sûrat Âl-Imrân* “The Family of Imrân”, is the best example for explaining “the slight difference between the words”

In this verse *Sûrat Âl-Imrân*, the Control Text, Irving, and Ozek use the verb “sent down”, Pickthall uses the verb “revealed”, Asad, Abdel-Haleem and Ali use the verb “sent down” and a paraphrase “step by step” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “نزل”.

In this respect, Shaik Şâlih al-Shaikh states:

We are aware of the fact that the translation of the *Glorious Qur’ân*, however accurate it may be, must fall short of conveying the wealth of meaning that the miraculous text of the original conveys: and that the meaning conveyed by the translation is only the sum total of what the translator has understood from the text of the Glorious Book of Allâh, and that it cannot escape the defects and drawbacks that are inherent in every human endeavour. (2009: 111)

A similar view was also held by Irving (1992:xxiv) who claims:

Almost every day I learn a new rendering for a word or phrase, then I must run this new thread of meaning through other passages. The Qur'ân is a living Book. We must respect yet find a way to interpret this sacred text, and not deform its meaning.

Commenting on this problem, Ozek, and his colleagues state:

There are many excellent translations of the *Qur'ân* in English, but our goal is to produce a special translation in clear, easily understood modern English language, immediately accessible to the majority of English-speakers today. We will also try to address all issues that readers bring to our attention. (2000: vii)

The implication of this argument is that the translator of the *Holy Qur'ân* needs to be cautious all time to revisit his/her choices of the words.

A case in point occurs in *Sûrat An-Naml* (The Ant):

And you will see the mountains and think them solid,
but they shall pass away as the passing away of the
clouds....(CT 27:88)

وترى الجبال تحسبها جامدة وهي تمر مر السحاب

The porpostional meaning of the intended Arabic word “ترى” is “صلب”, which is equivalent to the word “solid” in English.

But the contextual meaning of this word here is “متحركة” which is equivalent to the phrase “stand still”.

The intended meaning of this word is to draw the Pagans to the alternation of the day and night by the power of Allâh.

There is no doubt that all the translators of the selected versions are keen not to distort the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân*, nevertheless, the translators of the Control Text made this mistake.

Other theorists relate semantic discrepancies and disparities to the differences between the languages. Eugene Nida, argues:

Since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to the corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrase and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. (1964b/2004: 153)

Nida's contributions to the debate will be revisited often, because his main concern was centred on the translation of another holy, sacrosanct text, the Holy Bible.

A similar view to Nida's is held by Josė Ortega y Gasset, who claims:

...it is utopian to believe that two words belonging to different languages, and which the dictionary gives us translations of each other, refer to exactly the same objects. Since languages are formed in different landscapes, through different experiences, their incongruity is natural. (1992: 96)

Philip E. Lewis (2004: 223) refers to the existence of semantic discrepancies and to the difference between languages as well: "What comes into English from French will therefore be something different. This difference that depends on the dissimilarity of languages is the difference always already in translation."

As far as the obfuscation of the Arabic Language is concerned, Roger Allen (2003: 16) writes:

The features of the Arabic language, its huge lexicon with a concomitant potential for enrichment and obfuscation, its repertoire of morphological transformations, its exultation in the sheer beauty of the sound of words, these elements have served as the inspiration for generations of *littérateurs* who have made virtuoso use of the potential it offers.

In this respect, the challenges facing the translators are compounded by the differences between Arabic and English. For example, Arabic differentiates between male and female, not only in pronouns, but also in the verbs and sentence structure, as well as in singular and plural forms. Conjugation depends on number and gender. The indefinite article does not exist in Arabic but it differentiates between the definite article and the indefinite article by using "*At-Tanwīn*" which is the Arabic grammatical device that is connected with the pronunciation of the last letter of the indefinite article if it is a singular, a specific plural or a collective noun, or a name of specific lexical form, in a different grammatical structure.

There is a definite article; the device “ال” but its use is not akin to its usage in the English language. Moreover, in Arabic verbs appear before nouns, and adjectives follow the nouns they qualify. (An expanded explanation of the lexical, syntactic, morpho-syntactic, rhetorical and cultural dissimilarities between Arabic and English will be given in chapter 3: Problems Related to Translatability of the *Holy Qur’ân*), as well as in chapter 5: Analysis of the selected *Sûrahs*.)

For the above reason, Al-Jawâdî argues: “The translators of the *Glorious Qur’ân* should be well-educated native speakers, otherwise no perfect message can be achieved.” (2008: 23)

Failure of preservation of the word order of the source text may lead to semantic dissimilarities.

Margaret Sayers Peden compares the differences in translation surrounding a change of word order with what happens to the molecules of the ice cube when it melts. She writes:

I like to think of the original work as an ice cube. During the process of translation the cube is melted. While in its liquid state, every molecule changes place: none remains in its original relationship to the others. Then begins the process of forming the work in a second language. Molecules escape, new molecules are poured in to fill the spaces, but the lines of molding and mending are virtually invisible. The work exists in the second language as a new ice cube-different, but to all appearances the same. (1989: 13)

St. Jerome views preservation of the word order in the sacred text as of a great significance, or as he puts it:

Indeed, I not only admit, but freely proclaim that in translation (interpretation) from Greek - except in the case of a Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery - I render not word for word, but sense for sense. (2004: 23)

A similar perspective is offered by S`îd al-Lâwundî (2001: 38) who stresses that the word order in the *Holy Qur’ân* poses a problem to translators: "This unique structure of the *Holy Qur’ân* will not tolerate an alteration or a replacement of its words even with the Arabic synonym, let alone the foreign words."

The failure of preservation of its word order might distort this miracle and lead to semantic discrepancies and disparities.

For example verse 15 in the 3rd *Sûrah* (The 3rd Chapter or The Family of `Imrân)

“[Prophet], say: “Would you like me to tell you of things that are better than all of these? Their Lord will give those who are mindful of God Gardens graced with flowing streams, where they will stay with pure spouses and God’s pleasure - God is fully aware of His servants.”

قل أُوْنِيْكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْ ذَلِكَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِصِيْرٍ بِالْعِبَادِ

Abdel-Haleem started his translation of this sentence “للَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ” with the latter part of the sentence “Their Lord will give those who are mindful of God”. The back translation of his translation is “ربهم سيعطى أولئك الذين مدركين “للإله”, which is a misinterpretation (this vers will be discussed in details in chapter 5 in comparison with the other six translators).

Cultural differences are among the most significant reasons for semantic discrepancies. According to Mona Baker (2011: 18) the discrepancies arise because of a cultural divide, and she writes: “The source language word may express a concept which is totally unknown in the target-language culture. The concept in question may be abstract or concrete, it may relate to a religious belief.”

Lawrence Venuti, for instance, refers semantic discrepancies and disparities to both linguistic and cultural differences, he states:

Translation never communicates in an untroubled fashion because the translator negotiates the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text by reducing them and supplying another set of differences, basically domestic, drawn from the receiving language and culture to enable the foreign to be received there. (2004: 482)

However, a different view is given by Anthony Pym who regards “explicitation” and “implication” as the main causes of differences in translation. He quotes the following formulation taken from Karoly and Foris, (2003):

Explication takes place, for example, when a SL (source-language) unit of a more general meaning is replaced by a TL (target-language) unit of a more special meaning... Implication occurs, for instance, when a SL unit of a more specific meaning is replaced by a TL unit of a more general meaning..., etc. (2005: 32)

Non-equivalence is one of the reasons of semantic disparities and discrepancies, as Arthur Schopenhauer comments in his article “On language and words”:

Not every word in one language has an exact equivalence in another. Thus, not all concepts that are expressed through the words of one language are exactly the same as the ones that are expressed through the words of another. (1992: 32)

The Arabic *Zakâh*, for example, is a very Islamic concept – it is not the same as the concept of taxes in English, although it also means an amount of money that is taken obligatorily from the rich, individuals or companies. In the Western world, taxes are paid to the government for public services. In Islâm, the *Holy Qur’ân* specifies those who deserve to receive the benefits of *Zakâh*, such as the poor and those who are in debt and others. In many cases, nowadays, it is not collected by the government, but a rich person pays it directly to his/her poor relatives, something which is far more preferable than paying it to a government who then has to distribute and allocate it. While the taxpayer can benefit from his taxes in terms of the public services, the *zakât*-payer, religiously, should not benefit from it at all.

Susan Bassnett-McGuire maintains that it is difficult to find sameness even between two versions of the same text of the target-language:

[E]quivalence in translation then should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two TL (target-language) versions of the same text, let alone between the SL (source language) and the TL versions. (2002: 36)

Eugene Nida concludes that differences in translations can generally be accounted for by three basic factors in translating: (1) the nature of the message, (2) the purpose or purposes of the author and, by proxy, of the translator, and (3) the type of audience. (1964b/2004: 154)

If we apply the convictions and arguments set out above to the selected translated versions of the *Holy Qur’ân*, it is inevitable that semantic

disparities and discrepancies must exist between them, for the following reasons:

1. Semantic discrepancies and disparities occur because the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* may choose different/differing words in English for some Qur'anic words. This would affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised and will also set translations apart.

2. Semantic discrepancies and disparities also occur because of the differences between the languages; such as the absence of the verb “to be” or the different use of the articles in Arabic. This would affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised and will also set translations apart.

3. It could be that these semantic discrepancies and disparities occur because the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* may fail to preserve the word order of the original text. This would affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised and will also set translations apart.

4. The semantic discrepancies and disparities occur because the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* use culture-specific concepts for concepts in the source text in order to facilitate the reception of the text. This would affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised and will also set translations apart.

5. The semantic discrepancies and disparities occur because the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* may not find the English equivalent of some Qur'anic words and culture-specific concepts, and will resort to describing or even circumventing these words. This would affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised.

6. The translators' declared aim in the production of the target text will result in differences in the translation and affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised.

7. The underlying language proficiency and knowledge of Arabic of the translators will be recognizable in the respective translations. This will affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised.

8. Sometimes overlooked when considering the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is the influence of the books of *Tafsîr*, authorised commentaries on the *Holy Qur'ân*. Ali (1934: v) states

In translating the Text I have aired no views of my own, but followed the received Commentators. Where they differ among themselves, I have had to choose what appeared to me to be the most reasonable opinion from all points of view. Where it is a question merely of words, I have not considered the question important enough to discuss in the Notes, but where it is a question of substance, I hope adequate explanations will be found in the Notes.

A similar view is held by Asad, who comments:

As has been pointed out by that great Islamic scholar, Muhammad Ábduh, even some of the renowned, otherwise linguistically reliable *Qur'ân*-commentators have occasionally erred in this respect; and their errors, manifested by the inadequacy of modern translators, have led to many a distortion, and sometimes to a total incomprehensibility, of the individual *Qur'ân* passages in their European renditions...In both the notes and the appendices I have tried no more than to elucidate the message of the *Qur'ân* and have, to this end, drawn amply on the works of the great Arab philologists and of the classical commentators. (1985: v-vii)

Finally, one can assume that the inability of the translators to reflect the poetic sub-stratum of the source text will affect the meaning of the relevant sections scrutinised in respect of the emotional effect of the text on the reader or hearer.

1.4 Research Objectives

This research aims to study and analyse the selected *Sûrahs* of both Arabic and English modes in order to determine the significant semantic disparities and discrepancies between them, and to identify the possible reasons for the differences. It will focus on the following in analysing them:

1. The nature of the differences, both in respect of how the poetic structure of the *Holy Qur'ân* influences meaning and the more obvious semantic differences.
2. The way of dealing with the figurative language (metaphors, idioms, proverbs. Similes. etc)

3. How culture-specific concepts are transferred from the source text into English.
4. the methods and strategies applied in translating the Holy Qur'ân into English.
5. The possible reasons for differences, looking at the purpose of translation, taking into account remarks made by the translators and the intended target audience.
6. The outcomes of the differences in respect of the meaning/message of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

1.5 Key Questions

To achieve its objectives, the research must address a number of questions:

1. If the way of dressing, the living-habits, the religion and manners, in most cases, play a strong role in the formation of words and expressions, then how do these cultural elements create semantic disparities and discrepancies in the different translations of the selected texts from the *Holy Qur'ân*?

Said Faiq (2004: 7) is convinced that cultural elements pose problems in translation from Arabic into English, or as he put it: "Language is not the problem. Ideology and poetics are, as are cultural elements that are clear, or seen as completely 'misplaced' in what would be the target culture version of the text to be translated."

2. To what extent do linguistic markers contribute to semantic disparities and discrepancies between the translations of the selected texts from the *Holy Qur'ân*?

According to Manâ al-Qaṭṭân (2007: 152):

The verbs “ويقتلون” and “فيقتلون” which means “kill” in verse 111, in *Sûrat At-Taubah* can be read in present and passive tenses according to the grammatical devices on their letters, such as:

“Verily, Allāh purchased from the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that their shall be Paradise. They fight in Allāh’s Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed...”, or vice versa “Verily, Allāh purchased from the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be Paradise. They fight in Allāh’s Cause, so they are killed and kill (others) ... (CT 9: 111)

إنَّ الله اشترى من المؤمنين أنفسهم بأنَّ لهم الجنة. يقاتلون في سبيل الله فيقتلون ويقتلون...

Both of the sentences “فيقتلون” and “ويقتلون” which means “to kill” are amalgamated sentences consisting of the verb “يقتل” and *wāw al-jama`a* “و” as a subject in the two sentences. In terms of “spelling” there is no difference between them. In terms of “conjugation” there is a difference between them; as one is on a present tense and the other is in a passive voice. The only difference between them is in the sound. The sentence “فيقتلون” is pronounced / fəjəgtolu::n/ and the sentence “ويقتلون” / w əjəgtolu::n/, respectively. However, in terms of “diacritic” there is an optional different form between the verbs “فيقتلون” and “ويقتلون”, because the reader of the *Holy Qur’ân* is free to change the pronunciation of the first sentence from the simple present to passive voice and vice versa.

Another example is the verse 32 in *Sûrat Al-Ahzâb* “The Confederates”:

يا نساء النبي لستن كأحد من النساء. إن اتقين. فلا تخضعن بالقول فيطمع الذي في قلبه مرضٌ، وقلن قولاً معروفاً.

In the above example the full stop comes after the word “النساء” which is “women”, “يا نساء النبي لستن كأحد من النساء”, which will end in “O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women.” and for that reason, the Complex in the *Noble Qur’ân English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*, the Control Text translated it as:

O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women. If you keep your duty (to Allāh), then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease (of hypocrisy, or evil desire for adultery) should be moved with desire, but speak in an honourable manner. (CT 33: 32)

However, in the same verse, the full stop for Asad comes after the verb “إتقین” which is “conscious of God”, and for that reason, he puts the comma after the word “النساء”, and the full stop after the verb “إتقین” من ” ” , which will be “O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the [other] women, provided that you remain [truly] conscious of God.” As such, *The Message of The Qur’ān* translated it as:

O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the [other] women, provided that you remain [truly] conscious of God.
Hence, be not over-soft in your speech, lest any whose heart is diseased should be moved to desire [you], but, withal, speak in a kindly way.. (*The Message of The Qur’ān* 33: 32)

Nevertheless, even though the meaning is not altered completely, each translator translates it differently according to the linguistic markers.

Underlying the above questions is the assumption that, in the translation of a text as significant as the *Holy Qur’ān*, translators would strive to remain as faithful to the original as possible. This, too, can be highly problematic: Wilhelm von Humboldt argued as early as 1816:

The more a translation strives toward faithfulness, the more it deviates from the original: It can even be argued that the more a translation strives toward fidelity, the more it ultimately deviates from the original, for in attempting to imitate refined nuances and avoid simple generalities it can, in fact, only provide new and different nuances. (1816/1992: 55)

Applying this argument to the *Holy Qur’ān*, a further question arises:

3. How does it affect semantic similarity of translation of the selected versions of the *Holy Qur’ān*?

Having established the existence of the semantic disparities and discrepancies between the original and translations of the selected texts of the *Holy Qur’ān* from Arabic into English, the study will reflect on what the primary causes of these semantic disparities and discrepancies could be.

1.6 Principal Theories

The principal theories relating to translation and which inform this research can be summarised as follows.

1.6.1 The Semantic Approach

It is an undisputed fact that each word has its own individual nature with its own character and specific shape, it also has fixed propositional/lexical meaning that comes from the relation between it and what it refers to or describe in a concrete or imaginary situation.

However, there are other types of meaning, according to Mona Baker (2012:11):

According to Cruse, we can distinguish four main types of meaning in words and utterances (utterances being stretches of written or spoken text): propositional meaning, expressive meaning, presupposed meaning and evoked meaning.

But in terms of assessing the utterance, Mona Baker is convinced that the original/lexical meaning is a criterion. (2012:11) She argues: “It is this type of meaning that provides the basis on which we can judge an utterance as true or false.”

As this study aims to assess conveying the message of the *Holy Qur’ân* into the English language, all types of meanings associated to the *Holy Qur’ân*, *that is to say*: the sociocultural, rhetorical, figurative language (idioms, simile and proverbs), metaphorical, functional or contextual, explicit or implicit, are subjected to investigation. (An elaborate discussion of this will be in chapter 3: Problem Related to Translatability of the *Holy Qur’ân*) as well as chapter 5: Analysis of the selected *Sûrahs*.)

According to Henry Schogt the semantic approach to translation is useful in light of the fact that it concentrates on the meaning: “Semantic translation focuses on cognitive meaning and leaves the complexities of intention and innuendo to other disciplines.” (1992: 197)

Peter Newmark formulates it as follows:

Semantic translation sometimes has to interpret, even to explain a metaphor, if it is meaningless in the target-language (nevertheless, only as a last resource, only if the translator is convinced that the relevant background knowledge is inaccessible to his reader). In semantic translation, the translator's first loyalty is to his author. (1988: 63)

The research, however, utilizes the semantic theory in as far as it attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the target-language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the source language message, that is to say, the Arabic text of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

1.6.2 The Communicative Approach

The value of communication theory, according to Peter Newmark (1988: 47) lies in the fact that a communicative translation tries to render the exact contextual meaning of the original: "Communicative translation attempts to render the exact meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership."

In respect of the translation's effect, Newmark continues: "Communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original."

In weighing the advantages of the two approaches, he concludes that in semantic translation every word translated represents some loss of meaning whereas there is no loss of meaning in communicative translation.

The same opinion is held by Gregory Rabassa (1989: 5), who comments: "In speech and in writing what we do essentially is to choose the word or (metaphor) that we think, sometimes instinctively, best describes or conveys the meaning of what we want to communicate."

Thus, a communicative translation attempts to produce in its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained in the readers of the source text: in this case, to communicate the message of the *Holy Qur'ân* to non-Arabic-speakers.

1.6.3 The Theory of Equivalence

The issue of equivalence will always be a central point of Translation Studies, quite simply because achieving equivalence is the ultimate goal of all translators;

This statement is confirmed by Roman Jakobson (2012:127) who argues

“Equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguists”.

As far as the problem of equivalence is concerned, Roman Jakobson (2012: 127), divided translation into three categories :

1. Intranlingual translation or *rewording* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
2. Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
3. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of a nonverbal sign system.

Seeking a solution to finding an accurate/appropriate equivalence, Jakobson (2012:127) argues:

The intralingual translation of a word uses either another, more or less synonymous, word or resorts to a circumlocution.

(...) on the level of interlingual translation, there is ordinary no full equivalence between code-units, while messages may serve as adequate interpretations of alien code-units or messages.

Mona Baker (2011:18 &51) divides the non-equivalence into two types|:

Non-equivalence at word level which means that the target language has no direct equivalent for a word which occurs in the source text. The type and level of difficulty posed can vary tremendously depending on the nature of non-equivalence.

Non-equivalence above the word level which includes collocation and idioms and fixed expressions.

She also suggests some strategies to solve the problem of non-equivalence, such as:

1. Translation by a more general word (superordinate),
2. Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word,
3. Translation by cultural substitution,
4. Translation using a loan word or loan words plus explanation,
5. Translation by paraphrase using a related word,
6. Translation by paraphrase using unrelated words,
7. Translation by omission, and
8. Translation by illustration.

However, it is worth mentioning that the analysis of the selected translated *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur'ân* will be based on Baker's discussion of non-equivalence.

It must be clear, Newmark argues "that all translations are based implicitly on a theory of language." (1988: 39) Accordingly we can apply all the equivalent and non-equivalent linguistic theories to translation.

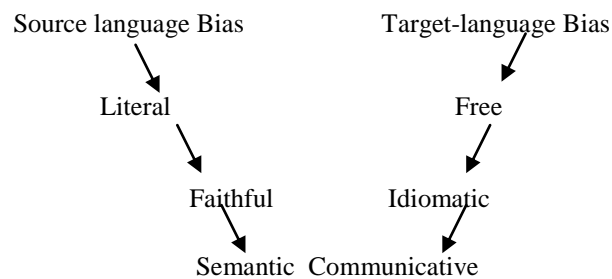
Eugene Nida divided equivalence into two categories: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence:

However, there are fundamentally two different types of equivalence: one which may be called formal and another which is primarily dynamic. Formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content...In contrast with the formal-equivalence translations others are oriented toward dynamic-equivalence. In such a translation the focus of attention is directed, not so much toward the source message, as toward the receptor response. (1964b), 2004: 161-162)

A translation of dynamic equivalence aims at complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behaviour relevant

within the context of his own culture: it does not insist that he understands the cultural patterns of the source language context in order to comprehend the message.

Given the special mode of existence of the *Holy Qur'ân* it is quite possible that dynamic equivalence would not be an option in approaching the translation of the text. Newmark argues convincingly that to a large extent these theoretical distinctions are often constructions and that translation should in fact be seen as a continuum. He illustrates this by means of a diagram in *Approaches to Translation* (1981: 39):



He elaborates on the similarities and differences between them and then proceeds:

In theory, there are wide differences between the two methods. Communicative translation addresses itself solely to the second reader, who does not anticipate difficulties or obscurities, and would expect a generous transfer of foreign elements into his own culture as well as his language where necessary. Semantic translation remains within the original culture and assists the reader only in its connotations if they constitute the essential human (non-ethnic) message of the texts (1981: 40)

1.6.4 Cultural Approach

In chapter 7 entitled “Central texts and central cultures Bassnett and Lefevere (2003:72), write:

The translators of the *Authorized Version* warn in their preface that he that meddleth with men’s religion in any part, meddleth with their custom, nay, with their freehold.” If a text is considered to embody the core values of a culture, if it functions as that culture’s central text, translations of it will be scrutinized with the greatest of care, since very basis of the culture itself.

This argument can be applied to the *Holy Qur'ân*. Because the Muslim community the *Holy Qur'ân* is the primary source on matters theological and legal. In addition to that it is a daily presence in the life of the community and its individual members.

Said Faiq (2004: 5) claims that ignoring the Arab culture in which the literary text is produced is a kind of distortion

Translating Arabic texts, with specific traditions for production, reception and circulation, into fixed texts has meant taking liberties, being invisible, violent, appropriationist and subverter to shift the texts into mainstream world culture and literature.

1.6.5 Skopos Theory

The *skopos* is a term that was introduced to translation, by Vermeer and developed by Christiane Nord.

Putting the cultural influence into consideration in translational action, the functionalist Hans J. Vermeer (2012:192) claims:

A source text is usually composed originally for a situation in the source culture; hence its status as “source text”, and hence the role of the translator in the process of the intercultural communication. This remains true of a source text which has been composed specifically with transcultural communication in mind. In most cases the original author lacks the necessary knowledge of the target culture and its text. If he did have the requisite knowledge, he would of course compose his text under the conditions of the target culture, in the target language! Language is part of culture.

About the domain of *skopos*, Hans J. Vermeer (2012:194) writes: “The notion of *skopos* can in fact be applied to three ways, and thus have three senses: it may refer to

- a. The translation process, and hence the goal of this process;
- b. The translation result, and hence the function of the translation;
- c. The translation mode, and hence the intention of this mode.

Applying this notion to the selected six translations of the *Holy Qur'ân* means that the researcher will look at them to determine the the intention and goal of the translators, the result and function of the translations in terms of their respective readers.

In his book “Introducing Translation studies”, in concern with the definition of *skopos* theory, Munday (2012:122) , writes:

Skopos is the Greek word áim'or 'purpose'and was introduced into translation theoryin 1970s by Hans J. Vermeer (1930-2010) as a technical term for the purpose of a translation and of the action of translating.

Jeremy Munday (2012:123-24) goes on writing about Skopos”

(...) Christine Nord, another major functionalist, takes issue with this. She stresses that, while 'functionality is the most important criterion for a translator'.this does not allow the translator absolute license (Nord 2005: 31-2). There needs to be a relationship between ST and TT, and the nature the nature of relationship is determined by the purpose or skopos.

This arguement raises a central problem for the translators, in terms of their faithfulness/ loyalty/ fidelity or betrayal of the original text.

Nord introduced source text analysis that would assist in understanding the gist of the source text and identify the function of the text, thus making it easier to translate

Finally, the different translations will be evaluated in terms of how successful they are measured against the aim or intention of the translators. Only at that point can the theoretical bias be ascertained and discussed.

1.7 Methodology and Methods

This study is conducted within the context of mixed method. It deals with the examination of existing documents, that is, the selected six translations of the *Holy Qur'ân*. But before delving into the methods, the research firstly

examines the concept of semantics, disparities and discrepancies in general and in translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, in particular. According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), the word “disparity” means “have a great difference.” The word “discrepancy” means “a difference or lack of compatibility between two or more facts that should be similar.” The word “semantics” is the branch of linguistics and logic concerning meaning, the meaning of a word, phrase, sentence or text.”

In order to investigate the research questions set out above, the following methods of research will be applied:

1.7.1 Descriptive Approach

In this study, Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), Corpus-based Translation Studies principles were applied in the description of the translation process and product. As the aim of this study is to examine the six selected translations of the *Holy Qur'ân* and compare them with the Control Text version in terms of their features with reference to the literary, cultural and historical contexts in which they were produced, Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), Corpus-based Translation Studies is the most relevant method.

Assessing descriptive approach to translation Antony Pym (2016:269), argues “Rather than prescribe what a good translation should be like, descriptive approaches try to say what translations are like or could be like.”

1.7.2 Comparative Approach

Because this study is of a comparative nature, it uses the comparative approach to compare the version of the King Fahd Complex as a Control Text and the chosen six translated texts and the specific selected chapters with a view to discovering the semantic disparities and the discrepancies between them. The reading always takes place against the original Arabic text. This will enable us to determine which strategies and procedures from those recommended by Newmark (1988) were used by the translators when rendering those cultural items into the TL, as well as the cultural differences that have affected the choice of those procedures.

The comparison can only become meaningful if the nature of the text is taken into account in the analysis. According to David Silverman

“[d]iscourse analysis may also focus on what is going on in an interaction in terms of performances, linguistic, styles, rhetorical devices and ways in which talk and text set out to convince and compete with alternative accounts”. (2001: 200-201)

1.7.3 Analytical Approach

The research uses the analytical approach to analyse the translated *Sûrahs* of the selected translations in order to identify the semantic differences between them. However, although the focus is on semantic disparities, yet the analysis will not be limited to the linguistic level of translation. Rather, it will trace the different translators; their backgrounds, their intentions, as well as their approaches and strategies of translation used by the translators when rendering cultural elements and figurative language reflected in the *Holy Qur'ân*.

In respect of the importance of the analytical approach, Jeremy Munday (2012: 140) comments: “Analysis of the lexicogrammatical patterns of transitivity, modality, thematic structure and cohesion can help reveal how the strands of meaning are constructed in a text.”

According to Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, the analytical approach helps in discovering the differences:

Thus far in our analysis, the textual encoding of politeness has included lexical choice, sentence form (imperative, interrogative), unfinished utterance, intonation, ambiguity of reference. These are the linguistic features which constitute the best evidence of management of the situation, the interpersonal dynamics and the process of the conflictual verbal relationship. We now turn to the sequence of subtitles to consider the extent to which the implicatures are still retrievable from the target text. Unsurprisingly - and almost inevitably - a different picture emerges. (2004: 437)

In this study, the smallest unit of discourse analysis is a sentence, but a sentence contains possible sub-units of translation such as clauses, phrases, words and morphemes.

In this respect, Newark stresses the importance of the sentence when

attempting translation:

The sentence is the 'natural' unit of translation, just as it is natural unit of comprehension and recorded thought. Within a sentence, transpositions, clause rearrangements, recasting are common, provided that 'FSP' is not infringed, and that there is a good reason for them. On the other hand, unless a sentence is too long, it is unusual to divide it. If it is unusually short, it is likely to be for a special effect. Needless to say, if long sentences are a part of a writer's style in an expressive text, they have to be preserved. (1988: 65)

The nature of the *Holy Qur'ân* is slightly problematic in this respect, given that its construction is primarily based on verses, which often seems to undermine the position of the sentence.

In respect of methodology, there are only two main methods of translation, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1992: 36) argues: "Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible, and moves the reader toward the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader."

Similar to that view, Jeremy Munday comments:

The TT of an expressive text should transmit the aesthetic and artistic form of the ST, in addition ensuring the accuracy of information. The translation should use the 'identifying' method, with the translator adopting the standpoint of the ST author. (2012: 14)

In the case of translating the Holy Book, the reader should be moved toward the original text, Newmark (1988: 55) writes: "Expressive texts, which I call 'sacred' texts, are normally translated at the author's level."

As such, the *Holy Qur'ân* is an expressive text, according to Newmark's definition and therefore its content and style should be sacred and inviolable.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 15) remarks that although an analysis of any discourse may be based on a variety of different sources, the text itself remains central, "always with focus on what the content and structure of the discourse conveys.

As far as discourse analysis is concerned, this research will benefit from Haladay's model of language and discourse in analysing the six selected

translated version of the *Holy Qur'ân*, because according to Jeremy Munday (2012: 137-38)

Halliday's model of discourse analysis, based on what he terms systematic functional grammar (SFL), is geared to the study of language as communication. It sees meanings in the writer's linguistic choices and systematically relates these choices to a wider sociocultural framework.

The Halidayan model of Language will be applied here, because the principles of the Arabic language system, that is to say; the Arabic grammar, stemmed/ stem from the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Concerning the influence of this systematic model, Munday (2012:137-38) continues:

The direction of influence is top down. Thus, the sociocultural environment in which the text operates is the highest level. This will include the conventions operating at the time and place of text production. As well as social and cultural factors, it will reflect any political, historical or legal conditions.

Applying the Halidayan model of Language to the topic of this study can be like this:: The sociocultural environment was the milieu in Arabian Peninsula before the advent of Islam, which was termed (*al-ja`hiliyyah* (the period of ignorance)). The discourse is the *Holy Qur'ân* with its various instructions and different types of address (register). With its 114 *Sûrahs* (discourse segments) and the vocabulary and grammar.

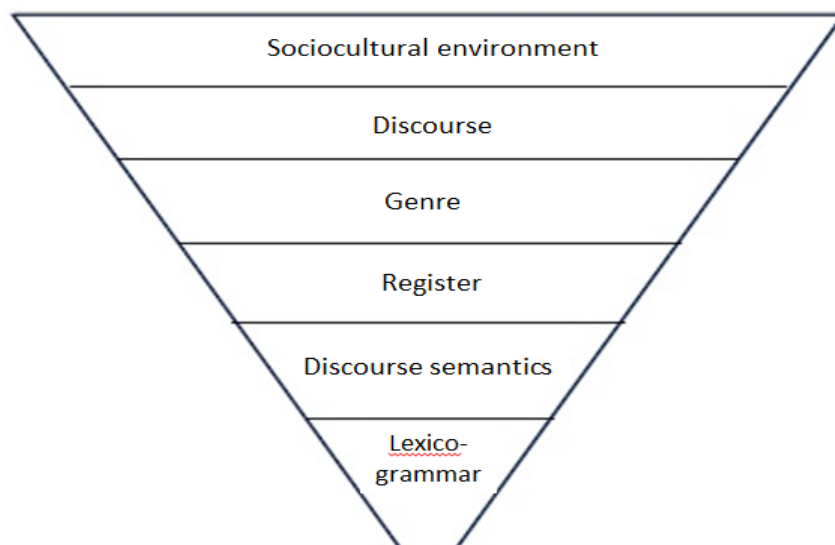


Figure 1.6.5 quoted from Munday.

For the above reasons the research uses the analytical approach to analyse sentences as a unit of translation in order to determine semantic disparities and discrepancies within the six selected versions and the specific selected *Sûrahs* as well, in order to analyse the reasons for these semantic disparities and discrepancies.

1.8 Structure of Thesis

The proposed study consists of six chapters.

Chapter 1: The purpose of this chapter is of an introductory nature and discusses the research problem, significance, rationale and objectives, the hypotheses, principal theories and methodology and methods used in the research questions.

Chapter 2: This chapter highlights the attitudes of past and current Muslim scholars on the issue of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Chapter 3: This chapter investigates the problems related to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Chapter 4: This chapter examines the introductions and/or /prefaces of the different translators to identify their intentions, target-receptors, approaches, the problems that faced them and the techniques that they used to solve these problems.

Chapter 5: This chapter explores and analyses the selected *Sûrahs* of the Holy Qur'ân in both the source language (SL) and the target-language (TL) to identify semantic disparities and discrepancies between them, and critically compare them. The outcome is weighed against the intentions of the translators as expressed by them. Finally, it identifies the theories of translation that the selected translators adopted in their translations of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Chapter 6: This chapter concludes the thesis. It contains a summary of the

conclusions, based on the results, the implications of the findings and how the study was conducted. It also makes a few recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO ATTITUDE OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS TOWARDS THE TRANSLATION OF THE *HOLY QUR'ÂN*

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly explore the attitude of Muslim scholars on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* both in the past and the present. It presents the attitude of both opponents and exponents of translation within various sects, creeds and schools of thought.

As stated before, Muslims believe that Allâh bestowed miracles upon His prophets to convince the people to whom a particular prophet was sent that this was indeed a prophet. For instance, the miracles performed by Moses appeared to the Egyptians to be sorcery. This is referred to in *Sûrat Al-A'râf* "The Height" the 7th *Sûrah* stating in verses 104 and 106 to 109:

And Mûsâ (Moses) said: 'O *Fir'aun* (Pharaoh)! Verily, I am a Messenger from the Lord of the 'Âlamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists).' *Fir'aun* said: 'If you have come with a sign, show it forth, if you are one of those who tell the truth.' Then Mûsâ threw his stick and behold! It was a serpent, manifest! And he drew out his hand, and behold! It was white (with radiance) for the beholders. The chiefs of the people of *Fir'aun* said: 'This is indeed a well-versed sorcerer. (CT 7:104, 106-109)

وقال موسى يا فرعون إني رسولٌ من رب العالمين. حقيقٌ على أن لا أقول على الله إلا الحق، قد جئتكُم ببينة من ربيكم فأرسل معي بني إسرائيل. قال إن كنت جئت بأية فأنت بها إن كنت من الصادقين. فألقى عصاه فإذا هي ثعبان مبين. ونزع يده فإذا هي بيضاء للناظرين. قال الملأ من قوم فرعون إن هذا لساحرٌ عليم.

The miracles performed by Jesus would again be seen in the context of medicine and healing, since medicine and healing were prevalent in his time. *Sûrat Âl- 'Imrân* "The Family of 'Imrân" narrates:

And will make him [*'Îsâ* (Jesus)] a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird and

breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allâh’s Leave: and I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allâh’s Leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, in that is a sign for you, if you are believers. (CT 3:49)

ورسولاً إلى بنى إسرائيل إني قد جنتكم بأية من ربكم، أنى أخلق لكم من الطين كهينة الطير فأنفخ فيه فيكون طيراً بإذن الله وأبرئ الأكمه والأبرص وأحي الموتى بإذن الله وأنبئكم بما تأكلون وما تدخرون فى بيوتكم، إن فى ذلك لآية لكم إن كنتم مؤمنين.

If Hashim Yahya al-Mallâh is to be believed there were few individuals among the Arabs who could read and write:

32 people were the number of the women and men of Makkah who knew writing in the beginning of Islâm,... Indeed this number of the people who knew writing was very few, because most people of Makkah were dealing with trade and they paid great interest in poetry. (2008: 295)

The *Holy Qur’ân* mentions the illiteracy of Arabs in *Sûrat Al-Jumu’ah* “Friday”:

He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching the Book (this Qur’ân, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and *Al-Hikmah* (*As-Sunnah* legal ways, orders, acts of worship of Muhammad ﷺ). And verily, they had been before in a manifest error. (CT 62:2)

هو الذى بعث فى الأميين رسولاً منهم يتلوا عليهم آياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وإن كانوا من قبل لفى ضلالٍ مبين.

However, Jews and Christians in Makkah and Madinah were the custodians of such knowledge. the *Holy Qur’ân* stated that fact in *Sûrat Ash- Shu’arâ’* “The Poets”:

Is it not a sign to them that the learned scholars (Like Abdullah bin Salam رضى الله عنه who embraced Islâm) of Children of Israel knew it (as true)? “(CT 26:198)

أو لم يكن لهم أية أن يعلمه علماء بني إسرائيل.

Some historians are of the opinion that the Arabic literature of that period was almost entirely oral. According to Hashim Yahya al-Mallâh (2008: 383): "Poetry was the most prominent cultural feature of the Pre-Islamic Era "In the time of Muhammad ﷺ the dominant skill was literary ability – linguistic competence in the form of poetic and oratory skills."

Poetry was highly developed among the Arab tribes: indeed, it was employed as a "weapon" against enemy tribes. Arabs were so deeply enamoured of the use of their language that they organized annual competitive fairs to choose the best poet and the best poem. Because of the important role that poetry played in the tribal life of ancient Arabia, a tribe would be very proud if one of its members managed to create a poem and the other tribes congratulated the tribe on having a poet. Abû-Âqîla comments that it was

[n]o wonder Poetry was a faithful mirror of life in ancient Arabia: it reflected the social norms of Arabs before Islâm. The most famous compositions of Arabs in the 'Pre-Islamic Era' were called '*al-Mu'allaqât al-Sab'ah*' (the 'seven Suspended Odes', or the 'Seven Hanging Poems'), a series of seven Arabic poems that were considered to be the best works of the Pre-Islâmic Era poets. (2004: 71)

In that competitive period focusing on literary competency, the *Holy Qur'ân* was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad in Makkah. Then Prophet Muḥammad began inviting all those He trusted among the people who frequented his quarters to Islâm in secret, and many embraced it. According to Hamudah Abdal Ati:

The word Islâm is derived from the Arabic root 'slm, سلم' which means among other things, peace, purity, submission and obedience. In the religious sense the word Islâm means submission to the Will of Allâh and obedience to His law. (1998: 7)

However, realizing the danger of this new faith and fearing of losing its social status, the Quraish tribe to which Prophet Muḥammad belonged, waged a psychological warfare against Him. They tried to humiliate Him by saying that He was a *sâhir*, a "sorcerer" and a mad poet, a fact referred to specifically in *Sûrat As-Sâffât* "Those Ranged in Ranks":

And (they) said: “Are we going to abandon our âlihah (gods) for the sake of a mad poet? (CT 73:36”)

ويقولون أننا لتاركوا آلهتنا لشاعر مجنون؟

They also put heavy pressure on the newly-found Muslim community: some weaker people were made to revert to their old ways, but others stuck to their new beliefs. After three years of preaching in secret, Prophet Muḥammad was ordered by Allâh to spread the word openly.

In their relentless fighting against Islâm and as the time of the annual poetic fair fast approaching, some people from amongst the Quraish approached al-Walīd bin al-Mughīra, a man of some standing. They wanted to form a united opinion on Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and His new revelation, so as to present it to the representatives of the Arabs at the fair. According to Muḥammad Muṣṭafâ al-A`zamī they asked al-Mughīra after a long discussion what they were then to say, to which he replied:

By God, his speech is sweet, his root is as a palm-tree whose branches are fruitful, and everything you have said would be known as false. The nearest thing to the truth is your saying that he is a *sahir* [sorcerer], who has brought by which he separates a man from his father, or from his wife, or from his family. (2008: 52)

The *Holy Qur`ân* mentions their debate in *Sûrat Al-Mudaththir* “The One Enveloped”:

Verily, he thought and plotted! So let him be cursed: how he plotted! And once more let him be cursed: how he plotted! Then he thought. Then he frowned and looked in a bad tempered way: then he turned back, and was proud. Then he said: “This is nothing but magic from that of God.” (CT 4:18-24”)

إنه فكر وقدر. فقتل كيف قدر. ثم قتل كيف قدر. ثم نظر. ثم عبس وبسر. ثم أدبر واستكبر قال إن هذا إلا سحر يؤثر.

As such, it is not surprising that the *Holy Qur`ân* challenged Arabs to write a book, or even to compose a single verse similar to it in many *Sûrahs*, such as in these verses of *Sûrat Al-Baqara* “The Cow”:

And if you are in doubt concerning that which We sent down (the *Qur'ân*) to our slave (Muhammad ﷺ) then produce a chapter of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) beside Allâh, if you are truthful. But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Hell whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers. (CT 2:23, 24)

وإن كنتم في ريب مما نزلنا على عبدنا فأتوا بسورة من مثله وادعوا شهداءكم من دون الله إن كنتم صادقين. فإن لم تفعلوا ولن تفعلوا فاتقوا النار التي وقودها الناس والحجارة أعدت للكافرين.

Another example is found in *Sûrat Al-Isrâ* “The Journey by Night” which states:

Say, if mankind and the Jinn were together to produce the like of this *Qur'ân*, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another. (CT 17:88)

قل لئن اجتمعت الإنس والجن على أن يأتوا بمثل هذا القرآن لا يأتون بمثله ولو كان بعضهم لبعض ظهيرا.

Given the above challenging spirit, and the fact that those who disbelieved in the *Holy Qur'ân* proved incapable of producing even a chapter to match its style, despite their linguistic competence echoed in their poetry and oratory skills, Arab pagans thought that this *Qur'ân* was magic. *Sûrat Al-Aḥqâf* “The Curved Sand-hills” states:

And when Our Clear Verses are recited to them, the disbelievers say of the truth (this Qurân) when it reaches them: “This is plain magic! (CT 46:7)

وإذا تتلى عليهم آياتنا بينات قال الذين كفروا للحق لما جاءهم هذا سحر مبين.

As such, Muslims believed/believe the *Holy Qur'ân* to be a ‘miracle’ of Prophet Muḥammad

The whole text of the *Holy Qur'ân* was revealed gradually over 23 years, according to the various circumstances, giving new teaching or answering questions. Because some parts of the *Holy Qur'ân* were revealed concisely,

the companions of Prophet Muḥammad used to ask Him about the meaning of some verses and words and from that practice emerged the study of *Tafsīr* “interpretation علم التفسير”, which is a first “translation” of the *Holy Qur’ân*. According to Manâ al-Qaṭṭân (2007: 316) “the word *Tafsīr* is a noun derived from the Arabic verb “فسر”, which means explaining of the meaning of a word.”

As such, *Tafsīr*, in general, is only a kind of concordant translation of the *Holy Qur’ân* that is connected with its discourse analysis, and gives explication of the reasons and situations of revelation of the *Holy Qur’ân*: the original text of the *Holy Qur’ân* remains preserved.

Tafsīr also appeared to assist in capturing the implicit meanings of some verses: some meanings were pronounced directly in the *Holy Qur’ân*, while others were included for the benefit of the listeners, such as in *Sûrat Ar-Ra`d* “Thunder”:

And if there had been a *Qur’ân* with which mountains could be moved (from their places), or the earth could be cloven asunder. Or the dead could be made to speak, but the decision of all things is certainly with Allâh. Have not then those who believed yet known that had Allâh willed, He could have guided all mankind? And a disaster will not cease to strike those who disbelieved because of their (evil) deeds or it (i.e. disaster) settles close to their homes, until the Promise of Allâh comes to pass. Certainly, Allâh breaks not His Promise. (CT 13:31)

ولو أن قرءاناً سيرت به الجبال أو قطعت به الأرض أو كلم به الموتى، بل الأمر لله جميعاً أفلم يبيس الذين آمنوا أن لو يشاء الله لهدى الناس جميعاً، ولا يزال الذين كفروا تصيبهم بما صنعوا قارعة أو تحل قريباً من دارهم حتى يأتي وعد الله إن الله لا يخلف الميعاد.

The implicit meaning of this verse is that if these things had happened in the previous holy books, it was even more appropriate to happen in this the *Holy Qur’ân*. However, the pagans of Makkah would not believe in it.

Because of the significance of *Tafsīr* as a branch of studies of the Muslim's belief, Muslim scholars link it firmly to the full knowledge of the *Holy Qur'ân*. Manâ al-Qaṭṭân continues:

Muslim scholars put some prerequisites for the interpreter of the *Holy Qur'ân* as follows:

1. The interpreter should be objective;
 2. He/she should interpret the *Holy Qur'ân* by using the *Holy Qur'ân* itself, because some concise verses are elaborated in other verses in some other *Sûrah*;
 3. She/he should seek the meaning from *Sunnah*;
 4. He/she should be competent in Arabic;
 5. He/she should be competent in the *Holy Qur'ân* and its themes;
 6. She/he should have a high level of understanding;
- and
7. He/she should be honest. (2007: 321-324)

The following are three examples of books of *Tafsīr* meeting these prerequisites, and named after the interpreters of the *Holy Qur'ân*: *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* and *Tafsīr at-Ṭabarī*

However, if translating the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân* is akin to interpreting them, then there should not be any dispute between Muslim scholars over it, because the first interpreter of the *Holy Qur'ân* was Prophet Muḥammad himself as Manâ al-Qaṭṭân (2007: 326) states:

When His companions questioned Him about the meaning of the word *Zulm* (ظلم) in *Sûrat Al-An'âm* (The Cattle), Prophet Muhammad told them that the word “ظلم” here did not mean: “to do wrong to oneself, rather it means joining others in worshipping with Allâh as it stated in *Sûrat Luqmân* (Luqmân): Verily, joining others in worshipping with Allâh is a great *Zulm* (wrong) indeed. (CT 31:13)

إِنَّ الشَّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ.

According to Hussein Abdul-Raof, the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* had already started in the time of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He argues:

During the Prophet Muhammad's Era, translation of the *Qur'ân* was limited to diplomatic purposes...Prophet Muhammad (629 CE) sent envoys to the neighboring countries, where they rendered some of the Qur'ân in the local languages to rulers. (2004: 91)

The translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* which was sent to the Emperor of Roman Empire in Byzantium -historically known as the Eastern Roman Empire- was the verse 64 of *Sûrat Âl-`Imrân* "The Family of 'Imrân":

Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allâh (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allâh." Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (CT 3:64)

قل يا أهل الكتاب تعالوا إلى كلمة سواء بيننا وبينكم ألا نعبد إلا الله ولا نشرك به شيئاً ولا يتخذ بعضنا بعضاً أرباباً من دون الله فإن تولوا فقولوا أشهدوا بأنا مسلمون.

In fact Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not do only that, but He instructed His companion Zaid bin Thâbit رضى الله عنه to learn the Jewish language so as to tell the Prophet about Jews and to tell them about the Prophet ﷺ.

Muslims are expected to follow the *Sunnah* (Prophetic Traditions) of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, without questioning, but with regard to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* from Arabic into any other language(s), they had/have an ambivalent attitude.

As such translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* has been a controversial issue among Muslim scholars since the time of the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1055 CE). The debate on the translation of the Holy Qur'ân arose because a large number of non-Arabic speaking people had embraced Islâm. It also arose because they believed/believe that the *Holy Qur'ân* itself talked about its completion, perfection and preservation. A case in point occurs in *Sûrat Al-Mâ'ida* "The Table Spread With Food":

... This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islâm as your religion. (CT 5:3)

اليوم أكملت لكم دينكم واتممت عليكم نعمتى ورضيت لكم الإسلام ديناً.

Another example is found in *Sûrat Al-Hijr* “The Rocky Tract”:

Verily, We, it is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur’ân) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).
(CT 15:9)

إننا نحن نزلنا الذكر وإننا له لحافظون.

The implication of these arguments is that the translation may lead to undesirable developments within the form and the content of the *Holy Qur’ân*, which will, eventually, be a violation of the *Holy Qur’ân* as it will not convey the miracle of the *Holy Qur’ân* which is embodied into its structure. But, however, in reality, there were from the very start Muslims who were non-native-Arabic speakers: their only access to the *Holy Qur’ân* would be through translation.

2.2 Historical context

It is against this backdrop that this study will briefly investigate the attitudes of Muslim scholars towards the translation of the *Holy Qur’ân* into English during the different ruling periods of Islâm.

Sheikh Muḥammad al-Khudayrî writes:

Good Caliphs’ of Islâm did not pay great attention to the cultural aspects of development. They spent their ruling period in the expansion, establishment, security of their nascent state and paving the road for calling people to Islam. This argument could be said about the ruling period of the Umayyad caliphs, as well. (2004: 201)

As such, and for that reason, history has not recorded any significant controversy amongst Muslim Scholars on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur’ân* in that period.

The ruling period of the Umayyad Caliphate was succeeded by the Abbasid Caliphate the longest ruling period in Islamic era. Sheikh Muhammad al-Khudayrī continues:

The Abbasid Caliphate ruled for 524 years, 37 was the total number of the Caliphs of it. It was divided into three eras: The first one continued for 100 years with a complete sovereignty of the Caliphs over the whole territory of the Caliphate: it ruled from 750 to 847. The second one started from 847 to 944. The third one started from 944 to 1055.(2004: 445)

As far as the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is concerned, the first era of the Abbasid Caliphate is the most remarkable era because the controversy on translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* from Arabic into any other language(s) among Muslim scholars began in this era. It is not surprising that this era was the most likely period for such a doctrinal stance, because it was the time of the greatest stability and a period of considerable economic and cultural development.

The most significant cultural developments of Islamic civilization, such as *Ilm al-Hadith* علم الحديث (the study of the tradition of the “*Sunnah*” of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ), as well as *Ilm At-Tafsîr* علم التفسير, the Interpretation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, a compilation of books and translations from foreign languages into Arabic, occurred in that period. It witnessed the emergence of the two Arabic linguistic schools in Al-Kûfa and Al-Baṣra, and the rise of eminent Arabic grammarians like Abū al-Aswad al-Dualī, Sibawaih and Khalīl bin Aḥmad al-Farâ'idī who fixed the Arabic script.

That debate on the issue of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* which started in that period raised many questions, such as whether it is possible to translate the *Holy Qur'ân*, and whether it is relevant if the translator is an Arabic-native-speaker or non-Arabic-native-speaker? A host of questions were framed. Is it permissible or not permissible to translate the *Holy Qur'ân*? What are the verses that are permissible to be translated into other language and which are not permissible? Is it permissible to recite the translated the *Holy Qur'ân* as a kind of worship? Is it permissible to recite the translated *Qur'ân* in ‘*Salâh*’? Is it permissible to write the *Holy Qur'ân* in non-Arabic

characters? Is it permissible to deliver the Friday Khutba, the “Friday Speech” in a language other than Arabic?

According to Abdul-Nabi Dhâkir, (2010: 2) “the above questions were raised because Prophet Muḥammad instructed Muslims to convey the message of Islâm to all mankind, “He said: The best of you is that who learns the *Holy Qur’ân* and teaches it” خيركم من تعلم القرآن وعلمه

Therefore both of the groups raised the question: “If we are ordered to convey the *Holy Qur’ân* to all people, how can we do this to non-Arabic-speakers without translating it to them into their own languages?”

The exponents based their licence of permissibility for translation of the *Holy Qur’ân* on the above instruction of Prophet Muḥammad and on the universality of Islam, as it is stated in verse 28 in *Sûrat Saba’* “Sheba”:

And We have not sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not. (CT 34:28)

وما أرسلناك إلا كافة للناس بشيراً ونذيراً ولكن أكثر الناس لا يعلمون.

They also based their opinion on the fact that, in the beginning of Islam, Prophet Muḥammad himself had sent some envoys to the neighbouring countries, where they rendered some statements of the *Holy Qur’ân* to them in their local languages, as I referred to earlier.

But the opponents based their arguments on the ground that Allâh is able to reveal His Message into any other language than Arabic but He didn’t do that, and the *Holy Qur’ân* itself stressed its Arabic nature in many verses such as in *Sûrat Az-Zûkhraf* “Gold Adornments”:

Verily, We have made it a *Qur’ân* in Arabic that you may be able to understand (its meaning and its admonitions). (CT 43:3)

إنا جعلناه قرآناً عربياً لعلكم تعقلون.

Because the controversy on the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* from Arabic into another or other language(s) among Muslim scholars began in the Abbasid Caliphate, there will be some more detailed focus on this era.

2.3 Translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in the Golden Age of the Abbasid Caliphate (750 to 847 CE)

This stage covered the first era of the Abbasid Caliphate in which 8 Caliphs were crowned. It started with the Caliph Abul-Abass As-Safâh in 750 CE and ended with the Caliph Al-Wathiq in 847 CE.

For the Muslim historians the golden age of the Islamic civilization was the era when Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, became a centre of higher education and knowledge and a destination of choice for the learners and scholars as Sheikh al-Khudayrî (2004: 126) stated: “Baghdad became a target for the students from all Muslim regions: they travelled to it to finish their higher education in different branches of knowledge.”

Sheikh al-Khudayrî comments:

The first person who showed interest in the translation activity was Abu-Jafar al-Mansur, the second Caliph of the Abbasid Caliphate. Although Abu-Jafar al-Mansur was the first Caliph who started the translation movement, translation activity reached its peak during the rule of Caliph Al-Mamun who ruled from 813-833 CE. (2004: 201)

Sheikh al-Khudayrî then continues:

When al-Mamun was crowned, his thinking was already influenced by the books that were translated from Greek into Arabic. For that reason, Al-Mamun established “*Beit Al-Hikmah*”, “The House of Wisdom”. It was an institution that was responsible for the translation of the Greek, the Indian and the Persian books into Arabic. He sent a group of scholars and translators, among them the director of “*Beit Al-Hikmah*”, to the Roman Emperor so as to get some of the ancient valuable Greek books to be translated into Arabic. (2004: 202)

That era was characterized by reading and digesting literature of the earlier civilizations and absorbing it. For this reason the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* became a matter of debate, among Muslim scholars, because they were influenced by the ancient Greek, Indian and Persian literature.

In that historical era of the Islâmic civilization lived four eminent Muslim scholars. They were/are called ‘Imams’ of the main four ‘Schools of the Islamic jurisprudence, because their ideas shaped/shape the Muslims’ religious instruction from that time. The first scholar who declared that it was permissible to recite the *Holy Qur’ân* in Persian in *Ṣalâh*, whether the reader knew Arabic or not, was Imâm Abū Ḥanīfa.

2.3.1 *Imâm Abū Ḥanīfa*

According to Abū Turâb al-Thahrī (1985: 82): “Abū Ḥanīfa was born in al-Kūfa in 702 and died in 772 in Baghdad. He was one of the four eminent leaders of the Islamic Jurisprudence School and a leader of The School of Thought. He established the Abū Ḥanīfa’s Method of *Fiqh*. This school was/is based on the predictive incidents and the elicitation of the Islamic rules from them by analogy”.

As for Abū Ḥanīfa’s attitude towards translation of the *Holy Qur’ân*, Sa’id al-Lâwundī said:

Abī Ḥanīfa based his argument on a license of Salmân al-Farisi - a companion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ - to the people of Persia which reads: “The people of Persia wrote to Salmân al-Farisi to write to them *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha* ‘the opening *Sûrah*’ in Persian, which he did: and they used to recite it in their *Salâh* until their tongue became used to it.” (2001: 41)

Therefore, according to Abū Ḥanīfa’s license, the *Holy Qur’ân* is translatable. Nonetheless, it is claimed that Abū Ḥanīfa abandoned his original unconditional license and accepted the opinion of his two chief disciples, in permitting the use of translation only for those who are unable to recite the original Arabic.

2.3.2 *Imâm Mâlik*

According to Abū Turâb al-Thahrī (1985: 68): “Mâlik bin Anas was born in 717 and died in Madīnah in 801. He was another one of the four famous Fiqh Schools’ leaders. He was the *Imâm* of the ‘School of *Ḥadīth*’. This school elicited/elicits its rule only from the *Holy Qur’ân* and the Prophetic Traditions”.

However, Muhga Ghâlib Abdul-Rahmân writes:

Imâm Mâlik rules that recitation of the Opening *Sûrah* in *Ṣalâh* is obligatory whether the person knows Arabic or not. He was against translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* on the ground that the miracle of the *Holy Qur'ân* is in its composition “structure” and the translation will lose that miracle. (1993: 94)

2.3.3 *Imâm al-Shâfi`î*

According to AbūTurâb al-Thahrī, (1985: 75): “Abū `Abdullâh Muḥammad bin Idrīs al-Shâfi`î was one of the four authorized *Fiqh* School’s leaders. He was born in Gaza in Palestine in 772 and died in 826 in Egypt”. Concerning the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Muhga Ghâlib Abdul-Rahman (1993: 89) stated that

... scholars of al-Shâfi`î’s School of Thought ruled that recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is not permissible, in *Ṣalâh* or outside it, whether the person knows Arabic or not. It is obligatory to recite the *Holy Qur'ân* in Arabic.” al-Shafie cited *Sûrat Az-Zumar* (The Groups): “An Arabic *Qur'ân*, without any crookedness (therein) in order that they may avoid all evil which Allâh has ordered them to avoid, fear Him and keep their duty to Him. (CT 39:28)

قرأنا عربياً غير ذي عوج لعلهم يتقون.

2.3.4 *Imâm bin Ḥanbal*

According to Abū Turâb al-Thahrī, (1985:30): “Abū Abdullâh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal al-Shaybânī was a leader of one of the four eminent Islamic Jurisprudence’s Schools. He was born in 686 and died in 863 in Baghdad. *Imâm* Ibn Ḥanbal was against translating the *Holy Qur'ân*”. He quoted *Sûrat Az-Zûkhruf* “The Gold Adornments” as a sufficient reply to the exponents of translating the *Holy Qur'ân*:

Verily, We have made it a *Qur'ân* in Arabic that you may be able to understand (its meaning and its admonitions). (CT 43:3)

إنا جعلناه قرآناً عربياً لعلكم تعقلون.

According to *Imâm* Ibn Ḥanbal it is obligatory to recite the *Holy Qur'ân* in Arabic, because Allâh is able to reveal it in any other language but He revealed it in a clear Arabic.

2.3.5 Abū Yūsuf Ya'qub

Abu Yusuf Ya`qūb bin Ibrāhīm bin Ḥabībal-Anṣārī was born in 731 Baghdad and died in 798 in Baghdad. He was a follower of *Imām* Abū Ḥanīfa. He was one of the two eminent jurists who supported the Abū Ḥanīfa's school. He was the one who introduced the Abu-Ḥanifa' school to the public. He wrote a number of books on it. However, he disagreed with his master AbūḤanīfa regarding the license of reciting the translated *Qur'ân* in *Ṣalâh*: he permitted it conditionally on the inability to recite the *Holy Qur'ân* in Arabic.

2.3.6 Muḥammad bin al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī

He was born in Wâsit in 753 and died in 811 in al-Raiy City. He was also a follower of Abū Ḥanīfa and authored many books on the Abū Ḥanīfa's school. Like his classmate Abū Yūsuf, he disagreed with his master's unconditional permission of reciting the translated *Qur'ân* in *Ṣalâh*. He also agreed to it only on the condition of the inability to recite the *Holy Qur'ân* in Arabic.

2.3.7 Abū `Uthmân` Umar bin Baḥr, al-Jâhiz

Al-Jâhiz was born in al-Basra in 781 and died in 877 in Baghdad. He was a linguist, a grammarian, a translator and an author of many books. He lived in a period of the biggest activity of translation in the Islamic history when they translated all the major Indian texts and the Greek wisdoms and Arabized the Persian literature available at the time. According to Abdul-Nabī Dhâkir:

Al-Jâhiz argues:

“Since the meanings are available to the Arabs and non-Arabs anywhere at any time, and since the beauty of creation of literature is in the structure but not in the meaning and the content, therefore, the Indian Books, the Greek wisdom and the Persian literature (which concentrated on the meaning) became more beautiful after translation into Arabic. Nevertheless, the Arab's wisdom “the poetry”, which is based on the beauty of “rhythm”, will lose its beauty, if it is translated into any other language. However, “the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân* can be translated.” (2010: 3)

The conclusion is that, historically, Muslim scholars were not in favour of translating the *Holy Qur'ân* into other languages because this would cause it to lose its literary prowess which comes across powerfully through Arabic. This stance appears to emphasise the structure and the style of the *Holy*

Qur'ân rather than its message (meaning). However, in later colonial and postcolonial periods this ideological position continued but tended to move towards an acceptance of the translation of the meanings of the message conveyed by the *Holy Qur'ân*, rather than attempting to retain equivalence of the structure. The argument then moves to more recent scholarship where both the literal translation and translation of the meaning would be permitted. The chapter concludes with a summary of the arguments for and against translation and a set of conditions under which it would be permissible to translate the *Holy Qur'ân*. This chapter is essentially a review of literature on the historical evolution of the debate about the desirability of translating the *Holy Qur'ân*. It is assumed that this chapter creates the framework within which the selected translations will be analysed.

2.4 Translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in the Later Part of the Abbasid Caliphate (944 to 1055 CE)

2.4.1 Ibn Ḥaẓm

According to AbūTurâb al-Thahrī (1985: 110): “Abū Muḥammad `Alī bin Aḥmad Bin Sa`īd al-Andalūsī (a Spaniard) was born in 1006 and died in 1072 in Cordoba, and was probably the most famous scholar of Islām during the Muslim rule of Spain”.

Regarding his stance on the issue of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Abdul-Nabī Dhâkir writes:

Ibn Ḥaẓm tackled the problem of translating the *Holy Qur'ân* from the point of permission and prohibition, and in respect of the recitation of the translated *Qur'ân* in worship, he stated: He who recites the translation of the mother of the Book the opening *Sûrah* or some verses of it, or some translated parts of the *Holy Qur'ân* in his *Ṣalâh* intentionally, his *Ṣalâh* is invalid and he is a disbeliever. (2010: 4)

To confirm his stance, Ibn Ḥaẓm also quoted *Sûrat Yûsuf* “Joseph”:

Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'ân in order that you may understand. (CT 12:2)

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ.

The conclusion of his opinion is that the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is not equivalent to the original revealed *Qur'ân* and that it will not replace it, nor will it be recited in worship.

2.4.2 *Imâm Al-Ghazâlî*

According to AbūTurâb al-Thahrī, (1985: 276): “Abū Ḥâmid Al-Ghazâlî was born in 1072 and died in 1127 in Tûss.” According to Abdul-Nabī Dhâkir Al-Gazâlî was against the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* and refers to the following remark: “The translation of the opening *Sûrah* will not replace it and it will not validate the *Ṣalâh* of those who are unable to recite it in Arabic. (2010: 4)

2.4.3 *Al-Shâṭibî*

According to AbūTurâb al-Thahrī (1985: 245): “Abū Isâaq Ibrâhîm Bin Mûsâwas born in 1160 and died in 1212 in Granada in al-Alandalus.” Regarding his attitude towards the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Abdul-Nabī Dhâkir writes:

Al-Shâṭibî said that the Arabic language has two levels of the meanings: “primary and secondary meanings. The primary meaning is the original meaning of every word or every sentence and in this respect Arabic is similar to that of most other languages. But Arabic has special forms for the secondary meaning: which depend on the importance of the information that is going to be conveyed, whether it is about the sender, the receiver, the sending item, the situation or the context. As for the primary meaning the *Holy Qur'ân* can be translated, but it is impossible to translate its secondary meanings. (2010: 6)

Therefore, it is possible to render the primary meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân*, but it is impossible to translate the secondary meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

2.4.4 *Ibn Taimiyya*

Abū Turâb al-Thahrī (1985: 87) writes: “Abul-`Abbâs Aḥmad Bin `Abdul-Halîm Al-Dimashqî Al-Harânî was born in Haran in 1243 and died in Damascus in in 1350. He is deemed to be the most eminent Islamic scholar of his time.”

Regarding his stance on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Muhgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Rahmân writes:

Ibn Taimiya said that it was impossible to find an utterance that denote the same meaning of the Holy Qur'ânic utterance, and for this reason Muslim scholars refused to permit recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in non-Arabic, whether the reader was/is able or unable to do it in Arabic, because it would/will not be the revealed Book. (1993: 93)

2.4.5 Al-Zarkashî

Badr a-Dîn al-Zarkashî was born in 1367 and died in 1416 in Cairo. According to Abdul-Nabî Dhâkir, Al-Zarkashî was against the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, his reasoning was as follows:

Recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is not permissible, whether a person knows Arabic language or not, whether he/she was/is in *Salâh* or outside it". He believes that the miracle of the *Holy Qur'ân* is in its composition 'نظمه' and the translated *Qur'ân* will lose those linguistic features of the *Holy Qur'ân* such as rhythm, semantics, syntactic and phonetics and for that specific reason, the translated *Qur'ân* is not permissible to be recited in all forms of worships. (2010: 5)

2.4.6 Jalâl al-Dîn al-Suyûfî

According to Abû Turâb al-Thahrî (1985: 128), Jalal al-Din `Abd al-Rahman Bin Kamal al-Din Abi Bakr, al-Shafî` was born in 1471 and died in 1533 in Cairo. He was one of the few published interpreters of the *Holy Qur'ân*. He is said to have authored around 1000 books. As for his attitude towards the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Abdul-Nabi Dhâkir stated that Jalal al-Din al-Sûyuti declared that:

Recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in non-Arabic text is not permissible at all, in *Salâh* or outside it, whether the person knows Arabic or not, because the *Holy Qur'ân* will lose its miraculous power which is based on its Arabic style. (2010: 7)

2.4.7 Al-Zarqânî

Al-Zarqânî was born in Egypt at a village of Al-Zarqâ in 1644 and died in Cairo in 1721. He was not only a linguist but also a jurist of *Sharâ`a*. He authored a number of books on Islamic issues.

In respect of his contribution, Muhgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Rahmân remarks as follows

Al-Zarqâni stated the following advantages of translating *Tafsîr* of the *Holy Qur'ân*: To disclose the beauty and the greatness of the *Holy Qur'ân*: to rebut the non-Muslims' allegations against Islam: to familiarize the non-Muslim with accurate Islamic teachings to remove the obstacles of the spread of Islâm: and to release ourselves from the obligations of spreading Islâm. (1993: 108 -109)

Taking this into account, we can conclude that Al-Zarqâni was a supporter of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

2.5 Translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in Modern History

This era covers the positions taken during the colonial and post-colonial period on the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, including the stance of Al-Azhar which will be discussed later in detail,. The remarkable feature of this period was the influence of the European languages and literature, especially, English and French on some of Muslim scholars as a result of the contact between the two biggest colonisers - Britain and France - and the Arab world. Obviously, that influence casts its shadow on the old/new debate on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. Muḥammad bin Al-Ḥasan Al-Ḥajâwî, who translated the *Holy Qur'ân* into the Berber language, reopened the debate by writing a book in defence of the idea of translating the *Holy Qur'ân*.

2.5.1 Muḥammad bin Al-Ḥasan Al-Ḥajâwî

Muḥammad bin Al-Ḥasan Al-Ḥajâwî was born in in the city of Fâs in Morocco in 1874 and died in 1956. He studied at al-Qarawiyîn University and was a man of great knowledge. He worked as Minister of Education for about thirty years.

According to Abdul-Nabî Dhâkir:

Al-Ḥajâwî represented the advanced official stance of Morocco on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* which is the permissibility of translating The Noble Book. He was quoted: "It was alleged that the *Holy Qur'ân* has obliged the people to learn Arabic, and to abandon their languages. I replied to that opinion in my book 'Permissibility of Translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, in which I proved that the religion does not force nations which converted to Islâm to speak Arabic and for that reason, they all still speak their own language.(2010: 8)

2.5.2 *Sheikh Al-Islâm Muṣṭafâ Şabrî*

Muṣṭafâ Şabrî was born in Turkey in 1896 and died in Cairo in 1954. He studied at Al-Fath Mosque, the biggest Islamic University in Istanbul at that time. He was appointed as a Sheikh of Islâm - the highest official position in respect of giving the Islamic opinion on all daily life issues in the Ottoman Empire. According to Sa`îd al-Lâwundî:

Muṣṭafâ Şabrî was the strongest supporter of the Islâm's culture. He fought severely against translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, arguing that a non-native Arabic speaker will not reach the level of being an Islamic Jurist from reading the translated *Qur'ân*. (2001: 133)

2.5.3 *Muṣṭafâ Şâdiq al-Râfi`î*

Muṣṭafâ Şâdiq al-Râfi`î was born in Egypt, in the city of Tanta in 1880 and died in Cairo in 1937. He was a poet as well as an author of a number of books on Arabic literature.

Muṣṭafâ Şâdiq al-Râfi`î was against the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. His attitude can be elicited from his comment: "Preservation of the *Holy Qur'ân*'s Arabic feature, will let all Muslims with their different colours, consider themselves as one nation, that speaks one language, which leads in the end to eradication of nationalism." (1997: 74)

2.6 **The Stance of Al-Azhar on the Translation of the *Holy Qur'ân***

Perhaps the most striking example of the ideological battle on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* was that which took place at the beginning of the twentieth century in Egypt, when the Sheikhs, the 'scholars' of Al-Azhar tackled the issue. In support of their stance, both the exponents and the opponents of the translation referred to the old discussion on the issue of recitation of the translated *Qur'ân* in *Şalâh*. The most important figure in this ideological battle was Sheikh al-Marâghî.

2.6.1 *Sheikh al-Marâghî*

Muḥammad bin Muṣṭafâ bin Muḥammad bin Abdul-Mu'nim Al-Marâghî was born in Egypt at al-Maragha in 1881 and died in Cairo in 1945. He was

appointed as a Sheikh of Al-Azhar in 1928. He was greatly influenced by Sheikh Muḥammad `Abdū, the leader of the Muslim Reformation. Sheikh al-Marâghī was a famous Arabic linguistic. According to Sa`īd al-Lâwundī

Sheikh al-Maraghi permitted translation of the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân*. He said: "It is possible to translate the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân*, but, it is impossible to translate the secondary meaning which is a part of its miraculous Arabic composition نظم to any foreign language, despite that the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is less than the revealed *Holy Qur'ân*. (2001: 135)

However, as a reaction to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* that was done by Pickthall and which caused a lot of controversy among Egyptian scholars, Sa`īd al-Lâwundī writes:

[A] committee of the eminent Muslim scholars headed by Sheikh al-Marâghī gave a license فتوى on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, which read: "Since the intention is to produce a translation of the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân* that were written by scholars, therefore, from the view of Sharia it is permissible, on condition that the original *Tafsīrs* should be put beside it. (2001: 141)

Based on the above license 'Fatwâ' Sheikh al-Marâghī wrote a letter to the Prime Minister of Egypt requesting him to issue a decree for an official translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Quoting Sa`īd al-Lâwundī, Sheikh al-Marâghī wrote:

People in the past and at present were/are preoccupied by translating the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân* into other languages and it was translated by linguists who were/are competent in their languages but they didn't/don't know Arabic well, nor they understood/understand the Islamic terminologies well and for this reason, a lot of mistakes had happened in these available translations, and the people rely on them for understanding the purposes of the *Holy Qur'ân* and the rules of Sharia. Therefore, it will be obligatory for the Muslim nation - like the Egyptian nation which has a high status in the Muslim world - to take an initiative to correct these mistakes and to produce an accurate meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* in the living international languages. As such, I suggested that the cabinet can issue a decree for an official translation of the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân* which should be done by Sheikhs of Al-Azhar with the assistance of Ministry of Education. (2001: 140)

In reply to that letter, the Egyptian Cabinet issued the decree, which read:

After familiarizing with the letter of the honourable Sheikh of Al-Azhar and the letter of his Excellency Minister of Education in concern with translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, and with the consideration of the Cabinet to the difficulty of this work, and as a prevention of the bad impact of the existing translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, and in accordance with the *Fatwa*

of the eminent Muslim scholars and scholars of *Sharī`a* Faculty, in its session on 16th of April 1936, Egyptian cabinet issued the decree of its approval for an official translation of the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân* which should be done by Sheikhs of Al-Azhar with the assistance of Ministry of Education. (2001: 145)

2.6.2 Maḥmūd Shalṭūt

Maḥmūd Shalṭūt was born in 1893 and died in Cairo in 1963. He was a member of the Arabic Academic Council. He was a staunch supporter of the Reformation Movement and was shifted from the elementary level of Al-Azhar's educational system to the high level by Sheikh al-Marâghi. He was appointed as an *Imâm* of Al-Azhar in 1958.

As for his stance on the issue of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Muḥgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Raḥmân (1993: 150) argues: "Maḥmūd Shalṭūt ruled that the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* for teaching, learning and understanding is permissible."

2.6.3 Ḥassanayn Muḥammad Makhlûf

Ḥassanayn Muḥammad Makhlûf was born in 1890 and died in 1990 in Cairo. He was appointed as a director of the Egyptian 'إفتاء' *Iftâ* a committee of the Islamic opinion on daily life issues in 1946. He worked as a director of the "Al-Azhar committee of *Fatwâ*" for a long time. Concerning his stance on the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Muḥgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Raḥmân states:

Sheikh Muḥammad Makhlûf was with the translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân*. He said that the corrupted translations of the *Holy Qur'ân* existed/exist because many of the Western Orientalists translated the *Holy Qur'ân* to confound it and since we cannot stop them, it will be obligatory for us to translate the *Holy Qur'ân*.(1993: 148)

According to Abdul-Nabi Dhâkir, the technical committee of Al-Azhar issued the following rules as requirements for translating the *Holy Qur'ân*:

- Avoidance of scientific terminology, unless it is necessary for the understanding of the verse:
- Avoidance of scientific theories, such as mentioning the opinion of the astronomers on heaven and stars, when translating a verse that contains some information about them:

- If there is a need for any elaboration on some problems, that elaboration should be put in the commentary:
- The translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* should not adhere to any specific school of Muslim Juristic thought:
- Translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* should be done according to the *Hafs*¹ recitation without referring to the other seven types of recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, unless there is a need for that:
- Avoidance of complication of connectivity between the chapters and the verses.
- Stating the authentic reasons of revelations:
- Writing the complete Arabic verse, or verses that discuss a certain topic, and writing a clear interpretation of them as well as writing of the reasons of revelation on the suitable place:
- No mentioning to the abrogated verses unless there is an impossibility of connecting between the verses:
- Verification of the Makkî and Madanî *Qur'ân* in the beginning of every *Sûrah*: and
- Writing an introduction to the *Holy Qur'ân* and the method of the technical committee for the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. (2010: 11)

2.7 Translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in Recent Times

Two eminent professors of recent times deserve mention: Muhgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Raḥmân, Professor of *Tafsir* and the studies of the *Holy Qur'ân* at the University of Al-Azhar, Egypt, and Manâ al-Qaṭṭân, a professor and a supervisor of Post-Graduate Studies at the Islamic University of *Imâm Muḥammad Ibn Sa`ūd*, Saudi Arabia.

Prof. Muhgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Raḥmân has stated her position as follows:

It is impossible to translate literally, the *Holy Qur'ân*, but the translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* is possible. However, it is a double-edged weapon because as far as it has great advantages, it has severe disadvantages as well. It will be of great advantages and will achieve its objectives, if a translator has all the requirements for the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. (1993: 126-127)

About these requirements Abdul-Raḥmân continues:

¹Note: Out of the 7 kinds of recitations of the Holy Qur'ân, the *Hafs* recitation *قراءة حفص* was/is the most widely known among Muslims all over the World.

Sheikh Al-Azhar suggested the following: The translation should be done by a committee of two groups: the first one should be of those scholars of religion and Arabic language who completed their studies at Al-Azhar, *Dâr Al-'Ulûm* or the School of Islamic Jurisprudence who have their further studies in Europe, which means they are competent in European languages. The second group should be from the eminent orientalist who are competent in Arabic and in the target-language. (1993: 152)

Manâ al-Qaṭṭân divides the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* into three categories:

1. Literal translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* which means finding an equivalent of Arabic words and placing it in the same order of the Arabic text;
2. Translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* which means finding an equivalent of an explicit meaning of the Arabic word: and,
3. Translation of *Tafsîrs* of the *Holy Qur'ân*. (2007: 308)

He elaborates:

Both literal translation and translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* which means finding an equivalent of an explicit meaning of the Arabic word are not permissible because it is difficult to capture the exact meaning of the metaphorical language in which the miracle of the *Holy Qur'ân* is based. However, the translation of *Tafsîr* of the Holy Book is permissible because an interpreter “مفسر” of the *Holy Qur'ân* usually says: “This is what I understand from the verse.” (2007: 310)

2.8 Concluding Remarks

From this very brief overview, it is clear that Muslim scholars throughout modern history unanimously believe that any effort towards the translation is a mere attempt to convey the general meaning of the original text to non-Arabic-speakers. They also agree that a translation remains only an interpretation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, and thus they call it the translation of the meanings of the *Holy Qur'ân*, where the original Arabic text is to be presented and read side by side with translated text.

CHAPTER THREE

PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE TRANSLATION OF THE *HOLY QUR'ÂN*

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the problems related to translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in general and into English in particular. It investigates the translatability of the *Holy Qur'ân* and matters pertaining to the cultural and linguistic differences between Arabic and English.

According to Roger Allen (2003: 34) :

An Introduction to Arabic Literature should thus be seen as an attempt to present an alternative approach to the production of a survey of Arabic literature. It begins with the text that holds an especially privileged position within Islam and Arabic, namely the *Qur'ân*. In giving prominence to the *Qur'ân*, as divinely inspired text, as linguistic yardstick, and as motivation for the need to record the pre-Islamic poetic tradition in written form, we acknowledge its central place in almost every aspect of the development of Arabic language and literature. (2003: 4-5)

In this introduction, a considerable attention is given to the poetic aspects of the *Holy Qur'ân*. The reason for that is not only because of the important role that poetry and the poetic and prosodic components played in the revelation and subsequent history of the text, but also, maybe primarily, because very little time will be devoted elsewhere to how these features were represented in the translations. Or, more correctly, were not represented.

This study looks at the semantic disparities and discrepancies, and the poetic disparities and discrepancies are barely touched upon. Not only is the translation of poetry notoriously problematic, as will become clear from the discussion that follows in this chapter, but the approach of a researcher is also of a different nature.

Very small segments are scrutinised and subjected to intense close reading, a process during which the sound factor often takes a central place. The text becomes an object of listening, albeit with an inner ear, and described and evaluated accordingly.

In light of these factors, a lengthy description of the poetry in and poetic texture of the *Holy Qur'ân* is given.

3.2 Poetic features

According to Burton Raffel the translation of medieval European poetry is severely inhibited by a number of factors:

One can, and comparists do, generalize about Medieval European literature as a whole. The translator of a medieval work, however, is far more limited, for by the very nature of his task he must enter as deeply and totally as he is able into a specific text, produced in a specific language, at a specific (or approximately specific) time, and in a specific tradition. Each of these components presents him with a problem in re-creation as well as in translation: medieval texts result from authorial intentions very different from those of our own time: medieval languages have very different linguistic features from modern ones: the context of life has changed enormously from those times to this one: and medieval literary traditions are today either dead, or poorly understood, or both. The translator of medieval poetry must try to think, and then to write, like the poet he is translating, and not like any other poet. This, too, is typical of translation as a whole, for the translation process is never a generalizing one. It is always relentlessly specific: the original text neither can nor should be evaded. (1989: 28)

This argument can be equally applied to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, because the *Holy Qur'ân* was produced in a specific language, at a specific time, and in a specific tradition. The language of the *Holy Qur'ân* has very different linguistic features from that of modern Arabic and the contexts of life and literary traditions in Arabian Peninsula have changed enormously from those times to the present day. It seems logical that these different features of the *Holy Qur'ân* may result in possible voids in its translation, taking into consideration the approaches a translator may have.

In his work, *Mabahith fî `Ulūm al-Qur'ân*, Manâ al-Qattân writes:

... the *Holy Qur'ân* is the Book of Islâm. It consists of thirty parts and a hundred and fourteen *Sûrahs*. It was revealed in piecemeal over twenty-three years. the word *Qur'ân* “قرآن” in Arabic means “That which can be read “مقروء”, it is an object of the “verb” “قرأ”. the *Holy Qur'ân* was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to challenge the Arabs linguistic competence in poetry and prose. It is not poetry, though it has some features of poetry, it is not prose, but it has some characteristic of prose. It has a specific lattice structure that connects every word and every verse with every other word and every other verse by rhyme, rhythm and meaning. It often skips from one subject to another and offers instructions on the same

subject in different places. Its verses can be very long or very short. (2007: 13, 14, & 139)

The above extracts not only place the holy text in a historical context, but also describe its essential Arabic nature and its structural appearance.

Interestingly enough, the *Holy Qur'ân* itself declares its existence in Arabic in many verses as it was mentioned earlier.

As the centuries progressed, it became clear that it was necessary and imperative to reveal the message contained in the *Holy Qur'ân* through other languages (including contemporary Arabic) besides the classical Arabic in which it had been.

In this respect, the translator of the *Holy Qur'ân* need to know that there are three types of Arabic that can be identified: Classical Arabic, which can be found in the pre-Islamic era literature and the Qur'ânic discourse, standard modern Arabic, which is used in all aspects of contemporary life, all over the Arab countries and can be understood by from the various Arab regions: The Gulf States, Iraq, Saudia Arabia, Yemen, Syria, Egypt, Sudan, and Morocco.

The classical Arabic of the *Holy Qur'ân* is the most difficult of the Arabic language today and for that reason *ʿIlm At-Tafsîr* was produced to facilitate the understanding of the *Holy Qur'ân* to all Muslims, native-speakers or non-speakers of the Arabic language.

The well-respected linguist, Roman Jakobson, remained convinced of the fact that poetry is untranslatable: “Whether its rule is absolute or limited, poetry by definition is untranslatable. (2004: 131)

This premise is applicable to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, because linguistically the *Holy Qur'ân* has the features of both poetry and prose. Therefore it may be more difficult to imitate or translate the *Holy Qur'ân* into foreign languages.

About the immitability of the *Holy Qur'ân* Roger Allen (2003: 61) : argues:

These features of the discourse of the *Qur'ân* are encapsulated into the religious and critical doctrine of *ĩ'ja`z*, the 'inimitability' of God's revelation to Muhammad. It is enshrined in the 'challenge' (*tah· addi`*) verses, such as 'If you have doubts concerning what we have sent down to our servant, then produce a surah like it' (*Surat al-Baqarah* (2, The Cow), v.24), and 'If mankind and the jinn got together to produce the like of this *Qur'ân*, they would not produce its like' (*Surat Isra* (17, The Night-Journey), v. 88). The existence of this doctrine has deterred most writers from attempting to take up the implicit challenge; one who did was Arabic's most famous poet, who thereby earned himself the name by which he is generally known, 'al-Mutanabbi' (he who claimed to be a prophet). Such exceptions aside, however, the language and style of the *Qur'ân* endure as yardsticks of Arabic eloquence, to be admired, cited, and, in particular, recited.

If the *Holy Qur'ân* is difficult to be imitated even by the Arabs poets, how will it be for the translators, with regard to its spirit and aesthetic quality and structure of some of the longer and shorter *su`rahs* and to repetition and rhyme, most especially those connected with the style known as *saj* (*rhymed prose*)?

In this respect it will be of a great benefit to identify the characteristics of the Pre-Islamic poetry which may pose challenges for the translator of the discourse of the *Holy Qur'ân*. Abû-Âqila argues:

The Pre-Islâmic poetry was very good with a clear, pure language. It developed from the simplicity in the first phase to the complexity in the later stages. Its themes were based on the social norms of the ancient Arabs such as pride, praising, satire, elegy and description. (2004: 72)

Because the *Holy Qur'ân* had/have a great emotional effect on its listeners, people of Makkah at the beginning of Islam described Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ as a poet. A case in point in *Sûrat At-Tûr* "The Mount":

Or do they say: "(Muḥammad ﷺ is) a poet! We await for him some calamity by time!" (CT 52:30)

أم يقولون شاعر نتربص به ريب المنون.

But the *Holy Qur'ân* itself corrects this supposition in *Sûrat Yâ-Sîn* "Yâ-sin"

And We have not taught him“ (Muḥammad ﷺ) poetry, nor is it suitable for him. This is only a Reminder and a plain *Qur’ân*. (CT 36:69)

وما علمناه الشعر وما ينبغي له، إن هو إلا نكر وقرءان مبين.

However, although the *Holy Qur’ân* was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to challenge the linguistic competency in poetry and prose of Arabs of his time, the role of the poet itself, ironically, was subjected to a severe criticism in the Holy Qur’an. A case in point in *Sûrat Al-Shû`arâ`* “The Poets”:

As for the poets, the erring ones follow them.
(CT 26: 224)

والشعراء يتبعهم الغاؤون.

The notion of the latent inaccuracy of literally rendering the message of a source language to the target-language is put forward, amongst others, by Muhgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Raḥmân, who claims that a literal translation of a text like the *Holy Qur’ân* leads to ambiguity, a skewing of the original text, or the inaccurate rendering of the original message to the target-language reader. She cited Verse 29 of *Sûrat Al-Isrâ`* “The Journey by Night”:

And let not your hand be tied (like a miser) to your neck, not stretch it forth to its utmost reach (like spendthrift), so that you become blameworthy and in severe poverty. (CT 17:29)

ولا تجعل يدك مغلولة إلى عنقك ولا تبسطها كل البسط...

She says:

If someone wants to translate this verse literally, she/he just seeks the equivalences in the target-language and it will be like this: ‘Do not tie your hand to your neck and do not stretch it forth to its utmost reach’. This translation will totally deviate [from] the meaning, because the real meaning of the verse is to encourage people to spend money on charity, without being wasteful or niggardly. (1993: 34)

The idea of the skewing of the source text when translating from Arabic into English is also expressed by Sa`îd Fâ`iq who said:

Manipulation through translation not only violates the Arabic original but also leads to the influencing of the target readers and their views of the source culture and its people. This manipulation ultimately leads to subversion of texts through translation and/or other discourse at all levels. (2004: 4)

The above remark is supported by Abdul-Haleem who, in his introduction to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, claims:

Throughout this translation, care has been taken to avoid close adherence to the original Arabic structure and idioms, which always sound unnatural in English. Literal translation of the Arabic idioms often results in meaningless English. (2005: xxxi)

However, Abdul-Haleem's remark cannot be accepted without reservation, because a translation is far more than the imparting of information, especially, in translation of such a sensitive text like the *Holy Qur'ân*, its style, the word order and the poetic nature are unique and irreplaceable. To avoid or ignore these specific features, would be to destroy the miracle of the *Holy Qur'ân* which is embedded in its structure.

In a remark by al-Qaṭṭān (quoted earlier), he referred to the 'lattice structure' of the text and the way in which the literary features and meaning contributed to this.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008):

Rhyme is the identity of sound between syllables or paired groups of syllables, usually at the end of verse lines. It can be divided into three categories "monosyllable, (love, above, known as masculine rhyme), or two syllables (whether, together) known as (feminine rhyme, or double rhyme), or even three syllables, (glamorous, amorous) known as triple rhyme.

An example of a monosyllabic rhyme in the *Holy Qur'ân* occurs in *Sûrat Al-Falaq* "The Daybreak":

Say: "I seek refuge with (Allâh) the Lord of the daybreak, From
the evil of what He has created. (CT 113:1-2)

قل أعوذ برب الفلق، من شر ما خلق.

In this example, the rhymes are in the words /fəɫɒg/ and /khəɫɒg/ which are translated into "the daybreak" and "has created".

Here the rhymes in the original do not only make the listeners realize their weakness and their continuous need for protection by Allâh from danger, but they create the emotional effect which is one of the characteristics of the *Holy Qur'ân*. However, this intended effect is lost in the translation.

An example of two syllabic rhymes occurs in *Sûrat An-Nabâ'* "The Great News":

A dwelling place for the Tâghûn (those who transgress the boundary limits set by Allâh like polytheists, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh, hypocrites, sinners, criminals). They will abide therein for ages. (CT 78:22-23)

للطاغين مآباً، لا يثين فيها أحقاباً.

In this example, the rhymes are in the words /mabæ/ and /əhgɑ:bæ/, which are translated into "A dwelling place for the Tâghûn" and "for ages".

In the above example, both of the Arabic words lost their rhymes in translation, but the word /mabæ/ lost its grammatical order as well. In the *Holy Qur'ân*, the word /mabæ/ comes at the end of the first sentence, but in the translation it comes at the beginning of the sentence.

If we are to follow the Arabic grammatical order, the phrase "للطاغين مآباً" will be "For the Tâghûn (those who transgress the boundary limits set by Allâh like polytheists, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh, hypocrites, sinners, and criminals) will be a dwelling place'. But in the back translation which means to retranslate the translated items into Arabic again, the result will be "مآباً" "للطاغين", which, retranslated into English, would read: "A dwelling place for the transgressors".

In this example the rhymes complement one another: the words are bound in sound not only to function as the warning signs of the torture for the disbelievers who will suffer in the Hereafter, but to indicate their long time of punishment as well.

An example of three syllabic rhymes occurs in *Sûrat Al-An`âm* "The Cattle":

And they prevent others from him, and they themselves keep
away from him. (CT 6:26)

وهم ينهون عنه ويننون عنه.

In this example, the rhymes are in the words /jənhoun/ and /jənoun/, which are translated into “they prevent others” and “they themselves keep away”.

Here the rhymes do not only help in verifying the denying state of the disbelievers, but they also depict their attitude toward Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. Both of the Arabic words lost their rhyming function in this translation.

An example of a rhyme occurring at the end of each verse can be found in *Sûrat An-Najm* “The Star”:

By the star when it goes down (or vanishes). Your companion
(Muhammad ﷺ) has neither gone astray nor has erred. Nor does
he speak of (his own) desire. It is only a Revelation revealed. (CT
53:3-4)

والنجم إذا هوى. ما ضل صاحبكم وما غوى. وما ينطق عن الهوى.

In this example, the rhymes are in the words /hʌwʌ/, /ghʌwʌ/ and /əlhʌwʌ/ which are translated into “when it goes down (or vanishes)”, “nor has erred” and “Nor does he speak of (his own) desire.” All these Arabic words lost their rhymes of the letter “ى” at the end of each one of them in the translation.

The function of the rhymes in these verses is to add some beauty to the recitation of the verses and, of course, to reinforce the reader or listener’s belief that the *Holy Qur’ân* was not Muḥammad’s ﷺ own words.

It is a fine example to illustrate what the loss of rhyme in translation can entail. In his delightful article “No Two Snowflakes are Alike: Translation as Metaphor”, Gregory Rabassa writes:

More deadly even than personal and cultural nuances in hindering an “exact” translation is the very sound of languages and the words that constitute them. We have already seen how the crow of the cock differs, so it is quite natural that the names of objects should receive varying sounds.

This makes for extreme difficulty in the translation of poetry, as might be imagined, especially when rhyme [is] involved. (1989: 2)

The implication is that it is difficult to preserve the meaning and to get an equivalent with the same rhyme in any given text, what not to say of the Qur'ânic verse.

Another example can be found in *Sûrat 'Abasa* "He frowned":

Be cursed (the disbelieving) man! How ungrateful he is! From what thing did He created him? From *Nutfah* (male and female semen drops) He created him and then set him in due proportion. Then He makes the Path easy for him. Then He causes him to die and puts him in his grave. Then when it is His Will, He will resurrect him (again). Nay, but (man) has not done what He commanded him. (CT 79:8-10)

قتل الإنسان ما أكفره. من أي شيء خلقه. من نطفة خلقه فقدره. ثم السبيل يسره ثم أماته فأقبره. ثم إذا شاء أنشره. كلا لما يقضى ما أمره.

These verses lost their rhyme "زه", which is a combination of the letters "r" and "h" at the end of each word.

The importance of the sound effects in poetry can hardly be "exaggerated", as Peck and Coyle (1989: 17-21) contends: "A common mistake is to exaggerate the importance of the sound effects in poetry. It is, however, the meaning of the words that is important and sound has only a minor role in underlying that meaning."

This is a generalization that surely needs to be treated with caution, because a vast number of examples can be shown to illustrate that a repetition of a sound played/plays a significant emotional role in recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. In reality, when Muslims listen to a good recitation they often burst into tears or cry loudly. Actually such repetitions enforce the intended message to the receivers. It is its oral and the rhetorical nature that gives the *Holy Qur'ân* its distinctive specificity.

Referring to the device of alliteration, the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008) describes it as follows:

Alliteration (is) the repetition of the same sound-usually initial consonants of words or of stressed syllables-in any sequence of neighbouring words: ‘landscape-lover, lord of languages (Tennyson). Now optional and incidental decorative effect in verse or prose, it was once required element in the poetry of Germanic languages (including old English and old Norse) and in Celtic verse (where alliterated sounds could regularly be placed in positions other than the beginning of a word or syllable) - such as poetry in which alliteration rather than rhyme ‘in the chief principle of repetition is known alliterative verse: its rules also allow a vowel sound to alliterate with any other vowel.

From the above definition, it is clear that alliteration would probably be more abundant in poetic texts, and therefore also in the *Holy Qur’ân*. This is indeed the case, as is evident, for instance, in *Sûrat At-Talâq* “The Divorce”:

Let the rich man spend according to his mean and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allâh has given him, Allâh puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him, Allâh will grant after hardship, ease. (CT 28:7)

لينفق ذو سعة من سعته، ومن قدر عليه رزقه، فلينفق مما آتاه الله، لا يكلف الله نفساً إلا ما آتاه، سيجعل الله بعد عسر يسراً.

The alliterations can be found in the words “آتاه”، “سعته”، “سعة”، “فلينفق”، “لينفق”، “أتاها”، “عسر” and “يسرا”، the transcriptions reveal the repeated sounds: /lɪjɒnfig/, /fəlɪjɒnfig/, /sæə /sæəθɪr /, /ɑ:ta:hʊ/, /ɑ:ta:hæ/, /ʊsrən/ and /jɔsrən/

The alliterations in these words add an emotional effect, presumably comforting the poor people in respect of their legal expenditure on their divorces. The loss of this alliteration in translation clearly diminishes the emotional impact of the words.

Consonance, according to the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008):

(...) is a repetition of identical or similar consonants in neighbouring words whose vowels are different.(e.g. coming home, hot food). The term is most commonly used, though, for a special case of such repetition in which the words are identical except for the stressed vowel sound (group/ grope, middle/mudd, wonder/wander): this device combining ‘alliteration and terminal consonance, is sometimes known more precisely as ‘rich consonance’, and is frequently in modern poetry at the ends of verse lines as an alternative to full rhyme. Consonance may be regarded as a counterpart to the vowel-sound repetition known as assonance.

An example of consonance in the *Holy Qur’ân* can be shown in *Sûrat An-Nisâ* ‘The women”:

They are in truth disbelievers. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment. (CT 4:151)

أولئك هم الكافرون حقاً، واعتدنا للكافرين عذاباً مهيناً .

The transcriptions of the two sounds in the words “الكافرون” and “للکافرين” are /əlka:firu:n / and /əlka:firi:n/

In this example, by losing the sounds of the letters “رون” and “رين”, the verse lost its emotional effect, in addition to the grammatical function of the Arabic adjective “حقاً”, which is an equivalent for the adjective “true, or really” as it was changed - in translation - to the noun “حقيقة”, which is an equivalent for the words “truth” or “reality”.

However, although the sound of the last letters of the words which is given to demonstrate the example of alliterations and consonance seems alike, the sound /n/ at the end of the words /ʊsrən/ and /jʊsrən/ and the the words /əlka:firu:n / and /əlka:firi:n/ is not original of these words. It is called only “*At-Tanwīn*” which is the Arabic grammatical device used with the indefinite article. (A detailed discussion of it will be in the differences between Arabic and English).

The *Holy Qur’ân*, however, has a special prosodic style which can be noticed in the use of the two Arabic letters “م” and “ن” - their equivalents are “m” and “n” - in the end of many verses, as it appears, for instance, in *Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥa* “The Opening Chapter”:

2. All praise and thanks are Allâh’s, the Lord of the *‘Ālamīn* (mankind, *jinn* and all that exists). 3.The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful. 4.the Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) 5. You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). 6.Guide us to the Straight Way. (CT 1:2-5)

الحمد لله رب العالمين. الرحمن الرحيم. مالك يوم الدين. إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين. اهدنا الصراط المستقيم.

The Arabic consonants “م” and “ن” are at the end of these words: /a:lami:n/, /əɾahi:m/, /ədi:n/, /nəstai:n/ and /əlmustai:m/.

This absence in the translation into English is a clear demonstration of how a poetic device simply disappears and the text loses inherent structural meaning.

Another example of this special style can be illustrated in *Sûrat Nûh* “Noah”:

Then, Verily, I called them openly (aloud). Then Verily, I proclaimed to them in public, and I have appealed to them in private. “I said (to them): Ask forgiveness from your Lord, Verily, He is Oft-Forgiving: He will send rain to you in abundance. (CT 71:8-11)

ثم إنى دعوتهم جهاراً. ثم إنى أعلنت لهم وأسررت لهم إسراراً. فقلت
استغفروا ربكم إنه كان غفراً. يرسل السماء عليكم مدراراً.

In this translation the verses lost their consonance in the end of each word which is the Arabic letter ‘r’.

The *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*.(2008) gives the following description of the poetic device “assonance”:

Assonance is a repetition of identical or similar vowels in the stressed syllables (and sometimes in the following unstressed syllables) of neighbouring words: it is from rhyme in that the consonants differ, although the vowels or diphthongs match: sweet dreams, hit or miss. As a substitute for rhyme at the ends of verse lines, assonance (sometimes called vowel rhyme or vocalic rhyme) has a significant function in early Celtic, Spanish, and French versification (notably in chansons de geste), but in English it has been an optional poetic device used within and between lines of verse for emphasis or musical effect.

