

Equivalence and Translatability of Qur'ānic Discourse

A Comparative and Analytical Evaluation

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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To my parents,
who set an example of
patience and perseverance

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أحسبُكَ حُسَيْنَ أَنْكَ تُحَسِّنُ الصَّنْعَ
مَا ضَنَنْتَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَمِثْلُكَ مَا امْتَنَعَ
صَارِمٌ حَسَامٌ يُصِيبُ النَّاطِرَ الْهَلْعَ
رُؤُوفٌ رَأْفَةٌ تَكَادُ تُمَاطِلُ الدَّلْعَ
تَهْشُ لِرُؤْيَيْتِهِ النُّفُوسُ تَزْدَادُ وَلَعَ
مَلَكْتَ الْقَلْبَ، مَلَيْتَ الْعَيْنَ وَالسَّمْعَ
نَذَرْتَ الْعَمَلَ لِلْقُرْآنِ وَقَتُّكَ اتَّسَعَ
كَتَبْتَ الْعِلْمَ أَمَرْتَ الْقَلَمَ فَاسْتَمَعَ
إِنَّكَ الْأَسْتَاذُ ذَهَبٌ خَالِصٌ لَمَعَ

Abstract

Translation theory has recently witnessed a considerable degree of improvement, however, translation of the meaning of Qur'ānic discourse still poses a severe challenge for translators. The present study investigates the notion of equivalence and probes the difficulties caused by the distinctiveness of the Qur'ān in terms of linguistics, semantics and stylistics. The study looks into translation theory as a framework against which several translations of the meaning of the Qur'ān have been analytically evaluated. Then the study puts forward for the first time the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model as a general theoretical framework or model for the purpose of understanding Qur'ānic discourse better. The study looks over the notion of *naẓm* (order system) and the impact of *'ilm al-balāghah* (the science of rhetoric) on the degree of equivalence in translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. Then an elaborated exemplary detail of the problems of translating the Qur'ān has been discussed and several selected translations of the meaning of the Qur'ān have been assessed. The study presents evidence to the effect that translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān constitutes a major area of difficulty for translators and interpreters. It has also arrived at a conclusion that substantiates the failure of the notion of equivalence.

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Introduction

It is erroneous to believe that one-for-one equivalents exist for all lexical and grammatical items in both the English and Arabic languages. It has to be recognized that the issue of equivalence in translation is one of the most complicated issues: the problem of which exists within the system of synonymy in the very same language - there is no complete identical synonymy within, for instance, the English language - and between one language and another. Taken together, these particulars embody a fact that equivalence in translation is hard to realize. Biguenet and Schulte (1989:xiii) conclude “an exact equivalence from one language to another will never be possible. This could be characterized as both the dilemma and the challenge for the translator.”

In this effect, Nida (2000:6) admits, “since all verbal communication is based on the two fundamental processes of selection and arrangement and since the original author has already selected certain basic concepts and has arranged these in a text, presumably a translator only needs to duplicate what the author has already done.” The problem is twofold, then. When the issue of equivalence is brought to the fore, it is meant to be of two dimensions, that of a language (lexically, grammatically, semantically speaking) and that of a culture of that language. If the former is successfully undertaken the latter is left unsettled. Nida (ibid:6) elaborates further “but translating is not that simple. In the first place, the ideas represented in the source text are a reflection of a particular culture, and the intended audience of a translation may not share such concepts nor place the same value on the corresponding ideas. Furthermore, languages do not differ in what they say, but in how they say it. What is linguistically obligatory in one language may not be so in another.” Quite justifiably of course then, that the work of a translator is so strenuous that the translator constantly strives to find the matching magic formula that will help him achieve his task in the most appropriate manner. That what makes Chaudhuri (1999:24) think that “translation then, is a philosophically redoubtable project of transferring a ‘reality’ from its native verbal habitat to another: or put it another way, extending a ‘reality’ beyond its power verbal confines, formulating it in terms other than the original ones in which it was

experienced and defined – which are, strictly, the only ones in which it can be valid. One is led towards the image of an organ transplant whose viability is constantly in question.”

