

A Comparative Study of Four English
Translations of *Sûrat Ad-Dukhân*
on the Semantic Level

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By

Saudi Sadiq

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

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by Saudi Sadiq

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To my mother, father, wife and son

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The present book was originally an M.A. thesis submitted to English Department, Faculty of Al-Asun (Languages), Minia University, Minia, Egypt, in 2007. It aims at investigating the field of Qur'ân translation through holding a semantic comparison of four English translations attempted by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, 'Abdullâh Yûsuf 'Alî, Arthur J. Arberry and Muhammad Mahmûd Ghâlî of *Sûrat Ad-Dukhân* (*the Chapter of Smoke*). The book is divided into three chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion. Chapter One deals with a number of the linguistic (lexical, syntactic, semantic and stylistic) and cultural problems that may arise during translation, with special reference to Qur'ân translation. It has been found that the problems directly related to Qur'ân translation are polysemy, semantic change, proper names, tenses — especially the use of the past tense in Arabic — word order, syntactic ambiguity, ellipsis, redundancy, extraposition and culture-bound words. In addition, there is an attempt to suggest some solutions to the problems investigated. Chapter Two tackles the principles of translating the Qur'ân, mainly focusing on the team of translators, the techniques of conveying the content and the format of translation. In Chapter Three, a semantic comparison is held, with sixty-eight lexical, syntactic and stylistic selections. The comparison depends on a number of different-oriented Qur'ân interpretations and Arabic dictionaries to decide the precise meaning(s) of the words and constructions selected. Then, a translation is suggested, and the four translations are judged: the correct ones are acknowledged and the mistaken shown, along with the reasons underlying the mistake(s). To reach the precise meaning in English, and in order to judge the translations under comparison accurately, a group of English dictionaries are relied on. Finally, the comparison shows that the best translation in terms of the precision of meaning and easiness of expression is that of Ghâlî, followed by Pickthall's, then that of Arberry and, lastly, that of 'Alî.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

AAL:	Academy of the Arabic Language
A.H.:	After Hijra (Islamic Calendar)
AHD:	<i>The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language</i>
ATQ:	Authority of Translating the Qur'ân
CIDE:	<i>Cambridge International Dictionary of English</i>
COD:	<i>The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English</i>
ERV:	<i>English Revised Version</i> (a Bible translation)
KFCPHQ:	King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Qur'ân
KJV:	<i>King James Version</i> (a Bible translation)
LDCEO:	<i>Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online</i>
LLA:	<i>Longman Language Activator</i>
MED:	<i>Macmillan English Dictionary: An International Student Edition</i>
MSA:	Modern Standard Arabic
MWCDT:	<i>Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary and Thesaurus</i>
NCCC:	National Center for Cultural Competence
NEB:	<i>New English Bible</i> (a Bible translation)
NET:	<i>New English Translation</i> (a Bible translation)
NIV:	<i>New International Version</i> (a Bible translation)
OALD:	<i>Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary</i>
OIC:	Organization of Islamic Countries
SC:	Source Culture
SCIA:	The Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs
SL:	Source Language
ST:	Source Text
TC:	Target Culture
TL:	Target Language
TT:	Target Text
WBD:	<i>World Book Dictionary of Current English</i>

﴿﴾ These symbols are used to quote Qur'ânic verses.

« » These symbols are used to quote Prophetic sayings "Ahadeeth".

TRANSLITERATION OF CLASSICAL ARABIC SOUNDS¹

Arabic Sound Symbol ²	Description	Representing Arabic Examples				English Words of Similar Sounds
		Initial	Medial	Final		
'	voiceless glottal stop		sa'la mu'min ya'in	سأل مؤمن يُنن	قرء	--
b	voiced bilabial stop	bayt	mabeet	مبيت	قلب	ble ss
t	voiceless alveolar stop	tawba	istalama	استلم	موت	fo y
th	voiceless interdental fricative	thanâ'	thuluthân	ثلثان	ليث	th in
j	voiced palato-alveolar affricate	jana	majnûn	مجنون	أريج	ju dge
h	voiceless pharyngeal fricative	hamâm	a/mar	أحمر	رمح	--

¹ Adapted from Ghâfî (2001: 45) and El-Gamal (2007: 22)