Assonance is indeed one of the most characteristic rhetorical features of the *Holy Qur’ân* and an example to demonstrate this can be found in *Sûrat Ar-Rahmân* “The Most Gracious”:

Then which of the Blessings of Your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? (CT 55:13)

فبأى آلاء ربكما تكذبان.

The transcriptions of the assonance in this verse are: /fəbiɛɪ/, /ɑ:læ/, /rʌbɪkʊmæ/ and /tʊkəðɪbæn/

Another example occurs in *Sûrat Ash-Shu'arâ* "The Poets":

Verily, in this is an Ayâh (proof or sign), yet most of them (polytheist, pagans do not believe in Resurrection) are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful. (CT 8:9)

إن في ذلك لآية، وما كان أكثرهم مؤمنين. وإن ربك لهو العزيز الرحيم.

As far as the sound is concerned, the transcriptions of this verse are as follows: /ɪnʌ/, /fi/, /ðæli:kə/, /lɑ:ɟʌtʌn/, /wə/, /mæ/, /kæn/, /ʌkθrʊhʊm/, /mʊmi:n/, /wə/, /ɪnʌ/, /rʌbʌkʌ/, /lʌhʊwæ/, /əʌzi:z/ and /ərʌhi:m/.

The first mentioned assonance was repeated 32 times in *Sûrat Ar-Rahmân* "The Most Gracious" and the second example repeated 15 times in *Sûrat Ash-Shu'ara* "The Poets". However, in these translations all the poetic features of these verses of the *Holy Qur'ân* were lost.

"Metaphor", according to the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008), "is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable."

As far as the translation of poetic features is concerned, metaphorical language may raise a real challenge to the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

An example to demonstrate this can be found in *Sûrat Al-Isrâ* "The Journey by Night":

And lower to them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say: "My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was young. (CT 17:24)

واخفض لهما جناح الذل من الرحمة، وقل رب ارحمهما كما ربياني صغيراً.

The literal meaning of this verse is to lower the wings of humility out of mercy: however, since mercy has no wings, the intended meaning is the kindness that the offsprings should show towards their parents.

3.3 Problems Related to the Translatability of the *Holy Qur'ân*: Linguistic Features

Walter Benjamin views the inherent translatability of a literary work as essential for it to be successfully translated:

Translatability is an essential quality of certain works, which is not to say that they can be translated: it means rather that a specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in its translatability. It is plausible that no translation, however good it may be, can have any significance as regards the original. Yet by virtue of its translatability the original is closely connected with the translation: in fact this connection is all the closer since it is no longer of importance to the original. (2004: 76)

If the mission of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ - as stated before in chapter 2 - was/is to demonstrate and complete the laws of moral, ethical, legal and social conduct and all other matters of significance for the humanity at large, the *Holy Qur'ân* must have an inherent quality of the translatability.

According to al-Rafī'ī, al-Walīd described the first revelation of the *Holy Qur'ân* as follows:

By God! None of you is more conversant than me with poetry, melodious hymns and songs and by God never did I hear anything similar to what he says. It has pleasantness and beauty. In its highest part [it] is fresh and yielding and in its lowest part [it] is copious and abundant, that it remains at the summit with nothing to surpass it. (1997: 227)

This remark is about the subtlety of the *Holy Qur'ân*'s language in comparison to the poetic language with which the ancient Arab was accustomed. That is why Muslims believe the *Holy Qur'ân* to be a 'miracle' of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, as it was mentioned earlier, and for the same reason, some Muslim scholars have stood firmly against any translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. Their argument remains that translation will not convey the linguistic miracle of the *Holy Qur'ân*, embodied in its Arabic-specific word structure, and the poetic nature of the text.

Reservations of this nature are, of course, not peculiar to the *Holy Qur'ân*. Addressing his readers about the untranslatability of the Bible into English, Robert Alter (1996: xxxi) writes: "The most pervasive aspect of the magic of biblical style that has been neglected by English translators is its beautiful rhythms."

This remark can just as easily be applied to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* with its many unique poetic features.

One of the typical Qur'ânic discourse features which may pose a problem for the translator is the rhetorical question.

According to Abrams and Harpham (2005: 287) "A rhetorical question is a sentence in the grammatical form of a question which is not asked in order to request information or to invite a reply, but to achieve a greater expressive force than a direct question."

An example of a rhetorical question which expresses disapproval through its grammatical structure can be demonstrated in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* "The Cow"

Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allâh) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture [the Taurât (Torah)]! Have you then no sense? (CT 2:44)

أتأمرون الناس بالبر وتنسون أنفسكم وأنتم تتلون الكتاب أفلا تعقلون؟

The difficulty of translating this rhetorical question appears not only in dealing with the Arabic word "بالبر" which was translated by a transliteration of the word "*Al-Birr*" and by means of paraphrase (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allâh), but also by creating a level of meaning which is not expressed directly in the verse, that is to say the phrase (to practise it).

Another example of a rhetorical question can be found in *Sûrat Al-Fajr* "The Break of Day or the Dawn":

Saw you (Muḥammad ﷺ) not how your Lord dealt with ‘Ād (people), Of Iram (who were very tall) like (lofty) pillars, The like of which were not created in the land? And (with) Thamūd (people) who hewed out rocks in the valley (to make dwellings)? And (with) Fir’aun (Pharaoh) who had the stakes (to torture men by binding them to the stakes)?, who did transgress beyond bounds in the lands (in the obedience of Allāh), And made therein much mischief, So your Lord poured on them different kinds of severe torment, Verily, your Lord is Ever Watchful (over them). (CT 89: 6-14)

ألم تر كيف فعل ربك بعاد، إرم ذات العماد، التي لم يخلق مثلها في البلاد، وثمود الذين جابوا الصخر بالواد، وفرعون ذي الأوتاد، الذين طغوا في البلاد، فأكثروا فيها الفساد، فصب عليهم ربك سوط عذاب، إن ربك لبالمرصاد.

According to al-Qurṭubī, “the word “ذات العماد” has three different meanings: The first meaning is “Those people were very tall”, the second one is “the pillars of their tents or houses”, while the third meaning is “those people were very strong and powerful.” (2001: 527)

In the above example, the first verse is a rhetorical question in which the *Holy Qur’ân* warned the pagans of Makkah as not to be deceived by their own wealth and power, there were people who were stronger than they were and yet Allāh destroyed them because of their disbelief. By using this metaphor, the *Holy Qur’ân* intended to impress the listeners, because even though the power of those ancient people was not mentioned explicitly, it could be understood through the choice of the word “ذات العماد”

The difficulty of translating this rhetorical question forced the translator to add some information in the many phrases in brackets, information which is not expressed directly in the original text.

When trying to establish meaning in any language, the morpheme is the smallest unit of a language that carries an element of meaning. Mona Baker writes:

In order to isolate elements of meaning in words and deal with them more effectively, some linguists have suggested the term morpheme to describe the minimal formal element of meaning in language, as distinct from word, which may or may not contain several elements of meanings... Some

morphemes have grammatical functions such as making plurality (funds), gender (manageress) and tense (considered). (2011: 10)

She elaborates: “It is nevertheless important to keep this distinction clearly in mind because it can be useful in translation, particularly in dealing with neologisms in the source language. (2011: 11)

One can safely say that the morpheme level in Arabic is far more productive in generating meaning than is the case in English. As an example, one can look at the word “Muslims”. In English it means all the followers of Islâm, but to the Arabic native-speaker it means only men. Arabic differentiates between the feminine and the masculine form, and at the same time creates a complex dual masculine form by way of morphemes.

To do that, it firstly has “*Alif al-Athnīn*” “ا”, which is used to change a singular masculine form into a dual masculine form, for instance, the word “مسلم” ‘Muslim’ will be “مسلمان” “Muslimân” for a dual masculine form.

We further distinguish “*Wâw al-Jama`a*” “و”, which is used to change a singular masculine form into a plural masculine form within the same singular masculine form such as the word “مسلم” ‘Muslim’ which will be “مسلمون” “Muslimūn” for a plural masculine form when we add the devices ‘ا’ and ‘و’ to it.

It also has different types of “*Taa Atanīth*”. The closed one “ة” is used to change a singular masculine form to a singular feminine form (such as the word “مسلم” ‘Muslim’ which will be “مسلمة” “*Muslima*” for a singular feminine form when we add the closed “ة” to it) and the open one, “ت” and “*Alif al-Athnīn*” “ا” which is used in combination “تا” to change a singular feminine form to a dual feminine form, such as the word “مسلمة” “*Muslima*” will be “مسلمتان” “*Muslimatân*” for a dual feminine form when we add the combination “تا” to it.

There is also the combination “ات” which is formed from the letter “ا” and the open “ت” which is used for changing a singular feminine form into a plural feminine form within the same singular feminine form, such the word

“مسلمة” “*Muslima*” will be “مسلمات” “*Muslimât*” for a plural feminine form.

An example of the plural feminine and masculine form can be found in *Sûrat Al-Aḥzâb* “The Confederates”:

Verily, the Muslims (those who submit to Allâh in Islam) men and women, the believers men and women (who believe in Islâmic Monotheism), the men and the women who are obedient (to Allâh), the men and the women who are truthful (in their speech and deeds), the men and the women who are patient (in performing all the duties which Allâh has ordered and in abstaining from all that Allâh has forbidden), the men and the women who are humble (before their Lord- Allâh) the men and the women who give sadaqât (i.e. *Zakât*, and alms), the men and the women who observe Saum (fast) (the obligatory fasting during the month of Ramadân, and the optional *Nawâfil* fasting), the men and the women who guard their chastity (from illegal sexual acts) and the men and the women who remember Allâh much with their hearts and tongues - Allâh has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. Paradise). (CT 33:35)

إنَّ المسلمين والمسلمات والمؤمنين والمؤمنات والقانتين والقانتات والصادقين
والصادقات والصابرين والصابرات والخاشعين والخاشعات والمتصدقين والمتصدقات
والصائمين والصائمات والحافظين فروجهم والحافظات والذاكرين الله كثيراً
والذاكرات أعد الله لهم مغفرة وأجرًا عظيمًا.

To overcome the problem in translation of the difference between the plural feminine and the masculine form in the above Qur’ânic term, the Control Text uses the plurals “Muslims”, ”believers”, “men” and “women”, in addition to long paraphrases.

It is clear, given the prevalence and functions of morphemes in Arabic set out above, that there would be little chance of expecting them to be represented in an English translation. This will, of course, also be reflected in the loss of rhythm and sound patterns existing in the *Holy Qur’ân*.

In Arabic, the system of tonality and rhythm/sound plays a significant role in respect of sound patterns. This becomes clear in the seven main types of recitations of the *Holy Qur’ân* (referred to it earlier in chapter 2), because the

difference between these recitations depends solely on changing the sound of the letter/morpheme in the same word.

For instance, the difference between “*Hafs-recitation*” and “*Warsh-recitation*” depends only on changing the sound of the letter “أ”, which comes between the letter “ر” and the letters “ها” in the same words “مجرها” and “مرساها”, from the sound /mdʒra:hæ/ and /mrsa:hæ/ in “*Hafs-recitation*”, into /mdʒreihæ/ and /mrseihæ/ in “*Warsh-recitation*”, respectively, without changing its diacritic. An example can be found in verse 41, of *Sûrat Hûd* “Prophet Hûd”:

And he [Nûh (Noah) عليه السلام] said: “Embark therein: in the Name of Allâh will be its (moving) course and its (resting) anchorage. Surely, my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

وقال اركبوا فيها، بسم الله مجراها ومرساها، إن ربي لغفورٌ رحيمٌ

In the above examples, the tonal quality, probably the main phonological characteristic of the *Holy Qur’ân* in the Arabic, has been completely lost in the translation: The repeated sound /i:n/ and /æt/ which is “ين” and “ات” at the end of the plural feminine and masculine form in verse 35, in *Sûrat Al-Aḥzâb*, as well as the rhyme [and the rhythm] created by the repetition of the sound cluster /ra:hæ/ and /sa:hæ/ in verse 41, in *Sûrat Hûd*, in “*Hafs-recitation*”, into /reihæ/ and /seihæ/ in “*Warsh-recitation*”, respectively.

The difference between Arabic and English in terms of the abundance of the morpheme can extend further to verbs as well. In English the verb in the simple past tense is always in a single form, irrespective of whether it is singular or plural: I, she, it, you, they came or looked, while in Arabic the verbs change according to the noun or the pronoun in the sentences such as

”هو جاء“، ”هي جاءت“، ”هما جاءتا“، ”هما جاءا“، ”هن جنن“، ”هم جاءوا“

From the left to the right:

In the first sentence, “هم جاءوا”, the subject is a plural masculine pronoun “*Wâw al-Jama`a*” “و”, which is used for a plural masculine form. In the

second one, “هن جئن”, it is a plural feminine pronoun “*Nūn al-Niswa*” “ن”, which is used for a plural feminine form.

In the third one, “هما جاءا”, it is a dual masculine pronoun “*Alif al-Athnān*” “ا”, which is used for a dual masculine form and in the fourth one, “هما جاءتا”, it is a dual feminine pronoun, the open “ت” and “*Alif al-Athnān*” “ا” in combination with “تا” which is used for a dual feminine form.

In the fifth sentence, “هي جاءت”, it is a singular feminine pronoun “*Taa Atanīth*”, the open one “ت” which is used for a singular feminine form, while it is a singular masculine hidden pronoun “هو” in the sixth one, “هو جاء”.

The root verb in all these sentences is “جاء”, which is equivalent to “came” in English.

The listener or the reader in Arabic differentiates between the performer of all these actions, while in English the reader or the listener can't differentiate between them simply from the verbs “came” or “looked”.

The dissimilarity between Arabic and English is not only at the lexical level but also at the grammatical level, something which has been referred to earlier. Arabic differentiates between the definite article and the indefinite article by using “*At-Tanwīn*” which is the Arabic grammatical device that is connected with the pronunciation of the last letter of the indefinite article if it is a singular, a specific plural or a collective noun, or a name of specific lexical form, in a different grammatical structure.

“*At-Tanwīn*” has three types: the *damatān* “الضمتان”, which is used with the nominative form, the *fathatān* “الفتحتان”, used with the accusative form, and the *kasratān* “الكسرتان”, which is used with the genitive form. The verses below are just a few examples to illustrate the three types of “*At-Tanwīn*”:

An example to show a singular indefinite article can be found, for instance, in verse 89, of *Sūrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (this *Qur'ân*) from Allâh confirming what is with them [the *Taurât* (Torah) and the *Injeel* (Gospel)]... (CT 2:89)

ولما جاءهم كتابٌ من عند الله مصدقٌ لما معهم...

The pronunciation of the word “كتابٌ” in the above example is /kitæbun/, because it is in a nominative form.

A second example is in verse 13 of *Sûrat Al-Isrâ* “The Journey by Night”:

And We have fastened every man’s deeds to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection, We shall bring out for him a book which will find wide open. (CT 17:13)

و كل إنسان أزرمانه طائره في عنقه، ونخرج له يوم القيامة كتاباً يلقاه منشوراً

The pronunciation of the word “كتاباً” in the second example is /kitæban/, because it is in an accusative form.

A third example is in verse 4, of *Sûrat Al-Aḥqâf* “The Curved Sand-hills”:

“...Bring me a Book (revealed) before this...” (CT 46:4)

...انتنوني بكتابٍ من قبل هذا...

The pronunciation of the word “كتابٍ” in the third example is /kitæbin/, because it is in a genitive form.

Because of the significance of the musical effect of the *Holy Qur'ân* on its listeners, the three types of *At-Tanwîn* may exist in one verse such as in verse 3, of *Sûrat Al-Fussilât*, “They are explained in detail”:

“A Book whereof the Verses are explained in detail - a Qur'ân in Arabic for a people who know.” (CT 41:3)

كتابٌ فصلت آياته قرءاناً عربياً لقوم يعلمون

From the right to left in verse 3 in *Sûrah 41: At-Tanwîn* - the grammatical device - is in the words: “كتابٌ”, “قرءاناً”, “عربياً” and “لقومٍ” which are

pronounced /kɪtæbʊn/, /gʊrɑ:nʌn/, /ʌrʌbjʌn/ and /lɪgʊmɪn/, respectively.

As said earlier, it is clear that this inherent device of the musical effect created at a morpheme level will almost certainly not be reflected in the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

As can be expected in a text of this nature, the *Holy Qur'ân* is full of rhetorical language devices such as allusion, imagery, allegory and other figures of speech. An example of its allusive style is found in *Sûrat Az-Zukhruf* “The Gold Adornments”:

(Like they then for Allâh) a creature who is brought up in adornments (wearing silk and gold ornaments, i.e. women), and who in dispute cannot make herself clear? (CT 43:18)

أو من ينشأ فى الحلية وهو فى الخصام غير مبين.

In this example the word “daughter” which is the intended word, was not mentioned directly or indirectly, but it can be understood from the phrase “wearing silk and gold ornaments”.

As one can imagine, imagery abounds and finding examples are easy. In *Sûrat Ash-Shûrâ* “The Consultation” we read:

To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth. He enlarges provision for whom He wills, and straitens (it for whom He wills). Verily, He is All-Knower of everything. (CT 42:12)

له مقاليد السموات والأرض، يبسط الرزق لمن يشاء ويقدر، إنه بكل شيء عليم.

In this verse the *Holy Qur'ân* portrayed the heaven and the earth as physical doors and their keys are with Allâh.

As for the figures of speech, the word “نور” may illustrate it, because it has been mentioned 45 times in different places of the *Holy Qur'ân*, with different meanings. The following are just a few examples.

The first example in *Sûrat Al-Mâ'idah* “The Table Spread With Food”:

O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians). Now has come to you Our Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and pass over (i.e. leaving out without explaining) much. Indeed has come to you from Allāh a light (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) and a plain Book (this *Qur'ân*). (CT 5:15)

يا أهل الكتاب قد جاءكم رسولنا يبين لكم كثيرا مما كنتم تخفون من الكتاب ويعفو عن كثير، قد جاءكم من الله نورٌ وكتابٌ مبينٌ.

In this verse, the *Holy Qur'ân* described Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ as a light that came to people of the Scripture to tell them about some parts of the Scripture which the scholars used to leave out without explaining.

The second example in *Sûrat Al-Ḥadīd* “Iron”:

On the Day you shall see the believing men and the believing women: their light running forward before them and (with their Records-Books of deeds) in their right hands. Glad tidings for you this Day! Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever! Truly, this is the great success! (CT 57:12)

يوم ترى المؤمنين والمؤمنات يسعى نورهم بين أيديهم وبأيمانهم، بشراكم اليوم جناتٍ تجري من تحتها الأنهار، خالدين فيها، ذلك هو الفوز العظيم.

Here the light is depicted as a living creature which is moving on its own to the right and left of the believers.

The third example, in *Sûrat At-Taubah* “The Repentance”:

They (the disbelievers, the Jews and the Christian) want to extinguish Allāh’s Light (with which Prophet Muhammad has been sent-Islamic Monotheism) with their mouths, but Allāh will not allow except that His Light should be perfected even though the Kāfrūn (disbelievers) hate (it). (CT 5:32)

يريدون أن يطفئوا نور الله بأفواههم ويأبى الله إلا أن يتم نوره ولو كره الكافرون.

In this example, Islāmic-Monotheism is described as a light that the disbelievers wanted to extinguish.

The fourth example in *Sûrat An-Nûr* “The Light”:

Allâh is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is as (if there were) a niche and within it a lamp: the lamp is in the glass as it were a brilliant star, lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the east (i.e. neither it gets sun-rays only in the morning) nor of the west (i.e. nor it gets sun-rays only in the afternoon, but it is exposed to the sun all day long), whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself), though no fire touched it. Light upon Light! Allâh guides to His Light whom He wills. And Allâh sets forth parables for mankind, and Allâh is All-Knower of everything. (CT 24:35)

الله نور السموات والأرض مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها مصباح، المصباح في زجاجة،
الزجاجة كأنها كوكب دري يوقد من شجرة مباركة، زيتونة لا شرقية ولا غربية، يكاد
زيتها يضيء ولو لم تمسسه نار، نورٌ على نورٍ، يهدي الله لنوره من يشاء، ويضرب
الله الأمثال للناس والله بكل شيء عليم.

Here the word “نور” is mentioned five times in different contexts. Firstly, Allâh described Himself as a light of heavens and earth. In the second, third and fourth contexts the word “light” is referred to by way of its lexical meaning by using the selectional restriction of the words “lamp” and “oil”. Finally the word “نور” refers to the Islamic Monotheism.

Using the strategies of transliteration and paraphrase in translation confirm the difficulty of translating these poetic devices.

3.4 Problems Related to the Translatability of the *Holy Qur’ân*: Semantics

According to Arleta Adamska-Salaciak (2005: 47): “Meaning is the only thing that is worth bothering about in language.”

In this respect, Arabic was considered by its speakers to be the most meaningful of languages, and that explains why, in the Pre-Islamic era, urban people of the Arabian Peninsula used to send their children to experience the Bedouin way of life to master the sense of Arabic language. In order to grasp the spirit of the *Holy Qur’ân* and to understand its meanings correctly, one

must be able to feel and hear this language as the Arabs felt and heard it at the time when the *Holy Qur'ân* was revealed.

Grasping the intended meaning in translation is a problem, Octavio Paz writes:

Every word holds a certain number of implicit meanings: when a word is combined with others to make up a phrase, one of those meanings is activated and becomes predominant. In prose there tends to be a single meaning while, as has often been noted, one of the characteristics of poetry, and perhaps its distinguishing trait, is the preservation of a plurality of meanings. (1992: 158)

Although this conviction relates to poetry, it can be applied to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, as it has features of both prose and poetry. The translator of the *Holy Qur'ân* must decide which meaning of a word he should choose when translating. The word “آيات”, for instance, is mentioned in the *Holy Qur'ân* 295 times, in many different contexts with different meanings.

An example in the verse 98 in *Sûrat Al-Isrâ* “The Journey by Night”:

That is their recompense, because they denied Our Ayât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and said: “When we are bones and fragments, shall we really be raised up as a new creation?” (CT 17:98)

ذلك جزاؤهم بأنهم كفروا بآياتنا وقالوا أئذنا كنا عظماً ورفاتاً أننا لمبعوثون خلقاً
جديداً.

Being aware of the plurality of meanings of the Qur'ânic term “بآياتنا” in some verses, the Control Text tends to use the transliteration, paraphrase and all the other possible equivalents to convey their meanings. As such, and because there is no selectional restriction in verse 98 in *Sûrat Al-Isrâ*, the Control Text uses the transliteration “Ayât” and all the other possible equivalents: that is to say (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “بآياتنا”.

As far as translating the *Holy Qur'ân* is concerned, lexical and semantic items, which carry various possible meanings, can clearly cause a problem in translation, Hussein Abdul-Raof writes:

Some Qur'ânic lexical items are pregnant with *Qur'ân*-specific emotive overtones, which in turn create lexical voids in translation. The lexical compression of Qur'ânic expressions can only be tackled through componential analysis: the translator's nightmare can be alleviated by the semantic decomposition of the words. As such, a periphrastic translation approach needs to be adopted because English cannot penetrate Qur'ânic lexical and morphological defences. (2004: 93)

An example can be found in verse 43 in *Sûrat An-Nisâ'*: "The Women":

O you who believe! Approach not As-Ṣalât (the prayer) while you are in a drunken state until you know (the meaning) of what you utter, nor while you are in state of *Janâba*, (i.e. in state of sexual impurity and have not yet taken a bath) except while travelling on the way (through a mosque), until you wash your whole body (*Ghusl*). And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from the Ghâ'it (toilet), or you have been in a contact with women (by sexual relations) and you find no water, perform *Tayammum* with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands (*Tayammum*). Truly, Allâh is Ever Oft-Forgiving (CT 4:43)

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تقربوا الصلاة وأنتم سكارى حتى تعلموا ما تقولون، ولا جنباً إلا عابري سبيلٍ حتى تغتسلوا، وإن كنتم مرضى أو على سفرٍ أو جاء أحدٌ منكم من الغائط أو لامستم النساء فلم تجدوا ماءً فتييموا صعيداً طيباً فامسحوا بوجوهكم وأيديكم، إن الله كان عفواً غفوراً.

In this verse, there are three Qur'ânic terms that probably could not be translated without having to be transliterated, paraphrased and explained. The first is term "جنباً" "*junuban*" which is derived from the noun "جنابة" (i.e. a state of sexual impurity and have not yet taken a bath). The term, "غسل" "*Ghusl*" -found in the masculine plural form "تغتسلوا" which can be described as "washing your whole body if you have been in a contact with women by sexual relations in a specific performance". The term "تيمم" "*Tayammum*"- found in a masculine plural form "فتيمموا" refers to a symbolic ablution that consists in touching the earth, or anything supposed to contain dust, with the palms of one's hand and then passing them lightly over the face the hands. Whenever water is not within reach-or cannot be used because of illness-the "*Tayammum*" takes the place of both the total ablution after sexual intercourse (*Ghusl*) and the partial ablution before *Salâhs*.

The problem of untranslatability is clearly complex. Muṣṭafâ Ṣhâdiq al-Râfi'î

(1997: 60) is convinced that “the *Holy Qur’ân* is inimitable because some of its words have various meanings such as the word “الهدى” which has 17 different meanings in 17 different places.”

A similar view is held by Sa`id al-Lâwundî, who writes:

Sheikh Rashîd Ridâ elaborated on the untranslatability of the individual word of the *Holy Qur’ân*, saying that: ‘It is impossible to translate the individual word of the *Holy Qur’ân*, because it is impossible for any two universal languages to have similarity in all their elements, for instance: Arabic has many names for the Day of Resurrection: such as الفارعة، الواقعة، الحاقة، الطامة، الغاشية، الصاخة، الحاقة and each of these names has a specific meaning. (2001: 39)

Although these words seem to be synonyms (being names for the same day), there are obviously some nuances of meanings between them, which will eventually pose a challenge to translators.

al-Qurṭubi discusses the relationship and the difference as follows at different points in his book:

The word “الواقعة” means “The Inevitable Event”. It is called by this name because a lot of difficulties will happen in it, the word “الحاقة” means “The Sure reality”, it is called by this name because everything that the *Holy Qur’ân* talks about will be verified in it, the word “الطامة” means “The Great Catastrophe” or “the Day of Recompense”, it is called by this name because people will face a lot of difficulties, the word “الصاخة” means “The Deafening Noise”, it is called by this name because on the Day of Resurrection there will happen a second loud blowing of the Horn, the word “الغاشية” means “The Overwhelming Even” it is called by this name because it overwhelms everything that exists, the word “الفارعة” means “The Day of Noise and Clamour”, it is called by this name because it strikes people with many disasters.(2001: 237)

The words that are thought to be synonyms, for instance, the words “الخوف”, “الخشية”, “أتى” and “أعطى”, may cause a problem for the translators as well.

According to Manâ al-Qaṭṭan (2007: 194-199) “(t)he words “الخشية” and “الخوف”, and the words “أتى” and “أعطى” are not synonyms. The word “الخشية” is stronger in meaning than the word “الخوف”, and the word “أتى” is stronger in meaning than the word “أعطى”.”

An example of the word “الخوف” can be found in *Sûrat An-Nahl* “The Bees”:

They fear their Lord above them, and they do what they are commanded (CT 16:50)

يخافون ربهم من فوقهم، ويفعلون ما يؤمرون.

The example of the word “الخشية” is in *Sûrat Al-Aḥzâb* "The Confederates":

Those who convey the Message of Allâh and fear Him, and fear none save Allâh. And sufficient is Allâh as a Reckoner. (CT 33:39)

الذين يبلغون رسالات الله ويخشونه ولا يخشون أحداً إلا الله، وكفى بالله حساباً.

Therefore, using the word “fear” to convey the meaning of the word “الخشية” in this context, is a misinterpretation in this translation.

The example of the word “أتى” is in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

He grants Hikmah to whom He pleases, and he, to whom Hikmah is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding. (CT 2:269)

يؤتى الحكمة من يشاء، ومن يؤت الحكمة فقد أوتي خيراً كثيراً وما يذكر إلا أولو الألباب.

An example of the word “أعطى” is in *Sûrat Al-Kawthar* “A River in Paradise”:

Verily, We have granted you (O Muḥammad ﷺ) *AlKawthar* (a river in Paradise). Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice (to Him only). For he who hates you (O Muḥammad ﷺ), will be cut off (from posterity and every good thing in this world and in the Hereafter). (CT 108:1-3)

إنا أعطيناك الكوثر، فصل لربك وانحر، إن شانئك هو الأبر.

Using the word “grant” to convey the meaning of the word “أتى” is a misinterpretation in this translation.

As such, the nature of meaning of these words, given their specific context, will obviously cause problems to translators.

Gregory Rabassa (1989: 3) addresses the phenomena of curses and oaths: "Almost as difficult as poetry to render into another language are curses and oaths. The meanings can be quite different, but the spirit is universally human enough to be the same."

If we apply this to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* into English, when taking into consideration the Qur'ânic poetic features that these curses and oaths were expressed in, there may be inevitable obstacles in translating them.

The *Holy Qur'ân* uses the term "curse" in respect of specific concepts that are different from the use of the Western culture, in that it is related to the deprivation of Allâh's Mercy as a punishment for disbelief in Him.

An example of a curse used in the meaning of deprivation of Allâh's Mercy can be found in *Sûrat Al-Baqara* "The Cow":

And they say, "Our hearts are wrapped (i.e. do not hear or understand Allâh's Word). Nay, Allâh has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is that which they believe. (CT 2:88)

وقالوا قلوبنا غلفت، بل لعنهم الله بكفرهم فقليلاً ما يؤمنون.

In his interpretation of the above verse in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah*, Ibn Kathîr, (2010: 69) said: "بل لعنهم الله بكفرهم" means "Allâh deprived the disbelievers of His Mercy."

According to al-Faiyūmi (2008): "the author of Arabic dictionary, "the word "curse" means "to deprive someone of something", (Citations from this dictionary in this thesis will be in respect of its name *Al-Misbah Al-Munir* (2008).

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), describes the word "curse" as "a solemn appeal to a supernatural power to inflict harm on someone or something, an offensive word or phrase used to express anger or annoyance."

According to Baalbaki (2007), -the authors of the *Arabic-English/English-Arabic Dictionary*- and from now on referred to as *Al-Mawrid* (2007), "the

word “curse” means “لعنة ، يلعن ، يشتم”, which are “to insult, to curse, and a curse.” respectively.

The most significant difference between the two concepts is that in the *Holy Qur’ân* the curse is used as a verification of an accusation, when a husband accuses his wife of committing “*zina*”, that is to say: having sexual intercourse with another man, when there were/are no witnesses.

al-Qurṭubī comments:

These four verses are called the verses of curse “اللعان” which is a specific Qur’anic term. To administer justice by this concept requires four conditions: 1, to bear witness four times, 2, the place and it should be a mosque, 3, the time and it should be after *Salât Asr* “the third obligatory *Salah*” and 4, at least a group of four people. Consequently the marriage will break up, whether the accusation is verified or not. (2001: 223)

An example of a curse which is used as a verification of an accusation in committing adultery is in *Sûrat An-Nûr* “The Light”:

And for those who accuse their wives, but have witnesses except themselves, let testimony of one of them be four testimonies (i.e. testifies four times) by Allâh that he is one of those who speak the truth. And the fifth (testimony should be) the invoking of the Curse of Allâh on him if he be of those who tell a lie (against her). But she shall avert the punishment (of stoning to death) from her, if she bears witness four times by Allâh, that he (her husband) is telling a lie. And the fifth (testimony) should be that the Wrath of Allâh be upon her if he (her husband) speaks the truth. (CT 24:6-9)

والذين يرمون أزواجهم ولم يكن لهم شهداء إلا أنفسهم فشهادة أحدهم أربع شهاداتٍ بالله إنه لمن الصادقين. والخامسة أن لعنت الله عليه إن كان من الكاذبين. ويدراً عنها العذاب أن تشهد أربع شهاداتٍ بالله إنه من الكاذبين والخامسة أن غضب الله عليها إن كان من الصادقين.

Although the Control Text tried to overcome the difficulty in translation of these curses by strategy of paraphrase, it created level of meanings that are not visible in the original text, in addition to a creation of another problem in conveying the exact meaning of the verses, for instance, the phrase (of stoning to death) itself is another problem for the readers, because it is not directly mentioned in these verses as a fixed punishment for the adulterer.

The concept of the word “oath” in Arabic, is also, different from how it is understood in English, in that it can be formally divided into two main categories: explicit and implicit.

The object - being sacred or otherwise - which verifies the oath and the related verbs of oath, such as “swear/ take”, are mentioned directly in the sentence of the explicit oath after the Arabic letters “ب،ت،و” such as “أقسم بالله”، “والله” and “تالله”. In the implicit oath neither the object nor the verbs or letters are mentioned. Only if the translator is familiar with these categories, will he/she be able to deal with the oaths perfectly.

We can find an example of an explicit oath using the direct device “وأقسموا بالله” in *Sûrat An-Nûr* “The Light”

They swear by Allâh their strongest oaths, that if only you would order them, they would leave (their homes for fighting in Allâh’s Cause). Say: “Swear you not: (this) obedience (of yours) is known (to be false). Verily, Allâh is Well-Acquainted with what you do. (CT 24:53)

وأقسموا بالله جهد أيمانهم لئن أمرتهم ليخرجن، قل لا تقسموا طاعةً معروفةً، إن الله خبيرٌ بما تعملون.

Another example of an explicit oath using the letter “ب” occurs in *Sûrat Al-Qiyâmah* “The Resurrection”:

I swear by the day of Resurrection. And I swear by the self-reproaching person (believers) (CT 75:1)

لا أقسم بيوم القيامة ولا أقسم بالنفس اللوامة.

An example of an explicit oath using the letter “ت” occurs in *Sûrat Al-Anbiyâ*’ “The Prophets”:

And by Allâh, I shall plot a plan (to destroy) your idols after you have gone away and turned your backs. (CT 12:95)

وتالله لأكيدن أصنامكم بعد أن تولوا مدبرين.

The difficulty of translating these explicit oaths can be demonstrated very clearly. In the first example the translator added some information that is not visible in the verses such as the phrases “that if only”, “(their homes for fighting in Allâh’s Cause”, “this”, “of yours” and “to be false”. The difficulty also shows itself in the loss of the repeated sound of the letters “ن” in the words “أيمانهم”, “لئن”, “ليخرجن”, “إن” and “تعملون” as well as the sound of the repeated letter “ر” in the words “أمرتهم”, “ليخرجن”, “معروفة” and “خبير”.

In the second example, too, the translator created a level of information which is not mentioned explicitly in the verse such as the word “believers”, in addition to the losing of the repeated sounds /gɪ ja:mʌ/ and / lʌwa:mʌ/ at the end of the words “القيامة” and “اللوامة”.

In the third example the translator also added a level of information that is not visible in the verse such as the verb “to destroy”, in addition to the losing the repeated sounds of the letter “ن” in the words “لأكيدن”, “أصنامكم”, “أن” and “مدبرين”.

If the translators encounter some difficulty in translating the explicit oath in Arabic, they will encounter more difficulty in translating the implicit one, because neither the object nor the verb is mentioned directly in this type of the oath.

An example of an implicit oath occurs in *Sûrat Maryâm* “Mary”:

He (the father) said: “Do you reject my gods, O Ibrâhîm (Abraham) If you stop not (this), I will indeed stone you. So get away from me safely (before I punish you). (CT 19:46)

قال أراغب أنت عن آلهتى يا إبراهيم. لئن لم تنته لأرجمتك، واهجرنى ملياً.

In this example, the implicit oath is in the present tense, “لأرجمتك” which is a result of the implicit present tense in the first part of this sentence “والله لئن لم والله لئن لم تنته لأرجمتك”, which means “I swear by Allâh to stone you, if you reject my gods”. This oath comes after the present tense “لئن لم تنته”, because of the assertive device “ل”, which is grammatically linked to the Arabic present

tenses. Here the translator creates a level of information which is not visible in the verse such as “the father”, “this” and “before I punish you”.

3.5 Problems Related to the Translatability of the *Holy Qur’ân*: Equivalence and Non-Equivalence

A lack of equivalence has always been identified as a hindrance when translating. Friedrich Schleiermacher commented on this two centuries ago:

As it happens, however, just the opposite is true for all languages that are not so closely related as to count almost as different dialects of a single tongue, and the further removed they are from one another in etymology and years, the more it will be seen that not a single word in one language will correspond perfectly to a word in another, nor does any pattern of declensions in the one contain precisely the same multiplicity of relationships as in another. (2004: 45- 46)

This is patently true when learning classical Arabic. The words, the phrases, the clauses and the sentences and the ways in which the ancient Arabs expressed themselves differ considerably from contemporary Arabic. And it follows naturally that this is even more applicable in respect of lexical, semantic and syntactical incongruities between Arabic and English, because they are relatively far from each other in respect of their linguistic roots.

Equivalence is probably not attainable in a translation of the *Holy Qur’ân*, as Hussein Abdul-Raof (2004: 93) pointed out: “Equivalence, still an important principle in translation studies, is dramatically underachieved and, in some cases, not achieved at all in Qur’ân’s translations.”

The word “سنة”, for instance, as a unique description of Allâh, creates a problem of non-equivalence, because the target-language lacks a specific term (hyponym). An example is in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

Allâh Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He) *Al-Hayyul-Qayyuum* (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists). Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. (CT 2:255)

الله لا إله إلا هو الحي القيوم لا تأخذه سنة ولا نوم...

According to *Al-Misbah Al-Munir*:

Arabic has nine distinctive names for the degrees of the word “نوم”. The word “سنة” is the condition in which the body needs to sleep, but it is less than the condition of the word “نعاس” in which the body needs to sleep too, the word “الوسن” is the heavy state of the word “نعاس”, the word “الترنيق” is the condition in which the eyes can be opened or closed with difficulty, the word “الكرى والغمض” is the condition before closing the eyes, the word “العفق” is the state of being asleep but one can hear the sound of what is around him/her, and the words “الهجود والهجوع” is the heaviest or the deepest condition of sleep in which one can not hear the sound of what is around him/her. (2008)

According to the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (2011) the word “sleep” means “a regularly recurring condition of body and mind in which the nervous system is inactive, the eyes closed, the postural muscles relaxed, and consciousness practically suspended”. The word “slumber” means “a sleep”.

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 262) the Qur’ân term “نعاس” can be translated as “sleep, drowsiness, slumber”. According to al-Khudrawī (2010) the word “slumber” means “سنة، نعاس”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007) the word “نعاس” means “drowsiness, sleepiness, somnolence, and lethargy” adding more possibilities when translating.

These definitions strengthen the conviction that finding the precise equivalent is exceedingly difficult.

Since the word “سنة” is less than the word “نعاس”, in terms of meaning in Arabic, therefore, the possible meanings of the words “sleep” and “slumber” somehow do not capture the exact meaning of the Qur’ânic term “سنة” and they certainly illustrate the limitations of the dictionary definitions.

In connection with the difficulty of finding an appropriate equivalent in a suitable place, Michael Riffaterre thinks that translation cannot achieve its desired effect if it doesn’t find equivalences for some literariness-inducing presuppositions in the target-language:

No literary translation therefore can be successful unless it finds equivalences for these literariness-inducing presuppositions. Some equivalence, however, may not be found in the target-language at the same

level as in the source language: equivalences to lexical features of the original may have to be found at the syntactical level, and the reverse is true as well. (1992: 205)

Examples abound and will be encountered when comparing the different translations. One example to demonstrate this is a verse from *Sûrat An-Nûr* “The Light”:

Allâh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieve after this, they are the Fâsiqûn (rebellious, disobedient to Allâh). (CT 24:55)

وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم وعملوا الصالحات ليستخلفنهم في الأرض كما استخلف الذين من قبلهم وليمكنن لهم دينهم الذي ارتضى لهم وليبدلنهم من بعد خوفهم أمنا يعبدونني لا يشركون بي شيئاً ومن كفر بعد ذلك فأولئك هم الفاسقون.

It must be mentioned that this verse contains the longest word in the *Holy Qur’ân*: the Arabic word “ليستخلفنهم”, which consists of four syllables and ten letters. Its root verb is “خلف” which consists of only three letters. This word also shows that the effect of sounds and semantics are inseparable, because each of the four syllables has two functions - at a sound level and at a semantic level - and if any of them is omitted the function of the whole verse will be lost.

In order to overcome the difficulty of non-equivalence and to render the meanings of the *Holy Qur’ân* as close as possible to the readers in English, the Control Text uses three strategies: transliteration, paraphrase and explanation. In the verse above the Control Text uses 11 words “that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers)” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “ليستخلفنهم”

Arthur Schopenhauer, too, had recognized this difficulty of non-equivalence and admits that:

[s]ometimes a language lacks the word for a certain concept even though it exists in most, perhaps all, other languages: a rather scandalous example is the absence of a word in French for 'to stand'. On the other hand, for certain concepts a word exists only in one language and is then adopted by other languages... At times a foreign language introduces a conceptual nuance for which there is no word in our own language. (1992: 32)

This argument can be applied to the *Holy Qur'ân* as it presents some such words, the most obvious being basic term 'Islâm'. This term clearly could not exist in any other language than Arabic and for this reason it is adopted by other languages in translation. An example can be found in *Sûrat ÂlImrân* "The Family of 'Imrân":

Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm. (CT 3:19)

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ .

Another example is the Arabic word "the *Qur'ân*" which is a name of the Holy Book that contains the commandments of Allâh Almighty which ought to be upheld, and the consequences for ignoring divine imperatives. *Sûrat Al-Isrâ'* "The Journey by Night" contains one such an example:

And surely, We have explained [Our Promises, Warnings and (set forth many) examples] in this *Qur'ân* that they (the disbelievers) may take heed, but it increases in naught save aversion. (CT 17:41)

ولقد صرفنا في هذا القرآن ليعلموا وما يزيدهم إلا نفوراً.

One stylistic feature of the *Holy Qur'ân* which could cause some difficulty for the translators are the names of the earlier prophets, their people, their places and the gods which no longer exist in the world of today, such as "عاد" the people of prophet Hûd and "ثمود" the people of prophet Salih, the names "والرس والأحقاف" of places in the ancient Arabia, the names of men such as "ولقمان وإلياس, هامان" and the names of some idols which were worshipped by the pagans before Islam such as "اللات والعزى ومناة".

These items have no equivalents in English, and as such the best strategy is to transliterate and explain them.

John Dryden argued centuries ago:

T'is almost impossible to translate verbally, and well, at the same time: For the Latin, (a most severe and Compendious Language) often expresses that in one word, which either the Barbarity, or the narrowness of modern Tongues cannot supply in more. T'is frequent also that the Conceit is couch'd in some Expression, which will be lost in English. (2004: 39)

It is true that, as far as the *Holy Qur'ân* is concerned, it is impossible to translate as succinctly some Qur'ânic concepts expressed in one word such as we find in *Sûrat Quraysh* "Quraish":

(It is a great Grace from Allâh) for the Protection of the Quraish.
(CT 106:1)

إيلاف قريش.

Here the single Arabic word "إيلاف" required seven English words to convey its meaning.

3.6 Problems Related to the Translatability of the *Holy Qur'ân*: Cultural Idiosyncrasies

Peter Newmark comments:

There is the artistic work with a strong local flavour which may also be rooted in a particular historical period. The themes will consist of comments on human character and behaviour-universals, applicable to the reader of the translation, and therefore subject to the equivalent-effect principle. On the other hand, the work may describe a culture remote from the second reader's experience, which the translator wants to introduce to him not as the original reader, who took or takes it for granted, but as something strange with its own special interest. In the case of the Bible, the translator decides on equivalent-effect-the nearer he can bring the human truth and the connotations to the reader, the more immediately he is likely to transmit its religious and moral message. (1981: 11)

Although Newmark's comments relate to the biblical discourse, it is also, applicable to the *Holy Qur'ân*. Its selection of words, phrases, clauses and sentences was based on their sounds and meanings in order to create both emotional and semantic effects.

Before the advent of Islam, Arabia was a male-dominated society: women had no status of any kind other than as sex objects. The number of women a man could marry was not fixed. Not only that, but he had the right to divorce his wife at any time he wished by any form of divorce. One such an example

relates to the protection of the woman's marital right and to prevent her from being abused, as is told in *Sûrat Al-Mujâdilah* "The Woman Who Dispute":

Those among you who make their wives unlawful to them by *Zihâr* 'الظهار', they cannot be their mothers. None can be their mothers except those who gave them birth. And verily, they utter an ill word and a lie. And verily, Allâh is Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving. (CT 58:2)

الذين يظاهرون منكم من نسائهم ما هن أمهاتهم إن أمهاتهم إلا اللاتي ولدنهم وإنهم ليقولون منكراً من القول وزوراً وإن الله لعفوٌ غفورٌ.

According to Ibn Kathîr:

The reason of revealing the verse of *Zihâr* "الظهار" was when Uas Ibn al-Samit divorced his wife Khulaha bint Thalaba by an old pagan custom "*Zihâr*" which consisted of the words 'You are to me like the back of my mother'. This form was held by pagan custom to imply a divorce and freed the husband from any responsibility for conjugal duties, but did not allow the wife to leave the husband's home, or to contract a second marriage.

Khulaha urged her plea to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and in prayer to Allâh, her just plea was accepted and this iniquitous custom, based on false words, was abolished. (2010: 371)

As far as losing some aspects of culture-specific concepts in translation is concerned, the implication of this degrading divorce - the freedom of the husband from any responsibility for conjugal duties and preventing the wife from leaving the husband's home, or to contract a second marriage - is not reflected in the translation in the Control Text, not even by an explanation of some kind.

Mona Baker identifies culture-specific concepts as a common problem of non-equivalence:

The source-language word may express a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture. The concept in question may be abstract or concrete: it may relate to a religious belief, a social custom, or even a type of food. Such concepts are often referred to as 'culture-specific'. (2011: 21)

An example of such cultural concepts related to a religious belief can be found in *Sûrat Al-Mâ'idah* "The Table Spread with Food".

Forbidden to you (for food) are: *Al-Maitah* (the dead animals-cattle-beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allâh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, (that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for other than Allâh, or has been slaughtered for idols) and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns, and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal, unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death), and that which is sacrificed (slaughtered) on *An-Nusub*... (CT 5:3)

حرمت عليكم الميتة والدم ولحم الخنزير وما أهل لغير الله به والمنخنقة والموقوذة والمتردية والنطيحة وما أكل السبع إلا ما ذكيتم وما ذبح على النصب.

This verse was an answer to the question as which meat “*halâl*” lawful and “*harâm*” forbidden for Muslims. the *Holy Qur’ân* narrates these animals “الميتة والمنخنقة والموقوذة والمتردية والنطيحة”, which died “by the goring of horns”, “by a headlong fall”, “by a violent blow”, “by strangling” and “the dead animals-cattle-beast not slaughtered”, respectively. If any one of these animals die without mentioning the Name of Allâh on it while slaughtering, it will be “*harâm*”, unlawful for Muslims.

As far as translation is concerned, the meaning of each of these words requires more than one English word and a transliteration in order to be conveyed.

Hussein Abdul-Raof, too, is of the opinion that culture-specific concepts can be a part of the reasons for the untranslatability of the *Holy Qur’ân*:

Most cultural expressions are translations resistant such as the *Whip* and *P45* in English, or the French expression *au pair*. Some cultural expressions, however, can be linguistically tamed and naturalizes into the target-language, such as the Arabic expression *bukhuur*, which can be rendered into English as (air freshener), or the English expression (tooth-brush) which could have been naturalised as *miswak* in Arabic. But these are instances of cultural transplantation. (2004: 104)

In this respect, the *Holy Qur’ân* mentions some words relating to Bedouin life which are not known to modern Arabs, let alone in Western culture. An example can be found in *Sûrat Al-Mâ'idah* “The Table Spread with Food”:

Allâh has not instituted things like *Bahira*, or *Sâ'ibah*, or *Wasilah*, or a *Ham*. But those who disbelieve invent lies against Allâh, and most of them have no understanding. (CT 5:103)

ما جعل الله من بحيرة ولا سائبة ولا وصيلة ولا حام ولكن الذين كفروا
يقتررون على الله الكذب وأكثرهم لا يعقلون.

According to at-Ṭabarī,

Bahira “بحيرة” is a she-camel that has produced young camels five times (then they looked at the fifth one, if it was a he-camel, then they cut the *Bahira*'s ears and freed her, that is to say, they would never drink its milk or cut its wool). A *Sâ'ibah* “سائبة” is a she-camel that has produced she-camels ten times. A *Waṣīla* “وصيلة” is a goat that has produced ten she-kids five times. A *Ham* is a he-camel that is used for breeding (they would not ride on its back for travelling in their journeys, if it was used for breeding for ten successive years). (2011: 124)

An example is found in *Sûrat Al-Ḥajj* “The Pilgrimage”:

And proclaim to mankind the Ḥajj (pilgrimage). They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel: they will come from every deep and distant (wide) mountain highway (to perform Ḥajj). (CT 22:27)

وأذن في الناس بالحج يأتوك رجالاً وعلى كل ضامرٍ يأتين من كل فجٍ عميقٍ.

In this verse, the *Holy Qur'ân* uses the word *dâmir* “ضامر” which is a descriptive noun for a lean camel. The specific meaning of this word *dâmir* “ضامر”, according to al-Qurṭubī refers to a camel that was lean because of the long journey that it had to make through the very dry desert to Makkah and it was an honour to that camel to be mentioned in the *Holy Qur'ân*. If the translation is meant for Western readers, such a person will have difficulty in comprehending the significance of camels for people who lived in an arid desert at a time when there was no other means of transport than a camel, and for a community in which social status is measured by the number of camels and cattle that a Bedouin has. So, honouring these animals for their contribution in increasing the wealth of an Arab will still make limited sense to a modern Western citizen, because he/she may not understand the social value of these specific Arabic concepts.

In this regard, José Ortega y Gasset argues:

In Arabic there are 5,714 names for the camel. Evidently, it's not easy for a nomad of the Arabian Desert and a manufacturer from Glasgow to come to an agreement about the humpbacked animal. Languages separate us and discommunicate, not simply because they are different languages, but because they proceed from different mental pictures, from disparate intellectual systems – in the last instance, from divergent philosophies. (1992: 107)

These cultural concepts will be meaningless not only to the Western reader but even to the modern Arabs who live in urban areas: the contexts of life and literary traditions in Arabian Peninsula have changed enormously from those times to the present time, as was mentioned earlier in this chapter. Camels are no longer a preferable means of transportation, even to the Bedouins.

To solve the problem of the cultural differences presented by these two verses and of the other similar items, it may be useful to translate by way of strategies such as paraphrase and explanation.

Roman Alvarez and M. Carmen-Africa Vidal are convinced that

[t]he importance of the cultural milieu of each languages is such that it could be argued that its significance cannot be found at a linguistic level (neither SL, nor TL) but rather on a third level: in the cultural space that emerges from the clash (although, ideally, intersection) between the two cultures: a cultural space that is usually as complex as it is conflicting. (1996: 3-4)

This conclusion seems quite applicable to the clash between the Arabic cultures at the time of the *Holy Qur'ân*'s revelation and the English cultures, both past and present.

When considering cultural diversity in translation, Javier Franco Aixelâ writes:

Each linguistic or national linguistic community has at its disposal a series of habits, value judgements, classification systems, etc., which sometimes are clearly different and sometimes overlap. In this way cultures create a variability factor the translator will have to take into account. (1996: 59)

An example demonstrating this contention can be found in *Sûrat Al-Mâ'idah* "The Table Spread With Food":

They ask you (O Muḥammad ﷺ) what is lawful for them (as food), Say: Lawful to you are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful-food) foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetable and fruits)]. And those beasts and birds of prey which you have trained as hounds, training and teaching them (to catch) in the manner as directed to you by Allâh: so eat of what they catch for you, but pronounce the Name of Allâh over it, and fear Allâh. Verily, Allâh is Swift in reckoning. (CT 5:4)

يسألونك ماذا أحل لهم، قل أحل لكم الطيبات وما علمتم من الجوارح مكلبين تعلمونهن مما علمكم الله، فكلوا مما أمسكن عليكم، واذكروا اسم الله عليه، واتقوا الله، إن الله سريع الحساب.

According to al-Qurṭubī:

This verse was revealed as an answer to the question of two of the companions Prophet Muhammad ﷺ saying “we are hunters with hounds and hawks, so how can we make a prey *halal*-meat by pronouncing the Name of Allâh over it if we can’t reach it while it is alive? (2001: 14)

As a culture-specific concept related to their customs, this verse must be seen in reference to the fact that Arabs trained/train dogs and eagles for hunting wild animals. If the name of Allâh was/is pronounced over those animals when they were/are sent to catch the prey, that hunted prey will be *halal*; lawful meat for Muslims, and if it happens that the name of Allâh was/is not pronounced over those animals, their meat will be *haram*, unlawful for Muslims to eat.

The problem is the word “الجوارح”, which are the eagles that were/are trained for hunting, and the word “مكلبين”, which are the dogs that were/are trained for hunting. The word “مكلبين” is an active participle which is formed by adding the letter “م” to the root noun “كلب” “dog”, which is pronounced /møkAlɪbi:n/. However, these words have no equivalence as single words in English and will be meaningless if they are not translated by means of strategies of paraphrase and/or explanation.

Actually we see that these two words required 28 English words to convey their meanings in this long paraphrase “And those beasts and birds of prey which you have trained as hounds, training and teaching them (to catch) in the

manner as directed to you by Allâh”.

However, as far as the term “accuracy” is concerned, perhaps it could be more accurate if the Control Text uses the word “trained animals” to convey the exact meaning of the word “مكلمين” instead of the word “beasts”.

3.7 Problems Related to the Translatability of the *Holy Qur’ân*: Language Barriers

According to Hugo Friedrich, literary translations are always threatened by the boundaries between languages. He said:

In a rather disturbing way, literary translations continue to be threatened by the boundaries that exist between languages. Thus, the art of translation will always have to cope with the reality of untranslatability from one language to another. Actually, one could say that, in a poetic sense, the art of translation is affected by language boundaries in proportion to the shades of subtlety of the original and the demands translators place on themselves. (1992: 11)

In this respect, Arabic has a very especial syntactical structure that may not be reflected in the translation, that is to say the amalgamative structure, because in English there is no such a structure. In Arabic one can form a full sentence from a single transitive or intransitive verb.

An example of a sentence formed from a transitive verb, is the sentence “يدرسونها”. In this sentence the verb “يدرس”, the subject “*waw al-Jamâa*” “و” and the object the pronoun “ها” are amalgamated in one sentence “يدرسونها”.

An example of a sentence formed from an intransitive verb, is the sentence “قاموا”. In this sentence the verb “قام” and the subject “*waw al-Jamâa*” “و” are amalgamated in one sentence “قاموا”.

If any one wants to translate such sentences he/she must break them down. As such, the translation of the first sentence is “They study/investigate/ examine it/them”, because both the verb “يدرس” and the pronoun “ها” may refer to the books or problems. The translation of the second sentence is “They stood”.

According to Manâ al-Qattân (2007: 191), grammar and syntax play a significant role in determining the accurate meaning of the Arabic words,

claims: "If there are two indefinite articles in one sentence, in most cases the second one is different in meaning from the first one. "

al-Qaṭṭān's claim is confirmed by Ibn Kathīr's (2010: 47) interpretation of the indefinite article "ضعف" in verse 54 in *Sūrat Ar-Rūm* "Romans" who writes:

This verse gives the phases of the development of human being. The meaning of the first indefinite article "ضعف" is "a drop of sperm", the meaning of the second one is "the state of babyhood", and the meaning of the third one is "the state of old age".

As far as conveying the meaning in English is concerned, the Control Text translated this verse as follows:

Allāh is He Who created you (in state of) weakness, then gave you strength after weakness, then after strength gave (you) weakness and grey hair, He creates what He wills. And it is He Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful (i.e. Able to do all things). (CT 30:54)

الله الذي خلقكم من ضعفٍ ثم جعل من بعد ضعفٍ قوةً ثم جعل من بعد قوةٍ ضعفاً
وشيبه، يخلق ما يشاء، وهو العليم القدير.

As such, and according to al-Qaṭṭān's claim and Ibn Kathīr's interpretation, using the word "weakness" to convey the meaning of the indefinite article "ضعف", which is mentioned in three sentences in this verse, is a misinterpretation.

Another example can be shown in *Sūrat Fâtir* or *Al-Malâ'ikah* "The Originator of Creation, or The Angels":

And likewise of men and Ad-Dawâbb [moving (living) creatures, beasts], and cattle, are of various colours. It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allāh. Verily, Allāh is All-Mighty, Oft-Forgiving. (CT 35:28)

ومن الناس والدواب والانعام مختلف ألوانه كذلك، إنما يخشى الله من عباده العلماء،
إنَّ الله عزيزٌ غفورٌ.

This is probably a confusing verse for the native-Arabic speaker who is not well-informed in Arabic grammar, let alone the non- native Arabic speaker.

At the outset, it seems that the word “Allâh” is a subject, as it comes directly after the verb “يخشى” “fear” which is the normal pattern in Arabic. But, in fact, the word “Allâh” is an object and the plural word “العلماء” - scholars - which was separated from its verb, is the subject. However, the meaning will change completely if the word “Allâh” would have been read as the subject and the plural word “العلماء” became the object.

As far as the problem of languages boundaries in translation is concerned, an interesting fact is how Arabic differentiates between the sun and the moon. In Arabic, the sun is a star, because it generates light and heat but the moon is a planet because it gives light only. This can be demonstrated in *Sûrat Nûh* “Noah”:

And has made the moon a light therein, and made the sun a lamp?
(CT 71:16)

وجعل القمر فيهن نوراً وجعل الشمس سراجاً.

Another example occurs in *Sûrat Yûnus* “Jonah”:

It is He Who made the sun a shining thing and the moon as a light
and measured out for it stages that you might know the number of
years and the reckoning... (CT 10:5)

هو الذي جعل الشمس ضياءً والقمر نوراً وقدره منازل لتعلموا عدد السنين
والحساب...

In the above examples, the *Holy Qur’ân* used two different expressions as a description of the sun. In the first example, it used the word “سراج” which is a “lamp”, as a generator of “light” and “heat”, while in the second one it used the word “ضياء” which is “bright light/sunshine”, for the sun. Nevertheless, it used the word “نور” which is “light” for the moon, in both examples, because it gives light only. Accordingly, the translator should be aware of these differences in translation of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

Eugene Nida, whose contribution to translation studies is primarily influenced by problems encountered in the translations of the Bible, stated the following

in one of his seminal essays:

SINCE NO TWO LANGUAGES are identical, either in the meanings given to the corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrase and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence there can be no fully exact translations. The total impact of a translation may be reasonably close to the original, but there can be no identity in details. (2004: 141)

In this respect the Arabic speaker arranges his/her elements of speech according to how he constructs or understands the listener's mind. If the listener has no idea of the news that she/he receives, the information will be conveyed to him/her without an assertive device, while if he/she has some idea of the news that he/she receives or if he/she is a hesitant about accepting the news that he/she receives, the speaker will use one device of assertion. But if the listener is a denier of that news, then the speaker has to use more devices of assertion to convey his/her message. In this way the *Holy Qur'ân* conveyed its message, both without and with assertions.

The best demonstration of this phenomenon can be found around the concept of Resurrection. An example of the news without assertion is in *Sûrat Al-An'âm* "The Cattle":

It is only those who listen (to the Message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) will respond (benefit from it), but as for the dead (i.e. disbelievers), Allâh raise them up, then to Him they will be returned (for their recompense). (CT 6:36)

إنما يستجيب الذين يسمعون، والموتى بيعتهم الله، ثم إليه يرجعون.

An example of the news with a single assertion can be found in *Sûrat As-Sâffât* "Those Ranged in Ranks":

When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we (then) verily be resurrected? "And also our fathers of old? "Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Yes, and you shall then be humiliated." (CT 37:16-18)

أعدا متنا وكنا تراباً وعظاماً أئنا لمبعوثون. أو أبأؤنا الأولون. قل نعم وأنتم داخلون

An example of more assertions is in *Sûrat At-Taghâbûn* “Mutual Loss and Gain”:

The disbelievers pretend that they will never be resurrected (for the Account). Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): Yes! By my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected, then you will be informed of (and recompensed for) what you did: and that is easy for Allâh. (CT 63:7)

زعم الذين كفروا أن لن يبعثوا، قل بلى وربى لتبعثن، ثم لتنبؤن بما عملتم، وذلك على الله يسير.

In the first example the concept of Resurrection - والموتى يبعثهم الله - was conveyed to Arab pagans without any assertion because it was the first time for them to hear it, which means that they had no idea of it. As such, they had the right to believe or disbelieve it.

In the second example the concept of Resurrection - أنذا متنا وكنا تراباً وعظاماً أننا - was conveyed to Arab pagans with one device of assertion: the word “نعم”, which is translated into the exclamation “yes”, because they already had an idea of the resurrection, but they had some hesitation or doubt about believing it, so they need an assertion to believe that the resurrection in the Hereafter is true.

In the third example the concept of Resurrection - زعم الذين كفروا أن لن يبعثوا، قل بلى - was conveyed to Arab pagans with four assertions: the word “بلى”, the oath “وربى”, and the assertive devices “ن” and “ل” in the words “لتبعثن” and “لتنبؤن”, which are translated into the exclamation “Yes!”, the oath “By my Lord”, the adverb “certainly” and the modal verb “will be”. This was required, because they were deniers of the concept of Resurrection. As such, more devices of assertion were required.

Robert Alter confirms Nida’s conviction as he argues:

I think it will be helpful to say something first about why English translations of the Bible have been problematic - more problematic, perhaps than most readers may realize... All this strongly suggests that the language of biblical narrative in its own time was stylized, decorous, dignified, and

readily identified by its audiences as a language of literature, in certain ways distinct from the language of quotidian reality. (1996: iv & xxv)

This argument is also applicable to the Qur'anic narrative which is stylistic decorous, dignified, and readily identified by its audiences as a language of literature. For that reason the Pagans accused Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, of being a magician and the *Holy Qur'ân* was magic, as referred to this earlier in chapter 1.

The word order in conveying the message of the sacred books is of a great significance, as Hussein Abdul-Raof writes:

Although the permutation of constituents is fairly fixed in a given language, we do encounter a variety of word orders that may be employed to produce effective and sublime style. These word orders are usually semantically oriented and their meaning is distinct from that of normal word order. (2004: 96)

The word “الطاغوت” is another specific Qur'anic term that was not known to the Arabs before Islam, an example of which is found in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

Allâh is the Wali (Protector or Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light. But as for those who disbelieve, their Auliyâ (supporters and helper) are *Tâghût* [false deities and false leaders], they bring them out from light into darkness. Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever. (CT 2:257)

الله ولي الذين آمنوا، يخرجهم من الظلمات إلى النور والذين كفروا أولياؤهم
الطاغوت يخرجونهم من النور إلى الظلمات أولئك أصحاب النار هم فيها خالدون.

According to Ibn Kathîr (2010: 187) “ the word “الطاغوت” means “Satan that leads his followers to disbelief and worship false deities.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007) “the word “الطاغوت” means “whatever is worshipped save Allâh, the idol”.”

Clearly, it poses a problem for the translators and this explains why the Control Text uses a transliteration “*Tâghût*” and a paraphrase to convey its meaning.

Robert Alter writes:

It should be clear from all this that a translation that respects literary precision of the biblical story must strive to reproduce its nice discrimination of terms, and cannot be free to translate a word here one way and there another, for the sake of variety or for the sake of the context. It must be admitted, however, that some compromises are inevitable because modern English clearly does not coincide semantically with ancient Hebrew in many respects. (1996: xxix)

If this argument is about the specificity of the Holy Bible's language, it can be truly applied to the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. Clearly there is a profound difference with modern English but even current Arabic does not correspond with the ancient Arabic in which the *Holy Qur'ân* was revealed.

In support of the view of shift in meaning in Arabic, Asad writes:

To this end, the translator must be guided throughout by the linguistic usage prevalent at the time of the revelation of the *Qur'ân*, and must always bear in mind that some of its expressions - especially such as relate to abstract concepts - have in the course of time undergone a subtle change in the popular mind and should not, therefore, be translated in accordance with the sense given to them by post-classical usage. (1985: v)

In classical Arabic, for instance, the word “صحف” means “Scriptures” or “Sacred books”, but in current Arabic the word “صحف” means “newspapers”. In *Sûrat Al-A'lâ* “The Most High” the word could easily be improperly translated and therefore misunderstood:

Verily, this is in the former Scriptures - The Scriptures of Ibrâhim
(Abraham) and Mûsâ (Moses). (CT 87:18-19)

إنَّ هذا لفي الصحف الأولى، صحف إبراهيم وموسى.

The text, therefore, represents not only a challenge in terms of understanding its message, but also poses a serious challenge to the translators. They have to ensure that the context of a verse would ensure that its proper meaning is conveyed in translation.

According to Manâ al-Qaṭṭân (2007: 260-261) the real miracle of the *Holy Qur'ân* is to be found in its composition: “the Qur'ânic discourse with its various characteristics and various syntactic, semantic, rhetorical and phonetic

styles is completely different from the other types of Arabic discourse that Arabs were accustomed to.”

In this respect the *Holy Qur’ân* did not only change the themes of the Pre-Islamic poetry, it also presented some expressions in the opening of some *Sûrahs* which were completely different from the structure of poetry that the ancient Arabs were familiar with.

It presents, for example, the detailed and the concise, the short and the long *Sûrah*, and verses in different parts. It presents some expressions in the opening of some *Sûrahs*, which were completely alien to the Arabs at that time, such as starting the *Sûrah* with letters only. The opening, for instance, of *Sûrah* 2 consists of three letters “الم”, the opening of *Sûrah* 41 consists of two letters “حم” and the opening of *Sûrah* 19 consists of five combined letters “كهيعص”.

The following specific *Qur’ân* concepts or terms, also, demonstrate al-Qaṭṭān’s conclusions: “*Salâh*”, الصلاة, “*Rukû*”, الركوع, “*Sujûd*”, السجود, etc., for example, are words or concepts in The *Holy Qur’ân* which have no equivalents in English. The word “*Salâh*” denotes more than the English word “prayer”, the English words “kneeling” and “prostration” do not convey the exact meaning of the terms “*Rukû* الركوع” and “*Sujûd* السجود” respectively. For the believers to understand and practise these specific terminologies, Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ did not only explain their meanings and performed them, practically in front of his believers, but He told them to take all their ritual performances from Him directly as well.

However, although, the name of “Allâh” was known to the Arab pagans before Islam, the *Holy Qur’ân* presented the word “الرحمن” “Most Gracious”, one of the 99 attributes of Allâh, which was unknown even to the Arabs of Makkah, who argued with the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ about it, as is presented in *Sûrat al-Furqân* “The Criterion”:

And when it is said to them ‘Prostrate yourselves to the Most Gracious (Allah)!’ They say: ‘And what the Most Gracious?’

Shall we fall down in prostration to that which you (O Muhammad ﷺ) command us?’ and it increases in them only aversion.” (CT 25:60)

وإذا قيل لهم اسجدوا للرحمن قالوا وما الرحمن، أنسجد لما تأمرنا وزادهم نفوراً.

Reference was made to the specific style and structure of the *Holy Qur’ân* in Chapter 1. The text features frequent shifts in tense or person, for example: a shift from the first person to the third person, a shift from the third person to the second person and then back to the first person or a shift from plural to singular within a given person, features which may not be easy for the translators to tackle.

An illustration can be found in in *Sûrat Al-Mâ’idah* “The Table Spread With Food”:

The Jews say: “Allâh’s Hand is tied up (i.e. He does not give and spend of His Bounty”. Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for what they uttered. Nay, both His Hands are widely outstretched. He spends (of His Bounty) as He Wills. Verily, the Revelation that has come to you from your Lord (Allâh) increase in most of them (their) obstinate rebellion and disbelief. We have put enmity and hatred amongst them till the Day of Resurrection. Every time they kindled the fire of war, Allâh extinguished it: and they (ever) strive to make mischief on earth. And Allâh does not like the mufsidün (mischief-makers). (CT 5:64)

وقالت اليهود يد الله مغلولة، غلت أيديهم ولعنوا بما قالوا. بل يدها مبسوطتان
ينفق كيف يشاء، وليزيدن كثيراً منهم ما أنزل إليك من ربك طغياناً وكفراً،
وألقينا بينهم العداوة والبغضاء إلى يوم القيامة، كلما أوقدوا ناراً للحرب
أطفأها الله، ويسعون في الأرض فساداً، والله لا يحب المفسدين.

The difficulty of translating this verse forced the Control Text to add levels of meanings which are not visible in the original text.

Moreover, even if a translator finds an equivalent for a complete word or phrase of the *Holy Qur’ân*, whether by using a word-for-word technique or by paraphrasing the equivalents, how could he/she translate the letters in the

beginning of some *Sûrahs* that I have referred to earlier? No one knows the exact meanings, as Allâh alone knows their meanings, and Muslims believe that they are parts of the miracle of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

This specificity of the *Holy Qur'ân* is, of course, a hindrance to its translation. Abdul-Nabî Dhâkir writes:

Al-Zarqânî thinks that there are two meanings of every word: “explicit” which can be easily grasped and translated and “implicit” which is difficult to be understood and translated, or as he put it: “primary and secondary”, and that the special characteristics of the *Holy Qur'ân* is related to the secondary meaning rather than to the primary meaning and for that reason the *Holy Qur'ân* is untranslatable. (2010: 8)

A good example of the verification of this argument is the Qur'ânic term “خيراً” in verse 180 of *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

It is prescribed for you, when death approaches any of you, if he leaves wealth, that he makes a bequest to parents and next of kin, according to reasonable manners. (This is) a duty upon Al-Muttaqûn [the pious believers of Islâmic Monotheism who fear Allâh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allâh (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)] (CT 2:180)

كتب عليكم إذا حضر أحدكم الموت إن ترك خيراً الوصية للوالدين والأقربين
بالمعروف حقاً على المتقين.

The obvious common explicit meaning of the word “خيراً” is something like to abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds and to perform all kinds of good deeds such as charity, kindness, generosity, etc.” However, the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “خيراً” in this verse is actually the money that a person asks to be given to a particular person when he/she dies. It is similar to the Western concept of the “will”.

It is abundantly clear that a translator should be aware of the reasons for and situation of revelation of the *Holy Qur'ân* so that it will assist him/her in capturing the implicit meanings of some verses.

3.8 Problems Related to the Translatability of the *Holy Qur'ân*: Concluding Remarks

The initial examples given in this chapter touch on a number of issues relating to sound patterns and to semantic problems. But it has become clear that there exist many other grammatical and syntactical factors which come into play when translating from Arabic to English.

A brief summary of some of the issues relating to translation which were not addressed above, will be encountered in the comparative reading in the text chapters, and will underscore the problems facing translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* into English.

There are clearly numerous incongruities between English and Arabic which can be ascribed to the fact, amongst others, that Arabic is a Semitic language that has remained unchanged for the last fourteen centuries. Arabic has had a standard orthography for fourteen centuries and there are no silent letters in writing, one writes what he/she hears. In Arabic the verbs normally come before nouns in a sentence structure. Adjectives follow the noun they qualify. Arabic differentiates between male and female in pronouns, verbs and sentence structure, pronouns like: “they” and “you” have specifications for males and females, singular and plural. Plurals which do not refer to human-beings become abstract feminine, and take their adjectives in the feminine singular. The use of conjunction and connectives is different, in Arabic one can begin each sentence or phrase with a series of “ands” but he/she cannot do this in English. Conjugation depends on number and gender. With all the consequent ramifications as far as rhyme is concerned. Arabic has no verb “to be” in present tense and no auxiliary “do”. Arabic does not make distinction between actions completed in the past with or without a connection to the present. The most significant difference is that in English the active participle is formed from a verb, ending in “ing”, while in Arabic the active participle is formed from a noun, for example, the word “مكلبين” is an active participle which is formed by adding the letter “م” to the root noun “كلب” “dog”, which is pronounced /mukalibi:n/. There is no indefinite article as such in Arabic.

There is a definite article, but its use is not identical with the English counterpart.

Taking this into account, it would be nigh impossible to imagine that a literal translation could reflect what is present in the original Arabic text.

However perfect or complete a translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* aspires to be, it will inevitably lose not only aspects of the source language's meanings, but also of course, the emotions accompanying it.

The Qur'ânic style has an emotional effect on those who listen to it. The quote from Muṣṭafâ Şâdiq al-Râfi`î (1997: 184) springs to mind again: "When Muslims listen to a correct beautiful recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, they fear: it shakes and softens their hearts, they often burst into tears."

The *Holy Qur'ân* itself states this fact in *Sûrat Az-Zûmar* "The Group":

Allâh has sent down the Best Statement, a Book (this *Qur'ân*), its parts resembling each other (in goodness and truth) (and) Oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or hear it). Then their skin and their hearts soften to the remembrance of Allâh... (CT 39:23)

الله نزل أحسن الحديث كتاباً متشابهاً مثاني تقشعر منه جلود الذين يخشون ربهم
ثم تلين جلودهم وقلوبهم لذكر الله...

As one may expect this emotional effect is unlikely to be replicated by a translation.

This, of course, holds true in respect of many translations. Paul Valery argues:

How many poetic works, reduced to prose, that is, to their simple meaning, become literally non-existent... This is because the finest verses in the world are trivial or senseless once their harmonic flow has been broken and their sonorous substance altered as it develop within the time peculiar to their measured movement, and once they have been replaced by an expression of no intrinsic musical necessity and no resonance. (1992: 116)

A similar view pertaining to the futility of translation is expressed by Josë Ortega Y Gasset arguing from the opposite side of the nature of the translation's purpose:

It is, at least it almost always is, impossible to approximate all the dimensions of the original text at the same time. If we want to give an idea of its aesthetic qualities, we will have to relinquish almost all the substance of the text in order to carry over its formal graces (1992: 110)

The need to give access of the *Holy Qur'ân* to a wider, international readership (whether for religious, social or even political reasons) in a time when the global village shakes off boundaries of old, inevitably would give rise to its continued and growing translation.

This happened and happens despite the old reservations in respect of its deemed untranslatability and the many problems related to the translation touched upon in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

VIEWS ON THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED OR ENVISAGED IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE *HOLY QUR'ÂN*

The different translations which inform this study all included prefaces or introductions which reflects the translator's or translators' views in respect of their translations. These comments can be grouped into different sections, such as intentions and the target receptors, the approaches, techniques and styles and the problems experienced or envisaged in the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

These prefaces or introductions give the writer a good opportunity to discuss the link between the translations, the translators, their intentions, their target receptors, their approaches, their techniques and their styles.

4.1 The Intentions and the Target Receptors

Regarding the intention and the target receptors of the Control Text, Shaikh Şâlih ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz ibn Muḥammad Âl al-Shaikh, Minister for Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Da`wah and Guidance, the Supervisor General of the Complex, writes:

Following the directives of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Âl Sa`ûd - may Allâh guard him - to give the Book of Allah all the importance due to it, its publication, its distribution throughout the World, preparation of its commentary and translation of its meanings into different languages of the world; and in view of the firm faith of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Da`wah and Guidance in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the importance of translating the meanings of the *Glorious Qur'ân* into all the important languages of the world to enable the non-Arabic-speaking Muslims to understand it: and in fulfilment of the injunction of the Prophet ﷺ "Convey my message even it be one single ayah": and with the view to serve our English-speaking brethren, King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the *Holy Qur'ân*, al-Madinah al-Munawarah has the pleasure to present the English speaking-reader with this English translation by Dr Muhammad Taqi-ud Din al-Hilali and Dr Muḥammad Muşsin Khân, which has been revised on behalf of the Complex by Fazzal Ilahi Zahir, Dr Amin ad-Din Abu Bakr, Dr Wajih Abdurrahman and Dr V. 'Abdur Rahim. (2009: 111)

From this very long quote - and from the date of the establishment of the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the *Holy Qur'ân*, in al-Madīnah al-Munawarah in 1984 and its declared intention - it is clear that the target

readers of this translation are the generations of the last decade of the twentieth century and the start of the current one who are non-Arabic-speakers, irrespective of whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims.

As for Pickthall's intention of the translation of the *Glorious Qur'ân*, Khaleel Muhammad writes:

Pickthall was aware of the problems of the Christian missionaries' translations and sought to remedy the defects since "some of the translations include commentation offensive to Muslims, and almost all employ a style of language which Muslims at once recognize as unworthy. (2005: 3)

Because a lengthy sojourn in Arabia gave him the opportunity to be in contact with the Arabs' culture, as well as to master the classical Islamic sources, Pickthall's desire was to serve Islam with the most accurate English version of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Addressing his target receptors, Yusuf Ali writes:

The service of the *Qur'an* has been the pride and the privilege of many Muslims. I felt that with such life-experience as has fallen to my lot, my service to the *Qur'an* should be to present it in a fitting garb in English. (1934: iii)

As a contemporary of Pickthall, Ali, who knew both Arabic and English languages and their cultures well, wanted to present an English Interpretation, side by side with the Arabic text of the *Holy Qur'ân* to Western readers. He writes:

Gentle and discerning reader! What I wish to present to you is an English Interpretation, side by side with the Arabic text. The English shall be, not a mere substitution of one word for another, but the best expression I can give to the fullest meaning which I can understand from the Arabic text. (1934: iv)

About his receptors, Asad writes:

THE WORK which I am now placing before the public is based on a lifetime of study and of many years spent in Arabia. It is an attempt - perhaps the first attempt - at a really idiomatic, explanatory rendition of the Qur'anic message into a European language. None the less, I do not claim to have "translated" the Qur'ân in the sense in which, say, Plato or Shakespeare can be translated. (1985: v)

Asad wants to convey the message of the *Holy Qur'ân* to people who, like most Westerners, do not know Arabic at all, as well as to the educated non-Arab Muslims, who would have found difficulty in understanding it.

About his intention Irving declares:

There is a necessity, almost an urgency now for an American version in contemporary English...A new generation of English-speaking Muslims has grown up in North America which must use our scripture differently than their fathers would have done. (1992: xxi)

Irving's declared intention is to render the *Holy Qur'ân* in a way that suits the American modern culture. His target receptors were/are the second and the third generation of American Muslims.

Fully informed by difficulties of the earlier translations, Ozek and his colleagues put their intention of translating the *Holy Qur'ân* as follows:

There are many excellent translations of the *Qur'ân* in English, but our goal is to produce a special translation in clear, easily understood modern English language, immediately accessible to the majority of English-speakers today. We will also try to address all issues that readers bring to our attention. (2000: vii)

In respect of their receptors, they claim that

... the growing number of conversions to Islâm in the English-speaking world, particularly in countries such as the United States, South Africa and Fiji, together with increased interest in Islâm among non-Muslims, has created an urgent need for a wider range of translations, to suit all orientations and educational levels. (2000: viii)

In fulfilment of the universality of the *Holy Qur'ân*, the declared intention of Ozek and his colleagues is to present a modern English translation that is accessible to the majority of English-speakers today. the *Holy Qur'ân* itself states this fact in *Sûrat Saba* ' "Sheba":

And We have not sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) except as a giver of glad tidings and a wrner to all mankind, but most of men know not.
(CT 34:28)

وما أرسلناك إلا كافة للناس بشيراً ونذيراً، ولكن أكثر الناس لا يعلمون

About his intention, Abdel-Haleem writes:

In preparing this translation the intention was to produce easily readable, clear contemporary English, as free as possible from the Arabism and Archaism that marked some previous translations, while remaining true to the original Arabic text. With these aims it was necessary to have the text read by native speakers of English mainly graduates in English and Arabic, including some of my former MA students. (2005: xxxvi)

As a native-Arabic language speaker who knows the whole *Holy Qur'ân* by heart, Abdel-Haleem's intention was to depart from the classical Arabic that characterizes the *Holy Qur'ân*'s discourse and to present it in a reliable, easily readable, clear contemporary English.

4.2 The Translator's/Translators' Approaches, Techniques and Styles

Being aware of the significant role of the method in understanding of the original language, Shaikh Salih Âl al-Shaikh (2009: 111) writes: "We, therefore, request every reader of this translation to furnish the Complex with any mistakes, omission and addition that he may find in it so that they may be eliminated in subsequent editions in shâ Allâh."

The Control Text adapts the semantic approach to translation because it wants to remain within the original culture of the *Holy Qur'ân*. The translators use current British English with intensive explanatory transliterations, paraphrases, commentary and footnotes to facilitate understanding of the message of the *Holy Qur'ân*. Their technique of avoidance of omission and addition in the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* can be elicited from the above request to readers by Shaikh Şaliḥ Âl al-Shaikh. As such, this translation should seek the simplest word in current English so as to enable the modern generations to comprehend the message of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

About Pickthall's approach, technique and style, Khaleel Muhammad (2005: 3) argues: "Aware that heavily annotated works distracted from focus on the actual text, Pickthall provided few explanatory notes and tried to let the text speak for itself."

Because his translation was a reaction to the Christian missionaries' offensive translations, and was done in the first half of the twentieth century, Pickthall used the Jacobean English which was prevalent in translations of the Bible at

that time. As such, his translation is not really appealing to modern Muslim non-native English speakers (and in some instances even incomprehensible for contemporary English-speakers) because the “classical English” is no longer spoken at present.

Regarding his approach, technique and style, Ali writes:

Introducing the subject generally, I come to the actual *Sûras*. Where they are short, I give you one or two paragraphs of my rhythmic Commentary to prepare you for the text. Where the *Sûra* is long, I introduce the subject-matter in short appropriate paragraphs of the Commentary from time to time, each indicating the particular verses to which it refers. The paragraphs of the running Commentary are numbered consecutively, with some regard to the connection with the preceding and the following paragraphs. It is possible to read this running rhythmic Commentary by itself to get a general bird's-eye view of the contents of the Holy Book before you proceed to the study of the Book itself. (1934: iv)

As far as approach is concerned, Ali used a communicative approach to translation. He, too, sought to reflect the poetic, rhetorical features of the original *Holy Qur'ân* in an English, which no one uses at the present time. Therefore, his translation presents the same obstacles as those mentioned above in respect of Pickthall's.

Describing his approach, Asad writes:

This absence of any division of reality into “physical” and “spiritual” compartments makes it difficult for people brought up in the orbit of other religions, with their accent on the “supernatural” element allegedly inherent in every true religious experience, to appreciate the predominantly rational approach of the *Qur'ân* to all religious questions... With the exception of two terms, I have endeavoured to circumscribe every Qur'ânic concept in appropriate English expressions - an endeavour which has sometimes necessitated the use of whole sentences to convey the meaning of a single Arabic word. The two exceptions from this rule are the terms *al-qur'ân* and *Sûrah*, since neither of the two has ever been used in Arabic to denote anything but the title of this particular divine writ, and each of its sections or “chapters”, respectively: with the result it would have been of no benefit whatsoever to the reader to be presented with “translations” of these two terms. (1985: iii)

According to Antoine Berman's definition (2004: 244)

Rationalization recomposes sentences and the sequence of sentences, rearranging them according to a certain idea of discursive order - wherever the sentence structure is relatively free (i.e. wherever, it doesn't answer to specific idea of order, it risks a rationalizing contraction.)

Asad (1985: vi) used the rational approach which allows him "... to circumscribe every Qur'anic concept in appropriate English expressions - an endeavour which has sometimes necessitated the use of whole sentences to convey the meaning of a single Arabic word."

However, although, the *Holy Qur'ân* will not tolerate any omission, substitution, manipulation or rearrangement of its composition, as far as conveying the meaning is concerned, the rational approach may be is the most appropriate method to be used in the translation of such a text of a miraculous embedded nature as the *Holy Qur'ân*.

As for his technique and style, Asad writes:

... On the other hand, I did not see any necessity of rendering the Qur'anic phrases into a deliberately 'modern' idiom, which would conflict with the spirit of the Arabic original and jar upon any ear attuned to the solemnity inherent in the concept of revelation. (1985: viii)

Although Asad put it clearly that his target receptor was/is "the contemporary reader", his use of the pronouns such as "thou and thee" would most probably alienate his envisaged readers.

About his approach, Irving writes:

[W]e must be able to discuss Islam on our own terms, terms which have been made up through our own knowledge and our own use of the English language. I have tried to find the simplest word so that the Muslim child can understand it easily, and feel strengthened thereby. It is also intended for the pious non-Muslim who is not already tied up in theology of some other sort: we must be able to discuss Islam on our own terms, terms which have been made up through our own knowledge and our own use of the English language. (1992: xxiv)

As he targeted the younger American generations, Irving wants to move or transpose the *Holy Qur'ân* to the American culture. He uses a communicative approach, because it enables him to communicate the meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to his readers. As such, he translates the specific term of "the *Holy Qur'ân*" into "the Noble Reading", which can be deemed to be a distortion of the original text. However, his subtitle "The First American

Version” is a direct contradiction to the basic *Holy Qur’ân*’s concept of unity of the Muslim community.

He adopts a technique of flexibility in translation: “Almost every day I learn a new rendering for a word or a phrase: then I must run this new thread of meaning through the other passage.”(1992: xxiv)

Regarding his style, Irving claims:

Rhymed prose meets the ear, but since the invention of the printing press it is punctuation and paragraphs that meet the reader’s eye. Verse form and punctuation are both matters of literary structure; when the rhyme shifts in the *Qur’ân*, it is shown roughly in this version by using different lines and paragraphs in English, so that the reader can achieve a similar rhythmic effect, especially for public reading or recitation. (1992: xxxiv)

He tried to preserve the poetic features of the *Holy Qur’ân* in simple contemporary words in order to help the readers to understand it easily.

About the technique and style adopted by their team, Ozek writes: “We plan to improve upon each new edition, especially, regarding commentary but also regarding the refinement of language, until the English we have chosen truly becomes both modern and eloquent.” (2000: vii)

To achieve their goal of reflecting the mainstream understanding of the *Holy Qur’ân*, which most readers wish to know, Ozek uses the semantic approach. In terms of a technique of transliteration, this translation differs from the Control Text’s translation in using the transliteration only for *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha*.

Regarding his approach, technique and style, Abdel-Haleem claims:

This translation is intended to go further than previous works in accuracy clarity, flow, and currency of language. It is written in a modern, easy style, avoiding where the possible use of cryptic language, or archaisms that tend to obscure the meaning...Throughout this translation, care has been taken to avoid unnecessarily close adherence to the original Arabic structures and idioms, which almost always sound unnatural in English. (2005: xxix)

As an Egyptian and a professor at London University, Abdel-Haleem is well acquainted with both the Arabic and the English culture. Since his target receptors are the native speakers of English, Abdel-Haleem uses a communicative approach, in which he avoids using not only Archaic Arabic

and idioms, but also the more classical English that characterized the earliest translations of the *Holy Qur'ân* done by non-Muslim or Muslim translators.

He uses a technique of omission and chooses modern simple words in his translation. He kept footnotes to a minimum and supplied them only when there is an absolute need: "The footnotes are meant to be minimal, and to explain allusions, references, and cultural background only when it was felt these were absolutely necessary to clarify meaning and context." (2005: xxxv)

4.3 The General Comments on the Problems Experienced or Envisaged in the Translation of the Holy Qur'ân

Shaik Şâlih al-Shaikh writes:

We are aware of the fact that the translation of the *Glorious Qur'ân*, however accurate it may be, must fall short of conveying the wealth of meaning that the miraculous text of the original conveys: and that the meaning conveyed by the translation is only the sum total of what the translator has understood from the text of the Glorious Book of Allâh, and that it cannot escape the defects and drawbacks that are inherent in every human endeavour. (2009: 111)

If understanding of the *Holy Qur'ân* is difficult for an educated native-Arabic speaker who is not specialized in the Qur'ânic studies - a fact that is verified by the various numbers of commentators and commentaries "*Tafsîrs*" of the *Holy Qur'ân* - how will it be for a translator who is a non-Arabic speaker? This assumption is what Shaik Salih al-Shaikh wants to convey to the reader of the Control Text:

"... however accurate it may be, [it] must fall short of conveying the wealth of meaning that the miraculous text of the original conveys." (2009: 111)

In his introduction, Pickthall writes:

The arrangement is not easy to understand. Revelations of various dates and on different subjects are to be found together in one *sûrah*: verses of Madinah revelation are found in Meccan *sûrahs*: some of the Madinah *sûrahs*, though of the late revelation, are placed first and the very early Meccan *sûrahs* at the end. But the arrangement is not haphazard, as some have hastily supposed. Closer study will reveal a sequence and significance, as, for instance, with regard to the placing of the very early Meccan *sûrahs* at the end. The inspiration of the Prophet progressed from inmost things to outward things, whereas most people find their way through outward things to things within. (1930: 18)

He continues:

There is another peculiarity which is disconcerting in translation though it proceeds from one of the beauties of the original, and is unavoidable without abolishing the verse-division of great importance for reference. (1930: 318)

Because he lived in the Arab world for a long time, one can conclude from this long argument that Pickthall was familiar with the *Holy Qur'ân*'s structure and the areas of difficulty in terms of translation. He shared the view of Muslim scholars who believed/believe that the *Holy Qur'ân* is untranslatable, but its meaning can be conveyed through translation: "That is of the spirit of the Arabic language: but attempts to reproduce such rhythm in English have the opposite effect to that produced by the Arabic." (1930: 19)

In his commentary on the *Qur'ân*, Yusuf Ali writes:

Sometimes I have considered it too stupendous for me - the double task of understanding the original, and reproducing its nobility, its beauty, its poetry, its grandeur, and its sweet practical reasonable application to every day experience... Classical Arabic has a vocabulary in which the meaning of each root-word is so comprehensive that it is difficult to interpret it in a modern analytical language word for word, or by the use of the same word in all places where the original word occurs in the Text. (1934: iv)

As a non-native Arabic speaker, Ali described the difficulty of the double task for him as to understand the original of the *Holy Qur'ân* and to translate not only the words but also its specific features. He had a similar view to those held by Asad and Abdel-Haleem in respect of the development of meaning in Arabic, and he writes: "Arabic words in Text have acquired other meanings than those which were understood by the Apostle and his Companions. All living languages undergo such transformations." (1934: viii)

Being well acquainted with the Arab language and culture, having spent a lifetime in Arabia studying Arabic, Asad sets out the various difficulties of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* as follows:

Unlike any other book, its meanings and its linguistic presentation form one integrated. The position of individual words in a sentence, the rhythm and sound of its phrases and their syntactic construction, the manner in which a

metaphor flows almost imperceptibly into a pragmatic statement, the use of acoustic stress not merely in the service of rhetoric but as a means of alluding to unspoken but clearly implied ideas: all this makes the *Qur'ān*, in the last resort, unique and untranslatable - a fact that has been pointed out by many translators and by all Arabs scholars. But although it is impossible to "reproduce" the *Qur'ān* as such in any other language, it is none the less possible to render its message comprehensible to people who, like most Westerners, do not know Arabic at all or, as is the case with most of the educated non-Arab Muslims, not well enough to find their way through it unaided. (1985: v)

Irving refers to some Arabic incongruity related to the problems of translating the *Holy Qur'ān*:

Some confusion in translations stems at times from the inability to distinguish between nouns and verbal sentences, verbs cause some difficulty too, since they can vary in the usage, tense and conditional moods must be expressed with care, especially with the absent verb "to be", collective nouns are generally considered as abstract feminines in Arabic, exactly what we find in English words "cattle", "opera", "people". Plurals in Arabic which do not refer to human beings become abstract feminines, and take their adjective in the feminine singular. The superlative absolute presents another problem. (1992: xxvi)

This is just an example of the very elaborate introduction by Irving to the difficulties that the translator of the original text of the *Holy Qur'ān* might encounter. This is because he discusses in detail the problems of translating the *Holy Qur'ān*, namely; the grammar and syntax such as conjunctions, connectives, the differences between the nouns and verbal sentences, the disjunctive pronoun, tense and conditional moods, collective nouns, the superlatives and the possessive pronouns. He also, discusses the dualism and pairs, the Qur'ānic terminologies, the spelling and phonetics, the style and mood and chanting and recitation.

Ozek and his colleagues write:

Over thirty English translations of the *Majestic Qur'ān* have been made, many of which continue to serve people all over the world. Many of them are of a high quality, and have filled the gap in conveying something of the Book's message to English speakers. Nonetheless, there is a generally felt belief that the gap has not been completely filled. Among the reasons for dissatisfaction, apart from the obvious one of the *Qur'ān's* inherent untranslatability, we could cite the following:

First, the translations most commonly reprinted are written in an archaic, Biblical style, which, while dignified and melodious, is sometimes difficult for a new generation which has not been exposed to pre-modern literature.

Second, the growing number of conversions to Islâm in the English-speaking world, particularly in countries such as the United States, South Africa and Fiji, together with increased interest in Islâm among non-Muslims, has created an urgent need for a wider range of translations, to suit all orientations and educational levels. (2000: vii)

To Ozek and his colleagues the problem is in the inherent untranslatability of the *Holy Qur'ân* which can be explained in its syntactic, semantic, rhetorical, phonetic and cultural features. They believe that the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* can convey only something of the meaning of the Book's message to English. But as a team consisting of different native languages and embracing different cultures, their translation could possibly be more accurate than the other translations.

On the difficulty of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Abdel-Haleem writes:

Throughout this translation, care has been taken to avoid unnecessarily close adherence to the original Arabic structures and idioms, which almost always sound unnatural in English... Also problematic can be a particular kind of rhetorical question, frequent in the *Qur'ân*, which expresses disapproval through its grammatical structure rather than by any lexical addition. (2005: xxxi)

Abdel-Haleem finds that the difficulty of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is to be found in its intertextuality, the context, the Arabic structure and idioms, the pronouns and the classical usage of Arabic.

Clearly all the translators are led by the intention of conveying the message of the *Holy Qur'ân* to non-Arabic speakers in a way that can be comprehensible to them and for this reason - with the exception of Asad - they primarily adopted one or two approaches. The first is the semantic approach which will let them move their readers to the Arab culture, the culture in which the *Holy Qur'ân* was revealed. In this respect it maybe useful to repeat Peter Newmark's definition of the semantic approach:

Semantic translation sometimes has to interpret, even to explain a metaphor, if it is meaningless in the target-language (nevertheless, only as a last resource, only if the translator is convinced that the relevant background knowledge is inaccessible to his reader). In semantic translation, the translator's first loyalty is to his author. (1988: 63)

The second one is the communicative approach which will allow them to move the *Holy Qur'ân* to the readers' culture. They use a flexible technique

and simple style to fulfil their intention. They draw attention of the readers to the difficulty that they faced in the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

CHAPTER FIVE THE ANALYSIS OF THE SELECTED *SŪRAHS*

This chapter explores the selected *Sūrahs* of the *Holy Qur'ân* in both the Arabic language (the Source Language) and the English language (the Target-language) to identify semantic disparities and discrepancies between them, and critically analyses them.

As indicated earlier, the Arabic text published by the King Fahd Complex in Madīnah Munawwarah as *Al-Qur'ân Al-Karīm* in 2009 will be used as the Source Text .

The translation by the same Complex, *The Noble Qur'ân English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*, also published in 2009, will serve as a Control Text. In light of the fact that this text can be deemed an authorized translation, it would make sense to use this as the basis for the comparative study of the other texts. The reason for choosing these texts were set out earlier, but for the sake of clarity the chronological order of their publication are given again below:

- (a) Pickthall, M. M. 1930. *The Glorious Qur'ân*. I used this translation because it was the first translation which was done by a European Muslim who was familiar with the Arabs' culture and it is now available world-wide and on the internet.
- (b) Ali, A. Y. 1934-1937. *The Holy Qur'ân. Translation and Commentary*.
- (c) Asad, M. 1980. *The Message of the Qur'ân*.
- (d) Irving, B.T. 1992. *The Qur'ân*.
- (e) Ozek, A., Abdal Hakim Murad, Mostafa al-Badawi and Uthman Hutchinson. 2000. *The Majestic Qur'ân*.
- (f) Abdel-Haleem, M.A.S. 2005. *The Qur'ân*.

As has been stated earlier, the translated version of the *Holy Qur'ân* of the Complex of Madīnah Munawwarah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be used as a Control Text and it will be referred to as such (CT). The others will be referred to simply by the names of the translators: Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem. The latter approach will help in avoiding possible confusion between the identical translated title, *The Qur'ân*, that was used by both Abdel-Haleem and Irving.

The Specific *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur'ân* that the research focuses on are the following: the 1st, the 3rd, the 12th, the 61st and the 112th *Sûrah*.

5.1 The Reasons for Selecting the *Sûrahs*.

The reasons are briefly set out below and it will be clear that there are common aspects of features relevant to translation problems or challenges shared by all or many of them.

- They contain some culture-specific concepts.
- They reflect specific linguistic differences between Arabic and English.
- They contain “*At-Tanwīn*” the Arabic grammatical device might not be replicated in translation.
- They have some poetic features which might not be reflected in translation, such as: rhyme alliterations, assonance, consonance and rhyme.
- Some of them start with the abbreviated letters, one of the specific style aspects what can be described as Qur'anic .

5.2 Comparison between the Selected Translations.

At the outset it must be reiterated that the verses discussed are those where there are some significant semantic disparities and discrepancies between the selected texts. Other reasons justifying the selection have been referred to earlier and some more detail in this respect is given prior to the discussion of the *Sûrah* itself.

5.2.1 The first *Sûrah* (The Opening Chapter)

- This *Sûrah* is known by several names such as: *Fâtiḥat al-Kitâb* (The Opening of the Book), *Umm al-Kitâb* (The Essence of the Book), *As-Sab` al-Mathânî* (The Seven Oft-Repeated Verse), *Al-Kâfiya* (The Sufficient), *Al-Shâfi`* (The Curing *Sûrah*), *Sûrat Al-Ḥamdu* (The *Sûrah* of praise). It is very important in Islamic worship, being an obligatory part of the daily *Salâh*, repeated several times during the day.
- It contains some culture-specific concepts.
- It has some poetic features such as assonance, consonance and rhyme, which may not be reflected in translation.
- It reflects specific linguistic differences between Arabic and English related to the disconnected pronoun “إِيَاكَ”, which precedes the full verbal sentences “إِيَاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ”, creating a problem for translators.
- It contains the core of the Islâmic belief, “*Tawhid*”, that is to say, the oneness of Allâh, and the exclusive worship of Allâh.
- The guiding principles of the *Holy Qur’ân*, which were revealed to help mankind along the journey of life, are summed up in this *Sûrah*.
- It is one of the short and concise *Sûrahs*.
- It has simple words, but is full of complex meanings.

