

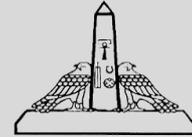


كلية الآداب

حوليات آداب عين شمس المجلد ٤٦ ( عدد يوليو – سبتمبر ٢٠١٨ )

<http://www.aafu.journals.ekb.eg>

( دورية علمية محكمة )



جامعة عين شمس

## THE UNTRANSLATABILITY OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

AnasKh. Ibraheem \*

Al-Ma'moon University College / Translation Department / Iraq – Baghdad – Al-Mansour

### Abstract:

This study aims at exploring the dilemma of the untranslatability of the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Quran must be preserved as it is, the way it descended upon the Prophet Mohammed, in the matter of terms, verses and chapters (*suras*). Most if not all of its translations or interpretations may change by the nature of time, for it all orbit around the interpretational possibilities. Understanding the real encoded message of the exact term or verse may vary from one interpreter / translator to another according to his intellectual, rational and scientific ability. Keeping the text as it is (in Arabic) would allow a wider range for the readers to extract the real concepts, secrets and rationale bases of the holy text; this will vary according to people's mentality. Nonetheless, Allah (God) forbids replacing any single word by an Arabic equivalent, so who it could be replaced by an equivalent from another language. Any translation will result in losing its miraculous composition, and if it happened, it will not be called Qur'an. For the only way to give the text this holy name is by having its Arabic composition and terminology. The only authorized way to translate the Holy Qur'an is to translate its message, meanings, principles, and concepts, and for this specific reason it will not be called a translation but rather it will be an interpretation. In our modern and confusing time, there is a growing need for an interpretation in order to clarify the core and concepts of Islam in general and the Qur'an in particular for the rest of the world.

Keywords: *Untranslatability, Translation, Interpretation.*

## 0. Introduction

This study shows that Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the Divine literal Word of Allah (God) that was revealed in Arabic to His Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) who was not sent to Arabs only but to all Mankind; i.e. the message of Islam is a universal message. Therefore, it is the duty of Muslims to convey this message and the meaning of it to all humanity.

The problem of translating the Qur'an into foreign languages becomes an exigency when the Arabs were exposed to the non-Arabs; and when the non-Arab Muslims are in need to understand the meanings of what they are saying in their prayer. The core of the problem is that the language of the Holy Quran, the Arabic language, is the highest rank of Arabic rhetoric and beauty which Allah challenged all the Arab to produce the like of the shortest *sura*(verse) of it and they failed.

Since the Qur'an is to the faithful Muslim the very Word of Allah, a miracle of speech, it is untranslatable; it would be a blasphemy to attempt to imitate. Thus, every believer has the responsibility to learn and understand its true meaning in Arabic. Yet, he/she may read the message and principles of the Holy Qur'an in his/her language.

## 1. Holy Untranslatable

Every translation of the Holy Qur'an proclaims its own inadequacy, for it must necessarily consist of verses which are clear in their emphasis that the Word of Allah was revealed to his Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the Arabic tongue. "Verily, we have made it an Arabic Qur'an, haply ye will comprehend it"(Sura 18:3). Every translation in any language, classical or modern, foreign or Islamic enshrines the same or similar pronouncement (Al-Zamakhshari: 1856). Their true importance is that any translation is merely an approximation of the meaning and so not the Qur'an itself (Tibawi: 1962).

No Muslim since the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him)until the present day has vacillated to alter one word for another in the order it is set down in the Holy Qur'an, despite the fact that the two words may be precisely synonymous. Thus, if it is revealed in Arabic and Muslims are forbidden to alter any word in it even with an Arabic equivalent,so any change in the holy text from the Arabic into any foreign language is much more strictly forbidden.

The Holy Qur'an is distinguished from all other heavenly books by its sacred arrangement in Arabic. As to the Torah and the Bible, each one of them is a sacred book but through a scared meaning quite apart from the sacred words which we find in the Holy Qur'an. So to say, if there is a translation of the Qur'an, then translators will have to correct and revise whenever they recognise a need for correction and revision, i.e. the Bible and the Torah(Shakir: 1926).For that reason, it is not allowed to make a translation of the Holy Qur'an just as it is not allowed to proceed to change

any single one of its sacred words and substitute another Arabic one for it or to transfer any word or verse from its original place to any other place (Ibid). The meaning of the Holy Qur'an, as Muslim philosophers believe, is not bound to the literal aspect only. The Qur'an has also a hidden aspect. Thus, the inner meaning does not, necessarily, eliminate or undermine its familiar meaning. In contrast, Qur'anic literalism believes that the Holy Qur'an should be taken at its apparent meaning, rather than employing any kind of interpretation (Tibawi: 1962).