² These symbols are used throughout the book to transliterate Arabic sounds. Since Arabic is an inflectional language, inflections will be shown in transliteration, especially in connected words or phrases, where necessary. If not so, Arabic examples will not be inflected for the purpose of making reading easier. As for *h*, *d* and *th*, they will be written in italics in non-italicized texts. But when they occur in italicized texts, they will be made different by being non-italicized.

kh	voiceless uvular fricative	khaleefa	خليفة	yakhûn	يخون	mukh	مخ	---
d	voiced alveolar stop	dâr	دار	yadûr	يدور	murâd	مراد	add
th	voiced interdental fricative	ṭhawabân	ثوبان	yathûb	يُوب	malâth	ملاذ	father
r	voiced alveolar trill	ra/ma	رحمة	markîb	مركب	sirr	سر	road
z	voiced alveolar fricative	zeena	زينة	mazâr	مزار	yajûz	يجوز	zoo
s	voiceless alveolar fricative	samak	سمك	maslak	مسلك	mâs	مأس	soon
sh	voiceless palato-alveolar fricative	shakk	شك	yusheer	يشير	int 'âsh	انتعاش	show
ṣ	voiceless alveolar <i>emphatic</i> fricative	ṣabr	صبر	qaṣr	قصر	baraṣ	برص	--
d	voiced alveolar <i>emphatic</i> stop	dalâl	ضلال	yudîl	يضل	fard	فرض	--
ṭ	voiceless alveolar <i>emphatic</i> stop	ṭâ'ir	طائر	maṭâr	مطار	qeerât	قيراط	--
th	voiced interdental <i>emphatic</i> fricative	thufîr	ظفر	intithâr	انتظار	wa 'th	وعظ	--
'	voiced pharyngeal fricative	'awn	عون	ist 'mâr	استعمار	badee'	بديع	--
gh	voiced uvular fricative	ghareeb	غريب	maghmûr	مغمور	mustasâgh	مستساغ	--
f	voiceless labiodental fricative	faqeer	فقير	ra 'fa	رافة	mutarâdif	مترادف	fan/ phone
q	voiceless uvular stop	qabl	قبل	istaqâla	استقال	naṭaqa	نطق	--
k	voiceless velar stop	kabeer	كبير	takbeer	تكبير	malik	ملك	cat/ key/ queen
l	voiced lateral fricative	lam	لم	malik	ملك	mâl	مال	leave
m	voiced bilabial nasal	multaqa	ملتقى	amn	أمن	alam	ألم	mother

Transliteration of Classical Arabic Sounds

n	voiced alveolar nasal	naḥar	نظر	intiḥâr	انتظار	‘awn	عون	noon
h	voiceless glottal fricative	hawâ’	هواء	istahâna	استهان	fiḥ	فقه	how
w	voiced bilabial semi-vowel	walad	ولد	mawt	موت	lahw	لهو	wait
y	voiced palatal semi-vowel	yaqûm	يقوم	yuh/ye	يحيي	aby	أبي	yes
ÿ	double (strengthened) voiced palatal semi-vowel (a substitute for iyy and usually a reference to possession in Arabic)			Misrÿa	مصرية	Misrÿ	مصري	--
i	short high front unrounded vowel	intiṣâr	انتصار	muntaṣîr	منتصر	kal-muhli	كالمهل	illogical
ee	long high front unrounded vowel	eelâf	إيلاف	‘a/heem	عظيم	fee	في	see
in	double (<i>nuntated</i>) short high front unrounded vowel					Muḥammadin	محمد	button
a	short low central unrounded vowel	Allâh	الله	malak	ملك	mata	متى	drama
â	long low central unrounded vowel	âl	آل	maal	مال	lâ	لا	cat
an	double (<i>nuntated</i>) short low central unrounded vowel					Muḥammadan	محمدًا	historian
u	short high back rounded vowel	ulfa	ألفة	mulk	ملك	na‘budu	نعبدُ	pull

û	long high back rounded vowel	ûlâ	أُوْلَى	‘ûd	عود	qâlû	قالوا	boot
un	double (<i>nuntated</i>) short high back rounded vowel					Muhammadun	مُحَمَّدٌ	on
ay	high front diphthong	ayna	أَيْنَ	bayna	بين	kay	كي	kite
aw	high back diphthong	awlâ	أُوْلَى	şawt	صوت	law	لو	power