In respect of this *Sûrah*, reference must briefly be made to the discrepancy in the numbering of the verses.

According to al-Qurṭubî:

Al-Shâfi`î considers the acronym the “*Basmallah*”, which comprises the words: “In the Name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful”, as an integral part of ‘The Opening chapter’ and, therefore, it is numbered as verse 1, and should be recited aloud in *Salâh*. But Abū Ḥanîfa decides that this acronym should be recited silently in *Salâh*, because it does not form a part of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥa* or any other *Sûrah*, with the exception of verse 30 of *Sûrat An-Naml* (The Ants). (2001: 11)

As far as the term “Method/School of *Fiqh*” is concerned, there are four main Islamic Jurisprudence Schools. The leaders of these schools were the eminent

scholars of *Fiqh*: Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik, Al-Shāfi`ī and Ibn Ḥanbal. All of these schools are based on the *Islamic Fiqh* with slight differences in their interpretation of some verses or Prophetic traditions. An example would be the difference between them about the “*Basmallah*”, whether it is a part of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥa* or not, or whether it should be recited loudly or silently in *Ṣalâh*. Schools shape the aspects of daily life of Muslims in terms of the rules pertaining to acts of worship and the rules pertaining to dealings with others. In Sudan they follow the Maliki School, in Egypt they follow the Shafei School and in South Africa they follow the Hannifi School, and for this reason the *Holy Qur’ân* was/is numbered according to the school that they follow in that country. This could probably hold true for the translators and found in their versions of translations of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

Based on the Hanafi and Al-Shāfi`ī schools the selected translators numbered the verses of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥa* differently. For the Control Text, Ali, Asad and Abdel-Haleem, the “*Basmallah*” is verse number 1 of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥa*, but it is not a part of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥa* for Pickthall, Irving and Ozek. This difference in the actual numbering of the verse will be ignored in the discussion which follows as the actual verse will be referred to and used, not the numbering.

5.2.1.1 *Sûrah* 1 Verse 1/2

Source Text

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

Control Text

“In the Name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.”

Pickthall

“In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.”

Ali

“In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.”

Asad

“IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE DISPENSER OF GRACE.”

Irving

“In the name of God, the Mercy-giving, the Merciful.”

Ozek

“In the name of Allah, the All Merciful, the Compassionate.”

“Bismi ’Llāhi ’r-Rahmāhi ’r-Rahim.”

Abdel-Haleem

“In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!”

Discussion

The Arabic acronym “البسمة” which consists of the words “بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ” was/is transliterated into the “*Basmallah*”. It comprises the words “In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, and the Most Merciful”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 14), “Ibn Abbas -رضى الله عنهما- narrated: “Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ did not know the end of any *Sūrah* and the beginning of the next one, unless He received the acronym the “*Basmallah*”.”.

On the same page, he continues: “Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said: “Everything which does not begin with the “*Basmallah*” falls short (of the blessing of Allāh).”.”

For the above Prophetic tradition the companions started the compilation of the *Holy Qur’ân* with the “*Basmallah*”, and for the same reason Muslims believe in beginning everything with it, seeking Divine blessings.

In respect of translation, the Control Text, Pickthall and Ozek use a transliteration of “Allâh” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “الله”, Ali, Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the word “God”.

According to Ibn Kathîr (2010: 14), “(t)he word “Allâh” is a unique Arabic word. It is a noun. It has no dual, no plural, no adjective, no verb and no adverb.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the Arabic word “Allâh” is the name of the creator of the universe.”.

However, while the Arabic word “Allâh” has no derivatives, there are ninety-nine other names or attributes of Allâh which have many derivations, such as verbs, nouns, etc.

Examples of the derived verbs from the attribute “الخالق” which is “the Creator” can be a present tense “يخلق” which is “to create/creates/ create”, a future tense “سيخلق” which is “will create”, a past tense “خلق”, which is “created” and an imperative tense “اخلق” which is “create”.

The above verbs can be applied to all forms of the subjects and objects of the sentence; singular, dual or plural, feminine or masculine and they change their forms, accordingly.

Examples of the derived nouns are the following: the word “الخالق” itself which can be used for a singular masculine form, the word “الخالقة” which can be used for a singular feminine form, the word “الخالقان” which can be used for a dual masculine form, the word “الخالقتان” which can be used for a dual feminine form, the word “الخالقون” which can be used for a plural masculine form, and the word “الخالقات” which can be used for a plural feminine form.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “Allâh” is the name of God among Muslims and Arab Christians. The word “God” in Christianity and other monotheistic religions means “the creator and ruler of the universe: the Supreme Being.”.

The word “god” itself is equivalent to (any) “deity” has a plural form and the distinction between this meaning and the one used by the translators is

conveyed by the absence of the definite article and the use of the upper-case “G”. The use of the lower case would refer to “deities” such as the Greek, Roman and Indian gods or the pagan Arabs’ gods around Al-Ka’abah in the Pre- Islamic Era.

In the “*Basmallah*”, the problem of non-equivalence arises because the Arabic word is a culture-specific concept with an imbued meaning.

The Control Text, Pickthall and Ozek translate it by using a loan word. (English borrowed the word Allâh and it is reflected in the English Dictionaries as an English word). Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use a cultural substitution to translate it.

Although the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, there is a difference in their expressive meaning. In terms of the equivalent effect, the transliteration of the word “Allâh” is more rewarding than the choice of the word “God” in as far as it places the text in a very specific context.

Being aware of the importance of this *Sûrah* in Islamic worship, as an obligatory part of the daily *Salâh*, repeated several times during the day, and as a customary invocation used in Islâmic ceremonies of all kinds and taking into account the merit of the poetic features of this *Sûrah*, Ozek uses transliteration for representing its Arabic words in their totality into English. Since the aim of Ozek, as it was stated in his preface, is to give the mainstream understanding of the *Holy Qur’ân*, he tries to help his reader to move from his/her linguistic habits to those of the Arabic ones by the strategy of transliteration. By doing so, his translation will be more attractive and effective on those non-Arabic readers, Muslim or non-Muslim who wish to know more about Islam.

In the “*Basmallah*”, the Control Text and Asad use the phrase “the Most Gracious”, Pickthall the word “the Beneficent”, Ali the phrase “Most Gracious”, Irving uses the phrase “the Mercy-giving”, Ozek uses the phrase

“the All Merciful” and Abdel-Haleem uses “the Lord of Mercy” to convey the meaning of the attribute of Allâh “الرحمن”.

Semantically, the word “الرحمن” is one of the ninety-nine attributes of Allah. It is an exaggerated attribute that consists of a prefix “ال”, which is “Al”, the root form “رحمة” and a suffix “ن” which is “n” in English. Although, the use of the definite article in Arabic is different to some extent from English, but in concern with the attributes of Allâh, it is a part of all the ninety-nine attributes with exception of the word Allâh itself. As such, without the definite article the words “رحمن، رحيم، رؤوف، كريم ، لطيف...إلخ” will not be attributes of Allâh, The superlative “most”, which means “greatest in amount or degree”, can convey the meaning of the exaggeration of this word accurately. The adjective “ful”, which means “an amount that fills something”, can convey the meaning of the exaggeration in this word accurately as well.

The phrase “the Mercy-giving” shifts the meaning of “being mercy Himself” to His action of giving mercy. The back translation will be “معطى/ مانح الرحمة”, which will be a misinterpretation.

Although the adjective “all”, which means “completely or in the highest degree”, has the meaning of the exaggeration in this word, it shifts the description of being “merciful” from the attribute “الرحمن” which is an exaggerated attribute in itself, to the name “Allâh Himself”. The back translation of “the All Merciful” will be “الرحيم كله/الكامل الرحيم”, which could be a misinterpretation.

The phrase “the Lord of Mercy” shifts the meaning from the attribute “الرحمن”, which is an exaggerated name in itself to the Lord who possesses that “mercy”. The back translation will be “رب الرحمة/مالك الرحمة”, which is a misinterpretation as well.

As such the words “All” and “Lord” will not be equivalents to the superlative “most” and the adjectival suffix “ful”.

The words “beneficent, compassionate, gracious and mercy” convey the meaning of the exaggerated indefinite article “رحمن”, but without the definite article “the” and the superlative “most” or the adjectival suffix “ful”, they do not convey the meaning of the attribute “الرحمن”.

Syntactically, the Control Text and Asad use the definite article “the”, the pronoun “most” and the morphemes “ful” and “ous”, Ali uses the pronoun “most” without a definite article and the morpheme “ous”, Irving uses the definite article “the” and a hyphenation rule “Mercy-giving”, Ozek uses the definite article “the”, a pronoun “all” and a morpheme “ful”, Abdel-Haleem uses the definite article “the”, the proper noun “Lord”, the preposition “of” and the noun “mercy”, for the prefix “ال” and for the suffix “ن”, to convey the meaning of Arabic exaggerated attribute of Allâh “الرحمن”.

By using the definite article “the”, the translators manage to convey the prefix “ال”, which is a part of the attribute “الرحمن”.

By using the superlative “most” and the adjectival suffix “ful”, the translators manage to convey the exaggeration of this attribute “الرحمن”. Although Ali used the superlative “most”, by the omission of the definite article “the” which is equivalent to the prefix “ال” he failed to convey an essential part of the attribute “الرحمن”.

By using the definite article “the” and the noun “beneficent” alone, Pickthall ignores the suffix “ن”, which plays the role of the exaggeration of this word.

As such, the choice of the noun “Beneficent” alone has less equivalent effect. According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “beneficent” means “doing good or resulting in good”, the word “compassion, derivative compassionate” means “sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others”, the word “dispense” means “distribute to a number of people, derivative dispenser”, the word “gracious” means “courteous, kind, and pleasant. In Christian belief, it means “showing divine grace”. The word “mercy” means “compassion or forgiveness shown towards an enemy or

person in one's power" and the word "most" means "greatest in amount or degree"."

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), "the word "beneficent" means "محسن، خير، رحيم"، the word "compassionate" means "شفوق، رحيم"، the word "dispense" means "يوزع"، the word "gracious" means "كيس، شفوق، رؤوف" and the word "mercy" means "رحمة، رافة، الرحمة"."

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), "the word "grace" means "نعمة، فضل، بركة" and the word "mercy" means "رحمة"."

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010:16), "the root of the attribute "الرحمن" is "رحمة". It carries the exaggeration of mercy and grace"."

In the "*Basmallah*", the Qur'ānic term "الرحيم" is conveyed by the phrase "the Most Merciful", in the Control Text, in Pickthall by the word "the Merciful", in Ali by the phrase "Most Merciful", in Asad by the phrase "THE DISPENSER OF GRACE", in Irving by the phrase "the Merciful", in Ozek by the phrase "the Compassionate" while in Abdel-Haleem by the phrase "the Giver of Mercy!"

The first assumption is that as a native Arabic language speaker who is familiar with both the Islamic and European cultures, Abdel-Haleem's translation could be the most accurate of all English translations of the Holy Qur'ān. Nevertheless, by using the phrases "the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy" he ignores the hyperbole of the attributes of Allāh "الرحمن" and "الرحيم".

The Arabic attribute of Allāh "الرحيم" is an exaggerated "hyperbole" that consists of a prefix "ال", which is "Al", the root form "رحمة" and the letter "ي".

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), "the word "compassion, derivative compassionate" means "sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others", and the word "dispense" means "distribute to a number of people, the derivative is dispenser"."

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007) “the word “compassionate” means “شفوق، رحيم”, and the word “dispense” means “يوزع.””

Although the adjective “compassionate” has the meaning of the Arabic adjective “رحيم” without the definite article “the” it will not be an equivalent for the attribute “الرحيم”, because the prefix “ال” is a part of the exaggerated attribute “الرحيم”.

The noun “dispenser” which means “distributor” of goods or any thing will not convey the meaning of the exaggerated attribute “الرحيم”.

The phrase “THE DISPENSER OF GRACE” shifts the meaning from the attribute “الرحيم”, which is an exaggerated name in itself to “THE DISPENSER OF GRACE” who possesses that “grace”. The back translation will be “موزع الرحمة/موزع النعمة”, which is a misinterpretation.

By using the phrases “the Most Merciful”, “Most Merciful”, “the Merciful”, the Control Text, Ali, Pickthall and Irving all convey the role of the exaggeration of this attribute “الرحيم” more accurately than the choices of “compassionate”, “the Giver of Mercy” and “the Dispenser”.

The choice of the phrase “the Most Merciful” has the most equivalent effect.

In terms of closeness, the Control Text’s translation is as close as possible to the original, because it uses the superlative “most” and the adjectival suffix “ful”, in addition to the definite article “the” to convey the prefix “ال” the main part that differentiates between the attributes of Allâh “الرحمن” and “الرحيم” and the adjective of the Arabic root “رحمة”.

However, regarding the repetition of the definition of the dictionaries of the meaning of the word “dispenser” as an equivalent of the attributes of Allâh “الرحمن” and “الرحيم”, because in Arabic they have different meaning, while the dictionaries give one meaning for both of them. This proves the argument of the problem of non-equivalence of some Quranic items.

In respect of the use of capital letters in translation of the *Holy Qur’ân*, it should be noted that Muslims prefer to use capital letters when writing all

words relate to Allâh, whether they are direct names, descriptive words or pronouns and this explains why the translators use them in their translations. However, it seems that Ali uses capital letters illogically, for instance, the words “To” “In”, “Confirming”, “And”, “Of” and “As” in verse 3 of *Sûrat Al-Imr’ân* “The Family of Îmr’ân”:

It is He Who sent down To thee (step by step), In truth, the Book,
Confirming what went before it: And He sent down the Law (Of
Moses) and the Gospel (Of Jesus) before this, As a guide to
mankind. (CT 3:3)

نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقاً لما بين يديه، وأنزل التوراة والإنجيل

As for the illogical use of capital letters by Ali, it is worth repeating what is stated briefly in one verse of some characteristics of the Qur’ânic style, and is explained at length below.

The *Holy Qur’ân* has a specific lattice structure that connects every word and every verse with every other word and every other verse by rhyme, rhythm and meaning. It often skips from one subject to another and offers instructions on the same subject in different places. Its verses can be very long or very short. What is stated in a general way in one verse is explained in detail in another: what is stated briefly in one verse, is explained in length in another.

Therefore Ali uses the capital letters in his translation to draw his readers’ attention to the shifts in meanings of the verses of the *Holy Qur’ân*. As far as the poetic aspects of the *Holy Qur’ân* are concerned, Ozek claims:

Human literary productions are either in poetry or prose. The *Majestic Qur’ân*, however, is in neither of these genres. Neither can it be termed music, although it possesses a system of tonality and rhythm that is aesthetically superb, being of Divine authorship. (2000: x)

In this respect, this verse lost these qualities, created amongst others by the /n/ and /m/ at the end of the attributes of Allâh, “الرحمن” and “الرحيم” which we find here and at the end of all the verses of this Sûrah:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

As has been stated earlier, an investigation into the representation of the poetic nature of the *Holy Qur'ân* in translation is a complex undertaking. It could hardly be included in a study of this kind, where the aim is to discuss semantic disparities and discrepancies. Justice can hardly be done to the rich poetic texture of the work by cursory remarks as the one above and for that reason little attention will be devoted to this aspect of the translations.

5.2.1.2 *Sûrah* 1 Verse 3/4

Source Text

مالك يوم الدين.

Control Text

“The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection).”

Pickthall

“*Owner of the Day of Judgment.*”

Ali

“*Master of the Day of Judgment.*”

Asad

“*Lord of the Day of Judgment.*”

Irving

“*Ruler on the Day for Repayment!*”

Ozek

“*Master of the Day of Judgement.*” “*Mālīki yawmi 'd-din.*”

Abdel-Haleem

“Master of the Day of Judgement.”

Discussion

In this verse the Control Text, Asad, Irving, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali use different words, such as “Owner”, “Judge”, “Lord”, ‘Ruler and “Master” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “مالك”. But the Control Text adds a qualifier “only” and a paraphrase “(and the Only Ruling Judge)”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “Judge” means “A public officer appointed to decide cases in a law court. A person who decides the result of a competition. A person able or qualified to give an opinion”. “The word “Lord” means “a name for God or Christ”. The word “master” means “a man who has people working for him, especially servants or slaves, a male head of a household, a person who has complete control of something”. The word “owner” means “a person who owns something” and the word “ruler” means “a person or an agent exercising government or control”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “Judge” means “*يحكم على، يحاكم، سيد، مولى، أمير، ملك، عاهل*”, the word “Lord” means “*يقدر، يكون رأيا، قاضي، حكم*”, the word “own” means “*يملك*” and the word “ruler” means “*الحاكم، المسيطر*”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because this is a culture-specific item. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, but there is a difference in their expressive meaning. The Control Text gives a translation by a paraphrase using related words. Asad, Irving, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali use a cultural substitution to translate it.

However, using the qualifier “only” and a paraphrase “(and the Only Ruling Judge)” the Control Text adds more effect to the meaning of the word

“Owner”, than the other three words, as it differentiates between it and the other lords, masters, owners and rulers of lands or any other properties.

The translators also use the word “Lord” as an equivalent for the Arabic word “رب”, which means that they use the same word for two different Arabic words “رب” and “مالك”.

This means that English has no specific equivalent for each of the two Arabic words.

There is a difference of meaning between the Control Text and the other translators in conveying the meaning of the Arabic “مالك”.

In the same verse the Control Text uses the phrase “the Day of Recompense” and a paraphrase “(i.e. the Day of Resurrection)”, Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the phrase “the Day of Judgment.”, while Irving uses the phrase “the Day for Repayment!” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “يوم الدين”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011) “the word “Judgement Day” means “the time of the Last Judgement” The word “Recompense” means “punish or reward appropriately”. The word “Repayment” means “pay back money owed to someone, do or give something as recompense for favour or kindness received” and the word “Resurrection” means “in Christian belief the rising of the dead at the Last Judgement” .”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “Judgement day” means “يوم يجازى، يعاقب أو يكافئ أو يعوض”، the word “Recompense” means “الحساب أو الدينونة عن ضرر” and the word “Repayment” means “وفاء دين، مجازاة، مكافأة، تعويض”، and the word “Resurrection” means “بعث، نشور، انبعاث”.” These are the same definitions that are given by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

Semantically there is no problem of non-equivalence, the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices of the equivalents were/are based on the translators’ personal preference.

Although the phrase “the Day of Judgment” conveys the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “يوم الدين” - as it a common culture-specific concept that relate to religions - the phrase “the Day of Recompense” and a paraphrase “(i.e. the Day of Resurrection)” conveys the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “يوم الدين” more accurately.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the choice of the phrase “the Day for Repayment!” is the least effective.

The Control Text’s translation is as close as possible to the original text, because it covers all the possible meanings by using the qualifier “only”, the word “owner” and a paraphrase “(and the Only Ruling Judge)” for the Qur’ânic term “مالك” and the phrase “the Day of Recompense” and a paraphrase “(i.e. the Day of Resurrection.”, for the Qur’ânic term “يوم الدين”.

5.2.1.3 *Sûrah* 1 Verse 4/5

Source Text

إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين.

Control Text

“You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).”

Pickthall

“*Thee (alone) we worship: Thee (alone) we ask for help.*”

Ali

“*Thee do we worship, And Thine aid we seek.*”

Asad

“*Thee alone do we worship: and unto Thee alone do we turn for aid.*”

Irving

“You do we worship and You do we call on for help.”

Ozek

“You alone do we worship, and Your help alone do we seek.”

“Iyyāka na budu, wa Iyyāka nasta īn.”

Abdel-Haleem

“It is You we worship: it is You we ask for help.”

Discussion

In this verse, The Control Text, Pickthall, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “help”, while Ali and Asad use the word “aid”, to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “نستعين”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “aid” means “help or support”, the verb “call on” means “have recourse to”. The word “help” means “be of a benefit to, support someone to allow them to move in a specified direction” and the verb “turn to” means “go to for help or information, have recourse to”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “aid” means “يعاون، يساعد، معاونة،”، the verb “call on” means “يدعو، ينادى”، the word “help” means “يساعد، يعاون” and the verb “turn to” means “يرجع، يلجأ”.”

In terms of equivalent affect the word “help” is the most effective. In terms of accuracy all these options are interchangeable.

Semantically, the disconnected pronoun “إياك” in this verse, “إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين”, may cause a semantic problem for the translators. The translators use different strategies to overcome this problem. All the translators use paraphrases to convey the meaning of the clauses “إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين”.

Syntactically, however, by using the word “alone” and the phrase “for each and everything”, the Control Text adds some meaning which are not visible in the sentence. Asad also adds the word “alone”, which is not visible in the sentence.

Using the pronoun “Thee” instead of the pronoun “You” for the disconnected pronoun “إِيَّاكَ”, the translations of Pickthall, Ali and Asad will not be understood by the modern English reader. The choice of the pronoun “You” as an equivalent for the disconnected pronoun “إِيَّاكَ” is an appropriate choice.

Using “Thine”, the possessive form of you, Ali does not only create some meaning which is not visible in the sentence, but also he shifts the meaning of the disconnected pronoun “إِيَّاكَ” from “Allâh” to “the help of Allâh”.

Because the translations of Pickthall, Ali and Asad were done in an earlier era, and because they were oriented towards the Westerners, they use the Biblical language.

Although Ozek uses a more contemporary English in the clause “Your help alone do we seek”, by doing so he changes the meaning of the disconnected pronoun “إِيَّاكَ” from “Allâh” to “Allâh’s help”. The back translations of their translations will be “نَسْأَلُ اسْتِعَانَتَكَ”.

Ali, Asad, Irving and Ozek use the auxiliary “do” to show the emphasis of the disconnected pronoun “إِيَّاكَ”.

By using the adjective alone, whether in parenthesis or not, the translators add some information which are not visible in the original text. However, irrespective of whether the translators use classical language or current language, the emotional effect of this *Sûrah* is lost and this explains why Ozek uses transliterations for the whole of it so as to retain this emotional effect.

In terms of understanding, the Control Text, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem are the most appropriate to the modern receptor language. Nevertheless, by using a paraphrase “(for each and everything)”, the Control Text adds some information which is not visible in the original text.

Although the study will not discuss the loss of poetic features in the various translations, it might be useful to indicate some of the prosodic markers in the verses. The density of these indications will provide some idea to non-Arabic speakers of the difficulties translators could expect in trying to emulate the original in English. Following this route, would obviate the need to spend time identifying, enumerating and describing what would be required in this respect, which is also not the purpose of this study.

This will be done by simply underlining these markers in some of the verses towards the end of the relevant discussion. In this verse it might well look as follows:

”إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ“

In terms of closeness, Abdel-Haleem’s translation is as close as possible to the original text, as he uses the pronoun “it” for the disconnected pronoun “إِيَّاكَ” as an object, because the real object of a verb “نَعْبُدُ” is hidden .

5.2.1.4 *Sûrah* 1 Verse 6/7

Source Text

صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين.

Control Text

“The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (i.e. those whose intentions are perverted: they know the Truth, yet do not follow it), nor of those who went astray (i.e. those who have lost the (true) knowledge, so they wander in error, and are not guided to the Truth).”

Pickthall

“The path of those whom Thou hast favoured. Not (the path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray.”

Ali

“The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, Those whose (portion) Is not wrath, And who go not astray.”

Asad

“The way of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessing, not of those who have been condemned [by Thee], nor of those who go astray.”

Irving

“The road of those whom You have favoured, with whom You are not angry, nor who are lost.”

Ozek

“The path of those whom You have favoured: “Sirāta’lladhina an’amta ‘alayhim”. Not of those who have incurred Your wrath “Ghayri’l-maghdūbi ‘alayhim”, Nor of those who are astray “Wa la’d-dāllin.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The road of those You have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray.”

Discussion

In this verse, The Control Text, Asad and Ali use the word “the way”, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the word “the road”, Pickthall and Ozek use the word “the path” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “صراط”.

In Arabic the word “صراط” is the moral “method, style, manner of doing something’, while the word “طريق” is a physical “a road, track, path, or street”. All these words are interchangeable and they all convey the general meaning, but the choice of the word “way” is more accurate as it covers the material meanings of the Arabic word “صراط” .

The Control Text uses the sentence “You have bestowed Your Grace”, Pickthall uses the sentence “Thou hast favoured”, Ali uses the sentence “Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace”, Asad uses the sentence “Thou hast bestowed Thy blessing”, Irving and Ozek use the sentence “You have favoured”, Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “You have blessed”, to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “أنعمت”.

The Control Text uses the sentence “who earned Your Anger (i.e. those whose intentions are perverted: they know the Truth, yet do not follow it).” Pickthall uses the sentence “who earn Thine anger”, Ali uses the sentence “Those whose (portion) Is not wrath”, Asad uses the sentence “those who have been condemned [by Thee]”, Irving and Ozek use the sentence “with whom You are not angry”, Ozek uses the sentence “Not of those who have incurred Your wrath”, Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “those who incur no anger”, to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “غير المغضوب عليهم”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “anger” means “a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility”, the word “astray” means “away from the correct path or direction”, the phrase “go astray” means “become lost or misled, the word “bestow” means “confer an honour, right, or gift”, the word “bless” means “consecrate or invoke divine favour upon someone by means of a religious rite”, the word “condemnation” means “an expression of a complete disapproval of”, the word “earn” means “obtain money in return for labour or services, gain something as the reward for hard work or merit”, the word “favour” means “approval or liking, unfair preferential treatment, an act of kindness beyond what is due or usual, regard or treat with favour, give unfairly preferential treatment to”, the word “grace” means “elegance of movement, courteous good will, (in Christian belief) the free and unearned favour of God”, the word “incur” means “become subject to something unwelcome or unpleasant as a result of one’s actions”, the word “lost” means “unable to find one’s way: not knowing one’s whereabouts”, the word “path” means “a way or track laid down for walking or made by continual treading, the direction in which a person or things move”, the word “portion” means “a part or share”, the word “road” means “a wide way

between places, especially one surfaced for use by vehicles, a way to achieving a particular outcome”, the word “way” means “a method, style, manner of doing something.’, (in place names) means “a road, track, path, or street” and the word “wrath” means “extreme anger”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “anger” means “غضب، يغضب”، the word “astray” means “ضال، شارد”، the word “bestow” means “يستعمل، يضع، يهب”، the word “bless” means “يكرس، يجعله مقدساً، يبارك”، The word “condemn” means “يشجب، يدين”، the word “favour” means “عطف، تأييد، استحسان، ”، the word “earn” mean “يكسب، يستحق، يستأهل”، the word “grace” means “نعمة إلهية، فضل، منة”، the word “incur” means “يتعرض، يجلب على”، the word “lost” means “مضيع، خاسر، ضال”، the word “path” means “طريق، ”، the word “portion” means “نصيب، جزء، قدر”، the word “road” means “طريق” and the word “wrath” means “حنق، غيظ، غضب شديد، ”. ”عقاب إلهي”.

As for the choice of the words ‘bestowed, blessed and favoured’, although they are all interchangeable and can convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “أنعمت”، the word “bestow” is the most accurate because the word “bless” is not usually used in this meaning as we can see it from the lexical meaning. The word “favour” may have some negative meaning as it can mean unfairness. The choice of the word “incur” is more accurate than the choice of the word “earn”, because the word “incur” is usually used in a negative case.

By using the phrases “Your Anger”, “Thine anger” and “Your wrath” to convey the meaning of the phrase “المغضوب عليهم”، the Control Text, Pickthall and Ozek change the meaning from the passive participle to a genitive noun which means adding some information that is not visible in the original text. The back translation of these phrases is “غضبك”.

By choosing the word “portion”, Ali creates some information which is not visible in the original text.

The choice of the words “anger, angry and wrath”, changes the state of the Arabic passive participle “المغضوب عليهم” into active voice. Asad uses a

translation by a less expressive word, “condemnation”, because if the speakers want to give the word “condemnation” an effect, normally they add the adverbs “strongly, firmly, etc.”, such as “We condemn strongly, firmly...” and it will be “نشجب، ندين بشدة، بقوة”. The choice of the word “condemned” and the pronoun “Thee” may be a less expressive choice for the phrase “المغضوب عليهم”.

The Control Text uses the sentence “nor of those who went astray (i.e. those who have lost the (true) knowledge, so they wander in error, and are not guided to the Truth)”, Pickthall and Ali use the sentence “go astray”, Irving uses the sentence “are lost”, Ozek uses the sentence “are astray”, Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “gone astray” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “الضالين”.

Although, the phrases “went astray”, “go astray”, “are astray” and “are lost” convey the general meaning of the Arabic word “الضالين”, grammatically the phrase “went astray” is the less expressive one because the Arabic word “الضالين” is an active participle which means in the past, the present and in the future.

Since the intention of the translators is to convey the meanings of this verse, the choice of the English equivalents will be of a great significance. As such, there are nuances in meanings between these translations.

The translations of Pickthall, Asad and Ali may not be understood by a modern reader as they were written in a biblical language emanating from seventeenth century. All the translators use a translation by cultural substitution.

In terms of Nida’s conviction regarding equivalent effect, the word “condemnation”, one can argue, has a lesser effect on the receptor than the word “anger”, because when the Arabic native-speakers hear or listen to someone condemning some bad conduct of some people, they know that this is just an expression of disapproval, nothing will happen to those people as a

result of their unacceptable conduct. It will not be followed by any harmful consequences.

Defending his choice of the word ‘condemnation’, Asad argues:

According to almost all the commentators, God’s “condemnation” (*ghadab*, lit. “wrath”) is synonymous with the evil consequence which man brings upon himself by wilfully rejecting God’s guidance and acting contrary to His injunctions. (1980: 2)

Excessive use of explanations by the Control Text will shift its task from a translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur’ân*, into a translation of *Tafsîr* of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

Irving avoids using not only a dated Arabic but also the classical English that characterized the earliest translations of the *Holy Qur’ân* which were done by non-Muslim or Muslim translators.

As such, his choice of words is influenced by the words of modern American culture such as “favoured”.

However, in spite of creating a level of meaning which is not visible in the original text by using the word “portion”, Ali’s translation is as close as possible to the original text, because he uses the words “bestow” and “grace” in addition to the phrase “who go not astray.” The latter is a suitable equivalent for the Arabic word “الضالين” which is an active participle that indicates the action in the past, present and in the future.

5.2.2 The third *Sûrah* or *Sûrat Âl-Imrân* “The Family of Imrân”

The different translated versions of the third *Sûrah* or *Sûrat Âl-Imrân* (The Family of Imrân) will now be considered.

The 3rd *Sûrah* was selected for the following reasons:

- It deals with the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus in that he himself is quoted as calling his followers to worship God alone:

Truly! Allâh is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him

(Alone). This is a straight Path. (CT 3:50)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ.

- It starts with the abbreviated letters “ألم”, one feature of the Qur’ânic-specific style.
- It contains a number of some culture-specific concepts, as reflected in the phrase “تجرى من تحتها الأنهار” and the words “بطانة وفاحشة ويغلل”
- It illustrates/demonstrates some specific linguistic differences between Arabic and English, which could create a problem for translators, such as the verbs “نزل وأنزل”
- It has some poetic features such as the assonance of the vowel “ا” at the end of the words “آيات محكمات وأخر متشابهات”, which could be lost in translation as well as the metaphorical language the phrase “هن أم الكتاب”
- It has specific Arabic grammatical devices that might not be replicated in translation, such as “*At-Tanwīn*” to which reference has already been made earlier
- It is one of the most detailed *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

5.2.2.1 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 1:

Source Text

ألم

Control Text

“*Alif-lâm-Mîm*. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings].”

Pickthall

“*Alif-lâm-Mîm*.”

Ali

“*Alif-lām-Mím.*”

Asad

“*Alif-lām-Mím.*”

Irving

“*A.L.M.*”

Ozek

“*Alif-lām-Mím.*”

Abdel-Haleem

“*Alif-lām-Mím.*”

Discussion

In verse 1, the Control Text, Asad, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by a transliteration, “*Alif-lām-Mím*”, while Irving uses the sounds of the letters of English alphabet “A.L.M”, to convey the meaning or sounds of the Arabic letters “*الم*”.

This verse is a beautiful illustration of the problems surrounding non-equivalence. Not only is the Arabic itself culture-specific, but also its meaning is incomprehensible. The concept is not even lexicalized semantically in the source language, so that it consequently cannot hope to be represented in the target-language.

The Control Text uses a translation by a paraphrase using related words. Asad, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by transliteration. Irving uses a cultural substitution by replacing them with the letters from the English alphabet “A.L.M”.

In his interpretation of these letters, al-Qurṭubī writes that

interpreters differ about the significance of the letters that are at the beginning of some *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur'ân*. Some of the commentators argued that: "Allâh has a mystery in every divine Book and these allegorical letters are a mystery of the *Holy Qur'ân*. (2001: 28)

According to Ibn Kathîr

Some of the commentators related these letters to Allâh and His Attributes: as the letter "أ" represents the first letter of the name "الله", the letter "ل" represents the first letter of the attribute "لطيف", which is "the Most Kind and Courteous (to His slaves)" and the letter "م" represents the first letter of the beautiful name "مجيد", which is 'the Glorious'. (2010: 20)

About the initial letters of the first verse of *Sûrat Âl-Imrân* "The Family of Imran", the Control Text writes: "These letters are one of the miracles of the *Qur'ân*, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings."

According to Ali:

Certain *Sûrahs* have certain initials prefixed to them which are called the "Abbreviated Letters". A number of conjectures have been made as to their meaning. Opinions are divided as to the exact meaning of each particular letter or combination of letters, but it is agreed that they have a mystic meaning... I shall try to discuss some of the probable meanings of any particular abbreviated letter or set of abbreviated letters on the first occasion on which it appears in the *Qur'ân*... There are 29 letters in the Arabic alphabet (counting *hamza* and *alif* as two letters), and there are 29 *Sûras* which have abbreviated letters prefixed to them... If we take the half of the alphabet, omitting the fraction, we get 14, and this is the number of letters which actually occur in the *Mugatta'at*... We should logically look for a common factor in the *Sûras* bearing the same initials, and this factor should be different for *Sûras* bearing other initials. In all cases where the abbreviated letters occur, there is some mention of the *Qur'ân* or the Book. (1934: 118)

Asad writes:

ABOUT one-quarter of the Qur'anic *Sûrahs* are preceded by mysterious letter-symbols called *Al-Muqatta'ât* ("disjointed letters") or, occasionally, *fawātih* ("openings") because they appear at the beginning of the relevant *Sûrahs*. Out of the twenty-eight letters of the Arabic alphabet, exactly one half - that is, fourteen - occur in this position, either singly or in varying combinations of two, three, four or five letters. They are always pronounced singly, by their designations and not as mere sounds, thus: *alif lām mīm*, or *hā mīm*, etc. (1980: 992)

In his introduction to the second *Sûrah*, Irving (1992: 2) writes: "This Chapter of 286 verses is arranged in forty sections. It, as well as Chapter 3 and Chapters 29-32 inclusive, begins with the mystic initials A. L. M."

Ozek writes about the initial letters of the first verse of the second *Sûrah*:

These letters are called *al-Hurūf al-Muqatta'āt*, and are placed at the beginning of several *Sūrahs*, of which they are an integral part. Different commentators have ascribed a range of different meanings to them, without, however, arriving at any consensus. (2000: 1)

In his footnote to verse 1 of the second *Sūrah*, Abdel-Haleem writes:

These are the names of the three Arabic letters a, l, and m. Twenty-nine suras of the *Qur'ân* begin with separate alphabetical letters like these: from one individual letter up to five. Various interpretations have been offered. It is sufficient to mention two here: (1) These letters indicated to the Arabs who first heard the *Qur'ân* that the *Qur'ân* consists of letters and words of their own language, although it was superior to any speech of their own, being of divine origin: (2) they are exclamatory device intended to arrest the listeners' attention, similar to the custom of starting poems with an emphatic 'No' or 'Indeed!' Exegetes normally added, after expounding their theories, 'God knows best. (2005: 2)

However, the subtlety of the cadence and sound, are ones of the especial features of the *Holy Qur'ân*, as al-Rafī'ī (1997: 183-184) writes: "The miracle of the musical composition of the *Holy Qur'ân* comes from the order of the letters that based on its pronunciation and the suitability of these letters to the purpose."

Semantically, all the selected translators know that the problem here is not about the sound of the sequence: rather it is about the semantic function of these initial letters.

Phonologically, by using transliteration, all the selected translators, with the exception of Irving, maintain the sound of these letters. However, because the Irving translation was/is not accompanied by the Arabic text of the *Holy Qur'ân*, or the audio-recitation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, the non-native Arabic speaker who has never listened to their Arabic Qur'ânic pronunciation which is /ʌlif/, /lɑ:m/ and /mi:m/, presumably may read them with their English names or sounds "/ei/, /el/ and /em/".

As such, Irving misinterprets the meaning of these initial letters of the 3rd *Sūrah*.

In terms of closeness, the Control Text's translation is as close as possible to the original text, because it gives the sound of these Arabic letters and a long

explanation or paraphrase of their function without which they will be meaningless to the English readers.

5.2.2.2 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 2

Source Text

الله لا إله إلا هو الحى القيوم.

Control Text

“Allâh lâ ilâhâ illa Hawa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), *Al-Hayyul-Qayyuum* (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists).”

Pickthall

“Allah! There is no god save Him, the Alive, the Eternal.”

Ali

“God! There is no god but He, - the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Eternal.”

Asad

“God - there is no deity save Him, the Ever Living, the Self-Subsistent, Fount of All Being!”

Irving

“God: there is no deity except Him, the Living, the Eternal.”

Ozek

“Allah there is no god but He, the Living, the Sustainer.”

Abdel-Haleem

“God: there is no god but Him, the Ever Living, the Ever Watchful.”

Discussion

In verse 2, the Control Text uses a transliteration “*Al-Hayyu*” and a paraphrase “the Ever Living”, Asad and Abdel-Haleem use the phrase “the Ever Living”, Ali, Irving and Ozek use the word “the Living”, while Pickthall uses the word “the Alive”, to convey the meaning of the attribute of Allâh “الحى”.

In the same verse 2, the Control Text uses a transliteration “*Al-Hayyul-Qayyum*” and a long paraphrase “the One Who sustains and protects all that exists”, Asad uses the English words “the Self-Subsistent, Fount of All Being”, Ozek uses the word “the Sustainer”, Abdel-Haleem uses the word “the Ever Watchful”, while Irving, Pickthall and Ali use the word “the Eternal” to convey the meaning of the attribute of Allâh “القيوم”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “alive” means “living, not dead, continuing in existence or use”, the word “the Eternal” means “an everlasting or universal spirit, as representing ~~deleted~~ God.” the word “ever” means “at all times, always”, the word “fount” means “a source of something desirable”, the word “living” mean “alive”, the word “subsist” means “maintain or support oneself at a minimal level, provide sustenance for”, the word “sustain” means “strengthen or support physically or mentally”, while the word “watchful” means “alert and vigilant”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “alive” means “على قيد الحياة”, the word “the Eternal” means “أبدى، سرمدى، لا نهائى” the word “ever means “دائماً، ابداً”, the word “fount” means “ينبوع، معين”, the word “living” means “حى، قوى”, the word “subsist” means “يوجد، يستمر، يبقى، يطعم، يعيل”, the word “sustain” means “يساند، يؤازر، يغذى، يمد بأسباب الحياة”, while the word “watchful” means “مؤرق، أرق، يقظ”.

According to the *Concordance of the Qur’anic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005), “the word “الحى” means “الدائم الحياة” which means “the ever living”, the attribute “القيوم” means “الدائم القيام بتدبير خلقه” which means “the Ever sustainer and Ever protector of all that exists”.”

As far as conveying the meaning is concerned, all the choices of the phrases “the Ever Living”, “the Living” and “Alive” convey the general meaning of this attribute of Allâh “الحى”.

In respect of the attribute of Allâh, “القيوم”, although the word “the Eternal”, is not the exact equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “القيوم”, it does carry something of its meaning. The same can be said about the words “fount”, “subsist” and “sustain”, because all of them bear the meaning of providing others with their needs. The word “watchful” is not an exact equivalent for the Arabic word “القيوم” either. In fact, the closest Arabic equivalent for the word “watchful” is the Arabic word “الرقيب” which is one of the ninety-nine names or attributes of Allâh.

The problem of non-equivalence arises because this is an Arab culture-specific concept.

Al-Qayyûm is the greatest attribute of Allâh, according to Ibn Kathîr:

The greatest name of Allâh - the name by which, if anyone invokes Him, He will definitely answer him/her-, is mentioned in three *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur’ân*: in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* (The Cow), in *Sûrat Al-‘Imrân* “The Family of Imrân)” and in *Sûrat Tâ-Hâ*. “2010: 184”

The source-language concept is clearly not lexicalized in the target-language.

This explains why the Control Text uses a transliteration ‘*Al-Hayyul-Qayyuum*’ and a paraphrase using related words. All the other translators use a translation by cultural substitution.

Nevertheless, although, there are some nuances in meaning between the selected words, they all manage to convey the general meaning of the verse.

Of course, by the way of the paraphrase and transliteration, it is the Control Text that goes furthest in explaining the concept of the specific Qur’ânic terms “الحى القيوم” and in this respect, the Control Text’s translation is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.2.3 Sûrah 3 Verse 3

Source Text

نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقاً لما بين يديه وأنزل التوراة والإنجيل.

Control Text

“It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur’ân) to You (Muhammad ﷺ) with truth, confirming what came before it. And He sent down the *Taurât* (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel).”

Pickthall

“He hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture with truth, Confirming that which was (revealed) before it, even as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.”

Ali

“It is He Who sent down To thee (step by step), In truth, the Book, Confirming what went before it: And He sent down the Law (Of Moses) and the Gospel (Of Jesus) before this, As a guide to mankind, And He sent down the Criterion (Of judgment between right and wrong).”

Asad

“Step by step, has He bestowed upon thee from on high this divine writ, setting forth the Truth which confirms whatever there still remains [of earlier revelations]: for it is He who has bestowed from on high the Torah and the Gospel.”

Irving

“He has sent down the Book to you with Truth, to confirm whatever existed before it. He sent down the Torah and the Gospel.”

Ozek

“He has sent down to You (Muhammad ﷺ) the Book with truth, confirming that

which was sent down before it, even as He sent down the Torah and the Gospel.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Step by step, He has sent the Scripture down to you [Prophet] with the Truth, confirming what went before: He sent down the Torah and the Gospel.”

Discussion

In verse 3, the Control Text, Irving, and Ozek use the verb “sent down”, Pickthall uses the verb “revealed”, Asad, Abdel-Haleem and Ali use the verb “sent down” and a paraphrase “step by step” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “نزل”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 333), “the *Holy Qur’ân* was revealed step by step but the Torah and the Gospel were revealed altogether”. According to Manâ al-Qaṭṭân (2007: 12-14) “the *Holy Qur’ân* was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ piecemeal in a period of 23 years in the latter half of the 7th century, CE.”

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the Qur’ânic term “نزل” means “Revealed in portions.” Bearing this fact in his mind, Asad (1980: 65) argues: “The gradualness of the Qur’ânic revelation is stressed here by means of the grammatical form *nazzala*”

However, the Qur’ânic term “نزل” in this verse is a semantic complex. The problem of non-equivalence is because of a language barrier.

The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language, because it signifies the piecemeal revelation of the *Holy Qur’ân* that lasted 23 years. In contrast, the word “أنزل” means to reveal in one go and at once.

The interpreters of the *Holy Qur’ân* differentiate between the Qur’ânic terms “نزل” and “أنزل” in respect of the revelation of the *Holy Qur’ân* and the other divine Scriptures, that is to say the Torah and the Gospel.

All the translators use a translation by a more general word. However, the Control Text, Irving, Ozek and Pickthall failed to make a clear distinction in meaning between the Qur'anic terms “نزل” and “أنزل”

Semantically, by using the phrase “In truth”, Asad, Abdel-Haleem and Ali manage to convey the meaning of the specific Qur'anic terms “نزل” more accurate than the Control Text, Irving, Ozek and Pickthall do.

Syntactically, by using this sentence “It is He Who has sent down the Book (the *Qur'ân*) to You (Muḥammad ﷺ)”, the Control Text violates the Arabic syntax “نزل عليك الكتاب”. It adds the phrase “It is He Who” which is not in the Arabic sentence.

Semantically, by using the word “revealed” in the sentence “He hath revealed unto thee (Muḥammad) the Scripture”, Pickthall misinterprets the specific meaning of the verb “نزل”. The back translation is “أوحى إليك الكتاب”, which is not the same as “sent down”.

The back translation, of course, is a technique of measuring the accuracy of a translation, if the retranslated text is the same as the original, then the translation is accurate.

Syntactically, by using the clause “It is He Who”, Ali adds some words which are not visible in the Arabic syntax. However, although he manages, semantically, to convey the meaning of the verb “نزل”, by using the phrase “step by step”, he violates the Arabic syntax by putting this phrase after the object “thee”.

Semantically Asad succeeds in conveying the meaning of the verb “نزل” by using the sentence “Step by step, has He bestowed upon thee from on high this divine writ”, but, syntactically, he failed to follow the Arabic syntax, in that he put the phrase “step by step” in the beginning of the sentence, while it should be after the Arabic verb “نزل”, because it a part of this verb. By using the phrase “from on high”, he also adds some meanings which are not visible in the Arabic sentence.

Syntactically, by using the clause “He has sent down the Book to you”, Irving follows the Arabic syntax of the clause “نزل عليك الكتاب”. Nevertheless, by putting the word “book” before the phrase “to you”, Irving failed to follow the Arabic structure.

Syntactically Ozek succeeds in maintaining the Arabic syntax by using the clause “He has sent down to You (Muhammad ﷺ) the Book”.

Syntactically, Abdel-Haleem failed to follow the Arabic syntax, in that he put the phrase “Step by step” before the verb “نزل عليك الكتاب” and separated the word “down” from the verb “has sent” which is a part of it in the Arabic form. He also put the object “Scripture” before the phrase “to you [Prophet]”, whereas in the Arabic syntax, it comes after the adjunct “عليك”

As for the influence of the linguistic markers on creating semantic discrepancies and disparities, it is worth repeating here that some verses of the Holy Qur’ân consist of one sentence, while others consist of 3 or 4 sentences. For this reason the scholars created a term of “the signs of waqff”, which is a marker of obligatory, optional and forbidden stopping places in recitation of the *Holy Qur’ân*, so as to make it comprehensible to the reader. However, some translators manipulate these verses according to their understanding. For instance, all the translators ended their translation of the verse 3 in *Sûrah* 3 with the name “Gospel”, as it does in the original Arabic text “وأنزل التوراة والإنجيل”, except Ali who ended his translation with a paraphrase: “(Of judgment between right and wrong)”, which is a part of the 4th verse.

Although Asad uses the phrase “step by step” in the same way of Abdel-Haleem, he creates levels of meanings that were/are not visible in the original text, such as “from on high this divine writ” and “there still remains [of earlier revelations]”.

However, in spite of putting the object “Scripture” before the genitive “عليك” which is “to you [Prophet]”, by using the phrase “step by step” without brackets, the Abdel-Haleem’s translation is as close as possible to the original text.

In this verse, the Control Text, Pickthall, Irving and Ozek use the phrase “with truth,” Asad uses the phrase “setting forth the Truth”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “with the Truth,” while Ali uses the phrase “In truth”, to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “بالحق”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “truth” means “the quality or state of being true (also the truth) that which is true as opposed to false”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “truth” means “صحة، حقيقة، صدق، ” “الحقيقة، فى الحق، فى الواقع”.”

From the right to the left, the first three words “صحة، حقيقة، صدق” are synonyms in forms of the indefinite articles. The fourth word “الحقيقة” is in a definite article. The fifth and the sixth words “فى الحق” and “فى الواقع”, which means “in reality” are in genitive forms.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 333), “بالحق أى بالصدق” means the *Holy Qur’ân* was revealed with the truth”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ personal judgement. The choice of the phrase “In truth” in Arabic means “فى الواقع، فى الحقيقة” which means “in reality or in truth”. The choice of the phrase “setting forth the Truth” in Arabic means “يقدم أو يعرض الحقيقة” which is to present or to give the truth.

As such, both the phrases “with truth” and “with the truth” are appropriate.

Syntactically, by putting the phrase “In truth” before the object “the Book”, Ali violates the Arabic syntax “نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق”.

In terms of the equivalent effect the choice of the phrases “In truth” and “setting forth the Truth” have the least effect.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the clause “what came before it.”, Pickthall uses the clause “that which was (revealed) before it.”, Ali uses the clause “what went before it.”, Asad, uses the clause “whatever there still remains [of earlier revelations]:”, Irving uses the clause “whatever existed before it.”, Ozek uses the clause “that which was sent down before it.”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “what went before:”, to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “لما بين يديه”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “come” means “move or travel towards or into a place near or familiar to the speaker, occur, happen, came is the past.”, the word “exist” means “have objective reality or being, be found”, the word “go” means “move from one place to another; travel, went is the past.”, and the word “remains” means “be left over after others or other parts have been used, completed, or dealt with”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “come” means “يجئ، يأتي، يصل إلى” “came” is the past which means “جاء، أتى، وصل إلى” , the word “exist” means “يمضى، يذهب، يرحل، يسافر” , the word “go” means “يكون، يوجد، يحتفظ ببقائه، يحيا” “went” is the past which means “مضى، ذهب، رحل، سافر” , and the word “remains” means “بقايا، خرائب ، فضلات، الآثار غير المنشورة”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 333), “لما بين يديه” means “the revealed Scriptures”.”

The clauses “what came before it.”, “what went before it.”, “whatever existed before it.”, and “what went before:”, do not specify the object, while the clauses “that which was (revealed) before it.”, “whatever there still remains [of earlier revelations]:” and “that which was sent down before it.”, specify the object as a revealed Book, by using the selectional restrictions “revealed” and “sent down”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence since the source-language is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ personal preference.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the clauses “that which was (revealed) before it”, “whatever there still remains [of earlier revelations]” and “that which was sent down before it,”, have the most effect.

In conclusion: By using the phrase “with truth”, the Control Text succeeds in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “بالحق”, but it fails to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “نزل” and “بالحق”.

By using the phrase “with truth” and the clause “that which was (revealed) before it, Pickthall manages to convey the meanings of the Qur’ânic terms “بالحق” and “لما بين يديه”, but he fails to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “نزل”, by using the clause “He hath revealed”.

By using the phrase “(step by step)”, Ali succeeds in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “نزل”, but he fails to convey the exact meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “بالحق” and “لما بين يديه”, by using the phrases “In truth” and “what went before it”, respectively.

By using the phrase “Step by step,”, and the clause “whatever there still remains [of earlier revelations]”, Asad succeeds in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “نزل” and “لما بين يديه”, but he fails in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “بالحق” by using the phrase “setting forth the Truth”.

By using the phrase “He has sent down” alone, and the clause “whatever existed before it”, Irving fails in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “نزل” and “لما بين يديه”, but he succeeds in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “بالحق” by using the phrase “with Truth”.

By using the clauses “He has sent down” and “that which was sent down before it”, Ozek fails in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “نزل” and “لما بين يديه”, but he succeeds in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “بالحق” by using the phrase “with Truth”.

By using the phrases “step by step” and “with the truth”, Abdel-Haleem succeeds in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “نزل” and “بالحق”,

but he fails in conveying the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “لما بين يديه” by using the phrase “what went before”.

Grammatically this verse lost “*At-Tanwîn*”, in this case the *fathatân* at the end of the word “مصدقاً”, which plays a significant role in the unbreakable system of rhythm and sound of individual words, phrases and sentences of the *Holy Qur'ân* in their syntactic construction.

The prosodic difference between the Arabic and the English verses can obviously not be adequately evaluated here, but the purely poetical sound devices present in the verses of the *Holy Qur'ân* discussed in this study, can be suggested at by underlining these markers.

نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقاً لما بين يديه وأنزل التوراة والإنجيل.

In terms of closeness, none of the translators was able to translate this verse as close as possible to the original, because if one of them succeeds in conveying the meaning of one of the Qur'ânic terms, he fails in conveying the meaning of another one. This clearly strengthens the argument of the untranslatability of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

5.2.2.4 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 4

Source Text

من قبل هدى للناس وأنزل الفرقان إن الذين كفروا بآيات الله لهم عذاب شديد والله عزيز ذو انتقام.

Control Text

“Aforetime, as guidance to mankind. And He sent down the criterion [of judgement between right and wrong (the *Qur'ân*)]. Truly, those who disbelieve in the *Ayât* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations. etc.) of Allâh, for them there is a severe torment: and Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Able of Retribution.”

Pickthall

“Aforetime, for guidance to mankind: and Hath revealed the Criterion (of right and

wrong). *Lo! Those who disbelieve the revelations of Allah, theirs will be a heavy doom. Allah is mighty. Able to Requite (the wrong).*”

Ali

“Then those who reject Faith in the Signs of God Will suffer the severest Penalty and God Is Exalted in Might, lord of Retribution.”

Asad

“aforetime, as a guidance unto mankind, and it is He who has bestowed [upon man] the standard by which to discern the true from the false. Behold, as for those who are bent on denying God’s messages – grievous suffering awaits them: For God is almighty, an avenger of evil.”

Irving

“In the past as guidance for mankind: He has (also) sent down the Standard. Those who disbelieve in God’s signs will have severe torment: God is Powerful, the Master of Retribution!”

Ozek

“Previously, a guidance to mankind, and sent down the criterion. Those who deny the signs of Allah shall receive a heavy penalty: and Allah is August, Able to Requite.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Those who deny God’s revelations will suffer severe torment: God is almighty and capable of retribution.”

Discussion

In verse 4, the Control Text uses a transliteration the “*Ayât*” and a paraphrase (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations. etc.), Asad uses the word “messages”, Irving, Ozek and Ali use the word “signs”, while Abdel-

Haleem and Pickthall use the word “revelation”, to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “آيات الله”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “message” means “a verbal, written, recorded or electronic communication.” The word “revelation” means “a surprising disclosure, a divine or supernatural disclosure to human” and the word “sign” means “an object, quality, or event whose presence or occurrence indicates the probable presence, occurrence, or advent of something else, a signal conveying information or instruction”.

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “message” means “رسالة”. The word “revelation” means “تنزيل، وحى” and the word “sign” means “آية، معجزة، علامة، أمانة”، which means a verse, miracle, sign and mark, respectively”.

This is a culture-specific concept related to the religious belief. The problem of non-equivalence here is above the word level. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

Semantically, the Control Text uses a translation by a transliteration and a paraphrase using related word. All the other translators use a translation by cultural substitution. However, the Arabic word “آية” is a general word that covers a wide range of meanings such as “verse, miracle, sign and mark etc.”, the word “رسالة” has only one meaning which is a “message”, The word “revelation” mean “تنزيل، وحى”. Each word of the target-language can be an equivalent for the Arabic word “آية” except the word “message”.

However, historically the term “message” was always used when referring to the message of Islâm as a whole, because it covers the most important components of Islâm, that is to say the *Holy Qur’ân* and the *Sunnah*, which are inseparable. In this case, although the other translators with the exception of Asad, convey the meaning, it is the Control Text that goes furthest towards explaining the concept in terms the interested reader would immediately understand because it covers all the possible meanings of the Qur’anic term “آيات الله”.

Syntactically, by using the clause “Then those who reject Faith in the Signs of God” and by omitting the Arabic adverb “من قبل” from his translation, Ali failed to maintain the Arabic syntax.

This also can be said about Abdel-Haleem who uses the clause “Those who deny God’s revelations” without mentioning the adverb “من قبل”.

In respect of morphology, in this verse the Arabic verb “كفروا” consists of two morphemes, the root form “كفر” and the device ‘وا’ marking the masculine plural form. By using the verb “disbelieve”, the Control Text, Pickthall and Irving preserved the two morphemes. Nevertheless, the clauses “who reject Faith”, “who are bent on denying”, “who deny the signs”, and “who deny”, which are used by Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem, respectively do not preserve the morphemes of this verb.

In the verse the Control Text, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the word “torment:”, Asad uses the word “suffering”, Ali and Ozek use the word “Penalty”, while Pickthall uses the word “doom.”, to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “عذاب”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “doom” means “death, destruction, or another terrible fate”, the word “Penalty” means “a punishment imposed for breaking a law, a rule or contract”, the word “suffer” means “experience or be subjected to (something unpleasant”, and the word “torment” means “severe physical or mental suffering”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “doom” means “حکم، قرار، وبخاصة”، “Penalty” means “عقاب، “حکم قضائى، قدر، وبخاصة قدر مشؤوم، موت، هلاك حد، قصاص، حد، “suffering” means “ألم، متألم، معذب”، and the word “torment” means “تعذيب، عذاب”.”

There is no problem of non-equivalence, since the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

Semantically, the choices are based on the translators’ personal preference. All these words are interchangeable, but the word “torment” is the most

suitable as an equivalent for the Qur'anic term “عذاب”, because it includes severe physical or mental suffering.

In this verse, the Control Text, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the word “severe” Asad uses the word “grievous”, Ali uses the word “the severest”, while Pickthall and Ozek uses the word “heavy”, to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic term “شديد”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “grievous” means “(of something bad) very severe or serious,”, the word “heavy” means “of great weight, difficult to lift or move, of more than the usual size, amount, or force.” and the word “severe- severest” means “(of something bad, undesirable, or difficult) very great, intense”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “grievous” mean “باهظ، مرهق، ثقيل،”، the word “heavy” means “ثقيل، كبير الوزن،”، and the word “severe- severest” means “صارم، متجهم، كالح، قاس، خطير”.”

There is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

Semantically, the choices are based on the translators' personal preference.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word “heavy” has the least effect in conveying the meaning of the Qur'anic term “شديد”.

The Control Text, Ali, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the word “Retribution”, Asad uses the word “an avenger of evil.”, Ozek uses the verb “to Requite.” while Pickthall uses the word “to Requite (the wrong).”, to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic term “إنتقام”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “avenge” means “inflict harm in return for (an injury or wrong), inflict retribution on behalf of (a wronged person)”, the word “requite” means “make appropriate return for (a favour or demonstration of affection, or a wrongdoing)” and the

word “retribution” means “punishment inflicted as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act”.”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “avenger” means “المنتقم”, the word “requite” means “يثأر، يجازى، يكافئ” and the word “retribution” means “جزاء، مكافأة، الثواب والعقاب فى الآخرة”.”

There is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

Semantically, the choices are based on the translators’ personal preference. All the choices are interchangeable. The Qur’ânic term “إنتقام” is a noun in a genitive form, and while the Control Text, Ali, Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the noun “retribution”, Pickthall and Ozek use the verb “to requite”

In terms of the equivalent effect, although the choices of “avenger” and “to requite” convey the meaning, it the choice of “retribution” that is most effectively in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “إنتقام”, because according to *Al-Mawrid* it is related to the religious belief.

Grammatically, this verse lost *At-Tanwîn* and consequently, as can be seen from the phonetic transcription, the resultant sound cluster in the *damatân* at the end of the words “عذاب”, “شديد”, “عزيز” which are pronounced /ʌðɑ:bʊn/, /ʃʌdi:ðʊn/, and /ʌzi:zʊn/, respectively. It must be clear by now that the grammatical device associated with *At-Tanwîn* is simply not replicated in the translations and this loss is accompanied by a loss in the sound structure of the sentences in translation.

In terms of poetic quality, the tonal structure found in the underlined words and sentences, has been lost in the translation:

من قبل هدى للناس وأنزل الفرقان إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

بآيات الله لهم عذابٍ شديداً والله عزيزٌ ذو انتقام.

In terms of closeness, the Control Text’s translation is as close as possible to the original text, because it does not only follow the Arabic structure, but also uses a paraphrase and a transliteration “the *Ayât*”, which covers all the possible meanings of the verse.

5.2.2.5 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 5

Source Text

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ.

Control Text

“Truly, nothing is hidden from Allâh, in the earth or in the heaven.”

Pickthall

“Lo! Nothing in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah.”

Ali

“From God, verily Nothing is hidden on earth or in the heavens.”

Asad

“Verily, nothing on earth or in the heavens is hidden from God.”

Irving

“Nothing is hidden from God on Earth nor in Heaven.”

Ozek

“Nothing in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Nothing on earth or in the heaven is hidden from God.”

Discussion

The Control Text uses the adverb “truly”, Asad and Ali use the adverb “verily”, Pickthall uses the exclamation “lo”, to convey the meaning of the assertive Arabic word “إِنَّ”, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem omit the assertive Arabic word “إِنَّ” from their translation of the verse.

There is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The Control Text, Asad and Ali use a translation by cultural substitution. Pickthall uses a loan word. Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use a translation by omission.

Semantically, there are three degrees of the listener in Arabic that determine the meaning of a sentence. The first one: assumes that the listener has no idea about the message that he/she receives. The second one: is directed at the listener who has some idea about the message but might have some doubt about it while in the third case it is a question of the listener who is in a state of a complete denial of the message. So, in the first state, the speaker can give the message without any assertive device, in the second one the speaker may need to use one assertive device, but in the third state the speaker should use two or more assertive devices.

As for Pickthall’s translation, Arabic has certain expressive words for the assertion: the exclamation “lo!” is not one of them. In this case, the *Holy Qur’ân* uses the word “إِنَّ” to convince the Arab pagans that He knows everything in the earth or in the heaven.

By the omission of the device “إِنَّ”, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem lost some of the meaning of the verse.

Syntactically, Pickthall, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem failed to maintain the Arabic grammatical structure by shifting the Arabic phrase “إِنَّ اللَّهَ” from the beginning of the sentence to the end of the sentence. By starting the translation with the phrase “from God”, Ali also failed to maintain the Arabic syntax.

The *Holy Qur'ân* does not allow alteration or replacement of its words, let alone omission, as al-Rafiei argues:

No wonder that the *Holy Qur'ân* has one unique style, if it is kept as it is, but if you change the Qur'ânic words, or remove them from their positions, or omit them from their contexts, you will find words similar to the people's daily-life words. (1997: 207, 208)

Of greater interest is the ethical question of the “faithfulness or fidelity”, especially, to the original text of which translation is an area of controversy such as the *Holy Qur'ân*.

In this verse, Abdel-Haleem and Irving stick to the words of the *Holy Qur'ân* by using the singular of the word “heaven”, while the other translators do not do so as they use the plural “heavens” to convey the meaning of the Arabic singular “السماء”.

In contrast to this usage, in translating verse 6, of the Control text, Asad, Irving, Ozek, Pickthall and Ali stick to the words of the *Holy Qur'ân*. They use the plural word “wombs”, to convey the meaning of the Arabic plural of the word “الأرحام”. Abdel-Haleem uses the singular of the word “womb” to convey the meaning of the same Arabic plural of word “الأرحام”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “womb” means “the organ in the lower body of a woman or female mammal where offspring are conceived and in which they gestate: the uterus”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “womb” means “الرحم”. And according to the Arabic dictionary of al-Fairūz-`Abādī (2000) – hereafter cited by its name as *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥid* (2000) – “ the word “رحم” is the singular form of the plural “أرحام”: “It is a part of the body in which the baby grows. It is the origin of the blood relationship”.”

A similar explanation is given by *Al-Misbâḥ Al-Munīr* (2008), “the word “رحم” is a part of the woman’s body in which the baby grows”.

In terms of consistency in the word usage, all the translators do not adhere to the elements of the source message in both verses 5 and 6, except for The

Control Text. But all of them convey the general meaning of the two verses. As such, all the selected translators failed to maintain the Arabic syntax in this verse,.

In terms of closeness, the Control Text's translation is as close as possible to the original text, because it follows the Arabic structure by using the adverb "truly" for the assertion in the same place of the Arabic assertive device "إِنَّ"; that is to say in the beginning of the verse, and the singular form of the word "heaven" for the singular Arabic form "السماء" at the end of the sentence as it is in the verse.

5.2.2.6 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 7

Source Text

هو الذى أنزل عليك الكتاب منه آياتٌ محكماتٌ هنَّ أم الكتاب وأخر متشابهاتٌ فأما الذين فى قلوبهم زيغٌ فيتبعون ما تشابه منه ابتغاء الفتنة وابتغاء تأويله وما يعلم تأويله إلا الله والراسخون فى العلم يقولون أمانا به كلٌّ من عند ربنا وما يذكر إلا أولوا الألباب.

Control Text

"It is He Who has sent down to you (Muhammad ﷺ) the Book (the Qur'ân). In it are Verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book [and those are verses of *Al-Ahkâm* (commandments), *Al-Farâ'id* (obligatory duties) and *Al-Hudud* (legal laws for the punishment of thieves, adulterers)]: and others not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking *Al-Fitnah* (polytheism and trials), and seeking for its hidden meanings except Allâh. And those who firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in it: the whole of it (clear and unclear Verses) are from our Lord." And none receive admonition except men of understanding. (Tafsir Al-Tabari)."

Pickthall

"He it is Who hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture wherein are clear revelations - They are the Substance of the Book - and others (which are) allegorical. But

those in whose hearts is doubt pursue, forsooth, that which is allegorical, (to cause) dissension by seeking to explain it. None knoweth its explanation save Allah. And those who are of sound instruction say: We believe therein, the whole is from our Lord: but only men of understanding really heed."

Ali

"He it is Who has sent down To thee the Book: In it are verses Basic or fundamental (Of established meaning: They are the foundation Of the Book: Others Are allegorical. But those In whose hearts is perversity follow The part thereof that is allegorical, Seeking discord, and searching For its hidden meanings, But no one knows Its hidden meanings except God. And those who are firmly grounded In knowledge say: "We believe in the Book: the whole of it Is from our Lord:" and none Will grasp the Message Except men of understanding."

Asad

"He it is who has bestowed upon thee from on high this divine writ, containing messages that are clear in and by themselves - and these are the essence of the divine writ - as well as others that are allegorical. Now those whose hearts are given to swerving from the truth go after that part of the divine writ which has been expressed in allegory, seeking out [what is bound to create] confusion, and seeking [to arrive at] its final meaning [in an arbitrary manner]: but none save God knows its final meaning. Hence, those who are deeply rooted in knowledge say: "We believe in it: the whole [of the divine writ] is from our Sustainer - albeit none takes this to heart save those who are endowed with insight."

Irving

"He is the One Who sent you down the Book which contains decisive verses. They [form] the basis of the Book: while others are allegorical. Those whose hearts are prone to falter follow whatever is allegorical in it, seeking to create dissension by giving [their own] interpretation of it. Yet only God knows its interpretation: those who are versed in knowledge say: "We believe in it: it all comes from our Lord!" However, only prudent persons bear it in mind."

Ozek

"It is He Who has sent down to you the Qur'ān. Some of its verses are clear: they are the mother of the Book: while others are open to interpretation. Those with swerving in their hearts pursue what is open to interpretation, seeking to create dissension, and seeking to explain it. Yet none knows their explanation except Allah. Those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in it: it is all from our Lord," but only people of understanding

really heed.”

Abdel-Haleem

“It is He who has sent down this Scripture to you [Prophet]. Some of its verses are definite in meaning - these are the cornerstone’ of the Scripture - and others are ambiguous. The perverse at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities in their attempt to make trouble and to pin down a specific meaning of their own: only God knows the true meaning. Those firmly grounded in knowledge say: “We believe in it: it is all from our Lord, - only those with real perception will take heed.”

Discussion

In verse 7, the Control Text uses the word “deviation”, Irving uses the word “prone”, Abdel-Haleem and Ali use the word “perverse”, Asad and Ozek uses the word “swerve”, Pickthall uses the word “doubt” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic specific term “زيف”.

According to the *Concordance of the Qur’anic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005), “the word “زيف” means “deviation from the truth”.” But according to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “deviate” means “diverge from an established course or from usual or accepted standards”, the word “doubt” means “a feeling of uncertainty or lack of conviction, question the truth or fact of”, the word “falter” mean “move or speak hesitantly”, the word “perverse” means “showing a deliberate and obstinate desire to behave unacceptably” and the verb “prone to” means “likely or liable to suffer from, do, or experience (something unfortunate)”.”

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “زيف” means “deviation, perversity”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “زيف” means “aberration, aberrance, perversion, perversity, deviation, etc.”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because this is a culture-specific concept. The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language.

All the translators use a translation by cultural substitution. However, in terms of the equivalent effect, the word “deviate” and “perverse” have more effect than the word “doubt” and the phrase “falter to prone”.

As such, Irving and Pickthall do not convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic specific term “زيع” as accurately as the other translators do.

The amalgamative structure, the remarkable difference between Arabic and English syntax, which was mentioned earlier, is again a factor in respect of the analysis of this verse.

The amalgamated sentence “فيتبعون” is conveyed in the Control Text by the long sentence “they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof”, in Irving by “Those whose hearts are prone to falter follow whatever is allegorical in it,”, in Abdel-Haleem by “The perverse at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities”, in Ali by “But those In whose hearts is perversity follow The part thereof that is allegorical,”, Asad by “Now those whose hearts are given to swerving from the truth go after that part of the divine writ which has been expressed in allegory,” , in Ozek by “Those with swerving in their hearts pursue what is there is open to interpretation”, in Pickthall by “But those in whose hearts is doubt pursue, forsooth, that which is allegorical.”.

The amalgamated sentence “ف ي ت ب ع و ن”, consists of the verb “ي ت ب ع”, and “waw al-Jamâa” “و” as a subject, both of them amalgamated in one sentence.

The problem is that this type of the Arabic grammatical structure cannot be translated without breaking the sentence into separate items, and this explains why the meaning of this sentence is conveyed by such long English sentences.

The same can be said about the sentence “يقولون”, where the verb is “يقول” and the subject is “wâw al-Jamâ`a” “و”, and both are amalgamated in one sentence.

In the same verse, the Control Text uses a transliteration “*Al-Fitnah*” and a paraphrase “polytheism and trials”, Asad uses the word “confusion”, Irving, Ozek and Pickthall use the word “dissension”, Abdel-Haleem uses the word

“trouble”, while Ali uses the word “discord”, to convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic specific term “الفتنة”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “confusion” means “uncertainty about what is happening, intended, or required”, the word “discord” means “lack of agreement or harmony”, the word “dissension” mean “disagreement that leads to discord” and the word “trouble” means “difficulty or problems, public unrest or disorder, cause distress or inconvenience to”.”

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 50), “the word “الفتنة” in this verse, means “to confuse yourself and others with their religion”.” According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 336), “the word “الفتنة” means “to confuse Muslims with their religion”.” According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 211), the word “الفتنة” means “to confuse their followers with their religion”.”

In defending his equivalent choice, Asad (1980: 67) argues: “The “confusion” referred to here is a consequence of interpreting allegorical passages in an “arbitrary manner” (Zamakhsharī)”.”

Of more interest is the technique of ignoring the context in which the word is used and forcing upon it one single meaning.

Semantically, in the same verse, the problem of non-equivalence is also related to a culture-specific concept. The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language. The Control Text uses a strategy of translation by a transliteration and a paraphrase using related words. All the other translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution.

The Qur’ānic specific term “الفتنة” and its derivatives are used 16 times in the *Holy Qur’ān* in different verses with different meanings such as “trial”, “ordeal”, “temptation”, “attraction”, “charm”, “riot”, “trouble”, “affliction”, “distress”, “confusion”, “disorder”, “polytheism”, “punishment”, “fighting Muslims”, “destroying oneself” and more. In terms of selectional restrictions. for instance, no normal person ordinarily seeks trials for himself/herself.

As such, the Control Text does not convey the meaning of the Qur'anic specific term “الفتنة” in this verse as accurately as the other translators do.

Syntactically, by starting their translation with the phrase “He it is”, Pickthall, Ali, Asad and Irving succeed in maintaining the Arabic syntax of the phrase “هو الذى” But the Control Text, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem failed to follow the Arabic syntax as they start their translation with the phrase “It is He”.

As far as preserving the Arabic structure of the *Holy Qur'an* is concerned, it is interesting to note what St. Jerome, who grappled with this problem in translation of the Holy Bible, states:

Indeed, I not only admit, but freely proclaim that in translation (interpretation) from Greek - except in the case of a Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery - I render not word for word, but sense for sense.' (2004: 23)

The Control Text uses the phrases “that are entirely clear” and “others not entirely clear”, Pickthall uses the phrases “are clear revelations” and “others (which are) allegorical”, Ali uses the phrases “Basic or fundamental (Of established meaning” and “Others Are allegorical”, Asad uses the phrases “that are clear in and by themselves” and “others that are allegorical”, Irving uses the phrases “decisive verses” and “others are allegorical”, Ozek uses the phrases “Some of its verses are clear” and “others are open to interpretation” and Abdel-Haleem uses the phrases “Some of its verses are definite in meaning” and “others are ambiguous”.

As we can see that the words “متشابهات” and “محكمات” cannot be translated without breaking them, and in respect of the prosodic features, this verse consequently lost the assonance of the vowel “ا” at the end of the words “آياتٌ، “متشابهاتٌ ، محكمات” as well as the alliteration of the letters “نا” at the end of the Arabic words “رنا” and “أنا” which consequent results in loss of their intended effects.

From the underlined sections of the verse, it is clear that this verse has a rich poetic texture, which is, of course, not reflected in the translation of the verse.

هو الذى أنزل عليك الكتاب منه آياتٌ محكماتٌ هنَّ أم الكتاب وأخر متشابهاتٌ

فأما الذين فى قلوبهم زيغٌ فيتبعون ما تشابه منه ابتغاء الفتنة وابتغاء تأويله

وما يعلم تأويله إلا الله والراسخون فى العلم يقولون آمنا به كل

من عند ربنا وما يذكر إلا أولوا الألباب.

Among many other sound clusters, it is the presence of the /æ/ that strings the verse together through the words “متشابهات، محكمات، آيات” (pronounced /ɑ:ʃætən/, /mohkɑmætən/ and, /mɒtʌʃæbihætən/) and in the repeated words “آمنّا” and “ربنا”, (pronounced /æmnæ/ and /rəbənæ/). It becomes even more significant in /æ b/ cluster at the end of the word “الألباب” (pronounced / ə l b æ b /) at the end of this verse, which is a recurring cluster at the end of many verses in this *Sûrah*, for example the words “العقاب” and “الحساب” in verses 11 and 19, which are pronounced /əlɪgæb/ and /əlɪhsæb/. In this way the strategically placed position of these sound clusters, actually constructs a pattern in the *Sûrah* itself and which becomes recognisable to the listener, and the reader who is sensitive to the sound values in the words.

By using simple phrases “entirely clear” and “not entirely clear” for the Qur’ânic terms “محكمات” and “متشابهات”, in addition to the transliterations and paraphrases, it is the Control Text’s translation that is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.2.7 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 8

Source Text

ربنا لا تزغ قلوبنا بعد إذ هديتنا وهب لنا من لدنك رحمةً إنك

أنت الوهاب.

Control Text

“(They say): “Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly. You are the Bestower.”

Pickthall

“Our Lord! Cause not our hearts to stray after Thou hast guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Thy Presence. Lo! Thou only Thou art the Bestower.”

Ali

“Our Lord!” (they say), “Let not our hearts deviate Now after Thou hast guided us, But grant us mercy from Thine own Presence: For Thou art the Grantor Of bounties without measure.”

Asad

“O our Sustainer! Let not our hearts swerve from the truth after Thou hast guided us: and bestow upon us the gift of Thy grace: Verily, Thou art the [true] Giver of Gifts.”

Irving

“Our Lord, do not Let our hearts falter once You have guided us: grant us mercy from Your presence, for You are the bountiful!”

Ozek

“(They say): “Our Lord! Do not cause our hearts to swerve after You have guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Your Presence. Assuredly. You are the Bestower.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Our Lord, do not Let our hearts deviate after You have guided us. Grant us Your mercy: You are the Ever Giving.”

Discussion

In verse 8, the Control Text uses the phrase “from you”, Asad uses the possessive form of thou” Thy grace”, Irving, Ozek and Pickthall use the phrase “Your presence”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “Your mercy”, while Ali uses the phrase “Thine own Presence” to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “من لَدُنْكَ”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 339), “the Arabic phrase “من لَدُنْكَ” means “من عِنْدَكَ”, which means “from your presence”. ” According to the *Concise Oxford*

Dictionary (2011), “the word “presence” means “the state or fact of being present”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the phrase “من لدنك” means “from”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The Control Text, Asad and Abdel-Haleem use a strategy of a translation by omission. The Control Text not only omits the Arabic phrase “من لدنك”, but it then adds a clause “They say” which is a creation of new information that was/is not mentioned in the verse explicitly or implicitly. Asad and Abdel-Haleem omit the Arabic phrase from their translation. Irving, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by cultural substitution.

Syntactically, although Ozek uses the same a strategy of cultural substitution, regarding the Arabic phrase, he also adds a clause “They say” which is the creation of new information that is not mentioned explicitly or implicitly in the verse.

However, in terms of the equivalent effect, the preservation of the phrase “from your presence” in the translation has a strong effect.

As such, Irving, Pickthall and Ali convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “لدنك” more accurate than the other translators do.

By merely looking at the underlined sections, we again notice, besides the repetition of other sounds, the presence of the /æ/ in at least five instances. This confirms the deduction referred to when looking at the preceding *Sûrah*.

ربنا لا تزغ قلوبنا بعد إذ هديتنا وهب لنا من لدنك رحمةً إنك أنت الوهاب.

In spite of using Jacobean English, which is difficult for contemporary English-speakers, in terms of closeness Pickthall’s translation is as close as possible to the original, because he translates this verse without omission or creating any level of meaning that are not visible in the original verse.

5.2.2.8 Sûrah 3 Verse 11

Source Text

كذاب آل فرعون والذين من قبلهم كذبوا بآياتنا فأخذهم الله بذنوبهم والله شديد العقاب.

Control Text

“Like the behaviour of the people of Fir’aun (Pharaoh) and those before them: they denied Our Ayât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations etc.). So Allâh seized (destroyed) them for their sins. And Allâh is Severe in punishment.”

Pickthall

“Like Pharaoh’s folk and those who were before them, they disbelieved Our revelations and so Allah seized them for their sins, And Allah is severe in punishment.”

Ali

“Their plight will be No better than that Of people of Pharaoh, and their predecessors: They denied our Signs, And God called them to account For their sins. For God is strict In punishment.”

Asad

“[To them shall happen] the like of what happened to Pharaoh’s people and those who lived before them: they gave the lie to Our messages - and so God took them to task for their sins: For God is Severe in retribution.”

Irving

“In the case of Pharaoh’s house as well as those before them, they denied Our signs, so God seized because of their offences: God is Stern in punishment.”

Ozek

“As with Pharaoh’s people and those before them, who denied Our signs, so that Allah seized them for their sins. And Allah is Severe in punishment.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Just as Pharaoh’s people and their predecessors denied Our revelations and God punished them for their sins: God is Severe in punishing.”

Discussion

In verse 11, the Control Text uses the verb “seized” and a paraphrase “destroyed”, Asad uses the sentence “and so God took them to task for their sins”, Irving, Ozek, and Pickthall use the verb “seized”, Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “God punished them for their sins”, Ali uses the sentence “God called them to account for their sins” to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “فأخذهم” as in “and so God took them to task for their sins: for God is severe in his retribution.” to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “فأخذهم”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “destroy” means “put an end to the existence of (something) by damaging or attacking it”. The verb “punish” means “inflict a penalty on someone for an offence.” The verb “seize” means “take hold of suddenly and forcibly” and the fixed expression “take to task for” means “reprimand or to criticize someone.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the verb “destroy” means “يهدم، يدمر، يخرّب”، the verb “punish” means “يعاقب، يؤذّي”، the verb “seize” means “يستولى على، يصادر، يعتقل، يضع يده على” and the fixed expression “take to task for” means “يعنف، يوبخ”.

According to the *Concordance of the Qur’anic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005), “the Qur’anic term “فأخذهم” means “killed them, destroyed them”.

Syntactically, the amalgamated sentence “فأخذهم” consists of the verb “أخذ”، the subject is the hidden pronoun “هـ” which refers to the attribute Allâh and the object the pronoun “هم”. This can not be replicated in the same manner in English, as has been referred to already.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence occurs because of a difference in expressive meaning. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

All the translators use a translation by a paraphrase using related words. However, in terms of the equivalent effect the verbs “seize and destroy” have a stronger effect than the verb “seized” as it describes what actually happened to Pharaoh’s people who were drowned in the sea. The fixed expression “take to task for” has the least expressive effect, because to reprimand or criticize someone does not mean that you are going to destroy, damage or kill him/her.

Syntactically, by using the simile form such as “like” and “as” the Control Text, Pickthall and Ozek maintain the Arabic syntax, while Ali, Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem failed to maintain the Arabic syntax as they add some lexical words which are not visible in the sentence.

In this verse we again find the abundant /æ/, which is lost, with a number of other recurring sounds, in the translation.

كدأب آل فرعون والذين من قبلهم كذبوا بآياتنا فأخذهم الله بذنوبهم والله شديد العقاب.

In terms of closeness, the Control Text’s translation is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the transliteration “*Ayât* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations etc.)”, which covers all the other possible meanings of the Qur’anic term “آياتنا”.

5.2.2.9 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 13

Source Text

قد كان لكم آيةٌ في فئتين التقتا فئة تقاتل في سبيل الله وأخرى كافرةٌ يرونهم مثليهم رأى العين والله يؤيد بنصره من يشاء إنَّ في ذلك لعبرةٌ لأولى الأبصار.

Control Text

“There has already been a sign for you (O Jews) in the two armies that met (in combat i.e. the battle of Badr). One was fighting in the Cause of Allâh, and as for the other, (they) were disbelievers. They (the believers) saw them (the disbelievers) with their own eyes twice their number (although they were thrice their number). And Allâh supports with His Victory whom He wills. Verily, in this is a lesson for those who understand.”

Pickthall

“There was a token for you in two hosts which met: one army fighting in the way of Allah, and another disbelieving, whom they saw as twice their number, clearly, with their very eyes. Thus Allah strengthened with His succour whom He will. Lo! Herein verily is a lesson for those who have eyes.”

Ali

“There has already been For you a Sign In the two armies That met (in combat): One was fighting in the Cause Of God, the other Resisting God: these saw With their own eyes Twice their number. But God doth support With His aid whom He pleaseth. In this a warning For such as have eyes to see.”

Asad

“You have already had a sign in the two hosts that met in the battle, one host fighting in God’s cause and the other denying Him: with their own eyes [the former] saw the others as twice their own number: but God strengthens with His succour whom He wills. In this, behold, there is indeed a lesson for all who have eyes to see.”

Irving

“You have already had a sign in the two detachments which met, one detachment fighting for God’s sake and the other disbelieving: they saw them with their own eyes as twice the same [number] as themselves. God assists anyone He wishes through His support, in that there lies a lesson for persons with insight.”

Ozek

“There was a sign for you in the two armies which met [on the battlefield of Badr]. One army fighting for the cause of Allah, and another disbelieving, who saw [the former] as twice their number, clearly, with their very eyes. Thus does Allah strengthen with His aid whom He will. Surely, in this there is a lesson for those who are able to see!”

Abdel-Haleem

“You have already seen a sign in the two armies that met in the battle, one fighting for God’s cause and the other made up of disbelievers. With their own eyes [the former] saw [the latter] to be twice their number. But God helps whoever He will. There truly is a lesson in this for all

with eyes to see.”

Discussion

In verse 13, the Control Text, Ali, Asad, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use “sign” while Pickthall uses the word “token” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “آية”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “sign” means “an object, quality, or event whose presence or occurrence indicates the probable presence, occurrence or advent or something else”, and the word “token” means “a thing serving to represent a fact, quality, feeling, etc.”.”

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010:215), “when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ returned to Madinah after defeating the disbelievers of Makkah in the battle of Badr, He gathered the Jews together in the market and warned them about similar defeat”.

As such, the word “sign” is more accurate than the word “token”, as its presence or occurrence indicates the probable presence, occurrence or advent or something else, which is a defeat of Jews in Madinah.

In this verse, the amalgamated sentence “يرونهم”, in the Control Text is conveyed by the sentence “They (the believers) saw them (the disbelievers)”, in Pickthall by “whom they saw as twice their number,”, in Ali by “these saw With their own eyes Twice their number.”, in Asad by “with their own eyes [the former] saw the others as twice their own numbe”, in Irving by “they saw them with their own eyes as twice the same [number] as themselves.”, in Ozek by “who saw [the former] as twice their number, clearly, with their very eyes.”, while in Abdel-Haleem by “With their own eyes [the former] saw [the latter] to be twice their number.”

In this amalgamated sentence “يرونهم”, the verb is “يرون”, and the subject is “waw al-Jamâa” “و”, the object is the pronoun “هم”, all of them are amalgamated in one sentence. This amalgamative structure is, of course, not

reflected in the translations.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “O Jews” which is not visible in the context.

Thereafter, the Control Text, Pickthall, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “disbelieve”, Asad uses the word “deny”, while Ali uses the word “resist” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “كافرة”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “deny” means “refuse to admit the truth or existence of”. The word “disbelieve” means “have no religious faith” and the word “resist” means “refuse to accept something and try to stop it from happening”.”

However, although the word “deny” can convey the meaning of the Arabic word “كافرة”, using the word “disbelieve” will be more appropriate.

In the same verse 13, the Control Text uses the phrase “His victory”, Asad, Ozek and Ali use the phrase “His aid”, Irving uses the phrase “His support”, while Pickthall uses the phrase “His succour” to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “بِنصره”

Abdel-Haleem omits the Arabic phrase “بِنصره” from his translation.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “aid” means “help or support, help in the achievement of something”, the word “succour” means “assistance and support in time of hardship and distress”, the word ‘support’ means “give assistance, encouragement, or approval to”, and the word “victory” means “an act of defeating an enemy or opponent in a battle, game, or other competition”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “aid” means “معاونة، مساعدة”, the word “succour” means “عون، مساعدة، اسعاف”, the word “support” means “تأييد، دعم” and the word “victory” means “نصر، انتصار، ظفر”.”

In this verse, the non-equivalence is simply because of a difference in the expressive meaning, but the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

Semantically, the Control Text, Asad, Irving, Ozek, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by more general words. Abdel-Haleem uses a strategy of a translation by omission. According to both Arabic and English dictionaries, the words “يُؤيد” and “بِنصره” have different propositional meanings. This verse is an allusion to the battle of Badr in which three hundred and odd poorly-equipped Muslims, led by Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, utterly defeated a well-armed Makkan force numbering nearly one thousand men, seven hundred camels and one hundred horses. They had this victory by the help, aid, support, assistance or succour of Allāh. So in terms of the equivalent effect the word “victory” has more effect than the words “aid, succour and support” respectively, because it describes an act of defeating an enemy or the result of a battle.

According to Mona Baker cultural substitution as a strategy:

involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target-language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader, for instance by evoking context in the target culture. (2011: 28)

However, this argument is completely contradicted by another argument raised by al-Rafi`, who writes:

What is more wondrous than the attraction by the position of words of the *Holy Qur'ân* is its appropriateness in the context. The word has the most wide range of meaning and it is the strongest one in conveying that meaning... However, the most amazing nature of the *Holy Qur'ân* is that: its meanings can not be conveyed by any other word even if it is from Arabic language and for that reason some scholars forbid the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* into other languages. (1997: 211)

Accordingly, only the word “victory” is the appropriate equivalent for the Arabic word “نصر”.

also become a fixture at the end of and many verses of this *Sûrah*. Examples can be found at the end of verses 16 and 17 with the words “النار”, and “الأسحار”, respectively, and which are pronounced /ə n a:r/ and /əʌʃhɑ:r/ .

قد كان لكم آية في فتنين التفتنا، فنة تقاتل في سبيل الله

وأخرى كفرة يرونهم مثليهم رأى العين والله يؤيد بنصره

من يشاء إن في ذلك لعبرة لأولى الأبصار.

Even though the word “understanding” carries the metaphorical meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أولى الأبصار”, it is the Irving’s translation that is as close as possible to the original text, because he uses the word “insight” which has a wider scope of the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أولوا الأبصار” .

5.2.2.10 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 14

Source Text

زُين للناس حب الشهوات من النساء والبنين والقناطير المنقطرة من الذهب والفضة والخيل المسومة والأنعام والحرث ذلك متاع الحياة الدنيا والله عنده حسن المآب.

Control Text

“Beautified for men is the love of things they covet: women, children, much of gold and silver (wealth), branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. This is the pleasure of the present world’s life: but Allâh has the excellent return (Paradise with flowing rivers) with Him.”

Pickthall

“Beautified for mankind is love of joys (that come) from women and offspring, and stored-up heaps of gold and silver, and horses branded (with their mark), and cattle and land. That is comfort of the life of the world, Allah! With Him is a more excellent abode.”

Ali

“Fair in the eyes of men Is the love of things they covet: Women and sons: Heaped-up hoards Of gold and silver: horses Branded (for blood and excellence): And (wealth of) cattle And

well-tilled land. Such are the possessions Of this world's life: But in nearness to God Is the best of the goals (To return to)."

Asad

"ALLURING unto man is the enjoyment of worldly desires through women, and children, and heaped- up treasures of gold and silver, and horses of high mark, and cattle, and lands. All this may be enjoyed in the life of this world -, but the most beautiful of all goals is with God."

Irving

"The love of passions [that come] from women and children has attracted mankind, as well as accumulated gold and silver treasures, pedigreed horses, livestock and crops. That means enjoyment during worldly life, while God holds the finest retreat."

Ozek

"Made beautiful for mankind is the love of desires, for women and offspring, of hoarded treasures of gold and silver, of branded horses, cattle and plantations. These are the comforts of this life: yet with Allah is the best of all ends."

Abdel-Haleem

"The love of desirable things is made alluring for men - women, children, gold and silver treasures piled up high, horses with fine markings, livestock, and farm land – these may be the joys of this life, but God has the best place to return to."

Discussion

In verse 14, the Control Text and Ali use the word "covet", Asad and Ozek use the word "desire", Irving uses the word "passion", Abdel-Haleem uses the word "desirable", and Pickthall uses the word "joys", to convey the meaning of the Arabic word "الشهوات".

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), "the word "covet" means "yearn to possess something belonging to someone else", the word "desire" means "a strong feeling of wanting to have or wishing for something to

happen”, the word “joy” means “a feeling of great pleasure and happiness” and the word “passion” means “an intense enthusiasm for something”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “الشهوات” means “appetites, desires, etc.”.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “الشهوات” means “lust, desire”.”

Semantically, the non-equivalence is because of a difference in expressive meanings resulting from the choice made by the different translators; the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

By using the phrase “things they covet”, the Control Text and Ali create a level of meaning which is not visible in the text

All the choices are based on the translators’ preferences. In terms of the equivalent effect the word “desire” has more effect than the other words, but they all still convey the general meaning of the verse.

Syntactically, by using the passive voice of the verb “Beautified for men”, the Control Text and Pickthall maintain the Arabic syntax as it was used by the *Holy Qur’ân*.

However, the phrases “Fair in the eyes of men”, “ALLURING unto man”, “The love of passions [that come] from women and children has attracted mankind”, “The love of passions [that come] from women and children has attracted mankind”, “The love of desirable things is made alluring for men”, which are used by Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem, respectively, do not only fail to maintain the Arabic syntax, but they add some lexical items which are not visible in the context.

In the same verse, the Control Text and Ali use the phrase “well-tilled land”, Pickthall uses the word “land”, Asad uses the word “lands”, Irving uses the word “crops”, Ozek use the word “plantations”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the word “farm land”, to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “الحرث”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “crops” means “a plant cultivated on a large scale for food or other use, especially a cereal, fruit or vegetable”, the word “farm” means “an area of land and its buildings, used for growing crops and rearing animals”, the word “land” means “the part of the earth’s surface that is not covered by water, an area of ground, especially in terms of its ownership or use”, the word “plantations” means “a large estate on which crops such as coffee, sugar, and tobacco are grown, an area in which trees have been planted, especially for commercial purposes” and the word “till” means “prepare and cultivate (land) for crops”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “crops” means “محصول، غلة، يحرث، يزرع”، the word “farm” means “مزرعة، يحرث، يفلح”، the word “land” means “اليابسة، بلد، أرض أو تربة ذات طبيعة خاصة”، the word “plantations” means “زروع، مزرعة” and the word “till” means “يحرث، يفلح.”” The same definition is given by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

According to *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muhīt* (2000), “the word “الحرث” means “tilled land, prepare and cultivate (land) for crops” .”

The same definition is given by *Al-Misbâh Al-Munīr* (2008), “the word “الحرث” means “tilled land, prepare and cultivate (land) for crops”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ personal understanding.

The Holy Qur’ân is characterized by a multi-faceted discourse: one word may have many different meanings depending on the different contexts, a claim that is verified by the large number of the commentators and commentaries or “Tafsirs”. Well acquainted with this aspect, Abdel-Haleem writes:

“Key terms are frequently used in the *Qur’ân* with different meanings for different contexts, a feature known in Arabic as *wujuh al-Qur’ân*. These were recognized from the early days of the *Qur’ân*ic exegesis and have been highlighted in many publication... ignoring this feature and forcing upon a word one single meaning for the sake of consistency results in denial of the context and misinterpretation of the material. (2005: xxx)

As such, it seems natural for the translators to choose a word or a phrase which they think could convey the meaning, accurately and therefore they could be inconsistent in their translations. This would be a result of the fact that they also based their work on the interpretations of the *Holy Qur'ân* which in the course of time increase and differ according to the human knowledge; the more historical experience increase, the more meanings manifested themselves in the pages.

According to the definition of both the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* and *Al-Mawrid*, the word “land” alone does not convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “الحرث”.

As such, the word “land” which is used by Pickthall and Asad, whether it is a singular or a plural, does not convey the exact meaning of the Qur'ânic term “الحرث”.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word “land” is the least effective one.

It must be noted, however, that the words “plantations” and “crops” are in a plural form, while the Qur'ânic term “الحرث” is in a singular form.

In the same verse, the Control Text uses the sentence “but Allâh has the excellent return (Paradise with flowing rivers) with Him”, Pickthall uses the sentence “With Him is a more excellent abode”, Ali uses the sentence “But in nearness to God Is the best of the goals (To return to)”, Asad uses the sentence “but the most beautiful of all goals is with God”, Irving uses the sentence “while God holds the finest retreat”, Ozek uses the sentence “yet with Allah is the best of all ends” and Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “but God has the best place to return to” to convey the meaning of the sentence “والله عنده حسن المأب” at the end of the verse.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “abode” means “a house or home”, the word “end” means “the final part of something, the stopping of a state or situation”, the word “retreat” means “a quiet or secluded place, a period or place of seclusion for prayer and meditation”, the

word “return” means “come or go back to a place (return to) go back to (a state or situation)”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the words “مأب، مرجع، منقلب” means “retreat, resort, recourse, place to return to”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, since the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language but there is, nevertheless, a difference in their expressive meaning. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences. By using the phrase “Allah! With Him is a more excellent abode”, the phrase “while God holds the finest retreat” and the phrase “but God has the best place to return to” respectively, Pickthall, Irving and Abdel-Haleem succeed in conveying the meaning of the Arabic phrase “حسن المأب”.

By using the phrase “but Allâh has the excellent return (Paradise with flowing rivers) with Him”, the phrase “But in nearness to God Is the best of the goals (To return to)”, the phrase “but the most beautiful of all goals is with God”, and the phrase “yet with Allah is the best of all ends”, the Control Text, Ali, Asad and Ozek create levels of meanings which are not visible in the original text.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the choice of the words “abode and retreat ” has the most effect. Asad’s choice of the sentence “but the most beautiful of all goals is with God” has less effect, because the word “مأب” is not reflected in this translation.

In the translation of this verse, it is almost impossible to miss the effect of the repeated /tɪ/ at the end of the words “المقنطرة”, “الفضة”, and “المسومة”, pronounced /əlmɒgəntərtɪ/, /əlfɪdətɪ/ and /əlmɒsəwəmətɪ/, is lost, as well as the recognizable /æb/ cluster at the end of the word “مأب” /mæb/ at the end of this verse, and recurring at the end of many other verses in this *Sûrah*.

رُئِنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبَّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالبَنِينَ وَالقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُنْقَطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالفِضَّةِ وَالخَيْلِ الْمَسُومَةِ وَالأَنْعَامِ وَالحَرثِ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنُ الْمَأْبِ.

Because it follows the Arabic pattern by using the passive voice “Made beautiful” for the Arabic word “زُينَ” and the word “desires” which is more appropriate in this context, Ozek’s translation is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.2.11 Sûrah 3 Verse 15

Source Text

قل أونيئكم بخيرٍ من ذلكم للذين اتقوا عند ربهم جناتٌ تجري من تحتها الأنهار خالدين فيها وازواجٌ مطهرةٌ ورضوانٌ من الله والله بصيرٌ بالعباد.

Control Text

“Say: “Shall I inform you of things far better than those? For *Al-Muttaqûn* (the pious) there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home) and *Azwâjun Mutahharatun* (purified mates or wives). And Allâh will be pleased with them. And Allâh is All-Seer of (His) slaves.”

Pickthall

“Say: *Shall I inform you of something better than that? For those who keep from evil, with their Lord, are Gardens underneath which rivers flow wherein they will abide, and pure companions, and contentment from Allah. Allah is Seer of His bondmen.*”

Ali

“Say: *Shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those? For the righteous are Gardens In nearness to their Lord, With rivers flowing beneath: Therein is their eternal home: With Companions pure (and holy): And the good pleasure of Allāh. For in God’s sight Are (all) His servants.*”

Asad

“Say: “Shall I tell you of better things than those [earthly joys]? For the God-Conscious there are, with their Sustainer, gardens through which running waters flow, therein to abide, and spouses pure, and God’s goodly acceptance.” And God sees all that is in [the hearts of] His servants.”