The belief that the Holy Qur'an is a literal transcript of the Word of Allah revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Arabic squared with the other belief that Muhammad's mission was to all mankind and not to the Arabs only. This problem becomes very demanding, after the Prophet's death when the Muslim conquerors approached non-Arabs, especially Persians. Salman al-Farisi was asked to write the Fatihah in Persian and the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not disapprove it. Now, is it permissible to translate the Qur'an into another language? Let us consider this event, 'Umar bin al-Khattab once challenged Hisham bin Hakim's recital of Suratu Al-Furqan and the two appealed to the Prophet for a decision. Then Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "This Qur'an has been revealed in seven dialects (*ah'ruf*); recite it according to what is easier for you" (At-Tabari: 1323; Al-Bukhari: 1296). The differences were in the way you read (*tilawah*) and not in the meaning (*ma'ani*), as At-Tabari stated (ibid). When the Prophet (peace be upon him) wrote to the Byzantine Emperor, he wrote it in Arabic and it was containing a verse from the Qur'an. Ibn 'Abbas relates from Abu Sufyan bin Harb that Heraclius called for an interpreter who read the Prophet's letter to him in Greek (Al-Bukhari, 8, 200; cf: IbnHajar, 13, 442).

The Holy Qur'an proclaims piercingly that it was revealed in Arabic and equally strongly proclaims that it was not Allah intention to reveal it in any but the Arabic tongue (Tibawi: 1962).

There are twelve references in ten Qur'anic suras clearly confirm that:

1. "Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you might understand" (12:2).
2. "Verily, if we had made it a foreign Qur'an, they would have said 'Why its signs are not clear? What a foreign (book) and an Arabian (prophet)'" (12:44).
3. "And We certainly know that they say, "It is only a human being who teaches the Prophet." The tongue of the one they refer to is foreign, and this Qur'an is [in] a clear Arabic language" (16:103).
4. "Verily, we have made it an Arabic Qur'an, haply ye will comprehend it"(18:3).
5. "In a clear Arabic language" (26:195).

6. "And thus We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an and have diversified therein the warnings that perhaps they will avoid [sin] or it would cause them remembrance" (20:113).
7. "It is an Arabic Qur'an free from all crookedness, in order that they will be cautious." (39: 28).
8. "A Book whose verses have been detailed, an Arabic Qur'an for a people who know" (41:3).
9. "And if We had sent this as a Qur'an in a foreign language (other than Arabic), they would have said: Why are not its ayat explained (in our language)? What! (A book) not in Arabic and (the Messenger) an Arab" (41:44).
10. "And thus We have revealed to you an Arabic Qur'an that you may warn the Mother of Cities [Makkah] and those around it and warn of the Day of Assembly, about which there is no doubt. A party will be in Paradise and a party in the Blaze" (42:7).
11. "We have made it a Qur'an in Arabic that ye may be able to understand" (43:3).
12. "And before it was the scripture of Moses to lead and as a mercy. And this is a confirming Book in an Arabic tongue to warn those who have wronged and as good tidings to the doers of good" (46:12). (Saheeh International: 2008).

Considering the above references, it is undoubtedly confirmed that the Holy Qur'an is the words of Allah, it is revealed in Arabic tongue and it can not be altered to any other language.

## 2. Scholars and the Ultimate Question

This section attempts to answer the ultimate question of: is it permissible in Islam to translate the Holy Qur'an or not?

Sarakhsi in his book (*Al-Mabsut*) stated that: The Qur'an is Allah's Word, not created and not new. It is not lawful to say, inasmuch as all languages are new, that it is a Qur'an in a specific language since Allah says "Verily, it is in the sacred books of the ancients", thus it was on their tongue (1324: I p. 37).

Ash-Shafi'i explains that the divine message of Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the Arabic tongue addressed to non-Arabs as well as to Arabs. Consequently, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was either sent with a message in the Arabic tongue and the rest of mankind has to learn it, or he was sent with the message in different tongues. The proof, says ash-Shafi'i that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent with a message in his own people's tongue is clear in more than one place in the Qur'an. So, the message did not need to be revealed in all languages, since translation (*tarjamah*) will make up for that (An-Nawawi: 380).