From the outset it can be claimed that previously most theoretical approaches to translation used to operate between two extremes: on the one hand, an excessive fidelity that insists on the invisibility of the translator in conveying “100% of the meaning” of the original (literal translation); on the other hand, the free translation where the translator re-creates, freely reshapes a text according to his or her vision. However, in review of the current trends in Translation Studies there has been witnessed a shift from dichotomies (literal vs. free, form vs. content, faithful, betrayal, etc.) to more in- depth discussion of the relationship between the source text and target text. Bassnett (2002:10) contends that “the common threads that link the many diverse ways in which translation has been studied over the past two decades are an emphasis on diversity, a rejection of the old terminology of translation as faithfulness and betrayal of an original, the foregrounding of the manipulative powers of the translator and a view of translation as bridge-building across the space between source and target.”

The aim of the study is to discuss current issues in translation theory: re-discuss them in the context of the translations of the Holy Qur’ān. The study also presents the Qur’ānic Cognitive Model as a framework against which the selected translations of the meaning of the Qur’ān will be discussed. It should be noted that the selected translations have been chosen because of their large readership, their prominence and because they are on the whole representative of the translation notions we are discussing. The examination of the selected translations has involved the description and evaluation of each looking at the language/text, and the conformity to the Qur’ānic Cognitive Mode. In this event, Larson has this to say “anything which can be said in one language can be said in another. It is possible to translate. The goal of the translator is to keep the meaning constant. Whenever necessary, the receptor language form should be changed in order that the source language meaning not be distorted”, (Larson 1984:11). Nord (2003:91) claims that “there is no doubt that, from an empirical perspective, real-life translations very rarely meet the high utopian standard of something called equivalence (of form, function, and effect at the same time)” Munday (2001:42) argues that “both the principle of equivalent effect and the concept of equivalence have come to be heavily criticized for a number of reasons: Lefevere (1993:7)

feels that equivalence is still overly concerned with the word level, while van den Broeck (1978:40) and Larose (1989:78) consider equivalent effect or response to be impossible (how is the 'effect' to be measured and on whom? How can a text possibly have the same effect and elicit the same response in two different cultures and times?).” Nida (1998:134) contends that “the potential receptors of a translation often differ considerably in education levels and exposure to the use of language. Accordingly, this means that an article about some important scientific discovery may need to be translated on at least three levels, e.g. for scholars, university students, and high school students. There may also be a need for a translation to appear in a popular magazine.”

In this case the alternative is only creative translation. The question is: How far can translators go? At what point does creative translation become betrayal? This reality is conceived as it will be shown in subsequent chapters (see chapter three and five) that the target translation could render varied and different meanings from the source text with degrees of ideological encroachments. However, Bassnett (2002:9) contends that “in the 1990s the figure of the subservient translator has been replaced with the visibly manipulative translator, a creative artist mediating between cultures and languages.” Equally noteworthy is what Chaudhuri (1999:34) argues that “translation proposes a sort of parallel universe (to that of the original text), another space and time in which the text reveals other, extraordinary possible meaning. For these meanings, however, there are no words, since they exist in the intuitive no man’s land between the language of the original and the language of the translator”.

It is worth mentioning that the rhetorical language of the Qur’ān is one of its own special, unique characteristics. Furthermore, the language of the Qur’ān is unsurpassed in its accuracy of meaning and expression. Each letter and word has its place while the language is free from fault. Abdel Haleem¹ (1999:8) states that Qur’ān was recited first to Arabs whose paramount gift lay in the eloquence of speech and who had a rich and elaborate literature, especially poetry. Both followers and opponents of the Prophet recognized its literary supremacy and inimitability. Believers hearing it uttered on the spot from the Prophet’s day-to-day-speech, saw in this a further proof of its divine origin. One of his opponents who was in awe of the power of the Qur’ān’s language described it by saying, ‘It

¹ See also 3.4.7 of this book: ‘The Qur’ān: A New Translation’.

ascends to the heights and nothing ascends above it, and it crushes what is beneath it' Thus the Qur'ān has a distinct style and noble grandeur that immediately sets it apart from other speech, and which Arabs, Muslims and non-Muslims, recognize.

With these assumptions in mind, the study will highlight the extent to which Qur'ānic discourse translations are dependent on the cultural setting and how the latter helps understand and translate Qur'ānic discourse. Therefore, the translator's prime concern is to identify the intended message of the source text and convey it to the target audience.

Chesterman (1997:21-22) explicates "if you believe that the scriptures are indeed the Word of God, and if you believe that you have a mission to spread this Word, you quickly find yourself in a quandary. The Word is holy; how then can it be changed? For translation does not only substitute one word-meaning for another but also reconstructs the structural form in which these word-meanings are embedded."