Irving

“SAY: “Should I give you news of something even better than that? Those who do their duty will have gardens through which rivers flow to live in for ever with their Lord, plus purified spouses and approval from God- God is Observant of [His] worshippers.”

Ozek

“Say: “Shall I tell you of better than that? For those who are God-fearing shall be gardens with their Lord, beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein perpetually, and pure wives, and the good pleasure of Allah. Allah is [the] Seer of His servants.”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Prophet], say: “Would you like me to tell you of things that are better than all of these? Their Lord will give those who are mindful of God Gardens graced with flowing streams, where they will stay with pure spouses and God’s pleasure - God is fully aware of His servants.”

Discussion

In verse 15 the Control Text uses a transliteration “Al-Muttaqân” and a paraphrase “(the pious)” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “المتقين”. Asad uses the clause ‘For the God-conscious’, Irving uses the clause ‘For those who do their duty’ and Ozek uses the clause “For those who are God-fearing”. Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “Their Lord will give those who are mind full of God”, Pickthall chooses the clause “For those who keep from evil”, while Ali uses the phrase “For the righteous”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “conscious” means “aware of and responding to one’s surroundings.”, the word “duty” means “a moral or legal obligation.” and the word “evil” means “extremely wicked and immoral.” The word “fear for” means “ regard (God) with reverence and awe.”, the phrase “mindful of” means “conscious or aware of something.”, and the word “righteous” means “morally right or justifiable”.”

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 345), “the word “تقوى” includes all the good deeds.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010) “the word “تقى” means “righteous, devout, pious”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “تقى” means “God-fearing, godly, devout, pious and religious”.”

The difficulty of translating the Qur’ānic term “للذين اتقوا” can be seen from the different choices of equivalents by the translators.

Semantically, the non-equivalence arises because there are differences in their expressive meaning even though the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. All the translators use a translation by paraphrase using related words.

Defending his equivalent choice, Irving argues:

The fascinating matter of root meaning in Arabic is a linguistic matter which I will now deal with in this section on terminology...Al-muttaqīn are ‘the heedful’, ‘those who do their duty’, while ‘taqwā’ is the quality of ‘heeding [God’s decrees]’, or ‘heedfulness’, ‘piety’, just plain ‘doing one’s duty before God and man’. Thus I have tried to avoid strictly Christian terms like “infidel,” “piety,” “sin,” etc., except where such are unavoidable. (1992: xxx)

A similar view is held by Abdel-Haleem who argues:

... and taqwa is commonly translated as ‘fear of God’, but the true meaning is closer to the concept of ‘being mindful of God’. It is very important for the translator to recognize when it is appropriate to be consistent in the translation of a repeated term, and when to reflect the context. This also applies to such fundamental terms as Islām, muslimun, kafirun, fasiqun, dhalimun, and din. Arabic classical dictionaries include varieties of meanings for these terms (2005: xxxi)

In terms of the equivalent effect, the words “conscious” and “mindful” are less effective than the other words. They nevertheless all manage to convey the general meaning of the Qur’ānic term “للذين اتقوا”.

In this verse, the Control Text and Pickthall use the word “underneath”, Asad and Irving use the word “through”, and Ozek and Ali use the word “beneath”, to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “من تحتها”. Abdel-Haleem omits the Arabic phrase “من تحتها” from his translation.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “beneath” means “extending or directly underneath”, the word “through” means “moving in one side and out of the other side of (an opening or location)” while the word “underneath” means “situated directly below”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the words “beneath” and “underneath” means “تحت”, the word “through” means “خلال، من خلال، بين”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

All the translators, except Abdel-Haleem, use a strategy of a translation by a more expressive word. Abdel-Haleem uses a translation by omission.

In defending his omission of the Qur’ānic term “تجرى من تحتها الأنهار” from his translation, Abdel-Haleem argues:

A literal translation of the Arabic phrase *tajri min tahtiha al-anhar* is thought by some to be ‘under which rivers flow’. This may, however, suggest to English reader that the rivers flow underground, what is not meant in Arabic: rather the image is of a shady garden watered by many streams. The present translation gives ‘graced’ with flowing streams. ‘Graced’ was intended to convey the generosity in God’s gift to the people of Paradise implicit in the Qur’ānic text: the adjective ‘flowing’ is taken from the Arabic verb *tajri* used in connection with these ‘rivers’, while ‘streams’ was chosen above the more general ‘rivers’ as the impression is one of many small rivulets coursing throughout the garden, keeping it watered, beautiful, and fresh. In classical Arabic, the term *nahr* applies to any body of running water, from the smallest of streams to the widest rivers. In modern Arabic the term has become restricted to rivers and this may in some cases have led to a misunderstanding of the term. (2005: xxxii)

However, the *Holy Qur’ān* will not allow any omission or replacement of its components.

In this verse, the Control Text uses transliterations “*Azwājūn Mutahharatun*” and a paraphrase “purified mates or wives”, to convey the meanings of the two Arabic words “أزواجٌ مطهرة”. Asad uses the phrase “spouses pure”, Irving uses “purified spouses”, Ozek “pure wives”, Abdel-Haleem “pure spouses”, while Pickthall uses “pure companions” and Ali chooses “companions pure” and adds “and holy”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “companion” means “a person with whom one spends time or travels”, the word “mate” means “a fellow member or joint occupant, a friend or companion”, the word “pure” means “not mixed or adulterated with any other substance or material”, and the word “spouse” means “a husband or wife considered in relation to their partner”.”

In his Arabic dictionary, *Mukhtār Al-Sihah* -and from now on referred to as *Mukhtār Al-Sihah*-, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr al-Rāzī (2009) distinguishes between the gender reflections in adjectives: “the word “مطهرة” is an adjective used for a “female” and the word “طاهر” is an adjective used for a “male””. Thus the words “companion, spouse”.

As such, the words “companion, spouse” do not convey the exact meaning of the Arabic feminine word “أزواج مطهرة”.

Semantically, the non-equivalence is because of a difference in their expressive meaning. The source-language concept, however, is lexicalized in the target-language.

The Control Text uses transliterations and a paraphrase .The other translators use related words.

In terms of equivalent effect, the transliterations “*Azwājūn Mutahharatun*” and a paraphrase “purified mates or wives” and the word “spouse” is more effective..

Syntactically, in this verse, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, except Abdel-Haleem who started his translation of this sentence “للذين اتقوا عند ربهم” with the latter part of the sentence “Their Lord will give those who are mindful of God”. The back translation of his translation is “ربهم سيعطى أولئك الذين مدركين للإله”, which is a misinterpretation.

In terms of equivalent effect, Abdel-Haleem is least effective. because he changes the Arabic grammatical structure of the verse, which can be considered as a kind of disloyalty to the original text.

To convey the meaning of the Arabic word “دابعل” in this verse, the Control Text uses the word “slaves”, Pickthall uses the word “bondmen”, Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “servants”, while Irving uses the word “worshippers”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “bondsmen” is an archaic word, meaning “a slave or feudal serf”, the word “servant” means “a person who performs duties for others, especially one employed in a house to carry out domestic duties or as a personal attendant, a devoted and helpful follower or supporter”, the word “worshipper” means “a person who shows reverence and adoration for a deity”. “

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “bondsmen” means “عبد، رقيق، الضامن الكافل، الكافل”، the word “servant” means “الخدم” the word “slave” means “الرقيق، العبد”، and the word “worshipper” means “عابد”.”

Semantically, the choice of the word “worshippers” conveys the intended meaning of the Arabic word “العباد” more accurate than the choices of the words “bondmen”, “servant” and “slaves”.

However, the word “creatures” is definitely less appropriate than the other choices.

By choosing the phrases “And Allâh is All-Seer of (His) slaves”, “Allah is Seer of His bondmen”, “For in God’s sight Are (all) His servants”, “And God sees all that is in [the hearts of] His servants”, “God is Observant of [His] worshippers”, “Allah is [the] Seer of His servants” and “God is fully aware of His servants”, respectively, all the translators maintain the Arabic structure of this verse.

By using the phrase “is in [the hearts of]”, Asad creates a level of meaning that is not visible the text.

This verse, too, abounds with strongly reverberating sound clusters, /ton/ being the most obvious one, as can be seen [or better: heard] in the underlined

parts. And, as was referred to earlier, the sounds /æd/ at the end of the word “بالعباد” / bilībæd/, at the end of this verse and many other verses of this *Sûrah*.

قل أُوْنِيْكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْ ذَلِكُمْ لِلَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَاتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ

خَالِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيْرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ.

Even though the Control Text uses the word “slaves” for the Qur’ânic term “بالعباد”, its translation is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the transliterations “*Al-Muttaqûn*” and “*Azwâjun Mutahharatun*” in addition to the paraphrase to facilitate the understanding of the Qur’ânic terms “للذين اتقوا” and “أزواج مطهرة”.

5.2.2.12 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 20

Source Text

فَإِنْ حَاجُوكَ فَقُلْ أَصَلَّمْتُ وَجْهِيْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ، وَقُلْ لِلَّذِيْنَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّيْنَ ءَأَسَلَّمْتُمْ ، فَإِنْ أَصَلَّمُوا فَقَدْ أَهْتَدُوا، وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ، وَاللَّهُ بَصِيْرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ.

Control Text

“So if they dispute with you (Muhammad ﷺ) say: “I have submitted myself to Allâh (in Islâm), and (so have) those who follow me.” And say to those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and to those who are illiterates (Arab pagans):”Do you (also) submit yourselves (to Allâh in Islâm)? If they do, they are rightly guided: but if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the Message: and Allâh is All-Seer of (His) slaves. ”

Pickthall

“And if they argue with thee, (O Muhammad), say: I have surrendered my purpose to Allah and (so have) those who follow me. And say unto those who have received the Scripture and those who read not: Have ye (too) surrendered? “If they surrender, then truly they are rightly guided, and if they turn away, then it is thy duty only to convey the message (unto them), Allah is Seer of (His) bondmen.”

Ali

“So if they dispute with thee, Say: “I have submitted My whole self to God And have those

Who follow me.” And say to the people of the Book And to those who are unlearned: “Do ye (also) submit yourselves?” If they do, they are in right guidance. But if they turn back, Thy duty is to convey the Message: And in God’s sight Are (all) His servants.”

Asad

“Thus, [O Prophet,] If they argue with thee, say, “I have surrendered my whole being unto God, and [so have] all who follow me!” - and ask those who have been vouchsafed revelation aforetime, as well as all unlettered people, Have you (too) surrendered yourselves unto Him?” And if they surrender themselves unto Him, they are on the right path: but if they turn away-behold, thy duty is no more than to deliver the message: For God sees all that is in [the hearts of] His creatures.”

Irving

“If they should argue with you, then say: ‘I have committed my person peacefully to God and [so has] anyone who follows me. Tell both those who have been given the Book as well as the unlettered: “Have you become Muslims?” If they commit themselves to [live in] peace, then they are guided, while if they turn away, you need merely to state things plainly, God is Observant of [His] worshippers.”

Ozek

“And if they argue with you, say: “I have surrendered myself to Allah and [so have] those who follow me.” And say to those who have received the Book and to those who read not: “Will you too surrender yourselves to Allah?” If they become Muslims they shall be rightly guided: if they turn away, then your duty is only to inform them. Allah is [the] Seer of all His servants.”

Abdel-Haleem

“If they argue with you [Prophet], say, ‘I have devoted myself to God alone and so have my followers.’ Ask those who were given the Scripture as well as those without one, “Do you too devote yourselves to Him alone? If they do, they will be guided, but if they turn away, your only duty is to convey the message. God is aware of His servants.”

Discussion

In verse 20, the Control Text and Pickthall use the direct name of Muhammad; Asad and Abdel-Haleem use the epithet “Prophet” to clarify the

connective pronoun “ك” in the Arabic word “حاجوك”, while Irving and Ozek use only the pronoun “you” to convey it.

The Control Text and Ali use the verb “submitted” to convey the meanings of the Arabic verb “أسلمت”, while Pickthall, Asad and Ozek use the verb “surrendered”. Irving chooses “committed” and Abdel-Haleem uses the verb “devoted”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the verb “commit” means “pledge or bind to a course, policy, or use, (often as adjective - committed to) dedicate to a cause: a committed Christian”, the verb “devote” means “give time or resources to (a person or activity)”, the verb “submit” means “accept or yield to a superior force or stronger person”, the verb “surrender to” means “abandon oneself entirely to (a powerful emotion or influence).”. the word “purpose” means “the reason for which something is done or for which something exists”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the verb “commit” means “يسلم إلى”, the verb “devote” means “ينذر، يقف، يكرس، يخصص، يندرج”، the word “purpose” means “غاية، غرض، مرمى، هدف”، the verb “submit” means “يسلم إلى، يخضع”، the verb “surrender to” means “يسلم (شيئاً) نزولاً عند طلب أو خضوعاً لقوة قاهرة، تسليم، استسلام”.

Semantically, although the Arabic verb “أسلمت” is a culture-specific concept that relates to Islâm religion, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

All the translators use a translation by more general expressive words. In terms of equivalent effect the choices of the verbs “submit” and “surrender to” have the most effect.

In the same verse, the Control Text, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “myself” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “وجهي”, Ali uses the phrase “My whole self”, Asad uses the phrase “my whole being”, Irving uses the phrase “my person”, while Pickthall uses the word “purpose”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “being” means “ your mind and all of your feelings”, “the word “myself” is a reflexive form of I”, the word “person” means “a human as an individual”, the word “purpose” means “the intention, aim or function of something; the thing that somebody is supposed to achieve”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “being” means “ كينونة، شخصية، ” “the word “myself” means “أنا نفسي”، the word “person” means “ شخص، ” “the word “purpose” means “غاية، غرض، مرمى، هدف” “إنسان”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators preference.

From the definitions in both dictionaries, the word “purpose” does not convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “وجهى”, because - whether it is allegorical or physical - Muslims in reality direct their faces in *Salâh* towards Ka`bah - the House of Allâh - in Makkah, in response to the instruction of the verse 144 in *Sûrat Al-Baqarah* “The Cow”:

Verily, We have seen the turning of your face (Muhammad ﷺ) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a *Qiblah* (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of *Al-Masjid Al-Harâm* (the sanctuary at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction... (CT 2:144)

قد نرى نقلاب وجهك فى السماء، فلنولينك قبلة ترضاها، فول وجهك شطر المسجد الحرام، وحيث ما كنتم فولوا وجوهكم شطره..

In this verse, all the translators use the qualifiers “only”, “no more” and “merely” to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “فإنما عليك البلاغ”, with the exception of Ali, who omits it from his translation.

They use these qualifiers after the word “duty” to show that the intended action is one of “telling, informing them”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the

qualifier “only” after the word “duty”. By doing so he shifts the intended meaning from “telling, informing” to the “duty”.

In this verse, the Control Text, Ali and Abdel-Haleem translate the word “غالبًا” by the phrase “to convey the Message”, Pickthall uses the phrase “to convey the message (unto them)” Asad uses the phrase “to deliver the message”, Irving uses the phrase “to state things plainly”, while Ozek uses the phrase “to inform them” .

Although the word “البلاغ” is a singular, it needs more than one word to convey its meaning. The back translation of the Control Text, Ali, Asad and Abdul-Haleem will be “تنقل أو تبلغ الرسالة”, Pickthall will be “تنقل أو تبلغ الرسالة”, Irving will be “توضح الاشياء بجلاء” and Ozek will be “تبلغهم أو تعلمهم”. In all these translations they have added levels of meanings which are not visible in the source text.

The word “البلاغ” is an Arabic-specific word related to conveying the message of Islam, so the variation between the translators in dealing with it shows the difficulty of translating such a specific Qur’anic term.

Semantically, although the Arabic verb “أسلمت” is a culture-specific concept that relates to Islâm religion, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

All the translators use a translation by more general expressive words. In terms of equivalent effect the choices of the verbs “submit” and “surrender to” have the most effect.

In the verse, the Control Text uses the word “illiterates”, to convey the meanings of the Arabic word “الأميين”, Asad, Irving and Ali use the word ‘unlettered’ Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “those without one”, while Ozek and Pickthall use the clause “those who read not”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “illiterate” means “unable to read or write” and the word “unlettered” means “poorly educated or illiterate”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “أمى” means “illiterate, uneducated, unlettered” and the word “وجه” means “face, visage, countenance”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is clearly lexicalized in the target-language.

As for the paraphrase “Arab pagans” of the Control Text, al-Mallâh writes:

History reported that before Islâm Arab pagans had 360 idols around the Ka’bah in Makkah and that the first thing that Muhammad ﷺ did after he conquered people of Makkah, was to damage all those idols and to clean the Ka’bah from them. (2008: 404)

The *Holy Qur’ân* mentioned that in *Sûrat At-Tawbah* “The Repentance”:

O you who believe (in Allâh’s Oneness and in His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ)! Verily, the Mushrikûn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in Oneness of Allâh, and the Message of Muhammad ﷺ) are Najasun (impure). So let them not come near *Al-Masjid al-Harmâ* (at Makkah) after this year... (CT 9:28)

يا أيها الذين آمنوا إنما المشركون نجسٌ فلا يقربوا المسجد الحرام بعد عامهم هذا...

In respect of the choice of the clause “those without one”, history shows that Arabs were familiar with the earlier divine Books from that region, namely the Torah and the Gospel, al-Mallâh writes that: “the whole of Yemen and many tribes of the middle Arabia had embraced Judaism and that Christianity was dominant in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq.” (2008: 408)

So the implication would be that the Qur’ânic term “الأميين” in this context does not refer to the Arab’s religious Book but rather that it refers to the state of the illiteracy among them before the advent of Islâm.

As such, Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall do not convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “الأميين” as accurate as the other translators do.

In terms of equivalent effect the word “unlettered” has the most effect. The phrases “those who read not” and “those without one” have the least effect as they do not indicate that those people cannot read.

Syntactically, the amalgamated sentences “اسلموا”, “اهتدوا” and “تولوا” consist of the verbs “أسلم”, “اهتدى” and “تولى” and *waw al-Jamaa* “و” as a subject in the three sentences.

In respect of this verse, even though paraphrases cannot be considered as translation, by using them to explain some verbs, the Control Text’s translation of the meaning is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.2.13 *Sûrah 3 Verse 30*

Source Text

يوم تجد كل نفس ما عملت من خيرٍ محضراً وما عملت من سوءٍ تود لو أن بينها وبينه أمداً بعيداً ويحذركم الله نفسه، والله رؤوفٌ بالعباد.

Control Text

“On the Day when every person will be confronted with all the good he has done, and all the evil he has done, he will wish that there were a great distance between him and his evil. And Allāh warns you against Himself (His punishment) and Allāh is full of kindness to (His) slaves.”

Pickthall

“On the day when every soul will find itself confronted with all that it hath done of good and all that it hath done of evil (every soul) will long that there might be a mighty space distance between it and that (evil). Allah biddeth you beware of Him. And Allah is full of pity for (His) bondmen.”

Ali

“On the Day when every soul Will be confronted With all the good it has done, And all the evil it has done, It will wish there were A great distance Between it and its evil. But God cautions you (To remember) Himself. And God is full of kindness To those that serve Him.”

Asad

“On the Day when every human being will find himself faced with all the good that he has

done, and with all the evil that he has done. [Many a one] will wish that there were a long span of time between himself and that [Day]. Hence, God warns you to beware of Him: but God is most compassionate towards His creatures.”

Irving

“Some day when every person will find whatever good he has done is presented [as evidence] as well as whatever bad he has done, he would like a long stretch [to lie] between them and himself. God cautions you about Himself: though God is Gentle with [His] worshippers.”

Ozek

“On the day when every soul will find itself confronted with whatever good it has done, and whatever evil it has done, it will wish that there might be a mighty gulf between it and that evil. Allah warns you to fear Him: and He is kind to His slaves.”

Abdel-Haleem

“On the Day when every soul finds all the good it has done present before it, it will wish all the bad it has done to be far, far away. God warns you to beware of Him, but God is compassionate towards His servants.”

Discussion

In verse 30, the Control Text and Ali use the phrase “a great distance” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic word “أمد”, Asad uses the phrase “a long span of time”, Irving uses the phrase “a long stretch”, Ozek uses the phrase “a mighty gulf”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “to be far, far away”, and Pickthall uses the phrase “a mighty space of distance”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 221), “the phrase “أمداً بعيداً” means “the distance between where the sun rises and sets”.”

According to *Mukhtār Al-Ṣiḥāḥ* (1990), “the word “أمد” means “غاية” which again means “utmost, extreme, the highest degree, as far as”.” Similar definition is given by *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīd* (2009) and *Al-Misbâḥ Al-Munīr* (2008), as well as by al-Qurṭubī (2001: 352) and at-Ṭabarī (2011: 54), in their interpretation of this verse.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “أمد” means “duration, period, time, span of time”, and the word “gulf” means “خليج، هاوية” The *Concordance of the Qur’anic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005), simply explains the word “أمد” as “period of time”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “distance” means “the length of the space between the two points, the condition of being remote”, the word “gulf” means “a deep inlet of the sea almost surrounded by land, with a narrow mouth”, and the word “stretch” means “a continuous expanse or period”.”

The problem of non-equivalence arises because the word “أمد” is semantically complex. The source-language concept may well be lexicalized in the target-language but the different choices by the translators show the difficulty of finding an exact equivalent for it.

All the translators use a translation by means of more general words and they all manage to convey the two possible explicit meanings of the phrase despite the nuances in meaning between them.

The choice of the phrase “a long span of time between himself and that [Day]...”, which is used by Asad is the most suitable one in terms of conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “أمداً”, as well as achieving the equivalent effect.

In this verse, Ozek’s attempt is probably the one to achieve the least equivalent effect of the Arabic word “أمداً”, because the first meaning of the word “gulf” that comes into the mind of the Arabic listener or reader is the word “خليج” which means specific areas such as The Gulf of Mexico, The Gulf States, The Arab/ Persian Gulf.

According to the definition of *Al-Mawrid* the back translation of the Ozek’s sentence “it will wish that there might be a mighty gulf between it and that evil” will be “تود لو أن بينها وبينه خليجاً كبيراً”, which is a kind of misinterpretation.

By choosing the phrases “he will wish that there were a great distance between him and his evil...”, “(every soul) will long that there might be a mighty space distance between it and that (evil)...”, “It will wish there were A great distance Between it and its evil...”, “[Many a one] will wish that there were a long span of time between himself and that [Day]...”, “he would like a long stretch [to lie] between them and himself...”, “it will wish that there might be a mighty gulf between it and that evil...” and “it will wish all the bad it has done to be far, far away...”, in their respective contexts, all the translators, with the exception of Abdel-Haleem, fail to maintain the Arabic structure of this clause “تود لو أن بينها وبينه أمداً بعيداً”

When perusing this verse and the underlined parts, it is clear that the translations cannot do justice to its rich poetic texture.

يوم تجد كل نفسٍ ما عملت من خيرٍ محضراً وما عملت من سوء

تود لو أن بينها وبينه أمداً بعيداً ويحذركم الله نفسه،

والله رؤوفٌ بالعباد.

As far as meaning is concerned, the Irving translation is closest to the original text, as he uses the word “worshippers” which is an appropriate choice for the Qur’anic term “بالعباد”.

5.2.2.14 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 32

Source Text

قل أطيعوا الله والرسول فإن تولوا فإن الله لا يحب الكافرين.

Control Text

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Obey Allâh and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ).” But if they turn away, then Allâh does not like the disbelievers.”

Pickthall

“Say: Obey Allah and the messenger. But if they turn away, lo! Allah loveth not the disbelievers (in His guidance).”

Ali

“Say: “Obey God And His Apostle”: But if they turn back, God loveth not those Who reject Faith.”

Asad

“Say, “Pay heed unto God and the Apostle.”

Irving

“Say: “Obey God and the Messenger.” Yet if they should turn away, [remember that] God does not love disbelievers.”

Ozek

“Say: “Obey Allah and the Messenger.” But then, if they turn away, Allah certainly loves not the disbelievers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Say, ‘Obey God and the Messenger’, But if they turn away, [know that] God does not love those who ignore [His commands].”

Discussion

In verse 32, the Control Text, Irving, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall use the word “Messenger”, to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “الرسول”, while Asad and Ali use the word “Apostle”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “Apostle”, spelt with capital letter means “each of the twelve chief disciples of Jesus Christ”, but the word “messenger” means “a person who carries a message”.”

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the words “Apostle” and “Messenger” both mean “رسول”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence arises because the source and target-languages make different distinctions in meaning. All the translators use a translation by a more general word.

However, the Arab Muslim scholars differentiate between “Messenger, and Prophet” as Imam al-Hassan Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad al- Mawardi makes clear:

In respect of the divine Message: the “Messenger” is the person who has received a Message or teaching from Allâh and is ordered to deliver /preach it to mankind. The “Prophet” is the person who has received a message/teaching from Allâh but he is not ordered to preach/deliver it to any one. (1994: 94)

In his *Tafsîr* of verse 14 of *Sûrah* 61, al-Qurṭubî (2001: 312) writes:

... the “Apostle” is each of the twelve chief disciples of the Children of Israel who believed in Jesus Christ and supported Him”.

Sûrat As-Saff “The Row or The Rank”:

O you who believe! Be you helpers (in the Cause) of Allâh as said ‘Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), to the Hawâriyyûn (the disciples): “Who are my helpers (in the Cause) of Allâh?” The Hawâriyyûn (the disciples) said: “We are Allâh’s helpers. (CT 61:14)

يا أيها الذين آمنوا كونوا أنصار الله كما قال عيسى ابن مريم
للحواريين من أنصاري إلى الله قال الحواريون نحن أنصار الله ...

In modern Arabic the word “حوار” is confined to the learners of the *Holy Qur’ân* under the sheikhs at special schools, the “Madresa”.

Although all the translations manage to convey the general meaning of the Arabic word “الرسول”, the distinction between the two words is important.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word Messenger is more effective than the word “Apostle”, as the possible confusion by readers with the Christian background will be avoided. It also confirms the totally different role assigned to Muhammad ﷺ.

In this verse, the Control Text, Irving, Ozek, and Pickthall use the word “the disbelievers” to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “فإن الله لا يحب الكافرين”. Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “those who ignore” and Ali chooses the clause “those who reject Faith”, Asad omits the Arabic sentence “فإن الله لا يحب الكافرين” in his translation.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “disbelieve” means “be unable to believe, have no religious faith”. The word “ignore” means “disregard intentionally, fail to consider something significant”, and the word “reject” means “refuse to consider or agree to, fail to show due affection or concern for”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “disbelieve” means “يكفر”, the word “ignore” means “يتجاهل، يرفض”, and the word “reject” means “يرفض، يأي”. ”

From the different choices, one can deduce that the Arabic word “الكافرين” clearly causes a problem for the translators.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, but the translators use different strategies of translations.

Irving (1992: xxxi) argues: “...Similarly kufr is ‘disbelief’, ‘ingratitude’ and a kâfir is a ‘disbeliever’”.

However, in terms of the equivalent effect, the word “disbelieve” has more effect because the word “كفر” belongs to specific religious terminology. As such, the words “ignore” and “reject” do not convey the meaning of this religious term as accurately as the word “disbelieve” does.

As stated, Asad omits the main clause of a sentence “if they turn away, then Allâh does not like the disbelievers”, which the result that the reader will not understand the consequences of his/her disbelief, in the eyes of Allâh. In this case, Asad does not convey the meaning of verse 32 as accurately as the other translators do. In fact he does not convey the meaning of the verse at all.

By choosing the phrases “then Allâh does not like the disbelievers”, “lo! Allah loveth not the disbelievers (in His guidance)”, “God loveth not those Who reject Faith”, “[remember that] God does not love disbelievers”, “Allah certainly loves not the disbelievers” and “[know that] God does not love those who ignore [His commands]”, all the translators with the exception of Asad follow the Arabic structure of this verse.

Its tonal structure, as was mentioned earlier, is one of the fundamental features that differentiates the *Holy Qur’ân* from the other types of the Arab literary works. In this respect even a morpheme plays a significant role when it comes to the phonological analysis of the *Holy Qur’ân*. In respect of this poetic feature, this verse lost the effect of the consonance created by the repeated device “وا” at the end of the amalgamated sentences “أطيعوا” and “تولوا” and the alliteration /ʌ/ and the repeated sounds /hə/ at the beginning and at the end of the name “الله”, which is pronounced /ʌlæhə/.

Both prosodically and phonologically, the rich texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, marked by the underlined parts of the verse, is not reflected in the translations:

قل أطيعوا الله والرسول فإن تولوا فإن الله لا يحب الكافرين.

Reference can be made to the loss of repeated sound at the end of the repeated device “فإن”, which is pronounced /fʌɪnʌ/, and the sound /ʌ/ and the sounds /hə/ at the beginning and at the end of the name “الله”, which is pronounced /ʌlæhə/. This name is, of course, in itself a thread that runs through the *Holy Qur’ân*.

What is of special interest, however, is the cluster /i n/ at the end of the word “الكافرين”, which is pronounced /ə lkæfirin/. This is another example of the lattice structure to which reference has been made: this cluster appears here like at the end of many other verses of this *Sûrah*, for instance in the words “المقرئين”, “الصالحين”, and “مؤمنين” at the end of verses 45, 46 and 49.

In terms of closeness, the Ozek’s translation is as probably the most reliable in so far as it reflects a straightforward verse with simple words, which does not need any explanation.

5.2.2.15 *Sûrah 3 Verse 39*

Source Text

فنادته الملائكة وهو قائم يصلى فى المحراب أن الله يبشرك بيحي مصدقاً بكلمة من الله وسيداً وحسوراً ونبياً من الصالحين.

Control Text

“Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in *Al-Mihrâb* (a praying place or a private room), (saying): “Allâh gives you glad tidings of Yahya (John), confirming (believing in) the word from Allâh [i.e. the creation of ‘Îsâ (Jesus) عليه السلام ” the Word from Allâh “Be!”- and he was!], noble, keeping away from sexual relations with women, and a Prophet, from among the righteous.”

Pickthall

“*And the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary: Allah giveth thee glad tidings of (a son whose name is) John, (who cometh) to confirm a word from Allah, lordly, chaste, a Prophet of the righteous.*”

Ali

“*While he was standing In prayer in the chamber, The angels called unto him: “God doth give thee Glad tidings of Yahyâ, Witnessing the truth Of a Word from God, and (be Besides) noble, chaste, And a Prophet, - Of the (goodly) company Of the righteous.*”

Asad

“*Thereupon, as he stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called out unto him: “God sends thee the glad tidings of [the birth of] John, who shall confirm the truth of a word from God, and [shall be] outstanding among men, and utterly chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous.*”

Irving

“*The angels called him while he was standing praying in the shrine: “God gives you news of John, who will confirm word from God, masterful yet circumspect, and a Prophet [chosen] from among honourable people.*”

Ozek

“And the angels called to him as he stood praying in the retreat: “Allah gives you the glad tidings of a son whose name is John [come] to confirm a word from Allah, princely and chaste, a Prophet of the righteous.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The angels called out to him, while he stood praying in the sanctuary, ‘God gives you news of John, confirming a Word from God. He will be noble and chaste, a Prophet, one of the righteous.”

Discussion

In verse 39, the Control Text uses a long sentence “keeping away from sexual relations with women”, to convey the meaning of the single Arabic word “حَصُورًا”, Asad, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali all use the word ‘chaste’, Irving uses the word ‘circumspect’.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 360), the word “حَصُورًا” is derived from the root “حَصَرَ”, which means abstaining from doing things in general, but in this context it clearly means abstaining from sexual relationship with women despite the ability of doing it. The same definition is given by the *Concordance of the Qur’ānic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005): “the word “حَصُورًا” means “a man who does not have a sexual relationship with women despite his ability of doing it”.” According to *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010) “the Arabic word “حَصُورًا” means “chaste”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “chaste” means “abstaining from extra-marital, or from all, sexual intercourse”, while the word “circumspect” means “cautious or prudent”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “chaste” mean “طاهر، عفيف، محتشم” and the word “circumspect” means “حذر، محترس، واع”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence arises because both the source and target-languages make different distinctions in meaning. The source-language concept, however, is lexicalized in the target-language.

The Control Text translates it by a paraphrase using related words. Asad, Irving, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by cultural substitution.

Defending his choice of words, Irving (1992: xxiv) argues: “I have tried to find the simplest word so that the Muslim child can understand it easily, and feel strengthened thereby.”

However, the Control Text uses the word “chaste” as an equivalent for many other Arabic words, although they are not synonyms, such as the words “محصنات” and “وليستعفف”. One example can be found in *Sûrat An-Nisâ* “The Women”:

And whoever of you have not the means wherewith to wed free, believing women, they may wed believing girls among those (slaves) whom your right hands possess, and Allâh has full knowledge about your faith: you are one from another. Wed them with the permission of their own folk (guardians, Auliyâ or masters) and give them their Mahr according to what is reasonable: they (the above said captive and slave-girls) should be chaste, not committing illegal sex, nor taking boy-friends... (CT 4:25)

ومن لم يستطع منكم طويلاً أن ينكح المحصنات المؤمنات فمن ما ملكت أيماكم من فتياتكم المؤمنات، والله أعلم بإيمانكم، بعضكم من بعض، فانكحوهن بإذن أهلهن وآتوهن أجورهن بالمعروف محصناتٍ غير مسافحاتٍ ولا متخذاتٍ أخدانٍ...

The second example is found in *Sûrat An-Nûr* “The Light”

And let those who find not the financial means for marriage keep themselves chaste, until Allâh enriches them of His Bounty. (CT 24:33)

وليستعفف الذين لا يجدون نكاحاً حتى يغنيهم الله من فضله.

The Arabic word “محصنات” in this context means “married”, while the Arabic word “ليستعفف” in this context means “not committing illegal sex”.

According to the interpretation of al-Qurṭubī (2001: 360) of this verse; “Prophet John did not have sexual intercourse with women as if he was forbidden from doing what is normally done by men”.

Similar interpretations are given by at-Ṭabarī (2011: 55) and Ibn Kathīr (2010: 224).

As such, in terms of accurate equivalents, neither the word “chaste” nor the word “circumspect” is an equivalent for the Qur’ānic term “حصوراً”.

Nevertheless, in terms of the equivalent effect, the paraphrase “keeping away from sexual relations with women” has more effect than the word “chaste”. The word “circumspect” may not convey the exact meaning of the Qur’ānic term “حصوراً”.

Syntactically, by using the conjunctions “Then”, “and”, “while” and “thereupon”, The Control Text, Pickthall, Ali, Asad and Ozek maintain the Arabic structure, while by omitting them from the sentence, Irving and Abdel-Haleem failed to do so.

By starting their translations with the sentences “While he was standing in prayer in the chamber, The angels called unto him” and “Thereupon, as he stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called out unto him” respectively, Ali and Asad failed to follow the Arabic syntax as well, while it was possible to do so. By choosing the phrases “and a Prophet, from among the righteous”, “a Prophet of the righteous”, “And a Prophet, - Of the (goodly) company Of the righteous”, “and a prophet from among the righteous”, “and a Prophet [chosen] from among honourable people”, a “Prophet of the righteous” and “a Prophet, one of the righteous” respectively, all the translators follow the Arabic structure of this verse. However, by choosing the words “among”, “chosen” and “one” and the phrases “Of the (goodly) company” and

“honourable people”, the Control Text, Ali, Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem create levels of meanings which are not visible in the original text.

Semantically, according to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “honourable” means “جدير بالاحترام، محترم، شريف”. According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “honourable” means “bringing or worthy of honour, a title given to certain high officials, the children of some ranks of the nobility”.”

As such, the phrase “honourable people” does not convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “ونبياً من الصالحين”

This verse also ends with the /i:n/, referred to in the analysis of another verse, a marker of the remarkable structure which becomes visible when looking at poetic features of the *Holy Qur’ân*. None of the translations even attempt to recall these elements

In terms of capturing the essential meaning of the original text, the translation of the Control Text is the most successful through the use of paraphrases to facilitate the understanding of some culture specific-concepts, such as the Qur’anic term “حسوراً” .

5.2.2.16 Sûrah 3 Verse 44

Source Text

ذلك من أنباء الغيب نوحيه إليك وما كنت لديهم إذ يلقون أقلامهم أيهم يكفل مريم وما كنت لديهم إذ يختصمون.

Control Text

“This is (a part) of the news of the *Ghaib* (unseen, i.e. the news of the past nations of which you have no knowledge) which We reveal to you (O Muhammad ﷺ), You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam (Mary): nor were you with them when they disputed.”

Pickthall

“This is of the tidings of things hidden. We reveal unto thee (Muhammad). Thou wast not

present with them when they threw their pens (to know) which of them should be the guardian of Mary, nor wast thou present with them when they quarrelled (thereupon)."

Ali

"This is part of the tidings Of the things unseen, Which We reveal unto thee (O Apostle!) by inspiration: Thou was not with them When they cast lots With arrows, as to which Of them should be charged With the care of Mary: Nor wast thou with them When they disputed (the point)."

Asad

"This is account of something that was beyond the reach of thy perception We [now] reveal unto thee: for thou wert not with them, when they drew lots as to which of them should be Mary's guardian, and thou wert not with them when they contended [about it] with one another."

Irving

"Such is some information about the Unseen We revealed it to you. You were not in their presence as they cast [lots with] their pens [to see] which of them would be entrusted with Mary. You were not in their presence while were they so disputing."

Ozek

"This is some news of that which you have not witnessed, which We reveal to you [O Muhammad], You were not present with them when they cast lots to see which of them would be the guardian of Mary: not were you present when they argued [concerning this]."

Abdel-Haleem

"This is an account of things beyond your knowledge that We reveal to you [Muhammad]: You were not present among them, when they cast lots to see which of them should take charge of Mary, you were not present with them when they argued [about her]."

Discussion

In the Control Text, the meaning of the Arabic word "الغيب" is conveyed by the transliteration "the news of the *Ghaib*" and a long paraphrase "(unseen, i.e. the news of the past nations of which you have no knowledge)", in

Pickthall by the phrase “of things hidden”, in Ali by the phrase “Of the things unseen” in Asad by the long phrase “of something that was beyond the reach of thy perception”, in Irving by the word “the Unseen”, in Ozek by the phrase “of that which you have not witnessed”, while in Abdel-Haleem by the long phrase “of things beyond your knowledge”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “hidden” means “kept out of sight”, the word “knowledge” means “awareness or familiarity gained by experience”, the word “perception” means “the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses ”, and the word “unseen” means “not seen or noticed” .”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the Arabic “الغيب” means “which is hidden or unseen”, the word “hidden” means “مخفي، مستور”, the word “knowledge” means “معرفة، علم، دراية”, the word “perception” means “الإدراك الحسى”, and the word “unseen” means “غير مرئى، غير منظور” .”

Semantically there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept, is lexicalized in the target-language. Although the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, the various long paraphrases and sentences of translating the Arabic word “بى غل”, show the individual differences of the understanding and preferences of the translators of the Holy Qur’ân.

In terms of equivalent effect, the words “hidden or unseen” are the most effective ones.

In this verse, the Control Text, Irving and Pickthall use the word ‘pens’ and Ali uses the word ‘arrows’ to render the meaning of the Arabic word “أقلامهم”. Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem simply omit the Arabic word “أقلامهم” from their translations.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “arrow” means “a weapon consisting of a stick with a sharp pointed head, designed to be shot from a bow.”, while the word “pen” means “an instrument for writing

or drawing with ink, typically consisting of a metal nib or ball, or a nylon tip, fitted into a metal or plastic holder” .”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “pen” means “قلم”.” According to al-Qurtubī (2001: 362) “The word “أقلامهم” is a plural of the word “قلم”, in this context it has two interpretations: one of them is an arrow and the other is a pen, and the latter is the most accurate as they used to write the Torah with them”.”

The same interpretation is given by Ibn Kathīr (2011: 226), who argues: “To solve the dispute between them in concern with whom should be in charge of looking after Maryam, they cast lots with their pen, with which they used to write the Torah.”

Actually, there is no problem of non-equivalence, as the concept of the source-language is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

However, choices of “pens” and “arrows” and even the omission of the phrase “مهمالقأ”, prove that there is a problem above the word level which can obviously be seen in the Arabic fixed expression “مهمالقأ نوقلي ذإ”, which is equivalent to the English fixed expression “draw/cast lots”.

The Control Text, Irving and Pickthall use a translation by cultural substitution, relying on an expression of similar meaning and form: Ali uses the word “arrows”, by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem, on the other hand, simply omit the Arabic word “أقلامهم” from their translations. They use a translation by omission of a play on the idiom, deciding that the way in which the lots were drawn (a commonly understood expression) was not of real significance.

However, in terms of the equivalent effect both the words “pens” and “arrows” have the same effect, but the word ‘pens’ conveys the meaning more effectively than the word ‘arrows’, because the *Holy Qur’ân* used the word “أقلامهم” explicitly.

Despite the fact that Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem omit the Arabic word “أقلامهم” from their translations, and the omission does not affect conveying the general meaning of the verse, it is clear that a cultural reference has been lost.

In respect of the preservation of the grammatical structure of the original, all the translators manage to maintain the Arabic structure of the sentence “إذ يلقون “أقلامهم أيهم يكفل مريم” by keeping the sentences in their original places.

Elsewhere in the same verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “they disputed” to render the meaning of the Arabic sentence “يختصمون”. Pickthall uses the phrase “they quarrelled (thereupon)”, Ali uses the phrase “they disputed (the point)”, Asad uses the phrase “they contended [about it] with one another”, Irving uses the phrase “were they so disputing”, Ozek uses the phrase “they argued [concerning this]” while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “they argued [about her]”

The use of the long different phrases, with or without brackets, proves the difficulty of translating one aspect of Arabic grammatical features, its amalgamative structure, something which does not exist in English and which has been discussed earlier.

By using the pronoun “her”, “Abdel-Haleem refers the topic of dispute to Mary, while by using the phrases “they quarrelled (thereupon)”, “they disputed (the point)”, “they contended [about it] with one another” and “they argued [concerning this]” respectively, Pickthall, Ali, Asad and Ozek refer the topic of dispute to verb “يكفل” which is an action of taking care of.

Using the phrases “the care of”, “the guardian of”, “be entrusted with” and “take charge of” to convey the meaning of a single Arabic verb “يكفل”, shows the problems existing in finding equivalent verb forms in English for the Arabic ones.

By using the phrases “they disputed.” and “were they so disputing” respectively, the Control Text and Irving stick to the Arabic structure of the amalgamated sentence “يختصمون”

Given the above, one can conclude that the Control Text, Irving and Pickthall convey the meaning of verse 44 more accurate than the other translators do.

Although, all the translators stick to Arabic structure of the verse, the amalgamative structure is, of course, not reflected in their translations.

It is important to remember that the inability to mirror the amalgamatives in translation, not only leads to a more cumbersome syntactical version, but also results in the text losing the fixed sound clusters which is associated with them. The same also applies in respect of the *At Tanwīn* device.

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَقُولُونَ

أَقْلَامِهِمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ.

A number of the underlined parts confirm the prevalence of /u:n/, which is found at the end of the the amalgamated sentences “يَقُولُونَ” and “يَخْتَصِمُونَ”, which are pronounced /jəlgu:n/ and /jəkhtʌsimu:n /. This cluster also serves the interesting function of binding verses through the fact that many other verses of this *Sûrah* ends with it.

In terms of closeness, the translation of Irving is the most successful through the use of the past continuous construction which indicates a duration of the action because the way in which the lots were drawn normally takes some time.

5.2.2.17 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 49

Source Text

ورسولاً إلى بنى إسرائيل أنى قد جنتكم بأية من ربكم أنى أخلق لكم من الطين كهيئة الطير فانفخ فيه فيكون طيراً بإذن الله وأبرىء الأكمه والأبرص وأحى الموتى بإذن الله وأنبئكم بما تآكلون وما تدخرون فى بيوتكم، إن فى ذلك لآية لى لكم إن كنتم

Control Text

“And will make him [‘Īsā (Jesus)] a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): “I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it, and becomes a bird by Allāh’s Leave: and I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allāh’s Leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, in that is a sign for you, if you are believers.”

Pickthall

“And will make him a messenger unto the Children of Israel, (saying): Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and breathe into it, and it is a bird by Allah’s Leave. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah’s Leave. And I announce unto you what ye eat and what ye store in your houses. Lo! Herein verily is a portent for you, if ye are to be believers.”

Ali

“And (appoint him) An apostle to the Children of Israel, (with this message): “I have come to you With a Sign from your Lord, In that I will make for you Out of clay, as it were, The figure of a bird, And breathe into it, And it becomes a bird By God’s Leave: And I heal those Born blind, and the lepers, And I quicken the dead, By God’s Leave. And I declare to you What ye eat, and what ye store In your houses. Surely Therein is a Sign for you, If ye did believe.”

Asad

“And [will make him] an apostle unto children of Israel.” “I HAVE COME unto you with a message from your Sustainer. I shall create for you out of clay, as it were, the shape of [your] destiny and then breathe into it, so that it might become [your] destiny by God’s leave: and I shall heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead back to life by God’s leave: and I shall let you know what you may eat and what you should store up in your houses. Behold, in all this there is indeed a message for you, if you are [truly] believers.”

Irving

“As a messenger to the Children of Israel: ‘I have brought you a sign from your Lord. I shall create something in the shape of a bird for you out of clay, and blow into it so it will become a [real] bird with God’s permission: I shall cure those who are blind from birth and lepers, and

revive the dead with God's permission. I shall announce to you what you may eat, and what you should store up in your houses. That will serve as a sign for you, if you are believers."

Ozek

"And will make him a Messenger to the Children of Israel. He will say: 'I bring you with a sign from your Lord. From clay I will make for you the likeness of a bird: I shall breathe into it, and it shall become a [living] bird by Allah's Leave. I shall give sight to the blind, and heal the leper, and raise the dead to life, by Allah's Leave. I shall tell you what you eat, and what you store up in your houses. Surely that will be a sign for you, if you are believers."

Abdel-Haleem

"He will send him as a messenger to the Children of Israel: "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make the shape of a bird for you out of clay, then breathe into it and, with God's permission becomes a real bird: I heal the blind and the leper, bring the dead back to life with God's permission, I will tell you what you may eat, and what you may store up in your houses. There truly is a sign for you in this, if you are believers."

Discussion

In verse 49, the Control Text, Asad and Abdel-Haleem use the phrase "bring the dead to life" to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence "وأحي الموتى". Irving uses the phrase "revive the dead", Ozek and Pickthall use the phrase "raise the dead to life" and Ali uses the words "quicken the dead".

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), "the word "bring" means "cause to move or to come into existence, cause to be in a particular state or condition" (here in relation to "life"), the word "quicken" in this context means "give or restore life to", the word "raise" mean "increase the amount, level, or strength of, cause to occur or to be considered" and the word "revive" means "restore to or regain life, consciousness, or strength"."

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), "the word "bring" means "يحمل، يجلب، يحضر"، the word "quicken" means "يحي، يثير، ينشط"، the word "raise" means "يجئ ب"، and the word "revive" means "يحي، ينعش، ينشط"."

Semantically there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-languages. The choices are based on the translators' preferences.

All the translators translate by a strategy of a paraphrase using related words. In terms of the equivalents, the words "quicken" and "revive" are the nearest equivalent to the Arabic word "أحى". However, both the phrases "bring the dead to life" and "raise the dead to life" convey the sense of the Arabic sentence "وأحى الموتى"

The propositional meaning of the verb "revive" is the most accurate equivalent for the Arabic verb "يحي"

Another semantic complexity can be seen in the translation of Arabic sentence "قد جئتمكم بأية". This Arabic sentence is a past tense construction, and one would expect that the translation should convey its meaning in the past tense construction, too. As Arabic does not have a present perfect tense, translations into English offers alternative possibilities utilising this tense.

The Control Text, Ali, Asad and Abdel-Haleem do so: "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord", as does Irving: "I have brought you a sign from your Lord". Pickthall uses the sentence with a present simple tense "Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord", and Ozek does so as well: "I bring you with a sign from your Lord".

The significant difference between the simple present and the present perfect tenses is that the simple present is said to be most commonly used to express universal truths, such as "the sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening", when the action is at the present time and/or when it expresses habitual action. The present perfect is used when the action began in the past and is completed in the present time, or when an action began in the past and is still continuing with a result in the present time. However, since a miracle of any prophet is an extraordinary event and has to last for the whole period of his mission so as to convince his opponents, the choice of present perfect tense is more suitable.

All the translators maintain the Arabic syntax of the verse and reflect the content, but by adding some lexical items such as “will make him [‘Îsâ (Jesus)]”, “will make him”, “appoint him”, and “will send him as” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word ‘ورسولاً’ the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem create some level of meanings which are not visible in the text.

The conjunction “و” (wāw) is generally used to connect lists or actions which had happened simultaneously, and for oaths, while the conjunction “ف” (fā) is used in respect of lists or actions that do not happen simultaneously. In this context the conjunction “wāw” is used to connect the verses only.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007) “the conjunction “as” means “كأن، مثل، ك،”” which shows that it is no similar to the conjunction “wāw”.”

All the translators use the conjunction “and” to convey the meaning of the Arabic conjunction “و” except Irving who uses the conjunction “as” for the same Arabic conjunction. However, the choice of the conjunction “as” has less equivalent effect.

In respect of the differences between the function of the conjunctions in Arabic and English, al-Qaṭṭān writes:

The connection in the *Holy Qur’ân* is divided into three types: the first one is for connecting the words. The second one is for connecting the words according to their grammatical function in the sentences. The third one is for connecting the words or sentences according to their meanings in the context (2007: 197)

The implication of this division is that the conjunctions in Arabic are not used only for making lists but they have a specific function in conveying the message. Therefore, omission of any of one of the three categories, especially the second one which is linked to grammatical function in the sentences, will affect the comprehension of the relevant portion of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

To overcome the problem of the Arabic conjunction “و” at the beginning of the verse, the Control Text makes the phrase “will make him” a part of the sentence and the phrase “[‘Îsâ (Jesus)]” between brackets as a paraphrase.

Pickthall and Ozek, too, make the phrase “will make him” a part of the sentence. Ali uses the phrase “(appoint him)” as a paraphrase between brackets, Asad uses the phrase “[will make him]” as a paraphrase between brackets, Irving uses the conjunction “as”, and Abdel-Haleem the phrase “He will send him” and the conjunction “as” as a part of the sentence. By doing so all the translators with the exception of Irving create levels of meaning, which are not visible in the original text. In terms of accuracy, Irving’s translation is the most accurate one.

Syntactically, by choosing the sentences “and I bring the dead to life by Allâh’s Leave...”, “and I raise the dead, by Allah’s Leave...”, “And I quicken the dead, By God’s Leave...”, “and bring the dead back to life by God’s leave...”, “and revive the dead with God’s permission...”, “and raise the dead to life, by Allah’s Leave...” and “bring the dead back to life with God’s permission...”, respectively, none of the translators retain the Arabic structure of the phrase “بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ”. However, it can be retained with the construct “by the Leave/ permission of Allâh”.

Reference must again be made to the fact that the amalgamated sentences “تأكلون” and “تدخرون”, consisting of the verbs “تأكل” and “تدخر” and *wâw al-jama`a* “و” as a subject in the two sentences, can not be represented in the translations.

As for the poetic features of the *Holy Qur’ân*, this verse lost the assonance of the vowel “و”- /u:/- present in the words “تأكلون” and “تدخرون”, which are pronounced /tɑkʊlu:n/and /tɑdkhɪru:n/ respectively.

Looking at repetitions or patterns reflected by the underlined sections of the verse, and looking for equivalents in the translations, it is clear that this aspect of the poetic texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, is simply not equalled.

ورسولاً إلى بنى إسرائيل أنى قد جئناكم بآية من ربكم أنى أخلق لكم من الطين كهيئة الطير فانفخ فيه
 فيكون طيراً بإذن الله وأبرىء الأكمه والأبرص وأحى الموتى بإذن الله وأنبئكم بما تأكلون وما
 تدخرون فى بيوتكم، إن فى ذلك لآية لكم إن كنتم مؤمنين.

The Arabic listener or reader will no doubt become aware of repeated /kum/ at the end of the words “ربكم”, “جنتكم”, “لكم”, “أنبيكم” and “بيوتكم”, which are pronounced /rɒbɪkum/, /dʒɪtɒkum/, /lɒkum/, /ʊ nɒbɪkum/ and /bɪjɒtɒkum/, respectively, as well as the sound cluster /u:n/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “تأكلون” and “تدخرون” (/tɒkɒlu:n/ and /tə dɒkħɪru:n/), which is found at the end of a number of verses in this *Sûrah*.

Irving’s use of the the conjunction “as” as an appropriate word to add the information of this verse to previous information about Jesus given in this verse, leaves his translation the closest to the original text.

5.2.2.18 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 55

Source Text

إذ قال الله يا عيسى إني متوفيك ورافعك إلى ومطهرك من الذين كفروا وجاعل الذين اتبعوك فوق الذين كفروا إلى يوم القيامة ثم إلى مرجعكم فأحكم بينكم فيما كنتم فيه تختلفون.

Control Text

“And (remember) when Allâh said: ‘O ‘Îsâ (Jesus)! I will make you sleep and raise you to Myself and clear you [of the forged statement that ‘Îsâ (Jesus) is Allâh’s son] of those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you (Monotheists, who worship none but Allâh) superior to those who disbelieve [in the Oneness of Allâh, or disbelieve in some of His Messengers e.g. Muhammad ﷺ, ‘Îsâ (Jesus), Mûsâ (Moses), etc. or in His Holy Books, e.g. the Taurât (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), the Qur’ân] till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute.”

Pickthall

“(And remember) when Allah said: O Jesus! Lo! I am gathering thee and causing thee to ascend unto Me, and am cleansing thee of those who disbelieve and am setting those who follow thee above those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then unto Me ye will (all) return, and I shall judge between you as to that wherein ye used to differ.”

Ali

“Behold! God said: “O Jesus! I will take thee And raise thee to Myself And clear thee (of the

falsehood) Of those who blaspheme: I will make those Who follow thee superior To those who reject Faith, To the Day of Resurrection: Then shall ye all Return unto me, And I will judge Between you of matters Wherein ye dispute.”

Asad

“Lo! God said: “O Jesus! Verily, I shall cause thee to die, and shall exalt thee unto Me, and cleanse thee of [the presence of] those who are bent on denying the truth, and I shall place those who follow thee [far] above those who are bent on denying the truth, unto the Day of Resurrection. In the end, unto Me you all must return, and I shall judge between you with regard to all on which you were wont to differ.”

Irving

“So God said: “Jesus, I shall gather you up and lift you towards Me, and purify you from those who disbelieve, and place those who follow you ahead of those who disbelieve until Resurrection Day. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall decide among you [all] concerning anything you have been disagreeing about.”

Ozek

“[And remember] When Allah said: ‘O Jesus! I am gathering you and raise you to Me, and cleansing you of those who disbelieve, and I setting those who follow you above those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me you will all return, and I shall judge between you as to that in which you used to differ.”

Abdel-Haleem

“God said, ‘Jesus, I will take you back and raise you up to Me: I will purify you of the disbelievers. To the Day of Resurrection I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieved. Then you will all return to Me and I will judge between you regarding your differences.”

Discussion

In verse 55, the Control Text uses the verb “sleep” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term *‘متوفيك’*. Asad uses the verb “die”, Irving Ozek, and Pickthall use the verb “gather”, while Abdel-Haleem and Ali use the verb “take”.

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 57) “the meaning of the word “متوفيك” is the state of being asleep.”

The same interpretation is given by Ibn Kathīr (2011: 228) who states that “the majority of the interpreters of the *Holy Qur’ân* agree that the meaning of the word “متوفيك” in this verse is to make you sleep”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011) “the word “die” means “stop living”. The verb “gather” means “draw together or towards oneself”. The word “sleep” means “a regularly recurring condition of body and mind in which the nervous system is inactive, the eyes closed, the postural muscles relaxed, and consciousness practically suspended” and the verb “take” means “carry or bring with one: convey or guide, remove from a place”.” According to *Al-Misbah Al-Munir* (2008), *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muīd* (2009) and *Mukhtār Al-Ṣiḥâḥ* (1990) “the word “توفاه الله” means “to kill him”.”

Semantically, there is not really a problem of non-equivalence because the meaning of the word “متوفيك”, in this context, which is “sleep”, is also lexicalized in the target-language in the same metaphorical sense. In this respect, the choice of the clause “I will make you sleep” is more accurate than the choice of the clauses “I am gathering thee”, “I will take thee”, “I shall cause thee to die”, “I shall gather you up” or “I am gathering you and I will take you back”.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the words “sleep” has more effect as it goes with the Muslims’ belief that Jesus was raised alive up to Allâh.

Muhgâ Ghâlib Abdul-Raḥmân earlier argues: “A literal translation of a text like the *Holy Qur’ân* leads to ambiguity, a skewing of the original text, or inaccuracy in rendering the authentic message to the target-language reader”. (1993: 34)

In addition to the allegorical meaning of the word “متوفيك”, the conjunction “وَ” poses another problem for the translators.

Syntactically, the conjunction “إِذْ” is used for the time in the past and for actions that happen all of a sudden. According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), the conjunction “إِذْ” means “then: and then: as, when, while: (and) suddenly, (and) all of a sudden”.

To convey the meaning of the conjunction “إِذْ”, the Control Text, Pickthall and Ozek use the phrase ‘And (remember) when’, Ali uses the verb ”Behold!”, Asad uses an exclamation “Lo!”, Irving uses the conjunction “So”, and Abdel-Haleem ignores it. The choice of the phrase “And (remember) when” is the most accurate one, although, it adds the word (remember) between brackets, which is not visible in the original text. The choice of the verb “behold” and the exclamation “Lo!” and the word “so” create a level of meaning which is not visible in the original the text as well. Although Abdel-Haleem manages to convey the general meaning of the verse, the omission of some words of such a sensitive text is a problem.

Syntactically, the amalgamated sentence “تختلفون” consists of the verb “تختلف” and *waw al-Jamaa* “و” as a subject in the sentence. This amalgamative structure and its intensifying function is not reflected in the translations.

Even though all the translators maintain the Arabic syntax, by using the words “dispute”, “differ”, “disagreeing about” and “differences”, the translations fail to preserve the structural poetic function of the letter “ن”, /u:n/, at the end of the amalgamated sentence “تختلفون” (/tʌkhtəlɪfu:n/) which marks the end of many verses of this *Sûrah*.

In this verse, the repetition of /kə/, the final syllable, of the other amalgamated sentences “متوفيك , ورافعك , ومطهرك” and “اتبعوك”, again demonstrates how this Arabic grammatical construct also serves a poetic function..

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَىٰ وَمَطْهَرُكَ مِنْ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأُحْكِمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ.

Even though the Control Text uses paraphrases, its translation is as close as possible to the original text, because - most importantly - it conveys the metaphorical meaning of the word “متوفيك” according to *Tafsīr* al-Ṭabarī (2011: 57) and Ibn Kathīr (2011: 228) of this verse.

5.2.2.19 *Sūrah* 3 Verse 63

Source Text

فإن تولوا فإن الله عليهم بالفسدين.

Control Text

“And if they turn away (and do not accept these true proofs and evidences), then surely, Allāh is All-Aware of those who do mischief.”

Pickthall

“And if they turn away, then lo! Allah is Aware of (who are) the corrupters.”

Ali

“But if they turn back, God hath full knowledge Of those who do mischief.”

Asad

“And if they turn away [from the truth] - behold, God has full knowledge of the spreaders of corruption.”

Irving

“However, if they should turn away, God is Aware as to who are mischief makers.”

Ozek

“And if they turn away, Allah is Aware of the corrupters.”

Abdel-Haleem

“If they turn away, [know that], God is well aware of anyone who causes corruption.”

Discussion

In verse 63, the Control Text, Irving and Ali use the word “mischief” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “بالمفسدين” in their respective phrases. Ozek uses the word “corrupters”, Asad uses the phrase “the spreaders of corruption”, Pickthall uses the word “the corrupters”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “who causes corruption”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “corrupt” means “willing to act dishonestly in return for money or personal gain, evil or morally depraved”, and the word “mischief” means “a playful misbehaviour or troublemaking, harm or trouble caused by someone or something”.”

According to Ibn Kathīr (2011: 231), “the Qur’ānic term “بالمفسدين” means those people who know the truth but they do not follow it”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “corrupt” means “يفسد، يحرف” and the word “mischief” means “أذى، عمل مزعج أو مثير”.”

Even though the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, the problem of semantic non-equivalence can be seen in the difference in expressive meaning.

From the definition of both Arabic and English dictionaries the word “mischief” does not carry the meaning of the Arabic word “المفسدين”. As such, the Control Text, Irving and Ali use a strategy of a translation by a less expressive meaning. Ozek and Pickthall use a strategy of a translation by a more general word, the word “corrupt” and its derivatives. Asad and Abdel-Haleem translates by a paraphrase using related words.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word “corrupt” or any of its derivatives has more effect than the word “mischief”.

As such, Asad, Ozek, Pickthall and Abdel-Haleem convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “بالمفسدين” more accurately than the Control Text, Irving and Ali

do. By using the paraphrase (“and do not accept these true proofs and evidences”), the Control Text creates a level of meaning which is not visible in the text.

The amalgamated sentence “تولوا” consists of the verb “تولى”, and *wâw al-Jama`a* “و” as a subject. It must be noted that again that this amalgamative structure is not reflected in the translations, with a consequential loss of intensity.

While all the translators maintain the Arabic syntax, by using the phrases “those who do”, “who are” [know that] and “anyone who causes”, whether between brackets or not, all of them, with the exception of Ozek, also create levels of meanings which are not visible in the original text.

Attention can be drawn to the end of the verse where the word “بالمفسدين” (/bilmofsi:ni/) again contains the /i:n/ cluster, which has been identified as a marker at the end of many other verses of this *Sûrah*, including some in the immediate vicinity: “الظالمين”, “الممترين” and “الكاذبين”, in verses 57 , 60 and 61, and which are pronounced /əldælimi:n/, /əlmomtəri:n/ and /əlkæðibi:n/, respectively.

Although Ozek uses the word “the corrupters” as an appropriate equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “بالمفسدين”, he omits the assertive device “فإن” from his the translation. Consequently, the older translation of Pickthall is as close as possible to the original text, because in addition to the assertive device “lo” and a paraphrase “who are”, he also uses the word “the corrupters” as an appropriate equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “بالمفسدين”.

5.2 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 75

Source Text

ومن أهل الكتاب من إن تأمنه بقنطارٍ يؤده إليك ومنهم من إن تأمنه بدينارٍ لا يؤده إليك إلا ما دمت عليه قائماً ذلك بأنهم قالوا ليس علينا في الأميين سبيلٌ ويقولون على الله الكذب وهم يعلمون.

Control Text

“Among the people of the Scripture ((Jews and Christians) is he who, if entrusted with a Qintâr (a great amount of wealth, etc.), will readily pay it back to you: and among them there is he who, if you entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it to you unless you constantly stand demanding, because they say: “There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs). “But they tell a lie against Allâh while they know it”.

Pickthall

“Among the People of the Scripture there is he who, if thou trust him with a weight of treasure, will return it to thee. And among them there is he who, if you trust him with a piece of gold, will not return it to thee unless thou keep standing over him. That is because they say: We have no duty to the gentiles. They speak a lie concerning Allah knowingly.”

Ali

“Among the People of the Book Are some who, if entrusted With a hoard of gold, Will (readily) pay it back: Others, who, if you entrusted With a single silver coin, Will not repay it unless Thou constantly stoodest Demanding, because They say, “there is no call On us (to keep faith) With these ignorant (Pagans). But they tell a lie against God. And (well) they know it.”

Asad

“AND AMONG the followers of earlier revelation there is many a one who, if thou entrust him with a treasure, will [faithfully] restore it to thee: and there is among them many a one who, if thou entrust him with a tiny gold coin, will not restore it to thou unless thou keep standing over him- which is an outcome of their assertion, “No blame can attach to us [for anything that we may do] with regard to these unlettered folk”: and [so] they tell a lie about God, being well aware [that it is a lie].”

Irving

“If you entrusted some People of the Book with a large sum, he would hand it back to you: while if you entrusted another with a gold coin, he would never hand it back to you unless you dunned him for it constantly. That is because they say: “There is no way for such illiterates [to complain] against us”. They tell a lie about God while they realize it.”

Ozek

“Among the people of the Book there is he who, if trust him with a weight [of treasure], he will return it to you. And among them there is he who, if you entrust him with a single silver

coin, he will not return it to you, unless you keep standing over him. That is because they say: “We have no duty to the gentiles.” They knowingly speak a lie concerning Allah.”

Abdel-Haleem

“There are People of the Book who, if you [Prophet] entrust them with a heap of gold, will return it to you intact, but there are others of them who, if you entrust them with a single dinar, will not return it to you unless you keep standing over them, because they say, ‘We are under no obligation towards the gentiles.’ They tell a lie against God and they know it.”

Discussion

In this verse, , the Control Text and Irving use the word “illiterates” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “الأميين”. Asad uses the words “unlettered folk”, Abdel-Haleem, Ozek and Pickthall use the word “gentiles” and Ali uses the words “ignorant pagans”. The Qur’ânic term “الأميين” however, is mentioned in verse 75 as well as in verse 20 of this *Sûrah*.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary (2011)*, “the word “gentile” means “a person who is not Jewish”, the word “illiterate” means “unable to read or write”, and the word “unlettered” means “poorly educated or illiterate”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid (2007)*, “the word “أمى” means “illiterate, uneducated, unlettered”.” According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 374), “(T)his verse was revealed as an answer to Jews’ claim that Allâh has exempted them from all moral responsibility towards Muslims, who were contemptuously described as “أميين”.”

The same interpretation is given by Ibn Kathīr (2011: 226), who argues: “Jews claimed that in their Scripture, there is no blame for them on not paying back the Arabs’ money when the deal with them financially.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The problem is that Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “those without one” in verse 20 of this *Sûrah*, but he uses the word “gentile” to convey the meaning of the same Qur’ânic term

“الأميين” in this verse, while Ozek and Pickthall use the clause “those who read not” in verse 20, but they use the word “gentile” to convey the meaning of the same Qur’ânic term “الأميين” in this verse, .

Obviously, there is no a distinct difference in the use of the Qur’ânic term ‘الأميين’ in both the contexts of verse 20 and verse 75 of this *Sûrah*.

In terms of the equivalent effect the word “unlettered” is probably a more apt choice, as the Muslim scholars prefer it in respect of the description of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ.

By using the phrases “But they tell a lie against Allâh while they know it”, “They speak a lie concerning Allah knowingly”, “But they tell a lie against God. And (well) they know it”, “and [so] they tell a lie about God, being well aware [that it is a lie]”, “They tell a lie about God while they realize it”, “They knowingly speak a lie concerning Allah.” and “They tell a lie against God and they know it”, all the translators, with the exception of Ozek, maintain the Arabic structure. However, by using the phrases “know it”, “knowingly”, “being well aware [that it is a lie]”, “realize it”, all the translators, with the exception of Pickthall. do not maintain the rhythm of the Arabic word “يعلمون”

In this verse the amalgamated sentences “يقولون” and “يعلمون” consist of the verbs “يقول” and “يعلم”, the subject in both of the sentences is *wâw al-jama`a* “و”. This amalgamative structure is lost in the translations, with the associated loss of intensity.

In the translations, the verse lost the noticeable repeated sounds /æɾɪn/ at the end of the words “بدينارٍ”, “بقنطارٍ”, pronounced /bɪdɪnæɾɪn/ and /bɪqɪntæɾɪn/, as well as the sounds /u:n/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “يقولون” and “يعلمون”, which are pronounced /jɔgɔlu:n/ and /jɔlɔmu:n/, a sound cluster which has been mentioned earlier as one with which many other verses in this *Sûrah* ends..

This is reflected, amongst other clear poetic markers, by the underlined sections of the verse:

ومن أهل الكتاب من إن تأمنه بقنطارٍ يؤده إليك ومنهم

من إن تأمنه بدينارٍ لا يؤده إليك إلا ما دمت عليه قائماً

ذلك بأنهم قالوا ليس علينا في الأميين سبيلٌ ويقولون

على الله الكذب وهم يعلمون.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible in capturing the meaning of the original text, because it uses the transliterations and paraphrases to facilitate the understanding of the verse.

5.2.2.21 Sûrah 3 Verse 79

Source Text

ما كان لبشرٍ أن يؤتيه الله الكتاب والحكم والنبوة ثم يقول للناس كونوا عباداً من دون الله ولكن كونوا ربانيين بما كنتم تعلمون الكتاب وبما كنتم تدرسون.

Control Text

“It is not (possible) for any human being to whom Allâh has given the Book and *Al-Hukm* (the knowledge and understanding of the Laws of religion) and Prophethood to say to the people: “Be my worshippers rather than Allâh’s. "On the contrary" he would say): "Be you *Rabbaniyyûn* (learned men of religion who practice what they know and also preach others), because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.”

Pickthall

“*It is not (possible) for any human being unto whom Allah had given the Scripture and wisdom, and the Prophethood that he should afterwards have said to unto mankind: Be slaves of me instead of Allah: but (what he said was): Be ye faithful servants of the Lord by virtue of your constant teaching of the Scripture and your constant study thereof.*”

Ali

“*It is not (possible) That a man, to whom, Is given the Book, And Wisdom, And the Prophetic Office, Should say to people: ‘Be ye my worshippers, Rather than God’s’ On the contrary (He would say): “Be ye worshippers Of Him Who is truly The Cherisher of all: For ye have*

taught the Book and ye Have studied it earnestly.”

Asad

“It is not conceivable that a human being unto whom God had granted revelation, and sound judgment, and Prophethood, should thereafter have said unto people, “Worship me beside God”: but rather [did he exhort them], “Become men of God by spreading the knowledge of the divine writ and by your own deep study [thereof].”

Irving

“It is not proper for God to give the Book, plus discretion and Prophethood to any human being, then that [the latter] should tell people: “Be worshippers of mine instead of God’s,” but rather: “Be the Lord’s [Alone] since you have been teaching the Book and because you have been studying it.”

Ozek

“It is not possible for any human being to whom Allah has given the Book and wisdom and Prophethood that he should afterwards have said to mankind: “Be slaves to me instead of Allah!” He would rather say: “Be men of Allah by virtue of your constant teaching and studying of the Book.”

Abdel-Haleem

“No person to whom God had given the Scripture, wisdom, and Prophethood would ever say to people, ‘Be my servants, not God’s.’ [he would say], ‘You should be devoted to God because you have taught the Scripture and studied it closely’.”

Discussion

In verse 79, the meaning of the Arabic sentence “ما كان ليشر” is reflected as follows in the different translations: The Control Text, Ozek and Pickthall use “It is not possible for any human being”, Asad uses “It is not conceivable that a human being”, Irving translates it as “It is not proper for God”, Abdel-Haleem uses “No person to whom God had given the Scripture” and Ali uses the sentence “It is not possible that a man”.

In respect of the Arabic phrase “ما كان”, the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali and Ozek use the phrase “not possible” to convey its meaning, Asad uses “not conceivable”, Irving uses “not proper”, while Abdel-Haleem uses “no person”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “conceivable” means “capable of being imagined or understood”, the word “possible” means “capable of existing, happening, or being achieved, that may exist or happen, but that is not certain or probable”, while the word “proper” means “suitable or appropriate, correct”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “ the word “conceivable” means “ممكن تصوره”, the word “possible” means “ممكن، مستطاع، متيسر، جائز حدوثه أو عدم حدوثه” “أو تخيله” and the word “proper” means “موافق، مناسب ، لائق”.”

Semantically, the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. From the definition of both Arabic and English dictionaries, the words “ever, conceivable, possible and proper” are not interchangeable. Abdel-Haleem omits the clause “ما كان”, from his translation by using “No person...” which does not have the same meaning of the Arabic phrase “ما كان”. The back translation will be “لا شخص منحه الله الكتاب والحكمة والنبوة سيقول للناس “أبدأ...”

According to al-Qurtubī (2001: 376), the sentence “ما كان لبشرٍ” means “it is not allowed for any human being to order people to worship him”. A similar view was also held by Ibn Kathīr, who claims:

It is not allowed for any prophet let alone any human being to order people to worship him. This verse was revealed as an answer to the question of the deputation from the Christians of Najrân who asked Prophet Muhammad: “Do you want us to worship you?” The Prophet’s answer was that “We do not worship others beside Allâh, and He has not sent me with this and He did not order me to do so.” (2010: 235)

Although Irving uses the phrase [the latter] between brackets to refer to the human being, he changes the basic meaning of the phrase “ما كان لبشرٍ” by referring the utterance to God instead of the Prophet who is a human being.

The back translation will be “ما كان لله”. Obviously the choice of the phrase “for God” changes the whole meaning of the verse.

Semantically, the Arabic “كونوا عباداً لى من دون الله” poses another problem. The non-equivalence arises because the source-language phrase is semantically complex. Although Asad starts this sentence accurately, he alters the meaning of the Qur’ânic sentence “كونوا عباداً لى من دون الله”, which means “Be my worshippers instead of Allâh”, into “Worship me beside God...” The back translation will be “أعبدونى بجانب الله”. Clearly the choice of the word “beside” has changed the whole meaning of the verse.

From the interpretations of al-Qurṭubī and Ibn Kathīr of the sentence “ما كان للبشر”, it is clear that none of the translators manages to get the exact equivalent for this sentence.

Using the sentences “because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it”, “by virtue of your constant teaching of the Scripture and your constant study thereof.”, “For ye have taught the Book and ye Have studied it earnestly.” “by spreading the knowledge of the divine writ and by your own deep study [thereof].”, “since you have been teaching the Book and because you have been studying it.”, “by virtue of your constant teaching and studying of the Book.” and “because you have taught the Scripture and studied it closely.”, by the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem respectively, showS the difficulty of understanding of the Qur’ânic tenses whether they are present, present continuous, present perfect, present perfect continuous, past perfect or even gerund.

In this verse the amalgamated sentences “تعلمون” and “تدرسون” consist of the verbs “تعلم” and “تدرس”, the subject in both of the sentences is *waw al-jamaa* “وا”. Consequently, the verbs in these amalgamated sentences are in a present tense form. This amalgamative structure is not reflected in the translations. The most accurate translation of the above Arabic tenses is that of the Control Text.

In other respects, all the translators follow the Arabic structure.

Semantically, all the translators manage to convey the general meaning of the verse. However, by using the phrases “thereof”, “it earnestly”, “it”, “of the Book” and “it closely”, all the translators create a level of meaning which is not visible in the text.

Phonologically, the rich texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, marked by the underlined parts of the verse, is not reflected in the translations.

ما كان لبشرٍ أن يُؤتِيَهُ اللهُ الكتابَ والحكمَ والنبوةَ ثم يقول للناس

كونوا عباداً لى من دون الله ولكن كونوا ربانيين بما كنتم

تعلمون الكتاب وبما كنتم تدرسون.

As can be expected in a text of this nature, the repetition of the name “الله” in a verse not only reaffirms its presence in terms of its meaning, but naturally produces an evocative sound effect as well. The end of the verse is, once again, marked by a closing cluster, /u:n/, with the already identified structural function of binding the very long *Sûrah*

Although, the Control Text omits the Arabic conjunction “ثم” which is translated “afterwards, after that, later on,...etc.” from its translation, it comes the closest to the essence of the original text, because it uses the transliterations “*Al-Hukm*” and “*Rabbaniyyûn*” and relevant paraphrases.

5.2.2.22 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 91

Source Text

إن الذين كفروا وماتوا وهم كفارٌ فلن يقبل من أحدهم ملء الأرض ذهباً ولو اقتدى به أولئك لهم عذابٌ أليمٌ وما لهم من ناصرين.

Control Text

“Verily. Those who disbelieved, and died while they were disbelievers, the (whole) earth full of gold will not be accepted from any of them even if they offered it as a ransom. For them is a painful torment and they will have no helpers.”

Pickthall

“Lo! those who disbelieve, and die in disbelief, the (whole) earth full of gold would not be accepted from such a one if it were offered as a ransom (for his soul). Theirs will be a painful doom and they will have no helpers.”

Ali

“As to those who reject Faith and die rejecting, - Never would be accepted From any such as much Gold as the earth contains, Though they should offer it For ransom. For such Is (in store) a penalty grievous. And they will have find no helpers.”

Asad

“Verily, as for those who are bent on denying the truth after having attained to faith, and die as deniers of the truth- not all the gold on earth could ever be their ransom. It is they for whom grievous suffering is in store, and they will have none to succour them.”

Irving

“Those who disbelieve, and die while they are disbelievers will never have even all the earth filled with gold accepted from any one of them, even though they tried to use it as a ransom. Those will have painful torment while they will have no supporters.”

Ozek

“As for those who disbelieve, and die in disbelief, no ransom, even if it was the earth full of gold would be accepted from them. Theirs will be a painful torment, and they will have no helpers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Those who disbelieve, and die disbelievers will not be saved even if they offer enough gold to fill the entire earth. Agonizing torment is in store for them, and there will be no one to help them.”

Discussion

In verse 91, when attempting to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “ملء الارض ذهباً”, the Control Text and Pickthall use the clause “ the {whole) earth

full of gold” Ali uses “as much Gold as the earth contains”, Asad uses the phrase “not all the gold on earth”, Irving uses “all the earth filled with gold” Ozek uses “the earth full of gold would” and Abdel-Haleem uses “the earth full of gold”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2010: 381), “(t)he interpretation of the Qur’ānic term “ملاء الارض ذهباً” in this context is the amount of gold that will fill the earth.” The same interpretation is given by Ibn Kathīr (2011: 238), who writes: “each person dies as a disbeliever Allāh will never accept his good deeds even if they were as much as the gold that will fill the earth”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence in this verse arises because of the fact that this is a specific Qur’ānic term. The source-language concept is not lexicalized as such in the target-language and requires a strategy of a paraphrase using related words. However, Asad shifts the meaning of the verse from the amount of gold that is as large as the size of the earth to all gold that is on earth.

As such, the back translation of Asad’s will be “كل الذهب على الأرض”, which clearly differs from the Qur’ānic phrase. Therefore, one may conclude that Asad does not convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “ملاء الارض ذهباً” as accurately as the other translators do.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the clause “the earth full of gold” or the other structures of this meaning that are used by the translators are more effective than the clause “not all the gold on earth”.

In this verse, the Control Text, Asad, Ozek, Irving, Pickthall and Ali use the word “ransom” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic sentence “ولو افتدى به” Abdel-Haleem, however, omits the same Qur’ānic sentence “ولو افتدى به” from his translation.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “ransom” means “a sum of money demanded or paid for the release of a captive”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “ransom” means “فدية، افتداء”, which means a sum of money demanded or paid for the release of a captive”. According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “ransom” means “فداء، فدية، يفتدى.”

Semantically, there should be no problem of non-equivalence in respect of the Qur’anic sentence “ولو اقتدى به”, because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

The Control Text, Asad, Ozek, Irving, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by a more general word. Abdel-Haleem uses a translation by omission.

By using the phrase “for his soul” and “in store”, whether between the brackets or without them, Pickthall, Ali, Asad and Abdel-Haleem create a level of meaning that is not visible in the text.

One may argue, though, that in terms of the equivalent effect, Abdel-Haleem’s translation has less effect as the element of ransom has disappeared. In terms of the status of the *Holy Qur’ân* the omission is more problematic when taking Manâ al-Qatan’s statement that in the examination of that text one “will never find any utterance that is redundant.” (2007: 259)

Syntactically, the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure except Irving and Abdel-Haleem, who omit the assertive device “إِنَّ”, at the beginning of the verse, from their translations.

Looking at Pickthall’s translation, one might recall that although Arabic has certain expressive words for the assertion, the exclamation “lo!” is not one of them. In this case, the *Holy Qur’ân* uses the assertive device “إِنَّ” to convince the Arab pagans that he/she who dies in the state of disbelieving will definitely go to the Fire in the Hereafter.

But by the omission of the assertive device “إِنَّ”, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem has erred to a more significant extent than Pickthall, and have lost a very important part of the meaning of the verse.

Most of the translators use English plural words to convey the meaning of the Arabic plural word “ناصرين” but Asad uses a singular English word “succour” and Abdel-Haleem “no one to help them”.

In respect of some of its poetic features, this verse lost the assonance of the sound / u:/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “كفروا” and “ماتوا”, which are pronounced /kʌfru:/ and /mætu:/. Other noticeable losses are the sounds /mʊn/ at the end of the words “كفار”, “عذاب”, and “اليم” (pronounced /kʊfa:rʊn/, /ʌðæbʊn/ and /ʌli:mʊn/) and the related /hʊm/ at the end of the repeated amalgamated device “لهم”, which is pronounced /ʌlhʊm/. The closing structural sound cluster in this instance is /i:n/, at the end of the word “ناصرين” /næsiri:n/.

إن الذين كفروا وماتوا وهم كفارٌ فلن يقبل من أدهم ملء الأرض
ذهباً ولو افتدى به أولئك لهم عذابٌ أليمٌ وما لهم من ناصرين.

In respect of correspondence, Pickthall’s translation comes the closest to the original, because he tries to convey the meaning of each word in the verse, by using the phrase “such a one”, and the paraphrase “(for his soul)” to convey the meaning of the hidden subject of the verb “ولو إفتدى به”, while the other translators omit it from their translations.

5.2.2.23 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 92

Source Text

لن تتالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون وما تنفقوا من شيءٍ فإن الله به عليمٌ.

Control Text

“By no means shall you attain *Al-Birr* (piety, righteousness - here it means Allâh’s Reward, i.e. Paradise), unless you spend (in Allâh’s Cause) of that which you love: and whatever of good you spend, Allâh knows it well.”

Pickthall

“Ye will not attain unto piety until ye spend of that which ye love. And whatsoever ye spend,

Allah is aware thereof.”

Ali

“By no means shall ye Attain righteousness unless Ye give (freely) of that Which ye love: and whatever Ye give of a truth, God knoweth it well.”

Asad

“[But as for you o believers,] never shall you attain to true piety unless you spend on others out of what you cherish yourselves: and whatever you spend - verily, God has full knowledge thereof.”

Irving

“You will never attain virtue until you spend something you are fond of: while God is Aware of anything you may spend.”

Ozek

“You will not attain to benevolence until you spend of what you love. And whatever you spend, Allah is Aware of it.”

Abdel-Haleem

“None of you [believers] will attain true piety unless you give out of what you cherish: whatever you give, God knows about it very well.”

Discussion

In verse 92, in attempting to give the meaning of the Qur’ânic-term “البر”, the Control Text uses a transliteration “*Al-Birr*” and a paraphrase “piety, righteousness - here it means Allâh’s Reward, i.e. Paradise”, Pickthall uses “piety”, Ali uses “righteousness”, Asad and Abdel-Haleem use “true piety”, Irving uses “virtue” and Ozek uses “benevolence”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “benevolence” means “kindness”, the word “piety” means “the quality of being pious or reverent”, the word “righteous” means “morally right or justifiable,

righteousness is a noun” and the word “virtue” means “behaviour showing high moral standards, a quality considered morally good or desirable”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “benevolence” means “الخيرية، هبة، صدقة، النزعة إلى عمل الخير، طاعة الوالدين، تقوى”, the word “piety” means “صالح، مستقيم، قويم، مبرر أخلاقياً”, the word “righteous” means “فضيلة، طهارة، عفة”.”

From the definitions of both the Arabic and English dictionaries, only the word “benevolence” is the suitable choice in respect of conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “البر”

Even though the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, by using word “righteousness” Ali does not capture the exact equivalent.

The meaning of the Arabic word “تحبون” is reflected as follows in the different translations: the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali and Ozek use word “love”. Asad and Abdel-Haleem use the word “cherish”, while Irving uses the phrase “fond of”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “cherish” means “protect and care for lovingly”, the phrase “fond of” means “having an affection or liking for, affectionate: loving” and the word “love” means “an intense feeling of deep affection, a great interest and pleasure in something”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “cherish” means “يعز، يدلل، يتعلق ب، ”، the word “fond of” means “مولع، مغرم، محب، حنون”، the word “love” means “محبة، مودة، ولوع، شغف”.”

From the definition of both Arabic and English dictionaries these words are interchangeable, so they all the suitable choices in respect of conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “تحبون”.

In terms of equivalent effect, the word “cherish” is more effective than the other choices as it covers a wide scope of meaning; that is to say protection and care for lovingly

Later in the verse, the meaning of the Arabic phrase “وما تنفقوا من شيء” is presented in two different ways. The Control Text” uses the phrase “whatever of good you spend”, Asad and Ozek use the phrase “whatever you spend”, Irving uses the clause “of anything you may spend”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “whatever you give”, Pickthall uses the phrase “whatsoever ye spend” and Ali uses the phrase “whatever ye give, of a truth”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “good” has many meanings such as “to be desired or approved of: pleasing, beneficial to, morally right: virtuous”, the word “truth” means “the quality or state of being true, that which is true as opposed to false” and the function of the word “whatever” is described as “used to emphasize a lack of restriction in referring to any thing, no matter what”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “good” has many meanings such as “مفيد أو رابح، جيد، صالح، حسن”، the word “truth” means “صدق، صحة، حقيقة” and the word “whatever” means “أى شيء”.”

About this verse, al-Qurṭubī (2001: 381) writes: “When this verse was revealed, the Companion Abu Talha, who was the richest one of the Anṣār

in Madīnah, said to the Prophet ﷺ: “I gave this well which is the one of my most favourite properties for charity”. Similar interpretation was also given by Ibn Kathīr (2011: 238).

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. But the translators could have a problem in comprehending the Arabic expression “وما تنفقوا من شيء”.

From the interpretation of al-Qurṭubī and the definition of both Arabic and English dictionaries neither of the words “good” and “truth” are the suitable choices in respect of conveying the relevant meaning of the Arabic phrase “وما تنفقوا من شيء”

The pronouns “anything, what, whatever and whatsoever” are the suitable choices in respect of conveying the meaning of the Arabic phrase “وما تنفقوا من شيء”

All the translators use a translation by cultural substitution and a paraphrase using related words. However, the word “truth”, used by Ali, is not mentioned in the verse explicitly or implicitly and it is not something that one can give out of.

Therefore, the phrases “and whatever of good you spend” and “whatever ye give, of a truth” have the least effect. As such, the Control Text and Ali’s translation do not convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “وما تنفقوا من شيء” as accurately as the other translators do.

Syntactically, by starting their translations with the phrases “By no means”, “[But as for you, o believers,] and “None of you [believers]” before the Arabic phrase “لن تنالوا البر”, the Control Text, Ali, Asad and Abdel-Haleem add some lexical items which are not visible in the original text. However, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

In this verse, the amalgamated sentences “تنالوا”, “تنفقوا” and “تحبون” consist of the verbs “تنال” and “تنفق”, “تحب”, the subject in all of the sentences is *wâw al-jama`a* “وا”. In fact, the verbs in these amalgamated sentences are in a present tense form and this and the compactness of the original Arabic has been lost in the translations.

As far as the emotional effect of the rhythm in the *Holy Qur’ân* is concerned, by using the word “well” in their respective places, the Control Text, Ali and Abdel-Haleem maintain the effect of the word “عليم” found at the end of this verse and at the end of many other verses of this *Sûrah*. Although it will not be discussed, the rich sound texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, marked by the underlined parts of the verse, is apparent and is not present in the translations, with the exception mentioned in the previous paragraph.

لن تنالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون وما تنفقوا من شيء فإن الله به عليم.

In terms of closeness, the translation of Ozek is as close as possible to the original, because it uses the word “benevolence” as an appropriate equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “البر”.

5.2.2.24 Sûrah 3 Verse 93

Source Text

كل الطعام كان حلالاً لبني إسرائيل إلا ما حرم إسرائيل على نفسه من قبل أن تنزل التوراة، قل فأتوا بالتوراة فاتلوها إن كنتم صادقين.

Control Text

“All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel made unlawful for himself before the *Taurât* (Torah) was revealed. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Bring here *Taurât* (Torah) and recite it, if you are truthful.”

Pickthall

“*All food was lawful unto the children of Israel, save that which Israel forbade himself (in days) before the Torah was revealed. Say: Produce the Torah and read it (unto us), if ye are truthful.*”

Ali

“*All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, Except what Israel Made unlawful for itself before the Law of (Moses) Was revealed. Say: “Bring ye the Law And study it, If ye be men of truth.*”

Asad

“*ALL FOOD was lawful unto the children of Israel, save what Israel had made unlawful unto itself [by its sinning] before the Torah was bestowed from on high. Say: “Come forward, then, with the Torah and recite it, if what you say is true!”*”

Irving

“*Every [kind of] food was permitted the Children of Israel except what Israel had banned herself before the Torah came down. Say: “Bring the Torah and recite it, if you have been*

truthful.”

Ozek

“All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel forbade himself before the Torah was revealed. Say: “Produce the Torah and read it, if what you say is true!”

Abdel-Haleem

“Except for what Israel made unlawful for himself, all food was lawful to the Children of Israel before the Torah was revealed. Say: “Produce the Torah and read out [the relevant passage], if you are telling the truth.”

Discussion

In verse 93, the use of different gender pronouns to convey the Qur’ânic word “نفسه” is quite interesting. The Control Text, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ozek all use the reflexive form of the pronoun “he” (i.e. “himself”), Asad and Ali use the reflexive form of the pronoun “it” (“itself”) and Irving uses the reflexive form of the pronoun ‘she’, namely ‘herself’.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “herself” is “used as the object of a verb or preposition to refer to a female person or animal previously mentioned as the subject of a clause.”, the word “himself” is “used as the object of a verb or preposition to refer to a male person or animal previously mentioned as the subject of a clause.”, the word “itself” is used as the object of a verb or preposition to refer to a thing or animal previously as the subject or the clause”. The same analysis can be given in respect of the Qur’ânic word “نفسه” which has no gender meaning, but informed by the gender it refers to, and this explains why each translator deals with it differently”.

According to al-Qurtubī (2001:383), “Israel was the name of Prophet Jacob”. It was a masculine name, which means that its reflexive pronoun should be of a masculine form. The nearest equivalent for the Qur’ânic word “نفسه” is the reflexive form of the pronoun “he”, namely “himself”.

As far as the difference between Arabic and English is concerned, the grammatical structure in Arabic changes according to the gender, plural, dual and singular form, and this also applies to the pronouns.

In respect of the reflexive pronoun alone, the following words reflect the gender differences “نفسه،نفسها،نفساهما،أو نفسيهما،انفسهم،أنفسهن”

In the word “نفس” from the left : the pronoun “هن” is a plural feminine form, the pronoun “هم” is a plural masculine form, the pronoun “هما” is a dual of both feminine/masculine form, the pronoun “ها” is a singular feminine form and the pronoun “ه” is a masculine singular form.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language pronoun is lexicalized in the target-language. Differences which would seem to indicate a problem arise from the different personal perspective of the translators.

All the translators use a translation by cultural substitution, based on their own judgement. The Control Text, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ozek use “himself”. Asad and Ali use “itself”, while Irving uses the reflexive form of the pronoun “she”, namely “herself”.

From the choices one can conclude that the Control Text, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ozek understand the pronoun to be a reflexive pronoun of the name of “Israel”, while Ali, Asad and Irving understand it as a reflexive pronoun of the word “soul of Israel” and for that reason the translations differ.

As such, Asad, Irving and Ali do not convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic word “نفسه” as accurately as the other translators do.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure except Abdel-Haleem, who changes the Arabic structure of the verse by starting his sentence with the last part of the verse in its original:

إلا ما حرم إسرائيل على نفسه كل الطعام كان حلاً لبني إسرائيل

Abdel-Haleem applies a similar strategy in many places. For instance, when translating the Qur'anic sentence “إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ”, he starts his sentence with the negation “لا” which is in the middle of the original sentence and places the beginning of the Arabic sentence at the end of his translation “Nothing on earth or in the heaven is hidden from God”. The back translation is “لا شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ”

This translation shows that the poetic features of the *Holy Qur'an* is of no interest to Abdel-Haleem .

In the same verse, the Control Text, Ali, Asad, and Abdel-Haleem use the phrase “unlawful for himself” to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic term “حرم على نفسه”. Pickthall and Ozek use “forbade himself”, while Irving uses “had banned himself”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “ban” means “officially or legally prohibit”, the word “forbade” is “ the past tense of forbid which means refuse to allow, order not to do, make impossible prevent”, and the word “unlawful” means “not conforming to or permitted by the law or rules”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “حرم” means “forbid, prohibit, interdict, proscribe, ban, bar, outlaw, enjoin, declare unlawful, make illegal” and the phrase “حرم على نفسه” means “to deny oneself something, to abstain from, refrain from, keep from, forbear, desist from”.”

As such, all the choices of “had banned, forbade and unlawful” are interchangeable in reflecting the meaning of the verb “حرم”.

In respect of lawful “*Halâl*” and unlawful “*Haram*” to Muslims, Islâm, through, its dietary regulations, in many ways reflect those given by Allâh to ancient Israel, protects individual from the spiritual pollution which proceeds from consuming animals which are themselves dirty: such as pork and carrion.

According to Ibn Kathîr this verse was revealed when:

(a) group of Jews came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked Him about which food that Israel made unlawful for himself? He took a covenant from them that if He told them the truth, they should follow Him. Then He told them that the most favourite food to Israel were the meat and milk of camels, yet He made them unlawful for himself because He vowed never to eat them if He was healed of His chronic severe disease. (2010: 239)

So it was an answer to the objection relating to the Jewish food laws, that originally all wholesome foods were lawful to the Children of Israel and that the severe restrictions imposed on them in the Torah were but a punishment for their sins. This can be drawn from the last part of this verse “Say: Come forward, then, with the Torah and recite it, if what you say is true!”

In this verse, too, an amalgamated sentence “فَاتْلُوها” (consisting of the verb “اتلوا”, the subject found in the hidden pronoun “هـ” and the object in the pronoun “ها”), is lost in translation. In the translation of this verse, the poetic features of the *Holy Qur’ân*, indicated by the underlined parts of the verse, is not reflected.

كل الطعام كان حلالاً لبني إسرائيل إلا ما حرم إسرائيل على نفسه

من قبل أن تنزل التوراة، قل فأتوا بالتوراة فاتلوها إن كنتم صادقين.

Some of these features worth mentioning include the effect of the repeated name “إسرائيل” (/Isra:i:l/), the strong /f/ at the beginning of the amalgamated sentences “فأتوا” and “فاتلوها”, and the presence of /i:n/ at the end of the word “الصادقين”, which is pronounced /sædɪgi:n/ , at the end of this verse and which has been identified as a functional end-marker of many verses of this *Sûrah*.

The translation of the Control Text is the closest to the original text, because it uses the word “recite” as an appropriate equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “فاتلوها” which is connected - specifically - with the reading of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

5.2.2.25 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 101

Source Text

وكيف تكفرون وأنتم تتلى عليكم آيات الله وفيكم رسوله، ومن يعتصم بالله فقد هدى إلى صراطٍ مستقيم.

Control Text

“And how would you disbelieve, while to you are recited verses of Allâh and among you is His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)? And whoever holds firmly to Allâh, (i.e. follows Islâm - Allâh’s religion, and practically obeys all that Allâh has ordered), then he is indeed guided to a Right Path.”

Pickthall

“How can ye disbelieve, when Allah’s revelations are recited unto you and His Messenger is in your midst? He who holdeth fast to Allah, he indeed is guided unto a right path. ”

Ali

“And how would ye Deny Faith while unto you Are rehearsed the Signs Of God and among you Lives the Apostle? Whoever holds Firmly to God, Will be shown A Way that is straight.”

Asad

“And how could you deny the truth when it is unto you that God’s messages are being conveyed, and it is in your midst that His Apostle lives? But he who holds fast unto God has already been guided onto a straight way.”

Irving

“How can you disbelieve, while God’s verses are being recited to you and His messenger is among you? Anyone who clings to God will be guided to a Straight Road.”

Ozek

“How can you disbelieve, when Allah’s signs are recited to you and His Messenger is in your midst? He who holds fast to Allah has been guided to a straight path.”

Abdel-Haleem

“How can you disbelieve, when God’s revelations are being recited to you and His Messenger is living among you? Whoever holds fast to God will be guided to the straight path.”

Discussion

In verse 101 the Control Text, Irving, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall use the word “recited” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “تتلى”, Asad uses the word “conveyed” and Ali uses the word “rehearse”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “convey” means “to communicate an idea, impression or feeling”. The word “recite” means “repeat aloud a poem or a passage from memory before an audience”, while the word “rehearse” means “repeat aloud”.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the Arabic word “تلا” means “either “recite” or “read”.”

It is clear that the Arabic word “تلا” and its derivatives pose a problem for the translators. In the previous verse, the translators use verbs “recite”, “read” and “study” to convey the meaning of the verb “فاتلوها”, while in this verse they use the verbs “recited”, “conveyed” and “rehearsed” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “تتلى”. In both instances the root form is “تلا”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence to the Qur’ânic term “تتلى” is because of the difference in the expressive meaning. The source-language concept is not lexicalized so precisely in the target-language, as it is the only specific term that Muslims used/use for reading the *Holy Qur’ân* loudly or quietly, as a religious duty on solemn occasions, both in public and private, and for comfort, morality and guidance. The word “تتلى” is a Qur’ânic term as Muslims do not call their reading of any other kind of speech, written or spoken recitation.

All the translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution. However, the word “rehearse” is connected with preparing and practicing reading poetry or acting plays in the theatre. In this context the word “recite” explains the concept of the Qur’ânic term “تتلى” more accurate than the word “conveyed” does.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word “recited” clearly has greater effect than the word “conveyed”.

By using “rehearse”, Ali does not nearly convey the exact meaning of the Qur’ânic term “تتلى”. His translation refers to a totally different relationship between the text and the person being exposed to the text. In this context, his translation can probably be faulted.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, but Pickthall, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem omit the Arabic conjunction “و” before the word “كيف”

As far as conveying the meaning of the verse is concerned, the omission of the Arabic conjunction “و” does not affect the meaning, but the omission of any items from the original text will arise the fears of the opponents of the translation of the *Holy Qur’ân* that translation could distort the Holy Book.