The term *tarjamah* refers to "translation," or "explanation". In either case, after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the duty of (*tabliqh*) preaching his message was passed on to the Companions and their

followers, and consequently the whole Arab-Muslim community. To perform this duty, it was increasingly necessary to explain the Holy Qur'an to foreigners who knew no Arabic, or even to Arabs with inadequate language. So, there was a need for some parts to be "explained" or "translated" for acknowledging the apprenticeships of faith, and understanding what is permitted and what is not (Tibawi: 1962).

The essence of the inimitability (*i'jaz*) of the Holy Qur'an is the failure of the Arabs to answer the challenge of producing a single verse equal to the Qur'an in the superiority of its literary miraculous composition. In a manner of speaking, if the Arabs could not come up with a verse how they could translate the Qur'an? Another question is that: Is it the literary style and composition that is (*mu'jiz*) or is it also the meaning, the contents and certain forecasts of the future? Now, if these questioned are answered then the problem would be solved.

Ash-Shafi'i upholds the supremacy of the Arabic language on religious grounds. "No human being," he declared, "unless he is a prophet, can be a complete master of it." As the followers of other religions are called upon to accept Islam as their religion, so they have to accept the Arabic language with it (Shakir: 1940). According to Shafi'i, An-Nawawi in his book *Al-Majmu* explain that no one ever has the right to read the Holy Qur'an or even pray with a language other than the Arabic, whether he knew it or not (1344 A.H). Al-Ghazali (1317) holds that the believers must not alter any Arabic wording, or translate its meaning. For him it is unlawful to relate any Qur'anic material apart from Arabic, stating that "some Arabic words have no equivalents at all." The real danger is that the change of wording or translation will affect the divine attributes, and this must be avoided. He in his *Al-Mustasfa fi 'ilm al-isul* (1993: 168/1) declared that a scholar is allowed to explain or render the essence of the Qur'an in any language, but he is not allowed to translate the meaning nor the words under any circumstances.

Some Arabic letters have no exact equivalents in other languages, and this will lead to mispronunciation and consecutively misunderstanding of the holy text. The Hanafi school allowed a translation only if is accompanied by the original Arabic text, as a way of equal translation, i.e. word for word translation (Tibawi: 1962). Yet, according to Hanafi, Sarakhsi in his book *Al-Mabsut* mentioned that Abū Ḥanīfa forbids reading the Holy Qur'an in Persian, and by doing so prevent altering its sacred words, which was prohibited by all the Prophet's companions and their followers. Reading the Qur'an in any language other than Arabic will definitely prejudice its miraculous wording and composition. (1324 A. H).

According to Maliki, El Desouki stated that it is prohibited to read the Holy Qur'an in any language other than Arabic, and if he/she does not know Arabic, they must learn it in order to pray if they are true Muslims (1980).

According to Hanbali, IbnQudamah clarified in his book Al-Mughni that no one can change or replace any single word in the Holy Qur'an in reading or pray by an Arabic or foreign equivalent. And if he does that it will be no more considered a Qur'an (1970).Al-Zarkashi (1391 H) in Al-Burhan fi 'ulum al-Qur'an said the Holy Qur'an was revealed by Allah to his Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the angel Gabriel (Jibril) using Arabic as a language "It is an Arabic Qur'an free from all crookedness, in order that they will be cautious." (Sura 39: 28). So it cannot be read in any tongue but that.

Al-Suyūfī in his book Al-Itqan (1941: 443) said that Imam Malik clearly stated that the Holy Qur'an has to be written in the same way it has been written the first time, or it will not be a Qur'an.IbnHazm in Al-Muhalla (1352 H: III, 254) wrote, he who read the Holy Qur'an in a language other than Arabic or change any word in it with another one even if it is an Arabic word is a miscreant "We cursed them and hardened their hearts. They changed the Words from their places" (Sura 5, 13). Therefore, any translation or rendering is not a Qur'an. Al-Bayhaqi in his book Shu'ab al-Iman (1986: 548/1) stated that he who writes a version of the Holy Qur'an must write it in the way, manner and form of the original Holy one, or else it is not a Qur'an.

Abu Bakribn al-Arabi (468 – 543 H) in his interpretation of "And if We had made it a non-Arabic Qur'an, they would have said: Why are its verses not explained in detail [in our language]? Is it a foreign [recitation] and an Arab [messenger]?"(Sura 41: 44) said that this verse, alone, elucidate that a translation into any other foreign language is not permissible because it will invalidate its holiness (IbnTaymiyyah: 2006). IbnTaymiyyah said learning the Arabic language and knowing its essence is a must. As far as learning and understanding the rules of Islam is a must so is the Arabic language (ibid: 1/207).