The problems that arise from the rendition of Qur'ānic discourse are of enormous linguistic and cultural affiliation. Diagnosing the problem is crucial to the subsequent process of prescribing the remedy and the manner it should be administered. Satisfactory translation can reliably be arrived at if these problems are relevantly addressed. The translator needs to be equipped with theoretical background as well as practical expertise. Ethnographic inquiry is deemed essential as cultures rather than languages often determine the output. Chesterman (1997:32) comments "not only is formal equivalence is a chimera, but no two meanings are ever quite the same, and no two styles or situations or even functions either."

The idea of chapter one is to bring in some of what has been said on the notion of equivalence in translation which was for quite sometime the predominant figure in the literature of translation theory. Chesterman (1997:10) is of the opinion that "if translation is defined in terms of equivalence, and since equivalence is unattainable, translation must be impossible." He then (ibid:11) expounds that "from the linguistic angle, the untranslatability idea looks like a restriction of language to *langue* only, to language as system; it seems to deny the role played by *parole*, by what people can do in their actual use of language. Translation is after all, a form of language use; and from this point of view nothing is untranslatable: that is everything can be translated somehow, to some extent, in some way – even puns can be explained."

Chapter two has been written with two objectives: first, to acquaint the translator with certain matters which he should take hold of at the very beginning to reach a more than superficial understanding of the Qur'ān; second, to illuminate the basic claims that the Qur'ān makes for itself. Thus, the chapter attempts to clarify those disturbing questions that commonly arise in the mind of the translator prior and during the study of the Qur'ān for the sake of translating its meaning. Abu al-A'ālā Maudūdī (1988:9) holds “whether one *the translator* ultimately decides to believe in the Qur'ān or not, one *the translator* must recognise the fundamental statements made by the Qur'ān and by the man to whom it was revealed, the Prophet Muḥammad, to be the starting point of one's *the translator's* study.” (Italicised words are mine). These claims are epitomized and characterized by the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model. A meaningful account of these claims cannot be arrived at without looking deep into the literature of the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model which reflects Muslim religious and social thought at its best.

Chapter Three provides a brief historical account of the translation tradition among early Muslims. In its very constituting event, Islam acknowledged that its message could be heard ‘in translation’: that the differences between one's own native tongue and the original text of revelation would not stand as a barrier to the proclamation of the Qur'ān. In response to the universality of Islam, the Holy Qur'ān is available in various vernaculars. The chapter also provides an outline of several translations selected for the purpose of exemplifying and enlightening the translation problems and whether they are close or not so close to the proposed model, the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model. Each outline offers the major features of the translation approach in terms of style, accuracy, and inaccuracy.

Chapter four deals with the notion of *ī'jāz* (inimitability) of the Qur'ān: its definition, origin and the views of speculative theologians Mutakallimūn- Mu'tazilites and As'haries. *ī'jāz*, for Arab rhetoricians, provides significant evidence that considers the Qur'ān the verbatim Word of Allāh. The views of al-Rummānī, al-Khaṭṭābī, and al-Bāqillānī will be taken into account in more details: both their views concerning the notion of *al-ṣarfah* (aversion) and the notion of *naẓm* (order system) are introduced and discussed. It has been drawn heavily throughout the chapter upon the works of al-Jurjānī, the famous philologist and literary critic: *Dala'il al-ī'jāz* (The Proofs for the Inimitability of Qur'ānic Style), and *Asrār al-Balāghah* (The Secrets of Rhetoric). The views of al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār will be compared

to that of al-Jurjānī on certain issues such as, *al-Ṣarfah* (aversion), *faṣāḥah* (eloquence), and *iʿjāz* (inimitability) of the Qurʾān. Within his work, al-Jurjānī organized his ideas into the disciplines of *ʿilm al-bayān* (figures of speech) and *ʿilm al-maʿānī* (word order) which both will be looked into in more details. The question which arises is: What is the impact of *ʿilm al-balāghah* (the science of rhetoric) on the degree of equivalence in translation of the meaning of the Qurʾān? That will also be looked into when dealing with Arabic rhetoric and equivalence in Qurʾān translation. Then, the third discipline of *ʿilm al-balāghah*: *ʿilm al-badʿ* and Ibn al-Muʿtaz will be dealt with towards the end of this chapter.