LIST OF ARABIC PROPER NAMES TRANSLITERATED

Abû-‘Azab	أبو عذب
Al-Idreesÿ	الإدريسي
Al-Aṣḡahânÿ	الأصفهاني
Al-Ba‘labkÿ	البلعكي
Al-Bayḡḡawÿ	البيضاوي
At-Tilmsânÿ	التلمساني
Al-Hâmidÿ	الحامدي
Alluḡayḡân	اللحيان
Ar-Râzÿ	الرازي
Az-Zubaidÿ	الزبيدي
Az-Zurḡânÿ	الزرقاني
Az-Zamakhsharÿ	الزمخشري
As-Sâmîrrâ‘ÿ	السامرائي
As-Suyûṡÿ	السيوطي
Ash-Sha‘râwÿ	الشعراوي
Ash-Shawḡânÿ	الشوكاني
Aṣ-Ṣâbûnÿ	الصابوني
Aṡ-Ṣabarÿ	الطبري
Al-‘Ashmâwÿ	العشماوي
El-‘Ikish	العكش
Al-‘Ilwânÿ	العلواني
Al-Fayrûz‘abâḡÿ	الفيروز آبادي
Al-Qurṡubÿ	القرطبي
Al-Maḡallÿ	المحلي
Al-Marâḡḡÿ	المراغي
An-Najjâr	النجار
An-Naḡḡâs	النحاس
An- Nasafÿ	النسفي
An-Naysabûrÿ	النيسابوري
Ibn Katheer	بن كثير

Ibn Manthûr	بن منظور
Hijâzî	حجازي
Hifnî	حفني
‘Âshûr	عاشور
Enani	عناني

INTRODUCTION

0.1. The Necessity of Translation

Having in mind that man is sociable by nature and the fact of the diversity of languages all over the world, translation seems a necessity. Language is the greatest means of communication among people, who naturally tend to get closer to one another through speech. Thus, they try to overcome the barrier of language among them through translation in any of its various forms, written or simultaneous. Translation has played a great role in all walks of life: politics, diplomacy, government administration, science, technology and religious activities. Out of this vital part in communication among different peoples, cultures and races through different ages, translation has always been there.

0.2. The History of Translation

The Egyptian Old Kingdom dating back to 3000 B.C. knew translation. Inscriptions in two languages were found in the area of the first cataract, Elephantine (Newmark, 1981: 5). In the third century B.C., the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek at the Great Library of Alexandria. Around the same period, Romans translated much of Greek culture, arts and mythology. Having conquered the Greek world, Arabs rendered many Greek works on science and philosophy into their language. In the 12th century, the West came into contact with Arabs in Cordova, Spain, where Latin versions were made from Arabic versions of Greek philosophy and science in addition to original Arabic works on arts, philosophy and science, etc., thus furnishing the West with Greek and Arabic knowledge (Massoud, 1988: 1-2).

0.3. The Role of Translation

Translation has played a great role in the development of many languages and their literatures. Martin Luther's translation of the Bible (1522) laid down the foundations of modern German. King James Bible (1611) had a similar impact on English that appeared later in English

literature (Newmark, 1981: 5). In addition, many other European languages were affected by translation in general and by Bible translations from Greek, Latin and Hebrew in particular. Many African languages such as Bantu, Yoruba and Xhosa developed thanks to the efforts exerted by missionaries and churchmen who established writing systems for the languages into which they wished to translate the Bible. In fact, these efforts were greatly influential in the promotion of written African literatures (McArthur, 1996: 961; Noss, 1998: 621-622). It is worth noting that translation has always been a great factor in the building up of civilizations, cultures as well as the development of many languages and literatures around the world, and here lies the importance of translation.

Our modern age can be truly called, as Jumpett puts it, "the age of translation" (as cited in Newmark, 1981: 5). Translation is everywhere: in business, international politics, cultural exchange, science, technology and international organizations such as the United Nations and European Union (Newmark, 1981: 5-6; Massoud, 1988: 1-2). Translation was a necessity in the past, a dire need at present and will be a more pressing need in the future.