The author of (Al-Qawl al-Fasl fi Tarjamat al-Qur'an al-Karimila al-Lughat al-A'jamiyya) Sheikh Muhammad Shaker clearly stated that it is not lawful to change any single word of the Holy Qur'an into any Arabic equivalent. As it the case in Arabic so it should be the case if translated into any language (1925). The spread the religion of Islam should be by means of transferring the meaning of the Holy Qur'an and not its words (AbouSheishaa: 2001).

Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei (1981) explained that Allah sends Muhammad (peace be upon him) to all mankind, and according to His will the Holy Qur'an come out in the language of His Prophet and his people. Yet, the principles of the Qur'an and Islam were to be spread to all mankind. If a translator wants to translate the Qur'an to any language he must master the two languages equally. However, this translation will not be as good as the miraculous language of the Holy Qur'an. Nevertheless, both the meanings and principles will be translated. The fact will remain, that is there will be

no version as the original Arabic one. Imam Shirazi (2006), when asked whether it is allowed to translate the Holy Qur'an into other languages, said it is but only with three conditions: he must be mastering the Arabic language so he could translate the explicit meaning of it, he must have read the interpretations of the Qur'an and so to translate accordingly, finally he must keep a common sense and a good reason during the translation.

Islam did not spread by means of any language rather than the Arabic language, and therefore promoting Arabic as the sacred language of the Holy Qur'an. So, the Holy Qur'an was untouched throughout the ages. Thus, mastering Arabic was a key point in learning the Qur'an (Salawu: 2007).

The untranslatable nature of the sacred Arabic words was explained in the Holy Qur'an: "We have made it a Qur'an in Arabic that ye may be able to understand" (Surah 43:3). Thus any translated version will merely be a dilution that involves a loss of purity (Salawu: 2007).

The one and only original form of the Qur'an exists in Arabic. Thus, Muslim scholars agreed unanimously that the Holy Qur'an is considered a Qur'an only if it is in Arabic. IbnHizam declared that "Non-Arabic isn't Arabic, so it's not the Qur'an" (Cook: 2000).

### 3. Translating the Untranslatable

This section shows who linguists and translators approached the issue of untranslatability. Catford (1965) refers to untranslatability as the property of a text or utterance in the source language (SL), for which there is no equivalent in the target language (TL). Nonetheless, the degree of difficulty of translating any term depends on its nature, as well as on the translator's abilities to render it. Any untranslatable text or utterance is actually considered a "lacuna", a lexical gap. In another word, there is no equivalence between this text and utterance in SL with any in TL. In this case, the translator should resort to some translation procedures which will compensate it.

When a translator encounters this kind of difficulty the whole issue concerning the translatability of the text is raised. Accordingly, two types of untranslatability can be distinguished: linguistically and culturally. Linguistically is when we have no lexical or syntactical substitute for an SL element in TL. Culturally if there is an absence in the TL of a situational feature or concept that is part of the source culture (Ibid).

Now, to accomplish a fine translation, a translator must know the exact meaning and the idea, or message that every word has to convey, literally or metaphorically. His knowledge of the target language must go beyond the syntactical modes of expression or he will fail to convey the essence of it or rather diverge from it.

There are certain language combinations in which cultural untranslatability is not applicable, i.e. languages that involve no or only a marginal cultural difference. Furthermore, some translations are simply

incompatible with the target culture due to the socio-cultural context. So translators must have a sensible approach and a sufficient knowledge of the target culture (Kitamura: 2009).

Lynne (2005) explains that as the world becomes a global village and cultures start to act together more frequently, so the need for religious translations grow up to be a necessity. She, also, states that what makes a holy text untranslatable is the context and not the content. Religious texts are difficult to be adjusted to suit the various cultural settings. This is to say, the lack of space, vocabulary or specified cultural connotations of words in the TL.

In translating religious texts, translators should be more concerned with the transferring of the meaningful aspects of the SL culture rather than being generally faithful. In other words, translators should preserve the underlying meaning of the messages (Toker: 2005). In the process of religious translation, Toker believes that the original text is much more important than the TL. The translator must be able to "separate between the spirit of the writing and the letter in which it is written"(ibid).