Chapter five touches upon the linguistic, stylistic, phonetic, exegetical, theological, and textual features of Qurʾānic discourse that cause translation problems. Qurʾānic discourse is considered particularly difficult in view of the fact that both Arabic and English languages belong to two different cultural and intellectual traditions. In addition to the Qurʾānic specificity of the text to be translated, translating the narrative prose of Qurʾānic discourse of Arabic expression into English presents additional problems. Any translation from Arabic to English demands a certain modulation or change in the way of looking at reality. In the field of literary and religious translation from Arabic to English the translator also has to have an appreciation of the cultural differences between the two linguistic groups. Knowledge of the Arabic language background is essential, for, the Qurʾānic text tends to be teeming with the particulars of the Arabic language. Nida (1964:51) opines that “different languages exhibit quite different concentrations of vocabulary, depending upon the cultural focus of the society in question.” Thus it can be envisaged that the problematic dimension of Qurʾān translation lies precisely in the issue of language and its relation to the notion of translation. This study, therefore, attempts to examine how translation functions as a critical as well as a creative activity in Arabic. In this context, to ‘translate’ means, literally, ‘to carry across,’ and this implies all other forms which carry the prefix *trans-*. It also means not only transportation or transmission or transposition but also transformation and transmutation, for all these activities take place when the translator writer sets out to write in English language. My approach to the notion of translation will be understood in its most established sense as the linguistic operation that consists in transporting meaning from one language to another and the cultural, textual interaction in this linguistic operation. Bassnett (1996:22) maintains: “Now, in the 1990s, drawing upon the work of the

past two decades, the keyword is ‘visibility’. The role of the translator can be reassessed in terms of analysing the intervention of the translator in the process of linguistic transfer. Once considered a subservient, transparent filter through which a text could and should pass without adulteration, the translation can now be seen as a process in which the intervention is crucial.” It is worthy to note here that whether the intervention is visible or crucial it has to agree with the Qur’ānic Cognitive Mode. Qur’ānic Cognitive Mode, in this respect, can help the translator to establish some sort of equivalence between the semantic and cultural differences of Arabic and English language. Bassnett (1996:12) embraces “translation therefore becomes the act that ensures the life of the text and guarantees its survival. Far from traducing the pure original, the translation injects new life blood into a text by bringing it to the attention of a new world of readers in a different language.”

In the same vein, Bassnett (2002:5) holds that “translation is not just the transfer of texts from one language into another, it is now rightly seen as a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures, a process during which all kinds of transactions take place mediated by the figure of the translator.” So equivalence is not the frame model then as it has been assured in the literature of translation studies that there is no absolute equivalence between languages and it is impossible to achieve. The shift as it has been reiterated is to the interaction between texts and cultures. In this connection, (1998:128) Nida states that “a sociolinguistic perspective on translation must take into account the diversities of culture and the manner in which texts reflect such cultural elements. It is this cultural dimension of verbal communication that is increasingly receiving more attention by translators.”

Transliteration System

In the present thesis, we have adopted the Library of Congress (LC) transliteration system as explained below:

Consonants (الْحُرُوفُ الصَّحِيحَةُ)

Arabic	LC	Arabic	LC
ء	'	ض	ḍ

ب	B	ط	t
ت	T	ظ	z
ث	Th	ع	c
ج	J	غ	gh
ح	H	ف	f
خ	Kh	ق	q
د	D	ك	k
ذ	Dh	ل	l
ر	R	م	m
ز	Z	ن	n
س	S	هـ	h
ش	Sh	و	w
ص	Ṣ	ي	y

حَرَكَاتُ الإِعْرَابِ وَ حُرُوفُ الْمَدِّ (Vowels)

Arabic Short Vowels	LC	Arabic long Vowels	LC
اَ	A	إِ	Ā
اِ	I	يِ	Ī
اُ	U	وِ	Ū

حُرُوفُ اللِّينِ (Diphthongs)

Arabic	LC	Arabic	LC
يِـ	(ay)	وِـ	(aw)

Chapter One

The Notion of Equivalence

1.1 Introduction

Translation is a difficult mission, particularly when it involves languages different in structure and cultural background, such as Arabic and English. The difficulty increases when we are faced with a translation of the word of God, such as the Qur'ān, as the translator should be aware of the linguistic and cultural aspects of both languages in order to understand the ST² and to render it in a linguistically acceptable and semantically equivalent target text.