0.4. Translation in the Arab World

In the past, Arabs rendered thousands of Greek works in nearly all fields into their language. Comparing the Arab world today with other European, Asian and American countries in the field of translation, it is discovered that the Arab world lags behind all of them. According to *The Arab Human Development Report* issued by the UN in 2003, "the total number of books translated into Arabic yearly is no more than 330, or one fifth of those translated in a small county like Greece" (67). This fact means that Arabs are in a bad need of translation. In the first place, they are no longer producers of knowledge. As consumers of knowledge, they should sufficiently support translation and give it its due place, since it is the means through which they receive knowledge. In addition, Arabs need translation to portray a true picture about their identity and culture, and here lies the importance of translating the Qur'ân, the core of their majority's religion—Islam.

0.5. The Reasons for Translating the Qur'ân

There are many reasons for translating the Qur'ân. According to the Islamic view, Islam is a universal religion, and Prophet Muḥammad was

sent as a Messenger to the whole world, regardless of language, color, race, etc. Thus, Allâh describes Prophet Muhammad, saying,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾¹

﴿Wamâ arsalnâka' illâ *rahmatan* lil'âlameena/ It was only as a mercy that We sent you [Prophet] to all people.﴾ (21:107)². The universality of the Islamic message has made Muslims responsible for translating the Qur'ân into different languages to "the greatest part of the Muslim nation, to whom Arabic has become a foreign language" (Ghâlî, 2005: ix). In view of the importance of translating the Qur'ân, many eminent scholars of Islam say that it is obligatory (*wâjib*). Among these scholars are Imâm Al-Bukhârî, Ibn Hajar, Ibn Taymîya, 'Abdul-'Azeez Ibn Bâz and Muhammad Ibn Şâlih Al-'Uthaymeen (King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Qur'ân [KFCPHQ], 2004).

In the aftermath of September 11th, 2001, many people all over the world tried to search for the true identity of Islam and Muslims through Qur'ân translations, but they could not find but few translations mostly rendered by non-Muslims. This is why Qur'ân translations into the different languages of the world are greatly required.

0.6. The Importance of Translating the Qur'ân into English

If it is important to translate the Qur'ân into different languages, the translation into English is more important. First of all, English, as considered by many, is the first language all over the world nowadays. It is held as a language of high esteem and prestige, being the official language of many politically influential countries such as the USA and the UK and the second language of many other significant countries as China, India, etc. English, besides, is known everywhere in the world as a foreign language, especially in Western Europe. Moreover, a great deal of the mass media is in English. This widespread of the English language gives any English translation of the Qur'ân a chance to be more widely circulated than any other translation into another language. In the Preface of his translation titled *The Holy Qur'ân: Translation and Commentary*, 'Abdullâh Yûsuf 'Alî, in 1934, wrote "The English language, being widely spread, many people interested in Islam will get their ideas of the Qur'ân from English translations" (xiii). If he were alive today, he would rewrite "most people...". In view of the growing widespread of English, the need for correct English translations will be more pressing.

0.7. The Aims of the Study

Against this background, this study takes some steps in the field of translating the Qur'ân. It aims at holding a semantic comparison of four English translations of *Sûrat Ad-Dukhân* (*Chapter of Smoke*) undertaken by 'Abdullâh Yûsuf 'Alî, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, Arthur J. Arberry and Muhammad Mahmûd Ghâîf. The aim behind the comparison is to get out with a new translation of the sûrâ (chapter) that is as correct as possible. The sûrâ is chosen for no special reason, but as an example. The idea of the comparison can be applied to any other sûrâs of the Qur'ân. The study is divided into three chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. Chapter One deals with the problems that face the translator of any text in general and Qur'ân translators in particular. Chapter Two tackles the principles that ought to be followed in translating the Qur'ân, and the comparison comes in Chapter Three.

0.8. The Four Translators under Study

There have been more than forty Qur'ân translations ³ into English. The differences among the translations owe to the differences in the translators' mother tongues, beliefs, backgrounds, attitudes toward the Qur'ân and motivations behind translation. The four translations under study are those of Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, 'Abdullâh Yûsuf 'Alî, Arthur J. Arberry and Muhammad Mahmûd Ghâîf.