On the other hand, Peter Kirk (2005) argues that regarding translating religious texts, as long as the specific meanings of the context are understood by the target audience it does not matter which words he uses. Transferring the meaning to TL is more important than anything else. He believes that the approach being taken by the translator is the determining factor in translating religious texts which, accordingly, can and should be translated.

Kate Crosby (2005) believes that the fact that different languages can have different versions of the same text is what makes a holy text untranslatable. To be precise, adequate translation of the source language holy text will be lost, i.e. relative vocabulary compatibility is what makes the holy untranslatable. Terminology is a key factor regarding untranslatability (Leye2008: 209). Some specific language peculiarities in SL can make the holy untranslatable. This could lead to either elongate the TL text to compensate for meaning, or worse omitting some parts of it which will result in misunderstanding the true meaning of the holy text.

It is rather difficult to adjust any religious text for various cultural settings, and that which makes the Holy untranslatable. The lack of expressions or the specified cultural connotations of words will make any translation difficult (Lynne: 2005). The reason behind the untranslatability of the Holy Qur'an is the cultural connotations of its revelation (Abdul Raof: 2005). Different cultural contexts have different word connotations. So, the focus of the translator, while translating the Qur'an, should be on the cultural transposition and not on the literalness (Ibid). Leye (2008) points out that no two languages are similar enough to provide directly matching meanings.

The dilemma of the untranslatability of the Qur'an has long been a battleground for both Muslims and non-Muslims. For most of them, the main purpose of translating the Qur'an is to make it available to those without Arabic (Muslims and non-Muslims). Yet, most if not all English translated versions have been used to undermine both the text and its message.

Muslim philosophers believe that the meaning of the Qur'an has outward and inward aspects, in which the inward gives life to the outward. The interpretations which deal with the outward aspects called tafsir (interpretation), and those which deal with the inward aspects called ta'wil (explanation) (Qur'an: 2017: online).

Muslims consider Tafsiras one of their earliest academic activities designed to explain the meanings of the suras of the Holy Qur'an, along with their importance and significance. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the first person to describe the meanings of the Qur'an for early Muslims. After his death, his Companions like Imam Ali, ibn Abbas, ibn Umar and ibn Kab undertook it. Ta'wil is considered as a spiritual and a divine inspiration that indicates the precise meaning of a verse and its direction. However, ta'wil is still a very debatable issue amongst Muslims (ibid).

Salman (bless be upon him) was the first to translate the Qur'an into Persian. He translated Fatihah in the 7th century. The first translated version of Quran, as a whole, was into Persian in the 9th century during Samanids' reign. The first translated version of the Qur'an into Latin was by Robert of Ketton in 1143. The first English version was by Alexander Ross in 1649. In 1734, the first scholarly translated version of the Qur'an into English is done by George Sale. By 1936, the Qur'an has been translated into a total of 102 languages (Quran translations: 2017). Some European translators said that it is actually the work of some authors like George Sale in 1734, J M Rodwell in 1861, and Richard Bell in 1937 and thus they rearrange it into some sort of chronological order. Other translators, orientalist, used omission, distortion, and mistranslation to subvert the message and meaning, like N J Dawood in 1956 who said that the Qur'an was a sexist text (Sardar: 2004).

All these translations were made by non-Arab-Muslims. The most popular translations by Muslims are conducted by Dr. Al Hilali, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Muhammad Asad and Pickthall (Qur'an: 2017). Nonetheless, the translated versions of the Qur'an are not the Qur'an. Qur'an means "reading", or simply "should be read". Its true importance can only be communicated via the original. Any translation will not have the unique symphony, the sounds that move believers to tears and ecstasy. For this specific reason, any translation is merely an attempt to provide a suggestion of the meaning (Sardar: 2004).

The moral issue, for Muslims, is the most difficult problem to be tackled in translating the Holy Qur'an. Thus, the straight translation is the best way to translate the Qur'an. This does not exclude the fact that translators might fail. Now, even if they sincerely preserve the stylistic features of the original text and the stylistic beauty of the repetition found there. Ali (2006) cleared out that the probability of failure is high due to the differences between the SL and TL systems of meaning-making and functioning. Most of the translated versions of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an, do actually sound like translations. The main reasons why most of the translated versions of the Qur'an sound like mere translations is: the inevitable impact of the form of the Qur'an on the target language, the attempt to hold on to the source text's wording, the attempts to follow the Arabic style and the Arabic terms that are untranslatable without detailed footnoting (ibid).