The aim of the present chapter is to discuss current issues in the notion of equivalence in translation theory. We shall discuss such issues in the context of the translation of the Holy Qur'ān and the Qur'ānic Cognitive model as the proposed model (see chapter two). Where appropriate the notion of equivalence in signification and overtones will be observed. The exegetical and theological interpretation of the Qur'ān will help to check appropriateness of words and meanings used by the translators. In the same vein, Nida (1964:4) holds “in interlingual translation we are concerned not merely with matching symbols (i.e. word-for-word comparisons) but also with the equivalence of both symbols and their arrangements. That is to say, we must know the meaning of the entire utterance.”

In the area of evaluating quality, the thesis draws heavily on Abdul-Raof's works (2001, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b and 2006), Nida (1964, 1969, 1975a, 1975b, 1981, 1998, 2000, 2001), House (1977, 1997), Newmark (1981, 1988, 1995, 1996) as well as others. Moreover, problems of translating from Arabic into English are also considered. These include the various levels of language such as the word, the sentence, and the text, as well as other linguistic aspects of the text such as rhetorical features, stylistics, and pragmatics. House (1997:30) quotes Stalnaker (1973:380) stating that “pragmatics is the study of the purposes for which sentences are used, of the real world conditions under which a sentence may be appropriately used as an utterance.” House (1997:30) comments “pragmatics thus relates to the correlation between linguistic units and the user(s) of these

² Source Text

units in a given communicative situation.” Pragmatics then deals with the illocutionary level which is the way people use; manipulate language to achieve certain effects. Languages have different ways of achieving these effects. Verschueren, Jef (1999:7) understands “pragmatics as a general cognitive, social, and cultural perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to their usage in forms of behaviour.” So pragmatics epitomises language as to how it functions in real life situations. The thrust of the argument is whether equivalence in lexis, sentence structure, text, rhetoric, style and function has been met, if not, why? This chapter also discusses other factors that affect the production of the communicative function of the SL message which mirror the cultural background, appropriateness³ and acceptability⁴.

1.2 Translation Theories

The first argument is based on the sheer multiplicity of languages and their differing tones and shades of meaning. As translation theorists are quick to point out, even the most basic and ordinary phrases cannot be carried across into different languages without remainder⁵. Chaudhuri (2007:88) proclaims that “the text changes its contours as it passes from writer to reader. The dissemination of the text is an endless series of *trans-lationes*, carrying across – trans-positions in more senses than one: an overall change of site or context, but also a reconstitution of the elements. Hence the text a reader reads is not the text that the author wrote, nor that read by any other reader.” To translate is to alter, to interpret, and to transform. This is due primarily to the differently toned associations and connotations⁶ called up by supposedly equivalent words in different languages. On this matter, Nida (1964:156) makes this point clear:

Since not two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged

³ The translator has to find the word which is more appropriate in the context.

⁴ Acceptability is one of the standards of textuality proposed by de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981). The other six standards of textuality are cohesion, coherence, intentionality, situationality, intertextuality, and informativity.

⁵ There is no absolute equivalence (of form, function, and the same effect) between languages; in translation there is always something left out and not carried across into the other language.

⁶ Connotation, connotative meaning: That aspect of meaning which involves the cognitive, supplementary components of the words (Nida, 1975b); opposed to denotations (That aspect of meaning of a term which most closely relates the term to the portion of the nonlinguistic world which it symbolizes (ibid).

in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages.