0.8.1. William (Muhammad) Marmaduke Pickthall (1875-1936)

William Marmaduke Pickthall was born in 1875 in London to an Anglican clergyman. He spent his early years in rural Suffolk and was contemporary to Winston Churchill at Harrow School. Pickthall traveled much in the Arab world and Turkey. In 1917, he declared his conversion to Islam, changing his name into Muhammad. His conversion to Islam came at the time of the collapse of the Caliphate in Turkey. However, he had a great support for the idea of the Islamic Caliphate. In 1920, he traveled to India to work as editor of *Bombay Chronicle*. There, he was invited to deliver Friday sermons as well as a group of lectures on the cultural aspects of Islam. Pickthall was given support and help by the Nizam Mir Osman 'Alî Khân, the governor of Hyderabad, the then chief cultural center of India. In 1925, he accepted an offer to work as a school headmaster. And in 1927, he was appointed editor of *Islamic Culture*, a

quarterly journal published under the auspices of the Nizam. Then, Pickthall was assigned more important functions of State (Hadhrami, 2006).

Since his conversion to Islam, Pickthall, who was fluent in English, French, Arabic, Latin, and Turkish, and who had studied Italian, German, and Spanish (Stratton, 2004: 81), was concerned with translating the Qur'ân into English since he considered it the key to make English-speaking Muslims know their religion intimately. Even in his lectures, he rejected the then available translations and offered his own. In 1928, Pickthall took a two-year grant of leave from the Nizam of Hyderabad to devote all his efforts toward the translation of the Qur'ân. While working on his translation, Pickthall consulted many scholars in Europe and traveled to Egypt in 1929 to get the approval of Al-Azhar scholars. He stayed in Egypt for three months and had the support of Sheikh Rasheed Rida. In 1930, Pickthall's translation, titled *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ân*, was published by A. A. Knop, New York (Hadhrami, 2006; "Marmaduke," 2006). It has gone through not less than 27 editions so far (Kidawi, 2006). In the Foreword of his translation, Pickthall shows his great admiration for the Qur'ân, saying,

The Qur'ân cannot be translated....The book is here rendered almost literally and every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the Glorious Qur'ân, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy. It is only an attempt to present the meaning of the Qur'ân—and peradventure something of its charm in English. It can never take the place of the Qur'ân in Arabic, nor is it meant to do so. (1981: i)

The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ân is supplemented with an introduction about Prophet Muhammad's life. In addition, it sheds the light on the Qur'ân, its revelation, recording and the arrangement of its sûrâs. The translation provides very short explanatory notes. Being rendered by a native speaker of English, Pickthall's translation has a language so elegant that it has become "a classic of accuracy and enlightenment" (Ghâfî, 2005: xi), and this makes it a first-rate translation approved of by most Muslims. However, it is not void of the "Biblical English that tends to be a stumbling block for an average reader" (Kidawi, 2006).

0.8.2. ‘Abdullâh Yûsuf ‘Alî (1872-1953)

‘Abdullâh Yûsuf ‘Alî may be the most renowned translator of the Qur'ân. He was born in 1872 in a humble Bohri family in Surat, India.

Then, he received his education in Bombay. Later, he was sent on a government scholarship to complete his studies at Cambridge University. On returning to India, 'Alî worked as a member of the Indian Civil Service in many provinces for a short time. But he had an influential impact on the political and educational fields in India and represented his country at national and international gatherings. Finally, he resigned and left for London, where he lived for the rest of his life. 'Alî achieved almost everything in terms of respect and position. However during the last days of his life, he got mentally sick and was seen walking in the streets of London in worn clothes, with no aim or abode. On December 10th, 1953, 'Alî died as a result of a heart attack at the age of 81. Then, he was buried in the Islamic Cemetery Brookwood, Surrey, near Working, where Pickthall had been buried sixteen years before. Thus, the two great translators of the Qur'ân finally shared the same place. After his death, 'Alî was awarded the title of Khân Bahadur, an award the British government conferred upon Muslims for an act of public service (Bangash, 2002).

'Alî was a man of vast experience in almost all spheres of life. He was deeply read in Western culture, as he admits in the Preface of his translation, saying, "I have explored Western land, Western manners, and the depths of Western thought and learning, to an extent that has rarely fallen to the lot of an Eastern mortal" (1403 A.H.: iii). However, he never lost touch with his Eastern heritage ('Alî, 1403 A.H.: iii). Thus, 'Alî wanted to make use of such experience to strengthen the faith of his fellow English-speaking Muslims through presenting the Qur'ân in "a fitting garb of English" (1403 A.H.: iii), especially he expressed his dissatisfaction over the available English translations at his own time due to either their weak language or being not supplemented with notes (1403 A.H.: xiii).