Muhammad Abdel Haleem provides an accurately translated version much more than all those before him. He made his translated text as much faithfully as possible, yet accessible to ordinary English readers. His version presented a highly pure linguistic reading and thus it is both reachable and convincing. To solve and clear out any misunderstanding or confusion Abdel Haleem used parentheses to achieve it. Yet his translation has limitations. In fact, despite its originality, it stills an orthodox reading of the Qur'an. The explanatory footnotes he used rely heavily on that of Fakhr al-Din al-Razi. And it did not even inspire the sense of poetic beauty (Sardar: 2004).

The Holy Qur'an is not merely a book of narrative records of ancient peoples or a "linear" text with a chronological order. It is a lattice structure in which every word and verse connected with every other word and verse by rhythm, rhyme, and meaning. Arberry (1953) wrote once that translators had ignored the marvellous symphony of the Holy Qur'an resulting in dull and flat translated versions. They had forgotten the only one splendid fact that is "the Qur'an is neither prose nor poetry, but a unique fusion of both".

It can be argued that any translated text is a way of rewriting the meaning/message of the original text by simply using a target language. Yet, this translation can never be the original, no matter how immaculate and scholarly it is. It will always be inadequate and subject to error. Hence, the Qur'an is translatable, yet it will have shortcomings and inaccuracies, and it will be merely an introduction to the non-Arabic speaking audience. For the Muslim, any translated version will be merely an interpretation or an attempt to convey the message of the Qur'an (Ali: 2006).

The aim of any translation should be: to present the target text in a proper style and to keep to the linguistic demands of the target language. Nonetheless, many translators find themselves in situations where the impacts of the source language demonstrated in the text devastatingly, i.e. unacceptable yet unavoidable (ibid). To handle this problem, several sincere

attempts have been made in to minimize the effect of these differences. Yet, it resulted in unnatural sounding translations of the Qur'an. Still, the result is always at the expense of something else.

#### 4. Conclusion

Thus, this study has shown that Interpretative translation is the pre-eminent translation of the Holy Qur'an, for it is not a translation of the words of the original but of their interpretation. In other words, it is an interpretation of or commentary on the Qur'an in another language. This kind is totally approved if it is based on the Prophetic traditions and mastering of the Arabic language, which are both required for the interpretation of the Qur'an (Makhluf: 1925: 2).

The interpretative translation is permitted provided that it is based on a valid interpretation of the Qur'an; and that spreading Islam to all humans is not dependant on the translation of the Qur'an but on a sound translation of the principles of Islam, which is a collective duty (fard kifaya) (Shakir: 1925: 161-162).

The method of conveying and propagating the message of Islam to all humans was through elucidation the principles of Islam that the Quran brought, and were embodied in the biography of the Prophet, which can be expressed in all languages without any need for the translation of the Qur'an. One of most obvious examples is that the Muslim Turks, Persians and Indians who read the Qur'an in Arabic, despite the fact that they do not know Arabic but understand as much of it (the Qur'an) as is necessary to fulfil the obligations of Islam without any need for the translation of the Qur'an (Makhluf: 1925: 29).

Muslim scholars from all the Arabic countries should convene a trustworthy International Islamic Committee, which consists of professionals both in Arabic as well as in other foreign languages to scrutinize the translations of the Qur'an and suggest recommended interpretations for them. Nevertheless, this Committee should prohibit any future translation and hold regular sessions to authenticate any future interpretation.

**الملخص****عدم إمكانية ترجمة القرآن الكريم****أنس خالد إبراهيم**

يهدف هذا البحث الى سبر اغوار معضلة ترجمة القرآن الكريم. يجب الحفاظ على القرآن الكريم كما أنزل على الرسول صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم سواء في ذلك ألفاظه او آياته وسوره لأن تفسيرات وترجمات المفسرين والمترجمين لألفاظه هو آياته قد تتغير بمرور الزمن لأنها تدور في معظمها في دائرة الاحتمالات التفسيرية. فما يفهمه مفسر أو مترجم ما يعتمد على طاقته الفكرية والعقلية والعلمية وقد يختلف هذا عما يفهمه مفسر أو مترجم آخر. ان ابقاء النص كما هو فيه إفساح المجال لاستنباط الحكم والأحكام والأسرار منه حسب قدرات الناس العقلية فقد حرم الله تعالى تبديل او تغيير ألفاظه ونصوصه بألفاظ وعبارات عربية. فكيف الامر بتبديلها او تغييرها بالفاظ او نصوص اجنبية. فعلى هذا إذا ما ترجم القرآن إلى لغة ما فالترجمة تفقده نظمه المعجز وإذا حصل هذا فلا يسمى النتاج قرآناً لأن القرآن إنما هو قرآن باللفظ العربي والنظم العربي الذي نزل به. إن الترجمة الوحيدة الجائزة هيترجمة رسالته ومعانيه ومفاهيمه وافكاره. وهي التي تسمى الترجمة التفسيرية وهي لا ريب فيها أنها تساعد على تفهيم الأجنبي فحوى القرآن. واصبحت هذه الترجمة ضرورية في عصرنا لتعريف أمم الأرض وشعوبها بالاسلام بشكل عام والقران الكريم بشكل خاص.