In this verse the amalgamated sentence “تكفرون” consists of the verb “تكفر”, and the subject *waw al-Jamaa* “و”. In the translation, the effect of the amalgamative structure is lost.

As for the discussion of semantic disparities between the translations of the Qur’ânic term “آيات الله” In this verse, there is no need to repeat them here as they were already discussed in verse 4 of this *Sûrah*.

Looking at the underlined sections of the verse, it is clear that, in respect of its sound layer, the essential poetic nature of the *Holy Qur’ân* has been lost in translation.

وكيف تكفرون وأنتم تتلى عليكم آيات الله وفيكم رسوله،

ومن يعتصم بالله فقد هدى إلى صراط مستقيم

In respect of the term closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it does not omit the conjunction “و”

and it uses the word “verses” for the Qur’ânic term “آيات الله” and the word “recite” as a specific term for reading the *Holy Qur’ân*.

5.2.2.26 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 112:

Source Text

ضربت عليهم الذلة أين ما تقفوا إلا بحبلٍ من الله وحبلٍ من الناس وباءوا بغضبٍ من الله وضربت عليهم المسكنة، ذلك بأنهم كانوا يكفرون بآيات الله ويقتلون الأنبياء بغير حقٍ ذلك بما عصوا وكانوا يعتدون.

Control Text

“Indignity is put over them and in wherever they may be, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allâh, and from men: they have drawn on themselves the Wrath of Allâh, and destitution is put over them. This is because they disbelieved in the Ayât (proofs, evidences verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allâh and killed the Prophets without right. This is because they disobeyed (Allâh) and used to transgress beyond bounds (in Allâh’s disobedience, crimes and sins).”

Pickthall

“Ignominy shall be their portion wheresoever they are found save (where they grasp) a rope from Allah and a rope from men. They have incurred anger from their Lord, and wretchedness is laid upon them. That is because they used to disbelieve the revelations of Allah, and slew the Prophets wrongfully. That is because they were rebellious and used to transgress.”

Ali

“Shame is pitched over them (Like a tent) wherever They are found, Except when under a covenant (Of protection) from God And from men: they draw On themselves wrath from God, And pitched over them Is (the tent of) destitution. This is because they rejected The Sign of God, and slew The Prophets in defiance of right: This is because they rebelled and transgressed beyond bounds.”

Asad

“Overshadowed by ignominy are they wherever they may be, save [when they bind themselves

again] in a bond with God and a bond with men: for they have earned the burden of God's condemnation, and overshadowed by humiliation: all this [has befallen them] because they persisted in denying the truth of God's messages, and in slaying the prophets against all right: all this because they rebelled [against God], and persisted in transgressing the bounds of what is right."

Irving

"Disgrace will be branded on them wherever they are overtaken unless they have a bond [leading] to God and a bond with other men. They have incurred anger from God, while misery has been branded on them. That is because they have disbelieved in God's signs, and killed the prophets without any right to: that is because they disobey and act so aggressive."

Ozek

"Ignominy shall be their portion wherever they are found, unless they [seize] a rope from Allah and a rope from man. They have incurred the wrath of Allah, and wretchedness is laid upon them. That is because they used to disbelieve the revelations of Allah, and slew the Prophets wrongfully. That is because they were rebellious and used to transgress."

Abdel-Haleem

"... and, unless they hold fast to a lifeline from God and from mankind, they are overshadowed by vulnerability wherever they are found. They have drawn God's wrath upon themselves. They are overshadowed by weakness, too. Because they have persistently disbelieved in God's revelations, and killed prophets without any right, all because of their disobedience and boundless transgression."

Discussion

In attempting to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic term "ضربت عليهم الذلة" in verse 112, the Control Text uses the word "indignity", Pickthall, Asad and Ozek "ignominy", Ali "shame", Irving "disgrace", while Abdel-Haleem chooses "vulnerability".

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), "the word "disgrace" means "loss of reputation as the result of a dishonourable action, a shameful and unacceptable person or thing", the word "ignominy" means "public

disgrace or shame”, the word “indignity” means “treatment or circumstances that cause one to feel shame or to lose one’s dignity”, the word “shame” means “a feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behaviour, bringing dishonour to”, while the word “vulnerable” means “exposed to the risk of being attacked: either physically or emotionally, vulnerability is a noun”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “disgrace” means

“خزياً، عاراً، عمل أو سلوك”، the word “ignominy” means “يلحق به خزياً أو عاراً”، “مخزى”، the word “indignity” means “إهانة، معاملة مهينة”، the word “shame” means “خجل، حياء، خزي، عار”، while the word “vulnerability” means “قابلية الحرج”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, but a problem could arise because of the differences in personal perspective of the translators.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure except Abdel-Haleem, who starts his translation with “unless they hold fast to a lifeline from God and from mankind”, which is in the middle of the Arabic verse “إلا بحبل من الله وحبل من الناس”.

In terms of equivalent effect, the choice of “vulnerability” is the least rewarding.

In this verse, the meaning of the Qur’anic term “تقفوا” is conveyed by the clause “they may be” in the Control Text, in Asad. Pickthall, Ali, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem by “they are found”, while Irving uses “they are overtaken”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “overtake past participle overtaken” means “catch up with and pass while travelling in the same direction, become greater or more successful than, come suddenly or unexpectedly upon”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “overtakes” means “يدرك، يلحق ب، “يتخطى، يتجاوز”.”

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 393), “(t)he interpretation of the Qur’ānic term “تقفوا” in this verse, is that Allāh humiliates and disgraces them wherever they may be or are found”.” A similar interpretation is given by Ibn Kathīr (2011:248): “Allāh humiliates and disgraces them wherever they may be”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, and the clauses “they may be” and “they are found” are just a matter of choice, resulting from the translator’s own personal perspective.

From the definition of both Arabic and English dictionaries, and from the interpretation of al-Qurṭubī and Ibn Kathīr, the word “overtaken” does not convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “تقفوا”. As such, in terms of Nida’s equivalent effect, the word “overtaken” has the least effect.

In trying to convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “حبل” in verse 112, the Control Text and Ali use the word “covenant”, Abdel-Haleem uses the word “lifeline”, Asad and Irving use the word “bond”, and Ozek and Pickthall use the word “rope”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “bond” means “a thing used to tie or fasten things together, a force or feeling that unites people”, the word “rope” means “a length of stout cord made by twisting together strands of hemp, sisal, nylon, etc.”, the word “covenant” means “a solemn agreement, a formal agreement or contract in writing especially one undertaking to make regular payment to a charity”, while the word “lifeline” means “a rope or line used for life-saving, typically one thrown to rescue someone in difficulties in water or one used by sailors to rescue themselves to a boat, or a thing on which someone or something depends or which provides a means of escape from a difficult situation”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “bond” means “قيد، ميثاق، حبل، رباط” but the word “rope” means “حبل”. The word “covenant” means “عهد، ميثاق، عقد” and the word “lifeline” means “حبل السلامة، حبل لإنقاذ الحياة يلقي من الشاطئ إلى السفينة”.

It seems, therefore, that the correct choice for the term in this verse, would, in fact, be “rope”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because the Qur’ânic term “حبل” is a metaphorical one, and for that reason each translator deals with it from his own personal perspective. According to my understanding, the most suitable translation of the meaning of this verse is: “They were covered with humiliation wherever they are found unless they have a rope from Allâh, and from men: they have drawn on themselves the Wrath of Allâh...”

About the problem of this metaphorical term, Asad (1980:7) writes: “The “bond with God” (conventionally translated as ‘God’s covenant) apparently refers here to man’s moral obligation to use his inborn gifts - intellectual as well as physical - in the way intended for them by God.”

Abdel-Haleem’s translation shows the difficulty of translating the metaphorical language use of the *Holy Qur’ân*. However, in terms of Nida’s concept of equivalent effect, the choice of the “life-line” has more effect on the receptor than the other choices.

In this verse the amalgamated sentence “يعتدون” consists of the verb “تعندى”, and the subject *waw al-Jamaa* “و”. Again the amalgamative structure with its feeling of intensity cannot really be reflected aptly in translation, as has been mentioned before..

This verse provides a number of examples to demonstrate how the translations often fail to reflect the highly-praised sound structure of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

One can identify a number of sound clusters which typically are lost. There is the repeated sound / u:/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “تقفوا”, “باعوا”, “كانوا” and “عصوا” (pronounced /θʊgifu:/, /bæu:/, /kænu:/ and /ʌsu:/), the /n/

at the end of the words “بحيلٍ” and “بغضبٍ” and “حقٍ”, which are pronounced /bɪhʌblɪn/, /bɪghdʌblɪn/ and /hʌɡɪn/, and the /u:n/ sound at the end of the amalgamated sentences “يكفرون”, “يقتلون” and “يعتدون”, which are pronounced /jəkʃʊru:n/, /jəɡtʊlu:n/ and /jətʌdu:n/, respectively.

It has been said before that the *At-Tanwīn* grammatical device also results in the repetition of sounds: here it is created by the *kasratan* at the end of the words “بحيلٍ” and “بغضبٍ” and “حقٍ”, which are pronounced /bɪhʌblɪn/, /bɪghdʌblɪn/ and /hʌɡɪn/ respectively.

These losses and others can be clearly seen in the underlined sections below:

ضربت عليهم الذلة أين ما تقفوا إلا بحيلٍ من الله وحيلٍ من الناس

وباءوا بغضبٍ من الله وضربت عليهم المسكنة، ذلك بأنهم كانوا

يكفرون بآيات الله ويقتلون الأنبياء بغير حقٍ ذلك بما عصوا

وكانوا يعتدون.

Because the Control Text uses the transliteration of the word “the Ayât” and a long paraphrase that covers all the possible meanings of the Qur’ânic term “آيات الله”, its translation is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.2.27 Sûrah 3 Verse 118:

Source Text

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تتخذوا بطانةً من دونكم لا يألونكم خبالاً ودواماً عنتم قد بدت البغضاء من أفواههم وما تخفي صدورهم أكبر، قد بينا لكم الآيات إن كنتم تعقلون.

Control Text

“O you who believe! Take not as (your) *Bitānah* (advisors, consultants, protectors. Helpers friends) those outside your religion (pagans, Jews, Christians, and hypocrites) since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you. They desire to harm you severely. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their breasts conceal is far worse. Indeed, We have

made plain to you the *Ayât* (proofs, evidences, verse) if you understand.”

Pickthall

“O ye who believe! Take not for intimates other than your own folk who would spare no pains to ruin you: they love to hamper you severely. Hatred is revealed by (the utterance of) their mouths: but that which their breasts hide is greater. We have made plain for you the revelations if ye will understand.”

Ali

“O ye who believe! Take not into your intimacy Those outside your ranks: They will not fail To corrupt you. They Only desire your ruin: Rank Hatred has already Appeared from their mouths: What their hearts conceal Is far worse. We have made plain To you the Signs If ye have wisdom.”

Asad

“O YOU who have attained to faith! Do not take for your bosom-friends people who are not of your kind. They spare no effort to corrupt you: they would love to see you in distress. Vehement hatred has already come into the open from out their mouths, but what their hearts conceal is yet worse. We have indeed made the signs [thereof] clear unto you, if you would but use your reason.”

Irving

“You who believe do not take up with any other persons than your own fellows as intimates. They will continually cause you turmoil, and they like anything that will distress you: Loathing shows through their mouths while what their minds conceal is even greater. We have explained the signs to you provided you will use your reason.”

Ozek

“O you who believe! Take not for friends other than your own people. They would spare no pains to ruin you: they love to hamper you. Their hatred is made clear by [the utterance of] their mouths, but more violent [is the hatred which] their breasts conceal. We have made plain for you the signs [O Muslims], if you will understand.”

Abdel-Haleem

“You who believe do not take for your intimates such outsiders as spare no effort to ruin you

and want to see you suffer: their hatred is evident from their mouths, but what their hearts conceal is far worse. We have made Our revelations clear for you: will you not use your reason.”

Discussion

In this verse, in trying to convey the meaning of the amalgamated sentences “آمنوا” and “تتخذوا”, all the translators use long sentences, while the Control Text uses long sentences and additional paraphrases, as is shown above.

The amalgamated sentences “آمنوا”, “تتخذوا”, “ودوا” and “نعقلون” consists of the verb “آمن”, “اتخذ”, “ودَّ” and “عقل”, and *waw al-jamaa* “وا” as a subject, the amalgamated sentence “يألوونكم” consists of the verb “يألو”, *waw al-jamaa* “وا” as a subject and the pronoun “كم” as an object, the amalgamated sentences “أفواههم” and “صدورهم” consist of the words “أفواه” and “صدور” and the pronoun “هم”. These amalgamative structures are not reflected in the translations.

These choices do not only show the difficulty of finding the exact equivalent in the target-language, but also the difficulty of preserving such a structure.

The meaning of the Qur’anic term “بطانة” in verse 118, is given in the Control Text by a transliteration “*Biṭānah*”, and a long paraphrase “advisors, consultants, protectors, helpers, friends”. Asad uses the phrase “bosom-friends”, while Irving, Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall use the word “intimates”. Ozek opts for “friends”, while Ali uses the word “intimacy” as a description of the nature of the relationship.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “bosom” in respect of a friend means “a very close”, the word “friend” means “a person with whom one has a bond of mutual affection, typically one exclusive of sexual or family relations” and the word “intimate” means “a very close friend”.”

According to al-Qurtubī (2001: 395) “the word “بطانة” means “the very close people to someone whom he/she asks for an advice and they know his/her private information and this verse was revealed to forbid Muslims from

making close relation with Jews and the hypocrites in Madinah”.” A similar interpretation is given by Ibn Kathīr (2011: 249).

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preference.

The Control Text uses a translation by a transliteration and a paraphrase using related words. Asad, Irving, Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall use a translation by cultural substitution.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the words “bosom-friend” and “intimate” have the same equivalent effect, but “friend” on its own reflects a less intense relationship.

The Control Text conveys the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “بطانة” more accurate than the other translators do, because it uses a long paraphrase that contains all the possible meanings of the word “بطانة”.

Syntactically, the translators, with the exception of Irving and Abdel-Haleem, who omit the vocative particle “O” from their translation, remain true to the Arabic grammatical structure. However, although, the omission of the vocative particle is permitted in some cases in Arabic, it is not permitted in a Book such as the *Holy Qur’ān*, particularly when one looks at the reason of revelation of this verse.

The Control Text, Ali and Asad use the word “corrupt”, Pickthall and Ozek use the word “ruin”, Irving uses the word “turmoil”, and Abdel-Haleem uses the word “suffer” to convey the meaning of the word “خبالا”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “corrupt” means “evil or morally depraved”, the word “suffer” means “experience or be subjected to something bad or unpleasant” and the word “turmoil” means “a state of great disturbance, confusion or uncertainty”.”

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 395), “the word “خيالا” means “فسادا” which is “corrupt”.” Ibn Kathīr (2011: 249) interprets “the word “خيالا” as “مشقة” which is “suffer”.”

As such, both of the words “corrupt” and “suffer” convey the meaning of the word “خيالا” more accurate than the word “turmoil”.

The meaning of the Qur’ānic term “الآيات” is conveyed in this verse by the clause “they may be” in the Control Text and in Asad and Pickthall, by “they are found” in Ali, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem, while in Irving we find “they are overtaken”.

The difficulty of translating the meaning of the Qur’ānic terms can be shown in the translation of the sentence “تعقلون”. In the Control Text we find the phrase “you understand”, in Pickthall “ye will understand” and in Ali “ye have wisdom”. Asad uses the phrase “you would but use your reason”, Irving “provided you will use your reason.”, Ozek “you will understand” while Abdel-Haleem formulates it as “will you not use your reason”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011) “the word “reason” means “cause, explanation, or justification”, the word “understand” means “perceive the indented meaning of words, speaker, or a language”, while the word “wisdom” means “the quality of being wise”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “reason” means “سبب، داع، ميرر،”، the word “understand” means “يفهم، يدرك” and the word “wisdom” means “معرفة، حكمة”.”

There is actually no problem of non-equivalence, as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choice are based on the translators personal perspective of the term “عقل”.

Grammatically, this verse lost the *fathatān* at the end of the words “بطانة” and “خيالا”, which are pronounced /bitænʌtʌn/ and /kħʌbæʌn/, respectively, because they are in accusative forms. It must be abundantly clear by now that the grammatical device associated with *At-Tanwīn* is simply not reflected in

Ali

“Yea, - if ye remain firm, And act aright, even if The enemy should rush here On you in hot haste, Your Lord would help you With five thousand angels Making a terrific onslaught.”

Asad

“Nay, but if you are patient in adversity and conscious of Him, and the enemy should fall upon you of a sudden, your Sustainer will aid you with five thousand angels swooping down!”

Irving

“Of course, if you act disciplined and obey orders, and they should come at you all of a sudden just like this, your Lord will supply you with five thousand angels sent on purpose.”

Ozek

“Yes, if you have patience and fear [Allah], Allah will send to your aid five thousand angels with distinctive marks.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Well, if you are steadfast and mindful of God, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand swooping angels if the enemy should suddenly attack you!’ and God arranged it so,”

Discussion

In trying to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “بلى” in verse 125, the Control Text and Ozek use the word “yes”, Pickthall and Asad use the word “nay”, Ali uses the word “yea”, Irving uses the word “Of course”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the word “Well”.

According to *Mukhtār Al-Şihâh* (1990), “the word “بلى” is a device used for an affirmative response which means “yes”.” The same definition is given by *Al-Misbâh Al-Munîr* (2008), “the word “بلى” is a device “that is used for an affirmative response which means “yes” and it is used only after negative question, as in *Şurat Al-Qiyâmah* “74: 3,4” “Does a man (a disbeliever) think

that We shall not assemble his bones? Yes, We are Able to put together in perfect order the tips of his fingers”.”

As such, the words “of course” and “well” convey the general meaning of the word “بلى”, but the words “yes” and “yea” might well be the best equivalents.

In verse 125, in trying to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “تصبروا”, the Control Text and Ozek use the word “patience”, Asad uses the phrase “patient in adversity”, Irving uses the word “disciplined”, Abdel-Haleem uses the word “steadfast”, Pickthall uses the word “persevere”, while Ali uses the phrase “remain firm”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “discipline” means “the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, showing a controlled form of behaviour”, the word “firm” means “having steady power or strength, unlikely to change: enduring”, the word “patience” means “the capacity to tolerate delay, trouble or suffering, without becoming angry or upset.”, the word “persevere” means “continue in a course of action in spite of difficulty or with little or no indication of success” and the word “steadfast” mean “resolutely or dutifully firm and unwavering”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “discipline” means “تدريب، تهذيب، انضباط”, the word “firm” means “ثابت، راسخ، قوى، صلب”, the word “patience” means “صبر، حلم، طوا أناة” the verb “persevere” means “يُثابر، يواظب، يدأب” and the word “steadfast” means “ثابت، راسخ، مخلص”. According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), the word “صبر” means “patience, perseverance”.”

Semantically there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, but the problem could be of a difference in personal perspectives.

The Control Text and Ozek use a strategy of a translation by a more general word. Asad translates it by a paraphrase using related words. Pickthall, Ali and Abdel-Haleem translate it by less expressive words, while Irving translates it using an inaccurate word.

In terms of equivalent effect, the word “disciplined” has the least one.

In trying to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “يُمددكم” in this verse, the Control Text, Pickthall and Ali use the word “help”, Asad and Ozek use the word “aid”, Irving uses the word “supply”, Abdel-Haleem uses the word “reinforce”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “reinforce” means “strengthen, or support: give added strength to, strengthen a military force with additional personnel or material.” and the word “supply” means “make something needed available to someone, provide with something needed”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “reinforce” means “يقوى، يدعم، يعزز”. The word “supply” means “يزود، يجهز، يمد”. According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), the word “مدد” means “an additional help”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ own preferences.

Interestingly enough, Abdel-Haleem uses the word “reinforce” in two different contexts, in this verse and in verse 14 in *Sûrat Yasin*, to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic word “فعززنا” (*Yasin*). “We sent two messengers but they rejected both. Then We reinforced them with a third.” إذ أرسلنا اثنين فكذبوهما، فعززنا بثالثٍ فقالوا إنا إليكم لمرسلون

In terms of accuracy, the word “reinforce” is the accurate one in conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “عزز” whereas it is inaccurate in conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “مدد” In this verse, the words “aid, help and supply” would be the most accurate ones in conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “مدد”.

In the verse, in trying to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “ويأتوكم من فورهم هذا”, the Control Text uses the sentence “and the enemy comes rushing at

you”, Pickthall uses the sentence “and (the enemy) attack you suddenly”, Ali uses the sentence “even if The enemy should rush here On you in hot haste” Asad uses the sentence “and the enemy should fall upon you of a sudden”, Irving uses the sentence “and they should come at you all of a sudden just like this”, Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “if the enemy should suddenly attack you!”, while Ozek omits it from his translation.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “attack” means “take aggressive action against” the word “come” means “move or travel towards a place near or familiar to the speaker, occur: happen”, the word “fall upon” means “attack fiercely or unexpectedly” and the word “rush” means “move or act or cause to move or act with haste”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “attack” means “يهاجم، يشن هجوماً” the word “come” means “يأتى، يجى”، the word “fall on” means “يهاجم، يخوض” and the word “rush” means “يدفع بعجلة أو عنف، يهاجم”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. But a problem could be one of a difference arising from a personal perspective. The Control Text Ali and Asad use a strategy of a translation by a more expressive word. Pickthall and Abdel-Haleem translate it by a common expressive word, Irving it by a less expressive word, while Ozek translate it by a strategy of omission. In of equivalent effect, the word “attack” has the least effect.

The Qur’ânic term “من الملائكة مسومين”, found in this verse, is conveyed in the Control Text and Ozek by the words “having marks (of distinction)” and “with distinctive marks.” Asad translates it by the phrase “swooping down”, Irving by the phrase “sent on purpose”, Abdel-Haleem by the phrase “swooping angels”, Pickthall by the phrase “sweeping on”, while Ali translates by the phrase “making a terrific onslaught”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “mark” means “a sign or indication of a quality or feeling” the word “onslaught” means “a fierce or destructive attack”, the word “sweeping” means “wide in range or

effect” and the word “swoop” means “(especially of a bird) move rapidly down-wards through the air, carry out a sudden raid”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “mark” means “علامة، إشارة، رمز،” the word “onslaught” means “انقضاض، هجوم ضار”، the word “sweeping” means “ينقض على، يقتلع شيئاً من” and the word “swoop” means “كنس، كاسح، جارف”.”

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 252), “The angels who fought with Muslims at the Battle of Badr had a distinctive mark”.” The same interpretation is given by at-Ṭabarī (2011: 66) and al-Qurṭubī (2001: 401).

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the different perceptions and perspectives of the translators. The Control Text and Ozek translate it by a common expressive word. The Control Text and Ozek use a strategy of a translation by a more general word, while Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use a translation by omission.

Syntactically, by using the phrases “having marks (of distinction)” and “with distinctive marks”, the Control Text and Ozek maintain the Arabic structure of the verse, whereas Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem do not maintain it.

In fact by using the phrases “sweeping on”, “Making a terrific onslaught.”, “swooping down!”, “sent on purpose”, and “God arranged it so”, at the end of their translations of this verse, they create levels of meaning which are not visible in the original text.

However, in terms of accuracy, Abdel-Haleem’s translation is the most inaccurate one because it not only changes the position of the Arabic sentence “ويأتوكم من فورهم” from the middle of the verse to the end of it, but he also shifts the beginning of verse 126 “وما جعله الله إلا بشرى لكم” to the end of verse 125 “and God arranged it so.”

In respect of the Arabic structure, according to *Al-Mawrid's* definition of the word “reinforce”, the back translation of Abdel-Haleem’s will be

بلى إن تصبروا وتتقوا يعززكم ربكم بخمسة آلاف من الملائكة منزلين إن هاجمكم العدو

الله رتب هذا.

As such, this would be a complete subversion of the verse.

In terms of Nida’s form of analysis of meaning and equivalence, the omission of the Arabic word “مسومين” gives the translation less effect on the receptor.

Syntactically, although all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, they used different words such as “Yes”, “Nay”, “of course” and “well” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “بلى”. This means “yes” only when a sentence starts with a negation, just like “a tag question or question tag” in English, as was referred to earlier.

In this verse the amalgamated sentences “تصبروا”, “وتتقوا”, “يأتوكم”, and “يمددكم” consist of the verb “تصبر”, “تتقى”, “يأتى” and “يمدد” and the subject *wāw al-Jama`a* “و”, in the first three sentences, respectively. In the fourth sentence the subject is a hidden pronoun “ه”. As can be expected, the amalgative sentence structure is not replicated in the translations and grammatically, this verse, too, has lost the *kasratân* at the end of the word “آلاف”, with a consequent loss of the sound patterns in the verse.

The rich sound stratum of this verse is clear by looking at the underlined parts, and none of it is reflected in the translations.

بلى إن تصبروا وتتقوا ويأتوكم من فورهم هذا

يمددكم ربكم بخمسة آلاف من الملائكة مسومين.

Some of these features include the assonance of the /u:/ at the end of the repeated amalgamated sentences “تصبروا” and “تتقوا”, (/təsbiru:/ and /tətəgu:/), and the repeated sound /kum/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “يأتوكم”,

“يُمددكم” and “ربكم”, which are pronounced /jʌtu:kʊm/, /jʊmdɪdkʊm/ and /rʌbʊkʊm /, respectively.

Regardless of the problems that are posed by culture-specific concepts, Arabic idioms and metaphorical language, the differences between the translators in conveying the meaning of this verse reflect the difficulty of translation of the Holy Qur’ân, however simple its words could be.

In spite of using the word “fear” as an equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “تتقوا” (which, in fact does not convey the exact meaning of the verb “تتقوا”), the translation of Ozek is as close as possible to the original text, primarily because it uses the phrase “with distinctive marks”, without brackets, as an equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “مسومين”, because it is a part of the Arabic sentence.

5.2.2.29 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 130

Source Text

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تأكلوا الربا أضعافاً مضاعفةً واتقوا الله لعلكم تفلحون.

Control Text

“O you who believe! Eat not *Ribâ* (usury) doubled and multiplied, but fear Allâh that you may be successful.”

Pickthall

“O ye who believe! Devour not usury, Doubling and quadrupling (the sum lent). Observe your duty to Allah, that ye may be successful.”

Ali

“O ye who believe! Devour not Usury, Doubled and multiplied: But fear God: that Ye may (really) prosper.”

Asad

“O YOU who have attained to faith! Do not gorge yourselves on usury, doubling and redoubling it - but remain conscious of God, so that you might attain to a happy state.”

Irving

“You who believe, do not live off usury which is compounded over and over again. Heed God so that you may prosper.”

Ozek

“O you who believe! Do not live in usury, multiplying your interest many times over. Have fear of Allah, that perhaps you may be successful.”

Abdel-Haleem

“You who believe, do not consume usurious interest, doubled and redoubled. Be mindful of God so that you may prosper.”

Discussion

In verse 130, the Arabic word “لا تأكلوا” is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “eat not”, in Pickthall and Ali by “devour not”, in Asad by “Do not gorge yourselves on”, in Irving “do not live off”, in Ozek by “Do not live in”, while in Abdel-Haleem we find “do not consume”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “consume” means “eat, drink or ingest”, the word “devour” means “eat food or prey hungrily or quickly”, the word “eat” means “put food into the mouth and chew and swallow it”, the word “gorge on” means “eat a large amount greedily”, the verb “live in” means “reside at the place where one works or studies” and the verb “live off” means “depend on as a source of income or support”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “consume” means “يستهلك، يستنفد”، the word “devour” means “يلتهم، يفترس”، the word “eat” means “يأكل، يلتهم” and the word “gorge on” means “حلق، بطن، يلتهم، يأكل بنهم” and the verb “live” without preposition of ‘in and off’ means “يحيا، يعيش، يقتات ب، يسكن، يقيم”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because of a difference in the expressive meaning. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

The choices are based on the translators' personal preferences. In terms of the equivalent effect, although the word "eat" is the most common word for "أكل" and is mentioned explicitly in the verse "لا تأكلوا", from the definition of both dictionaries the verb "live off" is the most effective one as it describes the means of generating income.

In this verse, the Arabic word "الربا" is conveyed in the Control Text by a transliteration "Ribâ" and the word "usury", in Pickthall, Ali, Asad, Irving and Ozek by the word "usury", while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase "usurious interest".

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), "the word "usury" means "the practice of lending money at unreasonable high rates of interest" and the word "usurious" is an adjective. According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), the word "usury" means "فائدة، مراباة، ربا فاحش".

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

All the translators use a strategy of a translation by more common words.

Since the source-language concept is well lexicalized in the target-language, there is no need for using a transliteration or any explanatory word or phrase such as the translation of the Control Text.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word "usury" has more effect because it is the universal word for this practice.

In attempting to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic term "أضعافاً مضعفة", the Control Text and Ali use the phrase "doubled and multiplied", Pickthall "Doubling and quadrupling (the sum lent)", Asad "doubling and re-doubling

it”, Irving “which is compounded over and over again”, Ozek “multiplying your interest many times over” and Abdel-Haleem “doubled and redoubled”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “compound” means “of interest payable on both capital and the accumulated interest”, the word “double” means “consisting of two equal, identical, or similar parts of things, make or become double”, the word “multiply” means “increase in number or quantity” while the word “quadruple” means “consisting of four times as much or as many, increase or be increased fourfold”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “compound” means “يزيد، يضاعف”، the word “double” means “مضاعف، ضعف، يضاعف”، the word “multiply” means “يكثر، يضاعف، يزيد” while the word “quadruple” means “عدد يبلغ أربعة أضعاف” “غيره، يضاعف أربع مرات”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The different options chosen, reflect the translators’ own understanding of the text.. In terms of accuracy in conveying the meaning, the choices of “compound, double and multiply” are more accurate than the word “quadruple” because it specifies the increase by four times, which is not mentioned in the original text. In terms of the equivalent effect, the word “quadruple” has the least effect.

The Control Text, Ozek and Pickthall use the word ‘successful’ to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “تفلحون”, Irving, Abdel-Haleem and Ali use the word “prosper”, Asad uses the phrase “a happy state”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “happy” means “feeling or showing pleasure or contentment”, the word “prosper” means “succeed or flourish, especially financially: thrive, make successful” while the word “successful” means “accomplishing an aim or purpose”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “happy” means “محظوظ، سعيد،” the word “prosper” means “ينجح، وبخاصة يحقق نجاحاً إقتصادياً”، “مبتهج” while the word “successful” means “ناجح، فائز”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because of a difference in the expressive meaning. The source-language is lexicalized in the target-language. All the translators use a strategy of a translation by more common words.

In the broadest sense of the word “happy”, one can be in a “happy state” as a result of many achievements such as success in all aspects of life, that is to say: academic field, sport- competition, financial prosperity, victory, healthiness, but in this context, the Qur’ânic term “تفلحون” means to achieve the supreme good result which is “to enter Paradise” when believers obey Allâh. This is a very important Islâmic term. It is used in “الأذان”- the loud calling for *Salâh* - five times a day.

In this respect, Asad does not use the exact equivalent of the Qur’ânic term “تفلحون”, though he manages to convey its implicit meaning.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, except Irving and Abdel-Haleem, who omit the vocative particle ‘O’ from their translations.

Grammatically, this verse, too, loses *At-Tanwîn* in translation, in this instance the *fathatân* at the end of the word “أضعافاً” and “مضعفةً”, which are pronounced /ʌdɑ:fʌn/ and /mʊdʌfʌtʌn/, respectively, and very clearly contributes to the poetic effect of the text. Similarly, the loss of the amalgamated sentences “تأكلوا” and “تفلحون” diminishes the intensity conveyed in Arabic

This is seen in the underlined sections of the verse below, as is the loss of the sound /u:/ repeated at the end of the amalgamated sentences “تأكلوا”, “آمنوا” and “واتقوا”, which are pronounced /æmənʊ:/, /tʌkʊlʊ:/ and /ətəɣʊ:/, and the sound /ʌn/ at the end of the word “أضعافاً” and “مضعفةً”, which are pronounced /ʌdɑ:fʌn/ and /mʊdʌfʌtʌn/, respectively.

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تأكلوا الربا أضعافاً مضعفةً واتقوا الله لعلمكم تفلحون.

In terms of closeness, the Control Text's translation is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the word "eat" as an equivalent for the Arabic word "تأكلوا", which is the exact-mentioned verb in the verse.

5.2.2.30 Sûrah 3 Verse 135

Source Text

والذين إذا فعلوا فاحشةً وظلموا أنفسهم، ذكروا الله فاستغفروا لذنوبهم ومن يغفر الذنوب إلا الله، ولم يصروا على ما فعلوا وهم يعلمون .

Control Text

"And those who, when they have committed *Fâhshah* (great sins as illegal sexual intercourse) or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allâh and ask forgiveness for their sins:- and none can forgive sins but Allâh - and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know."

Pickthall

"And those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins - Who forgiveth sins save Allah only? - and will not knowingly repeat (the wrong) they did."

Ali

"And those who, having done something To be ashamed of, Or wronged their own souls, Earnestly bring God to mind, And ask for forgiveness For their sins , - And who can forgive Sins except God? And are never obstinate In persisting knowingly In (the wrong) they have done."

Asad

"And who, when they have committed a shameful deed or have [otherwise] sinned against themselves, remember God and pray that their sins be forgiven - for who but God could forgive sins? - and do not knowingly persist in doing whatever [wrong]" they may have done."

Irving

"And those who remember God and seek forgiveness for their offences when they commit

some shocking deed or harm themselves - for who forgives offences besides God? - and do not knowingly persist in whatever they have been doing.”

Ozek

“[A]nd those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who can forgive sins except Allah - and who will not knowingly persist [in misdeeds].”

Abdel-Haleem

“[T]hose who remember God and implore forgiveness for their sins if they do something shameful or wrong themselves -who forgives sins but God? - and who never knowingly persist in doing wrong.”

Discussion

The Qur’ānic term “فاحشة” in verse 135 is conveyed in the Control Text by a transliteration “Fâhshah” and a paraphrase “great sins as illegal sexual intercourse”, in Asad and Abdel-Haleem by the word “shameful”, in Irving by the phrase “shocking deed”, in Ozek and Pickthall by the phrase “an evil thing”, while in Ali we find the phrase “something to be ashamed of”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “evil” means “extremely wicked and immoral”, the word “shame” means “a feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behaviour”, the word “shameful” means “worthy of or causing shame”, while the word “shocking” means “causing shock or disgust, very bad”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “evil” means “شرير، فاسد أخلاقياً”، the word “shame” means “خجل، حياء، خزي، عار”، the word “shameful” means “مخز، مخجل، فاضح”، while the word “shocking” means “مثير، مروع، فظيع، للإشمزاز”. According to al-Qurṭubī (2001), the word “فاحشة” means “illegal sexual intercourse and all great hideous sins”.”

Semantically, this is a culture-specific concept. The problem of non-equivalence is because the source-language and the target-language make different distinctions in meaning in this respect.

The Control Text uses a transliteration and a paraphrase using related words. The other translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution. Ali uses a strategy of a translation by a paraphrase using related words. Nevertheless, the concept of shameful, evil and shocking deeds may differ according to the cultural differences, that is to say what is acceptable in one culture could be unacceptable in another. For example, religiously, among Muslims, the dog is considered a vile creature, worthy of a swift kick, they are not allowed to have it as a pet animal, while others dote on it, particularly in the Western culture. In terms of the equivalent effect the words “evil”, “shameful” and “shocking” is more effective.

In terms of the equivalent effect the words “evil, shameful and shocking” have more effect.

The transliteration “*Fâḥihah*” and a paraphrase “great sins as illegal sexual intercourse” conveys the concept of the Qur’ânic term “فاحشة” more accurate than the other words do, because it connects the meaning of the word with the act of sexual intercourse out of wedlock, which is a major sin the Arab culture in the Pre-Islâmic Era and in Islâm.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “ask forgiveness” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “فاستغفروا”. Pickthall and Abdel-Haleem use the phrase “implore forgiveness”, Ali uses the phrase “ask for forgiveness”, Asad uses the phrase “pray that their sins be forgiven”, while Irving and Ozek use the phrase “seek forgiveness”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “ask” means “say something in order to obtain an answer or information”, the word “implore” means “beg earnestly or desperately”, the word “pray” means “address a prayer to God or another deity, wish or hope earnestly for a

particular outcome”, whereas the word “seek” means “attempt to find, ask for”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “ask” means “يسأل، يطلب، يَلمس”، the word “implore” means “يُنشِد، يتوسل إلى، يَلمس”، the word “pray” means “يُصلي، يتوسل أو يتضرع إلى، يَلمس”، while the word “seek” means “يُجد، يَلمس، يَطلب، يقصد، يَطلب كذا”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language,

The different choices are based on the translators’ preferences. Looking at the definition given in both dictionaries, the word “pray” is the most effective one as it relates to a prayer to God.

Later in the verse, the amalgamated sentence “فعلوا” is conveyed in the Control Text and Asad by “when they have committed”, in Pickthall and Ozek by “when they do” and in Ali by “having done something”. Irving chooses “when they commit some shocking deed” and Abdel-Haleem “if they do something”.

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 67), “this verse is about those Muslims who pray for Allâh’s forgiveness if they do or commit sins”.” Similar interpretations are given by Ibn Kathīr (2010: 253) and al-Qurṭubī (2001: 407).

The three interpreters quote Hadith of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ: “If any Muslim commits a sin, then he makes ablution and performs two “*Rukûs*” of *Ṣalâh* and asks Allâh’s forgiveness for that sin, Allâh will definitely forgive him/her”.

As such, the choice of “when/if they do/commit” is the most accurate one as it complies with the meaning of this Hadith.

Syntactically, the translators maintain the Arabic syntax except for Irving and Abdel-Haleem, who start their translation with the sentence “ذكروا الله فاستغفروا” “لذنبهم ومن يغفر الذنوب إلا الله”, which is in the middle of the Arabic structure.

The translations, once again, lose the charm of the rich sound texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, indicated by the underlined parts of the verse below. This includes the loss of the repeated sound /u:/ at the end of the repeated amalgamated sentences “فعلوا” and the amalgamated sentences “ظلموا”, “ذكروا”, “فاستغفروا” and “يصروا”, which are pronounced /fʕʌlu:/, /ðʌlʌmu:/, /ðʌkʕru:/, /fʕstʌghfʕru:/ and /jʕsɪru:/, as well as the /hʌ/ at the end of the repeated name “الله”, which are pronounced /ʌʌhʌʌ/.

والذين إذا فعلوا فاحشة وظلموا أنفسهم، ذكروا الله فاستغفروا

لذنبهم ومن يغفر الذنوب إلا الله، ولم يصروا على ما

فعلوا وهم يعلمون .

Through the use of the transliteration and a long paraphrase to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “فاحشة”, the translation of the Control Text is the closest to the original text.

5.2.2.31 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 140

Source Text

إن يمسسكم قرحٌ فقد مس القوم قرحٌ مثله، وتلك الأيام نداولها بين الناس وليعلم الله الذين ءامنوا ويتخذ منكم شهداء ، والله لا يحب الظالمين.

Control Text

“If a wound (and killing) has touched you, be sure a similar wound (and killing) has touched the others. And so are the days (good and not so good), We give to men by turns, that Allâh may test those who believe: and that He may take martyrs from among you. And Allâh likes not the *Zâlimûn* (polytheists and wrong-doers).”

Pickthall

“If ye have received a blow, the (disbelieving) people have received a blow the like thereof. These are (only) the vicissitudes which We cause to follow one another for mankind, to the end that Allah may know those who believe: and may choose witnesses from among you: and Allah loveth not wrong-doers.”

Ali

“If a wound hath touched you, Be sure a similar wound hath touched the others. Such days (of varying fortunes) We give to men and men by turns: that God may know Those that believe: And that He may take To Himself from your ranks Martyr-witnesses (to Torah). And God loveth not Those that do wrong.”

Asad

“If misfortune touches you, [know that] similar misfortune has touched [other] people as well: for it is by turns that We apportion unto men such days [of fortune and misfortune] and [this] to the end that God might mark out those who have attained to faith, and choose from among you such as [with their lives] bear witness to the truth- since God does not love evildoers.”

Irving

“If some sore should afflict you, well sores just like them have afflicted [other] folk. We deal out such days to mankind, so God may recognize those who believe and accept witnesses from among you – God does not love wrongdoers.”

Ozek

“If you have suffered a wound, so did the [disbelieving] people [at Badr]. We alternate these days [of victory and defeat] among mankind so that Allah may know those who that believe: and choose martyrs from among you. And Allah does not love the unjust.”

Abdel-Haleem

“If you have suffered a blow, they too have suffered one like it. We deal out such days among people in turns, for God to find out who truly believes, for Him to choose martyrs from among you - God do not love evildoers.”

Discussion

In trying to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “قرح” in verse 140, the Control Text uses the phrase “wound and killing”, Asad uses the word “misfortune”, Irving uses the word “sore”, Ozek and Ali use the word “wound” and Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall use the word “blow”.

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 67), “the word “قرح” means “wound and killing”.” A similar interpretation is given by Ibn Kathīr (2010: 255). According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 393), “the Qur'ânic term “قرح” means “wound”.” According to the *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010) “the Qur'ânic term “قرح” means “wound”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “blow” means “a powerful stroke with a hand or weapon”, the word “misfortune” means “bad luck”, the word “sore” means “painful or aching, a source of distress or annoyance”, while the word “wound” means “an injury to living tissue caused by a cut, blow, or other impact”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “blow” means “ينفخ، يهب، كارثة، ضربة يهب”، the word “misfortune” means “سوء الحظ، محنة، بلية”، the word “sore” means “مؤلم، محزن، قرح” and the word “wound” means “يجرح، جرح”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators' personal preferences.

This particular verse was revealed as a comfort to Muslims after the Battle of Uhd. Many of them were in despair because of their defeat. It tells them, and all Muslims, that if they are true believers, they will achieve a victory in the end.

Although the words “blow, misfortune and sore” have the meaning of pain, they do not convey the exact meaning of the Qur'ânic term “قرح” as they do not explain the Muslims' real condition at the Battle of Uhud.

In this context, although the words “sore” and “wound” carry the meaning of the Arabic word “جرح”, it is the word “wound” that describes the Qur’ânic term “قرح” more accurately.

Syntactically, all the translators maintain the Arabic syntax in the verse: “إن يمسسكم قرح فقد مسَّ القوم قرح مثله”

In the Control Text, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem the word “شهداء” is conveyed by the word “martyrs”, in Pickthall and Irving by the word “witnesses”, in Ali by the phrase “Martyr-witnesses (to Torah)”, and in Asad by the phrase “such as [with their lives] bear witness to the truth”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “martyr” means “a person who is killed because of his religious or other belief”, and the word “witness” means “a person who sees an event take place”.”

According to Ibn Kathîr (2010: 256), “the word “شهداء” means “those who are killed in the cause of Allâh”.” The same interpretation is given by al-Qurtubî (2001: 411) who said that “the word “شهداء” means “Allâh will honour those who are killed in His cause”.”

Given this explanation, the word “martyrs” conveys the Qur’ânic term “شهداء” more accurately than the word “witnesses” or the other phrases.

By just looking at the underlined sections of the verse below, it is evident that the translations fail to reflect the dense sound effect found in the Arabic.

إن يمسسكم قرحٌ فقد مسَّ القوم قرحٌ مثله، وتلك الأيام نداؤها بين الناس

وليعلم الله الذين آمنوا ويتخذ منكم شهداء ، والله لا يحب الظالمين.

Mention has been made before of the repetition of of the name “الله”, which is pronounced /ʌllæh u/. This not only contributes to the sound depth of the text but, of course, also enhances the rhythmic flow when reading or listening to the *Holy Qur’ân*. This, too, is applicable when considering the prevalence of the sound cluster in the word “الظالمين” at the end of this verse and many other verses of this Sûrah.

Although the Control Text and Ali both correctly use the words “wound” and “touch” for the words “يمسكم” and “قرح”، mentioned in the verse, the Control Text, by using the paraphrase “and killing” twice, creates a level of meaning which is not visible in the text. Consequently, it is Ali’s translation that is as close as possible to the original text .

5.2.2.32 Sûrah 3 Verse 146

Source Text

وكأين من نبي قاتل معه ربيون كثير فما وهنوا لما أصابهم في سبيل الله وما ضعفوا وما استكانوا والله يحب الصابرين.

Control Text

“And many a Prophet (i.e. many from amongst the Prophets) fought (in Allâh’s Cause) and along with whom (fought) large bands of religious learned men. But they never lost heart for that which did befall them in Allâh’s Way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allâh loves As-Sâbirûn (patient).”

Pickthall

“And with how many a Prophet have there been a number of devoted men who fought (beside him). They quailed not for aught that befell them in the way of Allah, nor did they weaken, nor were they brought low. Allah loveth the steadfast.”

Ali

“How many of the Prophets fought (in God’s way), And with them (fought) Large bands of godly men? But they never lost heart If they met with disaster In God’s way, nor did They weaken (in will) Nor give in. And God Loves those are Firm and steadfast.”

Asad

“And how many a prophet has had to fight [in God’s cause], followed by many God-devoted men: and they did not become faint of heart for all that they had to suffer in God’s cause, and neither did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves [before the enemy], since God loves those who are patient in adversity.”

Irving

“How many a Prophet has fought with many devout men alongside him! They never faltered despite what had afflicted them for God’s sake: they did not weaken nor yield. God loves the patient!”

Ozek

“And how many a Prophet fought, with a number of devoted men [beside him]. They quailed not despite what befell them in Allah’s path, nor did they weaken, nor were they brought low. Allah loves the steadfast.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Many Prophets have fought, with large bands of godly men alongside them who, in the face of their sufferings for God’s cause, did not lose heart or weaken or surrender: God loves those who are steadfast.”

Discussion

In verse 146, the Control Text uses the word “along with whom” to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “*مع*”. Irving uses the phrase “alongside him!”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “alongside them”, Pickthall and Ozek use the phrase “(beside him)” in brackets and Ali uses the verb “with them”. Asad omits it from his translation.

According to *Mukhtār Al-Şihâḥ* (2009), “the word “*مع*” is a noun which means “in the company or presence of somebody/something”. In terms of morpheme, the Arabic phrase “*مع*” consists of the noun “*مع*” and the singular masculine pronoun “*هو*”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “him” is “used as the object of a verb or preposition to refer to a male person or animal previously mentioned”, the word “them” is “used as the object of a verb or preposition to refer to two or more people or things previously mentioned or easily identified”, whereas the word “whom” is “used instead of “who” as the object of a verb or preposition”.”

However, in respect of the pronouns, as was mentioned earlier, in Arabic the pronoun “هو” is used for a singular masculine, the pronoun “هم” is used for a plural masculine. In this context the pronoun “ه” refers to the Arabic word “نبي” which is a singular form of the word prophet. As such, the pronoun “them” is inaccurate, because the Arabic phrase “معهم” does not refer to the Arabic word “رهبون”, which is plural masculine form for “devoted men”. The pronoun “whom” is inaccurate also, because it is a neutral word in that it can be used for both singular / dual/ plural masculine/ feminine form according to the context in which it is used.

Semantically, the apparent problem of non-equivalence arises from the choices made by some of the translators based on their personal preferences. The source-language concept is, after all, lexicalized in the target-language.

Syntactically, by using the phrase “has had to fight [in God’s cause], followed by many God-devoted men”, Asad not only omits an important part of the verse, but he distorts the grammatical structure by changing the past simple “قاتل” into present perfect. He also changes the meaning of the verb “قاتل” from the active into passive. By using “had to” he also changes the meaning of the verb “قاتل” into the sense of obligation.

The back translation of Asad will be “كم من نبي كان عليه أن يقاتل في سبيل الله أتبع بكثير” “من الربانيين”, which is a complete change from the Arabic verse.

In terms of equivalent effect, the pronoun “him” is the most effective choice.

In trying to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “رهبون”, the Control Text uses the phrase “large bands of religious learned men”, Pickthall and Ozek use “devoted men”, Asad uses the phrase “God-devoted men”, Irving uses the word “devout men”, while Abdel-Haleem uses “large bands of godly men”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “devoted” means “very loving, loyal”, the word “devout” means “having or showing deep religious feeling or commitment” and the verb “godly” means “devoutly religious: pious”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “devoted” means “مخلص، مكرس”, the word “devout” means “ورع، تقى، خاشع”, and the verb “godly” means “إلهى، ورع”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ personal preferences.

The choices of more than one word as an equivalent for the Arabic word “ربيون” nevertheless illustrate the difficulty of translating even the simple Arabic words.

In the this verse, the Control Text and Ali use the clause “they never lost heart” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “وهنوا”, Pickthall and Ozek use the clause “They quailed not”, Asad uses the clause “they did not become faint of heart”, Irving uses the words “they had to suffer”, and Abdel-Haleem uses the word “did not lose heart”.

In terms of analysis, the amalgamated sentence “وهنوا” consists of the verb “وهن” and *waa al-Jamaa* “و” as a subject.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “faint-hearted” means “lacking courage or conviction”, the word “falter” means “lose strength or momentum”, the word “lose heart” mean “ become discouraged”, while the verb “quail” means “feel or show fear or apprehension”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language and the difference in the translation arises because their strategy of a translation is informed by their own preferences.

In terms of equivalent effect the word “falter” has the least effect in conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “وهنوا” in this context

In attempting to convey the meaning of the amalgamated sentence “أصابهم” in this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “which did befall them”, Asad uses the clause “they had to suffer”, Irving uses the phrase “had afflicted them”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “in the face of their sufferings”, Ozek and Pickthall use the phrase “befell them” and Ali translates with “If they met with disaster”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “afflict” means “(of a problem or illness) cause pain or suffering to”, the word “befall” means “(especially of something bad) happen to”, the verb “disaster” means “a sudden accident or a natural catastrophe that causes great damages or loss of life”, while the word “suffer” means “experience or be subjected to something bad or unpleasant”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ personal preferences.

In terms of the equivalent effect, all the choices are interchangeable, but the word “befall” is more effective.

In verse 146, the Control Text uses the word “degrade” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “استكانوا”, Asad uses the clause “abase themselves”, Irving uses the word “yield”, Abdel-Haleem uses the word “surrender”, Ozek and Pickthall use the phrase “brought low”, while Ali uses the verb “give in”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “abase” means “behave in a way that belittles or degrades someone”, the word “degrade” means “cause to suffer a severe loss of dignity or respect: demean”, the verb “give in” means “cease fighting or arguing”, the word “surrender” means “stop resisting an opponent and submit to their authority, give up a person right or possession on compulsion or demand”, while the word “yield” means “give way to demands or pressure: submit, give way under force or pressure”.”

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 256), “the word “استكانوا” means “weakness, losing power, and retreat from the battle. They didn’t degrade themselves”.” A similar interpretation is also given by al-Qurṭubī (2001: 416) who argues: “They never degraded themselves in front of their enemy, despite the fact that some of them were injured and others were killed”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because the target-language lacks a specific term. The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language. All the translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution.

However, in terms of the equivalent effect, the choices of “give in”, “surrender” and “yield” have more equivalent effect than the choices of “abase themselves, degrade, brought low” because they are related to war, the actual reason for the revelation of this verse.

As such, Irving, Abdel-Haleem and Ali convey the meaning of the Arabic word “استكانوا” more accurately than the other translators do.

Syntactically, all of the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, except Abdel-Haleem, who, instead of using the singular masculine form of the word “prophet”, uses its plural masculine form “prophets”. He does not do only that, but he also changes the position of the clause “لما أصابهم في سبيل الله” by putting it before the clause “فما وهنوا” which is a complete subversion of the verse. His back translation is as follows: وكأين من أنبياء قاتلوا معهم ربيون كثير لما أصابهم في سبيل الله فما وهنوا وما ضعفوا وما استكانوا

Phonologically, the rich texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, marked by the underlined parts of the verse, is again not adequately reflected in the translations.

وكأين من نبي قاتل معه ربيون كثير فما وهنوا لما أصابهم في

سبيل الله وما ضعفوا وما استكانوا والله يحب الصابرين.

In this respect, mention can be made of the /æ/ at the end of the repeated device “ما”, which is pronounced /mæ/, and the sound /u:/ recurring at the end of the amalgamated sentences “وهنوا”, “ضعفوا” and “استكانوا”, which are pronounced /wəhənu:/, /dɛʌfu:/ and /əstakænu:/. In this verse, too, the structured pattern of the *Holy Qur’ân* becomes apparent in the repetition of the way in which some verses consistently end the same in this *Sûrah*. In this instance it is the word “الصابرين”.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text can be deemed the best, because it uses paraphrases and it does not omit the conjunction “و”, which is in the beginning of the first and last sentences.

5.2.2.33 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 150

Source Text

بل الله مولاكم وهو خير الناصرين.

Control Text

“Nay, Allâh is your *Maulâ* (Patron, Lord, Helper, Protector), and He is the Best of helpers.”

Pickthall

“*But Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of helpers.*”

Ali

“*Nay, God is your Protector: And He is the best of helpers.*”

Asad

“*Nay, but God alone is your Lord Supreme, and He is the best succour.*”

Irving

“*Rather God is your Protector: He is the best Supporter!*”

Ozek

“But Allah is your support and He is the best of helpers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“No indeed! It is God who is your Protector: He is the Best of helpers.”

Discussion

In verse 150, the Control Text, Ali and Asad use the word “nay” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “بَلِّ”, Pickthall and Ozek “but”, Irving “rather” while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “no indeed”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), the word “but” is “used to introduce a phrase or clause contrasting with what has come before or with what is expected”, the word “nay” means “or rather: and more than that, no, a negative answer”, while the word “rather” means “on the contrary, instead of, as opposed to”.

According to *Al-Misbah Al-Munir* (2008), “the device “بَلِّ” is a conjunction that is used to introduce a word or a phrase that contrasts with what was said before”. A similar definition is given by *Mukhtār Al-Şiḥâḥ* (2009).

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The difference we find stems from the translators’ interpersonal preferences. From the definition of the all dictionaries, it is clear that the words “but”, “nay”, “no” and “rather” are interchangeable in this context.

In this verse the Control Text uses a transliteration “*Maulâ*” and a paraphrase “Patron, Lord, Helper, Protector” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “مَوْلَاكُمْ”, Asad uses the phrase “Lord Supreme”, Ozek uses the word “Support”, and Irving, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali all use the word “Protector”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “help” means “make it easier for someone to do something”, the word “Lord” means “a name for God or Christ”, the word “patron” means “a person who gives financial or other support to a person, organization, cause, etc.”, the word “Protector” means “a person or thing that protects”, while the word “supreme” means “highest in authority or rank, very great or greatest: most important”.”

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 69), “the Qur’ānic term “مولاكم” means “supporter and protector”.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “ the Qur’ānic term “مولاكم” also means “supporter and protector”.”

Semantically, in this verse the problem of non-equivalence is because the Qur’ānic term “مولاكم” is a culture-specific concept that has a difference in its expressive meaning in the target-language.

All the translators, with the exception of the Control Text, use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution.

The word “ولى” and its derivatives “مولى” are culture-specific concepts related to religious belief.

Because it poses a problem for translators, Abdel-Haleem (2005: xxx) argues: “...Thus *awliyā*” is commonly translated as “friends” when in fact it generally means “allies” or “supporters”.”

As such, by using the transliteration “ Maulā” and a long paraphrase (Patron, Lord, Helper, Protector), the Control Text tries to capture all the possible equivalents to the Qur’ānic term “مولاكم”.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the phrase “Lord Supreme” has a lesser effect than the other words.

One may conclude that Asad does not convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “مولاكم” as accurately as the other translators do.

Syntactically, although all of the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, they used different word such as ““nay”,” but”, “rather” and “no” for the translation of the Arabic device “بلى”.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, as it uses a transliteration “*Maulā*” and a paraphrase that covers all the possible meanings of the Qur’ānic term “مولاكم”.

5.2.2.34 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 153

Source Text

إذ تصعدون ولا تلوون على أحدٍ والرسول يدعوكم في أخراكم، فأثابكم غمّاً بغمٍ لكيلا تحزنوا على ما فاتكم ولا ما أصابكم، والله خبيرٌ بما تعملون.

Control Text

“(And remember) when you ran away (dreadfully) without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) was in your rear calling you back. There did Allāh give you one distress after another by way of requital to teach you not to grieve for that which had escaped you, nor for that which had befallen you. And Allāh is Well-Aware of all that you do.”

Pickthall

“When ye climbed (the hill) and paid no heed to anyone, the messenger, in your rear, was calling you (to fight). Therefore He rewarded you grief for (his) grief that (He might teach) you not to sorrow either for that which ye missed, or for that which befell you. Allah is Informed of what ye do.”

Ali

“Behold! Ye were climbing up The high ground, without even Casting a side glance At any one, and the Apostle, In your rear was calling you Back. There did God give One distress after another By way of requital, to teach you not to grieve For (the booty) that had escaped you And for (the ill) that had befallen you. For God is well aware Of all that ye do,”

Asad

“[Remember the time] when you fled, paying no heed to anyone, while at your rear the

Apostle was calling out to you-wherefore. He requited you with woe in return for (the Apostle's) woe, so that you should not grieve [merely] over what had escaped you, nor over what had befallen you: for God is aware of all that you do"

Irving

"When you were climbing up [the hillside] and did not follow anyone and the Messenger was calling to you from your rear. He rewarded you with one worry after another so you would not feel so sad because of what had eluded your grasp nor for what had afflicted you. God is Informed about anything you do!"

Ozek

"[Remember] When you were climbing to [higher ground], paying no heed to anyone and the Messenger was calling out to you from behind: there Allah rewarded you with grief upon grief, so that you might not grieve for what you missed [the spoils] or what befell you. Allah is Aware of what you do."

Abdel-Haleem

"You fled without looking back while the Messenger calling was out to you from behind and God rewarded you with sorrow for sorrow. [He has now forgiven you] so that you may not grieve for what you missed, or for what happened to you. God is well aware of everything you do."

Discussion

In verse 153, the Control Text uses the verb "ran away" to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause "تصعدون", Irving, Ozek, Pickthall and Ali use the verb "climbing to", while Asad and Abdel-Haleem use the verb "fled".

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), "the word "climb" means "go or come up a slope, stairs, etc.", and the word "flee, past and past participle fled" means "run away from danger"."

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 260), "the clause "تصعدون" means "They climbed the mountain running away from the battlefield"."

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “صعد” means “to climb up, to mount up”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “صعد” means “to ascend, climb, mount ‘up’, scale, to rise, go up”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence in this verse as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “And remember”, Asad “Remember the time” and Ozek “Remember” as paraphrases to explain the meaning of the Arabic device “إِذْ”, while Pickthall, Ali, Irving and Abdel-Haleem translate it without any explanatory device.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “And remember”, Asad “Remember the time” and Ozek “Remember” as paraphrases to explain the meaning of the Arabic device “إِذْ”, while Pickthall, Ali, Irving and Abdel-Haleem translate it without any explanatory device.

Even though the word “fled” conveys the general meaning of the state of the Muslim’s army which was defeated at the Battle of Uhd, it does not convey their actual action that was narrated by the Holy Qur’ân as “إِذْ تَصْعَدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُونَ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ”, and it is not the appropriate choice in this context, as well.

By using the adverb “dreadfully” the Control Text creates a level of meaning which is not visible in the original text.

By using the phrases “[the hill]”, “[the hillside]” and “[higher ground]”, the translations of Pickthall, Irving and Ozek give a more accurate explanation of the meaning of the amalgamated sentence “تَصْعَدُونَ”.

In this instance, the Control Text does not convey the meaning of the Arabic verb “تَصْعَدُونَ” as accurately as the other translators do.

Syntactically all of the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

In this verse, the amalgamated sentence “تَلَوْنَ”, is conveyed in the Control Text and Ali by the phrase “without even casting a side glance at anyone”, in Irving by “did not follow anyone” in Pickthall by “paid no heed to anyone”, Asad and Ozek by “paying no heed to anyone”, while Abdel-Haleem chooses “without looking back”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “glance” means “take a brief or hurried look”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 260), “the clause “تَلَوْنَ” means “No one of you looking back at anyone”.” Similar interpretation is given by at-Ṭabarī (2011: 69) and al-Qurṭubī (2001: 421).

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence in this verse, as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language and the different choices are the result of the translators’ preferences.

In terms of the equivalent effect, although the word “anyone” is omitted from the phrase “without looking back”, it still is the most effective one. The phrase “did not follow anyone”, which is used by Irving, does not convey the exact meaning of the clause “تَلَوْنَ”.

Syntactically all of the translators remain true to the Arabic grammatical structure in their translations. However, here again, the amalgamative sentences are not reflected and this verse lost the noticeable assonance of *waw-al- Jamaa* “و” we find in the three amalgamated sentences “تَصْعَدُونَ”, “تَعْمَلُونَ” and “تَلَوْنَ”.

Similarly, the loss of the *At-Tanwīn* devices of *kasratan* at the end of the words “أَحَدٍ” and “بِغَمٍ”, (pronounced /aħaɖim/ and /bighamim/ respectively, because they are in genitive forms), illustrates what has been lost as far as rhyme and rhythm is concerned.

These are only two aspects of the diminished return in the translations in respect of the poetic quality of the verse, which is apparent when looking at the underlined parts below:

إذ تصعدون ولا تلوون على أحدٍ والرسول يدعوكم في

أخراكم، فأتابكم غمًا بغمٍ لكيلا تحزنوا على ما فاتكم

ولا ما أصابكم، والله خبيرٌ بما تعملون.

In terms of closeness, even though Pickthall uses the pronoun “He” to convey the meaning of the subject of the verb “فأتابكم”, which was not mentioned explicitly in the verse, his translation is as close as possible to the original text, as it uses the word “the hill” for the amalgamated sentence “تصعدون”, which was the exact interpretation of Ibn Kathīr of this verse.

5.2.2.35 Sûrah 3 Verse 154:

Source Text

ثم أنزل عليكم من بعد الغم أمنةً نعاساً يغشى طائفةً منكم، وطائفةً قد أهمتهم أنفسهم يظنون بالله غير الحق ظن الجاهلية، يقولون هل لنا من الأمر من شيء. قل إن الأمر كله لله، يخفون في أنفسهم ما لا يبدونه لك، يقولون لو كان لنا من الأمر شيء ما قتلنا هاهنا. قل لو كنتم في بيوتكم لبرز الذين كتب عليهم القتال إلى مضاجعهم، وليبتلي الله ما في صدوركم، وليمحص ما في قلوبكم. والله عليمٌ بذات الصدور.

Control Text

“Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you, while another party was thinking about themselves (as how to save their own selves, ignoring the others and the Prophet ﷺ) and thought wrongfully of Allāh- the thought of ignorance. They said, “Have we any part in the affair?” Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Indeed the affair belongs wholly to Allah. “They hide within themselves what they dare not to reveal to you, saying: “If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here.” Say: “Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death,” but that Allāh might test what is in your breasts: and to purify that which was in your hearts (sins), and Allāh is All-Knower of what is in (your) breasts.”

Pickthall

“Then, after grief, He sent down security for you. As slumber did it overcome a party of you,

while (the other) party, who were anxious on their own account, thought wrongly of Allah, the thought of ignorance. They said: Have we any part in the cause? Say (O Muhammad): The cause belongeth wholly to Allah. They hide within themselves (a thought) which they reveal not unto thee, saying: Had we had any part in the cause we should not have been slain here. Say: Even though ye had ye had been in your houses, those appointed to be slain would have gone forth to the places where they were to lie. (All this hath been) in order that Allah might try what is in your breasts and prove what is in your hearts. Allah is Aware of what is hidden in the breasts (of men).”

Ali

“After (the excitement) Of the distress, He sent down Calm on a band of you, Overcome with a slumber, While another band, Was stirred to anxiety by their own feelings Moved by wrong suspicions Of God-suspicious due To Ignorance. They said: “What affair is this of ours?” Say thou: “Indeed, this affair Is wholly God’s” They hide In their minds what they Dare not reveal to thee. They say (to themselves): “If we had had anything To do with this affair, We should not have been In the Slaughter here.” Say: “Even though you had remained In your homes, those For whom death was decreed Would certainly have gone forth To the place of their death”. But (all this was) That God might test What is in your breasts And purge what is In your hearts. For God knoweth well The secrets of your hearts.

Asad

“Then, after this woe, He sent down upon you a sense of security, an inner calm which enfolded some of you, whereas the other, who cared mainly for themselves, entertained wrong thoughts about God-thoughts of pagan ignorance-saying, “Did we, then, have any power of decision [in this matter]? Say: “Verily all power of decision does rest with God”-[as for them,] they are trying to conceal within themselves that [weakness of faith] which they would not reveal unto thee, [O Prophet, by] saying, “If we had power of decision, we would not have left so many dead behind.” Say [unto them]: “Even if you had remained in your homes, those [of you] whose death had been ordained would indeed have gone forth to the places where they were destined to lie down. And [all this befell you] so that God might put to a test all that you harbour in your bosoms, and render innermost hearts pure of all dross: for God is aware of what is in the hearts [of men].”

Irving

“Then following [your] worry, He sent down confidence upon you: a drowsiness overcame one squadron of yours, while another squadron fretted themselves thinking something besides the Truth about God guess-work from [the times of] Ignorance. They said: “Is this a concern

of ours in any way?” Say: “The whole concern is up to God” They hide something they do not show in their souls: they say: “If we had had anything to do with the matter, we would not have had to fight here.” Say: “Even though you were in your own homes, those for whom killing has been prescribed would have shown up on their deathbeds, so that God might test what is on your minds and purge whatever is in your hearts. God is Aware of whatever is on your minds.”

Ozek

“Then after grief, He sent down security upon you. A sleep which overtook some, while others lay troubled on their own account, moved by wrong suspicions of Allah, the suspicions of ignorance. They said: Have we any decision in the matter?” Say [O Muhammad]: “The matter belongs wholly to Allah.” They hide within themselves [a thought] which they reveal not to you, saying: “Had we had any decision in the matter we should not have been slain here. Say: Even if you had been in your houses, those appointed to be slain would have gone forth to the places where they were to lie. [All this hath been] In order that Allah might try what is in your breasts and prove what is in your hearts. Allah knows what is hidden in the breasts.”

Abdel-Haleem

“After sorrow, He caused calm to descend upon you, a sleep that overtook some of you. Another group, caring only for themselves, entertained false thoughts about God, thoughts more appropriate to pagan ignorance, and said, “Do we get a say in any of this?” [Prophet], tell them, ‘Everything to do with this affair is in God’s hands.’ They conceal in their hearts things they will not to reveal to you. They say, “If we had had our say in this, none of us would have been killed here.” Tell them, “Even if you had resolved to stay at homes, those who were destined to be killed would still have gone out to meet their death.’ God did this in order to test everything within you and in order to prove what is in your hearts. God knows your innermost thoughts very well.”

Discussion

In verse 154, the Control Text, Pickthall and Ali use the word “slumber” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “نعاس”. Asad uses the phrase “inner calm”, Irving uses the word “drowsiness”, while Ozek, and Abdel-Haleem use the word “asleep”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “calm” means “not showing or feeling nervousness, anger, or other emotions” and the word “slumber” means “a sleep”.” According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 262), “the Qur’ānic term “نعاس” means “sleep, drowsiness, slumber”.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “slumber” means “سنة، نعاس”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “نعاس” means “drowsiness, sleepiness, somnolence, lethargy”.”

Semantically, the Qur’ānic term “نعاس” creates a problem of non-equivalence, because the target-language lacks a specific term or hyponym.

All the translators use a strategy of a translation by a more general word.

According to *Al-Misbâḥ Al-Munīr* (2008), “Arabic has nine distinctive names for the degrees of the word “نوم”. The word “نعاس” is the condition in which the body needs sleep, the word “الوسن” is the heavy state of the word “نعاس”, the word “الترنيق” is the condition in which the eyes can be opened or closed with difficulty, the word “الكرى والغمض” is the condition before closing the eyes, the word “العفق” is the state of being asleep but one can hear the sound of what is around him/her, and the words “الهجود والهجوم” is the most heaviest or deepest condition of the sleep in which one cannot hear the sound of what is around him/her “.” However, all the meanings that these words project do not capture the exact meaning of the Qur’ānic term “نعاس” and they certainly show the limitations of the dictionary definitions. the *Holy Qur’ān* differentiates between three degrees of this state: “نوم، سنة، النعاس” as it was explained earlier in this study.

As far as the state of the Companions at that time was concerned, Ibn Kathīr writes:

The Companion Abu Talha narrated: I was among the fighting men during the Battle of Uhd: slumber also overtook me, so that I could not help myself: my sword fell from my hand, and I picked it up, and it fell out again: and this happened to me many times.” So this is a clear distinction between these three words as he was aware of his sword’s falling down from his hand. (2010: 263)

Semantically, none of the choices of “asleep, drowsiness, inner calm and slumber” which are used by all translators is the exact equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “نعاس”, but still they manage to convey the general meaning of the state that overcame the Muslim fighters at that night.

In the same verse, when trying to convey the Qur’ânic term “الغم”, the Control Text uses “the distress”, Pickthall and Ozek “grief”, Ali the phrase “(the excitement) Of the distress”, Asad uses the phrase “this woe”, Irving uses the phrase “[your] worry”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the word “sorrow”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “distress” means “extreme anxiety, sorrow or pain”, the word “grief” means “intense sorrow, especially caused by someone’s death, trouble or annoyance”, the word “sorrow” means “a feeling of deep distress caused by loss or disappointment, the outward expression of grief” the word “woe” means “great sorrow or distress, trouble” and the word “worry” means “feel or cause to feel troubled over actual or potential difficulties, expressing anxiety”.

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “غم” means “anguish, affliction”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the words “غم، حزن، كآبة” means “grief, sorrow, sadness, anguish, depression, low spirit, worry”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. Therefore, the choices show that the translations are based on the translators' own preferences.

In attempting to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أمنة” in this-verse,, the Control Text, Pickthall and Ozek use “security”, Ali and Abdel-Haleem the word “Calm”, Asad uses the phrase “a sense of security”, while Irving uses the word “confidence”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “calm” means “not showing or feeling nervousness, anger, or other emotions”, the word “confidence” means “the belief that one can have faith in or rely on someone or something, a positive feeling arising from an appreciation of one’s own

abilities”, and the word “security” means “the state of being or feeling secure”.”

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the Qur’ânic term “أمنة” means “security”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “calm” means “سكون، هدوء”, the word “confidence” means “إيمان، ثقة، ثقة بالنفس” and the word “security” means “أمن، طمأنينة، سلام”.” The same definitions are given by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. as the source-language is lexicalized in the target-language. The different choices made in the translations therefore simply reflect the translators' own preferences.

However, since the meaning of the “sense of something” is not the same as the meaning of that “something itself”, the phrase “a sense of security” does not convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أمنة” as accurately as the word “security”. From the definition of both dictionaries, the word “confidence” does not convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أمنة”. In terms of Nida’s equivalent effect, the choice of the word “security” has the most effect.

Syntactically, all of the translators maintain the Arabic syntax, but Ali and Abdel-Haleem omit the conjunction “ثم” from their translations.

The Qur’ânic term “مضاجعهم” in this verse is conveyed by the phrase “the place of their death” in the Control Text and Ali, in in Pickthall and Ozek by the phrase “the places where they were to lie”, in Asad by the phrase “the places where they were destined to lie down”, in Irving by the phrase “their deathbeds”, and by the phrase “meet their death” in Abdel-Haleem.

According to *Al-Misbâh Al-Munîr* (2008) and *Muktâr Al-Şihâh* (1990), “the word “ضجع” is the root form of the word “مضاجع”, which means to lie down on the earth”.

According to the interpretations of at-Ṭabarī (2011: 70), “the Qur’ānic term “مضاجع” means “the places where they will die.” A similar interpretation is given by al-Qurṭubī (2001: 423).

Pickthall, Ozek and Asad use the propositional meaning of the word “ضجع”, while the Control Text, Ali, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the intended meaning of the Qur’ānic term “مضاجعهم”.

As such, the phrases “the place of their death”, “their deathbeds” and “meet their death” convey the meaning more accurate than the other phrases.

These various semantic and syntactic phrases do not only show the difficulty of translation of the *Holy Qur’ān* but they show the differences in its understanding as well.

In the Arabic, as has been shown before, *At-Tanwīn* contributes to the poetic nature of the text by the resultant repetition of sound clusters at the end of words. In this verse we see it in the *fathatan* at the end of the words “أمنةً”, “نعاساً” and “طائفَةً”, (pronounced /ʌmʌtʌn/, /nʊɑ:sʌn/ and /tɑ:ɪfʌtʌn/, respectively), and in the *damatan* at the end of the words “طائفَةً”, “نسي” and “عليم”, which are pronounced /tɑ:ɪfʌtʊn/, /ʃeɪɒn/ and /ʌli:mʊn/, respectively.

Returning to the more poetic features, this verse lost the noticeable assonance of *waw-al-Jamaa* “و” at the end of the amalgamated sentences “نونظي”, “نولوقي”, “نوفخي”, and “نودبي”, the consonance “ط” at the beginning of the repeated words “قفئاط” and the consonance “ه” at the beginning of the devices “له”, “اه” and “انه”.

As far as the sound stratum is concerned, the lost repeated sounds are /ʌn/ at the end of the words “أمنةً”, “نعاساً” and “طائفَةً”, which are pronounced /ʌmʌtʌn/, /nʊɑ:sʌn/ and /tɑ:ɪfʌtʌn/, the repeated sounds /ʊn/ at the end of the words “طائفَةً”, “نسي” and “عليم”, which are pronounced /tɑ:ɪfʌtʊn/, /ʃeɪɒn/ and /ʌli:mʊn/, the repeated sounds /kʊm/ at the end of the amalgamated devices “عليكم” and “منكم”, which are pronounced /ʌleɪkʊm/ and /mɪnkʊm/, the same repeated sounds at the end of the amalgamated sentences “بيوتكم”, “صدوركم”

and “قلوبكم”, which are pronounced /buju:ti:kum/, /sudu:ri:kum/ and /gulu:bikum/, as well as the repeated sounds /u:n/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “يظنون”, “يخفون” and the repeated amalgamated sentences “يقولون”, which are pronounced /jəðu:nu:n/, /jəkhfu:n/ and /jəgulu:n/, respectively.

These losses, and others which diminish the poetic nature of the translations, are clear when looking at the underlined sections of the verse:

ثم أنزل عليكم من بعد الغم أمنةً نعاساً يغشى طائفةً منكم،

وطائفةً قد أهمتهم أنفسهم يظنون بالله غير الحق ظن الجاهلية،

يقولون هل لنا من الأمر من شيء. قل إن الأمر كله لله،

يخفون في أنفسهم ما لا يبدونه لك، يقولون لو كان لنا من

الأمر شيء ما قتلنا هاهنا. قل لو كنتم في بيوتكم لبرز الذين

كتب عليهم القتال إلى مضاجعهم، وليبتلى الله ما في صدوركم،

وليمحص ما في قلوبكم. والله عليم بذات الصدور.

In terms of closeness, the Control Text is possibly the closest to the original text, because it uses the word “slumber” for the Arabic word “نعاس” and the phrase “place of their death” for the Arabic phrase “مضاجعهم”, as well as the paraphrase “as how to save their own selves, ignoring the others and the Prophet ﷺ”, which described the real state of the Muslim fighters at the Battle of Uhd.

5.2.2.36 Sûrah 3 Verse 161:

Source Text

وما كان لنبي أن يغفل ومن يغفل يأتي بما غل يوم القيامة ثم توفى كل نفس ما كسبت وهم لا يظلمون.

Control Text

“It is not for any Prophet to take illegally a part of the booty (*Ghalûl*), and whosoever deceives his companions as regards the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took (illegally). Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.”

Pickthall

“It is not for any Prophet to deceive (mankind) Who so deceiveth will bring his deceit with him on the Day of Resurrection. Then every soul will be paid in full what it hath earned: and they will not be wronged.”

Ali

“No prophet could (ever) Be false to his trust. If any person is so false, He shall, On the Day Of Judgment, restore What he misappropriated: Then shall every soul Receive its due, - Whatever it earned, - And none shall be Dealt with unjustly.”

Asad

“AND IT IS not conceivable that a prophet should deceive - since he who deceives shall be faced with his deceit on the Day Resurrection, when every human being shall be repaid in full for whatever he has done, and none shall be wronged.”

Irving

“No prophet should hold back anything: and anyone who defrauds [someone else] will bring along whatever he has been withholding on Resurrection Day. Then every soul will be repaid for whatever it has earned, and they will not be harmed.”

Ozek

“It is not [possible] for any Prophet to deceive [mankind]: whoever deceives will bring his deceit with him on the Day of Resurrection. Then every soul will be paid in full what it has earned: and they will not be wronged.”

Abdel-Haleem

“It is inconceivable that a prophet would ever dishonestly take something from the battle gains. Anyone who does so will carry it with him on the Day of Resurrection, when each soul

will be fully repaid for what it has done: no one will be wronged.”

Discussion

In verse 161, the Control Text uses a long sentence “to take illegally a part of the booty” and a transliteration “Ghulûl” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “يُغْل”. Asad, Ozek and Pickthall use the verb “deceive”, Irving uses the phrase “should hold back anything” and the word “defraud”, Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “would ever dishonestly take something from the battle gains”, Ali uses the phrase “could ever be false to his trust”.

According to the Tafsîr of at-Ṭabarî (2011: 71) “the Qur’ânic term “يُغْل” means “to betray, to take illegally a part of the booty”.” A similar interpretation is given by Ibn Kathîr (2010: 265) and al-Qurtubî (2001: 429). According to the *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010: 387) “the word “غُلٌّ” means “defraud”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “deceive” means “deliberately cause someone to believe something that is not true”, and the word “defraud” means “illegally obtain money from someone by deception”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence in this verse surfaces because this is a culture-specific concept. The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language.

The Control Text uses a strategy of a translation by a transliteration and a paraphrase using related words. Asad, Ozek and Pickthall use a strategy of cultural substitution. Irving uses a strategy of a translation by a paraphrase using unrelated words. Abdel-Haleem and Ali uses a translation by a paraphrase using related words. However, the reason for the revelation of this verse was because some items from the war-spoils after the Battle of Badr were missing and the hypocrites took advantage of this incident and accused the Prophet (ﷺ) of stealing them.

It is a very strong warning against whoever deceives or steals something. In this case, the Control Text and Abdel-Haleem convey the concept of the Qur'anic term “يُغْل” more accurate than the other translators do. But despite this fact, all translators manage to convey the general meaning of the concept as they would all have some similar equivalent effect on the receptor.

Syntactically, all of the translators maintain the Arabic syntax.

In the next sentence, the word “person”, is used by the Control Text to convey the meaning of the meaning of the Arabic word “نفس”. Pickthall, Ali, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem all use the word “soul”, while Asad uses the word “human being”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “human being” means “a man, woman or child of the species *Homo sapiens*”, the word “person” means “a human being regarded as an individual” and the word “soul” in this context means “the spiritual or immaterial part of a person, regarded as immortal, a person’s moral or emotional nature or sense of identity”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “human” means “آدمي، بشري،”، the word “person” means “شخص، انسان” and the word “soul” means “النفس، الروح، شخص”.”

Semantically, in spite of the nuances in meaning between these choices, given the definition of both dictionaries, the most accurate one is the word “soul”.

By using the sentences “they shall not be dealt with unjustly” and “And none shall be Dealt with unjustly” the Control Text and Ali maintain the rhythm of this verse. By respectively using the sentences “and they will not be wronged”, “and none shall be wronged”, “and they will not be harmed”, “and they will not be wronged” and “no one will be wronged”, Pickthall, Asad, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem do not maintain the rhythm of this verse in the sentence “وهم لا يظلمون” .

Looking at other poetic features of the *Holy Qur'ân* as far as the sound stratum is concerned, most of them marked by the underlined parts of the verse, is not present in the translations.

وما كان لنبي أن يغل ومن يغلل يأت بما غل يوم

القيامة ثم توفى كل نفس ما كسبت وهم لا يظلمون

Very apparent, for instance, is the loss of the sound cluster /ghol/ at the end of the words “يغل” “يغلل” and “غل”, which are pronounced /jʌghol /, /jʌghəlɔl/ and /ghʌl/

Although the Control Text correctly uses the clause “take illegally a part of the booty (Ghalûl)”, in terms of closeness, it is Abdel-Haleem’s translation that is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the adverb “would ever” to emphasize one of the prophethood’s basic, obligatory features as it were stated by al-Mawardi (1994: 89-90): “To convey the message of Allâh, the prophet should ever be a male, truthful, honest, clever, brave, generous, patient, kind, humble and free from all kind of infectious diseases”.

5.2.2.37 Sûrah 3 Verse 164:

Source Text

لقد منّ الله على المؤمنين إذ بعث فيهم رسولاً من أنفسهم يتلوا عليهم آياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وإن كانوا من قبل لفي ضلالٍ مبينٍ.

Control Text

“Indeed, Allâh conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses (the Qur’ân), and purifying them (from sins by their following him), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur’ân) and *Al-Hikmah* [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. his legal ways, statements, acts of worship)], while before that they had been in a manifest error.”

Pickthall

“Allah verily hath shown grace to the believers by sending unto them a messenger of their own who reciteth unto them His revelations, and causeth them to grow, and teacheth them the Scripture and wisdom: although before (he came to them) they were in flagrant error.”

Ali

“God did confer A great favour On the Believers When He sent among them An Apostle from among Themselves, rehearsing Unto them the Signs Of God, sanctifying them, and instructing them In Scripture and Wisdom, While, before that, They had been In manifest error.”

Asad

“Indeed, God bestowed a favour upon the believers when he raised up in their midst an apostle from among themselves, to convey His messages unto them, and to cause them to grow in purity, and to impart unto them the divine writ as well as wisdom- whereas before that they were indeed, most obviously, lost in error.”

Irving

“God has benefited believers whenever He sent them a messenger from among themselves, to recite His verses to them, and purify them, and teach them the Book and wisdom, whereas previously they had been in plain error.”

Ozek

“Allah has surely shown favour to the believers by sending them a Messenger of their own to recite to them His signs, and purify them and instruct them in the Book and in wisdom: while before they were in evident error.”

Abdel-Haleem

“God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom- before that they were clearly astray.”

Discussion

In verse 164, the Control Text, Irving and Ozek use the verb “purify” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “يزكّيهنّ”, Asad and Abdel-Haleem the clause “grow in purity”, Pickthall the verb “grow” while Ali uses the verb “sanctify”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “grow” means “undergo natural development by increasing in size and changing physically, become larger or greater over time, increase”, the word “purify” means “remove contaminants from: make pure”, and the word “sanctify” means “consecrate, free from sin”.

According to *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīd* (2009), *Al-Misbâḥ Al-Munīr* (2008) and *Mukhtār Al-Ṣiḥḥ* (1990), “the word “زكى” is a root, it means “grow and increase”, and the Qur’anic term “Zakâh” is derived from it.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “زكى” means “to grow, purify, justify, pay Zakâh”.” The same definition is given by the *Concordance of the Qur’anic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005): “the word “زكى” has many different meanings such as purify, grow, remove sins”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence arises in this verse because this is a culture-specific concept. The source-language word is semantically complex.

All the translators use a translation by cultural substitution.

The context continuously determines the meaning of any discourse, Qur’anic or otherwise. Knowing that the word “زكى” can mean, amongst others, “praise”, “righteousness” and “purify”, an example to demonstrate this can be found in *Sûrahs* 4, 18 and 78.

Have you not seen those (Jews and Christians) who claim sanctity for themselves? Nay, but Allâh sanctifies whom He wills” (CT 4:49)

ألم تر إلى الذين يزكون أنفسهم، بل الله يزكى من يشاء، ولا تظلمون فتيلاً.

“So we intended that their Lord should change him for them for one better in righteousness and nearer to mercy” (CT 18:81)

فأردنا أن يبدلهم ربهما خيراً منه زكاةً وأقرب رحماً

“And say (to him): “Would you purify yourself (from the sin of disbelief by becoming a believer?” (CT 79:18)

فقل هل لك إلى أن تزكى

In these contexts the word “زكى” alternatively means purify, sanctify or grow in purity. It is clear that using the word “grow” without any paraphrase is not a satisfactory equivalent for the Arabic amalgamated sentence “يزكيهم”.

Syntactically, all of the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, but Irving omits the Arabic assertive device “لقد” from his translation.

In attempting to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “مبين” in this verse, , the Control Text and Ali use the phrase “manifest error”, Pickthall “flagrant error”, Asad “most obviously, lost in error”, Irving “plain error”, Ozek “evident error” and Abdel-Haleem “clearly astray”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “error” means “a mistake, the state of being wrong in conduct or judgement”, the word “evident” means “plain, obvious, clear”, the word “flagrant” means “conspicuous: blatant”, the word “manifest” means “clear or obvious to the eye or mind” and the word “plain” means “easy to perceive or understand: clear”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “error” means “غلط، خطأ”, the word “evident” means “واضح، بين، جلى”, the word “flagrant” means “فاضح، فاضح، جلى، واضح، مشهر، أثيم”، the word “manifest” means “واضح، ظاهر، جلى” and the word “plain” means “سهل، واضح، جلى”.”

Semantically, looking at the definition of the both the dictionaries, the choice of the word “flagrant” does not convey the correct meaning of the Arabic word “مبين”

In terms of equivalence, although the concept of the word “مبين” is lexicalized in the target-language, it requires two or more English words to be conveyed. The options chosen by the translators is indicative of the difficulty of finding an equivalent for the language of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

By using the phrase “manifest error”, “flagrant error”, “most obviously, lost in error”, “plain error”, and “clearly astray” none of the translators maintain the rhythm of the word “مبين” at the end of the verse.

In respect of some of the poetic aspects, one can point out the patent loss of the sound /him/, present in the letters “م” at the end of the amalgamated devices and sentences “فيهم”, “أنفسهم”, “عليهم”, “يزكيهم”, and “يعلمهم”, and pronounced /fi:hi m /, /ʌnfusihi m/, /ʌleihim / and /juzaki:hi m/ respectively.

لقد منّ الله على المؤمنين إذ بعث فيهم رسولاً من أنفسهم

يتلو عليهم آياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وإن

كانوا من قبل لفي ضلال مبين

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the words “reciting”, “His Verses” and the transliteration and paraphrases in an effort to convey or capture the full meaning.

5.2.2.38 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 176:

Source Text

ولا يحزنك الذين يسارعون في الكفر إنهم لن يضروا الله شيئاً يريد الله ألا يجعل لهم حظاً في الآخرة ولهم عذاب عظيم.

Control Text

“And let not those grieve you (O Muhammad ﷺ) who rush with haste to disbelieve: verily, not the least harm will do to Allâh. It is Allâh’s Will to give them no portion in the Hereafter. For them there is a great torment.”

Pickthall

“Let not their conduct grieve thee, who run easily to disbelief, for lo! They injure Allah not at all. It is Allah’s will to assign them no portion in the Hereafter, and theirs will be an awful doom.”

Ali

“Let not those grieve thee Who rush headlong Into Unbelief: Not the least harm Will they do to God: God’s Plan is that He Will give them no portion In the Hereafter, But a severe punishment.”

Asad

“And be not grieved by those who vie with one another in denying the truth: verily, they can in no wise harm God. It is God’s will that they shall have no share in the [blessings of the] life to come: and tremendous suffering awaits them.”

Irving

“Let not those who hasten on to disbelief sadden you: they will never injure God in any way. God wants to grant them no fortune in the Hereafter, where they will have terrible torment.”

Ozek

“[O Muhammad] let not their conduct grieve you, who run easily to disbelief. They will not harm Allah at all. He wants to assign them no share in the Hereafter, and theirs will be a formidable torment.”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Prophet], do not be grieved by those who are quick to disbelieve. They will not harm God in the least: it is God’s will that they will have no share in the Hereafter- a terrible torment awaits them.”

Discussion

In verse 176, the Control Text uses a clause “who rush with hastes to” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “يسارعون”. Asad uses the clause “those who vie with”, Irving uses the clause “those who hasten on”, Ozek and

Pickthall use the clause “who run easily to”, Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “those who are quick to”, Ali uses the clause “who rush headlong into”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “haste” means “excessive speed or urgency of action”, the word “quick” means “moving fast or doing something in a short time”, the word “run” means “move at a speed faster than a walk, never having both or all feet on the ground at the same time”, the word “rush” means “move or act or cause to move or act with urgent haste”, while the word “vie with” means “compete eagerly with others in order to do or achieve something”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “سارع” means “hurry, hasten, rush, dash, run to”.

Semantically, in this verse, the problem of non-equivalence is due to the differences in form as the amalgamative structure “يسارعون” does not exist in English. Although the source-language concept is generally lexicalized in the target-language, there is no specific equivalent in the target-language.

All the translators use a translation by cultural substitution based on their own judgement. However, the back translation of Asad will be “الذين يتنافسون في السباق إلى الكفر”, which is a kind of misinterpretation of the meaning of the Arabic verb “يسارع”.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the clause “those who vie with” in this verse has lesser effect than the clauses “who rush with hastes to”, “those who hasten on”, “who run easily to”, “those who are quick to” and “who rush headlong into” because all of them are synonyms and can be equivalents for the Arabic word “يسارعون في الكفر”.

By using the phrases “a great torment”, “a severe punishment”, “terrible torment” and “a formidable torment”, the Control Text, Ali, Irving and Ozek maintain the grammatical structure of the Arabic phrase “ولهم عذاب أليم”. On the other hand by using the phrases “an awful doom”, “tremendous suffering awaits them”, and “a terrible torment awaits them”, respectively, Pickthall,

Asad and Abdel-Haleem do not maintain the grammatical structure of this phrase at the end of the verse.

Nevertheless, Asad (1980: viii) argues: “With all this, however, I make no claim to having reproduced anything of the indescribable rhythm and rhetoric of the *Qur’ân*.”

Syntactically, all of the translators, in general, follow the Arabic grammatical structure of the first part of the verse.

The amalgamated sentences “يسارعون” and “يضرّوا” consist of the verbs “يسارع” and “يضرّ” and *waw al-Jmaa’* “و” as a subject in both of them, In all these sentences the subject is a part of the verb. These amalgamative structures are not reflected in the translations.

In respect of the poetic feature, this verse lost the assonance of *waw al-jmaa’* “و” at the end of the amalgamated sentences “يسارعون” and “يضرّوا” , respectively.

In the Arabic, as has been shown before, *At-Tanwīn* contributes to the poetic nature of the text by the resultant repetition of sound clusters at the end of words. In this verse we see it in the *fathatan* at the end of the words “ثيناً” and “حظاً”, (pronounced /ʌmʌtʌn/, /nɔɑ:sʌn/ and /tɑ:ifʌtʌn/, respectively), and in the *damatan* at the end of the words “عذابٌ”, and “عظيمٌ”, which are pronounced /ʃeɪʌn/ and /həðʌn /, and /əðæbʊn/ and /ə l i:mʊn/, respectively.

One more than one occasion, the strong presence of the *At-Tanwīn* is reflected at the very end of a verse, which, in turn, contributes to the structural unity of the whole *Sûrah*, as was mentioned on more than one occasion earlier.

Looking at the marked sections of the verse, it is clear that the translations do not reflect this rich sound level of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

ولا يحزنك الذين يسارعون في الكفر إنهم لن يضرّوا الله شيئاً يريد الله ألا يجعل لهم حظاً في الآخرة ولهم عذابٌ عظيمٌ

This would include the abundant repetition of the sound of the letter “ن” in the words “يحرزك”, “يسارعون”, and in the device “إنهم” and “لن”, as well as sound of the letter “ر” in the words “يسارعون”, “الكفر”, and “يضرروا” .

As it uses the sentence “who rush with haste to” which carries the spirit of the amalgamated sentence “يسارعون”, follows the Arabic structure and it does not omit the conjunction “و” at the beginning of the Arabic verse, in addition to the paraphrase (O Muḥammad ﷺ), it is the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.2.39 Sûrah 3 Verse 178:

Source Text

ولا يحسبن الذين كفروا انما نملىٰ خيرٌ لانفسهم انما نملىٰ لهم ليزدادوا اثماً ولهم عذابٌ مهينٌ.

Control Text

“And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing of their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness. And for them is a disgracing torment.”

Pickthall

“And let not those who disbelieve imagine that the rein We give them bodeeth good unto their souls. We only give them rein that they may grow in sinfulness. And theirs will be a shameful doom.”

Ali

“Let not the Unbelievers Think that Our respite To them is good for themselves: We grant them respite That they may grow In their iniquity: But they will have A shameful punishment.”

Asad

“And they should not think- they who are bent on denying the truth - that Our giving them rein is good for them: We give them rein only to let them grow in sinfulness: a shameful

suffering awaits them.”

Irving

“Let not those who disbelieve consider how our acting indulgent with them is good so far as their own persons are concerned: We merely postponing things for them so they may increase in vice: they will have disgraceful torment.”

Ozek

“Let not those who disbelieve imagine that We prolong their time for the good of their own selves. We only give them respite that they may grow in sinfulness: and theirs will be a shameful torment.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The disbelievers should not think that it is better for them that We give them more time: when We give them more time they become more sinful- a shameful torment awaits them.”

Discussion

In verse 178, the meaning of the first Arabic word “تملى” is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “Our postponing of their punishment”, in Pickthall by the phrase “the rein We give them”, in Ali by the phrase “Our respite To them”, in Asad by the phrase “Our giving them rein”, in Irving by the phrase “our acting indulgent with them”, in Ozek by the phrase “We prolong their time”, while in Abdel-Haleem the phrase “We give them more time” is used.

In the second sentence of the verse, the meaning of the first Arabic word “تملى” is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “We postpone the punishment”, in Pickthall by the phrase “We only give them rein”, in Ali by the phrase “ We grant them respite”, in Asad by the phrase “We give them rein”, in Irving by the phrase “We merely postponing things”, in Ozek by the phrase “We only give them respite”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “We give them more time”.

The amalgamated sentence “تملى” consists of a verb “تملى” and a hidden plural pronouns; “إننا” or “نحن” as a subject. Even though these pronouns are plural,

they are used in Arabic for being supreme, great and powerful and for this reason they are used in the *Holy Qur'ân* for a description of the absolute power of Allâh in many cases, for instance, in verse 9 of *Sûrat Al-Hijr* “The Rocky Tract”:

“Verily, We, it is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'ân) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).” (CT 15:9)

إننا نحن نزلنا الذكر وإننا له لحافظون

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “indulgent” means “tending to allow somebody to have or do whatever they want”, the word “postpone” means “arrange for something to take place at a time later than that first scheduled”, the word “rein” means “a long, narrow strap attached at one end to horse’s, typically used in pairs to guide or check a horse’s bit in riding or driving”, and the idiom “free rein” means “freedom of action or expression” and the word “respite” means “a short period of rest or relief from doing something unpleasant, postpone”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “indulgent” means “متسامح، متساهل”, the word “postpone” means “يؤجل، يؤخر”, while the word “rein” means “العنان، سير اللجام”, and the idiom “to give rein to” means “يطلق العنان ل” and the word “respite” means “إرجاء، تأجيل، يرجى، يمهل”.”

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 73) and al-Qurṭubī (2001: 439), “the Qur’ânic term “نملى” means “give them a long span of age with easy life”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language.

Although there is no grammatical or functional differences between the amalgamated sentence “نملى” in both the contexts, the translators vary in their choices. The Control Text, for example, uses the gerund “postponing” in the first context and the simple present “postpone” in the second one.

As such, the choices would be informed by their understanding of the Holy Qur'ân, the complexity of the Arabic sentence “نملى” or simply by their personal preferences.

However, whether the choices are verbs, gerunds or nouns, they all manage to convey the general meaning of the verb “نملى”.

All the translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the phrase “give more time” has more effect than the other words.

As such, the choice of the phrase “give more time” which is used by Abdel-Haleem conveys the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “نملى” more accurate than the other choices do. But in spite of the nuances in meaning between these translations, all the translators manage to convey the general meaning of the verse.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the verb “postpone” which is used by the Control Text is more effective, because the source-language word “نملى” is a verb as well.

Syntactically, the Control Text, Pickthall, Asad follow the Arabic grammatical structure but Ali, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem do not maintain the Arabic syntax, in as far as they omit the Arabic conjunction “و” from their translations.

With the loss of the amalgamated sentence structure in “كفروا” and “ليزدادوا”, the translations again have a diminished effect. This has been referred to earlier and is a factor in almost every verse looked at.

This also affects the replication of the poetic density of the verse, apparent when looking at the underlined segments:

ولا يحسبن الذين كفروا انما نملى خيراً لأنفسهم

انما نملى لهم ليزدادوا إثمًا ولهم عذابٌ مهينٌ.

An inventory of what is reflected here, would include, amongst others, the repetitions of the amalgamated sentence “تملى” with its rhythmic effect and accompanying repetition of sounds and sound clusters, the pervasive presence of /æ/ and the sound /hʊm/ at the end of the repeated device “لهم” (/ləhʊm/) in the proximity of the slightly similar /ʊn/ at the end of the words “خير”, and “عذاب”, which are pronounced /kheiron/ and /ʌðɑ:bʊn/.

Although Ozek omits the Arabic conjunction “و” from his translation, in terms of closeness his translation can be deemed the best, because it uses the pronoun “who” for the pronoun “الذين” and the verb “disbelieve” for the Arabic verb “كفروا” which are as they are present in the verse.

5.2.2.40 Sûrah 3 Verse 180:

Source Text

ولا يحسبن الذين يبخلون بما آتاهم الله من فضله هو خيراً لهم بل هو شرٌّ لهم سيطوقون ما بخلوا به يوم القيامة والله ميراث
السموات والأرض والله بما تعملون خبيرٌ.

Control Text

“And let not those who covetously withhold of that which Allâh has bestowed on them of His Bounty (Wealth) think that it is good for them (and so they do not pay the obligatory *Zakât*). Nay, it will be worse for them: the things which they covetously withheld shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection. And to Allâh belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth: and Allâh is Well-acquainted with all that you do.”