To prepare himself for translating the Qur'ân, 'Alî collected books, took notes, visited many places and met so many people to talk about the Qur'ân and its meanings. He did all of this to reproduce the meanings of the Qur'ân and its "nobility... its grandeur, and its sweet" (1403 A.H.: iii) in English. Then, in the city of Lahore, in 1934, 'Alî began producing the first part of his translation titled *The Holy Qur'ân: Translation and Commentary*, intending to produce a part at intervals of not more than three months. Thus, the whole work was completed in three years: from 1934 to 1937 ('Alî, 1403 A.H.: vi).

'Alî's translation came as a monumental translation as well as a deeply scholarly work that has passed through at least thirty-five editions up till now (Kidawi, 2006). The most distinguishing feature of this translation is

that the text and the English translation are arranged in parallel columns, with many profound footnotes as a commentary. Moreover, a summary at the beginning of each sûra is given, with a complete analytical index and fourteen appendixes at the end of some sûrâs in the form of scholarly essays dealing with specific themes referred to in these sûrâs.

‘Alî’s voluminous translation is perhaps the most popular and widely circulated translation of the Qur’ân all over the world. This may be due to the fact that it is couched in chaste English, with a choice of words that is close to the original and scholarly notes (Meeran, 2007). Besides, the language ‘Alî uses in his translation reflects that he has an excellent command of English (Ghâfî, personal communication, March 27th, 2004). However, it is seen that some of his notes on heaven, hell and angels reflect his Sufism and overemphasis on spiritual matters and are blended with the “pseudo-rationalist spirit of his times” (Kidawi, 2004).

0.8.3. Arthur J. Arberry (1905-1969)

Arthur J. Arberry was born in 1905 at Buckland, Portsmouth, England. He received his education at Pembroke College, Cambridge. In 1944, he was appointed to the chair of the Persian language at London University. In 1946, he became Professor of Arabic and Head of the Near and Middle East Department. In 1947, Arberry returned to Pembroke College as Sir Thomas Adam’s Professor of Arabic, a position that he held for the rest of his life, which extended to 1969. Arberry was a prolific writer, publishing over sixty works on various topics in Arabic and Persian (Arberry, 1983: viii).

Arberry considered the arrangement of the Qur’ân sûrâs “random and bizarre” (1983: xi). The reason behind this view may be that he was not sure that the Qur’ân was the last divine message sent through Prophet Muhammad. In fact, Arberry admired the Qur’ân as a literary masterpiece authored by Prophet Muhammad, something like the masterpieces that came from the pens of Shakespeare and Voltaire. This view is given through many passages of his *The Holy Koran: An Introduction with Selections*. For instance, he speaks about the Qur’ân, saying,

The literatures and fine arts of all the Muslim peoples spring from this fountainhead [the Qur’ân]; the majestically flowering river is joined here and there by tributaries running into it from neighbouring civilisations, but it remains to this day the same river as that which welled up thirteen and a half centuries ago in the city land of Arabia.... It is among the greatest monuments of mankind. (2004: 12)

The Qur'ân is described here as a literary source of all Islamic fine arts and as part of the greatest achievements of mankind. In addition, Arberry, showing his doubts over the divine source of the Qur'ân, compares his attitude towards the Qur'ân with that of Muslims, saying, "...whereas the faithful claim the source of the Prophet's inspiration to be divine, ... I confess myself unable to say what might have been its source, and am equally content not to guess at it" (2004: 11).

Arberry (2004) thought that the main reason behind the failure of the previous Qur'ân translations to gain any attention in the West was that they did not do justice to "the splendid language of the Qur'ân, its rhetoric and its astonishing rhythm" (7). Thus, he endeavored to produce a translation that could reflect all these elements. The translation came under the title *The Koran Interpreted* and was published in 1955. In this translation, Arberry did his utmost to demonstrate the rhythmic qualities of the Arabic text along with its "dramatic impact and most moving beauty" (1983: xii). However, the translation came free from any explanatory notes, with varied indentions of the lines.