The depths of difference among languages led Nida (ibid:192) to argue that the notions of “faithful” translations which had hitherto so thoroughly governed the enterprise, are doomed to “involve serious distortions”. One may wonder what “faithful translation” can really do to the rendering of meaning. We can safely claim that faithful translation cannot fully reproduce the meaning of individual words or sentences which they have in the original. We believe that literalness is a long way from faithfulness. Faithfulness means that the same or similar impressions are produced, for these are the heart of the matter. Abdul-Raof (2001:9) holds the view that “languages differ considerably from one another syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. At the heart of translation lies the problem of meaning.” However, in this connection, Larson has this to say: “Anything which can be said in one language can be said in another. It is possible to translate. The goal of the translator is to keep the meaning constant. Whenever necessary, the receptor language form should be changed in order that the source language meaning cannot be distorted” (Larson, 1998:12). Nord (2003:91) claims that “there is no doubt that, from an empirical perspective, real-life translations very rarely meet the high utopian standard of something called equivalence (of form, function, and effect at the same time).” In this case, the alternative is only creative translation. The questions that we can ask are: How far can translators go? At what point does creative translation become betrayal? Bassnett and Lefevere (1990:11) hold “translation, like all (re)writings is never innocent. There is always a context in which the translation takes place, always a history from which a text emerges and into which a text is transposed.” Later, Bassnett and Lefevere elaborate on the relationship between the translation and the original text: they (1998:25) are of the opinion that “recent debates on translation have focused more and more on exploring the relationship between what is termed ‘translation’ and what is termed ‘original’. One line of thought has traditionally seen the translation as a traducement, a betrayal, an inferior copy of a prioritized original. Another line of thinking focuses instead on the translation ... the original through translation, i.e. that translation is our original.” This betrayal issue is conceived as it will be shown in subsequent sections of the present chapter that the target translation could render varied and different meanings from the SL with degrees of

ideological encroachments. By ideology⁷ in this connection, we mean *the concepts, beliefs, dogmas, presuppositions and sentiments which originate from the social, political, contextual history of a particular individual, class, group, or certain culture and represent themselves through a certain medium*. Equally noteworthy is what Chaudhuri (1999:34) argues that “translation proposes a sort of parallel universe (to that of the original text), another space and time in which the text reveals other, extraordinary possible meaning. For these meanings, however, there are no words, since they exist in the intuitive no man’s land between the language of the original and the language of the translator”.

It should not go without saying that in order to capture the intended meaning of a text, one has to be familiar with the ‘communication force’ and the ‘emotional connotations’ conveyed by the word chosen to express that meaning. James Dickins, et al (2002:16) contend “in literal translation proper, the denotative meaning of words is taken as if straight from the dictionary (that is, out of context)”. This is why literal translation blows up the manoeuvres to reproduce the meaning and constitutes a direct threat to comprehensibility.

Nida (1964:22) notes that “despite major shifts of viewpoints on translation during different epochs and in different countries, two basic conflicts, expressing themselves in varying degrees of tension, have remained. These fundamental differences in translation theory may be stated in terms of two sets of conflicting “poles”: (1) literal versus free translating, and (2) emphasis on form versus concentration on content.” Evidence to sustain this line of argument includes the different types of translation and their applicability. Bassnett (2002:7-8) explains “whereas previously the emphasis had previously been on comparing original and translation, often with a view to establishing what had been ‘lost’ or ‘betrayed’ in the translation process, the new approach took a resolutely different line, seeking not to evaluate but to understand the shift of emphasis that had taken place during the transfer from one literary system into another.” We can safely claim that the aim of this study is to describe and shed light on this process of interaction or as Bassnett called ‘negotiation’ between texts and cultures. The following section illustrates different definitions of translation.

⁷ This definition is built from Naess (1956), Dant (1991), Terry (1991), Khāshim, M.A. (1984), Dirven, René, et al. (2001) vol.1, ‘Āṭiyat Allāh, Aḥmed (1980), Simpson, Paul (1993), Joseph, John, et al. (1990), Norton, G. P. (1984).

1.2.1 What is Translation?

Frequent attempts have been made to give a systematic description of translation. Some attempts have been based on cognitive theories⁸ whereas others have been formulated to serve as a basis for instructional design theories⁹. This implies that elements of the translation base are characterized by the 'function' they fulfill in the performance of a target task. Contemporary translation theory has seized upon the establishment of criteria for good translation quality as its touchstone. The main concern of translation theory is to determine appropriate translation methods for the widest range of texts or text categories. It provides a framework of principles for translating texts and criticizing the quality of translation. Translation theory is mainly concerned with choice and decision, rather than with the mechanics of either the source or the target language.

For Forster (1958:1), translation is "the transference of the content of a text from one language to another", noting that "a perfect translation is one which fulfils the same purpose in the new language as the original did in the language in which it was written, not a mere approximation to that purpose" (ibid:6). Therefore, the translation should have the same impact and leave the same impression on the target readers as that of the original which means the purpose of the original should be transferred to the target text and its audience without any failure. Forster (ibid:16) asserts that a translation should aim at giving the TL¹⁰ readers the same sort of impression which the ST gave to its readers.