Pickthall

“And let not those who hoard up that which Allah hath bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be their collar on the Day of Resurrection. Allah is the heritage of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is Informed of what ye do.”

Ali

“And let not those Who covetously withhold Of the gifts which God hath given them of His Grace, Think that it is good for them: Nay, it will be the worse For them: Soon shall the things Which they covetously withheld Be tied to their necks Like a twisted collar, On the Day

of Judgment. To God belongs the heritage Of the heavens and the earth: And God is well-acquainted With all that ye do.”

Asad

“AND THEY should not think- they who niggardly cling to all that God has granted them out of His bounty - that this is good for them: nay, it is bad for them. That to which they [so] niggardly cling will, on the Day of Resurrection, be hung about their necks: for unto God [alone] belongs the heritage of the heavens and of the earth: and God is aware of all that you do.”

Irving

“Let not those who act niggardly with any of His bounty God has given them consider it is better for them: rather it will be worse for them: they will be charged on Resurrection Day with anything they were so niggardly about. God holds the inheritance of Heaven and Earth: God is Informed about anything you do.”

Ozek

“And let not those who hoard up that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty think that it is better for them. It is worse for them. That which they hoard will be their collar on the Day of Resurrection. Allah’s is the inheritance of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is Aware of what you do.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Those who are miserly with what God has granted them out of His grace should not think that it is good for them: on the contrary, it is bad for them. Whatever they meanly withhold will be hung around their necks on the Day of Resurrection. It is God who will inherit the heavens and earth: God is well aware of everything you do.”

Discussion

In trying to convey the meaning of the Arabic amalgamated sentence “سيطوقون” in verse 180, the Control Text uses the phrase “be tied to their necks”, Asad uses the phrase “be hung about their necks”, Irving uses the phrase “will be charged”, Ozek uses the phrase “be their collar”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “be hung around their necks” and Pickthall uses the

phrase “be their collar”. Ali uses the phrase “be tied to their necks like a twisted collar”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 441), “(t)he things they were so niggardly about will be tied around their necks as a punishment”. According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “collar” means “a band of material around the neck of a shirt or other garment, either upright or turned over”.”

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “طوق” means “to twist a collar”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is a factor because of the difference in the expressive meaning. All the translators, except Irving, use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution. Irving translates it by using a more general phrase “they will be charged”.

However, all the translators who use the word “neck” and its related words such as “collar, tie, around” succeed in conveying the meaning of the amalgamated sentence “سيطوقون”.

As far as the instructions of Islam are concerned, the implicit meaning of this verse was/is a warning against being greedy, niggardly, miserly, because Muslims believe that all manifestations of wealth belong to Allāh and that He orders them to give the needy out of it. A case in point in *Sûrat Al-Hadîd* “The Iron” where it is stated:

“and spend of that whereof He has made you trustees.” (CT 57:7)

وأنفقوا مما جعلكم مستخلفين فيه

Although, Irving does not use the word “neck” or any of its related words, he conveys the exact meaning of the Qur’ānic term “سيطوقون”.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, except Irving and Abdel-Haleem, who again chooses to omit the Arabic conjunction of the letter “و” from their translations.

By using the sentences “and Allâh is Well-acquainted with all that you do”, “and Allah is Informed of what ye do”, “And God is well- acquainted With all that ye do”, “and God is aware of all that you do”, “God is Informed about anything you do”, “and Allah is Aware of what you do” and “God is well aware of everything you do”, all the translators maintain the grammatical structure of this verse.

As could be expected, the poetic texture of the *Holy Qur’ân* as suggested by the underlined parts of the verse, is not reflected in the translations.

ولا يحسبن الذين يبخلون بما آتاهم الله من فضله هو خيراً
 لهم بل هو شرٌّ لهم سيطوقون ما بخلوا به يوم القيامة والله
 ميراث السموات والأرض والله بما تعملون خبيرٌ.

This can be demonstrated by the loss of the assonance of *waw al-Jamaa* “و” and the repetition of the letter “ن” (/u:n/) at the end of the amalgamated sentences “يبخلون” and “سيطوقون” and “تعملون”, pronounced /jəbkhəl u:n/, /səjütəwəgu:n/ and /təməlu:n/, respectively.

Other examples include the loss of the sound /æ/ at the end of the repeated device “بما”, the sounds /həm/ at the end of the amalgamated sentence “آتاهم”, “لهم”, which are pronounced /ɑ:tæhəm/ and /ləhəm/ as well as the sound cluster /ʊn/ at the end of the words “شرٌ” and “خبيرٌ” (pronounced /ʃʌrʊn/ and /khʌbi:rʊn/) and found at the end of the verse and of many other verses of this specific *Sûrah*.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses a paraphrase to explain that this verse is about those who do not pay the obligatory *Zakâh*.

5.2.2.41 Sûrah 3 Verse 186

Source Text

لتبخلون في أموالكم وأنفسكم ولتسمعن من الذين أوتوا الكتاب من قبلكم ومن الذين أشركوا أذىً كثيراً، وإن تصدقوا وتتقوا

Control Text

“You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves, and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allâh: but if you persevere patiently, and become *Al-Muttaqûn* [the pious the believers of Islâmic Monotheism who fear Allâh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allâh much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)], then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs (and that is from the great matters which you must hold on with all your efforts).”

Pickthall

“Assuredly ye will be tried in your property and in your persons, and ye will hear much wrong from those who were given the Scripture before you, and from the idolaters. But if ye persevere and ward off (evil), then that is of the steadfast heart of things.”

Ali

“Ye shall certainly Be tried and tested In your possessions And in your personal selves: and ye shall certainly Hear much that will grieve you, From those who received The Book before you (Jews and Christians) And from those who Worship many gods. But if ye persevere Patiently, and guard Against evil, - then That will be A determining factor In all affairs.”

Asad

“You shall most certainly be tried in your possessions and in your persons: and indeed you shall hear many hurtful things from those to whom revelation was granted before your time, as well as from those who have come to ascribe divinity to other things beside God. But if you remain patient in adversity, and conscious of Him, - this, behold, is something to set one’s heart upon.”

Irving

“You will be tested by means of your wealth and through your own selves: and you hear much abuse from those who were given the Book before you, as well as those who associate [others with God]. If you are patient and do your duty, that what will determine matters.”

Ozek

“You shall certainly be tried in your possessions and in your lives: and you shall certainly hear much wrong from those who were given the Book before you [Jews and Christians], and from the idolaters. But if you persevere patiently, and fear [Allâh] these are weighty factors in all affairs.”

Abdel-Haleem

“You are sure to be tested through your possessions and persons: you are sure to hear much that is hurtful from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with God. If you are steadfast and mindful of God, that is the best course.”

Discussion

As was mentioned earlier in chapter 3, it would be clear that if the translators encounter some difficulty in translating the explicit oaths in Arabic, they will encounter even more difficulty in translating the implicit ones, because neither the object nor the verb is mentioned directly in this type of the oath.

In this verse, both of the first and second amalgamated sentences that come after the present tenses “لتبلون” and “لتسمعن” are the resultants of the implicit oaths which are “والله لتبلون” and “والله لتسمعن” which is equivalent to “by Allâh” in both of them. They are in the implicit oath, because of the assertive device “ل” which is - grammatically - amalgamated in the Arabic present tenses.

The amalgamated sentences “لتبلون” and “لتسمعن” consist of the assertive device “ل”, the verbs “تبلو” and “تسمع” and the hidden disconnected pronoun “أنتم” as a subject in both of them.

In trying to convey the meaning of the assertive device “ل” in both the Qur’anic implicit oaths in the amalgamated sentences “لتبلون” and “لتسمعن” in verse 186, the Control Text uses the long phrase “You shall certainly”, Pickthall uses the phrase “Assuredly ye will”, Ali uses the phrase “Ye shall certainly”, Asad uses the phrase “You shall most certainly”, Irving uses the phrase “You will”, Ozek uses the sentences “You shall certainly”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “You are sure”.

Although, all the translators manage to convey the meaning of the assertive device “ل” , in terms of the equivalent effect, the choice of the modal verb “You will” without any adjective or adverb of certainty, is the lesser one.

The Control Text and Ali use the verbs “be tried” and “be tested”, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use the verb “be tested” only, while Pickthall, Asad, and Ozek use the verb “be tried”, to convey the meaning of the oath “لتبلون”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “abuse” means “insulting and offensive language”, the word “test” means “ a difficult situation revealing the strength or quality of someone or something” and the word “try” means “deliberately test one’s patience”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “abuse” means “سباب”, the word “test” means “إختبار، محك”, and the word “try” means “يبتلى، يمتحن، يخضعه لتجربة” “قاسية”.

According to the definition of both dictionaries, the best choice is the word “try”, as it is a deliberate action to see the strength of the believers’ patience.

Semantically, all the translators use the assertive devices such as the modal verb - “will/shall” - and the adjective or adverb of words of assertion such as “certainly”, “assuredly” and “sure” in addition to the verbs “tried” and “tested”, to convey the spirit of the oath “لتبلون”, and the verb “hear” to convey the spirit of the oath “لتسمعن”.

In attempting to convey the proper meaning of the amalgamated sentence “أموالكم” in the implicit oaths in verse 186, the Control Text uses the phrase “your wealth and properties”, Pickthall uses the phrase “your property”, Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the phrase “your possessions”, while Irving uses the phrase “your wealth”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “possession” means “ the state of possessing something, a thing owned or possessed”, the word “property” means “a thing or things belonging to someone, a building

and the land belonging to it”, and the word “wealth” means “an abundance of valuable possessions or money”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “possession” means “تملك، حيازة”, the word “property” means “ملك، ملكية”, and the word “wealth” means “غنى، ثروة”.”

Although these words seem to be synonyms, the choices of “your wealth and properties”, “property” and “wealth” convey the meaning of the amalgamated sentence “أموالكم” more accurate than the word “possession”, because the latter covers a wide range of meanings.

Similarly, in trying to convey the meaning of the amalgamated sentence “أنفسكم” in the implicit oaths in verse 186, the Control Text and Ali use the phrase “your personal selves”, Pickthall and Asad use the phrase “your persons”, Irving uses the phrase “your own selves”, Ozek uses the phrase “your lives”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the word “person”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “person” means “a human being regarded as an individual”, and the word “selves” means “a person’s essential being that distinguishes them from others, especially considered as the object of introspection or reflexive action, of or directed towards oneself or itself”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), the word “person” means “شخص، انسان”, and the word “selves” means “أنفس”.

In his interpretation of this verse, al-Qurtubī (2001: 444) writes: “This oath was directed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his believers as they will be tried in their wealth by financial problems and by illnesses or death in their own selves.”

As such, and according to the above definition, the phrase “your own selves” is the most suitable equivalent as it covers the meaning of “لتبلونفئ أنفسكم”, the amalgamated sentences, by both illness and death.

In trying to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic sentence “الذين أشركوا” in the implicit oaths in this verse, the Control Text uses the long sentence “those who ascribe partners to Allâh”, Pickthall and Ozek use the word “the idolaters”, Ali uses the sentences “those who Worship many gods.” Asad uses the sentence “those who have come to ascribe divinity to other things beside God.”, Irving uses the sentence “those who associate [others with God]”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the sentences “those who associate others with God”.

Semantically, all these choices convey the general meaning of the Qur'ânic sentence “الذين أشركوا”.

The amalgamated sentence “أشركوا” consists of the verb “أشرك” and *waw al-jamaa* “وا” as a subject. This amalgamative structure is not reflected in translations. It also results in a wrong translation: the word “idolaters” is not accurate, because it is a noun and a direct subject to verb “أشرك”.

All the translators dealt with the implicit oaths in this verse as a conditional sentence type 2, both a promise and/or a warning.

Returning to the discrepancies which exist at the elementary sound level in the translations, the rich texture of the *Holy Qur'ân*, marked by the underlined parts of the verse, is not captured in the translations.

لتبْلونَ في أموالكم وأنفسكم ولتسمعنَ من الذين أوتوا

الكتاب من قبلكم ومن الذين أشركوا أذىً كثيراً،

وإن تصبروا وتتقوا فإن ذلك من عزم الأمور

It lost, amongst others, the assonance of *waw al-Jamaa* “و” the /u:/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “أوتوا”, “أشركوا”, “تصبروا” and “تتقوا”, as well as the consonance of the letters “كم” at the end of the amalgamated sentences “أموالكم”, “أنفسكم” and the device “قبلكم”, pronounced /ʌmwælik ʊm/, /ʌnfusikʊm/ and /gæblikʊm /, respectively.

Looking at the various discrepancies and disparities between the translators in this verse, it confirms the argument of Gregory Rabassa about the difficulty of translating the curse and oath of a poetic text to which have been referred to earlier.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the words “tried” and “tested” for the Arabic oath “لتبلون”, as well as a transliteration and enlightening paraphrases.

5.2.2.42 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 191:

Source Text

الذين يذكرون الله قياماً وقعوداً وعلى جنوبهم ويتفكرون في خلق السموات والأرض ربنا ما خلقت هذا باطلاً سبحانك فقنا عذاب النار.

Control Text

“Those who remember Allâh (always and in prayer) standing, sitting and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and earth, (saying): “Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted are You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of Fire.”

Pickthall

“Such as remember Allah, standing, sitting, and reclining, and consider the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say): Our Lord! Thou createdst not this in vain. Glory be to Thee! Preserve us from the doom of Fire!”

Ali

“Men who celebrate The praises of God standing, sitting, And lying down on their sides, And contemplate The (wonders of) creation In the heavens and the earth, (With the thought):”Our Lord! Not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us Salvation from the Penalty Of the Fire.”

Asad

“[and] who remember God when they stand, and when they sit, and when they lie down to sleep, and [thus] reflects on the creation of the heavens and earth: “Our Sustainer! Thou hast not created [aught of] this without meaning and purpose. Limitless art Thou in Thy glory! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through fire.”

Irving

“who remember God while standing, sitting, and [lying] down on their sides, and mediate on the creation of Heavens and Earth [by saying]: “Our Lord, You have not created this in vain! Glory be to You! Shield us from the torment of Fire.”

Ozek

“Those that remember Allah standing, sitting and lying down, and mediate upon the creation of the heavens and the earth. “Our Lord! You have not created this in vain. Transcendent are You! So protect us from the torment of Fire!”

Abdel-Haleem

“who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down, who reflect on the creation of the heavens and earth: ‘Our Lord! You have not created all this without purpose- You are far above that! So protect us from the torment of the Fire.’”

Discussion

The meaning of the amalgamated sentence “يتفكرون” of verse 191, is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “and think deeply about”, in Pickthall by the phrase “and reclining, and consider”, in Ali by the phrase “And contemplate The (wonders of)”, in Asad by the phrase “and [thus] reflects on”, in Irving and Ozek by the phrase “and mediate on/upon”, and in Abdel-Haleem by the phrase “reflect on”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “consider” means “think carefully about”, the word “contemplate” means “look at thoughtfully.”, the word “mediate” means “intervene in a dispute to bring about an agreement or reconciliation”, the word “reclining” means “lean or lie back in a relaxed position” and the word “reflect on/upon” means “think deeply or carefully about”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “consider” means “ يفكر فى، يتأمل ، ، يعتبر ”, the word “contemplate” means “ يتأمل، يفكر فى ”, the word “mediate” means “ يتوسط لإصلاح ذات البين ”, the word “recline” means “ ينحنى إلى الوراء، ” and the word “reflect” means “ يفكر ملياً فى ”.”

In this verse, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ own preferences. However, from the definition of both dictionaries, the word “mediate” is not a suitable choice.

The meaning of the Qur’anic term “سبحانك” in verse 191 is conveyed in the Control Text, Asad, Irving, Pickthall and Ali by the word “glory” and in Ozek by the word “transcendent” while in Abdel-Haleem by the phrase “far above that”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “glory” means “praise, worship and thanks giving, offered to God” and the word “transcendent” means “of God: existing apart from and not subject to the limitations of the material universe”.”

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 277), “they praised Allāh for not creating things without a purpose by saying “سبحانك”.” According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the Qur’anic term “سبحانك” means “Glory be to You!”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “glory” means “تمجيد، تسبيح” and the word “transcendent” means “متجاوز الحد، فائق”.” According to *Al-Misbâḥ Al-Munīr* (2008), *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muhid* (2000) and *Mukhtār Al-Sihah* (2009), the word “سبح” means “to praise Allāh the Exalted”.”

In this verse, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language is lexicalized in the target-language. In respect of translation, however, the translators must deal with the fact that the source-language word is semantically complex. The Control Text, Asad, Irving, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by cultural substitution. Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use a translation by a general expressive word.

In terms of the equivalent effect the word “glory” has more effect than the word “transcendent” and the phrase “far above”. In the end, they all manage to convey the general meaning of the Qur’ânic term “سبحانك”.

Syntactically, despite the slight differences in their structure, all of the translators succeed in maintaining the Arabic syntax. This is quite formidable, given that the amalgamated sentences “يذكرون” and “يتفكرون” consist of the verbs “يذكر” and “يتفكر” and *waw al-Jamaa* “و” as a subject in both of them respectively.

By using the phrase “lying down on their sides” the Control Text, Ali and Irving maintain the Arabic phrase “وعلى جنوبهم”, while it is not maintained in the translations of Pickthall, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem.

By using the sentence “Give us salvation from the torment of Fire”, “preserve us from the doom of Fire!”, “Give us Salvation from the Penalty Of the Fire”, “Keep us safe, then, from suffering through fire”, “Shield us from the torment of Fire”, “So protect us from the torment of Fire!” and “So protect us from the torment of the Fire” respectively, all the translators maintain the rhythm of the phrase “فقتنا عذاب النار”.

As far as the poetic strategies visible in the *Holy Qur’ân* are concerned, the translations lost the effect of the repetition of the “ى”, the assonance that is the result of *waw al-Jamaa* “و” and the recurring /ru:n/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “يذكرون” and “ويتفكرون”, which are pronounced /jəð kɔru:n/ and /jətəfəkɔru:n/. Notice can also be taken of the sound cluster /ʌn/ at the end of the words “قياماً”, “قعوداً” and “باطلاً”, which are pronounced /gɪjɑ:mʌn/, /gɔu:dʌn/ and /ba:tɪʌn/, respectively.

الذين يذكرون الله قياماً وقعوداً وعلى جنوبهم

ويتفكرون في خلق السموات والأرض ربنا ما

خلقت هذا باطلاً سبحانك فقنا عذاب النار.

الذين يذكرون الله قياماً وقعوداً وعلى جنوبهم

ويتفكرون في خلق السموات والأرض ربنا ما

خلقت هذا باطلاً سبحانك فقنا عذاب النار.

In the terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because of its use of the paraphrases to facilitate the understanding of the verse.

5.2.2.43 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 192:

Source Text

ربنا إنك من تدخل النار فقد أجزيتته وما للظالمين من أنصارٍ.

Control Text

“Our Lord! Verily, whom You admit to the Fire, indeed, You have disgraced him: and never will the *Zâlimûn* (polytheists and wrong-doers) find any helpers.”

Pickthall

“Our Lord! Whom Thou causest to enter the Fire, indeed Thou hast confounded. For evil-doers there will be no helpers.”

Ali

“Our Lord! Any whom Thou Dost admit to the Fire, Truly Thou coverest with shame, And never will wrong-doers Find any helpers!”

Asad

“O Our Sustainer! Whomsoever Thou shalt commit to the fire, him, verily, wilt Thou have brought to disgrace [in this world]: and such evildoers will have none to succour them.”

Irving

“Our Lord, anyone You sentence to the Fire, You will humiliate. Wrongdoers will have no supporters.”

Ozek

“Our Lord! Those whom You will admit to the Fire, You have humiliated them. For the unjust there are no helpers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Our Lord! You will truly humiliate those You commit to the Fire. The evildoers have no one to help them.”

Discussion

In this verse, the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أخزيتہ” is conveyed in the Control Text and Asad by the word “disgrace”, in Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem by the word “humiliate”, in Pickthall by the word “confounded”, while in Ali by the phrase “coverest with shame”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “disgrace” means “loss of reputation as the result of a dishonourable action” and the word “humiliate” means “injure the dignity and self-respect of”.”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “confounded” means “مرتبك، لعين، ”، the word “disgrace” means “يلحق به خزيًا أو عارًا” and the word “humiliate” means “يذل، يخزي”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence in this verse is because of the difference in the expressive meaning. All the translators use a strategy of a translation by a more general word.

In terms of the equivalent effect the words “disgrace” and “humiliate” have the most effect as they are the exact equivalents to the Qur’ânic term “أخزيتہ”

The word “confounded” does not convey the meaning as accurately as the other words do.

The amalgamated sentence “أخزيتہ” consists of the verb “أخزى” and the pronoun “ه” as an object. These source-language morphemes are not reflected in translations, as was alluded to at the very outset of the study..

As far as the translation of this verse is concerned, the Control Text, Asad, Irving, Pickthall and Ali use the pronoun “this” to convey the meaning of the Arabic pronoun “هـ” at the end of the Qur’anic term “أخزيته”, while Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the pronoun “those”.

However, in terms of Arabic grammar the pronoun “هـ” is the singular masculine form that is used as a relative pronoun to introduce a part of a sentence which refers to the person, thing or time you have been talking about, the pronoun “هم” is its plural masculine form.

In this case, in terms of accuracy, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem do not convey the meaning as accurately as the other translators do, because they refer the meaning of the pronoun “هـ” in the amalgamated sentence “أخزيته” to the direct plural noun “الظالمين” "those who will be in Fire in the Hereafter".

Syntactically, even though, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure by using the words “helpers” and “supporters” at the end of the verse as an equivalent of the Arabic word “وما للظالمين من أنصار”, the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali and Ozek maintain this structure, while by using the pronoun “them” as an equivalent of the direct noun “وما للظالمين من أنصار” Asad, Irving and Abdel-Haleem do not do that.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text comes closest to the original text, because by using the adverbs “verily” and “indeed” for the amalgamated assertive devices “إنك” and “فقد”, in addition to the transliteration and a paraphrase, it manages to preserve the Arabic structure.

5.2.2.44 *Sûrah* 3 Verse 196:

Source Text

لا يغررك تقلب الذين كفروا فى البلاد.

Control Text

“Let not the free disposal (and affluence) of the disbelievers throughout the land deceive

you.”

Pickthall

“Let not the vicissitude (of success) of those who disbelieve, in the land, deceive thee (O Muhammad).”

Ali

“Let not the strutting about of the Unbelievers Through the land Deceive thee.”

Asad

“LET IT NOT deceive thee that those who are bent on denying the truth seem to be able to do as they please on earth.”

Irving

“Do not let it deceive you how those who disbelieve bustle about the land.”

Ozek

“Let not the strutting of the disbelievers in the land beguile you.”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Prophet], do not be deceived by the disbelievers’ [lucrative] trading to and fro in the land.”

Discussion

In attempting to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “تقلب” in verse 196, the Control Text uses the phrase “free disposal” and a phrase “affluence”, Irving uses the phrase “bustle about”, Asad uses the sentence “seem to be able to do as they please”, Ozek, and Ali uses the word “strut”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “lucrative trading to and fro”, while Pickthall uses the word “vicissitude”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “affluence” means “wealthy”, the word “bustle” means “move in an energetic and busy

manner”, the word “strutting” means “walk with a stiff erect, and conceit gait, dance or behave in a confident and expressive way” and the word “vicissitude” means “a change of circumstances or fortune, typically for the worse, alternation between contrasting things”.”

In his interpretation of the Qur’ânic term “تقلب”, Ibn Kathîr (2010: 278) writes:

“this verse was revealed as a reply to the Muslims’ question to the Prophet ﷺ about the prospering trade of the disbelievers, while they were starving, So Allâh told them that it was just a brief worldly enjoyment with Hell in the Hereafter. It was a comfort to the Muslims.”

A similar explanation is given by al-Qurṭubî (2001: 451).

Semantically, in this verse, there is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, albeit with a difference in expressive meaning.

All the translators use a strategy of a translation in terms of their own preferences.

The root meaning of the word “تقلب” does not explicitly mean “wealth”, per se. The Control Text and Abdel-Haleem use a strategy of a translation by a paraphrase using related words. According to the reason of the revelation of the verse, the sentence “seem to be able to do as they please”, the phrase “bustle about” and the word “strutting” convey the sense of the word “تقلب” without an indication to the richness or poverty. The word “vicissitude” is a literal equivalent for the Arabic word “تقلب”.

Asad’s translation shows the difficulty of finding a single equivalent for the most of the Qur’ânic words.

As such, the Control Text and Abdel-Haleem convey the meaning of the verse more accurately than the other translators do.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

In this verse, yet another closing sound cluster is present, this time as /æd/ at the end of the word “البلاد”, which is pronounced /əlbɪlæd/. Mention has been made on a number of occasions about the presence of the way in which a number of similar sound clusters at the end of verses act as formal elements of structuring this *Sûrah*. This specific cluster, for instance, appears at the end of the verse following this one, in the word “المهاد”, which is pronounced /əl mɪhæd/, but is found at intervals throughout the 200 verses of this very long *Sûrat Âl-‘Imrân*

In terms of closeness, the translation of Irving is as close as possible to the original text, because by using the pronoun “who” for the Arabic pronoun “الذين” and the verb “disbelieve” for the verb in the amalgamated sentence “كفروا”, it follows the Arabic structure of the verse.

5.2.3 The 12th *Sûrah* - *Sûrat Yûsuf* “Prophet Joseph”

The different translated versions of some verses from the 12th *Sûrah* - *Sûrat Yûsuf* (Prophet Joseph) - will now be considered.

The reasons for selecting the 12th *Sûrah* are the following:

- This *Sûrah* has an unusual structural unity and narrative qualities, Roger Allen (2003:59) writes:

The *surah* that has attracted much attention in both Arabic and other languages for its unusual structural unity and narrative qualities is *Surat Yusuf* (12, Joseph). The elements of the narrative – Joseph’s dream and its interpretation, the duplicity of his brothers, the attempted seduction of Joseph by Potiphar’s wife, the imprisonment and recognition scenes – these are all well known from the account in Genesis (chs. 37–50).

- It begins with the abbreviated letters “ألر”, one of the Qur’anic-specific features found at the beginning of some *Sûrahs*.
- It contains many culture-specific archaic words[s], such as the words “يرتع، العير”. Nowadays people use “يأكل”, which is equivalent for “eat”, instead of “يرتع”, and “الجمال” which is equivalent for “camels” instead of “العير”.
- It illustrates/demonstrates some specific linguistic differences between Arabic and English, which could cause a problem for the translators,

an example being the word “كظيم”.

- It has some poetic features, which might not be replicated in translation. All verses end with either the letter “ن” or the letter “م”.
- It contains some oaths which might not be reflected in translation.

5.2.3.1 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 1:

Source Text

ألر تلك آيات الكتاب المبين.

Control Text

“*Alif-Lâm-Râ* [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings]. These are the Verses of the Clear Book (the Qur’ân that makes clear the legal and illegal things, laws, a guidance and a blessing).”

Pickthall

“*Alif Lam Ra. These are verses of the Scripture that maketh plain.*”

Ali

“*Alif Lam. Ra. These are The symbols (or Verses) Of the Perspicuous Book.*”

Asad

“*Alif Lam Ra.*” *THESE ARE MESSAGES of a revelation clear in itself and clearly showing the truth.*”

Irving

“*A. L. R. These are verse from the Clear Book.*”

Ozek

“*Alif. Lam. Ra. These are the signs [or “the verses”] of the Manifest Book.*”

Abdel-Haleem

“*Alif Lam Ra. These are the verses of the Scripture that makes things clear.*”

Discussion

The meaning or sounds of the abbreviated Arabic letters “ألر” in verse 1 in the Control Text, Asad, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali is conveyed by a transliteration “Alif-lâm-Râ”, and in Irving by the English alphabet “A.L.R”.

Semantically, in this verse, the problem of non-equivalence is because of a language-barrier reflected within a Qur’ânic idiosyncrasy. This source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language.

The Control text uses a strategy of a translation by a paraphrase using related words. Asad, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali use a technique of a translation by transliteration. Irving uses a strategy of cultural substitution by replacing them with the English alphabet “A.L.R”.

However, because Irving's translation was/is not accompanied by the Arabic text of the *Holy Qur’ân*, or the audio-recitation of the *Holy Qur’ân*, the non-native Arabic speaker who has never listened to their Arabic Qur’ânic pronunciation which is “/ʌlif/, /la:m/ and /mi:m/”, presumably may read them with their English names or sounds “/ei/, /el/and /a:[r] /” , which are incorrect.

As such, Irving does not convey the meaning of these Qur’ânic letters at all.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “the Clear” and a long paraphrase “the *Qur’ân* that makes clear the legal and illegal things, laws, a guidance and a blessing”, Pickthall uses the phrase “maketh plain.”, Ali uses “Perspicuous”, Asad uses a long sentence “clear in itself and clearly showing the truth.”, Irving uses the phrase “the Clear.”, Ozek uses the phrase “the Manifest.”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “makes things clear.” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “المبين”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 190), “the word “المبين” means “The *Qur’ân* that is clear in itself and that makes ambiguous statement clear”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “clear” means “easy to perceive or understand”. The word “manifest” means “clear or obvious to the eye or mind”, the word “perspicuous” means “clearly expressed and easily understood: lucid” and the word “plain” means “easy to perceive or understand: clear”.”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “clear” means “واضح، جلي”، the word “manifest” means “واضح، جلي، ظاهر”، the word “perspicuous” means “سهل، واضح، سهل” and the word “plain” means “جلي، واضح، سهل”.”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The different choices show the difference in the translators’ ability of the target-language.

As far as conveying the meaning of this verse is concerned, all the translators manage to do so. However, by using the strategies of paraphrase and explanation, the Control Text, Asad and Abdel-Haleem manage to convey the meaning of this verse clearer

In the discussion of the long 3rd *Sûrah*, the remarkable phenomenon of the closing sound clusters was mentioned on a couple of occasions. The same holds true for this one and its 111 verses all end with one of three clusters: /u:n/, /i:n/ or /i:m/. In the case of Verse 1, it is /i:n/, found in the word “المبين” , pronounced /læmʊbi:n/ and many other verses of this *Sûrah*, such as the words “يكون”, “صادقين”, and “أليم”, which pronounced /jəbku: /, /sædɪgi:n/ and /əli:m/, in verses 16, 17 and 25, respectively.

أر تلك آيات الكتاب المبين

In the terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the Arabic sound of the

abbreviated letters and an elaborated explanation, without which they will be meaningless to readers from other societies.

5.2.3.2 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 2:

Source Text

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ.

Control Text

“Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’ân in order that you may understand.”

Pickthall

“*Lo! We have revealed it, a lecture in Arabic, that ye may understand.*”

Ali

“*We have sent it down As an Arabic Quran, In order that ye may Learn wisdom.*”

Asad

“*Behold, We have bestowed it from on high as a discourse in the Arabic tongue, so that you might encompass it with your reason.*”

Irving

“*We have sent it down as an Arabic reading so that you may reason.*”

Ozek

“*We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran, which you may understand.*”

Abdel-Haleem

“*We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’ân so that you [people] may understand.*”

Discussion

In verse 2 the Control Text, Abdel-Haleem, Ozek and Ali use a transliteration “*Qur’ân*” to convey the meaning of the Arabic name “قرءاناً”, Asad uses the English word “discourse”, Irving uses the word “reading”, while Pickthall uses the word “lecture”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), the word “discourse” means “written or spoken communication or debate, a text or conversation”, the word “lecture” means “an educational talk to an audience, especially one of the students in a university, a long serious speech, especially one given as scolding or reprimand.” The word “*Qur’ân*” means “Arabic spelling of Koran” and the word “reading” means “the action or skill of reading, an instance of something being read to an audience”.

Muslims unanimously believed/believe from the first day that the *Holy Qur’ân* is the direct words of Allâh that were revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by Allâh through the Archangel Gabriel. In this respect the term “The *Qur’ân*” with the definite article or without it, was mentioned 58 times in different verses of the *Holy Qur’ân*, which means that this term was chosen by Allâh Himself. To give just an example of a definite article in verse 2 of *Sûrat Yâ-Sîn* (CT 38:2):

“By the *Qur’ân*, full of wisdom (i.e. full of laws, evidences and proofs)”.

والقرءان الحكيم

Therefore Muslims consider any alteration to the content of “the *Holy Qur’ân*”, from the first to the last verse, as a distortion of their Holy Book.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because this is a culture-specific concept. The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language.

The Control Text, Abdel-Haleem, Ozek and Ali use a strategy of a translation by way of the loan word “*Qur’ân*” (the *Qur’ân* is in the entry of the *Concise Oxford dictionary*), while Asad, Irving and Pickthall use a strategy of a

translation by cultural substitution. In the process, Asad, Irving and Pickthall misinterpret the specific Arabic name of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical pattern. However, while the Control Text, Pickthall and Asad maintain the assertive device “إِنَّ”، which is assimilated into the pronoun “إِنَّا”، Ali, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem omit it from their translation.

The Control Text, Pickthall, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “understand” to convey the meaning of the amalgamated sentence “تعقلون”، Ali uses the phrase “learn wisdom,” Asad uses the phrase “encompass it with your reason”, while Irving, uses the word “reason”.

The amalgamated sentence “تعقلون” consists of the verb “تعقل” and *wâw al-Jama`a* “و”، as a subject.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “encompass” means “surround and have or hold within”, the word “learn” means “acquire knowledge of or skill in something through study or experience or by being taught”, the word “reason” means “cause, explanation, or justification”, the word “understand” means “perceive the indented meaning of words, speaker, or a language”, while the word “wisdom” means “the quality of being wise”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “encompass” means “يطوق، يشمل،” the word “learn” means “يُتعلَّم، يدرِّس، يحفظ عن ظهر قلب”، the word “reason” means “سبب، داع، مبرر، تفسير، عقل، صواب، رشد”، the word “understand” means “يفهم، يدرك” and the word “wisdom” means “معرفة، حكمة”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

In terms of accuracy, looking at the definitions in both dictionaries, the phrase “learn wisdom” is inaccurate in conveying the meaning of the Arabic clause “تعقلون”.

In terms of equivalent effect, the word “understand” is more effective than the other choices.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical pattern. However, the Control Text, Pickthall and Asad maintain the assertive device “إِنَّ”, which is assimilated into the pronoun “إِنَّا”, while Ali, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem omit it from their translation.

Even if this is a short verse, the intensity of its tonality in Arabic is quite remarkable, as is clear by the underlining:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ.

This is the partly the result of *At-Tanwīn*, where the *fathatān* at the end of the words “قُرْءَانًا” and “عَرَبِيًّا” are pronounced /gʊɑ:nʌn/ and /ʌrʌbjʌn/, respectively, being in the accusative. This further contributes to the very strong presence of the sound of the letter “ن”, /un/, in the words “إِنَّا”, “أَنْزَلْنَاهُ”, “تَعْقِلُونَ” and “قُرْءَانًا”.

Very apparent, for instance, is the loss of the sound clusters are /ʌn/ at the end of the words “قُرْءَانًا” and “عَرَبِيًّا”, which are pronounced /gʊɑ:nʌn/ and /ʌrʌbjʌn/, as well as the sound cluster is /u:n/ at the end of the amalgamated sentence “تَعْقِلُونَ”, which is pronounced /tʌʌgɪlu:n/, at the end of this verse and many other verses of this *Sûrah*.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the adverb “verily” for the assertive device “إِنَّ”, in addition to the name “an Arabic *Qur’ân*”, for the words “قُرْءَانًا” and “عَرَبِيًّا”.

5.2.3.3 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 8:

Source Text

إِذْ قَالُوا لِيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْنَا مِمَّا نَحْنُ عَصِيْبَةٌ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ.

Control Text

“When they said: “Truly, Yûsuf (Joseph) and his brother (Benjamin) are dear to our father than we, while we are a strong group. Really, our father is in a plain error.”

Pickthall

“When they said: “Joseph and his brother are dear to our father than we are, even though we are a closed group. Our father is clearly mistaken.”

Ali

“They said: “Truly Joseph and his brother are loved more by our father than we: But we are a goodly body! Really our father is obviously wandering (in his mind)!”

Asad

“Now, [Joseph’s brothers] spoke [thus to one another:] “Truly, Joseph and his brother [Benjamin] are dearer to our father than we, even though we are so many. Behold, our father is surely suffering from an aberration!”

Irving

“When they said: “Joseph and his brother are dear to our father than we are, even though we are a closed group. Our father is clearly mistaken.”

Ozek

“They said [to each other]: “Surely Joseph and his [full] brother [Benjamin] are dearer to our father than ourselves, although we are numerous. Our father is indeed in manifest error.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The brothers said [to each other], “Although we are many, Joseph and his brother are dearer to our father than we are - our father is clearly in the wrong.”

Discussion

The meaning of the Qur’ânic term “ونحن عصابة” is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “a strong group”, in Pickthall by the sentence “many

though we be”, in Ali by the sentence “but we are a goodly body”, in Asad by the sentence “even though we are so many”, in Irving by the phrase “a closed group”, in Ozek by the sentence “although we are numerous”, while in Abdel-Haleem we find “Although we are many”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “body” means “an organized group of people”, the word “group” means “a number of people or things located, gathered, or classed together”, the word “many” means “a large number of” and the word “numerous” means “consisting of many members”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “body” means “جماعة”, the word “group” means “جماعة، زمرة”, the word “many” means “كثير، متعدد” and the word “numerous” means “عديد، متعدد، كثير، وافر”.”

According to the *Concordance of the Qurānic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005), “the word “عصبة” means “group”.” According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 236), al-Qurṭubī (2001:461) and Ibn Kathīr (2010: 191), “the word “عصبة” means “a group”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators' personal preferences.

The Control Text and Ozek use the word “error” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “ضلالٍ”, Pickthall and Irving use “mistaken”, Ali uses “wandering (in his mind)!””, Asad uses “an aberration!” and Abdel-Haleem uses “wrong”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “aberration” means “a temporary mental lapse”, the word “error” means “a mistake, the state of being wrong in conduct or judgement”, the word “wander” means “walk or move in a leisurely or aimless way” and the word “wrong” means “not correct or true”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “aberration” means “ضلال، زيغ، انحراف”, the word “error” means “غلط، خطأ، غلطة، إثم””, the word “wander” means “يتجول، يطوف حول، يخالط في عقله” and the word “wrong” means “الخطأ، الضلال”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence could result because of a difference in expressive meaning. The source-language concept, however, is lexicalized in the target-language. The choice is based on personal preferences.

In terms of equivalent effect, the word “aberration” is more effective than the other choices are. Although, the word “error” is interchangeable with the word “wrong”, looking at the definitions given by both dictionaries it is inaccurate in conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “ضلال” in this context.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the word “plain” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “مبين”, Pickthall, Irving and Abdel-Haleem use “clearly”, Ali uses “obviously”, Asad uses “surely” and Ozek “manifest”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “clearly” means “with clarity, obviously: without doubt”, the word “manifest” means “clear or obvious”, the word “obviously” means “easily perceived or understand: clear”, the word “plain” means “easily perceived or understand: clear” and the word “surely” means “must be true that (used for emphasis)”.”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “clearly” means “بوضوح، بجلاء”, the word “manifest” means “ظاهر، واضح، جلي”, the word “obviously” means “بوضوح، بجلاء”, the word “plain” means “واضح، جلي” and the word “surely” means “بثبات، بثقة، من غير ريب”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence since the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

In terms of equivalent effect, all the choices are interchangeable, which means that they have the same result, except in the case of Asad, who omits the word

من غير ريب أو شك إنَّ أبانا“ from his translation. His back translation will be “يعانى من إختلال ذهنى”.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure. However, by using the phrases “Yûsuf (Joseph)”, (Benjamin), “(in his mind)!””, “[Joseph’s brothers]” “[thus to one another:]”, “[Benjamin]”, “[to each other]” and “[full]” between brackets, The Control Text. Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem create level of meanings which are not visible in the original text.

Creating levels of meaning that are not visible in the original text also apply in respect of the words “strong”, “goodly” and “closed” used by the Control Text, Ali and Irving, respectively.

Asad adds some information which is not visible in the context to explain the meaning of the conjunction and the verb “إذ قالوا”, Irving omits the assertive device “ل”, which comes before the name of “يوسف”, Ozek omits the conjunction “إذ”, which comes at the beginning of the sentence, and Abdel-Haleem omits the conjunction “إذ”, which comes in the beginning of the sentence as well as the prefix “ل” from the name of “يوسف”.

The amalgamated sentence “قالوا” is plural masculine form consists of the verb “قال” and *wâw al-Jama`a* “و” as a subject. As has been shown before, the construction and the accompanying morphemes are not (and can not be) reflected in the translations.

Considering the very prominent sound texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, marked by the underlined parts of the verse below, it is clear that the translations fail to reflect this.

إذ قالوا ليوسف وأخوه أحب إلى أبينا منا ونحن عصبة إنَّ أبانا لفي ضلال مبين.

This is the result, for instance, of the loss of the assonance stemming from the prevalence of the letters “نا” at the end of the the device “إننا” and at the end of the words “أبينا” and “أبانا”. In addition, the prominent sound cluster /næ/ found

in the end of the words “أبانا”, “أبانا”, and pronounced /ʌbi:næ/, /mɪnæ/ and /ʌbænæ/, is not replicated.

As far as this important closing sound cluster is concerned, it is /i:n/ in this instance, at the end of the word “مبين”, pronounced /mubi:nɪn/. As stated earlier, this sound cluster is found at the end of many verses of this specific *Sûrah*.

Even though Ali omits the adverb “إذ” from his translation, by using the adverbs “truly” for the amalgamated assertive device “ليوسف”, the adverb “really” for the assertive device “إن” and the phrase “a goodly body” for the word “عصبة” without adding any level of meaning that was not visible in the verse, his translation is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.3.4 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 10:

Source Text

قال قائل منهم لا تقتلوا يوسف وألقوه فى غيابت الجب يلتقطه بعض السيارة إن كنتم فاعلين.

Control Text

“One from among them said: “Kill not Yusuf (Joseph), but if you must do something, throw him down to the bottom of a well: he will be picked up by some caravan of travellers.”

Pickthall

“One among them said: “Kill not Joseph but, if you must be doing, fling him into the depth of the pit: some caravan will find him.”

Ali

“Said one of them: “Slay not Joseph, but if ye must do something, throw him down to the bottom of the well: he will be picked up by some caravan of travellers.”

Asad

“Another of them said:” Do not slay Joseph, but rather - if you must do something - cast him

into the dark depths of this well, [whence] some caravan may pick him up.”

Irving

“One among them spoke up and said: “Don’t Kill Joseph, toss him into the bottom of the cistern: so some travellers may pick him up, if you must do something.”

Ozek

“One of them said: “Do not kill Joseph, but cast him into the depth of the pit; some caravan will find him, if you must do something!”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Another of them] said, ‘Do not kill Joseph, but, if you must, throw him into the hidden depths of a well where some caravan may pick him up.’”

Discussion

In verse 10, the Control Text, Asad, Abdel-Haleem and Ali use the word “well” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic specific term “غيايت الجب”, Irving uses the word “cistern”, while Ozek and Pickthall use the word “pit”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “cistern” means “a water storage tank, especially as part of a flushing toilet”, the word “pit” means “a large hole in the ground, a mine or excavation for coal or minerals” and the word “well” means “a shaft sunk into the ground to obtain water, oil, gas, water spring or fountain”.

According to al-Qurtubī (2001: 336) and Ibn Kathīr (2010: 211) “the Qur’ânic specific term “غيايت الجب” means “a well”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “cistern” means “صهريج، حوض”, the word “pit” means “حفرة”, while the word “well” means “ينوع، بئر”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, but with a clear difference in their expressive meaning.

As far as the the accurate meaning is concerned, the Arabic word “دلو” which is a bucket that is fixed to a rope for drawing water from a well, shows that Joseph’s brothers threw him into a well. This meaning is confirmed in the context of the verse 19 of this *Sûrah*, which reads:

And there came a caravan of travellers and they sent their water-drawer, and he let down his bucket (into the well). He said:
“What good news! Here is a boy.” So they hid him as merchandise (a slave). And Allâh was All-Knower of what they did.

وجاءت سيارة فأرسلوا واردهم، فأدلى دلوه قال يا بشرى
هذا غلام وأسروه بضاعة، والله عليم بما يفعلون

The choices found in the translations are based on translators’ preferences. However, by using “pit” and “cistern”, Pickthall, Irving, and Ozek misinterpret the Qur’ânic specific term “غيابت الجب”, and in the process they create levels of meanings which are not visible in the original text.

Syntactically, by putting the clause “إن كنتم فاعلين” at the end of the verse, the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali and Asad do not follow the Arabic grammatical structure, while Irving and Ozek do. In the beginning of his translation Ali also follows it literally by putting the verb “said” in front of the subject “قال قائل” which does not follow the English grammatical pattern that places the subject before the verb.

It may be worth mentioning again that one of the peculiarly Arabic grammatical constructs, the amalgamated sentence, consistently leads to a in loss of intensity in translation and provides clear evidence why comparisons at the level of the morpheme can hardly be productive. In this verse this amalgamated sentence, visible as “تقتلوا”, consists of the verb “تقتل” and *waw al-Jamaa* “و” as a subject.

This construct very often also contributes to the rich sound texture of the *Holy Qur’ân* : In this verse the repeated cluster /hʊ/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “ألقوه” and “يلتقطه”, which are pronounced /ʌlɡu:hʊ/ and /jəltəɡɪthʊ/, is not reflected in the translations.

The verse ends with the word “فاعلين”, pronounced /fæili:n/ , the final sound cluster, /i:n/, confirming the remarkable role played by verse closures in composing an encompassing structure for a whole *Sûrah*, and in the process, eventually, the entire the *Holy Qur’ân* .

قال قائل منهم لا تقتلوا يوسف وألقوه فى

غيابت الجب يلتقطه بعض السيارة إن كنتم فاعلين

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses the phrase “down to the bottom of a well” for the Arabic word “غيابت الجب”, in addition to the transliteration of the name of Yusuf (Joseph).

5.2.3.5 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 14:

Source Text

قالوا لنن أكله الذئب ونحن عصبة إنا إذا لخاسرون.

Control Text

“They said: “If a wolf devours him, while we are a strong group, (to guard him), then surely, we are the losers.”

Pickthall

“They said, “If the wolf should devour him, when we are (so strong) a band, then surely we should have already perished.”

Ali

“They said: if the wolf were to devour him while we are (so large) a party, Then should we indeed (First) have perished ourselves.”

Asad

“Said they: “Surely, if the wolf were to devour him notwithstanding that we are so many -

then, behold, we ought ourselves to perish.”

Irving

“They said: “How could a wolf eat him, when we are a closed group? Then, we would be losers!”

Ozek

They said: “if the wolf devour him while we are numerous, then we should surely be losers!”

Abdel-Haleem

“They said: “If a wolf were to eat him, when there are so many of us, we would truly be losers!”

Discussion

In verse 14, the Control Text, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “losers” to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “لخاسرون”, while Asad, Pickthall and Ali use the word “perish”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 192), “the Arabic phrase “لخاسرون” means “عاجزون”, which means “failures or losers”.” A similar interpretation was given by al-Qurṭubī (2001: 463).

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “devour” means “to eat all of something quickly, especially because you are very hungry”, the word “eat” means “to put food in your mouth, chew it and swallow it”, the word “loser” means “a person or thing that loses or has lost” and the word “perish” means “die, especially in a violent or sudden way, suffer complete ruin or destruction”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “devour” means “يلتهم، يفترس”, the word “eat” means “يأكل، يلتهم”, the word “loser” means “الخاسر” and the word “perish” means “يهلك، يفنى، يموت، يفسد”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language and the different choices reflect the translators' personal preferences.

As such, the Control Text, Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem manage to convey the meaning of the source-language concept, but Asad, Pickthall and Ali misinterpret the meaning of the Arabic phrase "لخاسرون".

Syntactically, all of the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, but the amalgamative constructions "قالوا" and "لخاسرون" cannot be reflected in its denseness and means that they are deconstructed into their various segments in the translations.

The poetic nature of the text, lost in the translations, can be demonstrated by the repeated /l/ sound in the amalgamated sentences "قالوا", "لئن", "أكله" and "لخاسرون", as well as the repeated sound /n/, at the end of the device "إذاً", at the end of the word "نحن", and at the end of the amalgamated sentences "لئن", and "لخاسرون":

قالوا لئن أكله الذئب ونحن عصية إنا إذا لخاسرون.

By using the verb "eat" as an exact equivalent of the Arabic verb "أكل" which is in the amalgamated sentence "أكل له", the translations of Irving and Abdel-Haleem come closest to the original text.

5.2.3.6 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 22:

Source Text

ولما بلغ أشده آتيناه حكماً وعلماً وكذلك نجزي المحسنين.

Control Text

"And when he [Yusuf (Joseph)] attained his manhood, We gave him wisdom and knowledge (the Prophethood): thus We reward the *Muhsinûn* (doers of good)."

Pickthall

“And when he reached his prime, We gave him wisdom and knowledge: Thus We reward the good.”

Ali

“When Joseph attained his full manhood, We gave him power and knowledge: thus do We reward those who do right.”

Asad

“And when he reached full manhood, We bestowed upon him the ability to judge [between right and wrong], as well as [innate] knowledge: for thus do We reward the doers of good.”

Irving

“When he became of age, We gave him discretion and knowledge: thus We reward those who act kindly.”

Ozek

“And when Joseph reached his full manhood, We bestowed on him wisdom and knowledge. Thus do We reward those who act with excellence.”

Abdel-Haleem

“And when he reached maturity, We gave him judgement and knowledge: this is how We reward those who do good.”

Discussion

The meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أشده” in verse 22, is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “his manhood”, in Pickthall by the phrase “his prime”, in Ali by the phrase “his full manhood”, in Asad and Ozek by the phrase “full manhood”, in Irving by the phrase “of age”, while in Abdel-Haleem the choice is for the word “maturity”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the expression “come of age” means “when a person comes of age, they reach the age when they have an adult’s legal right and responsibilities”. The word “manhood” means “the state or a period of being a man rather than a child”. The word “mature/maturity” means “fully developed physically; full grown, the state, fact, or period of being mature” and the word “prime” means “a state or time of greatest vigour or success in a person’s life” .”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the expression “come of age” means “ يبلغ سن الرشد”. The word “manhood” means “الرجولية، سن الرجولة”. The word “maturity” means “نضج، رشد، إدراك” and the word “prime” means “ فاتحة، مطلع، ”. ”صدر، شباب”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because of a difference in expressive meaning. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language and the different choices reflect the translators’ preferences.

The translation is, however, again compounded by the presence of the amalgamated sentence “أشده” ., but all the translators manage to convey its general meaning.

In terms of equivalent effect, the word “manhood” is more effective than the other choices, because it covers all the possible range of a man’s life after childhood.

The meaning of the Qur’anic term “المحسنين” in verse 22, is conveyed in the Control Text by a transliteration “the *Muhsinûn*” and a paraphrase “doers of good”, in Asad and Abdel-Haleem by the phrase “the doers of good”, in Irving by the clause “those who act kindly”, in Ozek by the clause “those who act with excellence” and in Ali by the clause “those who do right”. Pickthall opts for “the good”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 194), “the Qur’anic term “المحسنين” means “those who act according to Allāh’s instruction.”.” According to al-Qurtubī (2001: 467), “the Qur’anic term “المحسنين” means “The believers or those who

show patience in the difficulty”.” According to *the Dictionary of Islamic term* (2010), “the Qur’ânic term: “ “muhsin” “محسن” means “good doer, one who does well, act righteously, a righteous man, beneficent, charitable”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “good” “has many different meanings one of them is that which is morally right: righteousness”. The word “excellence” means “The quality of being excellent, an outstanding feature or quality”. The word “kindly” means “in a kind manner” and the word “right” means “morally good, justified, or acceptable”.”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “excellence” means “تفوق، امتياز، ”ميزة، فضيلة”، the verb “good” means “إحسان، جيد، إلحاح”، the verb “kindly” means “عطف، كريم، رقيق الفؤاد” and the word “right” means “صحيح، مناسب، ملائم”.”

Semantically, the problem of apparent non-equivalence is because of a difference in expressive meaning, because the source-language concept is, after all, lexicalized in the target-language.

The choices are based on the translators personal preferences. If the definition found in both dictionaries are used as being correct, the adverb “kindly”, used by Irving, is inaccurate in conveying the meaning of the Arabic word “المحسنين”.

The different phrases “the *Muhsinûn* (doers of good)”, “the good” “those who do right” “the doers of good”, “those who act kindly”, “those who act with excellence” and “those who do good”, reflect the difficulty of translating not only metaphorical language but also the ostensibly simple words. It also again demonstrates the dangers of comparing translations originating from different eras.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical pattern.

In terms of the equivalent effect the words “good and right” have a stronger effect than the “kindly and excellence”.

The word “المحسنين” is a plural word consisting of the root form “المحسن” and *waw al-Jamaa* “و” which changes into the vowel “ى” because it is in an accusative form. These morphemes are not reflected in Pickthall’s translation, because by using the phrase “the good” he changes the meaning of the word “المحسنين” from the persons/doers of good and right, to the act/ practice of the theme, while the other translators do not do so.

In terms of accuracy, however, it is interesting that none of the translators manage to convey the religious concept of the word “المحسنين” in the way in which it was interpreted by Ibn Kathīr and al-Qurṭubī.

In terms of closeness, the translation of Ali is the closest to the original text, because it uses the word “power” for the Arabic word “حكماً”, which correctly describes what had happened to Joseph - later - in the prison, when he interpreted the King’s dream and as a result later became a ruler of Egypt himself.

5.2.3.7 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 24:

Source Text

ولقد همت به وهم بها لولا أن رأى برهان ربه، كذلك لنصرف عنه السوء والفحشاء إنه من عبادنا المخلصين.

Control Text

“And indeed she did desire him, and he would have inclined to her desire, had he not seen the evidence of his Lord. Thus We warded off evil and sexual misconduct from him. He was one of Our sincere servants.”

Pickthall

“She verily, desired him, and he would have desired her, if it had not been that he saw the argument of his Lord. Thus it was, that We might ward off from him evil and lewdness. Lo! He was one of Our chosen slaves.”

Ali

“And (with passion) did she desire him, and he would have desired her, but that he saw the

evidence of his Lord: thus (Did We order) that We might turn away from him (all) evil and shameful deeds: For he was one of Our servants, Sincere and purified.”

Asad

“And, indeed, she desired him, and he desired her; [and he would have succumbed] had he not seen [in this temptation] an evidence of his Sustainer’s truth: thus [We willed it to be] in order that We might avert from him all evil and all deeds of abomination- for, behold, he was truly one of Our servants.”

Irving

“She kept him on her mind, while he would have had her on his, had it not been that he saw a proof from his Lord. Thus it was, that We might turn away from him evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely, he was one of Our chosen (guided) slaves.”

Ozek

“She moved towards him and he moved toward her, but he saw the sign of his Lord. Thus We warded off from him indecency and evil, for he was one of our servants, whom we chose to be most purified.”

Abdel-Haleem

“She made for him, and he would have succumbed to her, if he had not seen evidence of his Lord- We did this in order to keep evil and indecency away from him, for he was truly one of Our chosen servants.”

Discussion

In verse 24, the Control Text, Asad, Pickthall and Ali use the word “desire” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “همت به”, Irving uses the sentence “She kept him on her mind”, Ozek uses the sentence “She moved towards him”, while Abdel-Haleem uses sentence “She made for him”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2010: 468),” the Qur’ānic term “همت به” means “she desired to have illegal sexual intercourse with him”. According to *Mukhtār Al-Ṣiḥāḥ* (2009), the verb “هم بالشئ” means “أراده” which means “want/desire”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “desire” means “a strong feeling of wanting to have or wishing for something to happen”, the phrase “make for” means “move towards”, and the phrase “put one in mind” means “thinking about him”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “desire” means “يرغب”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is caused by the fact that the source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language.

The Control Text, Asad, Pickthall and Ali use a translation by cultural substitution, while Irving, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use a strategy of a translation by a paraphrase using related words.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word “desire” has the most effect.

In this verse, the Control Text, Ali, Asad, Abdel-Haleem use the word “evidence”, Pickthall uses the word “argument”, Irving uses the word “proof”, while Ozek uses the word “sign” to convey the meaning of the word “برهان”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

In terms of the equivalent effect, however, the choice of “argument” is the least effective.

The Control Text uses the sentence “We warded off evil and sexual misconduct from him” to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “لنصرف عنه”, Pickthall uses the sentence “Thus it was, that We might ward off from him”, Ali uses the sentence “thus (Did We order) that We might turn away from him”, Asad uses the sentence “thus [We willed it to be] in order that We might avert from him”, Irving uses the sentence “Thus it was, that We might turn away from him”, Ozek uses the sentence “Thus We warded off from him” and Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “We did this in order to keep evil and indecency away from him”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “avert” means “turn away (one’s eyes or thoughts), prevent or ward off (undesirable occurrence)”, the phrase “keep from” means “keep from (or keep someone from) avoid (or cause someone to avoid) doing something”, and the phrase “ward someone/something off” means “prevent someone or something from harming or affecting one”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the verb “avert” means “يحول بصره عن،” and the verb “ward off” means “يتفادى، يرد، يصد”.”

Semantically, although the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language, the choice of longer English sentences, whether with paraphrases or not, that are used by all the translators for conveying the meaning of the Arabic sentence “لنصرف عنه”، reflects the difficulty of finding the exact equivalent in the target-language.

Syntactically, all the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, save the Control Text and Abdel-Haleem who change the word order of the object “السوء والفحشاء” which in back-translation will be “لنصرف السوء والفحشاء عنه”.

Later in the verse the Control Text uses the phrase “illegal sexual intercourse” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “الفحشاء”, Asad uses the phrase “all deeds of abomination”, Irving uses the phrase “sexual misconduct”, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “indecent”, Pickthall uses the word “lewdness” and Ali uses the phrase “shameful deeds”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “abomination” means “a cause of hatred or disgust”, the word “evil” means “extremely wicked and immoral”, the word “indecent” means “not conforming with generally accepted standards of behaviour or propriety, especially in relation to sexual matters”, the word “lewdness” means “crude and offensive in a sexual way” and the word “misconduct” means “unacceptable or improper behaviour”.”

According to *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muhid* (2000), “the word “فاحشة” means “illegal sexual intercourse and all great hideous sins”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence arises from the fact that the source language and the target-language make different distinctions in meaning. The source-language concept, however, is lexicalized in the target-language. In Arabic there is no lexical or cultural differences between the Qur’ânic terms “فاحشة”, and “الفحشاء”, because both of them are derived from the same root form which is “فحش”.

The Control Text uses a transliteration and a paraphrase using related words. The other translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution. The concept of shameful, evil and shocking deeds may differ according to the cultural differences, that is to say what is acceptable in one culture could be unacceptable in another, something that was raised earlier in this study.

In terms of the equivalent effect the words “evil, shameful” and “shocking” have more effect.

The phrase “illegal sexual intercourse” conveys the concept of the Qur’ânic term “الفحشاء” more accurate than the other words do, because it connects the meaning of the word with the act of sexual intercourse out of the wedlock. The concept of “الفحشاء” was a most serious sin in the Arab culture before Islâm and remains so in Islâm itself.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

By using the phrase “with passion” , Ali adds some information which is not visible in the context.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “sincere servants” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “المخلصين”, Pickthall uses ‘Our chosen slaves’, Ali “sincere and purified” and Asad “one of Our servants”. Irving uses “Our chosen (guided) slaves”, Ozek “whom we chose to be the most purified” and Abdel-Haleem “Our chosen servants”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 196), “the Qur’ānic term “المخلصين”, means “those who are purified/chosen/selected by Allāh”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “chosen”, is the past participle of “choose”, which means “pick out as being the best of two or more alternatives”, the word “purified”, is the past participle of “purify” which means “remove contaminants from: make pure” and the word “sincere” means “proceeding from or characterized by genuine feelings: free from pretence or deceit”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is simply because of a difference in expressive meaning. The source-language is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

In respect of accuracy, the word “sincere” is inaccurate in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “المخلصين” in this context, linguistically.

By missing the word “chosen” which is of a great significance in this verse, the choice of the phrase “one of Our servants” by Asad does not convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “المخلصين” as well.

In terms of equivalent effect, the words “purified” and “chosen” are the most effective ones.

If the representation of the tonality of this verse in its original in the translations would be scrutinised, the diminishing returns would again be clear.

ولقد همت به وهم بها لولا أن رأى برهان ربه، كذلك

لنصرف عنه السوء والفحشاء إنه من عبادنا المخلصين.

This could be ascribed in no small way to the loss of the strong consonance emanating from the repetition of the letter “ه” in words “همت”, “هم”, “به”, “بها”, “برهان”, “عنه” and “إنه”. There is also the repeated sound cluster /hɪ/ at the end of the repeated device “به” and the amalgamated sentence “ربه”, (pronounced

/bɪhɪ/ and /ɾʌbɪhɪ/ respectively) and /hʊ/ at the end of the devices “عنه” and “إنه”, which are pronounced /ənhʊ/ and /ɪnhʊ/.

Phonologically, the word “المحسنين”, is pronounced /əlmʊhsɪni:n/ , the final sound cluster, /i:n/, confirming the remarkable role played by verse closures in composing an encompassing structure for a whole *Sûrah*, and in the process, eventually, the entire *Holy Qur’ân*.

Although the technique of using paraphrases in some verses is necessary to help in capturing the meaning of a particular word, it is not needed in many cases. As such, Ali’s translation is not as close as it could be to the original text, because it uses paraphrases “with passion”, “Did We order” and “all”, which are not required in this verse at all.

The Control Text’s translation comes the closest to the original text, because it does not add any level of meaning which is not visible in the verse.

5.2.3.8 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 31:

Source Text

قلما سمعت بمكرهن أرسلت إليهن وأعدت لهن متكناً وأتت كل واحدةٍ منهن سكيناً وقالت أخرج عليهن، فلما رأينه أكبرنه وقطعن أيديهن وقلن حاش لله ما هذا بشراً إن هذا إلا ملكٌ كريمٌ.

Control Text

“So when she heard of their accusation, she sent for them and prepared a banquet for them: she gave each one of them a knife (to cut the foodstuff with), and she said [(to Yûsuf (Joseph))]: “Come out before them. Then when they saw him, they exalted him (at his beauty) and (in their astonishment) cut their hands. They said: “How perfect is Allâh (or Allâh forbids)! No man is this! This is none other than a noble angel!”

Pickthall

“And when she heard of their sly talk, she sent to them and prepared for them a cushioned couch (to lie on it at the feast) and gave every one of them a knife and said (to Joseph): Come out unto them! And when they saw him, they exalted him and cut their hands, exclaiming:

Allah Blameless! This is not a human being. This is no other than some gracious angel!"

Ali

"When she heard Of their malicious talk, She sent for them And prepared a banquet For them: she gave Each one of them a knife: And she said (to Joseph): "Come out before them. When they saw him, They did extol him, and (in their amazement) cut their hands: they said, "God preserve us! No mortal is this! This is none other than a noble angel!"

Asad

"Thereupon, when she heard of their malicious talk, she sent for them and prepared for them a sumptuous repast, and handed each one of them a knife and said [to Joseph]: "Come out and show thyself to them. And when the women saw him, they were greatly amazed at his beauty, and [so flustered were they that] they cut their hands [with their knives], exclaiming, "God save us! This is no mortal man! This is nought but a noble angel!"

Irving

"When she heard about their remarks, she sent for them and prepared a party for them. To each one of them she gave a knife. She told [him]: "Come out to [see] them!" When they saw him, they praised him and cut their hands. They said: "God forbids! This is no human being, this is simply a noble angel!"

Ozek

"When she heard of their malicious talk, she invited them and prepared a banquet for them: she gave each one of them a knife and said [to Joseph]: "Come out before them!" When they saw him, they were amazed at him and cut their hands, exclaiming "Allah forbid! This is no human being, this is but a noble angel."

Abdel-Haleem

"When she heard their malicious talk, she prepared a banquet and sent for them: giving each one of them a knife, She said to Joseph, "Come out and show yourself to them! And when the women saw him, they were stunned by his beauty, and cut their hands, exclaiming, "Great God! He cannot be mortal! He must be a precious angel!"

Discussion

In verse 31, the Control Text uses the phrase “their accusation” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “مكرهن”, Pickthall uses the phrase “their sly talk”, Ali, Asad, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the phrase “ their malicious talk”, while Irving uses the phrase “their remarks”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “accusation” means “a statement saying that you think a person is guilty of doing something wrong, especially of committing a crime”, the word “malicious” means “having or showing hatred and a desire to harm somebody or to hurt his/her feeling”, the word “remark” means “something that you say or write which expresses an opinion, a thought about somebody/something”, and the word “sly” means “acting or done in a secret or dishonest way, often intending to trick people”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “accusation” means “إتهام، تهمة موجّهة”، the word “malicious” means “مكر، خبيث، حقود، ماهر”، the word “remark” means “يلاحظ، يقدم ملاحظة أو تعليقا”، and the word “sly” means “حكيم، بعيد النظر، ماهر”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators' personal preferences.

In terms of equivalent effect, the word “remarks” is less effective than the words “accusation”, “malicious talk” and “sly talk”.

In the verse, the Control Text, Ali, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use the word “banquet” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “متكئاً”, Pickthall uses the phrase “a cushioned couch (to lie on it at the feast)”, Asad uses the phrase “a sumptuous repast”, while Irving uses the phrase “a party”.

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 197), “she invited the women of the noble society, the princes and the leaders of Egypt at that time and prepared a luxurious couch for them to sit on for the feast”.” A similar interpretation was given by al-Qurṭubī (2001: 470).

However, although the word “invitation” is not mentioned explicitly in the verse, it can be elicited from the sentence “she gave each one of them a knife” (to cut the foodstuff with).

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “banquet” means “an elaborate and formal meal to many people”, the word “couch” means “a long upholstered piece of furniture for several people to sit on”, the word “cushioned” means “a bag of cloth stuffed with a mass of soft material, used as a comfortable support for sitting or learning on”, the word “party” means “a social gathering of invited guests, typically involving eating, drinking, and entertainment”, the word “repast” means “meal” and the word “sumptuous” means “splendid and expensive-looking”,”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “banquet” means “مأدبة، يقيم مأدبة”، the word “couch” means “أريكة”، the word “cushioned” means “وسادة”، the word “party” means “حفلة أنس وسمر”، the word “praise” means “يطرى، يثنى، يسبح، يمجد، يسبح”، the word “repast” means “طعام، وجبة”، and the word “sumptuous” means “سخى، منفق عليه، فخم، مترف”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, as the source-language concept, that is to say the concept of the word “متكناً”, is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators' personal preferences.

The meaning of the Qur’ânic term “متكناً” is conveyed in Pickthall by the phrase “a cushioned couch (to lie on it at the feast)”, while it is omitted from the other translations. In this context, the Pickthall’s translation is the most accurate.

Later in the verse, the Control Text uses the sentence “they exalted him” and a paraphrase (at his beauty)” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أكبرنه”, Pickthall uses the phrase “they exalted him”, Ali uses “They did extol him”, Asad uses “they were greatly amazed at his beauty”, Irving uses “they praised him”, Ozek uses “they were amazed at him”, while Abdel-Haleem uses “they were stunned by his beauty”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “amaze” means “surprise (someone) greatly: astonish”, the word “exalted” means “at a high level”, the word “extol” means “praise enthusiastically”, and the word “praise” means “the expression of approval or admiration”, the word “stun” means “astonish or shock someone so that they are temporarily unable to react”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “amaze” means “يذهل، يشده”، the word “exalted” means “مرفوع، ممجد”، the word “extol” means “يمجد، يطرى”، and the word “praise” means “يثنى، يمجد، يسبح”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence could be ascribed to a difference in the expressive meaning, resulting from the translators' personal preferences.

In terms of equivalent effect all the choices are effective, but the sentences “they were amazed at him”, “they exalted him”, “They did extol him”, and “they praised him”, have lesser effect than “they were greatly amazed at his beauty”, and “they were stunned by his beauty”. However, even between these latter choices one can differentiate in respect of the effectiveness, in that the sentence “they were stunned by his beauty” has the greatest effect, as it describes the exact reaction of the women.

In the verse, the Control Text uses a paraphrase “How perfect is Allâh (or Allâh forbid!)” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “حاش لله”, Pickthall uses the phrase “Allâh blameless!”, Ali uses the phrase “God preserve us!”, Asad uses the clause “God save us”, Irving uses the clause “God forbid!”, Ozek uses the clause “Allâh forbid!”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “Great God!”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 471), “the Qur’ânic term “حاش لله” means “Allâh forbids”. According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), the word “حاش” means “except, save”.” According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the Qur’ânic term “حاش لله” means “Allâh forbids”.”

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence has come about because this is a Qur'anic-specific concept, and is, consequently, not lexicalized in the target-language

As far as “meaning” is concerned, the word “حاشا” without being linked to the name “Allâh”, is an Arabic device of exception, We say, for example, “حضر جميع التلاميذ حاشا واحداً” which means “ all the pupils were/are present, except/save one”.

In ordinary language, however, people use the word “حاش” in a sense of strong denial, negation or surprise As such, and according to my understanding, the closest equivalent of the fixed expression “حاش لله” is the English expression ‘Oh no’ which is used to express surprise or disappointment or even the less expressive option of the adverb “really”., which expresses uncertainty and doubt. Accordingly, the closest translation could be “(in their astonishment at his beauty), they said: “Oh no/Really, this is no man! There is just a noble angel.” with omission of the attribute “الله” from the translation as it is a part of the amazement.

All the translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution, but all the translators misinterpret the Qur'anic expression “حاش لله”.

Syntactically, by using the direct word of “women” for “*Nûn an-Niswa*”, the Arabic feminine pronoun “ن” which is assimilated into the verb “رأينه”, Asad and Abdel-Haleem do not stick to the Arabic grammatical structure.

Elsewhere, the Control Text uses the word “man” to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic term “بشراً”, Pickthall, Irving and Ozek use the word “human being”, while Ali, Asad and Abdel-Haleem use the word “mortal”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “human being” means “a man, woman or child of the species *Homo sapiens*”, the word “man” means “a person, human being in general: the human race”, and the word “mortal” means “ (of a living creature) subject to death, a person contrasted with those of higher status or ability”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators' personal preferences. The options "human being", "man" and "mortal" are interchangeable and they have the same equivalent effect.

In the same verse, the Control Text, Ali, Asad, Irving and Ozek use the word "noble" to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic term "كريم", Pickthall uses the word "gracious" and Abdel-Haleem uses the word "precious".

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), "the word "gracious" means "(in Christian belief) showing divine grace", the word "noble" means "belonging by rank, title, or birth to the aristocracy, imposing magnificent" and the word "precious" means "having great value"."

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators' personal preferences. All the choices are interchangeable, but in terms of the equivalent effect, the word "gracious" is more effective and more suitable.

The amalgamated sentences "رأينه", "أكبرنه", "قطعن" are clearly lost in translation; the reader or the listener can easily deduce from the grammatical device *nun al-Niswa*, "ن", that these are feminine forms, while the translators need to make it explicit.

Looking at the underlined parts of the verse, it is clear that it contains significant sound repetitions, which are not reflected in this manner in any of the the translations

فلما سمعت بمكرهن أرسلت إليهن وأعدت لهن متكئاً

وءأنت كل واحدةٍ منهن سكيناً وقالت أخرج عليهن،

، فلما رأينه أكبرنه وقطعن أيديهن وقلن حاش لله

ما هذا بشراً إن هذا إلا ملكٌ كريمٌ.

Some of the elements lost are the sound /t/ at the end of verbs “أرسلت”, “سمعت”, “أعدت”, and “أنتت”, which are pronounced /səmiʔt/, /ʔrsəʔt/, /ʔʔtəʔt/ and /ʔ:tʔt/, the cluster /hɪnə/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences and devices “بمكرهن”, “إليهين”, and “عليهن”, (pronounced /bɪməkrihɪnə/, /ʔleihɪnə/ and /ʔleihɪnə/) and the sound cluster /hʊnə/ at the end of the devices “لهن”, “منهن”, and “أيديهن”, which are pronounced /ləhʊnə/, /mɪnhʊnə / and /eidəhʊnə/. The letter Reference can also be made to /ʔn/, found at the end of the words “متكناً”, “سكيناً” and “بشراً”, all the result of *At-Tanwīn*.

As far as the important closing sound cluster is concerned, it is /i: m/ in this instance, at the end of the word “كريم”, pronounced /kəri: m/. As stated earlier, this sound cluster is found at the end of many verses of this *Sūrah*; such as the words “أليم”, “عظيم” and “عليم” at the end of verses 25, 28 and 50 etc., respectively.

Even though the Control Text and Abdel-Haleem mention the beauty of Joseph with the paraphrases “they exalted him (at his beauty)” and “they were stunned by his beauty”, by using the phrases “How perfect is Allāh (or Allāh forbids!)” and “Great God”, respectively, none of them is as close as possible to the original text.

However, although Pickthall is the only translator who manages to convey the meaning of the word “متكناً”, in this verse, by using the phrase “Allāh blameless!”, he fails to convey the main theme of this verse; that is to say the beauty of Prophet Joseph, as well. Not one of the translations really stands out as being closest to the original text.

5.2.3.9 *Sūrah* 12 Verse 65:

Source Text

ولما فتحوا متاعهم وجدوا بضاعتهم ردت إليهم ، قالوا يا أبانا ما نبغى هذه بضاعتنا ردت إلينا ونمير أهلنا ونحفظ أخانا ونزداد كيل بعير ، ذلك كيل يسير .

Control Text

“And when they opened their bags, they found their money had been returned to them. They said: “O our father! What (more) can we desire? “This is our money which has been returned to us: so we shall get (more) food for our family, and we shall guard our brother and add one more measure of a camel’s load. This quantity is easy (for the king to give).”

Pickthall

“And when they opened their belongings, they discovered that their merchandise had been returned to them. They said: O our father! What (more) can we ask?” Here is our merchandise returned to us: so we shall get provision for our folk, and guard our brother, and we shall have the extra measure of a camel (load). This (that we bring now) is a light measure.”

Ali

“Then when they opened their baggage, they found their stock-in-trade had been returned to them. They said: “O our father! What (more) Can we desire? “This, our stock-in-trade has been returned To us: so we shall get (More) food for our family: We shall take care of our brother: And add (at the same time) A full camel’s load (of grain To our provision). This is but a small quantity.”

Asad

“Thereupon, when they opened their packs, they discovered that their merchandise had been returned to them: [and] they said: “O our father! What more could we desire? "Here is our merchandise: it has been returned to us! [If thou send Benjamin with us,] we shall [again] be able to bring food for our family, and shall guard our brother [well], and receive in addition another camel load of grain. That [which we have brought the first time] was but scanty measure.”

Irving

“When they opened their baggage, they found that their trading goods had been returned to them. They said: “Our father, what more do we desire than this?” This merchandise of ours has been returned to us! We shall supply our family, look after our brother, and add a camel’s load [to it] besides: that should be such an easy load!”

Ozek

“Then when they opened their baggage they found that their merchandise had been returned

to them. They said, “O our father! What (more) can we ask?” Here is our merchandise returned to us. So we shall [again] buy food for our family, and we shall guard our brother, and also add a camel’s load [of grain to our provision]. This [that we bring now] is a small quantity.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Then, when they opened their packs, they discovered that their goods had been returned to them and they said, “Father! We need no more [goods to barter]: look, our goods have been returned to us. We shall get corn for our household: we shall keep our brother safe: we shall be entitled to another camel-load of grain - an extra measure so easily achieved!”

Discussion

In verse 65, the Control Text uses the word “money” to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “بضاعتهم”, Asad Ozek and Pickthall use the word “merchandise”, Irving uses the phrase “trading goods”, Abdel-Haleem uses the word “goods” while Ali uses the phrase “stock-in-trade”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “goods” means “merchandise or possessions”, the word “merchandise” means “goods for sale”, the word “money” means “a medium of exchange in the form of coins and banknotes”, the word “stock” means “a supply of goods or materials available for sale or use” and the word “trade” means “the buying and selling of goods and services”.”

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 485), “the Arabic phrase “بضاعتهم” means “the price of the grain”.” A similar interpretation is given by at-Ṭabarī (2011: 242). According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 202), “the Arabic phrase “بضاعتهم” means “their goods”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “بضاعة” means “goods, merchandise, commodities”.” According to *Mukhtār Al-Ṣiḥāḥ* (2009), “the word “بضاعة” means “Some of the money that has been allocated for trading”.”

Semantically there is no problem of non-equivalence, as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators' personal understanding of contemporary Arabic.

The great difference in meaning between the choice of the Control Text and the choices of the other translators reflects the significant shift in meaning of some Arabic words at the time of revelation of the *Holy Qur'ân* and at the present time, which poses a problem for the translators. This problem was mentioned earlier in chapter 3, where an example was given of the change in meaning of the Arabic word “صحف” from “Scriptures” or “Sacred books” in classical Arabic to that of “newspapers” in the current Arabic.

This is typically what has happened to the meaning of the Arabic word “ثمن”, which is currently confined to the amount of money that has to be paid for something and its accurate equivalent in English is the word “price”.

However, if the intention of the Control Text is to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “بضاعة” to the modern English readers who do not know any other meaning of it than the words “goods, or merchandise or commodities” then its translation does not convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic phrase “بضاعتهم” as accurate as the other translators do.

By using the sentences “This quantity is easy (for the king to give)”, and “an extra measure so easily achieved!”, the Control Text and Abdel-Haleem refer the meaning of the Arabic sentence “ذلك كيلٌ يسيرٌ” to the amount of the grain that will be given to them if they bring their brother with them to Joseph.

By using the sentences “This (that we bring now) is a light measure.”, “That [which we have brought the first time] was but scanty measure”, and “This [that we bring now] is a small quantity”, Pickthall, Asad and Ozek refer the meaning of the Arabic sentence “ذلك كيلٌ يسيرٌ” to the amount of the grain that they brought with them.

However, by both using the sentences “This is but a small quantity”, Ali and Irving understand the meaning of the Arabic sentence “ذلك كيلٌ يسيرٌ” to be

neither to the amount of the grain that they brought with them nor to the amount of the grain that will be given to them if they bring their brother with them to Joseph.

Referring it to the additional amount of the grain that will be given to them, al-Qurtubi (2001: 485) writes that the sentence “ذلك كيل يسير” means “that they will be given another camel-load of grain for Benjamin”.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

In respect of a comparison between the Arabic and English texts as far as sound structures are concerned, the underlined sections below is an indication of what existed and is not replicated in translation:

ولما فتحوا متاعهم وجدوا بضاعتهم ردت إليهم ،

قالوا يا أبانا ما نبغى هذه بضاعتنا ردت إلينا ونمير

أهلنا ونحفظ أخانا ونزداد كيل بعير ، ذلك كيل يسير.

A summary of what is lost, would include the following prominent examples: The /u:/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “فتحوا”, “وجدوا”, and “قالوا” (pronounced /fətəhu:/, /wədʒədu:/ and /g ælu:/) and the sound cluster /næ/ at the end of the amalgamated sentences “أبانا”, “بضاعتنا”, “إلينا”, “أهلنا” and “أخانا”, which are pronounced /ʌbænæ/, /bɪdæʌtɒnæ /, /ɪleɪnæ/, /ʌ hlənæ/ and /ʌkhænæ/.

It is interesting to note that the sound cluster / i:r/ at the end of the word “يسير”, which is pronounced /jəsi:r/, does not exist at the end of any other verse of this *Sûrah*. It nevertheless does not stand in isolation, as it is found in two other words in this *verse* ; namely: the verb “نمير” and “بعير”, which are pronounced /nəmi:r / and /bəi:r/, respectively.

Taking into account the translation regarding the question of the amount of grain, the translation of the Control Text and Abdel-Haleem are the closest to the original text, because in accordance with al-Qurtubi’s interpretation, they

interpret the meaning of the phrase “ذلك كيلاً يسيراً” to refer to the amount of the grain that will be given to them if they return with their brother to Joseph.

5.2.3.10 Sûrah 12 Verse 66:

Source Text

قال لن أرسله معكم حتى تؤتوني موثقاً من الله لتأتتنى به إلا أن يحاط بكم فلما أتوه موثقهم قال الله على ما نقول وكيلٌ.

Control Text

“[Ya’qûb (Jacob)] said: “I will not send him with you until you swear a solemn oath to me in Allâh’s Name, that you will bring him back to me unless you are yourselves surrounded (by enemies), And when they had sworn their solemn oath, he said: Allâh is Witness to what we have said.”

Pickthall

“He said: I will not send him with you, till ye give me an undertaking in the name of Allah that you will bring him back to me, unless ye are surrounded And when they gave him their undertaking, he said: Allâh is the Warden over what we say.”

Ali

“ (Jacob) said:” Never will I send him with you until ye swear a solemn oath to me, in God’s name, that ye will be sure to bring him back to me unless ye are yourselves Hemmed in (and made powerless) And when they had sworn Their solemn oath, He said: Over All that we say, be God The Witness and Guardian!”

Asad

“Said [Jacob]: ‘I will not send him with you until you give me a solemn pledge, before God, that you will indeed bring him back unto me, unless you yourselves be encompassed [by death]! And when they had given him their solemn pledge, [Jacob] said: “ God is witness to all that we say!”

Irving

“He said: “I will never send him with you, until you give me some assurance before God that

you will bring him back to me, unless you have been ambushed. When they had given him their pledge, he said: God is a Trustee for what we say.”

Ozek

“He [Jacob] said: “I will not send him with you until you give me a solemn oath by Allah to bring him back to me, unless you are [in some way] prevented. And when they had given him their oath, he said, “Allah is witness to what we say.”

Abdel-Haleem

“He said: “I will never send him with you, not unless you swear by God that you will bring him back to me if that is humanly possible. Then, when they had given him their pledge, he said, “Our words are entrusted to God.”

Discussion

In verse 66, the Control Text uses the sentence “you are yourselves surrounded” and a paraphrase “(by enemies)” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم”, Pickthall uses the clause “ye are surrounded”, Ali uses the sentence “ye are yourselves hemmed in (and made powerless)”, Asad uses the clause “you yourselves be encompassed” and a paraphrase “[by death]”, Irving uses the clause “you have been ambushed”, Ozek uses the clause “you are [in some way] prevented”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “if that is humanly possible”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 485), “the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم” means “unless you all die”.” According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 203), “the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم” means “unless you are all surrounded by something that will make you unable to bring him back to me”.” A similar interpretation is given by at-Ṭabarī (2011: 243).

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “ambush” means “a surprise attack by people lying in wait in a concealed position”, the word “encompass” means “surround and have or hold within”, the verb “hem in” means “surround and restrict the space or movement of someone or

something”, the word “prevent” means “ make unable to do something” and the word “surround” means “be all round: encircle”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “ambush” means “كمين، يهاجم من” “ممكن”, the word “encompass” means “يطوق، يشمل”, the verb “hem in” means “يطوق”, the word “prevent” means “يمنع، يحول دون” and the word “surround” means “يطوق”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The differing choices are based on the translators’ understanding of the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم”.

In terms of equivalent effect, the words “encompass”, “hem in” and “surround” are the most effective ones. In terms of accuracy, however, the words “ambush” and “prevent” have the sense of the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم” but they are inaccurate in conveying its exact meaning.

Using the word “ambushed” and the adverb “humanly” by Abdel-Haleem and Irving respectively, creates levels of meaning which are not visible in the original text. Abdel-Haleem’s back translation will be “إن كان ذلك إنسانياً/ بشرياً” “ممكناً”, while Irving’s back translation which will be “إذا تعرضتم إلى كمين”

Syntactically, the translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, except for Asad who, instead of putting the verb “said” after the subject “[Jacob]” in accordance with English grammatical structure, puts it before the subject. Another disparity is that while Pickthall, Irving and Abdel-Haleem stick to the Arabic structure by not mentioning the direct subject of the verb “قال”, while the Control Text, Ali, Asad and Ozek mention the name of Ya’qûb or “Jacob” as a direct subject of the verb “قال”.

To continue the discussion of the verse, the Control Text uses the sentence “Allâh is Witness to what we have said.” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “الله على ماتقول وكيل”. Pickthall uses the clause “Allâh is the Warden over what we say”, Ali “Over All that we say, be God The Witness and Guardian!”, Asad uses the clause “ God is witness to all that we say!”, Irving

uses the clause “God is a Trustee for what we say.”, Ozek uses the clause “Allah is witness to what we say”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “Our words are entrusted to God.”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “entrust” means “to make somebody responsible for doing something or taking care of somebody”, the word “guardian” means “a person who protects something”, the word “Trustee” means “a person or an organization that has control of money or property that has been put into a trust for somebody”, the word “warden” means “a person who is responsible for taking care of a particular place and making sure that the rules are obeyed”, and the word “witness” means “a person who sees something happen and is able to describe it to other people”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “entrust” means “يودع، يَأْتَمَن، يعهد به إلى”، the word “guardian” means “حارس، وصى”، the word “Trustee” means “الوصى، الأمين، القيم، يعهد بشئ إلى وصى أو قيم”، the word “warden” means “الحافظ،”، the word “witness” means “الشاهد، شاهد العيان، يشهد على”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. All these words are interchangeable. The choices are based on the translators’ interpersonal perspectives. In terms of equivalent effect, the word “witness” is more effective than the other choices.

As it uses the word “prevented” and the sentence “Allah is witness to what we say.”, which are more suitable in this context, the translation of Ozek is as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.3.11 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 84:

Source Text

وتولى عنهم وقال يا أسفى على يوسف وابيضت عيناه من الحزن فهو كظيم.

Control Text

“And he turned away from them and said: “Alas, my grief for Yusuf (Joseph!)” And he lost his sight because of the sorrow that he was suppressing.”

Pickthall

“And he turned away from them and said: Alas, my grief for Joseph! And his eyes whitened with sorrow that he was suppressing.”

Ali

“And he turned away from them, and said: “How great is my grief for Joseph!” and his eyes became white with sorrow, and he fell into silent melancholy.”

Asad

“But he turned away from them and said: “O woe is me for Joseph! – And his eyes became dim from the grief with which he was filled.”

Irving

“He turned away from them and said: “How upset I feel over Joseph!” Both his eyes clouded over from sadness, so he choked back his grief.”

Ozek

“And he turned away from them saying:” How great is my grief for Joseph” And his eyes turned white with the sorrow that he was suppressing.”

Abdel-Haleem

“And he turned away from them, saying’ ‘Alas, for Joseph!” His eyes went white with grief and he was filled with sorrow.”

Discussion

In verse 84, the Control Text and Pickthall use the phrase “Alas, my grief for Yusuf (Joseph!)”, to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “يا أسفى”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “Alas, for Joseph!” Ali and Ozek use the

phrase “How great is my grief for Joseph!”, Asad uses the phrase “O woe is me for Joseph!”, while Irving uses the phrase “How upset I feel over Joseph!”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “alas” means “an expression of grief, pity or concern”, the word “upset” means “make unhappy, disappointed, or worried”, and the word “woe” means “great sorrow or distress”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “alas” means “وا حسرتاه”, the word “upset” means “يقلق، يزعج”, and the word “woe” means “وا اسفاه، وا ويلتاه”. “,which are the same meanings that are given by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices reflect the translators’ personal decisions.

In terms of equivalent effect the words “alas” and “woe” are the most effective ones, while the phrase “how great” is the least effective one.

In this verse, the Control Text uses the sentence “he lost his sight” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “وابيضت عيناه”, Pickthall uses the phrase “his eyes were whitened”, Ali uses the phrase “his eyes became white”, Asad uses the phrase “his eyes became dim”, Irving uses the phrase “both his eyes clouded over”, Ozek uses the phrase “his eyes turned white”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “his eyes went white”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 492), “the Qur’ânic term “وابيضت عيناه” has two interpretations, the first one is that he lost his sight completely and the second one is that he could see but not clearly”.”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the phrase “cloud over” (of the sky) means “become full of clouds”, “make or become less clear or transparent”, (of the face or eyes) “show sadness, anxiety, or anger”, the word “dim” means “of eyes not able to see clearly”, the phrase “lose sight of”

means “be no longer able to see” and the word “white” means “of the colour of milk or fresh snow: due to the reflection of all visible rays of light”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the expression “cloud over” means “يغشى، يعتم”، the word “dim” means “غير حلى، معتم، غير حلى”، the word “lose” means “يفقد”، the word “sight” means “نظر” and the word “white” means “أبيض”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

In terms of equivalent effect, the word “dim” and the phrase “lost his sight” are the most effective ones.

Further in the verse, the Control Text, Pickthall and Ozek use the sentence “he was suppressing” to convey the meaning of the Qur’anic term “فهو كظيم”. Ali uses the sentence “he fell into silent melancholy”, Asad uses the sentence “with which he was filled”, Irving uses the sentence “so he choked back his grief” and Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “he was filled with sorrow”.

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “كظيم” means “grieving inwardly and silence”.” According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 205), “the Arabic clause “كظيم” means “He kept silent without complaining about his sorrow to anybody except to Allah”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “grief” means “intense sorrow, especially caused by someone’s death, trouble or annoyance” and the word “melancholy” means “a feeling of pensive sadness, feeling causing, or expressing sadness”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “كظيم” means “anguished, agonized, distressed, grieved, angry, filled with anger”.”

Semantically, a problem arises because this is an emotive, lexically Qur’anic-specific word that has no equivalent in English and it can only be dealt with

by way of a paraphrase and this explains why none of the translators is able to find an equivalent of one word to it.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

In terms of equivalent effect, the phrases “he was suppressing” and “so he choked back his grief” are more effective than the other options.

This is a Qur’ânic specific overtone item which depicts the disclosed deep sorrow and pain of Prophet Jacob over the loss of his son Joseph. As far as this closing sound cluster is concerned, it is /i:n/ in this instance, at the end of the word “كظيم”, pronounced /kəði:m/. As stated earlier, this sound cluster is found at the end of many verses of this *Sûrah*; such as the words “أليم”, “عظيم” and “عليم” at the end of verses 25, 28 and 50 etc., respectively.

Because they use the word “alas” and the phrase “my grief for Joseph!”, which are more suitable in this context, in terms of closeness, the translations of the Control Text and Pickthall are as close as possible to the original text.

5.2.3.12 *Sûrah* 12 Verse 91:

Source Text

قالوا تالله لقد آثرك الله علينا وإن كنا لخاطئين.

Control Text

“They said: “By Allâh! Indeed Allâh has preferred you to us, and we certainly have been sinners.”

Pickthall

“They said: By Allah, verily Allah hath preferred thee above us, and we were indeed sinful”.

Ali

“They said: “By God! Indeed Hath God preferred thee Above us, and we certainly

Have been guilty of sin!”

Asad

“[The brothers] said: “By God! Most certainly has God raised thee high above us, and we were indeed but sinners!”

Irving

“They said: “By God, God has preferred you ahead of us, while we have been mistaken.”

Ozek

“By Allâh, they said: “Allâh has indeed proffered you over us: and we were indeed sinful!”

Abdel-Haleem

“They said, ‘By God! God really did favour you over all of us and we were in the wrong!’”

Discussion

In verse 91, the Control Text uses the sentence “By Allâh! Indeed Allâh has proffered you to us”, to convey the meaning of the explicit oath “*تالله لقد أترك الله علينا*”, Pickthall uses the sentence “By Allah, verily Allah hath proffered thee above us”, Ali uses the sentence “By God! Indeed Hath God proffered thee Above us”, Asad uses the sentence “By God! Most certainly has God raised thee high above us”, Irving uses the sentence “By God! Most certainly has God raised thee high above us”, Ozek uses the sentence “By Allâh, they said: “Allâh has indeed proffered you over us”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the sentence “By God! God really did favour you over all of us”.

In trying to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “*أترك*”, the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali, Irving and Ozek use the word “prefer”, Asad uses the phrase “raised high above”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the word “favour”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “prefer” means “like something or someone better than another or others: tend to

choose”, and the word “raise” means “lift or move to a higher position or level”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the verb “prefer” means “يرقى، يرفع، يفضل، ”، and the word “raise” means “يرفع، ينصب، يوقظ، ”، ”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence. The source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ personal judgement.

All the translators use the adjective “indeed” and the adverbs “verily, “certainly” and “really” to convey the assertive device “لقد”, except Irving who omits it from his translation.

In terms of equivalent effect, although the phrase “raise higher above” has the meaning of the Prophet Joseph’s status, the suitable choice in this context is the word “prefer” because it has the lexical meaning of the Arabic verb “آثر”.

Syntactically, all the translators followed the Arabic pattern in the first sentence by using the pronoun “They”, as an equivalent of *waw al-jamaa* “وا” in the amalgamated sentence “قالوا” except Asad who uses the direct noun “[the brothers]” which is not mentioned explicitly in the verse.

All the translators put the oath after the sentence “قالوا”, as it appears in the *Holy Qur’ân*, except Ozek, who places it before the sentence “قالوا”.

In attempting to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “لخاطئين” in this verse, the Control Text uses the phrase “certainly have been sinners.”, Pickthall uses the phrase “were indeed sinful”, Ali uses the phrase “certainly Have been guilty of sin!”, Asad uses the phrase “were indeed but sinners!”, Irving uses the phrase “have been mistaken”, Ozek uses the phrase “were indeed sinful!”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “were in the wrong”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “mistaken” means “wrong in one’s opinion or judgement”, the word “sin” means “an immoral act considered to be a transgression against divine law.”, and the

word “wrong” means “not correct or true- in an unsuitable or undesirable manner or direction”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “mistaken” means “مخطئ”, the word “ sin” means “إثم، خطيئة”, and the word “wrong” means “ظلم، بغى، ضيم، ”. “الخطأ”.”

By using the adjective “indeed” and the adverb “certainly”, all the translators, with exception of Irving and Abdel Haleem, manage to convey the assertive device “ل” which is amalgamated into the word “لخاطئين”.

If the poetic features of The would be considered, the most striking loss in the translations in this verse would be the repetition of the letter “ن” at the end of the words “كنا” and “لخاطئين” and in the device “إن”, all of which are prominent Qur’ânic-specific. Quite marked would also be the loss of sound cluster /næ/ at the end of the amalgamated device “علينا” and of the amalgamated sentence “كنا”, which is pronounced /əʎlemæ/ and /kʊnæ/ respectively.

قالوا تالله لقد آثرك الله علينا وإن كنا لخاطئين.

Even though the phrase “raise higher above” describes the status of Prophet Joseph’s in Egypt at the time when his brothers recognised him, the suitable choice in this context is the word “prefer” because it has the lexical meaning of the Arabic verb “أثر”, compared with the word “favour”, which has an implied meaning of unfairness according to the definition of both the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* and *Al-Mawrid*. As such, the translations of the Control Text, Pickthall, Ali. Irving and Ozek are the closest to the original text.

5.2.4 The 61st *Sûrah* or *Sûrat As-Şaff* “The Row” or “The Rank”

The reasons for selecting this *Sûrah* are:

- It has some Qur’ânic-specific expressions, such as the word “سبح”.
- It has some poetic features, such as some consonances and alliterations, which may not be reflected in translation.

- It has a metaphor “نور الله”, which could cause a problem for the translators.

5.2.4.1 *Sûrah* 61 Verse 1:

Source Text

سبح لله ما فى السموات وما فى الأرض وهو العزيز الحكيم.

Control Text

“Whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth glorifies Allâh. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. ”

Pickthall

“All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifieth Allah, the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, the Mighty, the Wise.”

Ali

“Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, let it declare the Praises and Glory of God: for he is the exalted in Might, the Wise.”

Asad

“All that is in the heavens and all that is on earth extols God’s limitless glory: for He alone is almighty, truly wise!”

Irving

“Whatever is in the Heaven and whatever is on Earth celebrates God. He is the Powerful, the Wise!”

Ozek

“All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifies Allah, and He is the August, the Wise.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies God - He is the All-Mighty, the Wise.”

Discussion

In trying to convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “سبحانك” in verse 1, the Control Text, Asad, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali all use the word “glorify”, while Irving uses the word “celebrate”.

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 305), “the Qur’ānic term “سبح” means “Glory and praise be to Allāh, it occurred in many verses of the *Holy Qur’ān* with the same meaning””. Similar interpretations are given by Ibn Kathīr (2010: 398) and at-Ṭabarī (2011: 551). According to the *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the Qur’ānic term “سبح” means “Glory and praise be to Allāh!””. A similar definition is found in the *Concordance of the Qur’ānic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005).

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “celebrate” in this context means “perform a religious ceremony, in a particular officiate at the Eucharist”, and the word “glory” means “praise, worship and thanks giving, offered to God.””

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “celebrate” means “يقوم قداسا، يحتفل”، the word “glory” means “تمجيد، تسبيح.”” According to *Al-Misbah Al-Munir* (2008) the word “سبح” means “to praise Allāh the Exalted””. Similar definitions are given by *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muhid* (2009), and *Mukhtār Al-Sihah* (1990).

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence in this verse arises from the fact that the source-language word is semantically complex. The choices are based on the translators’ understanding of the Qur’ānic term “سبح”.

In terms of the equivalent effect the word “glory” has more effect than the word “celebrate”.

In this respect, Irving does not convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic term “سبح” as accurate as the other translators do.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

In trying to convey the meaning of the attribute “العزیز” in verse 1, the Control Text uses the phrase “All-Mighty”, Pickthall uses the phrase “the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, the Mighty”, Ali uses the phrase “the exalted in Might” Asad uses the word “almighty”, Irving uses the word “the Powerful”, Ozek uses the word “the August”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “the All-Mighty”.

According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the attribute “العزیز” means “Mighty, powerful”. According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the attribute “العزیز” means “mighty, powerful, strong, influential”.”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011) “the word “august” means “inspiring respect and admiration ”, the word “exalt” means “praise or regarded highly”. The word “might” means “great power or strength.”, the word “mighty” is an adjective meaning “very powerful or strong”, and the word “sovereign” means “possessing supreme or ultimate power”.”