كلمات مفتاحية: عدم إمكانية الترجمة - الترجمة - التفسير.

**English References:**

- Abdul Raof, Hussein (2005). *Cultural Aspects of in Qur'an Translation. Translation and Religion: Holy Untranslatable?* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- AbouSheishaa, Mohamed (2001). *Muslim Discourse: in the Early Twentieth Century on the Translation of the Qur'an*. Journal of: the Society for Qur'anic Studies, Number 2, Volume 1.
- Al-Bukhari (1422 H). *Al-Sahih*. Bulaq. Cf. IbnHajar (1438 H). Fath al-Bari. Cairo.
- Al-Ghazali, AbūHāmid. *Al-Mustasfa fi 'ilm al-isul* (1993). Dar al-kotob al-ilmiyah. Beirut: Lebanon. 1/168.
- Ali, Ahmed Abdel-Fattah Muhammad (2006). *Word Repetition in the Qur'an - Translating Form or Meaning?* Riyadh: J. King Saud University, Vol. 19, Lang. & Transl., pp. 17-34.
- Al-Khawarizmi (1332 H). *Jami' Masanid al-Imam al-A'zam*. Hyderabad. I, 293.
- Al-Khoei, Abu al-Qasim (1981). *Al-Bayan Fi Tafsir al-Quran*. Dar Alhoda. Qom: Iran. (p 44 - p505).
- Al-Zamakhshari, et al (1856). *Al-Kashshaf*. Calcutta.
- Al-Zarkashi, Muhammad bin Bahadir bin Abdullah (1391 H). *Al-Burhan fi 'ulum al-Qur'an*. Beirut: Dar al-Makrifah.
- An-Nawawi (1344 H). *Al-Majmu'*. Cairo, Matbacat at-'Tadamunn.d, p 380.
- Arthur J Arberry. (1953). *The Holy Koran*. London: published by Allen & Unwin.
- Ash-Shahrastini (1934). *KitabNihayat al-Iqdam*. A. Guillaume, Oxford, 447-448.
- At-Tabari (1323 H). *Tafsir al-Jami' al-Bayan*. Bulaq. Cf. Al-Suyuti (1360 H). Al-Itqan. Cairo, 1941.
- Catford, J. C. (1965). *A Linguistic Theory of Translation An Essay in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cook, M. (2000). *The Koran*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.
- Crosby, Kate (2005). *What Does Not Get Translated in Buddhist Studies and The Impact on*