Though Arberry declares in the Introduction of his translation that he tried to avoid the Biblical language and style favored by some of his predecessors (1983: xii), the language he uses is apparently affected by Biblical English in many aspects. Arberry's translation has gone through at least twelve editions so far (Kidawi, 2006) and is sometimes seen as "the most superior English translation" ("The Qur'ân," 1986, Vol. 9: 867). But this may be due to its artistic beauty rather than its accuracy or faithfulness to the original.

0.8.4. Muḥammad Maḥmūd Ghâḥī (1920-...)

Muḥammad Maḥmūd Ghâḥī was born at a small village in Damietta Governorate, Egypt, on September 23rd, 1920 to an Azharian teacher. He memorized the Qur'ân at a very early age. In 1936, he joined English Department, Faculty of Arts, Fû'âd 1st University (Cairo University now). In 1940, Ghâḥī graduated with a B. A. in English. From 1941 to 1955, he worked as a teacher of English at a group of different schools in Suhag, Damietta, Cairo and Aswan Governorates. In 1952, Ghâḥī was sent on a scholarship to complete his studies at Exeter University, England, where he obtained a diploma in the English Language and Phonetics. Then, he was sent on another scholarship to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA, where he received an M. A. in English Linguistics in 1957 and a Ph. D. in English and Linguistics in 1960. On returning to Egypt, Ghâḥī was appointed as Lecturer in Teachers' College, Cairo.

In 1961, Ghâî left for Saudi Arabia to work as the Head of English Department, King Sa'ûd University, Riyadh, from 1961 to 1964. Having returned to Egypt, Ghâî was appointed as the Head of the Department of European Languages, Faculty of the Arabic Language, Al-Azhar University in 1965. That department was the beginning of the Institute of Languages and Translation founded in 1966 and headed by Ghâî himself. Just one year later, that institute turned into the Faculty of Languages and Translation, with Ghâî as its Dean until 1972. Again, he traveled to Saudi Arabia to work, this time at King 'Abdul-'Azeez University, Jeddah, as the Head of English Department from 1972 to 1990. Then, he came back to Egypt for just one year, after which he left for Saudi Arabia as the Consultant of the English Language, Faculty of Female Students, Jeddah. Since 1994, he has been living in Egypt, devoting all his efforts to the service of Islam.

While working at King 'Abdul-'Azeez University, Ghâî, along with a committee of another twelve professors, was assigned to revise the most prominent translations of the Qur'ân into English. The aim intended was to get out with a new and correct translation as possible. To be completed, the work took fifteen years, after which the committee produced its translation which was taken to be revised at Umul-Qurâ University, Mecca. But the translation did not see light. Having returned to Egypt in 1994, Ghâî, relying on the experience he gained while working on the revision of the prominent Qur'ân translations into English in Saudi Arabia, began working on his own translation.

Ghâî's translation took three years to be completed, from 1994 to 1997. It came under the title *Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'ân* and was published by Dâr An-Nashr Liljâmi'ât, Cairo. Until now, the translation has passed through four editions, that of 1997 and another three ones in 1998, 2003 and 2005. In all the four editions, the original Arabic Qur'ân has been incorporated along with the translation since -- as Ghâî believes -- "no translation can ever be a substitute for Divine Revelation, with all its truth and glory" (2005: xiv). Ghâî sees that what distinguishes his translation is that it is the first translation to follow a method of differentiating among synonyms and "tries to clear some of the vague wording of previous translations," regarding "the glorious and elaborate morphological and syntactic system of the Arabic of the Qur'ân" (2005: xiv).

Notes

1 Qur'ânic verses are cited with their calligraphy from *Al-Maddena An-Nabawya Mushaf for Digital Publication* developed by King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Qur'an. Detailed information about this program and downloads are available at <http://www.qurancomplex.com/defination.asp?SecOrder=15&SubSecOrder=1>.

The transliteration represents the reading of Hafş Ibn 'Âşim, the most widely-circulated and well-known method of reading all over the Islamic world.

2 For more clarification, the translations of the Qur'ânic verses are cited from M.A.S. Abdel Haleem's *The Qur'an*. However, this does not mean that the author totally approves of them. In such citations, the **bold number** represents the sûrâ number and the non-bold one represents the verse number.