Semantically, in this section of the verse the problem of non-equivalence is because the source-language word is semantically complex. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

All the choices manage to convey the general meaning of the attribute “العزیز”.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the word “august” is less effective than the other choices.

As is the case in the other *Sûrahs*, this one is also characterised by the structural device of a limited set of sound clusters used at the end of the different verses. In the 14 verses of *Sûrat As-Şaff* three such clusters can be identified: /u:n/, /i:n / and /i:m/. The use of the clusters clearly enhances the poetic quality of the text, and makes it easier in respect of recitation, for both the reciter and the listener. And obviously it is recognised by a reader as well.

As one can imagine, it would be well nigh impossible to emulate this in an English translation, which results in the fact that a reader would have little appreciation of the structural beauty of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

In this verse the sound cluster is /i:m/, appearing at the end of the word “الحكيم”, pronounced /əlhʌki: m / and is found at the end of many verses in this *Sûrah*.

سبح لله ما في السموات وما في الأرض وهو العزيز الحكيم.

The fact that typical grammatical devices are repeated, also enriches the sound layer of the verse. The repetition in itself is a factor in establishing rhythm in the verse and this, together with the loss of the sounds embedded in these repetitions, quite naturally diminish the poetic nature of the translation.

In this instance reference can be made to the loss of the /mæ/ cluster at the end of the repeated device “ما”, which is pronounced /mæ/, and the sound /fi/ at the end of the repeated device “فى”, pronounced /fi/.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is comes the nearest to the original text, because it does not add or omit any level of meaning that is not visible in the text.

5.2.4.2 *Sûrah* 61 Verse 5:

Source Text

وإذ قال موسى لقومه يا قوم لم تؤذوننى وقد تعلمون أنى رسول الله إليكم فلما زاغوا أزاغ الله قلوبهم، والله لا يهدى القوم الفاسقين.

Control Text

“And (remember) when *Mûsâ* (Moses) said to his people: “O my people! Why do you annoy me while you know certainly that I am A Messenger of Allâh to you?” So when they turned away (from the Path of Allâh), Allâh turned their hearts away (from the Right Path). And Allâh guides not the people who are *Fâsqûn* (the rebellious, the disobedient to Allâh).”

Pickthall

“And (remember) when Moses said unto his people: “O my people! Why persecute ye me, when you well know that I am Allah’s messenger unto you? So when they went astray, Allah sent their hearts astray. And Allah guideth not the evil living folk.”

Ali

“And remember, Moses said to his people:” O my people why do ye vex and insult me, though ye know that I am the apostle of God (sent) to you? Then when they went wrong God let their hearts go wrong. For God guides not those Who are the rebellious, transgressors.”

Asad

“Now when Moses spoke to his people, [it was this same truth that he had in mind:]” O my people! Why do you cause me grief, the while you know that I am an apostle of God sent unto you? And so, when they swerved from the right way, God let their hearts swerve from the truth. For God does not bestow His guidance upon iniquitous folk.”

Irving

“Thus Moses told to his folk: “My folk, why do you annoy me? You know I am God’s messenger to you. When they wavered, God let their hearts waver, too. God does not guide immoral folk.”

Ozek

“And [remember] when Moses said to his people: ‘O my people, Why do you seek to harm me, when you know that I am Allah’s Messenger to you? So when they swerved, Allah let their hearts swerve. Allah does not guide the corrupt.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Moses said to his people, ‘My people, why do you hurt me when you know that I am sent to you by God? When they went astray, God left their hearts to astray. God does not guide rebellious people.”

Discussion

The meaning of the Arabic amalgamated sentence “تؤذوننى” in this verse, is conveyed in the Control Text and Irving by the sentence “you annoy me”, in Pickthall by the sentence “persecute ye me”, in Ali by the sentence “ye vex and insult me”, in Asad by the sentence “you cause me grief”, in Ozek by the sentence “you seek to harm me”, while Abdel-Haleem opts for “you hurt me”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “annoy” means “يزعج، يؤذى”، the word “grief” means “أسى، حزن”، the word “harm” means “يؤذى، يضر”، the word “hurt” means “يجرح، يؤذى”، the word “persecute” means “يضطهد، يضايق” and the word “vex” means “يغيظ، ينادك”.

According to and *Mukhtār Al-Şihâḥ* (1990), “the word “أذى” means “to harm/hurt”.” A similar definition is given by *Al-Misbâḥ Al-Munīr* (2008) and *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīd* (2009).

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “annoy” means “make slightly angry, harm or attack”, the word “grief” means “trouble or annoyance”, the word “harm” means “physical injury, especially that which is deliberately inflicted”, the word “hurt” means “cause pain or injury to”, the word “persecute” means “persistently harass or annoy” and the word “vex” means “make annoyed or worried”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence is because the source- and target-languages make different distinctions in meaning. The choices are based on translators’ preferences.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the words “grief”, “persecute” and “vex” have the greatest effect.

Here, once again, the Arabic text is made concise by the amalgamated sentence “تؤذوننى”, which consists of the verb “تؤذى” and *wâw al-jama`a* “و” as a subject and the device “ى” as an object, something which cannot be replicated in English.

In the same verse, the Control Text uses the adverb “certainly” to convey the meaning of the Arabic assertive device “قد”, Pickthall uses “well” Ali uses

“though”, Asad uses “while”, Ozek and Abdel-Haleem use “when ” while Irving omits it from his translation.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “certainly” means “definitely: undoubtedly”, the word “though” means “despite the fact that: although”, the word “when” means “at what time, in view of the fact that: considering that, although”, whereas the word “while” means “at the same time: although”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “certainly” means “من غير ريب، ”، the word “though” means “مع ذلك، برغم ذلك، ولو أن، وكأن”، the word “when” means “متى، وإذ ذاك، ومن ثمن مع أن، برغم أن ، فى حين”، and the word “while” means “بينما، فى حين، على الرغم، ما دام”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence as the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ preferences.

In terms of equivalent effect, the adverb “certainly” is the most effective choice.

By the omission of the Arabic assertive device “قد”, Irving has weakened the meaning of phrase “وقد تعلمون”.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure, although, has has been mentioned on a number of occasions, the amalgamative structure simply cannot be reflected in the translations.

The meaning of the Arabic amalgamated sentence “زاغوا” in this verse, is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “turned away (from the Path of Allâh)” and in Irving by the word “wavered”, in Pickthall and Abdel-Haleem by the phrase “went astray”, in Ali by the phrase “went wrong”, in Asad by the phrase “swerved from the right way”, while in Ozek by the “swerve”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “swerve” means “abruptly diverge or cause to diverge from a straight course”, and the word “waver” means “move quaveringly: flicker, irresolute”.”

These various long and short phrases show the difficulty of finding an exact equivalent for both the Qur’ânic direct meaning and its and metaphorical language.

As is the case with the other Surahs, here, too, no justice is really done in the translations to the rich sound texture of the *Holy Qur’ân*, marked by the underlined parts of the verse.

وإذ قال موسى لقومه يا قوم لم تؤذونني وقد تعلمون

أنى رسول الله إليكم فلما زاغوا أزاغ الله قلوبهم،

والله لا يهدي القوم الفاسقين.

Worth mentioning in this respect is the loss of the alliteration created by the repetition of the letter “ق”, /g/, in the words “قال”, “لقومه”, “قوم”, “قد”, and “القوم” and the amalgamated sentence “قلوبهم”, which are pronounced /gælə /, /lɪgoumɪhɪ/, /goumɪ/, /gæd/, /əlgoum/ and /gʊləbəhʊm /, and the repeated sound cluster /zægh/ in the amalgamated sentence “زاغوا” and the verb “أزاغ”, which are pronounced /zæghʊ/ and /əzægh/, as well as the sound cluster /i:n/ in this instance, at the end of the word “الفاسقين”, pronounced /əlfæsi:ni:/. As stated earlier, this sound cluster is found at the end of many verses of this *Sûrah*.

Although the Control Text uses the word “annoy”, which has less effect in terms of the equivalent effect, still its translation comes as close as possible to the original, because it uses paraphrases, the transliteration “*Fâsqûn*” with all its possible meaning between the brackets “(the rebellious, the disobedient to Allâh)”.

5.2.4.3 *Sûrah* 61 Verse 7:

Source Text

ومن أظلم ممن افترى على الله الكذب وهو يدعى إلى الإسلام والله لا يحب الظالمين.

Control Text

“And who does more wrong than the one invents a lie against Allāh, while he is being invited to Islām? And Allāh guides not the people who are *Zâlimûn* (polytheists, wrong-doers and the disbelievers).”

Pickthall

“And who doth greater wrong than he who inventeth a lie against Allah when he is summoned unto Al-Islâm? And Allah guideth not wrong-doing folk.”

Ali

“Who doth greater wrong than one who invents falsehood against God, even as he is being invited to Islâm? And God guides not those who do wrong.”

Asad

“And who could be more wicked than one who invents {such} a lie about {a message from} God, seeing that he is {but} being called to self-surrender unto Him? But God does not bestow His guidance upon evil- doing folk.”

Irving

“Who is more in the wrong than someone who invents a lie about God while he is being invited to [embrace] Islâm? God does not guide such wrong-doing folk.”

Ozek

“And who is more wicked than the man who invents a falsehood about Allah when called to Islâm? Allah does not guide the unjust.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Who could be more wrong than someone who invents lies against God, when called to submit to Him? God does not guide the wrong-doers.”

Discussion

In verse 7, the Control Text and Abdel Haleem use the phrase “more wrong” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أظلم”, Pickthall, and Ali use the phrase “greater wrong”, Asad and Ozek use the phrase “more wicked”, while Irving uses the phrase “more in the wrong”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “disbeliever” means “be unable to believe, have no religious faith”, the word “evil” means “extremely wicked and immoral”, the word “polytheist” means “the believer or worshipper of more than one god”, the word “unjust” means “not just, unfair”, the word “wicked” means “evil or morally wrong” and the word “wrong” means “unjust, dishonest, or immoral”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “disbeliever” means “يكفر”, the word “evil” means “فساد أخلاقياً”, the word “polytheist” means “المشرك”, the word “unjust” means “جائر، ظالم”, the word “wicked” means “شرير مؤذ، خطر، مزعج”, and the word “wrong” means “حيف، جور، ظلم”. According to *The Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the word “ظالم” means “unjust, oppressor, transgressor, wrong-doer”.”

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language concept is lexicalized in the target-language. The translators’ use a strategy of a translation guided by their personal preferences.

In terms of the equivalent effect the word “wrong” has more effect than the word “wicked” because it conveys the meaning of the word “أظلم”, as specific Qur’ânic terminology, more aptly.

In this verse, the Control Text uses a transliteration “*Zâlimûn*” and a paraphrase “(polytheists, wrong-doers and disbelievers)” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “الظالمين”. Pickthall and Irving use the phrase “wrong-doing folk”, Ali uses the clause “those who do wrong”, Asad uses the phrase “evil-doing folk”, Ozek uses the word “the unjust”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “the wrong-doers”.

Semantically, although the source-language is lexicalized in the target-language, the problem is because of the differences in the translators' understanding. The translators use a strategy of a translation informed by their personal preferences.

The Control Text uses a strategy of translation by transliteration and a paraphrase using related words. The other translators use a strategy of a translation in light of their own preferences or judgement.

In terms of the equivalent effect, the Control Text's translation has more effect because it covers all the aspects of the word "الظالمين".

Syntactically, all the translators remain true to the Arabic grammatical structure.

As far as aspects of the tonal features of this verse is concerned, it has become clear that very little of the rich sound textures of the *Holy Qur'ân* is replicated in the translation.

ومن أظلم ممن افترى على الله الكذب وهو يدعى

إلى الإسلام والله لا يحب القوم الظالمين.

The underlined segments of the verse, as seen above, mark some aspects of sound patterns in the verse. A superficial comparison with any one of the translations will confirm what has been lost.

A central loss, not always so obvious when reading a verse in isolation, is the important binding role played by the sound cluster at the end of the last word of the verse. In this instance it is /i:n/ in the word "الظالمين", which is pronounced /əðælmɪ:n/.

The translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses a transliteration "*Zâlimûn*" and a paraphrase (polytheists, wrong-doers and the disbelievers).", which will cover all the possible meanings of the Qur'ânic term "الظالمين".

5.2.5 The 112th *Sûrah Sûrat Al-Ikhlâş* or *Tawhid* “The Purity”

The reasons for selecting the 112th *Sûrah* or *Sûrat Al-Ikhlâş* are the following:

- As it is not mentioned in the *Sûrah* explicitly, its title might cause a problem for the translators.
- The concept of the Qur’ânic term “الصمد”, which means “The only one who has no wife, no son, and no partner”, might not be replicated in translation.
- It has some poetic features such as alliterations and consonances which might not be replicated in translation.
- Its subject matter is the core of the Islamic belief, “*Tawhîd*”, that is to say, the oneness of Allâh.

5.2.5.1 This *Sûrah* differs from the other 113 *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur’ân*. Its title is not mentioned in it explicitly, and for that reason each translator titled it according to his preference.

In this respect, the Control Text uses the words “*Al-Ikhlâş* or *Tawhîd* (The Purity)”, Pickthall uses the word “unity”, Ali uses the words “*Ikhlâs*, or Purity (of Faith)”, Asad uses the words “*Al-Ikhlâş* (The Declaration of [God’s] Perfection)”, Irving uses the words “Sincerity (OR [God’s] Oneness)”, Ozek uses the word “*Al-Ikhlâş*”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “Purity [of Faith]”.

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “purity” means “the state of being pure which means not mixed or adulterated with any substance or material”, the word “sincere - sincerity” means “proceeding from or characterized by genuine feelings, free from pretence or deceit”, and the word “unity” means “A thing forming a complete whole”.

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “purity” means “نقاء، نظافة، خلوص،”

”طهارة”, the word “sincerity” means “إخلاص، صدق”, and the word “unity” means “وحدة، انسجام، إتفاق”.

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011:104), *Al-Ikhlâs*, the title of this *Sûrah*

... means worship only Allâh Who is the Self-Sufficient Master Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks. He begets not, nor was He begotten and there is no one co-equal or comparable to Him.

A similar interpretation is given by al-Qurṭubī (2001: 608) and Ibn Kathīr (2010: 558).

However, although all the translators captured the general meaning of the title, there are still nuances between the different choices of words.

A translation by strategy of a transliteration and a paraphrase is a suitable choice for solving the problem of the Arabic title of this *Sûrah*.

5.2.5.2 *Sûrah* 112 Verse 1:

Source Text

قل هو الله أحدٌ.

Control Text

“Say (Muhammad ﷺ) “He is Allâh, (the) One.

Pickthall

“Say: He is Allah, the one!”

Ali

“Say: He is God, The One and Only:”

Asad

“SAY: He is the One God:”

Irving

“SAY: “*God is Unique!*”

Ozek

“Say: “*He is Allah, is One!*”

Abdel-Haleem

“Say, *He is God the One.*”

Discussion

In Verse 1 the Control Text uses the word “(the) One”, Pickthall uses the word “the one” and Ozek uses the word “One”, Ali uses the phrase “The One and Only”, Asad uses the phrase “the One God”, Irving uses the word “Unique”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the word “the One” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أحد” .

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011:104), “the Qur’ânic term “أحد” means “He is the only one and there is no partner with Him”. ”

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 608), “the Qur’ânic term “أحد” means “He is the only one Who has no wife, no son, and no partner”. ”

According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 558), “the Qur’ânic term “أحد” means “He is the only one Who has no partner, no counterpart, no assistant. He is the absolute Perfect”. ”

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “unique” means “being the only one of its kind: unlike anything else”. ”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “unique” means “وحيد، مفرد، فذ، ” “فريد”. ”

In this verse, the *Holy Qur’ân* distinguishes between the term “واحد”, which was known to the Arab pagans at that time and the term “أحد”, which is the

core of the concept of the “Islâmic Monotheism”.

Semantically, whether the translators use the word “one” preceded by definite article “the” directly or between brackets or whether it is in the upper-case or not, it still does not convey the exact meaning of the Qur’ânic term “أحد” From the above interpretations and the definitions of both English and Arabic dictionaries, the nearest equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “أحد” is the word “unique”, but it remains unsatisfactory.

The question of the poetic qualities of this verse and the loss in translation is not really important here. What is relevant, is to what extent this *Sûrah* conforms to the established pattern of the verses ending with similar sound clusters. What makes *Sûrat Al-Ikhlâş* unique in this respect, is that all four verses end with the same cluster /əd/.

5.2.5.3 *Sûrah* 112 Verse 2: .

Source Text

الله الصمد

Control Text

“Allâh *us-Samad* (السيد الذى يصمد إليه فى الحاجات) [Allâh-the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)].”

Pickthall

“*Allah, the eternally Besought of all.*”

Ali

“: *God, the Eternal, Absolute.*”

Asad

“*God the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of All Being.*”

Irving

“God is the Source [for everything].”

Ozek

“Allah, the eternally Besought!”

Abdel-Haleem

“God the Eternal.”

Discussion

The meaning of the Qur’ānic word “الصمد” in this verse, is conveyed in the Control Text by a transliteration “us-Samad”, an Arabic explication “السيد الذي يصمد إليه في الحاجات” and a long paraphrase “Allāh- the Self-Sufficient Master Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ānic word “الصمد”. Pickthall and Ozek use the phrase “the eternally, Besought of all!”, Ali uses the phrase “the Eternal, Absolute”, Asad uses the phrase “the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of all Being”, Irving uses the phrase “the Source for everything”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the word “the eternal”.

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011:104), “the Qur’ānic term “الصمد” means “He who is not hollow. He who neither eats, nor drinks”.”

According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 608) and Ibn Kathīr (2010: 558), “the Qur’ānic term “الصمد” means “the Master Whom all creatures need. He neither eats nor drinks”.” A similar, but more comprehensive interpretation, is given by al-Khudrawī:

Us-ṣamad’ mean “The Eternal”, One of the ninety-nine names or attributes of Allāh. It occurs once in the. *As-ṣamad*, the One on Whom all depend and He depends on none. *As-samad* is the One Who does not give birth, nor was He born, because there is nothing that is born except that it will die, and there is nothing that dies except that it leaves behind inheritance, and indeed Allāh does not die and He does not leave behind inheritance. `Ali bin Abī Talḥa reported from Ibn ‘Abāss, ‘*As-samad* is the Master Who is perfect in

His sovereignty, the Most Noble, Who is perfect in His nobility, the Most Magnificent, Who is perfect in His magnificence, the Most Forbearing, Who is perfect in His forbearance, the All-Knowing, Who is perfect in His knowledge. (2010: 308)

According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2011), “the word “absolute” means “not subject to any limitation of power, not relative or comparative”, the word “besought” “is the past and past participle of beseech means “ask someone urgently and fervently for something”, the word “the Eternal” means “an everlasting or universal spirit, as representing by God” and the word “source” means “a place, person, or thing from which something originates”.”

According to *Al-Mawrid* (2007), “the word “absolute” means “كامل”, the word “beseech” means “يتوسل” يتوسل " يتضرع”, the word “the Eternal” means “أبدى، أصل، منشأ، مصدر” and the word “source” means “سرمدي، لا نهائي”.

Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence here is because this is again a Qur’ânic specific concept which is not lexicalized in the target-language. As such, it is difficult to find a precise equivalent in English for the Qur’ânic term “الصمد” .

All the translators translate it by a strategy of a paraphrase using related words.

Syntactically, all translators follow the Arabic grammatical structure.

The fact that this is a short verse, does not lead to the conclusion that its poetic resonance would be small. On the contrary, given that it is characterised by the Qur’ânic-specific term, the repeated attribute of Allâh, the opposite might well be true.

قُلْ هُوَ اللهُ أَحَدٌ. اللهُ الصَّمَدُ.

In this respect, the verse lost the alliteration of the sound /ʌ/ in the beginning of the repeated name of “الله” and the repeated sound cluster /hʊ/ at the end of the same repeated name of “الله”, which is pronounced /ʌllæhʊ/. And, significantly, the translations fail to replicate the very functional repeated

cluster /əd/ at the end of attribute “الصمد”, /ʌSSʌMəd/, which is also at the end of the verse.

As was pointed out in the discussion of Verse 1 (where the attribute “أحد”, pronounced /ʌhəd/ appears), this is the sound cluster found at the end of all four the verses of this *Sûrah*.

In terms of closeness, the translation of the Control Text is as close as possible to the original text, because it uses a transliteration “*us-Şamad*” and long paraphrases “(السيد الذى يصمد إليه فى الحاجات) [Allâh - the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)]”, in Arabic and English which will cover all the possible meanings of the Qur’ânic term “الصمد”.

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes this thesis. It sets out how the study was conducted, and contains a summary of the conclusions, a critical comparative evaluation of the translations with each other based on the results and the implications of the findings. The chapter ends with a few remarks in respect of the insight gained through the analysis of the translations.

The *Holy Qur'ân* is a sacred book in Islâm. It is the fundamental and paramount source of the creed, rituals, ethics and laws, “Shariâ”, of the Islâmic religion. This supreme status stems from the belief that the *Holy Qur'ân* is the direct word of Allâh, revealed to the Prophet ﷺ via the Archangel Gabriel, and intended for all times and all human beings in all places. It consists of 114 Chapters or *Sûrahs* and 6,200 verses. It is a historical fact that the appearance of the *Holy Qur'ân* was finalised before the death of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

However, the present *Holy Qur'ân* is known as the “Uthmanic Version” because it is named after the third Caliph “Uthman ibn Áfan (644-656) who ordered that a number of copies of the *Holy Qur'ân* should be made from the original text and distributed to different parts of the Muslim regions at that time; he appointed a committee to collect an authorized version of the *Holy Qur'ân* in a standard version. This committee fulfilled its task well, as it was/is used by Muslims worldwide, today.

It has been translated into many languages over the centuries, even though the very fact of translation was and still is objected to. This study focussed on six translations into English.

Five *Sûrahs* [or Chapters] of the *Holy Qur'ân* were identified as the object of this study. They were the 1st *Sûrah* (*Sûrat Al-Fâtiha*, consisting of 7 verses), the 3rd *Sûrah* (*Sûrat Âl-'Imrân* / The Family of 'Imrân, 200 verses), the 12th *Sûrah* (*Sûrat Yûsuf* / Joseph, 111 verses), the 61st *Sûrah* (*Sûrat As-Saff* / “The Row or The Rank”, 14 verses) and the 112th *Sûrah* (*Sûrat Al-Ikhlâ*, 4 verses).

The total of the verses of the five selected *Sûrahs* [or Chapters] are 336. The reason for the respective choices was given at the outset.

From these 336 verses, 65 were used in this analysis, comparing them in their different translations and reading these against the original Arabic source text. Comparisons were drawn at a sentence, a clause, a phrase, a word and, where relevant, a morpheme level in order to determine the significant semantic disparities and discrepancies between the translations, and to identify the possible reasons for differences. An authorised translated version functioned as a Control Text of kind, but was itself also scrutinised, referring constantly to the original Arabic text.

Attention was paid to the way in which the translations reflect the poetic prosody of the original source text and the outcomes of the differences with regard to conveying the meaning/message of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

The discussion was mainly based on Baker's analysis of common problems of non-equivalence (2011: 15-43), and the strategies that were/are used by the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* for dealing with them.

Given its origin and revelation, the *Holy Qur'ân* contains a number of culture-specific items which may present problems for translators. An example, for instance, is the actual implications of *Zihâr*, “الظهار”, the degrading divorce - the freedom of the husband from any responsibility for conjugal duties while preventing the wife from leaving the husband's home or to contract a second marriage – which cannot readily be reflected in the translation even by an explanation of some kind.

It brings with it its own intertextuality, specific expressions and , rhetorical devices unfamiliar to most English-speaking readers. Mention has been made and problems illustrated regarding the selection of a specific grammatical form of a chosen lexical item which can be quite difficult to tackle through translation. Examples include the amalgamative structure which cannot be translated without deconstructing it, breaking it up in its components, and the *At-Tanwîn* device which does not only reflect a remarkable case and gender

indicator, but also creates a pattern of sound clusters which can not be replicated in English.

It introduces to its readers the conative affective aspects of Islâmic terminologies and many words of Arabic origin have, through the existence of the *Holy Qur'ân*, been assimilated into English and found in most dictionaries. This includes key terms such as Islam, Muslim, Allah, the *Qur'ân*, surah, etc. Obviously, the translation of these terms is generally unproblematic from a semantic aspect and it is difficult to suggest an alternative.

Nevertheless, the fact that they retain phonetic features of the original does not mean they carry the same effect in English, or carry the same chains of articulation. The Qur'anic quotations are reproduced in italicised transliteration with an explanation in English for the first time, but not usually thereafter, for example the abbreviated letters "*Alif-lâm-Mîm*. [These letters are one of the miracles of the *Qur'ân*, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings].", "*Allâh lâ ilâhâ illa Hawa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He), *Al-Hayyul-Qayyuum* (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists)."

For Arabs or Muslims this normally presents no problem, since, when the quotation is subsequently repeated in translation, but without an explanation, it is well-known and accessible. However, this technique will alienate a reader who is not familiar with Arabic or with Islam, when reading the translated version of the *Holy Qur'ân*, especially in the time when most Muslims and Westerners on both sides holding negative stereotypes of the other.

In this thesis, then, the different educational, cultural and social backgrounds of the translators were discussed, their aims in translating the *Holy Qur'ân* were specified, the target readers, approaches, techniques, styles and the common problems of translation in general were highlighted. The latter included the incongruities of the two languages, the cultural barriers between the communities, and the concepts of accuracy, loyalty and fidelity to the original text.

Chapter 1 introduced the research problem and delineation of the study area, the rationale and the underlined hypotheses of the study, the objectives and the key questions. The principal translation theories were briefly evaluated in respect of their relevance for the envisaged study and the proposed methodology and structure of the thesis was set out.

In chapter 2 the attitudes of past and current Muslim scholars on the issue of translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* were examined, always placed in a historical context. The discussion started with the Umayyad Caliphate (662-750 EC), and continued through the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1055 CE), the translations of the *Holy Qur'ân* in the Golden Age of the Abbasid Caliphate (750-847 CE) and the latter part of the Abbasid Caliphate (944-1055 CE), the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in modern history, the stance of Al-Azhar on the issue of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* and the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* in recent history.

In chapter 3, problems related to the translatability of the *Holy Qur'an* were identified. The poetry and poetic devices, linguistic features and semantics problems that contribute to the challenge of translating the *Holy Qur'ân*, as well as cultural idiosyncrasies, were discussed. The common problem of non-equivalence due to language barriers, rhetorical and metaphorical language and shifts in meaning over time was pointed out.. Specific problems related to the untranslatability of the *Holy Qur'ân* - the Qur'anic-specific expressions, the untranslatability of semantic items such as the curses, oaths and lexical items - were highlighted. The differentiation between the masculine and feminine pronouns and verbs, the stylistic features such as the use of grammatical shifts, and the frequent shifts in tense or person were identified.

In chapter 4 the writer of this thesis perused the prefaces or introductions of the translators in order to try to ascertain their intentions, target receptors, approaches, techniques and styles, as well as the problems they experienced or envisaged in the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*. This included the strategies which each translator of the selected texts of the *Holy Qur'ân* adapts in dealing with these problems.

In chapter 5, the longest, the reasons for selecting these *Sûrahs*, the 1st, the 3rd, the 12th, the 61st and the 112th were briefly discussed. This was followed by the analyses of the selected *Sûrahs* of the *Holy Qur'ân* in both the source language and the target-language at the sentence, clause, phrase and word levels and they were then compared. The disparities and the discrepancies between the selected texts, and possible reasons for these disparities and discrepancies, were discussed. The issue of non-equivalence, arising from Qur'anic-specific concepts and expressions and semantic complexity, as well as the understanding of the *Holy Qur'ân*, received special attention.

6.1 The Major Semantic Disparities and Discrepancies in the Translations of the Selected Verses

The question of fidelity or loyalty in the translation of a sensitive book like the *Holy Qur'ân* is of paramount importance. It follows that a translation by strategies of omissions or paraphrases could lead to misunderstanding of the *Holy Qur'ân* by the target readers, and may well be considered as a betrayal of the text.

The total number of the major semantic disparities and discrepancies between the selected verses commented on are 147.

As one would expect, the longer *Sûrahs* produced the largest number of discrepancies, although 10 could be marked in the relatively short 1st *Sûrah*. In the others the count was as follows: The 3rd *Sûrah* 100, the 12th *Sûrah* 29, the 61st *Sûrah* 5 and the 112th *Sûrah* 3.

6.2 Reasons for Disparities and Discrepancies

A number of reasons can be put forward for the (semantic) disparities and discrepancies identified in the analysis and discussion.

Some of these would stem, entirely, from the inherent differences between Arabic and English, others from the translators' approach to the translation, also influenced by the time when the translation was done, or by the Books of *Tafsîr*.

Two other factors were identified at the outset in respect of differences which could not readily be reflected in English. The first was the prevalence of the amalgamative sentence structure in Arabic; the second the *At-Tanwīn* device which not only reflects a remarkable case and gender indicator, but creates a pattern of sound clusters which can not be replicated in English.

All the translators, with the exception of Asad, use communicative and semantic approaches of translation which correspond to Nida's dynamic and formal equivalence approaches, respectively. Asad, however, uses a rational approach to convey the message of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

In respect of the influence of the time, the place and the receptor on the translator's choice of words, all the translations done in the first half of the twentieth century were influenced by the Jacobean English, because they were meant to combat the missionary polemic efforts of the day. The translations after that period (with the exception of Asad's) were directed at the readers of the contemporary world who were not familiar with more traditional and/or outdated English, and were/are therefore done in a more familiar, contemporary English.

As for the effect of the cultural and social dimensions, as well as Arabic as a native language, on the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Abdel-Haleem's work shows no marked difference from the translations of the non-native Arabic speakers' translators.

This might well be because of his knowledge of earlier translations, something which was alluded to in the analysis of one or two verses.

It further follows that the understanding of the translators of the Qur'ânic discourse, and the degree to which the translator feels that conveying the message requires adaptation in order to be comprehended by the target receptor, would be a crucial factor in the outcome of and the nature of their respective translations.

In order to overcome the problems encountered in translating, also in respect of the above-mentioned factors, all the translators employ well-established strategies such as transliterations, paraphrases using related words, cultural substitutions and omissions.

As can be expected, non-equivalence was identified as one of the most obvious characteristics of the translations in a comparative reading.

The numerous examples of non-equivalence identified can be ascribed to a number of reasons. The most important relates to culture-specific concepts where the source-languages are not lexicalized in the target-language, or where the source-language are lexicalized in the target-language but with a difference in their expressive meanings.

Other reasons relate to the fact that the source-language concept is semantically complex, the target-language lacks a specific term or that the source and the target-language make different distinctions in meaning as far as a term or word is concerned

Concerning the influence of Books of *Tafsīr* on the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Asad (1985: viii) writes:

But although none of the truly original, classical *Qur'ân*-commentators ever made any claim to “finality” concerning his own interpretations, it cannot be often enough stressed that without the work of those incomparably great scholars of past centuries, no modern translation of the *Qur'ân* - my own included - could ever be undertaken with any hope of success; and so, even where I differ from their interpretations, I am immeasurably indebted to their learning for the impetus it has given to my own search after truth. (1985: viii)

As such, and because all the selected translations were done by the *Sunnī* translators, they were influenced by the classical commentators of the *Holy Qur'ân* and for that reason they are accepted by the majority of Muslims.

Although it is not a marked factor when discussing semantic discrepancies and disparities, mention must be made of the failure of the translators, by and large, to capture the poetic nature of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

6.3 Discussion of the Most Significant Semantic disparities and Discrepancies

Not unsurprisingly, the different translations revealed a substantial number of identical [but not similar] semantic disparities and discrepancies, informed by the factors mentioned above.

6.3.1 Cultural Distinctions.

In respect of the different cultures in which they are embedded, the source- and target-languages often reveal different distinctions in meaning, which naturally give rise to semantic disparities and discrepancies when looking at the translations.

The cultural differences do not only cause disparities and discrepancies between the selected translators, but even between the translations of each translator individually. This fact can be verified by the choices of the translators for the Qur'ânic terms “فاحشة”, and “الفحشاء” in verse 135 of the third *Sūrah*. The meaning of the Qur'ânic terms “فاحشة”, and “الفحشاء” is conveyed in the Control Text by a transliteration “*Fâhshah*” and a paraphrase “great sins as illegal sexual intercourse” and “illegal sexual intercourse”, Pickthall by the phrase “an evil thing” and the word “lewdness”, Ali by the phrase “something to be ashamed of” and the phrase “shameful deeds”, Asad by the word “shameful” and the phrase “all deeds of abomination”, Irving by the phrase “shocking deed” and the phrase “sexual misconduct”, Ozek by the phrase “an evil thing” and the word “indecenty”, while Abdel-Haleem by the word “shameful” and “indecenty”, in their respective places.

Semantically the problem of non-equivalence arises because both the source and target-languages make different distinctions in meaning. The source-language, however, is lexicalized in the target-language.

There is no lexical or cultural differences between the Qur'ânic terms “فاحشة”, and “الفحشاء”, because both of them are feminine singular forms with one root

form which is “فحش”. The concept of “فاحشة”, or “الفحشاء” embodies a most serious sin in the Arab culture before Islâm and in Islâm itself, whereas it is not seen as such in some other cultures.

The Control Text uses a transliteration and a paraphrase using related words. The other translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution. Nevertheless, even the concept of shameful, evil and shocking deeds may differ according to the cultural differences, that is to say what is acceptable in one culture could be unacceptable in another.

This is one example of the phenomenon in respect of the problem of the cultural differences in translation which was discussed in some detail during the analysis.

6.3.2 Semantic Complexity

Translation uncertainties are the result when the source-language word is semantically complex. This is not surprising, and would also occur in translations other than in the religious sphere.

In verse 3 of *Sûrat Al-`Îmr`ân*, the Control Text, Irving, and Ozek use the verb “sent down”, Asad, Abdel-Haleem and Ali adds a paraphrase “step by step”, while Pickthall uses the verb “revealed” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “نزل”.

The problem of non-equivalence is because the verb “نزل” is a Qur’ânic-specific concept. The source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language, because it signifies the piecemeal revelation of the *Holy Qur’ân* that lasted 23 years. This is in contrast to the word “أنزل” which means to reveal in one go and at once. The interpreters of the *Holy Qur’ân* differentiate between these two Qur’ânic terms “نزل” and “أنزل” in respect of the revelation of the *Holy Qur’ân* and the other divine Scriptures, that is to say the Torah and the Gospel.

In the above example, all the translators use a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution, or a paraphrase using related words to deal with the problems arising.

In another example, Verse 31 of *Sûrat Yûsuf*, in an effort to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic fixed expression “حاش لله”, the Control Text uses a paraphrase “How perfect is Allâh (or Allâh forbid)!” Pickthall uses the phrase “Allâh blameless!”, Ali uses the phrase “God preserve us!”, Asad uses the clause “God save us”, Irving uses the clause “God forbid!”, Ozek uses the clause “Allâh forbid!”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “Great God!”.

The problem of non-equivalence is because the source-language is not lexicalized in the target-language.

The word “حاشا” is one of the Arabic devices of exception, we say, for example, “حضر جميع التلاميذ حاشا واحداً.” which means “all the pupils were/are present except/save one”

In ordinary language, however, people use the word “حاش” in a sense of strong denial, negation or surprise. As such, and according to my understanding, the closest equivalent of the fixed expression “حاش لله” is the English expression ‘Oh no’ which is used to express surprise or a lesser expressive option is the adverb “really”, which expresses uncertainty and doubt. Accordingly, the closest translation could be “(in their astonishment at his beauty), they said: “Oh no/Really, this is no man! There is just a noble angel.” with omission of the attribute “الله” from the translation as it is a part of the amazement.

By using the above mentioned phrases, none of the translators actually manages to convey the precise meaning of this fixed expression.

6.3.3 Qur'ânic-Specific Concepts or Style

In this respect, the *Holy Qur'ân* did not only change the themes of the Pre-

Islamic poetry, but it also presented some expressions in the opening of some *Sûrahs* which were completely different from the structure of poetry that the ancient Arabs were familiar with.

For instance, the Arabic letters “ألر” and “ألر” at the beginning of verse 1 in *Sûrat Âl-Imr’ân* (The Family of Imr’ân) and verse 1 in *Sûrat Yûsuf* (Prophet Joseph). All the translators, with the exception of Irving (who uses the sounds of the letters of English alphabet “A.L.M” and “A. L.R.”), employ a transliteration, “*Alif-lâm-Mim*”, to convey the meaning or sounds of these Arabic letters.

These verses are beautiful illustrations of the problems surrounding non-equivalence. Not only is the Arabic itself culture-specific, but the meaning itself is also incomprehensible. The concept is not even lexicalized semantically in the source language, so that it consequently cannot hope to be represented in the target-language.

6.3.4 Metaphorical Language.

The way in which the translators approach metaphorical language shows the difficulty of capturing the accurate equivalent. Some of the translators translate them literally, while others seek the equivalent for the hidden meaning.

The Qur’ânic term “حبل من الله” in verse 112 of *Sûrat Âl-Imrân*, for example, is conveyed in the Control Text by the phrase “a covenant (of protection) from Allâh”, and Ali by the word “a covenant (Of protection) *from God*”. Abdel-Haleem chooses the sentence “a life from God”, Asad formulates it as “in a bond with God”, in Irving it is represented by the word “a bond [leading] to God”, while in Pickthall and Ozek the phrase “a rope from Allah” is used. In trying to convey the meaning of amalgamated phrase “مضاجعهم”, in verse 154 of *Sûrat Âl-Imr’ân*, the Control Text and Ali use the phrase “the place of their death”, Pickthall and Ozek use the phrase “the places where they were to lie”, Asad uses the phrase “the places where they were destined to lie down”, Irving uses the phrase “their deathbeds”, while the phrase “meet their death” is used by Abdel-Haleem.

6.3.5 Shift in Meaning Over Time

The great difference in meaning between the choice of the Control Text and the choices of the other translators reflects the significant shift in meaning of some Arabic words at the time of revelation of the *Holy Qur'ân* and at the present time, which poses a problem for the translators.

Abdel-Haleem (2005: xxxiii) warns: "It is important to identify the meaning of the Arabic words as used at the time of the revelation of the Qur'ân rather than the one(s) they have acquired in modern Arabic."

A good illustrative example is verse 65 of *Sûrat Yûsuf*. In trying to convey the meaning of the amalgamated phrase "بضاعتهم", the Control Text uses the word "money", Asad Ozek and Pickthall use the word "merchandise", Irving uses the phrase "trading goods", Abdel-Haleem uses the word "goods", while Ali uses the phrase "stock-in-trade".

The amalgamated phrase "بضاعتهم" consists of the word "بضاعة" and the pronoun "هم". At the present time the word "بضاعة" is confined to the words "goods, or merchandise or commodities", whereas in the past in addition to this, it had the meaning of money that was used in trading.

The Arabic word "ثمن" in modern Arabic, is confined to the amount of money that has to be paid for something which means, eventually, that its accurate equivalent in English is the word "price".

In this instance, all the translators except the Control Text used a strategy of a translation by cultural substitution. If the intention of the Control Text is to convey the meaning of the Arabic the word "بضاعة" to the modern English readers who do not know any other meaning of it than the words "goods, or merchandise or commodities" then its translation does not convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic amalgamated phrase "بضاعتهم" as accurately as the other translators do.

6.3.6 Influence of Books of *Tafsīr*

There is no doubt that all the translators have been - to a greater or lesser extent - influenced by the opinion of the interpreters of the *Holy Qur'ân*. the question that arises is how does this affect conveying the intended meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

In respect of the significant influence of Books of *Tafsīr* Abdel-Haleem (2005: xxi) writes: “Over the years, a large body of commentaries on the *Qur'ân* has accumulated, and differences in interpretation can be observed both between the various traditions within Islâm (such as Sunni, Shi ‘i, or Sufi), and between different periods in history.”

A similar view on the influence of Books of *Tafsīr* on the translators: is also held by Irving (1992: xxi) who comments “However, translations by Muslims are not always acceptable. Muhammad ‘Ali’s is clear but his commentary and at times the English text can be affected by his sectarian tendency.”

As such, it is almost impossible to miss the effect of the Books of *Tafsīr* on the translation that can be seen clearly in the number of semantic disparities and discrepancies between the selected texts and the Control Text. This stems from the fact that the latter based its translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* on only one specific Book of *Tafsīr*, namely, ‘*Tafsīr* at-Ṭabarī ‘.

The Control Text does this despite the fact that the existence of many different books of *Tafsīr* confirms that Muslim scholars vary in their understanding of the words of the *Holy Qur'ân*. This is, of course, an element which the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* always have to bear in mind when they translate.

A fine example of this influence was demonstrated by the differences in conveying the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “متوفيك” in verse 55 of *Sûrat Âl-Imr’ân*. The Control Text uses the verb “I will make you sleep” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term ‘متوفيك’, Pickthall use the verb “I am gathering thee”, Ali use the verb “I will take thee”, Asad uses the verb “I shall cause

thee to die,” Irving “I shall gather you up” Ozek “I am gathering you”, while Abdel-Haleem “I will take you back”.

According to at-Ṭabarī (2011: 57), “the word “متوفيك” means “I will make you sleep or raise you alive”.” According to Ibn Kathīr (2010: 228), “Ibn Abbas interpreted the word “متوفيك” as “I will make you die”.” According to the Arabic Dictionaries the phrase “توفاه الله” means “Allāh killed him”.”

As far as the state in which Jesus was raised to Allāh is concerned, Asad, in contrast to the other translators, put it explicitly that Jesus will be in state of death when he was raised up to Allāh. In the Control Text, Jesus will be in state of sleeping when he was raised up to Allāh, whereas there is no mentioning of Jesus’s state when he was raised up in the other translations.

6.3.7 Knowledge and Understanding of Arabic by the Translators

The misunderstanding of the Arabic of the *Holy Qur’ân* would play a significant role in creating semantic disparities.

In trying to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic word “أمد” in verse 30 of *Sûrat Âl`Imrân*, the Control Text and Ali use the phrase “a great distance”, Asad uses the phrase “a long span of time”, Irving uses the phrase “a long stretch”, Ozek uses the phrase “a mighty gulf”, Abdel-Haleem uses the phrase “to be far, far away”, and Pickthall uses the phrase “a mighty space of distance”.

The meaning of the single Arabic word “حصوراً” in verse 39 of *Sûrat Âl`Imrân*, is conveyed by in the Control Text a long sentence “keeping away from sexual relations with women”, in Asad, Ozek, Abdel-Haleem, Pickthall and Ali all by the word ‘chaste’, Irving by the word ‘circumspect’.

However, the difference in understanding of the Qur anic terms is not limited to the translators; it includes the interpreters of the *Holy Qur’ân* as well. The following interpretations and definitions of the the Qur anic term “حصوراً” confirm this. According to al-Qurṭubī (2001: 360) “the word “حصوراً” is

derived from the root “حَصْرٌ” which means abstaining from doing things in general, but in this context it clearly means abstaining from sexual relationship with women despite the ability of doing it.” The Similar definition is given by the *Concordance of the Qur’ânic Vocabulary Interpreted* (2005) “the word “حَصْرًا” means “a man who does not have a sexual relationship with women despite his ability of doing it”.” According to *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (2010), “the Arabic word “حَصْرًا” means “chaste”.” Semantically, the problem of non-equivalence arises because the source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target-language. In attempting to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “يُزَكِّىهِمْ” in verse 164 of *Sûrat Âl’Imrân*, the Control Text, Irving and Ozek use the verb “purify”, Asad and Abdel-Haleem use the clause “grow in purity”, Pickthall the verb “grow” while Ali uses the verb “sanctify”.

Semantically, there is no problem of non-equivalence, because the source-language is lexicalized in the target-language. The choices are based on the translators’ understanding of the Arabic language.

6.3.8 Linguistic Barriers

In this respect, the significant differences between Arabic and English (raised at the outset, and which have been illustrated in the analyses) should be mentioned again.

In Arabic, the grammatical structure itself changes according to the gender, plural, dual and singular form. This can also be applied to the pronouns, irrespective of whether they are in place of a subject, an object or have a reflexive function. In Arabic verbs appear before nouns, and adjectives follow the nouns they qualify. In English the verb in the simple past tense is always in a single form, irrespective of whether it is masculine or feminine, singular or plural, while in Arabic the verb changes to reflect not only the number, but also the gender of the noun or the pronoun.

Furthermore, although Arabic has no indefinite article it differentiates

between the definite article and the indefinite article by using “*At-Tanwīn*” which is the Arabic grammatical device that is connected with the pronunciation of the last letter of the indefinite article if it is a singular, a specific plural or a collective noun, or a name of specific lexical form, in a different grammatical structure.

A notable difference, also, is that Arabic has a very special syntactical amalgamative structure that is unlikely to be reflected in the translation, due to the fact that there is no similar phenomenon in English. It abounds in the *Holy Qur’ân* and contributes in no small way to the remarkable nature of the text, often adding density and a rich sound level.

For example: In verse 153 of *Sûrat Al-Îmrâ’n* the amalgamated sentence “تصعدون” is a plural masculine form that consists of the verb “تصعد”, and *waw-al Jamaa* “و” as a subject. This amalgamative structure cannot be replicated in such a concise form in translation, resulting in rather long-winded options.

The Control Text uses the sentence “when you ran away” and the adverb “(dreadfully)” between brackets, by doing so, the Control Text dealt the verb “تصعد”, as an intransitive verb. And the adverb “dreadfully” as an adjunct. Pickthall uses the sentence “When ye climbed” and the adverb “(the hill)” he separated the object by brackets, Ali uses long sentence “Ye were climbing up The high ground,”, Asad uses the short sentence “when you fled,”, Irving uses the long sentence “When you were climbing up” and the phrase [the hillside]” between brackets, Ozek uses the long sentence “When you were climbing to” and the phrase “ [higher ground],”, between brackets, while Abdel-Haleem omits the object by using a very short sentence “You fled”.

6.3.9 The Translators’ Personal Preference

Given the nature of the *Holy Qur’ân* and the different backgrounds of the translators, it can be expected that that choices made between different options when translating, would in many, if not most instances, be a reflection of the translator’s personal preference

In verse 3 of *Sûrat Âl`Imrân* we find the Qur`ânic term: “لما بين يديه”. The different translators choose to translate this as follows: The Control Text uses the clause “what came before it.”, Pickthall uses the clause “that which was (revealed) before it.”, Ali uses the clause “what went before it.”, Asad, uses the clause “whatever there still remains [of earlier revelations]:”, Irving uses the clause “whatever existed before it.”, Ozek uses the clause “that which was sent down before it.”, while Abdel-Haleem uses the clause “what went before:”

Although all the translators are aware that the Qur`ânic term “لما بين يديه”, referred to the old Scriptures that were revealed before the *Holy Qur`ân*, they use different expressions to convey this meaning.

However, the different choices are, entirely, based on each translator’s personal preference. Individually they believe their choice of the verb - “came”, “revealed” “went”, “remains”, “existed” and “sent down” - to be the best expression in conveying the intended meaning.

6.4 Strategies of a Translation

The translators use different strategies such as transliterations, paraphrases using related words, cultural substitutions and omissions.

6.5 The Approaches to Translation

All the translators, with the exception of Asad, use communicative and semantic approaches of translation which correspond to Nida’s dynamic and formal equivalence approaches, respectively.

Asad (1985: vi) uses the rational approach which allows him:

“... to circumscribe every Qur`ânic concept in appropriate English expressions - an endeavour which has sometimes necessitated the use of whole sentences to convey the meaning of a single Arabic word.”

However, this approach can not readily be used in the translation of such a text like the *Holy Qur`ân*, which will not tolerate any omission, substitution, manipulation or rearrangement of its composition.

6.5.1 Poetry in Translation

Although this study is directed at semantic differences and disparities, mention has to be made in passing about the success of the translations as far as the rich poetic nature of the *Holy Qur'ân* is concerned. These remarks are by their very nature superficial, as there was no concerted effort to integrate poetic close reading into the analysis.

Very few of the prosodic features such as the rhyme, alliteration, consonance and assonance, which are some of the characteristics that distinguish the *Holy Qur'ân* and individuate it from all other texts in Arabic, are reflected in these translations.

The relationship between form and content in a text (and the resulting problems for translators) is also demonstrated by the role of *At-Tanwîn*, a grammatical device. The *Holy Qur'ân* is generally read out aloud, but more frequently recited from memory, following thorough training. *At-Tanwîn*, which is the declension of nouns and their adjectives, plays a significant role in this recitation, being connected with the position of the individual words in sentence, the rhythm and sound of its phrases and their syntactic construction. It clearly must have a significant musical effect on the listeners of the *Holy Qur'ân* or native-speakers when reading the text. This phenomenon and its effect was not replicated in English and is absent in all these translations.

Another remarkable feature of the *Holy Qur'ân*, which reinforces the way in which rhyme in its fullest sense serves as a structural element, is the way in which recurring sound clusters at the end of verses in a *Sûrah* reinforces its unity. This feature is impossible to reproduce in a translation and there is no sign that any of the translators even tried to do so.

In conclusion, rhythm is probably one of the most notable prosodic devices, and inevitably recognised sub-consciously by native-speakers of a language. The manipulation of normal speech rhythms in poetry is also

recognised and appreciated for what it achieves. It is unlikely, almost impossible to represent that in translation.

Irving clearly understands this predicament when he writes:

Style creates mood: rhymed prose meets the ear, to offer us diction. As corollary, this edition is arranged in paragraphs, verse or lines so the reader, in both public and private, is guided to the rhythm and movement of the passage. Saje (rhymed prose) is ancient, oral punctuation; it tells the reader where to pause during his recitation so that his listeners can hear the message reverently, and understand it more easily. (1992: xxxv)

And Ali's comments in this respect is rather unrealistic and was not realised at all:

The rhythm, music, and exalted tone of the original should be reflected in the English in the English Interpretation. It may be but a faint reflection, but such beauty and power as my pen can command shall be brought to its service. (1934: iv)

Not only in the case of Ali, but as far as all the translators are concerned, very little poetic justice was done to the *Holy Qur'ân*.

For non-Arabic readers of the *Holy Qur'ân*, listening to the reading or recitation of the text will help them to appreciate some aspects of its poetic beauty, even though it will be primarily perceptible through the rhythm and the rich sound texture created by the many repetitions of sounds and sound clusters in close proximity to each other. Luckily a number of sites on the Internet makes that possible.

6.6 Remarks about and Comparisons between the Different Translations.

6.6.1 The Noble Qur'ân. The King Fahd Complex for Printing, Madinah Munawwarah. 2009 – The Control Text.

The first aspect related to the problem of the translation of the *Holy Qur'ân* is the choice between rendering it with absolute fidelity or loyalty to the whole text, keep the form of the original, its rhythm and its rhyme on the one hand, or a translation with a margin of liberty on the other, introducing various changes in order to assist its comprehension.

Since the target readers of the Control Text would be the Muslim generations of the last decade of the twentieth century and the start of the new millennium who are non-Arabic speakers, the translators use current English. Bearing in mind the differences in the structure of Arabic and English, and the sensitivity of the original text, the Control Text adapts the semantic approach to translation because it wants to remain true to the original culture of the *Holy Qur'ân*. It follows Arabic grammatical structure and the word order of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

As far as the title is concerned, although the adjective “Noble” in the name “*The Noble Qur'ân*” conveys the sense of the greatness of the *Qur'ân*, it does not fit here, because *the Qur'ân* itself relates about its holiness and that no one is allowed to touch it, unless he/she is in a state of a specific Islamic purification: namely, the complete (*Gusul*) or the partial (*wathdu*) ablution.

An example demonstrating this can be found in verses 77 and 79, in *Sûrat Al-Wâqiah* (The Event) where we find إِنَّهُ لَقُرْءَانٌ كَرِيمٌ... لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ in the original, reading in the translation as

“That (this) is indeed an honourable recitation (the *Noble Qur'ân*)”, and “Which (That Book with Allâh) none can touch but the purified (i.e the angels)” (CT 56: 77 &79)

إِنَّهُ لَقُرْءَانٌ كَرِيمٌ... لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ

However, the above quote, using the adjectives “honourable” and “noble”, do not carry the sense of the Holiness of the *Holy Qur'ân*, even if they are taken from the translation of the Control Text. The accurate translations of the above Arabic verses are, as far as I understand, is: “*Indeed this is a Holy Qur'ân,*” and “*No one should touch it except the purified ones*”.

Faced with various difficulties of translating the Qur'anic discourse, the Control Text uses a strategy of a translation by a transliteration and a paraphrase using related words.

However, excessive use of a technique of intensive explanatory transliterations, paraphrases, commentary and footnotes to overcome the complexity of the Qur'anic language, will take the translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* to the place of a commentary, and bears even less relationship to the concept of translation.

Ignoring the context of the verse and insisting on one interpretation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, the Control Text does not convey the meaning of the Qur'anic specific term “الفتنة” in verse 7 of *Sûrat Al-Îmrâ'n* as accurately as the other translators do.

By adapting a strategy of a translation by a transliteration and a paraphrase, the Control Text creates levels of meaning that were not visible in the original text. This happens, for instance, in verse 39 of *Sûrat Al-Îmr'ân* (The Family of Îmr'ân) where the underlined sections are not visible in the Arabic:

Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in *Al-Mîhrâb* (a praying place or a private room), (saying): “Allâh gives you glad tidings of Yahya (John), confirming (believing in) the word from Allâh [i.e. the creation of 'Îsâ (Jesus) عليه السلام” the Word from Allâh “Be!”- and he was!], noble, keeping away from sexual relations with women, and a Prophet, from among the righteous. (CT 3: 39)

فنادته الملائكة وهو قائم يصلى فى المحراب، أن الله يبشرك بيحيى مصدقاً بكلمة من الله
وسيداً وحسوراً ونبياً من الصالحين.

The poetic nature of the text of the *Holy Qur'ân* is not among the concerns of the translators of the Control Text. This is clear from the introduction of Shaikh Salih, the Supervisor General of the Complex, in which he made no mention to it. As such, the poetic features of the *Holy Qur'ân* are lost in its translation.

In respect of the target receptor, the Control Text's rendition is suitable for the non-native Arabic speaking Muslims. However, the extensive parts in brackets, the explanations may well alienate the modern readers.

6.6.2 *The Glorious Qur'ân*. Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall. 1930.

Marmaduke William Pickthall, who converted to Islâm, was the eldest of the two sons of an Anglican clergyman, Charles Grayson Pickthall. He was the first British Muslim to translate the *Holy Qur'ân*. His translation, which appeared in 1930, gave rise to a wide-ranging, heated debate among Egyptian scholars of al-Azhar.

As far as the title is concerned, although the adjective “Glorious” in the name “*The Glorious Qur'ân*”, reveals a sense of respect for the *Qur'ân*, it does not fit here, because the *Qur'ân* itself talked about its holiness and that no one is allowed to touch it, unless he/she is in a state of a specific Islamic purifying, namely complete (*Ghusl*) or a partial (*wuḍū*) ablution.

Even though Pickthall chooses the adjective “Glorious” for his title “*The Glorious Qur'ân*”, it is interesting that, in respect of the translation of verses 77 and 79 in *Sûrat Al-Wâqiah* “The Event”, he also chooses the adjective “noble” for the name “*إِنَّهُ لَقُرْءَانٌ كَرِيمٌ... لا يمسسه إلا المطهرون*” which he translated as “*That (this) is indeed a noble Qur'ân,*”... “*Which none toucheth save the purified.*” (Pickthall 56:77 &79).

Because his translation was a reaction to the Christian missionaries’ offensive translations, and was done in the first half of the twentieth century, Pickthall used the Jacobean English which was prevalent in translations of the Bible at that time. He does so in order to give a special status to the *Holy Qur'ân*.

The following verses from his translation of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha* illustrate Pickthall’s English. “*The path of those whom Thou hast favoured; Not (the path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray.*”

صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم، غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين.

Although Pickthall spent a long period in the Arab countries studying Arabic, the fact that he was not a native speaker is revealed occasionally. For instance, by using the word “pit” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic specific term

“غيايت الجب” and the word “lecture” to convey the meaning of the Arabic name “قرءاناً” in *Sûrat Yusuf*, Pickthall failed to convey the meaning of these Qur’ânic-specific terms. He also failed to convey the real meaning of the Qur’ânic word “الصمد” in the 112th *Sûrah*.

In his approach to the culture-specific concepts related to a religious belief, Pickthall uses the verbs “revealed”, the words “chaste” and “blow”, to convey the meaning the Qur’ânic terms “نزل”, “حصوراً”, “قرح”. There are some inaccuracies in the conveyed meaning of these Qur’ânic terms. The more accurate equivalents are “sent down step by step”, “abstaining from sexual relations with women in spite of his sexual ability to do so ” and “wound”, respectively.

For no obvious reason, Pickthall uses the clause “those who read not” in verse 20 and then, in verse 75, the word “gentiles” as equivalents for the same Qur’ânic term “الأميين” in of *Sûrat Al-Îmr’ân*.

A total loss of the meaning can be found in the translation of the Qur’ânic term “يزكيهم” in verse 164 of *Sûrat Âl`Imr’ân*. Pickthall uses the clause “causeth them to grow” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “يزكيهم”, while the most accurate equivalent would be “ to purify them from their sins”.

Allah verily hath shown grace to the believers by sending unto them a messenger of their own who reciteth unto them His revelations, and causeth them to grow, and teacheth them the Scripture and wisdom: although before (he came to them) they were in flagrant error.

لقد منّ الله على المؤمنين إذ بعث فيهم رسولاً من أنفسهم يتلوا عليهم
آياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وإن كانوا من قبل لفي ضلالٍ
مبينٍ

As the first Muslim who translated the *Holy Qur’ân* into English, Pickthall influenced many later translators of the *Holy Qur’ân* by his style, such as Ali and Asad.

Pickthall, intentionally, ignores the rhythm of the *Holy Qur'ân*, saying that: “attempts to reproduce such rhythm in English have the opposite effect to that produced by the Arabic”.

However, what Pickthall writes in his introduction shows that he had great knowledge of the themes of the *Holy Qur'ân* which were categorized by Muslim scholars, such as the reasons for and the the context of the revelation of each verse, which enabled him to capture the implicit meanings of some verses and to only rarely resort to a strategy of omission in his translation.

As far as the receptor is concerned, one can generalize and state that Pickthall succeeds in conveying the message of the *Glorious Qur'ân* to the target reader of his time.

A modern reader of Pickthall's translation will face a problem in comprehending the message of the *Holy Qur'ân* as the translation was done in an older English which most readers will now surely encounter as obsolete, an obstacle and difficult to read.

However, his contribution towards the knowledge of the *Holy Qur'ân* and its message in the English-speaking world of the 20th century can hardly be over-estimated.

6.6.3 The Holy Qur'ân. Abdullah Yusuf Ali. 1934-1937.

Ali was born in Surat, Gujarat, in British India, a son of a wealthy merchant family. As a child Ali received a religious education, and, eventually, could recite the entire *Qur'ân* from memory. He spoke both Arabic and English fluently. As he sought to reflect the poetic features such as the rhythm, music, and exalted tone of the original *Holy Qur'ân* in English, Ali used a communicative approach.

Concerning his target English readers, Ali writes: “

It may be asked: Is there any need for a fresh/English Translation? To those who ask this question I commend a careful consideration of the facts I have set out in my Note on Translation. After they have read it, I would invite them to take any particular passage in Part 1, say i.74 or i 102 or I 164 in the second Part and compare it with any previous version they choose. If

they find that I helped them even the least bit further in understanding its meaning, or appreciating its beauty, or catching something of the grandeur of the original, I would claim that my humble attempt is justified. (1934: iii)

In respect of the title, the adjective “Holy” in the name “*The Holy Qur’ân*”, is the most accurate one, because it corresponds with the fact that the *Qur’ân* itself talked a about its holiness.

An initial point of special interest is the alteration of order of the verses in *Sûrat Âl `Imrân*, where all the other translators end their translations of verse 3 according to the Qur’ânic word order “وَأَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ”: “*And He sent down the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel).*” Ali changes the verse order by shifting the first part of verse 4 to the end of verse 3 as in: “*And He sent down the Law (Of Moses) and the Gospel (Of Jesus) before this, As a guide to mankind, And He sent down the Criterion (Of judgment between right and wrong).*”

According to Manâ al-Qaṭṭân

The order of the *Sûrahs*, is as the same as the order of the letters and the verses of the *Holy Qur’ân*, was done by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself. If anyone changes or alters the order of any *Sûrah*, he/she corrupts the *Holy Qur’ân*. (2007: 138)

The justification for his use of capital letters could be that Ali uses them to draw his readers’ attention to focus on the shift of the new information that the *Holy Qur’ân* intends to convey.

In terms of accuracy, Ali uses the words “covet”, “chaste”, “take”, “mischief”, the clause “those who reject Faith” and the phrases “quicken the dead” and “making a terrific onslaught” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic terms “الشهوات”, “حصوراً”, “الكافرين”. However, he failed to convey their meaning accurately. The more accurate equivalents are the word “desires”, the paraphrase “abstaining from sexual relations with women in spite of his sexual ability to do so”, and the word “disbelievers”, respectively.

The use of long paraphrases such as “could ever be false to his trust” and “be tied to their necks like a twisted collar” to convey the meanings of the

Qur'ânic terms “يغل” and “سيطوقون”, reflects the difficulty of finding specific equivalents in the target-language.

For no clear reasons, in verse 20 in *Sûrat Âl`Imrân* Ali uses the word “unlettered” and in verse 75 then chooses to use the phrase “ignorant pagans” to convey the meanings of the same Qur'ânic term “الأميين”.

By using the word “truth” in the phrase “*whatever ye give, of a truth*” to convey the meaning of the Arabic word “وما تنفقوا من شيء” in verse 92 in *Sûrat Âl`Imrân*, Ali misconceived the meaning of the verse. The accurate one is “and whatever you give”.

By using the sentence “but we are a goodly body” to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic specific term “ونحن عصابة”, the word “perish” to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “لخاسرون”, the word “desire” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “همت به”, and the phrase “God preserve us!” to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “حاش لله”, Ali failed to convey the accurate meaning of these Qur'ânic specific terms.

Ali uses the phrase “shameful deeds” to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “الفحشاء”. However, in respect of cultural dimension, this is also not the accurate meaning, because sexual acts before marriage would be tolerated or are even accepted in some Western societies. Although Ali learnt Arabic in his childhood, he was a non native-speaker and by confusing the meaning of the Qur'ânic words, he often made mistakes.

By using the clause “ye are yourselves hemmed in (and made powerless)” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم”, and the sentence “ye vex and insult me” to convey the meaning of the Arabic sentence “تؤذونني”, Ali is the most accurate translator of these Arabic sentences in comparison with the other translations.

Similar to the other translators, Ali failed to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic word “الصمد”, because the phrase “the Eternal, Absolute” will not be the accurate equivalent for Qur'ânic word “الصمد”. Since the word “الصمد” is a

religious culture-specific concept which has no exact English equivalent, the strategies of transliteration, paraphrase and explanation will be the most suitable. As such the long sentence “*Allâh us-Şamad (السيد الذى يصمد إليه فى) (الحاجات)* [Allâh-the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)].”, which is done by the Control Text is the accurate one.

As far as the poetic nature of the texts is concerned, Ali (1934: iv) tried to reflect the rhythm of the original in his translation: “The rhythm, music, and exalted tone of the original should be reflected in the English Interpretation. It may be but a faint reflection, but such beauty and power as my pen can command shall be brought to its service.”

An example of preserving the rhythm is found in *Sûrat Al- Balad* “The City”:

Have We not made For him a pair of eyes,
And a tongue, And a pair of lips,
And shown him The two highways?

ألم نجعل له عينين، ولساناً وشفقتين، وهديناه النجدين

This is, however, an exception and Ali, like all the other translators, simply failed to reflect the poetic beauty of the Arabic text.

As far as the receptor is concerned, one can say that Ali succeeds in conveying the message of the *Holy Qur’ân* to the target reader of his time.

As contemporaries, Pickthall and Ali were greatly influenced by the language used by the translators of the earlier Scriptures, the Old and the New Testaments”. Despite the shortcomings, their translations influenced the non-Arabic-speaking Muslims worldwide for decades.

6.6.4 The Message of The Qur’ân. Muhammad Asad. 1980.

Muhammad Asad was a Jewish-born Austro-Hungarian. German was his native language. By his mid-twenties, he could read and write in English, French, Persian and Arabic. After traveling across the Arab World as a journalist, he converted to Islam in 1926. and chose for himself the Muslim

name “Muhammad Asad”. During his stay in Saudi Arabia, he spent time with Bedouins and enjoyed close company of Ibn Saud - the founder of modern Saudi Arabia. His target readers were the Europeans of the twentieth century. As such, Asad has been described by his biographers as “Europe's gift to Islam” and “A Mediator between Islam and the West”.

In respect of its title, even though the word “*Message*” is one of the Islam’s specific term, that is to say the universally known “The Message of Islam”, it does not fit here. It does not convey the meaning of the idea that the *Qur’ân* itself talked about its holiness and that no one is allowed to touch it and usurp its message, as has been stated on a number of occasions during the discussion of the translation of various verses earlier.

Mention needs to be made about Asad’s own perspective, which informs his translation or interpretation. In order to attract the attention of his reader, Asad (1985: viii) opts for a reader-friendly translation:

“AS REGARDS the style of my translation, I have consciously avoided using un-necessary archaisms, which would only tend to obscure the meaning of the *Qur’ân* to the contemporary reader.”

He continues:

... On the other hand, I did not see any necessity of rendering the Qur’ânic phrases into a deliberately ‘modern’ idiom, which would conflict with the spirit of the Arabic original and jar upon any ear attuned to the solemnity inherent in the concept of revelation.

Because Asad believes that there is a complete lack of appreciation of the *Holy Qur’ân* in the Western world, he chooses for a rational approach in translating the *Holy Qur’ân*.

This approach, however, should not be used in a translation of the *Holy Qur’ân*, because the *Holy Qur’ân* essentially will not tolerate any substitution, manipulation or rearrangement of its composition. Therefore this kind of rendering may be deemed to be a distortion of the *Holy Qur’ân* and it supports the conviction of the opponents of translation who claim that a translation may lead to unforeseeable and undesirable developments within the body of the sacred Book itself.

Assessing the previous translations, Asad writes:

When we look at the long list of translations-beginning with the Latin works of the high Middle Ages and continuing up to the present in almost every European tongue-we find one common denominator between their authors, whether Muslims or non-Muslims: all of them were-or are-people who acquired their knowledge of Arabic through academic study alone: that is, from books. None of them, however great his scholarship, has ever been familiar with the Arabic language as a person is familiar with his own, having absorbed the nuances of its idioms and its phraseology with an active, associative response within himself, and hearing it with an ear spontaneously attuned to the intent underlying the acoustic symbolism of its words and sentences. (1980: iii)

This argument is questionable, because if he had absorbed the nuances of the Arabic and its phraseology, he wouldn't have chosen the word "God" in his translation of the acronym "*Basmallah*" to convey the meaning of the Arabic word "الله". Or the words "condemnation" as an equivalent for the Qur'anic term "غضب الله" in verse 7 of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha*, and again in verse 162 of *Sûrat Âl'Imrân*. The same applies to his choice of the phrase "a happy state" to convey the meaning of the amalgamated sentence "تفلحون", because all these equivalents are less in their expressive meanings. The simple accurate equivalents of the Qur'anic term "غضب الله" and the amalgamated sentence "تفلحون" are the phrase "anger of Allâh" and the sentence "that you may succeed", respectively.

Similar to the Control Text, Asad adopts various strategies to solve the problems of the untranslatability of the *Holy Qur'ân*. One is by means of paraphrase using related words; a second is by changing the structure of the verses, as happens, for example, in verse 5 of *Sûrat Al-'Imrân*:

Verily, nothing on earth or in heavens is hidden from God.

إن الله لا يخفى عليه شيء في الأرض ولا في السماء

The back translation of Asad will be:

حقيقة لا شيء في الأرض أو في السموات يخفى على الله

being: "Indeed/ Verily/ surely from Allâh nothing is hidden on earth nor in heaven."

Although Asad manages to convey the general meaning of the verse, changing or the alteration of any word will be a betrayal of sorts of the sacred text. By using a plural of the word “heavens” he creates a level of meaning which is not visible in the text.

A further strategy which is found in other translations as well, translation by omission, as can be found in verse 32 of *Sûrat Al-’Imrân*: “Say, ‘Pay heed unto God and the Apostle’”(CT 3 :32). Asad simply omits the whole Arabic sentence “فإن تولوا فإن الله لا يحب الكافرين” from his translation, which results in a complete misinterpretation of this verse.

Asad also shifts the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “ملء الارض ذهباً” in verse 91, in *Sûrat Al-’Imrân*, from “the amount of gold as large as the size of the earth” to “all gold that is on earth”. As such, the back translation of Asad’s rendition will be كل الذهب على الأرض, which is different from the Qur’ânic phrase. The accurate equivalent is “the earth full of gold”.

Although Asad targets the contemporary reader, his translation may not readily appeal to, or even be comprehensible for the modern non-specialist majority of English-speakers through his use of the the very dated pronouns “thou” and “thee”.

By using many explanatory words and sentences, Asad intends to facilitate the understanding of the message of the *Holy Qur’ân*, but this method makes his translation a cumbersome one.

Similar to the other translators of the *Holy Qur’ân*, Asad failed to convey the meaning of some terms such as the word “deceive” in verse 161 in *Sûrat Al-’Imrân*, for the Arabic word “يغل”, and “discourse” in verse 2 in *Sûrat Yûsuf* for the title “قرءاناً”. The accurate equivalents according to the Books of Tafsir are “to take illegally the part of the booty” and “the *Qur’ân*”.

By using the English word “discourse” to convey the meaning of the Arabic name “قرءاناً”, Asad misinterprets the specific title of the *Holy Qur’ân*.

When he uses the word “perish” to convey the meaning of the Arabic phrase “لخاسرون”, the word “desire” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “همت به” and the clause “God save us” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “حاش الله”, Asad misinterprets these Arabic terms. The simple accurate equivalents of these words are “losers”, “she put him in the mind” and “Great Allâh”, respectively.

By using the phrase “by death” in the clause “you yourselves be encompassed by [by death]” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم”, in verse 66 in *Sûrat Yûsuf*, Asad adds some levels of meaning that are not present in the Qur’ânic term.

The concept of “death” is not among the lexical meanings of the the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم”, and the different choices exercised by the translators confirm this fact.

Although he does not capture the exact equivalent for the Qur’ânic word “الصمد” by using the phrase “the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of all Being”, Asad comes closest to the Control Text’s translation which seems to be the most accurate one.

In respect of the poetic nature of the text, Asad (1985: viii) admits that it is impossible to produce the rhythm of the *Holy Qur’ân*:

I make no claim to having produced anything of the indescribable rhythm and rhetoric of the *Qur’ân*. No one who has truly experienced its majestic beauty could ever be presumptuous enough to make such a claim or even to embark upon such an attempt.

Generally speaking, Asad’s work is more than adequate and shows deep empathy with the *Holy Qur’ân*. He tries to convey to his readers not only the bare words of the original text, but also the deeper and hidden meaning of those words.

Despite the reservations expressed above, Asad succeeds in conveying the message of the *Holy Qur’ân* to the target reader of his time.

6.6.5. The Qur'ān, First American Version. Irving, B.T. 1992.

Thomas Ballantyne Irving, also known as Al-Ḥajj Ta'līm `Alī Abū Nāṣir was an American Muslim author, professor, and scholar. Irving' knowledge of Arabic is manifested in his lengthy detailed discussion of the problems of translating the *Holy Qur'ān*, referring to the grammar and syntax such as conjunctions, connectives, the differences between the nouns and verbal sentences, the disjunctive pronoun, tense and conditional moods, collective nouns, the superlatives and the possessive pronouns. He also discusses the dualism and pairs, the Qur'ānic terminologies, the spelling and phonetics, the style and mood as well as chanting and recitation of the *Holy Qur'ān*.

Irving's declared intention is to render the *Holy Qur'ān* in a way that makes it accessible to readers belonging to present-day American society. His target receptors were the second and the third generation of American Muslims and their contemporaries. His choice of words is accordingly influenced by contemporary American and he uses, as could be expected, the American spelling, for instance "favored".

As far as the title is concerned, although the name "*The Qur'ān*", is the actual name of the *Holy Qur'ān*, it does not fit here, as it does not reflect respect for the numinous Book; it does not convey the meaning of the idea that the *Holy Qur'ān* itself talked about its holiness, as was referred to earlier.

The subtitle, "The First American Version" might suggest that there are different types of the *Holy Qur'ān* for different groups or regions, and for that reason the Americans should have their own version based on their own knowledge and their own use of English language. To this end, Irving explains:

It is also intended for the pious non-Muslim who is not already tied up in in theology of some other sort: we must be able to discuss Islām on our own terms, terms which have been made up through our own knowledge and our own use of English language. (1991: xxiv)

The implication of the above quote is that Irving wants to present Islâm on the Americans' own terms, terms which have been made up through their own knowledge and own use of English language.

However, in reality, Islam is a religion of unity in the fullest sense of the word, unity that manifests itself in one Prophet, one Lord, one Book, one people, one direction of *Salâh*, that is to say towards the Holy Ka'abah in Makkah.

It might be true that a dispute exists between *Sunnah* and *Shi'a'*, but it is not related to the text of the *Holy Qur'ân*. The tension arises from their respective positions about the Companions of the Prophet, namely the first two Caliphs, Abu Bakr and Omar. In *Sûrat Al-Mu'minûn* "The Believers", the *Holy Qur'ân* urges its followers to be united in their belief:

And verily, this your religion (of Islamic
Monotheism) is one religion, and I am your Lord, so
fear (keep your duty to) Me. (CT 23:52)

وإنَّ هذه أمتكم أمة واحدة وأنا ربكم فاتقون.

Irving uses a communicative approach, because it enables him to communicate the meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to his readers. As such and because he knows the root meaning of the Arabic word "قرءان", he translated the specific term of "The *Qur'ân*" into "The Reading" and the specific term "الكريم" into "The noble", by doing so, he quite clearly misinterprets the universally known title of "ميركلاناءرقلا".

Irving adopts various strategies for solving the problem of non-equivalence. This can be easily seen, for instance, when he simply chooses to use letters from English alphabet "A.L.M", and "A. L. R." to convey the meaning or sounds of the Arabic letters "ألْم" and "ألر" in the opening of the 3rd and 12th *Sûrahs*. Because his translation is not accompanied by the Arabic text of the *Holy Qur'ân*, or by an audio guide, the non-Arabic speaker who has never listened to the Arabic Qur'ânic pronunciation of these letters, most probably

will read them with their English names or sounds /ei/, /el/and /em/' and '/ei/, /el/ and /a:[r]/'. That this is both incorrect and improper, was discussed in the analysis of the respective *Sûrahs*.

Irving wants his translation to be user-friendly for the modern American reader. He claims (1992: xxiv): "I have tried to find the simplest word so that the Muslim child can understand it easily, and feel strengthened thereby."

This is Irving's version of the same verses of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha* that was earlier used to illustrate Pickthall's English, and shows the simpler language favoured by Irving : "*The road of those whom You have favoured, with who You are not angry, nor who are lost!*"

صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم، غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين.

Irving adopts a rather flexible approach in translation and he freely translates in respect of culture-specific concepts related to religious belief. He uses the verbs "sent down", and "gather", the words "circumspect", "bond" and "disciplined", the phrases "sent on purpose" and "should hold back anything", the adverb "kindly" and the reflexive form of the pronoun "herself" to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic terms "نزل", "المحسنين", "حصوراً", "يعل", "متوفيك", "من الملأئكة مسومين", "تصبروا", "إلابحيل من الله" and the pronoun "ه" in the word "نفسه".

Irving uses the feminine because he refers the reflexive pronoun "ه" in the amalgamated clause "نفسه" to the word "نفس" which is an abstract feminine noun in Arabic that is equivalent to the word "soul" in English, while the other translators refer it to Israel, which is a masculine name and as a result they use the reflexive pronoun "himself". However, even if Irving prefers the pronoun "ه" to the abstract noun "نفس", its accurate equivalent is the reflexive pronoun "itself,"

By doing so, Irving misinterprets these Qur'anic terms. The accurate translations of these Qur'anic terms are as follows: "sent down step by step", for verb "نزل" "the good-doers" for word "المحسنين" the paraphrase "abstaining

from sexual relations with women in spite of his sexual ability to do so”, for the word “حضوراً”, “to take illegally the part of the booty”, for the verb “يغل”, “I will make you sleep”, for the amalgamated sentence “متوفيك”, “except when under a protection from Allâh”, for the metaphorical language “إلا بحبلٍ من الله”, “if you hold on a patience”, for the amalgamated sentence “تصبروا”, “angels having a distinctive marks”, for the phrase “من الملائكة مسومين” and “himself”, for word “نفسه”, respectively.

Another example of Irving’s approach can be demonstrated when considering his translation of the phrase “ما كان لبشر” in verse 79 in *Sûrat Al-Îmrân*. Because the source language phrase is semantically complex, a problem of non-equivalence is almost inevitable. What is problematic in Irving’s translation, is a shift in accent from the addressee as a human being to the addressee as God. He changes the basic meaning of the phrase by directing the utterance to God instead of the Prophet, who is a human being. By doing so, Irving misrepresents the Arabic original text.

On the other hand, by using the phrase “will be charged” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “سيطوقون”, Irving manages to convey the most accurate meaning of these two Qur’ânic terms when we compare this with the other translations. He also manages to convey the accurate meaning of the Arabic metaphorical sentence “هت به” in verse 24 in *Sûrat Yusuf*, by using the sentence “She kept him on her mind”.

On the other hand, by using the phrase “the bottom of a cistern” in verse 10 in *Sûrat Yusuf* as an equivalent for the Qur’ânic term “غيايت الجب”, Irving’s translation does not convey the meaning accurately. The accurate equivalent is “throw him down to the deep bottom of a well”. This meaning is drawn from the verse 19 in the same *Sûrah*, “and he let down his bucket (into the well)”.

Similar to other translators, by using the phrase “the Source [for everything]”, Irving failed to convey the real meaning of the concept of the Qur’ânic word “الصد”. Since the word “الصد” is a religious culture-specific concept which has no exact English equivalent, the strategies of transliteration, paraphrase and explanation will be the most suitable. As such, the long sentence “Allâh

us-Samad (السيّد الذي يصمد إليه في الحاجات) [*Allâh-the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)*]", which is found in the Control Text is the accurate one.

In respect of the poetic features of the *Holy Qur'ân*, Irving wants to keep the rhythm:

The present version has been arranged either in prose form or as rhythmic free verse, depending on the nature of the Arabic original. I have laid the more lyric sections in the form of free verse and rough stanza. An ecstatic quality is found in the early Meccan chapters towards the end of our canonical text (but actually at the start of the primitive prophetic message). Here is the seventh-century Arabia speaking to North Americans in the closing years of the twentieth century, or perhaps we should now say, to mark the opening of the new fifteenth century of the Hijra era. (1992: xxxv)

The following verses from "The City", illustrates the Irving's free choices:

Have We not granted him both eyes,
a tongue and two lips,
and guided him along both highroads?

ألم نجعل له عيين، ولساناً وشفقتين، وهديناه النجدين

In the Arabic poetry the above three verses create a formal stanza as they end with the same letters "ين", the sound cluster /ein/ at the end of the words "عيين", "شفقتين" and "النجدين", which are pronounced /einem/, /ʃətəm/ and /nəɖʒem/, respectively. By doing this, even if presenting it as verse, Irving does not succeed in preserving the most important poetic feature of these verses.

Despite the use of simple current American English, Irving fails in conveying parts the message of the *Holy Qur'ân* to the target reader.

In addition to the above mentioned flaws, his translation of verse 18 of *Sûrat Al-Îmrân* is entirely sufficient to justify this claim, because by using the sentence "there is no deity except Himself" , Irving placed the "deity" in the same level of the reflexive pronoun "Himself", which refers to Allâh.

“God testifies there is no deity except Himself, and so do the angels and persons possessing knowledge. Maintaining fairplay , there is no deity except Him, the Powerful, the Wise.”

شهد الله أنه لا إله إلا هو والملائكة وأولو العلم، قائماً بالقسط

، لا إله إلا هو العزيز الحكيم

In my opinion, the accurate translation of this verse is:

“Allāh testifies that none has the right to be worshipped but He, and the angels and those having knowledge, He maintains justice, none has the right to be worshipped but He, the Almighty, the All- Wise.”

As such, and in light of the concerns raised and since the *Holy Qur’ân* does not tolerate any misinterpretation, Irving’s translation must be approached and read with great circumspection.

6.6.6 *The Majestic Qur’ân*. Ozek, A., N. Uzuunoglu, T. Topuzoglu and M. Maksutoglu. 2000.

Ali Ozek and his colleagues, Abdal Hakim Murad (British), Mostafa al-Badawi (Egyptian) and Uthman Hutchinson (American) all eminent academics and writers, translated the *Holy Qur’ân* as a joint undertaking . Their respective contributions are, however, not identified or discernable.

Despite the fact that the adjective “majestic” in the title, *The Majestic Qur’ân*, reflects respect for the *Holy Qur’ân*, it is not suitable, because it does not convey the meaning of the idea that the *Holy Qur’ân* itself mentioned its holiness. This has been referred to already.

From the outset, Ozek’s team wants their translation, in a refined modern English, to be user-friendly and accessible to the target readers. Their aspirations (2000: vii) have been stated earlier in this study: “It is our desire that this initiative be an interactive work, a dialogue between our readers and us. We request you to join us in our project by giving your feedback and criticism.”

Because they wish to convey the understanding of meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân* as effectively as possible, they issue this request as they “plan to improve upon each new edition.” It is clear that what is at issue here is not the English quality of the translation, but whether what they have presented in the translation has been effective

The translation team adopts a totally different approach in respect of the crucial importance of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha* in *Sâlah*, by deciding on a strategy of a transliteration for the whole of *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha*, accompanied by an English translation.

Bismi'Llâhi'r-Rahmâhi'r-Rahim” 1. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds “Al-hamduli'LlâhiRabbi'l-âlamîn:” 2. The All-Merciful, The Compassionate:” Ar-Rahmâhni'r-Rahim” 3. Master of the Day of Judgement. “Mâlikiyawmi'd-din” 4. You alone do we worship, “Iyyākana'budu”, And Your help alone do we seek. “Waiyyākanasta'in 5. Guide us to the Straight Path: “Ihdina's-sirāta'l-mustaqim” 6. The path of those whom You have favored: “Sirāta'lladhinaan'amta 'alayhim” 7. Not of those who have incurred Your wrath, “Ghayri'l-maghdūbi 'alayhim”, Nor of those who are astray. “Wala'd-dâllin. (The *Majestic Qur'an* 1:1-7)

This transliteration stresses the importance of the *Surah*, and, at the same time, draws the English receptors' attention to the issue of translation, and its complexities.

Faced with the problems of non-equivalence for various reasons, Ozek and his colleagues use different strategies of translations such as cultural substitution and the use of more general or more expressive words to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic terms.

As this translation is the work of a team of translators, one would have expected that inaccuracies would be kept to a minimum. There are, however, many. The Qur'ânic terms “الحى القيوم”, “نزل”, “أمدأ بعيداً”, “حصوراً”, “يغل”, “متوفيك”, “نعاس”, “فاحشة”, “سيطوقون” and “أخزيتة”, for instance, are translated into the verbs “sent down”, “deceive” and “gather”, the words “the Sustainer”, “chaste” and “asleep”, the phrases “an evil thing”, “a mighty gulf”, “be their collar” and the pronoun “them”, while the accurate equivalents are as follows: “the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists”, “sent down step by step”, “he will wish that there were a great distance between

him and his evil”, “abstaining from sexual relations with women in spite of his sexual ability to do so”, “to take illegally the part of the booty”, “I will make you sleep”, “drowsiness”, “great sins as illegal sexual intercourse”, “will be charged”, and “You have disgraced him”, respectively.

For no obvious reason, in verse 20 in *Sūrat Al-Īmrân*, Ozek and his team use the clause “those who read not”, and then in verse 75, the word “gentiles” to convey the meaning of the same Qur’ânic term “الأميين”. According to the Books of *Tafsīr*, the Qur’ânic term “الأميين” simply means the Arabs of that time, in both contexts.

Misinterpretation is clear when they use the word “pit” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic specific term “غيايت الجب”, the sentence “She moved towards him” to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “همت به”, the clause “Allâh forbid!” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic term “حاش لله”. The accurate equivalents to these are “the deep bottom of the well”, “she puts him in her mind” and “great Allâh”, respectively.

On the other hand, by using the clause “you are [in some way] prevented” Ozek and his team come closest to the accurate meaning of the Arabic clause “يحاط بكم”.

Similar to other translators, by using the phrase “the eternally, Besought of all!” Ozek failed to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic word “الصمد”. As the word “الصمد” is a religious culture-specific concept which has no exact English equivalent, the strategies of transliteration, paraphrase and explanation will probably be the most suitable. As such, the long sentence “*Allâh us-Samad (السيّد الذي يصمد إليه في الحاجات) [Allâh-the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)]*”, found in the Control Text is the accurate one.

In terms of the poetic nature of the texts, Ozek and his team write:

Human literary productions are either in poetry or prose. The *Majestic Qur’ân*, however, is in neither of these genres. Neither can it be termed music, although it possesses a system of tonality and rhythm that is aesthetically superb, being of Divine authorship. (2000: x)

The assumption that a team effort is most likely more accurate than an individual's translation, is not proven true in this case - unfortunately there is no significant difference between *The Majestic Qur'ân* and the other translations in respect of its many similar errors.

In respect of the receptor, despite the shortcomings highlighted in the analyses, the expressed aim of Ozek's team to produce a translation which was user-friendly and fairly reliable, was probably achieved. In as far as they wanted a text which is accessible to the target readers and conveys a mainstream understanding of the *Holy Qur'ân* in a refined modern English, *The Majestic Qur'ân* is probably the most suitable, reliable and accessible translation for both Muslim and non-Muslim non-Arabic speakers who want to know something about the message of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

6.6.7 The Qur'ân. A new translation. Abdel-Haleem, M.A.S. 2005.

Abdel-Haleem was born in Egypt, and learned the *Qur'ân* by heart from childhood. Educated at al-Azhar, Cairo, and Cambridge Universities, he has taught Arabic and Islamic Studies at Cambridge and London Universities since 1966, including courses in advanced translation and the *Qur'ân*. He is currently Professor of Islâmic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and editor of the *Journal of the Qur'ânic Studies*.

In respect of the title, what was said about Irving holds true for Abdel-Haleem, because he, too, uses the same name "*The Qur'ân*" as the title of the translation. However, it is strange that Abdel-Haleem, as a native-Arabic speaker who learnt the *Holy Qur'ân* since his childhood, would omit the adjective "Holy". The title does not convey the meaning of the idea that the *Holy Qur'ân* itself refers to its holiness, as mentioned previously.

Because he is well acquainted with both the Arabic and English cultures, and since his target receptors were native speakers of English, Abdel-Haleem uses a communicative approach, in which he avoids using not only Archaic Arabic and idioms, but also the older English that characterized the earlier

translations of the *Holy Qur'ân*, whether done by non-Muslim or Muslim translators. Hence the subtitle, *A new translation*. In the process, he uses a technique of omission and chooses modern simple words in his translation.

As is the case in most of the translations, the question arises whether Abdel-Haleem translates or interprets the *Holy Qur'ân*.

By using a strategy of a translation by omission of many Qur'ânic terms such as the phrases “ولو افتدى به” , “تجرى من تحتها الأنهار” , “بنصره” , “من لدنك” and the words “أقلامهم” and “مسومين” and the assertive Arabic word ‘إِنَّ’, Abdel-Haleem opts for the interpretation of the general meaning of the verses in which these concepts occur, rather than a definitive translation of the meaning of the *Holy Qur'ân*.

In terms of accuracy, the use of the phrase “the Ever Watchful”, and the words “take”, “chaste”, “blow”, “fled” and “asleep” are not the exact equivalents to the Qur'ânic terms “القيوم”, “متوفيك”, “حصوراً”, “قرح”, “تصعدون”, “نعاس”. Their accurate equivalents are “the One Who sustains and protects all that exists”, “I will make you sleep”, “abstaining from sexual relations with women in spite of his sexual ability to do so”, “wound” and “to climb the mountain”, “drowsiness”, respectively.

By using the word “lifeline” to convey the meaning of the Qur'ânic term “إلا حبل من الله”, Abdel-Haleem’s translation shows the difficulty of translating the metaphorical language use of the *Holy Qur'ân*. The accurate equivalent is “except when under a protection from Allâh”.

Abdel-Haleem argued that “Context is crucial in interpreting the meaning of any discourse, Qur'ânic or otherwise” (2005: xxx), but does not always stay true to this conviction. The contexts of Qur'ânic term “الأميين” in verse 20 and verse 75 of *Sûrat Al-’Imrân*, for instance, do not show any difference in meaning between them, but in verse 20 he uses the clause “those who read not” and in verse 75, the word “gentiles” to convey the meaning of the same Qur'ânic term.

There is, of course, a significant difference between “those who read not” and “gentiles”. But, more importantly, according to the Books of Tafsir in both contexts, the Qur’ânic term “الأميين” actually means “the Arabs of that time.”

This specific difference has been demonstrated in more than one translation, and it seems that despite the claim of being a new translation, Abdel-Haleem follows in the footsteps of those translators of the *Holy Qur’ân* who were influenced by Pickthall’s choices. This again demonstrates what a remarkable influence Pickthall’s translation had over many decades.

Just like Asad, Abdel-Haleem adopts a strategy of changing the Arabic word order of many verses. An example can be found in verse 112 in *Sûrat Al-Îmrân*:

ضربت عليهم الذلة أين ما تقفوا إلا بحيلٍ من الله وحيلٍ من الناس

وباءوا بغضبٍ من الله وضربت عليهم المسكنة، ذلك بأنهم كانوا

يكفرون بآيات الله ويقتلون الأنبياء بغير حقٍ ذلك بما عصوا وكانوا يعتدون

Abdel-Haleem translates the above mentioned verse as follows:

“... and, unless they hold fast to a lifeline from God and from mankind, they are overshadowed by vulnerability wherever they are found. They have drawn God’s wrath upon themselves. They are overshadowed by weakness, too. Because they have persistently disbelieved in God’s revelations, and killed prophets without any right, all because of their disobedience and boundless transgression.” (Abdel-Haleem 3:112)

In this verse, Abdel-Haleem starts his translation with the Arabic phrase

“إلا بحيلٍ من الله وحيلٍ من الناس” which is in the middle of the Arabic construction.

He creates level of meanings which are not visible in the original text

In my view, the back translation of Abdel-Haleem’s translation will be as follows:

و إلا أن يمسكوا بقوة بحيل السلامة من الله ومن الناس،

ضربت عليهم الذلة أين ما تقفوا وباءوا بغضبٍ من الله

وضربت عليهم المسكنة أيضاً، ذلك بأنهم كانوا

يكفرون باصرار بآيات الله ويقتلون الأنبياء بغير حق
وذلك كله لعصيانهم وإعتداؤهم بلا حدود.

Clearly this is not the same text we find in the original.

Remaining true to the word order in the *Holy Qur'ân*, an accurate translation, to my understanding, would be:

*For the pious, with their Lord, there are gardens,
underneath which rivers flow to live in for ever,
with purified wives and the pleasure of Allāh and
Allah is Seer of His worshippers.*

Similar to the other translators, by using ‘She made for him’ to convey the meaning of the Arabic clause “همت به”, and by using the word “the eternal” to convey the meaning of the Qur’ânic word “الصمد”, Abdel-Haleem failed to convey the accurate meaning of the two Qur’ânic terms.

The accurate equivalent for these the Qur’ânic terms are : “She puts him in her mind” and the long sentence “*Allâh us-Samad (السيّد الذي يصمد إليه في الحاجات)* [*Allâh-the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)*]”, found in the Control Text, is the accurate one.

Though the technique of paraphrase and explanation is useful in translation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, it is not a part of Abdel-Haleem’s method, as he writes:

(...) footnotes are meant to be minimal, and to explain allusions, references, and cultural background only when it was felt these were absolutely necessary to clarify meaning and context. (2005: xxxv)

Central to Abdel-Haleem’s approach to his translation, is the message of the *Holy Qur'ân*, which he places in the following context:

The message of the *Qur'ân* was, after all, directly addressed to all people without distinction as to class, gender, or age: it does not rely on archaisms or pompous language for effect. Although the language of the present translation is simple and straightforward, it is hoped that it does not descend to an inappropriate level. (2005: xxix)

It seems that Abdel-Haleem does not concern himself with the issue of the poetic nature of the text of the *Holy Qur'ân*, because he elaborates only on specific linguistic features, among them the grammatical shift. The poetic features are absent, or at least not visible, in his translation.

As he has no privilege to alter the Qur'anic features under the pretence that his translation will look better, by using the techniques of omission and changing the word order of the verse, Abdel-Haleem's translation would not be reliable and even inaccurate.

For instance, in verse 15, the Control Text uses a transliteration and paraphrase "For *Al-Muttaqûn* (the pious) there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. to convey the meaning of the Qur'anic sentence

للذين اتقوا عند ربهم جناتٌ تجري من تحتها الأنهار

In this sentence Abdel-Haleem does not only change the word order of the original sentence and omits the phrase "تجري من تحتها الأنهار", but by using the verb "will give", he also creates a level of meaning which is not visible in the original.

It is interesting that Abdel-Haleem's translation shows no significant different outcomes when Arabic is the native-tongue of a translator when compared with the other extreme where a translator is a native-speaker of neither Arabic nor English. "*The Holy Qur'ân*", a translation by a scholar of Indian origin, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, who had neither Arabic (the source language) nor English (the target language) as a native language, could serve as an example.

As far as the receptor is concerned, despite using the technique of omission, the English reader will not encounter any difficulty in terms of comprehending Abdel-Haleem's translation, as it is written in contemporary simple English.

6.6.8 Summary

Finally, all the translations of the selected texts - as we have seen in this study - demonstrate that many lexical, structural, cultural, rhetorical, semantic and stylistic features are encountered when translating the *Holy Qur'ân*. Fearing that the *Holy Qur'ân* may lose some of them in translation, some translators use transliteration, in order to preserve its prosodic feature, and/or provide annotations that contain textual and contextual information, in order to assist the target reader to fully comprehend the message of the Holy Book.

6.7 Concluding Remarks

6.7.1 It is inevitable that a study of this nature would demand some final evaluation of the translations, having analysed them in a comparative manner. It must be taken into account that this study was directed at semantics disparities and discrepancies and that other aspects of the translations, including important ones related to the many poetic features of the *Holy Qur'ân* was not taken into consideration.

For the purpose of evaluating the translations, given the above qualifications, one would consider the reliability of the translation and how accessible it would be to a new generation, living in a global society.

In this respect the translation by Pickthall would not even be considered, but it was at its time a significant publication. It is therefore no surprise that later translations more than occasionally still show traces of this work.

Two texts present themselves as being identified for special mention, although they, too, have a number of defects which this study has pointed out.

The Noble Qur'ân. English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary, the Control Text, has been translated into current English. However, its excessive use of a technique of intensive explanatory transliterations, paraphrases, commentary and footnotes to overcome the complexity of the Qur'anic language, and insistence on one interpretation of the *Holy Qur'ân*, may alienate the young target readers.

At the same time, its complex nature makes it extremely reliable for those Muslims who are non-native Arabic-speakers. They will already have some background knowledge about the Islâmic literature from their “Mosque”, “*Darul Ulum*”, or “*Madreesa*”, where the *Holy Qur’ân* and its related subjects are taught world-wide. Against this background they will not find the translation cumbersome, but will delight in the way in which it grapples in its effort to convey the meaning of the *Holy Qur’ân* and to place it in a historical and cultural context.

The Majestic Qur’ân, the translation by the team lead by Ozek, is probably the the most successful in terms of what the team set out to achieve: A translation that would be user-friendly and accessible to the target readers in conveying the mainstream understanding of the *Holy Qur’ân* in a refined modern English. Despite the shortcomings pointed out and discussed in the study, it is the most suitable and accessible to non-Arabic speakers, both Muslim and non-Muslims, who wish to know something about the message of the *Holy Qur’ân*. Its reliability also stems from the fact that the translation team came from different educational, cultural and social backgrounds and which would have helped them in capturing the accurate intended equivalent. That they do not see the translation as a final product, is made clear by their request to the readers to provide them with feedback as they “plan to improve upon each new edition”.

6.7.2 As was mentioned early in the study, Muslims consider the *Holy Qur’ân* a miracle of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and for this reason some Muslim scholars firmly opposed any translation of the *Holy Qur’ân*. They argued that translation will not convey the miracle of the *Holy Qur’ân*, which is embodied in its Arabic-specific structure and that it may lead to undesirable alterations to the *Holy Qur’ân*.

However, as the translations exist, there would be no sense in ignoring this fact. There would be more to gain in comparing and critically discussing them, but keeping in mind that there are many challenges facing any prospective translator.

6.7.3 Some findings and conclusions emanating from this study are the following:

- If a translation of 1449 verses of the selected versions shows 147 major semantic disparities and discrepancies between them, how many will there be in a translation of 43,400 verses, the total number of verses in the seven selected versions of the *Holy Qur'ân*?
- As translation is not only a matter of mastering two or more languages, but also a mastering of the culture(s) in which those languages are embedded, prospective translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* should master the Arab's culture in which The Qur'anic discourse was revealed.
- As a result of some inaccuracies in the translation of some Qur'anic concepts, the message of the *Holy Qur'ân* cannot be received accurately by the target-language speakers.
- As this study shows, the problem of non-equivalence is a dominant one, and this is not only in respect of many of the rhetorical words in which the *Holy Qur'ân* was revealed. Different types of translation for different reader groups are probably called for. A technique of transliteration accompanied by exhaustive explanations could be the appropriate solution for the old Muslims, a technique of a simplified English, without affecting the original information, could be the appropriate solution for the young Muslims, while a technique of cultural substitution could be the appropriate solution for translations aimed at non-Muslims in general. The latter is of great importance, due to the fact that, for many reasons, there is a growing global interest in the message of the *Holy Qur'ân*.
- All the translators of the *Holy Qur'ân* in this study, directly or indirectly agree that the *Holy Qur'ân* is untranslatable. Although this primarily relates to the revelatory origin of the text nature, the problem of translating or conveying the meaning of Qur'anic-specific terms and remaining true to the poetic features and often dense syntactic constructions, clearly present major challenges. In this light, any attempt at translating this divine Book deserves appreciation and all of these translators deserve to be honoured.