- Teaching, Translation and Religion: Holy Untranslatable?* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- IbnHajar (1438 H). *Fath al-Bari*. Cairo. IX, 7, 19-21.
- IbnHazm (1352 H). *Al-Muhalla*. Cairo. III, 254.
- IbnTaymiyyah (2006). *Iqtida' as-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. Al-Maktaba al-Assrya. Beirut, Lebanon. (1/207).
- Imam Al-Bayhaqi (1986). *Shu'ab al-Iman*. Al-Dar – First Edition. Pompeii: India. 2/548.
- Imam Shirazi (2006). *Ajowbeh al Masal al Alshary*. Imam Shirazi World Foundation. Retrieved December 2016 from: <http://alshirazi.com/rflo/ajowbeh/arshif/quran.htm>.
- Jalāl al-Dīn al-Khūḍayrī al-Suyūṭī (1941). *Al-Itqan*. Cairo. II, 443.
- Kirk, Peter (2005). *Holy Communicative? Current Approaches to Bible Translation Worldwide*. Translation and Religion: Holy Untranslatable? Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Kitamura, Kanji. (2009). *Cultural Untranslatability*. Translation Journal. Retrieved in June from: <http://translationjournal.net/journal/49translatability.htm>
- Leye, OumouKhaïry (2008). *Long Lynne*. Translation and Religion: Holy Untranslatable? Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd, 2005, 209 pp. Cadernos de Tradução, v. 1, n. 21, ISSN 2175-7968, Florianópolis, Brasil.
- Lynne, Long (2005). *Translation and Religion: Holy Untranslatable?* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd, 209 pp.
- Makhluḥ, Muhammad Hasanayn. (1925). *Risala fi Hukm Tarjamat al-Qur'an al-Karim wa-Qira'atihi wa-Kitabatihi bi-ghayr al-Lughati al-'Arabiyya*. Cairo: Matba'at Matar. p. 2.
- Newmark, Peter. 1981. *Approaches to Translation*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Qur'an (2017). Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Retrieved on May 2017 from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quran>.
- Quran translations (2017). Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Retrieved on May 2017 from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quran\\_translations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quran_translations).
- Saheeh International (2008). *Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'an*. Jeddah: King Fahd National Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data. Legal Deposit no. 2737/17. ISBN: 9960-792-63-3.
- Salawu, Adewuni (2007). *The Spread of Revealed Religions in West Africa: and its Implications for the Development of Translation*. [www.sil.org/siljot/2007/2/49509/siljot2007-2-03.pd](http://www.sil.org/siljot/2007/2/49509/siljot2007-2-03.pd).
- Sarakhsi. *Kitab al-Mabssi* (Cairo, 1324 H).
- Sardar, Ziauddin (2004). *Desperately Seeking Paradise: journeys of a skeptical Muslim*. London: Granta Books.
- Shakir, Muhammad (1925). "On the Translation of the Koran into Foreign Languages", trans. T. W. Arnold, in *The Moslem World*, vol. XVI, 1926, pp. 161-62.
- Shakir, Ahmad Muhammad (1940). *Kitabar-Risalah*. Cairo. Pp 40-48.
- Tibawi, A.L (1962). *Is The Qur'an Translatable? Early Muslim Opinion*. Harvard University: Cambridge, Massachusetts. First read at the XXVth International Congress of Orientalists on Friday 12th August 1960, at the University of Moscow, and later published in *The Muslim World*, Volume 52, pages 1-16.
- Toker, K. Onur (2005). *Prophecy and Tongues: St. Paul, Interpreting and Building the House*. Translation and Religion: Holy Untranslatable? Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

### المصادر العربية:

ابن قدامة. المغني (١٩٧٠). مطابع سجل العرب. ج ١ - ص ٣٥٠.  
الحافظ البيهقي (١٩٨٦). الجامع المصنف في شعب الايمان. مطبعة الدار. بومباي: الهند. الطبعة الاولى  
٥٤٨ / ٢

- الغزالي (١٩٩٣). *المستصفى من علم الاصول*. دار الكتب العلمية. بيروت: لبنان. الطبعة الاولى ١ / ١٦٨.
- الغزالي (١٣١٧ هـ). *الوجيز في الفقه الشافعي*. مطبعة الاداب. مصر. ص ١١.
- ابن تيمية (١٩٥٠). *اقتضاء الصراط المستقيم مخالفة اصحاب الجحيم*. مطبعة السنة المحمدية. القاهرة: مصر. ص ٢٣٠.
- شمسالدینالسرخسي (١٩٩٣). *المبسوط*. دار المعرفة للطباعة. بيروت: لبنان. ج ١ - ص ٣٧.
- محمدبنعبداللہالزركشي (١٩٨٨). *البرهان في علوم القرآن*. دار الكتب العلمية. بيروت: لبنان. الطبعة الاولى ج ١ - ص ٥٤٨.
- محمد بن عرفة الدسوقي (١٩٨٠). *حاشية الدسوقي على الشرح الكبير*. دار احياء الكتب العلمية. دمشق. الطبعة الاولى ج ١ - ص ٢٣٦.
- محمدبهاءالدينحسين (٢٠٠٦). *ترجمة القرآن الكريم*. دراسات : الجامعة الاسلامية العالمية شيتاغونغ. ISSN 1813-7733. المجلد الثالث ص ١٣٣ - ١٤٤.
- محمد حسنين مخلوف (١٩٢٥). *رسالة في حكم ترجمة القرآن الكريم وقراءته وكتابته بغير اللغة العربية*. مطبعة المطر. مصر: القاهرة. ص ٢.
- محي الدين شرف النووي. *المجموع شرح المذهب*. تحقيق: محمد نجيب المطيعي. نشر: زكريا يوسف. مطبعة الامام. مصر : بدون تاريخ. ج ٣ - ص ٣٤٢ - ٣٧٩.