3 Among the most famous Qur'ân translations are: *The Alcoran of Mohamet Translated out of Arabique Into French, by the Sieur Du Ryer... And Englished, for the Satisfaction of All That Desire to Look Into the Turkish Vanities* by Alexander Ross (1649); *The Koran Commonly Called the Al Koran of Mohammed* by George Sale (1734); *The Koran* by E. A. Palmer (1880); *The Holy Qur'ân* by Muhammad 'Abdul-Hakeem Khân (1905); *The Qur'ân Translated Into English From the Original Arabic* by Mirza Abul Fadl (1912); *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ân* by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1930); *The Holy Qur'ân: Translation and Commentary* by 'Abdullâh Yûsuf 'Alî (1934); *The Qur'ân Translated With a Critical Rearrangement of the Sûrâs* by Richard Bell (1937); *The Koran Interpreted* by Arthur J. Arberry (1955); *The Koran* by N. J. Dawood (1956); *The Message of the Qur'ân* by Muhammad Asad (1980); *The Koran: The First American Version* by T. B. Irving (1980); *The Qur'ân: The Final Scripture* by Rashad Khalifa (1981); *The Bounteous Koran: A Translation of Meaning and Commentary* by M. M. Khatib (1986) (Kidawi, 2004; Kidawi, 2006; Al-'Ashmâwî, 2006: 24-29), *Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'ân* by Muhammad Mahmûd Ghâlî (1997) and *The Qur'an* by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (2004).

CHAPTER ONE

TRANSLATION: SOME PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

1.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to shed the light on the linguistic and cultural problems of translation in general. Then, an attempt will be made to determine to what extent these problems are related to the translation of the Qur'ân, with the aim of finding working solutions to the many problems encountered in translating it with the maximum degree of accuracy.

Translation is the process consisting in "reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in meaning and secondly in style" (Nida & Taber, 1969: 12). It is a complicated process beset by many problems and difficulties. These problems may have been the main reason that made many people through ages reluctant to carry out translation. However, because of the great importance of translation in the development of peoples and building civilizations, it has been practiced all over ages. Even, it was encouraged by many patrons all over the globe. In particular, many Arab kings and sultans paid much attention and money to great translators for their endeavors to translate the great heritage of the Greeks and Romans into Arabic.

Since it is a process of constant search for the transfer of a message from the Source Language (SL) into the Target Language (TL), translation is often accompanied by many problems and difficulties that may be a result of the differences in both languages or differences in the cultures represented by them.

1.2 Linguistic Problems

Since "no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences" (Nida, 2000: 126), translation, which aims at conveying a message from the SL into the TL, is often accompanied by many linguistic problems: lexical, syntactic, semantic and stylistic.

1.2.1. Lexical Problems

1.2.1.1. The Absence of Direct TL Counterparts

The first lexical problem any translator faces is to have many vocabularies in the SL with no direct counterparts in the TL. In this case, the SL word meaning can be conveyed relying on another TL word having the same function. For example, in languages where *snow* is not a known phenomenon, translating the phrase "*white as snow*" poses a problem. But this problem can be solved depending on another expression having the same function like "*white as cotton*", provided that *cotton* is known to express the meaning of whiteness in these languages (Nida, 1959: 29-30). Other times, however, the SL word has neither a direct counterpart nor another word of a similar function in the TL. Then, the translator can rely on paraphrase. For instance, in translating حُرَّ عَيْنٍ *hûrin* 'eenin included in the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿كَذَٰلِكَ زَوَّجْنَاهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ﴾

﴿Kaṭhâlika wazawwajnâhum bihûrin 'eenin / so it will be. We shall wed them to maidens with large, dark eyes.﴾ (44:54) into English, a paraphrase like *extremely beautiful females of bright complexion and lovely eyes* can do. If there is no possibility to paraphrase, then transliteration is the last resort; and this is what happened in Arabic with many inventions such as *telephone* (transliterated as تَلِفُون), *radio* (transliterated as رَادِيُو) and *television* (transliterated as تَلِفِيزِيُون).

1.2.1.2. The Different Function of the TL Counterpart

A direct TL counterpart for an SL word may exist, but with a different function. This may also cause a problem for the inexperienced translator, who may be misled and then misleads his/her receptors. As Nida suggests, *heart* in Greek should be translated as *abdomen* in Conob, a Mayan language of Guatemala, and as *liver* in the Kabba-Laka language of Equatorial Africa (1959: 30). This does not mean that Conob and Kabba-