- Since in all languages and linguistic creations there remains something that cannot readily be conveyed in translation, it remains important to determine which parts of the message of the *Holy Qur'ân* need to be or must be conveyed in respect of the various Books of *Tafsîr*.
- Since no one is allowed to omit, add or replace any *Sûrah*, verse or word of the *Holy Qur'ân*, the original Arabic verses are to be presented beside the translation when published, i.e. as parallel texts.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, being the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques (the Holy Mosque in Makkah and the Prophetic Mosque in Madinah), and as a leader of Sunnis, may have the greatest authority and competence as far as the consideration of relevant aspects of these findings are concerned. More particularly, this would become the responsibility of the Translation Centre at the King Fahd Complex for Printing of the *Holy Qur'ân* in Madinah Munawwarah. The latter is, after all, concerned with specific matters of the translations, especially translating the meaning of *The Noble Qur'ân* into different languages, studying the problems related to these translations and verifying existing translations.

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ADDENDUM

This addendum contains the translated verses of the selected texts as well as the original, and is presented in this manner to facilitate the comparative reading of the different translations.

1 *Sûrat Al-Fâtiha* (The Opening Chapter)

Verse 1/2

Source Text

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

Control Text

“In the Name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.”

Pickthall

“*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.*”

Ali

“*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.*”

Asad

“*IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE DISPENSER OF GRACE.*”

Irving

“*In the name of God, the Mercy-giving, the Merciful.*”

Ozek

“*In the name of Allah, the All Merciful, the Compassionate.*”

“*Bismi 'Llâhi 'r-Rahmâhi 'r-Rahim.*”

Abdel-Haleem

“In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!”

Verse 3/4

Source Text

مالك يوم الدين

Control Text

“The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection).”

Pickthall

“Owner of the Day of Judgment.”

Ali

“Master of the Day of Judgment.”

Asad

“Lord of the Day of Judgment.”

Irving

“Ruler on the Day for Repayment!”

Ozek

“Master of the Day of Judgement.” “Māliki yawmi’d-din.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Master of the Day of Judgement.”

Verse 4/5

Source Text

إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين

Control Text

“You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).”

Pickthall

“*Thee (alone) we worship: Thee (alone) we ask for help.*”

Ali

“*Thee do we worship, And Thine aid we seek.*”

Asad

“*Thee alone do we worship: and unto Thee alone do we turn for aid.*”

Irving

“*You do we worship and You do we call on for help.*”

Ozek

“*You alone do we worship, and Your help alone do we seek.*”

“*Iyyāka na`budu, wa Iyyāka nasta īn.*”

Abdel-Haleem

“*It is You we worship: it is You we ask for help.*”

Verse 6/7

Source Text

صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين

Control Text

“The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (i.e. those whose intentions are perverted: they know the Truth, yet do not follow it), nor of those who went astray (i.e. those who have lost the (true) knowledge, so they wander in error, and are not guided to the Truth).”

Pickthall

“The path of those whom Thou hast favoured. Not (the path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray.”

Ali

“The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, Those whose (portion) Is not wrath, And who go not astray.”

Asad

“The way of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessing, not of those who have been condemned [by Thee], nor of those who go astray.”

Irving

“The road of those whom You have favoured, with whom You are not angry, nor who are lost.”

Ozek

“The path of those whom You have favoured: “Sirāta’lladhina an`amta ‘alayhim”. Not of those who have incurred Your wrath “Ghayri’l-maghdūbi ‘alayhim”, Nor of those who are astray “Wa la’d-dāllin.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The road of those You have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray.”

2 *Sûrat Al-Imr'ân* (The Family of Imr'ân)

Verse 1:

Source Text

ألم

Control Text

“Alif-lâm-Mím. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings].”

Pickthall

“*Alif-lâm-Mím.*”

Ali

“*Alif-lâm-Mím.*”

Asad

“*Alif-lâm-Mím.*”

Irving

“*A.L.M.*”

Ozek

“*Alif-lâm-Mím.*”

Abdel-Haleem

“*Alif-lâm-Mím.*”

Verse 2:

Source Text

Control Text

“Allâh lâ ilâhâ illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), Al-Hayyul-Qayyuum (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists).”

Pickthall

“Allah! There is no god save Him, the Alive, the Eternal.”

Ali

“God! There is no god but He, - the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Eternal.”

Asad

“God - there is no deity save Him, the Ever Living, the Self-Subsistent, Fount of All Being!”

Irving

“God: there is no deity except Him, the Living, the Eternal.”

Ozek

“Allah there is no god but He, the Living, the Sustainer.”

Abdel-Haleem

“God: there is no god but Him, the Ever Living, the Ever Watchful.”

Verse 3:

Source Text

نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقاً لما بين يديه وأنزل التوراة والإنجيل

Control Text

“It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur’ân) to You (Muhammad ﷺ) with truth, confirming what came before it. And He sent down the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel).”

Pickthall

“He hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture with truth, Confirming that which was (revealed) before it, even as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.”

Ali

“It is He Who sent down To thee (step by step), In truth, the Book, Confirming what went before it: And He sent down the Law (Of Moses) and the Gospel (Of Jesus) before this, As a guide to mankind, And He sent down the Criterion (Of judgment between right and wrong).”

Asad

“Step by step, has He bestowed upon thee from on high this divine writ, setting forth the Truth which confirms whatever there still remains [of earlier revelations]: for it is He who has bestowed from on high the Torah and the Gospel.”

Irving

“He has sent down the Book to you with Truth, to confirm whatever existed before it. He sent down the Torah and the Gospel.”

Ozek

“He has sent down to You (Muhammad ﷺ) the Book with truth, confirming that which was sent down before it, even as He sent down the Torah and the Gospel.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Step by step, He has sent the Scripture down to you [Prophet] with the Truth, confirming what went before: He sent down the Torah and the Gospel.”

Verse 4:

Source Text

من قبل هدى للناس وأنزل الفرقان إن الذين كفروا بآيات الله لهم عذابٌ شديدٌ والله عزيزٌ ذو انتقامٍ

Control Text

“Aforetime, as guidance to mankind. And He sent down the criterion [of judgement between right and wrong (the Qur’ân)]. Truly, those who disbelieve in the Ayât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations. etc.) of Allâh, for them there is a severe torment: and Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Able of Retribution.”

Pickthall

“Aforetime, for guidance to mankind: and Hath revealed the Criterion (of right and wrong). Lo! Those who disbelieve the revelations of Allah, theirs will be a heavy doom. Allah is mighty. Able to Requite (the wrong).”

Ali

“Then those who reject Faith in the Signs of God Will suffer the severest Penalty and God Is Exalted in Might, lord of Retribution.”

Asad

“aforetime, as a guidance unto mankind, and it is He who has bestowed [upon man] the standard by which to discern the true from the false. Behold, as for those who are bent on denying God’s messages – grievous suffering awaits them: For God is almighty, an avenger of evil.”

Irving

“In the past as guidance for mankind: He has (also) sent down the Standard. Those who disbelieve in God’s signs will have severe torment: God is Powerful, the Master of Retribution!”

Ozek

“Previously, a guidance to mankind, and sent down the criterion. Those who deny the signs of Allah shall receive a heavy penalty: and Allah is August, Able to Requite.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Those who deny God’s revelations will suffer severe torment: God is almighty and capable of retribution.”

Verse 5:

Source Text

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

Control Text

“Truly, nothing is hidden from Allâh, in the earth or in the heaven.”

Pickthall

“Lo! Nothing in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah.”

Ali

“From God, verily Nothing is hidden on earth or in the heavens.”

Asad

“Verily, nothing on earth or in the heavens is hidden from God.”

Irving

“Nothing is hidden from God on Earth nor in Heaven.”

Ozek

“Nothing in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Nothing on earth or in the heaven is hidden from God.”

Verse 7:

Source Text

هو الذى أنزل عليك الكتاب منه آياتٌ محكماتٌ هنَّ أم الكتاب وأخر متشابهاتٌ فأما الذين فى قلوبهم زيغٌ
فيتبعون ما تشابه منه ابتغاء الفتنة وابتغاء تأويله وما يعلم تأويله إلا الله والراسخون فى العلم يقولون
أمنابيه كلٌّ من عند ربنا وما يذكر إلا أولوا الألباب

Control Text

“It is He Who has sent down to you (Muhammad ﷺ) the Book (the Qur’ân). In it are Verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book [and those are verses of Al-Ahkâm (commandments), Al-Farâ'id (obligatory duties) and Al-Hudud (legal laws for the punishment of thieves, adulterers)]: and others not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking Al-Fitnah (polytheism and trials), and seeking for its hidden meanings except Allâh. And those who firmly grounded in knowledge say: “We believe in it: the whole of it (clear and unclear Verses) are from our Lord.” And none receive admonition except men of understanding. (Tafsir Al-Tabari).”

Pickthall

“He it is Who hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture wherein are clear revelations -They are the Substance of the Book - and others (which

are) allegorical. But those in whose hearts is doubt pursue, forsooth, that which is allegorical, (to cause) dissension by seeking to explain it. None knoweth its explanation save Allah. And those who are of sound instruction say: We believe therein, the whole is from our Lord: but only men of understanding really heed.”

Ali

“He it is Who has sent down To thee the Book: In it are verses Basic or fundamental (Of established meaning: They are the foundation Of the Book: Others Are allegorical. But those In whose hearts is perversity follow The part thereof that is allegorical, Seeking discord, and searching For its hidden meanings, But no one knows Its hidden meanings except God. And those who are firmly grounded In knowledge say: “We believe in the Book: the whole of it Is from our Lord:” and none Will grasp the Message Except men of understanding.”

Asad

“He it is who has bestowed upon thee from on high this divine writ, containing messages that are clear in and by themselves - and these are the essence of the divine writ- as well as others that are allegorical. Now those whose hearts are given to swerving from the truth go after that part of the divine writ which has been expressed in allegory, seeking out [what is bound to create] confusion, and seeking [to arrive at] its final meaning [in an arbitrary manner]: but none save God knows its final meaning. Hence, those who are deeply rooted in knowledge say: “We believe in it: the whole [of the divine writ] is from our Sustainer- albeit none takes this to heart save those who are endowed with insight.”

Irving

“He is the One Who sent you down the Book which contains decisive verses. They [form] the basis of the Book: while others are allegorical. Those whose hearts are prone to falter follow whatever is allegorical in it, seeking to create

dissentation by giving [their own] interpretation of it. Yet only God knows its interpretation: those who are versed in knowledge say: “We believe in it: it all comes from our Lord!” However, only prudent persons bear it in mind.”

Ozek

“It is He Who has sent down to you the Qur’ān. Some of its verses are clear: they are the mother of the Book: while others are open to interpretation. Those with swerving in their hearts pursue what is there is open to interpretation, seeking to create dissension, and seeking to explain it. Yet none knows their explanation except Allah. Those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: “We believe in it: it is all from our Lord,” but only people of understanding really heed.”

Abdel-Haleem

“It is He who has sent down this Scripture to you [Prophet]. Some of its verses are definite in meaning - these are the cornerstone’ of the Scripture – and others are ambiguous. The perverse at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities in their attempt to make trouble and to pin down a specific meaning of their own: only God knows the true meaning. Those firmly grounded in knowledge say: “We believe in it: it is all from our Lord, - only those with real perception will take heed.”

Verse 8:

Source Text

ربنا لا تزغ قلوبنا بعد إذ هديتنا وهب لنا من لدنك رحمةً إنك

أنت الوهاب

Control Text

“(They say): “Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly. You are the Bestower.”

Pickthall

“Our Lord! Cause not our hearts to stray after Thou hast guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Thy Presence. Lo! Thou only Thou art the Bestower.”

Ali

“Our Lord!” (they say), “Let not our hearts deviate Now after Thou hast guided us, But grant us mercy from Thine own Presence: For Thou art the Grantor Of bounties without measure.”

Asad

“O our Sustainer! Let not our hearts swerve from the truth after Thou hast guided us: and bestow upon us the gift of Thy grace: Verily, Thou art the [true] Giver of Gifts.”

Irving

“Our Lord, do not Let our hearts falter once You have guided us: grant us mercy from Your presence, for You are the bountiful!”

Ozek

“(They say): “Our Lord! Do not cause our hearts to swerve after You have guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Your Presence. Assuredly. You are the Bestower.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Our Lord, do not Let our hearts deviate after You have guided us. Grant us Your mercy: You are the Ever Giving.”

Verse 11:

Source Text

كذاب آل فرعون والذين من قبلهم كذبوا بآياتنا فأخذهم الله بذنوبهم والله شديد العقاب

Control Text

“Like the behaviour of the people of Fir’aun (Pharaoh) and those before them: they denied Our Ayât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations etc.). So Allâh seized (destroyed) them for their sins. And Allâh is Severe in punishment.”

Pickthall

“Like Pharaoh’s folk and those who were before them, they disbelieved Our revelations and so Allah seized them for their sins, And Allah is severe in punishment.”

Ali

“Their plight will be No better than that Of people of Pharaoh, and their predecessors: They denied our Signs, And God called them to account For their sins. For God is strict In punishment.”

Asad

“[To them shall happen] the like of what happened to Pharaoh’s people and those who lived before them: they gave the lie to Our messages - and so God took them to task for their sins: For God is Severe in retribution.”

Irving

“In the case of Pharaoh’s house as well as those before them, they denied Our signs, so God seized because of their offences: God is Stern in punishment.”

Ozek

“As with Pharaoh’s people and those before them, who denied Our signs, so that Allah seized them for their sins. And Allah is Severe in punishment.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Just as Pharaoh’s people and their predecessors denied Our revelations and God punished them for their sins: God is Severe in punishing.”

Verse 13:

Source Text

قد كان لكم آيةٌ في فئتين التقتا فئة تقاتل في سبيل الله وأخرى كافرةٌ يرونهم مثليهم رأى العين والله يؤيد
بنصره من يشاء إنَّ في ذلك لعبرةٌ لأولى الأبصار

Control Text

“There has already been a sign for you (O Jews) in the two armies that met (in combat i.e. the battle of Badr). One was fighting in the Cause of Allâh, and as for the other, (they) were disbelievers. They (the believers) saw them (the disbelievers) with their own eyes twice their number (although they were thrice their number). And Allâh supports with His Victory whom He wills. Verily, in this is a lesson for those who understand.”

Pickthall

“There was a token for you in two hosts which met: one army fighting in the way of Allah, and another disbelieving, whom they saw as twice their number, clearly, with their very eyes. Thus Allah strengthened with His succour whom He will. Lo! Herein verily is a lesson for those who have eyes.”

Ali

“There has already been For you a Sign In the two armies That met (in combat): One was fighting in the Cause Of God, the other Resisting God: these saw With their own eyes Twice their number. But God doth support With His aid whom He pleaseth. In this a warning For such as have eyes to see.”

Asad

“You have already had a sign in the two hosts that met in the battle, one host fighting in God’s cause and the other denying Him: with their own eyes [the former] saw the others as twice their own number: but God strengthens with His succour whom He wills. In this, behold, there is indeed a lesson for all who have eyes to see.”

Irving

“You have already had a sign in the two detachments which met, one detachment fighting for God’s sake and the other disbelieving: they saw them with their own eyes as twice the same [number] as themselves. God assists anyone He wishes through His support, in that there lies a lesson for persons with insight.”

Ozek

“There was a sign for you in the two armies which met [on the battlefield of Badr]. One army fighting for the cause of Allah, and another disbelieving, who saw [the former] as twice their number, clearly, with their very eyes. Thus does Allah strengthen with His aid whom He will. Surely, in this there is a lesson for those who are able to see!”

Abdel-Haleem

“You have already seen a sign in the two armies that met in the battle, one fighting for God’s cause and the other made up of disbelievers. With their own eyes [the former] saw [the latter] to be twice their number. But God helps whoever He will. There truly is a lesson in this for all with eyes to see.”

Verse 14:

Source Text

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُنْقَطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمَسُومَةِ
وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنُ الْمَأْتَبِ

Control Text

“Beautified for men is the love of things they covet: women, children, much of gold and silver (wealth), branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. This is the pleasure of the present world’s life: but Allâh has the excellent return (Paradise with flowing rivers) with Him.”

Pickthall

“Beautified for mankind is love of joys (that come) from women and offspring, and stored-up heaps of gold and silver, and horses branded (with their mark), and cattle and land. That is comfort of the life of the world, Allah! With Him is a more excellent abode.”

Ali

“Fair in the eyes of men Is the love of things they covet: Women and sons: Heaped-up hoards Of gold and silver: horses Branded (for blood and excellence): And (wealth of) cattle And well-tilled land. Such are the possessions Of this world’s life: But in nearness to God Is the best of the goals (To return to).”

Asad

“ALLURING unto man is the enjoyment of worldly desires through women, and children, and heaped- up treasures of gold and silver, and horses of high mark, and cattle, and lands. All this may be enjoyed in the life of this world -, but the most beautiful of all goals is with God.”

Irving

“ The love of passions [that come] from women and children has attracted mankind, as well as accumulated gold and silver treasures, pedigreed horses, livestock and crops. That means enjoyment during worldly life, while God holds the finest retreat.”

Ozek

“Made beautiful for mankind is the love of desires, for women and offspring, of hoarded treasures of gold and silver, of branded horses, cattle and plantations. These are the comforts of this life: yet with Allah is the best of all ends.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The love of desirable things is made alluring for men - women, children, gold and silver treasures piled up high, horses with fine markings, livestock, and farmland – these may be the joys of this life, but God has the best place to return to.”

Verse 15:

Source Text

قل أُوْنِيْكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَاَزْوَٰجٌ مَّطَهَّرَةٌ وَّرِضْوَانٌ مِّنْ اِلٰهِ وَاِلٰهُ بِصِيْرٍ بِالْعِبَادِ

Control Text

“Say: “Shall I inform you of things far better than those? For Al-Muttaqûn (the pious) there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home) and Azwâjun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives). And Allâh will be pleased with them. And Allâh is All-Seer of (His) slaves.”

Pickthall

“Say: Shall I inform you of something better than that? For those who keep from evil, with their Lord, are Gardens underneath which rivers flow wherein they will abide, and pure companions, and contentment from Allah. Allah is Seer of His bondmen.”

Ali

“Say: Shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those? For the righteous are Gardens In nearness to their Lord, With rivers flowing beneath: Therein is their eternal home: With Companions pure (and holy): And the good pleasure of Allāh. For in God’s sight Are (all) His servants.”

Asad

“Say: “Shall I tell you of better things than those [earthly joys]? For the God-Conscious there are, with their Sustainer, gardens through which running waters flow, therein to abide, and spouses pure, and God’s goodly acceptance.” And God sees all that is in [the hearts of] His servants.”

Irving

“SAY: “Should I give you news of something even better than that? Those who do their duty will have gardens through which rivers flow to live in for ever with their Lord, plus purified spouses and approval from God- God is Observant of [His] worshippers.”

Ozek

“Say: “Shall I tell you of better than that? For those who are God-fearing shall be gardens with their Lord, beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein perpetually, and pure wives, and the good pleasure of Allah. Allah is [the] Seer of His servants.”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Prophet], say: “Would you like me to tell you of things that are better than all of these? Their Lord will give those who are mindful of God Gardens graced with flowing streams, where they will stay with pure spouses and God’s pleasure - God is fully aware of His servants.”

Verse 20:

Source Text

فإن حاجوك فقل أسلمت وجهي لله ومن اتبعن، وقل للذين أوتوا الكتاب والأمينين أسلمتم ، فإن أسلموا
فقد اهتدوا، وإن تولوا فإنما عليك البلاغ، والله بصيرٌ بالعباد

Control Text

“So if they dispute with you (Muhammad ﷺ) say: “I have submitted myself to Allâh (in Islâm), and (so have) those who follow me.” And say to those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and to those who are illiterates (Arab pagans):”Do you (also) submit yourselves (to Allâh in Islâm)? If they do, they are rightly guided: but if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the Message: and Allâh is All-Seer of (His) slaves. ”

Pickthall

“And if they argue with thee, (O Muhammad), say: I have surrendered my purpose to Allah and (so have) those who follow me. And say unto those who have received the Scripture and those who read not: Have ye (too) surrendered? “If they surrender, then truly they are rightly guided, and if they turn away, then it is thy duty only to convey the message (unto them), Allah is Seer of (His) bondmen.”

Ali

“So if they dispute with thee, Say: “I have submitted My whole self to God And have those Who follow me.” And say to the people of the Book And to those who are unlearned: “Do ye (also) submit yourselves?” If they do, they are in right guidance. But if they turn back, Thy duty is to convey the Message: And in God’s sight Are (all) His servants.”

Asad

“Thus, [O Prophet,] If they argue with thee, say, “I have surrendered my whole being unto God, and [so have] all who follow me!” - and ask those who have been vouchsafed revelation aforesaid, as well as all unlettered people, Have you (too) surrendered yourselves unto Him?” And if they surrender themselves unto Him, they are on the right path: but if they turn away-behold,

thy duty is no more than to deliver the message: For God sees all that is in [the hearts of] His creatures.”

Irving

“If they should argue with you, then say: ‘I have committed my person peacefully to God and [so has] anyone who follows me. Tell both those who have been given the Book as well as the unlettered: “Have you become Muslims?” If they commit themselves to [live in] peace, then they are guided, while if they turn away, you need merely to state things plainly, God is Observant of [His] worshippers.”

Ozek

“And if they argue with you, say: “I have surrendered myself to Allah and [so have] those who follow me.” And say to those who have received the Book and to those who read not: “Will you too surrender yourselves to Allah?” If they become Muslims they shall be rightly guided: if they turn away, then your duty is only to inform them. Allah is [the] Seer of all His servants.”

Abdel-Haleem

“If they argue with you [Prophet], say, ‘I have devoted myself to God alone and so have my followers.’ Ask those who were given the Scripture as well as those without one, “Do you too devote yourselves to Him alone? If they do, they will be guided, but if they turn away, your only duty is to convey the message. God is aware of His servants.”

Verse 30:

Source Text

يوم تجد كل نفسٍ ما عملت من خيرٍ محضراً وما عملت من سوءٍ تود لو أن بينها وبينه أمداً بعيداً
ويحذركم الله نفسه، والله رؤوفٌ بالعباد

Control Text

“On the Day when every person will be confronted with all the good he has done, and all the evil he has done, he will wish that there were a great distance between him and his evil. And Allāh warns you against Himself (His punishment) and Allāh is full of kindness to (His) slaves.”

Pickthall

“On the day when every soul will find itself confronted with all that it hath done of good and all that it hath done of evil (every soul) will long that there might be a mighty space distance between it and that (evil). Allah biddeth you beware of Him. And Allah is full of pity for (His) bondmen.”

Ali

“On the Day when every soul Will be confronted With all the good it has done, And all the evil it has done, It will wish there were A great distance Between it and its evil. But God cautions you (To remember) Himself. And God is full of kindness To those that serve Him.”

Asad

“On the Day when every human being will find himself faced with all the good that he has done, and with all the evil that he has done. [Many a one] will wish that there were a long span of time between himself and that [Day]. Hence, God warns you to beware of Him: but God is most compassionate towards His creatures.”

Irving

“Some day when every person will find whatever good he has done is presented [as evidence] as well as whatever bad he has done, he would like a long stretch [to lie] between them and himself. God cautions you about Himself: though God is Gentle with [His] worshippers.”

Ozek

“On the day when every soul will find itself confronted with whatever good it has done, and whatever evil it has done, it will wish that there might be a mighty gulf between it and that evil. Allah warns you to fear Him: and He is kind to His slaves.”

Abdel-Haleem

“On the Day when every soul finds all the good it has done present before it, it will wish all the bad it has done to be far, far away. God warns you to beware of Him, but God is compassionate towards His servants.”

Verse 32:

Source Text

قل أطيعوا الله والرسول فإن تولوا فإن الله لا يحب الكافرين

Control Text

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Obey Allâh and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ).”
But if they turn away, then Allâh does not like the disbelievers.”

Pickthall

“Say: Obey Allah and the messenger. But if they turn away, lo! Allah loveth not the disbelievers (in His guidance).”

Ali

“Say: “Obey God And His Apostle”: But if they turn back, God loveth not those Who reject Faith.”

Asad

“Say, “Pay heed unto God and the Apostle.”

Irving

“Say: ‘Obey God and the Messenger.’ Yet if they should turn away, [remember that] God does not love disbelievers.”

Ozek

“Say: ‘Obey Allah and the Messenger.’ But then, if they turn away, Allah certainly loves not the disbelievers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Say, ‘Obey God and the Messenger’, But if they turn away, [know that] God does not love those who ignore [His commands].”

Verse 39:

Source Text

فنادته الملائكة وهو قائم يصلى فى المحراب أن الله يبشرك بيحى مصدقاً بكلمة من الله وسيداً وحسوراً
ونبياً من الصالحين

Control Text

“Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in Al-Mihrâb (a praying place or a private room), (saying): “Allâh gives you glad tidings of Yahya (John), confirming (believing in) the word from Allâh [i.e. the creation of ‘Īsā (Jesus) عليه السلام” the Word from Allâh “Be!”- and he was!]), noble, keeping away from sexual relations with women, and a Prophet, from among the righteous.”

Pickthall

“And the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary: Allah giveth thee glad tidings of (a son whose name is) John, (who cometh) to confirm a word from Allah, lordly, chaste, a Prophet of the righteous.”

Ali

“While he was standing In prayer in the chamber, The angels called unto him: “God doth give thee Glad tidings of Yahyā, Witnessing the truth Of a Word from God, and (be Besides) noble, chaste, And a Prophet, - Of the (goodly) company Of the righteous.”

Asad

“Thereupon, as he stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called out unto him: “God sends thee the glad tidings of [the birth of] John, who shall confirm the truth of a word from God, and [shall be] outstanding among men, and utterly chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous.”

Irving

“The angels called him while he was standing praying in the shrine: “God gives you news of John, who will confirm word from God, masterful yet circumspect, and a Prophet [chosen] from among honourable people.”

Ozek

“And the angels called to him as he stood praying in the retreat: “Allah gives you the glad tidings of a son whose name is John [come] to confirm a word from Allah, princely and chaste, a Prophet of the righteous.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The angels called out to him, while he stood praying in the sanctuary, ‘God gives you news of John, confirming a Word from God. He will be noble and chaste, a Prophet, one of the righteous.’”

Verse 44:

Source Text

ذلك من أنباء الغيب نوحيه إليك وما كنت لديهم إذ يلقون أقلامهم أيهم يكفل مريم وما كنت لديهم إذ
يختصمون

Control Text

“This is (a part) of the news of the Ghaib (unseen, i.e. the news of the past nations of which you have no knowledge) which We reveal to you (O Muhammad ﷺ), You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam (Mary): nor were you with them when they disputed.”

Pickthall

“This is of the tidings of things hidden. We reveal unto thee (Muhammad). Thou wast not present with them when they threw their pens (to know) which of them should be the guardian of Mary, nor wast thou present with them when they quarrelled (thereupon).”

Ali

“This is part of the tidings Of the things unseen, Which We reveal unto thee (O Apostle!) by inspiration: Thou was not with them When they cast lots With arrows, as to which Of them should be charged With the care of Mary: Nor wast thou with them When they disputed (the point).”

Asad

“This is account of something that was beyond the reach of thy perception We [now] reveal unto thee: for thou wert not with them, when they drew lots as to which of them should be Mary’s guardian, and thou wert not with them when they contended [about it] with one another.”

Irving

“Such is some information about the Unseen We revealed it to you. You were not in their presence as they cast [lots with] their pens [to see] which of them would be entrusted with Mary. You were not in their presence while were they so disputing.”

Ozek

“This is some news of that which you have not witnessed, which We reveal to you [O Muhammad], You were not present with them when they cast lots to see which of them would be the guardian of Mary: not were you present when they argued [concerning this].”

Abdel-Haleem

“This is an account of things beyond your knowledge that We reveal to you [Muhammad]: You were not present among them, when they cast lots to see which of them should take charge of Mary, you were not present with them when they argued [about her].”

Verse 49:

Source Text

ورسولاً إلى بنى إسرائيل أنى قد جنتكم بأية من ربكم أنى أخلق لكم من الطين كهينة الطير فانفخ فيه فيكون طيراً بإذن الله وأبرئ الأكمه والأبرص وأحى الموتى بإذن الله وأنبئكم بما تآكلون وما تدخرون فى بيوتكم، إن فى ذلك لآية لكم إن كنتم مؤمنين

Control Text

“And will make him [‘Îsâ (Jesus)] a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): “I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it, and becomes a bird by Allâh’s Leave: and I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allâh’s Leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, in that is a sign for you, if you are believers.”

Pickthall

“And will make him a messenger unto the Children of Israel, (saying): Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and breathe into it, and it is a bird by Allah’s Leave. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah’s

Leave. And I announce unto you what ye eat and what ye store in your houses. Lo! Herein verily is a portent for you, if ye are to be believers.”

Ali

“And (appoint him) An apostle to the Children of Israel, (with this message): “I have come to you With a Sign from your Lord, In that I will make for you Out of clay, as it were, The figure of a bird, And breathe into it, And it becomes a bird By God’s Leave: And I heal those Born blind, and the lepers, And I quicken the dead, By God’s Leave. And I declare to you What ye eat, and what ye store In your houses. Surely Therein is a Sign for you, If ye did believe.”

Asad

“And [will make him] an apostle unto children of Israel.” “I HAVE COME unto you with a message from your Sustainer. I shall create for you out of clay, as it were, the shape of [your] destiny and then breathe into it, so that it might become [your] destiny by God’s leave: and I shall heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead back to life by God’s leave: and I shall let you know what you may eat and what you should store up in your houses. Behold, in all this there is indeed a message for you, if you are [truly] believers.”

Irving

“As a messenger to the Children of Israel: ‘I have brought you a sign from your Lord. I shall create something in the shape of a bird for you out of clay, and blow into it so it will become a [real] bird with God’s permission: I shall cure those who are blind from birth and lepers, and revive the dead with God’s permission. I shall announce to you what you may eat, and what you should store up in your houses. That will serve as a sign for you, if you are believers.”

Ozek

“And will make him a Messenger to the Children of Israel. He will say: ‘I bring you with a sign from your Lord. From clay I will make for you the likeness of a bird: I shall breathe into it, and it shall become a [living] bird by Allah’s Leave. I shall give sight to the blind, and heal the leper, and raise the dead to life, by Allah’s Leave. I shall tell you what you eat, and what you store up in your houses. Surely that will be a sign for you, if you are believers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“He will send him as a messenger to the Children of Israel: “I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: I will make the shape of a bird for you out of clay, then breathe into it and, with God’s permission becomes a real bird: I heal the blind and the leper, bring the dead back to life with God’s permission, I will tell you what you may eat, and what you may store up in your houses. There truly is a sign for you in this, if you are believers.”

Verse 55:

Source Text

إذ قال الله يا عيسى إني متوفيك ورافعك إلى ومطهرك من الذين كفروا وجاعل الذين اتبعوك فوق الذين كفروا إلى يوم القيامة ثم إلى مرجعكم فأحكم بينكم فيما كنتم فيه تختلفون

Control Text

“And (remember) when Allâh said: ‘O ‘Îsâ (Jesus)! I will make you sleep and raise you to Myself and clear you [of the forged statement that ‘Îsâ (Jesus) is Allâh’s son] of those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you (Monotheists, who worship none but Allâh) superior to those who disbelieve [in the Oneness of Allâh, or disbelieve in some of His Messengers e.g. Muhammad ﷺ, ‘Îsâ (Jesus), Mûsâ (Moses), etc. or in His Holy Books, e.g. the Taurât (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel, the Qur’ân] till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute.”

Pickthall

“(And remember) when Allah said: O Jesus! Lo! I am gathering thee and causing thee to ascend unto Me, and am cleansing thee of those who disbelieve and am setting those who follow thee above those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then unto Me ye will (all) return, and I shall judge between you as to that wherein ye used to differ.”

Ali

“Behold! God said: “O Jesus! I will take thee And raise thee to Myself And clear thee (of the falsehood) Of those who blaspheme: I will make those Who follow thee superior To those who reject Faith, To the Day of Resurrection: Then shall ye all Return unto me, And I will judge Between you of matters Wherein ye dispute.”

Asad

“Lo! God said: “O Jesus! Verily, I shall cause thee to die, and shall exalt thee unto Me, and cleanse thee of [the presence of] those who are bent on denying the truth, and I shall place those who follow thee [far] above those who are bent on denying the truth, unto the Day of Resurrection. In the end, unto Me you all must return, and I shall judge between you with regard to all on which you were wont to differ.”

Irving

“So God said: “Jesus, I shall gather you up and lift you towards Me, and purify you from those who disbelieve, and place those who follow you ahead of those who disbelieve until Resurrection Day. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall decide among you [all] concerning anything you have been disagreeing about.”

Ozek

“[And remember] When Allah said: ‘O Jesus! I am gathering you and raise you to Me, and cleansing you of those who disbelieve, and I setting those who follow you above those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me you will all return, and I shall judge between you as to that in which you used to differ.’”

Abdel-Haleem

“God said, ‘Jesus, I will take you back and raise you up to Me: I will purify you of the disbelievers. To the Day of Resurrection I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieved. Then you will all return to Me and I will judge between you regarding your differences.’”

Verse 63:

Source Text

فإن تولوا فإن الله عليم بالمفسدين

Control Text

“And if they turn away (and do not accept these true proofs and evidences), then surely, Allâh is All-Aware of those who do mischief.”

Pickthall

“And if they turn away, then lo! Allah is Aware of (who are) the corrupters.”

Ali

“But if they turn back, God hath full knowledge Of those who do mischief.”

Asad

“And if they turn away [from the truth] - behold, God has full knowledge of the spreaders of corruption.”

Irving

“However, if they should turn away, God is Aware as to who are mischief makers.”

Ozek

“And if they turn away, Allah is Aware of the corrupters.”

Abdel-Haleem

“If they turn away, [know that], God is well aware of anyone who causes corruption.”

Verse 75:

Source Text

ومن أهل الكتاب من إن تأمنه بقنطارٍ يؤده إليك ومنهم من إن تأمنه بدينارٍ لا يؤده إليك إلا ما دمت عليه قائماً ذلك بأنهم قالوا ليس علينا في الأميين سبيلٌ ويقولون على الله الكذب وهم يعلمون

Control Text

“Among the people of the Scripture ((Jews and Christians) is he who, if entrusted with a Qintâr (a great amount of wealth, etc.), will readily pay it back to you: and among them there is he who, if you entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it to you unless you constantly stand demanding, because they say: “There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs). “But they tell a lie against Allâh while they know it”.

Pickthall

“Among the People of the Scripture there is he who, if thou trust him with a weight of treasure, will return it to thee. And among them there is he who, if you trust him with a piece of gold, will not return it to thee unless thou keep standing over him. That is because they say: We have no duty to the gentiles. They speak a lie concerning Allah knowingly.”

Ali

“Among the People of the Book Are some who, if entrusted With a hoard of gold, Will (readily) pay it back: Others, who, if you entrusted With a single silver coin, Will not repay it unless Thou constantly stoodest Demanding, because They say, “there is no call On us (to keep faith) With these ignorant (Pagans). But they tell a lie against God. And (well) they know it.”

Asad

“AND AMONG the followers of earlier revelation there is many a one who, if thou entrust him with a treasure, will [faithfully] restore it to thee: and there is among them many a one who, if thou entrust him with a tiny gold coin, will not restore it to thou unless thou keep standing over him- which is an outcome of their assertion, “No blame can attach to us [for anything that we may do] with regard to these unlettered folk”: and [so] they tell a lie about God, being well aware [that it is a lie].”

Irving

“If you entrusted some People of the Book with a large sum, he would hand it back to you: while if you entrusted another with a gold coin, he would never hand it back to you unless you dunned him for it constantly. That is because they say: “There is no way for such illiterates [to complain] against us”. They tell a lie about God while they realize it.”

Ozek

“Among the people of the Book there is he who, if trust him with a weight [of treasure], he will return it to you. And among them there is he who, if you entrust him with a single silver coin, he will not return it to you, unless you keep standing over him. That is because they say: “We have no duty to the gentiles.” They knowingly speak a lie concerning Allah.”

Abdel-Haleem

“There are People of the Book who, if you [Prophet] entrust them with a heap of gold, will return it to you intact, but there are others of them who, if

you entrust them with a single dinar, will not return it to you unless you keep standing over them, because they say, 'We are under no obligation towards the gentiles.' They tell a lie against God and they know it."

Verse 79:

Source Text

ما كان لبشرٍ أن يُؤتِيه الله الكتاب والحكم والنبوة ثم يقول للناس كونوا عباداً من دون الله ولكن كونوا ربانيين بما كنتم تعلمون الكتاب وبما كنتم تدرسون

Control Text

"It is not (possible) for any human being to whom Allâh has given the Book and Al-Hukm (the knowledge and understanding of the Laws of religion) and Prophethood to say to the people: "Be my worshippers rather than Allâh's. "On the contrary" he would say): "Be you Rabbaniyyûn (learned men of religion who practice what they know and also preach others), because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it."

Pickthall

"It is not (possible) for any human being unto whom Allah had given the Scripture and wisdom, and the Prophethood that he should afterwards have said to unto mankind: Be slaves of me instead of Allah: but (what he said was): Be ye faithful servants of the Lord by virtue of your constant teaching of the Scripture and your constant study thereof."

Ali

"It is not (possible) That a man, to whom, Is given the Book, And Wisdom, And the Prophetic Office, Should say to people: 'Be ye my worshippers, Rather than God's" On the contrary (He would say): "Be ye worshippers Of Him Who is truly The Cherisher of all: For ye have taught the Book and ye Have studied it earnestly."

Asad

“It is not conceivable that a human being unto whom God had granted revelation, and sound judgment, and Prophethood, should thereafter have said unto people, “Worship me beside God”: but rather [did he exhort them], “Become men of God by spreading the knowledge of the divine writ and by your own deep study [thereof].”

Irving

“It is not proper for God to give the Book, plus discretion and Prophethood to any human being, then that [the latter] should tell people: “Be worshippers of mine instead of God’s,” but rather: “Be the Lord’s [Alone] since you have been teaching the Book and because you have been studying it.”

Ozek

“It is not possible for any human being to whom Allah has given the Book and wisdom and Prophethood that he should afterwards have said to mankind: “Be slaves to me instead of Allah!” He would rather say: “Be men of Allah by virtue of your constant teaching and studying of the Book.”

Abdel-Haleem

“No person to whom God had given the Scripture, wisdom, and Prophethood would ever say to people, ‘Be my servants, not God’s.’ [he would say], ‘You should be devoted to God because you have taught the Scripture and studied it closely’.”

Verse 91:

Source Text

إن الذين كفروا وماتوا وهم كفارٌ فلن يقبل من أحدهم ملء الأرض ذهباً ولو افتدى به أولئك لهم عذابٌ أليمٌ وما لهم من ناصرين

Control Text

“Verily. Those who disbelieved, and died while they were disbelievers, the (whole) earth full of gold will not be accepted from any of them even if they offered it as a ransom. For them is a painful torment and they will have no helpers.”

Pickthall

“Lo! those who disbelieve, and die in disbelief, the(whole) earth full of gold would not be accepted from such a one if it were offered as a ransom (for his soul). Theirs will be a painful doom and they will have no helpers.”

Ali

“As to those who reject Faith and die rejecting, - Never would be accepted From any such as much Gold as the earth contains, Though they should offer it For ransom. For such Is (in store) a penalty grievous. And they will have find no helpers.”

Asad

“Verily, as for those who are bent on denying the truth after having attained to faith, and die as deniers of the truth- not all the gold on earth could ever be their ransom. It is they for whom grievous suffering is in store, and they will have none to succour them.”

Irving

“Those who disbelieve, and die while they are disbelievers will never have even all the earth filled with gold accepted from any one of them, even though they tried to use it as a ransom. Those will have painful torment while they will have no supporters.”

Ozek

“As for those who disbelieve, and die in disbelief, no ransom, even if it was the earth full of gold would be accepted from them. Theirs will be a painful torment, and they will have no helpers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Those who disbelieve, and die disbelievers will not be saved even if they offer enough gold to fill the entire earth. Agonizing torment is in store for them, and there will be no one to help them.”

Verse 92:

Source Text

لن تنالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون وما تنفقوا من شيء فإن الله به عليم

Control Text

“By no means shall you attain Al-Birr (piety, righteousness - here it means Allâh’s Reward, i.e. Paradise), unless you spent (in Allâh’s Cause) of that which you love: and whatever of good you spend, Allâh knows it well.”

Pickthall

“Ye will not attain unto piety until ye spend of that which ye love. And whatsoever ye spend, Allah is aware thereof.”

Ali

“By no means shall ye Attain righteousness unless Ye give (freely) of that Which ye love: and whatever Ye give of a truth, God knoweth it well.”

Asad

“[But as for you o believers,] never shall you attain to true piety unless you spend on others out of what you cherish yourselves: and whatever you spend - verily, God has full knowledge thereof.”

Irving

“You will never attain virtue until you spend something you are fond of: while God is Aware of anything you may spend.”

Ozek

“You will not attain to benevolence until you spend of what you love. And whatever you spend, Allah is Aware of it.”

Abdel-Haleem

“None of you [believers] will attain true piety unless you give out of what you cherish: whatever you give, God knows about it very well.”

Verse 93:

Source Text

كل الطعام كان حلالاً لبني إسرائيل إلا ما حرم إسرائيل على نفسه من قبل أن تنزل التوراة، قل فأتوا بالتوراة فاتلوها إن كنتم صادقين

Control Text

“All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel made unlawful for himself before the Taurât (Torah) was revealed. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Bring here Taurât (Torah) and recite it, if you are truthful.”

Pickthall

“All food was lawful unto the children of Israel, save that which Israel forbade himself (in days) before the Torah was revealed. Say: Produce the Torah and read it(unto us), if ye are truthful.”

Ali

“All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, Except what Israel Made unlawful for itself before the Law of (Moses) Was revealed. Say: “Bring ye the Law And study it, If ye be men of truth.”

Asad

“ALL FOOD was lawful unto the children of Israel, save what Israel had made unlawful unto itself.[by its sinning] before the Torah was bestowed from on high. Say: “Come forward, then, with the Torah and recite it, if what you say is true!”

Irving

“Every [kind of] food was permitted the Children of Israel except what Israel had banned herself before the Torah came down. Say: “Bring the Torah and recite it, if you have been truthful.”

Ozek

“All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel forbade himself before the Torah was revealed. Say: “Produce the Torah and read it, if what you say is true!”

Abdel-Haleem

“Except for what Israel made unlawful for himself, all food was lawful to the Children of Israel before the Torah was revealed. Say: “Produce the Torah and read out[the relevant passage], if you are telling the truth.”

Verse 101:

Source Text

وكيف تكفرون وأنتم تتلى عليكم آيات الله وفيكم رسوله، ومن يعتصم بالله فقد هدى إلى صراطٍ مستقيم

Control Text

“And how would you disbelieve, while to you are recited verses of Allah and among you is His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)? And whoever holds firmly to Allâh, (i.e. follows Islâm - Allâh’s religion, and practically obeys all that Allâh has ordered), then he is indeed guided to a Right Path. ”

Pickthall

“How can ye disbelieve, when Allah’s revelations are recited unto you and His Messenger is in your midst? He who holdeth fast to Allah, he indeed is guided unto a right path. ”

Ali

“And how would ye Deny Faith while unto you Are rehearsed the Signs Of God and among you Lives the Apostle? Whoever holds Firmly to God, Will be shown A Way that is straight.”

Asad

“And how could you deny the truth when it is unto you that God’s messages are being conveyed, and it is in your midst that His Apostle lives? But he who holds fast unto God has already been guided onto a straight way.”

Irving

“How can you disbelieve, while God’s verses are being recited to you and His messenger is among you? Anyone who clings to God will be guided to a Straight Road.”

Ozek

“How can you disbelieve, when Allah’s signs are recited to you and His Messenger is in your midst? He who holds fast to Allah has been guided to a straight path.”

Abdel-Haleem

“How can you disbelieve, when God’s revelations are being recited to you and His Messenger is living among you? Whoever holds fast to God will be guided to the straight path.”

Verse 112:

Source Text

ضربت عليهم الذلة أين ما تقفوا إلا بحبلٍ من الله وحبلٍ من الناس وباءوا بغضبٍ من الله وضربت عليهم المسكنة، ذلك بأنهم كانوا يكفرون بآيات الله ويقتلون الأنبياء بغير حقٍ ذلك بما عصوا وكانوا يعتدون

Control Text

“Indignity is put over them and in wherever they may be, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allâh, and from men: they have drawn on themselves the Wrath of Allâh, and destitution is put over them. This is because they disbelieved in the Ayât (proofs, evidences verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allâh and killed the Prophets without right. This is because they disobeyed (Allâh) and used to transgress beyond bounds (in Allâh’s disobedience, crimes and sins).”

Pickthall

“Ignominy shall be their portion wheresoever they are found save (where they grasp) a rope from Allah and a rope from men. They have incurred anger from their Lord, and wretchedness is laid upon them. That is because they used to disbelieve the revelations of Allah, and slew the Prophets wrongfully. That is because they were rebellious and used to transgress.”

Ali

“Shame is pitched over them (Like a tent) wherever They are found, Except when under a covenant (Of protection) from God And from men: they draw On themselves wrath from God, And pitched over them Is (the tent of) destitution. This is because they rejected The Sign of God, and slew The Prophets in defiance of right: This is because they rebelled and transgressed beyond bounds.”

Asad

“Overshadowed by ignominy are they wherever they may be, save [when they bind themselves again] in a bond with God and a bond with men: for they have earned the burden of God’s condemnation, and overshadowed by

humiliation: all this [has befallen them] because they persisted in denying the truth of God's messages, and in slaying the prophets against all right: all this because they rebelled[against God], and persisted in transgressing the bounds of what is right."

Irving

"Disgrace will be branded on them wherever they are overtaken unless they have a bond [leading] to God and a bond with other men. They have incurred anger from God, while misery has been branded on them. That is because they have disbelieved in God's signs, and killed the prophets without any right to: that is because they disobey and act so aggressive."

Ozek

"Ignominy shall be their portion wherever they are found, unless they [seize] a rope from Allah and a rope from man. They have incurred the wrath of Allah, and wretchedness is laid upon them. That is because they used to disbelieve the revelations of Allah, and slew the Prophets wrongfully. That is because they were rebellious and used to transgress."

Abdel-Haleem

"... and, unless they hold fast to a lifeline from God and from mankind, they are overshadowed by vulnerability wherever they are found. They have drawn God's wrath upon themselves. They are overshadowed by weakness, too. Because they have persistently disbelieved in God's revelations, and killed prophets without any right, all because of their disobedience and boundless transgression."

Verse 118:

Source Text

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تتخذوا بطانة من دونكم لا يألونكم خبالاً ودواماً عنتم قد بدت البغضاء من أفواههم وما تخفى صدورهم أكبر، قد بينا لكم الآيات إن كنتم تعقلون

Control Text

“O you who believe! Take not as (your) Bitānah (advisors, consultants, protectors. Helpers friends) those outside your religion (pagans, Jews, Christians, and hypocrites) since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you. They desire to harm you severely. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their breasts conceal is far worse. Indeed, We have made plain to you the Ayât (proofs, evidences, verse) if you understand.”

Pickthall

“O ye who believe! Take not for intimates other than your own folk who would spare no pains to ruin you: they love to hamper you severely. Hatred is revealed by (the utterance of) their mouths: but that which their breasts hide is greater. We have made plain for you the revelations if ye will understand.”

Ali

“O ye who believe! Take not into your intimacy Those outside your ranks: They will not fail To corrupt you. They Only desire your ruin: Rank Hatred has already Appeared from their mouths: What their hearts conceal Is far worse. We have made plain To you the Signs If ye have wisdom.”

Asad

“O YOU who have attained to faith! Do not take for your bosom-friends people who are not of your kind. They spare no effort to corrupt you: they would love to see you in distress. Vehement hatred has already come into the open from out their mouths, but what their hearts conceal is yet worse. We have indeed made the signs [thereof] clear unto you, if you would but use your reason.”

Irving

“You who believe do not take up with any other persons than your own fellows as intimates. They will continually cause you turmoil, and they like

anything that will distress you: Loathing shows through their mouths while what their minds conceal is even greater. We have explained the signs to you provided you will use your reason.”

Ozek

“O you who believe! Take not for friends other than your own people. They would spare no pains to ruin you: they love to hamper you. Their hatred is made clear by [the utterance of] their mouths, but more violent [is the hatred which] their breasts conceal. We have made plain for you the signs [O Muslims], if you will understand.”

Abdel-Haleem

“You who believe do not take for your intimates such outsiders as spare no effort to ruin you and want to see you suffer: their hatred is evident from their mouths, but what their hearts conceal is far worse. We have made Our revelations clear for you: will you not use your reason.”

Verse 125:

Source Text

بلى إن تصبروا وتتقوا ويأتوكم من فورهم هذا يمددكم ربكم بخمسة آلافٍ من الملائكة مسومين

Control Text

“Yes, if you hold on to patience and piety, and the enemy comes rushing at you: your Lord will help you with five thousand angels having marks (of distinction).”

Pickthall

“Nay, but if ye persevere, and keep from evil, and (the enemy) attack you suddenly, your Lord will help you with five thousand angels sweeping on.”

Ali

*“Yea, - if ye remain firm, And act aright, even if The enemy should rush here
On you in hot haste, Your Lord would help you With five thousand angels
Making a terrific onslaught.”*

Asad

*“Nay, but if you are patient in adversity and conscious of Him, and the enemy
should fall upon you of a sudden, your Sustainer will aid you with five
thousand angels swooping down!”*

Irving

*“Of course, if you act disciplined and obey orders, and they should come at
you all of a sudden just like this, your Lord will supply you with five thousand
angels sent on purpose.”*

Ozek

*“Yes, if you have patience and fear [Allah], Allah will send to your aid five
thousand angels with distinctive marks.”*

Abdel-Haleem

*“Well, if you are steadfast and mindful of God, your Lord will reinforce you
with five thousand swooping angels if the enemy should suddenly attack you!’
and God arranged it so,”*

Verse 130:

Source Text

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تأكلوا الربا أضعافاً مضاعفةً واتقوا الله لعلكم تفلحون

Control Text

“O you who believe! Eat not Ribâ (usury) doubled and multiplied, but fear Allâh that you may be successful.”

Pickthall

“O ye who believe! Devour not usury, Doubling and quadrupling (the sum lent). Observe your duty to Allah, that ye may be successful.”

Ali

“O ye who believe! Devour not Usury, Doubled and multiplied: But fear God: that Ye may (really) prosper.”

Asad

“O YOU who have attained to faith! Do not gorge yourselves on usury, doubling and re-doubling it- but remain conscious of God, so that you might attain to a happy state.”

Irving

“You who believe, do not live off usury which is compounded over and over again. Heed God so that you may prosper.”

Ozek

“O you who believe! Do not live in usury, multiplying your interest many times over. Have fear of Allah, that perhaps you may be successful.”

Abdel-Haleem

“You who believe, do not consume usurious interest, doubled and redoubled. Be mindful of God so that you may prosper.”

Verse 135:

Source Text

والذين إذا فعلوا فاحشةً وظلموا أنفسهم، ذكروا الله فاستغفروا لذنوبهم ومن يغفر الذنوب إلا الله، ولم
يصرروا على ما فعلوا وهم يعلمون

Control Text

“And those who, when they have committed Fâhshah (great sins as illegal sexual intercourse) or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allâh and ask forgiveness for their sins: - and none can forgive sins but Allâh - and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know.”

Pickthall

“And those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins - Who forgiveth sins save Allah only? - and will not knowingly repeat (the wrong) they did.”

Ali

“And those who, having done something To be ashamed of, Or wronged their own souls, Earnestly bring God to mind, And ask for forgiveness For their sins,-And who can forgive Sins except God? And are never obstinate In persisting knowingly In (the wrong) they have done.”

Asad

“And who, when they have committed a shameful deed or have [otherwise] sinned against themselves, remember God and pray that their sins be forgiven- for who but God could forgive sins? - and do not knowingly persist in doing whatever [wrong]” they may have done.”

Irving

“And those who remember God and seek forgiveness for their offences when they commit some shocking deed or harm themselves- for who forgives offences besides God? - and do not knowingly persist in whatever they have been doing.”

Ozek

“[A]nd those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins-and who can forgive sins except Allah-and who will not knowingly persist [in misdeeds].”

Abdel-Haleem

“[T]hose who remember God and implore forgiveness for their sins if they do something shameful or wrong themselves-who forgives sins but God?-and who never knowingly persist in doing wrong.”

Verse 140:

Source Text

إن يمسسكم قرحٌ فقد مس القوم قرحٌ مثله، وتلك الأيام نداولها بين الناس وليعلم الله الذين ءامنوا ويتخذ منكم شهداء ، والله لا يحب الظالمين

Control Text

“If a wound (and killing) has touched you, be sure a similar wound (and killing) has touched the others. And so are the days (good and not so good), We give to men by turns, that Allāh may test those who believe: and that He may take martyrs from among you. And Allāh likes not the Zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doers.”

Pickthall

“If ye have received a blow, the (disbelieving) people have received a blow the like thereof. These are (only) the vicissitudes which We cause to follow one another for mankind, to the end that Allah may know those who believe: and may choose witnesses from among you: and Allah loveth not wrong-doers.”

Ali

“If a wound hath touched you, Be sure a similar wound hath touched the others. Such days (of varying fortunes) We give to men and men by turns: that God may know Those that believe: And that He may take To Himself from your ranks Martyr-witnesses (to Torah). And God loveth not Those that do wrong.”

Asad

“If misfortune touches you, [know that] similar misfortune has touched [other] people as well: for it is by turns that We apportion unto men such days [of fortune and misfortune] and [this] to the end that God might mark out those who have attained to faith, and choose from among you such as [with their lives] bear witness to the truth- since God does not love evildoers.”

Irving

“If some sore should afflict you, well sores just like them have afflicted [other] folk. We deal out such days to mankind, so God may recognize those who believe and accept witnesses from among you –God does not love wrongdoers.”

Ozek

“If you have suffered a wound, so did the [disbelieving] people [at Badr]. We alternate these days [of victory and defeat] among mankind so that Allah may know those who that believe: and choose martyrs from among you. And Allah does not love the unjust.”

Abdel-Haleem

“If you have suffered a blow, they too have suffered one like it. We deal out such days among people in turns, for God to find out who truly believes, for Him to choose martyrs from among you-God do not love evildoers.”

Verse 146:

Source Text

وكأين من نبي قاتل معه ربيون كثير فما وهنوا لما أصابهم في سبيل الله وما ضعفوا وما استكانوا والله
يحب الصابرين

Control Text

“And many a Prophet (i.e. many from amongst the Prophets) fought (in Allâh’s Cause) and along with whom (fought) large bands of religious learned men. But they never lost heart for that which did befall them in Allâh’s Way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allâh loves As-Sâbirûn (patient).”

Pickthall

“And with how many a Prophet have there been a number of devoted men who fought (beside him). They quailed not for aught that befell them in the way of Allah, nor did they weaken, nor were they brought low. Allah loveth the steadfast.”

Ali

“How many of the Prophets fought (in God’s way), And with them (fought) Large bands of godly men? But they never lost heart If they met with disaster In God’s way, nor did They weaken (in will) Nor give in. And God Loves those are Firm and steadfast.”

Asad

“And how many a prophet has had to fight [in God’s cause], followed by many God-devoted men: and they did not become faint of heart for all that they had to suffer in God’s cause, and neither did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves [before the enemy], since God loves those who are patient in adversity.”

Irving

“How many a Prophet has fought with many devout men alongside him! They never faltered despite what had afflicted them for God’s sake: they did not weaken nor yield. God loves the patient!”

Ozek

“And how many a Prophet fought, with a number of devoted men [beside him]. They quailed not despite what befell them in Allah’s path, nor did they weaken, nor were they brought low. Allah loves the steadfast.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Many Prophets have fought, with large bands of godly men alongside them who, in the face of their sufferings for God’s cause, did not lose heart or weaken or surrender: God loves those who are steadfast.”

Verse 150:

Source Text

بَلِ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّاصِرِينَ

Control Text

“Nay, Allâh is your Maulā (Patron, Lord, Helper, Protector), and He is the Best of helpers.”

Pickthall

“But Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of helpers.”

Ali

“Nay, God is your Protector: And He is the best of helpers.”

Asad

“Nay, but God alone is your Lord Supreme, and He is the best succour.”

Irving

“Rather God is your Protector: He is the best Supporter!”

Ozek

“But Allah is your support and He is the best of helpers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“No indeed! It is God who is your Protector: He is the Best of helpers.”

Verse 153:

Source Text

إذ تصعدون ولا تلوون على أحدٍ والرسول يدعوكم في أخراكم، فأثابكم غمّاً بغمٍ لكيلا تحزنوا على ما فاتكم ولا ما أصابكم، والله خبيرٌ بما تعملون

Control Text

“(And remember) when you ran away (dreadfully) without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) was in your rear calling you back. There did Allâh give you one distress after another by way of requital to teach you not to grieve for that which had escaped you, nor for that which had befallen you. And Allâh is Well-Aware of all that you do.”

Pickthall

“When ye climbed (the hill) and paid no heed to anyone, the messenger, in your rear, was calling you (to fight). Therefore He rewarded you grief for (his) grief that (He might teach) you not to sorrow either for that which ye missed, or for that which befell you. Allah is Informed of what ye do.”

Ali

“Behold! Ye were climbing up The high ground, without even Casting a side glance At any one, and the Apostle, In your rear was calling you Back. There

did God give One distress after another By way of requital, to teach you not to grieve For (the booty) that had escaped you And for (the ill) that had befallen you. For God is well aware Of all that ye do,”

Asad

“[Remember the time] when you fled, paying no heed to anyone, while at your rear the Apostle was calling out to you-wherefore. He requited you with woe in return for (the Apostle’s) woe, so that you should not grieve [merely] over what had escaped you, nor over what had befallen you: for God is aware of all that you do”

Irving

“When you were climbing up [the hillside] and did not follow anyone and the Messenger was calling to you from your rear. He rewarded you with one worry after another so you would not feel so sad because of what had eluded your grasp nor for what had afflicted you. God is Informed about anything you do!”

Ozek

“[Remember] When you were climbing to [higher ground], paying no heed to anyone and the Messenger was calling out to you from behind: there Allah rewarded with grief upon grief, so that you might not grieve for what you missed [the spoils] or what befell you. Allah is Aware of what you do.”

Abdel-Haleem

“You fled without looking back while the Messenger calling was out to you from behind and God rewarded you with sorrow for sorrow. [He has now forgiven you] so that you may not grieve for what you missed, or for what happened to you. God is well aware of everything you do.”

Verse 154:

Source Text

ثم أنزل عليكم من بعد الغم أمنةً نعاساً يغشى طائفةً منكم، وطائفةً قد أهمتهم أنفسهم يظنون بالله غير الحق ظن الجاهلية، يقولون هل لنا من الأمر من شيء. قل إن الأمر كله لله، يخفون في أنفسهم ما لا يبدونه لك، يقولون لو كان لنا من الأمر شيء ما قتلنا هاهنا. قل لو كنتم في بيوتكم لبرز الذين كتب عليهم القتل إلى مضاجعهم، وليبتلي الله ما في صدوركم، وليمحصن ما في قلوبكم. والله عليم بذات الصدور

Control Text

“Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you, while another party was thinking about themselves (as how to save their own selves, ignoring the others and the Prophet ﷺ) and thought wrongfully of Allâh- the thought of ignorance. They said, “Have we any part in the affair?” Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Indeed the affair belongs wholly to Allah. “They hide within themselves what they dare not to reveal to you, saying: “If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here.” Say: “Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death,” but that Allâh might test what is in your breasts: and to purify that which was in your hearts (sins), and Allâh is All-Knower of what is in (your) breasts.”

Pickthall

“Then, after grief, He sent down security for you. As slumber did it overcome a party of you, while (the other) party, who were anxious on their own account, thought wrongly of Allah, the thought of ignorance. They said: Have we any part in the cause? Say (O Muhammad): The cause belongeth wholly to Allah. They hide within themselves (a thought) which they reveal not unto thee, saying: Had we had any part in the cause we should not have been slain here. Say: Even though ye had ye had been in your houses, those appointed to be slain would have gone forth to the places where they were to lie. (All this hath been) in order that Allah might try what is in your breasts and prove what is in your hearts. Allah is Aware of what is hidden in the breasts (of men).”

Ali

“After (the excitement) Of the distress, He sent down Calm on a band of you, Overcome with a slumber, While another band, Was stirred to anxiety by their own feelings Moved by wrong suspicions Of God-suspicions due To Ignorance. They said: “What affair is this of ours?” Say thou: “Indeed, this affair Is wholly God’s” They hide In their minds what they Dare not reveal to thee. They say (to themselves): “If we had had anything To do with this affair, We should not have been In the Slaughter here.” Say: “Even though you had remained In your homes, those For whom death was decreed Would certainly have gone forth To the place of their death”. But (all this was) That God might test What is in your breasts And purge what is In your hearts. For God knoweth well The secrets of your hearts.”

Asad

“Then, after this woe, He sent down upon you a sense of security, an inner calm which enfolded some of you, whereas the other, who cared mainly for themselves, entertained wrong thoughts about God-thoughts of pagan ignorance-saying, “Did we, then, have any power of decision [in this matter]? Say: “Verily all power of decision does rest with God”-[as for them,] they are trying to conceal within themselves that [weakness of faith] which they would not reveal unto thee, [O Prophet, by] saying, “If we had power of decision, we would not have left so many dead behind.” Say [unto them]: “Even if you had remained in your homes, those [of you] whose death had been ordained would indeed have gone forth to the places where they were destined to lie down. And [all this befell you] so that God might put to a test all that you harbour in your bosoms, and render innermost hearts pure of all dross: for God is aware of what is in the hearts [of men].”

Irving

“Then following [your] worry, He sent down confidence upon you: a drowsiness overcame one squadron of yours, while another squadron fretted themselves thinking something besides the Truth about God guess-work from [the times of] Ignorance. They said: “Is this a concern of ours in any way?” Say: “The whole concern is up to God” They hide something they do not show

in their souls: they say: "If we had had anything to do with the matter, we would not have had to fight here." Say: "Even though you were in your own homes, those for whom killing has been prescribed would have shown up on their deathbeds, so that God might test what is on your minds and purge whatever is in your hearts. God is Aware of whatever is on your minds."

Ozek

"Then after grief, He sent down security upon you. A sleep which overtook some, while others lay troubled on their own account, moved by wrong suspicions of Allah, the suspicions of ignorance. They said: Have we any decision in the matter?" Say [O Muhammad]: "The matter belongs wholly to Allah." They hide within themselves [a thought] which they reveal not to you, saying: "Had we had any decision in the matter we should not have been slain here. Say: Even if you had been in your houses, those appointed to be slain would have gone forth to the places where they were to lie. [All this hath been] In order that Allah might try what is in your breasts and prove what is in your hearts. Allah knows what is hidden in the breasts."

Abdel-Haleem

"After sorrow, He caused calm to descend upon you, a sleep that overtook some of you. Another group, caring only for themselves, entertained false thoughts about God, thoughts more appropriate to pagan ignorance, and said, "Do we get a say in any of this?" [Prophet], tell them, 'Everything to do with this affair is in God's hands.' They conceal in their hearts things they will not to reveal to you. They say, "If we had had our say in this, none of us would have been killed here." Tell them, "Even if you had resolved to stay at homes, those who were destined to be killed would still have gone out to meet their death.' God did this in order to test everything within you and in order to prove what is in your hearts. God knows your innermost thoughts very well."

Verse 161:

Source Text

وما كان لنبي أن يغفل ومن يغفل يأت بما غل يوم القيامة ثم توفى كل نفس ما كسبت وهم لا يظلمون

Control Text

“It is not for any Prophet to take illegally a part of the booty (Ghalûl), and whosoever deceives his companions as regards the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took (illegally). Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.”

Pickthall

“It is not for any Prophet to deceive (mankind) Whoso deceiveth will bring his deceit with him on the Day of Resurrection. Then every soul will be paid in full what it hath earned: and they will not be wronged.”

Ali

“No prophet could (ever) Be false to his trust. If any person is so false, He shall, On the Day Of Judgment, restore What he misappropriated: Then shall every soul Receive its due, - Whatever it earned, - And none shall be Dealt with unjustly.”

Asad

“AND IT IS not conceivable that a prophet should deceive - since he who deceives shall be faced with his deceit on the Day Resurrection, when every human being shall be repaid in full for whatever he has done, and none shall be wronged.”

Irving

“No prophet should hold back anything: and anyone who defrauds [someone else] will bring along whatever he has been withholding on Resurrection Day. Then every soul will be repaid for whatever it has earned, and they will not be harmed.”

Ozek

“It is not [possible] for any Prophet to deceive [mankind]: whoever deceives will bring his deceit with him on the Day of Resurrection. Then every soul will be paid in full what it has earned: and they will not be wronged.”

Abdel-Haleem

“It is inconceivable that a prophet would ever dishonestly take something from the battle gains. Anyone who does so will carry it with him on the Day of Resurrection, when each soul will be fully repaid for what it has done: no one will be wronged.”

Verse 164:

Source Text

لقد منَّ اللهُ على المؤمنين إذ بعث فيهم رسولاً من أنفسهم يتلوا عليهم آياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وإن كانوا من قبل لفي ضلالٍ مبينٍ

Control Text

“Indeed, Allāh conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses (the Qur’ān), and purifying them (from sins by their following him), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur’ān) and Al-Hikmah [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. his legal ways, statements, acts of worship)], while before that they had been in a manifest error.”

Pickthall

“ Allah verily hath shown grace to the believers by sending unto them a messenger of their own who reciteth unto them His revelations, and causeth them to grow, and teacheth the Scripture and wisdom: although before (he came to them) they were in flagrant error.”

Ali

“God did confer A great favour On the Believers When He sent among them An Apostle from among Themselves, rehearsing Unto them the Signs Of God, sanctifying them, and instructing them In Scripture and Wisdom, While, before that, They had been In manifest error.”

Asad

“Indeed, God bestowed a favour upon the believers when he raised up in their midst an apostle from among themselves, to convey His messages unto them, and to cause them to grow in purity, and to impart unto them the divine writ as well as wisdom- whereas before that they were indeed, most obviously, lost in error.”

Irving

“God has benefited believers whenever He sent them a messenger from among themselves, to recite His verses to them, and purify them, and teach them the Book and wisdom, whereas previously they had been in plain error.”

Ozek

“Allah has surely shown favour to the believers by sending them a Messenger of their own to recite to them His signs, and purify them and instruct them in the Book and in wisdom: while before they were in evident error.”

Abdel-Haleem

“God has been truly gracious to the believers in sending a Messenger from among their own, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow in purity, and to teach them the Scripture and wisdom- before that they were clearly astray.”

Verse 176:

Source Text

ولا يحزنك الذين يسارعون في الكفر إنهم لن يضروا الله شيئاً يريد الله ألا يجعل لهم حظاً في الآخرة
ولهم عذابٌ عظيمٌ

Control Text

“And let not those grieve you (O Muhammad ﷺ) who rush with haste to disbelieve: verily, not the least harm will do to Allâh. It is Allâh’s Will to give them no portion in the Hereafter. For them there is a great torment.”

Pickthall

“Let not their conduct grieve thee, who run easily to disbelief, for lo! They injure Allah not at all. It is Allah’s will to assign them no portion in the Hereafter, and theirs will be an awful doom.”

Ali

“Let not those grieve thee Who rush headlong Into Unbelief: Not the least harm Will they do to God: God’s Plan is that He Will give them no portion In the Hereafter, But a severe punishment.”

Asad

“And be not grieved by those who vie with one another in denying the truth: verily, they can in no wise harm God. It is God’s will that they shall have no share in the [blessings of the] life to come: and tremendous suffering awaits them.”

Irving

“Let not those who hasten on to disbelief sadden you: they will never injure God in any way. God wants to grant them no fortune in the Hereafter, where they will have terrible torment.”

Ozek

“[O Muhammad] let not their conduct grieve you, who run easily to disbelief. They will not harm Allah at all. He wants to assign them no share in the Hereafter, and theirs will be a formidable torment.”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Prophet], do not be grieved by those who are quick to disbelieve. They will not harm God in the least: it is God’s will that they will have no share in the Hereafter- a terrible torment awaits them.”

Verse 178

Source Text

ولا يحسبن الذين كفروا انما نملىٰ خيراً لأنفسهم انما نملىٰ لهم ليزدادوا إثماً ولهم عذابٌ مهينٌ

Control Text

“And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing of their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness. And for them is a disgracing torment.”

Pickthall

“And let not those who disbelieve imagine that the rein We give them bodeeth good unto their souls. We only give them rein that they may grow in sinfulness. And theirs will be a shameful doom.”

Ali

“Let not the Unbelievers Think that Our respite To them is good for themselves: We grant them respite That they may grow In their iniquity: But they will have A shameful punishment.”

Asad

“And they should not think- they who are bent on denying the truth- that Our giving them rein is good for them: We give them rein only to let them grow in sinfulness: a shameful suffering awaits them.”

Irving

“Let not those who disbelieve consider how our acting indulgent with them is good so far as their own persons are concerned: We merely postponing things for them so they may increase in vice: they will have disgraceful torment.”

Ozek

“Let not those who disbelieve imagine that We prolong their time for the good of their own selves. We only give them respite that they may grow in sinfulness: and theirs will be a shameful torment.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The disbelievers should not think that it is better for them that We give them more time: when We give them more time they become more sinful- a shameful torment awaits them.”

Verse 180:

Source Text

ولا يحسبن الذين يبخلون بما آتاهم الله من فضله هو خيراً لهم بل هو شرٌّ لهم سيطوقون ما بخلوا به يوم
القيامة والله ميراث السموات والأرض والله بما تعملون خبيرٌ

Control Text

“And let not those who covetously withhold of that which Allâh has bestowed on them of His Bounty (Wealth) think that it is good for them (and so they do not pay the obligatory Zakât). Nay, it will be worse for them: the things which they covetously withheld shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection. And to Allâh belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth: and Allâh is Well-acquainted with all that you do.”

Pickthall

“And let not those who hoard up that which Allah hath bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be their collar on the Day of Resurrection. Allah is the heritage of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is Informed of what ye do.”

Ali

“And let not those Who covetously withhold Of the gifts which God hath given them of His Grace, Think that it is good for them: Nay, it will be the worse For them: Soon shall the things Which they covetously withheld Be tied to their necks Like a twisted collar, On the Day of Judgment. To God belongs the heritage Of the heavens and the earth: And God is well- acquainted With all that ye do.”

Asad

“AND THEY should not think- they who niggardly cling to all that God has granted them out of His bounty- that this is good for them: nay, it is bad for them. That to which they [so] niggardly cling will, on the Day of Resurrection, be hung about their necks: for unto God [alone] belongs the heritage of the heavens and of the earth: and God is aware of all that you do.”

Irving

“Let not those who act niggardly with any of His bounty God has given them consider it is better for them: rather it will be worse for them: they will be charged on Resurrection Day with anything they were so niggardly about. God holds the inheritance of Heaven and Earth: God is Informed about anything you do.”

Ozek

“And let not those who hoard up that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty think that it is better for them. It is worse for them. That which they hoard will be their collar on the Day of Resurrection. Allah’s is the inheritance of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is Aware of what you do.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Those who are miserly with what God has granted them out of His grace should not think that it is good for them: on the contrary, it is bad for them. Whatever they meanly withhold will be hung around their necks on the Day of Resurrection. It is God who will inherit the heavens and earth: God is well aware of everything you do.”

Verse 186

Source Text

لتبْلونَ في أموالكم وأنفسكم ولتسمعنَ من الذين أوتوا الكتابَ من قبلكم ومن الذين أشركوا أذَى كثيراً،
وإن تصبروا وتنتقوا فإنَّ ذلكَ من عزمِ الأمور

Control Text

*“You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves, and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allāh: but if you persevere patiently, and become *Al-Muttaqūn* (the pious- see V, 2:2) then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs (and that is from the great matters which you must hold on with all your efforts).”*

Pickthall

“Assuredly ye will be tried in your property and in your persons, and ye will hear much wrong from those who were given the Scripture before you, and from the idolaters. But if ye persevere and ward off (evil), then that is of the steadfast heart of things.”

Ali

“Ye shall certainly Be tried and tested In your possessions And in your personal selves: and ye shall certainly Hear much that will grieve you, From those who received The Book before you (Jews and Christians) And from those who Worship many gods. But if ye persevere Patiently, and guard Against evil,- then That will be A determining factor In all affairs.”

Asad

“You shall most certainly be tried in your possessions and in your persons: and indeed you shall hear many hurtful things from those to whom revelation was granted before your time, as well as from those who have come to ascribe divinity to other things beside God. But if you remain patient in adversity, and conscious of Him,- this, behold, is something to set one’s heart upon.”

Irving

“You will be tested by means of your wealth and through your own selves: and you hear much abuse from those who were given the Book before you, as well as those who associate [others with God]. If you are patient and do your duty, that what will determine matters.”

Ozek

“You shall certainly be tried in your possessions and in your lives: and you shall certainly hear much wrong from those who were given the Book before you [Jews and Christians], and from the idolaters. But if you persevere patiently, and fear [Allâh] these are weighty factors in all affairs.”

Abdel-Haleem

“You are sure to be tested through your possessions and persons: you are sure to hear much that is hurtful from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with God. If you are steadfast and mindful of God, that is the best course.”

Verse 191:

Source Text

الذين يذكرون الله قياماً وقعوداً وعلى جنوبهم ويتفكرون في خلق السموات والأرض ربنا ما خلقت هذا
باطلاً سبحانك فقنا عذاب النار

Control Text

“Those who remember Allâh (always and in prayer) standing, sitting and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and earth, (saying): “Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted are You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of Fire.”

Pickthall

“Such as remember Allah, standing, sitting, and reclining, and consider the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say): Our Lord! Thou createdst not this in vain. Glory be to Thee! Preserve us from the doom of Fire!”

Ali

“Men who celebrate The praises of God standing, sitting, And lying down on their sides, And contemplate The (wonders of) creation In the heavens and the earth, (With the thought):”Our Lord! Not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us Salvation from the Penalty Of the Fire.”

Asad

“[and] who remember God when they stand, and when they sit, and when they lie down to sleep, and [thus] reflects on the creation of the heavens and earth: “Our Sustainer! Thou hast not created [aught of] this without meaning and purpose. Limitless art Thou in Thy glory! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through fire.”

Irving

“who remember God while standing, sitting, and [lying] down on their sides, and mediate on the creation of Heavens and Earth [by saying]: “Our Lord, You have not created this in vain! Glory be to You! Shield us from the torment of Fire.”

Ozek

“Those that remember Allah standing, sitting and lying down, and mediate upon the creation of the heavens and the earth. “Our Lord! You have not created this in vain. Transcendent are You! So protect us from the torment of Fire!”

Abdel-Haleem

“who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down, who reflect on the creation of the heavens and earth: ‘Our Lord! You have not created all this without purpose- You are far above that! So protect us from the torment of the Fire.’”

Verse 192:

Source Text

ربنا إنك من تدخل النار فقد أجزيته وما للظالمين من أنصارٍ

Control Text

“Our Lord! Verily, whom You admit to the Fire, indeed, You have disgraced him: and never will the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong- doers) find any helpers.”

Pickthall

“Our Lord! Whom Thou causest to enter the Fire, indeed Thou hast confounded. For evil-doers there will be no helpers.”

Ali

“Our Lord! Any whom Thou Dost admit to the Fire, Truly Thou coverest with shame, And never will wrong-doers Find any helpers!”

Asad

“O Our Sustainer! Whomsoever Thou shalt commit to the fire, him, verily, wilt Thou have brought to disgrace [in this world]: and such evildoers will have none to succour them.”

Irving

“Our Lord, anyone You sentence to the Fire, You will humiliate. Wrongdoers will have no supporters.”

Ozek

“Our Lord! Those whom You will admit to the Fire, You have humiliated them. For the unjust there are no helpers.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Our Lord! You will truly humiliate those You commit to the Fire. The evildoers have no one to help them.”

Verse 196:

Source Text

لا يغرنك تقلب الذين كفروا فى البلاد

Control Text

“Let not the free disposal (and affluence) of the disbelievers throughout the land deceive you.”

Pickthall

“Let not the vicissitude (of success) of those who disbelieve, in the land, deceive thee (O Muhammad).”

Ali

“Let not the strutting about of the Unbelievers Through the land Decieve thee.”

Asad

“LET IT NOT deceive thee that those who are bent on denying the truth seem to be able to do as they please on earth.”

Irving

“Do not let it deceive you how those who disbelieve bustle about the land.”

Ozek

“Let not the strutting of the disbelievers in the land beguile you.”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Prophet], do not be deceived by the disbelievers’ [lucrative] trading to and fro in the land.”

3 *Sûrat Yûsuf* (Prophet Joseph)

Verse 1:

Source Text

أَلر تَلَك آيَات الْكِتَاب الْمَبِين

Control Text

“Alif-Lâm-Râ [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings]. These are the Verses of the Clear

Book(the Qur'ân that makes clear the legal and illegal things, laws, a guidance and a blessing).”

Pickthall

“Alif Lam Ra. These are verses of the Scripture that maketh plain.”

Ali

“Alif Lam. Ra. These are The symbols (or Verses) Of the Perspicuous Book.”

Asad

“Alif Lam Ra.” THESE ARE MESSAGES of a revelation clear in itself and clearly showing the truth.”

Irving

“A. L. R. These are verse from the Clear Book.”

Ozek

“Alif.Lam.Ra. These are the signs [or “the verses”] of the Manifest Book.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Alif Lam Ra. These are the verses of the Scripture that makes things clear.”

Verse 2:

Source Text

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

Control Text

“Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'ân in order that you may understand.”

Pickthall

“Lo! We have revealed it, a lecture in Arabic, that ye may understand.”

Ali

“We have sent it down As an Arabic Quran, In order that ye may Learn wisdom.”

Asad

“Behold, We have bestowed it from on high as a discourse in the Arabic tongue, so that you might encompass it with your reason.”

Irving

“We have sent it down as an Arabic reading so that you may reason.”

Ozek

“We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran, which you may understand.”

Abdel-Haleem

“We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’ân so that you [people] may understand.”

Verse 8:

Source Text

إذ قالوا ليوسف وأخوه أحب إلى أبينا منا ونحن عصبة إن أبانا لفي ضلالٍ مبين

Control Text

“When they said: “Truly, Yûsuf (Joseph) and his brother (Benjamin) are dear to our father than we, while we are a strong group. Really, our father is in a plain error.”

Pickthall

“When they said: “Joseph and his brother are dear to our father than we are, even though we are a closed group. Our father is clearly mistaken.”

Ali

“They said: “Truly Joseph and his brother are loved more by our father than we: But we are a goodly body! Really our father is obviously wandering (in his mind)!”

Asad

“Now, [Joseph’s brothers] spoke [thus to one another:] “Truly, Joseph and his brother [Benjamin] are dearer to our father than we, even though we are so many. Behold, our father is surely suffering from an aberration!”

Irving

“When they said: “Joseph and his brother are dear to our father than we are, even though we are a closed group. Our father is clearly mistaken.”

Ozek

“They said [to each other]: “Surely Joseph and his [full] brother [Benjamin] are dearer to our father than ourselves, although we are numerous. Our father is indeed in manifest error.”

Abdel-Haleem

“The brothers said [to each other], “Although we are many, Joseph and his brother are dearer to our father than we are-Our father is clearly in wrong.”

Verse 10:

Source Text

قال قائل منهم لا تقتلوا يوسف وألقوه في غيابت الجب يلتقطه بعض السيارة إن كنتم فاعلين

Control Text

“One from among them said: “Kill not Yusuf (Joseph), but if you must do something, throw him down to the bottom of a well: he will be picked up by some caravan of travellers”

Pickthall

“One among them said: “Kill not Joseph but, if you must be doing, fling him into the depth of pit: some caravan will find him.”

Ali

“Said one of them: “Slay not Joseph, but if ye must do something, throw him down to the bottom of the well: he will be picked up by some caravan of travellers.”

Asad

“Another of them said:” Do not slay Joseph, but rather- if you must do something –cast him into the dark depths of this well, [whence] some caravan may pick him up.”

Irving

“One among them spoke up and said: “Don’t Kill Joseph, toss him into the bottom of the cistern: so some travellers may pick him up, if you must do something.”

Ozek

“One of them said: “Do not kill Joseph, but cast him into the depth of the pit; some caravan will find him, if you must do something!”

Abdel-Haleem

“[Another of them] said, ‘Do not kill Joseph, but, if you must, throw him into the hidden depths of a well where some caravan may pick him up.’”

Verse 14:

Source Text

قالوا لئن أكله الذئب ونحن عصبة إنا إذا لخاسرون

Control Text

“They said: “If a wolf devours him, while we are a strong group, (to guard him), then surely, we are the losers.”

Pickthall

“They said, “If the wolf should devour him, when we are (so strong) a band, then surely we should have already perished.”

Ali

“They said: if the wolf were to devour him while we are (so large) a party, Then should we indeed (First) have perished ourselves.”

Asad

“Said they: “Surely, if the wolf were to devour him notwithstanding that we are so many-then, be-hold, we ought ourselves to perish.”

Irving

“They said: “How could a wolf eat him, when we are a closed group? Then, we would be losers!”

Ozek

They said: “if the wolf devour him while we are numerous, then we should surely be losers!”

Abdel-Haleem

“They said: “If a wolf were to eat him, when there are so many of us, we would truly be losers!”

Verse 22:

Source Text

ولما بلغ أشده آتيناها حكماً وعلماً وكذلك نجزي المحسنين

Control Text

“And when he [Yusuf (Joseph)] attained his manhood, We gave him wisdom and knowledge (the Prophethood): thus We reward the Muhsinûn (doers of good).”

Pickthall

“And when he reached his prime, We gave him wisdom and knowledge: Thus We reward the good.”

Ali

“When Joseph attained his full manhood, We gave him power and knowledge: thus do We reward those who do right.”

Asad

“And when he reached full manhood. We bestowed upon him the ability to judge [between right wrong], as well as [innate] knowledge: for thus do We reward the doers of good.”

Irving

“When he became of age, We gave him discretion and knowledge: thus We reward those who act kindly.”

Ozek

“And when Joseph reached his full manhood, We bestowed on him wisdom and knowledge. Thus do We reward those who act with excellence.”

Abdel-Haleem

“And when he reached maturity, We gave him judgement and knowledge: this is how We reward those who do good.”

Verse 24:

Source Text

ولقد همت به وهم بها لولا أن رأى برهان ربه، كذلك لنصرف عنه السوء والفحشاء إنه من عبادنا
المخلصين

Control Text

“And indeed she did desire him, and he would have inclined to her desire, had he not seen the evidence of his Lord. Thus We warded off evil and sexual misconduct from him. He was one of Our sincere servants.”

Pickthall

“She verily, desired him, and he would have desired her, if it had not been that he saw the argument of his Lord. Thus it was, that We might ward off from him evil and lewdness. Lo! He was one of Our chosen slaves.”

Ali

“And (with passion) did she desire him, and he would have desired her, but that he saw the evidence of his Lord: thus (Did We order) that We might turn away from him (all) evil and shameful deeds: For he was one of Our servants, Sincere and purified.”

Asad

“And, indeed, she desired him, and he desired her; [and he would have succumbed] had he not seen [in this temptation] an evidence of his

Sustainer's truth: thus [We willed it to be] in order that We might avert from him all evil and all deeds of abomination - for, behold, he was truly one of Our servants."

Irving

"She kept him on her mind, while he would have had her on his, had it not been that he saw a proof from his Lord. Thus it was, that We might turn away from him evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely, he was one of Our chosen (guided) slaves."

Ozek

"She moved towards him and he moved toward her, but he saw the sign of his Lord. Thus We warded off from him indecency and evil, for he was one of our servants, whom we chose to be most purified."

Abdel-Haleem

"She made for him, and he would have succumbed to her, if he had not seen evidence of his Lord- We did this in order to keep evil and indecency away from him, for he was truly one of Our chosen servants."

Verse 31:

Source Text

قلما سمعت بمكرهن أرسلت إليهن وأعتدت لهن متكئاً وءأتنت كل واحدةٍ منهن سكيناً وقالت أخرج عليهن، فلما رأينه أكبرنه وقطعن أيديهن وقلن حاش لله ما هذا بشراً إن هذا إلا ملكٌ كريمٌ

Control Text

"So when she heard of their accusation, she sent for them and prepared a banquet for them: she gave each one of them a knife (to cut the foodstuff with), and she said [(to Yūsuf (Joseph))]: "Come out before them. Then when they saw him, they exalted him (at his beauty) and (in their astonishment) cut

their hands. They said: “How perfect is Allâh (or Allâh forbids)! No man is this! This is none other than a noble angel!”

Pickthall

“And when she heard of their sly talk, she sent to them and prepared for them a cushioned couch (to lie on it at the feast) and gave every one of them a knife and said (to Joseph): Come out unto them! And when they saw him, they exalted him and cut their hands, exclaiming: Allah Blameless! This is not a human being. This is no other than some gracious angel!”

Ali

“When she heard Of their malicious talk, She sent for them And prepared a banquet For them: she gave Each one of them a knife: And she said (to (Joseph): “Come out before them. When they saw him, They did extol him, and (in their amazement) cut their hands: they said, “God preserve us! No mortal is this! This is none other than a noble angel!”

Asad

“Thereupon, when she heard of their malicious talk, she sent for them and prepared for them a sumptuous repast, and handed each one of them a knife and said [to Joseph]: “Come out and show thyself to them. And when the women saw him, they were greatly amazed at his beauty, and [so flustered were they that] they cut their hands [with their knives], exclaiming, “God save us! This is no mortal man! This is nought but a noble angel!”

Irving

“When she heard about their remarks, she sent for them and prepared a party for them. To each one of them she gave a knife. She told [him]: “Come out to [see] them!” When they saw him, they praised him and cut their hands. They said: “God forbids! This is no human being, this is simply a noble angel!”

Ozek

“When she heard of their malicious talk, she invited them and prepared a banquet for them: she gave each one of them a knife and said [to Joseph]: “Come out before them!” When they saw him, they were amazed at him and cut their hands, exclaiming “Allah forbid! This is no human being, this is but a noble angel.””

Abdel-Haleem

“When she heard their malicious talk, she prepared a banquet and sent for them: giving each one of them a knife, She said to Joseph, “Come out and show yourself to them! And when the women saw him, they were stunned by his beauty, and cut their hands, exclaiming, “Great God! He cannot be mortal! He must be a precious angel!””

Verse 65:

Source Text

ولما فتحوا متاعهم وجدوا بضاعتهم ردت إليهم ، قالوا يا أبانا ما نبغى هذه بضاعتنا ردت إلينا ونمير
أهلنا ونحفظ أخانا ونزداد كيل بعير ، ذلك كيل يسير

Control Text

“And when they opened their bags, they found their money had been returned to them. They said: “O our father! What (more) can we desire? “This is our money which has been returned to us: so we shall get (more) food for our family, and we shall guard our brother and add one more measure of a camel’s load. This quantity is easy (for the king to give).”

Pickthall

“And when they opened their belongings, they discovered that their merchandise had been returned to them. They said: O our father! What (more) can we ask?” Here is our merchandise returned to us: so we shall get

provision for our folk, and guard our brother, and we shall have the extra measure of a camel (load). This (that we bring now) is a light measure.”

Ali

“Then when they opened their baggage, they found their stock-in-trade had been returned to them. They said: “O our father! What (more) Can we desire? “This, our stock-in-trade has been returned To us: so we shall get (More) food for our family: We shall take care of our brother: And add (at the same time) A full camel’s load (of grain To our provision). This is but a small quantity.

Asad

“Thereupon, when they opened their packs, they discovered that their merchandise had been returned to them: [and] they said: “O our father! What more could we desire? "Here is our merchandise: it has been returned to us! [If thou send Benjamin with us,] we shall [again] be able to bring food for our family, and shall guard our brother [well], and receive in addition another camel load of grain. That [which we have brought the first time] was but scanty measure.”

Irving

“When they opened their baggage, they found that their trading goods had been returned to them. They said: “Our father, what more do we desire than this?” This merchandise of ours has been returned to us! We shall supply our family, look after our brother, and add a camel’s load [to it] besides: that should be such an easy load!”

Ozek

“Then when they opened their baggage they found that their merchandise had been returned to them. They said, “O our father! What (more) can we ask?” Here is our merchandise returned to us. So we shall [again] buy food for our

family, and we shall guard our brother, and also add a camel's load [of grain to our provision]. This [that we bring now] is a small quantity."

Abdel-Haleem

"Then, when they opened their packs, they discovered that their goods had been returned to them and they said, "Father! We need no more [goods to barter]: look, our goods have been returned to us. We shall get corn for our household: we shall keep our brother safe: we shall be entitled to another camel-load of grain- an extra measure so easily achieved!"

Verse 66:

Source Text

قال لن أرسله معكم حتى تؤتونى موثقاً من الله لتأتتنى به إلا أن يحاط بكم فلما أتوه موثقهم قال الله على ما نقول وكيلاً

Control Text

"[Ya'qûb (Jacob)] said: "I will not send him with you until you swear a solemn oath to me in Allāh's Name, that you will bring him back to me unless you are yourselves surrounded (by enemies), And when they had sworn their solemn oath, he said: Allāh is Witness to what we have said."

Pickthall

"He said: I will not send him with you, till ye give me an undertaking in the name of Allah that you will bring him back to me, unless ye are surrounded And when they gave him their undertaking, he said: Allāh is the Warden over what we say."

Ali

" (Jacob) said:" Never will I send him with you until ye swear a solemn oath to me, in God's name, that ye will be sure to bring him back to me unless ye are yourselves Hemmed in (and made powerless) And when they had sworn

Their solemn oath, He said: Over All that we say, be God The Witness and Guardian!”

Asad

“Said [Jacob]: ‘I will not send him with you until you give me a solemn pledge, before God, that you will indeed bring back unto me, unless you yourselves be encompassed [by death]! And when they had given him their solemn pledge, [Jacob] said: “ God is witness to all that we say!”

Irving

“He said: “I will never send him with you, until you give me some assurance before God that you will bring him back to me, unless you have been ambushed. When they had given him their pledge, he said: God is a Trustee for what we say.”

Ozek

“He [Jacob] said: “I will not send him with you until you give me a solemn oath by Allah to bring him back to me, unless you are [in some way] prevented. And when they had given him their oath, he said, “Allah is witness to what we say.”

Abdel-Haleem

“He said: “I will never send him with you, not unless you swear by God that you will bring him back to me if that is humanly possible. Then, when they had given him their pledge, he said, “Our words are entrusted to God.”

Verse 84:

Source Text

وتولى عنهم وقال يا أسفى على يوسف وابيضت عيناه من الحزن فهو كظيم

Control Text

“And he turned away from them and said: “Alas, my grief for Yusuf (Joseph!)” And he lost his sight because of the sorrow that he was suppressing.”

Pickthall

“And he turned away from them and said: Alas, my grief for Joseph! And his eyes whitened with sorrow that he was suppressing.”

Ali

“And he turned away from them, and said:” How great is my grief for Joseph!” and his eyes became white with sorrow, and he fell into silent melancholy.”

Asad

“But he turned away from them and said: “O woe is me for Joseph! –And his eyes became dim from the grief with which he was filled.”

Irving

“He turned away from them and said: “How upset I feel over Joseph!” Both his eyes clouded over from sadness, so he choked back his grief.”

Ozek

“And he turned away from them saying:” How great is my grief for Joseph” And his eyes turned white with the sorrow that he was suppressing.”

Abdel-Haleem

“And he turned away from them, saying’ ‘Alas, for Joseph!” His eyes went white with grief and he was filled with sorrow.”

Verse 91:

Source Text

Control Text

“They said: “By Allâh! Indeed Allâh has preferred you to us, and we certainly have been sinners.”

Pickthall

They said: By Allah, verily Allah hath preferred thee above us, and we were indeed sinful.

Ali

“They said: “By God! Indeed Hath God preferred thee Above us, and we certainly Have been guilty of sin!”

Asad

[The brothers] said: “By God! Most certainly has God raised thee high above us, and we were indeed but sinners!”

Irving

“They said: “By God, God has preferred you ahead of us, while we have been mistaken.”

Ozek

“By Allâh, they said: “Allâh has indeed preferred you over us: and we were indeed sinful!”

Abdel-Haleem

“They said, ‘By God! God really did favour you over all of us and we were in the wrong!’”

4 Sûrat As-Saff (The Row or The Rank):

Verse 1:

Source Text

سبح لله ما فى السموات وما فى الأرض وهو العزيز الحكيم

Control Text

“Whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth glorifies Allāh. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”

Pickthall

“All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifieth Allah, the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, the Mighty, the Wise.”

Ali

“Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, let it declare the Praises and Glory of God: for he is the exalted in Might, the Wise.”

Asad

“All that is in the heavens and all that is on earth extols God’s limitless glory: for He alone is almighty, truly wise!”

Irving

“Whatever is in the Heaven and whatever is on Earth celebrates God. He is the Powerful, the Wise!”

Ozek

“All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifies Allah, and He is the August, the Wise.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies God-He is the All-Mighty, the Wise.”

Verse 5:

Source Text

وإذ قال موسى لقومه يا قوم لم تؤذوننى وقد تعلمون أنى رسول الله إليكم فلما زاغوا أزاغ الله قلوبهم،
والله لا يهدى القوم الفاسقين

Control Text

“And (remember) when Mûsâ (Moses) said to his people: “O my people! Why do you annoy me while you know certainly that I am A Messenger of Allâh to you? So when they turned away (from the Path of Allâh), Allâh turned their hearts away (from the Right Path). And Allâh guides not the people who are Fâsqûn (the rebellious, the disobedient to Allâh).”

Pickthall

“And (remember) when Moses said unto his people: “O my people! Why persecute ye me, when you well know that I am Allah’s messenger unto you? So when they went astray, Allah sent their hearts astray. And Allah guideth not the evil living folk.”

Ali

“And remember, Moses said to his people:” O my people why do ye vex and insult me, though ye know that I am the apostle of God (sent) to you? Then when they went wrong God let their hearts go wrong. For God guides not those Who are the rebellious, transgressors.”

Asad

“Now when Moses spoke to his people, [it was this same truth that he had in mind:]” O my people! Why do you cause me grief, the while you know that I am an apostle of God sent unto you? And so, when they swerved from the

right way, God let their hearts swerve from the truth. For God does not bestow His guidance upon iniquitous folk.”

Irving

“Thus Moses told to his folk: “My folk, why do you annoy me? You know I am God’s messenger to you. When they wavered, God let their hearts waver, too. God does not guide immoral folk.”

Ozek

“And [remember] when Moses said to his people: ‘O my people, Why do you seek to harm me, when you know that I am Allah’s Messenger to you? So when they swerved, Allah let their hearts swerve. Allah does not guide the corrupt.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Moses said to his people, ‘My people, why do you hurt me when you know that I am sent to you by God? When they went astray, God left their hearts to astray. God does not guide rebellious people.”

Verse7:

Source Text

ومن أظلم ممن افترى على الله الكذب وهو يدعى إلى الإسلام والله لا يحب الظالمين

Control Text

“And who does more wrong than the one invents a lie against Allāh, while he is being invited to Islām? And Allāh guides not the people who are Zālimûn (polytheists, wrong-doers and the disbelievers).”

Pickthall

“And who doth greater wrong than he who inventeth a lie against Allah when he is summoned unto Al-Islām? And Allah guideth not wrong-doing folk.”

Ali

“Who doth greater wrong than one who invents falsehood against God, even as he is being invited to Islâm? And God guides not those who do wrong.”

Asad

“And who could be more wicked than one who invents {such} a lie about {a message from} God, seeing that he is {but} being called to self-surrender unto Him? But God does not bestow His guidance upon evil- doing folk.”

Irving

“Who is more in the wrong than someone who invents a lie about God while he is being invited to [embrace] Islâm? God does not guide such wrong-doing folk.”

Ozek

“And who is more wicked than the man who invents a falsehood about Allah when called to Islâm? Allah does not guide the unjust.”

Abdel-Haleem

“Who could be more wrong than someone who invents lies against God, when called to submit to Him? God does not guide the wrong-doers.”

5 Sûrat Al-Ikhlâs (The 112th Chapter)

Verse 1:

Source Text

قل هو الله أحدٌ

Control Text

“Say (Muhammad ﷺ) “He is Allâh, (the) One.”

Pickthall

“Say: He is Allah, the one!”

Ali

“Say: He is God, The One and Only.”

Asad

“SAY: He is the One God.”

Irving

“SAY: “God is Unique!”

Ozek

“Say: “He is Allah, is One!”

Abdel-Haleem

“Say, He is God the One.”

Verse 2:

Source Text

الله الصمد

Control Text

“Allâh us-Samad (السيد الذى يصمد إليه فى الحاجات)[Allâh-the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)].”

Pickthall

“Allah, the eternally Besought of all.”

Ali

“God, the Eternal, Absolute.”

Asad

“God the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of All Being.”

Irving

“God is the Source [for everything].”

Ozek

“Allah, the eternally Besought!”

Abdel-Haleem

“God the Eternal