Equally noteworthy, Rabin (1958:123) holds the same view as Foster. However, Catford (1965:20) sees translation as "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another TL". According to Nida and Taber (1969:12), "translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style". In their definition, meaning is given priority, closely followed by style. In their opinion

⁸ Geeraerts, Dirk (1997:7) holds that "cognitive linguistics is an approach to the analysis of natural language that focuses on language as an instrument for organizing, processing, and conveying information. Methodologically speaking, the analysis of the conceptual and experiential basis of linguistic categories is of primary importance within cognitive linguistics: it primarily considers language as a system of categories. The formal structures of language are studied not as if they were autonomous, but as reflections of general conceptual organization, categorization principles, processing mechanisms, and experiential and environmental influences."

⁹ Instructional design theories relate to absolute classification. Central elements of this type of theories are objectives and criterion tasks, which are typical of a discipline.

¹⁰ Target language.

(ibid:13), “though style is secondary to content, it is nevertheless important. One should not translate poetry as though it were prose, nor expository material as though it were straight narrative”. Thus, we argue that the textual equivalence is a very important notion in translation, i.e. the rhetorical function, the stylistic features of the TT should be kept equivalent as much as we can to that of the ST. However, equivalence of structures cannot be achieved between two linguistically and culturally incongruent languages such as Arabic and English. Bassnett (1980:2, 2002:11), for instance, claims that “translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted.” Translation, Newmark (1981:7) proposes, is “a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language”. Later, he (1995:5) concisely reformulates his definition of translation as “it is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text”. Schulte and Biguenet (1992:10) quote the German philosopher Hans Georg Gadamer: “Reading is already translation, and translation is translation for the second time...The process of translating comprises in its essence the whole secret of human understanding of the world and social communication”. In addition Bell, (1991:5) focuses on “preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences”. He (ibid:13) suggests three distinguishable meanings for the word translation. First, translating as “the process”, second, translation as “the product of the process of translating”, and third, translation, as “the abstract concept which encompasses both the process of translating and the product of that process”. Tancock (1958:45) holds “the ideal translation, like the ideal stage play, should have the power to suspend the reader’s disbelief, to make him think he is reading an original piece of work written in his own tongue”. Authenticity then is stressed and not the faint image of the original.

Therefore, equivalence is mandatory in the process of translation. However, the question remains: Can the translator achieve equivalence at all levels with regards to Qur’ān translation? As Abdul-Raof (2001:8) argues, there are eight kinds of equivalence (see figure 1, p. 24) and he is sceptical whether all these levels will be met satisfactorily by the TT with regards to the Qur’ānic Arabic text. From Abdul-Raof we can understand that the

major translation hurdle is the ST textuality which involves linguistic, rhetorical, stylistic, and phonetic characteristics that are prototypical to Qur'ānic Arabic.

Translation is essential in making people understand the culture of one another. In this effect, Neubert and Shreve (1992:69) have the following to say: "The process of translation is a textual process that connects one knowledge system with another. The translator makes the connection by inserting linguistic indices in the target text. These indices give the L₂¹¹ reader access to the underlying knowledge structure of the author's original message. Translators must link L₁¹² frames and scenarios with corresponding L₂ frames and scenarios using the L₂ linguistic system. Results of this matching process have to be L₂ texts. The translation has to compete in the target text world as a natural example of an L₂ text, and it must exhibit all of the features which make it recognizable as a native text." It is at this point that the term textuality should come to the fore of the discussion. Thus, it appears that textuality interweaves the text and makes its identity. Textuality (ibid:70) is then, "the complex set of features that texts must have to be considered texts. Textuality is a property that a complex linguistic object assumes when it reflects certain social and communicative constraints. The operation of these constraints is manifested in recognizable linguistic patterns at the textual surface." It is important to remember that the textuality of a certain text is not always straightforwardly translatable into matching categories similar to that of the SL. It is for this reason that Nord (1991:24) ascertains that "each text has its place in a configuration of particular, interdependent elements whose constellation determines its function. If only one element is changed, the constellation of the other elements within the configuration will inevitably change as well." Linguistically speaking, words and constructions need to be visualized meticulously in order to judge correspondence between the source and the target languages. Neubert and Shreve (1992:20) claim that "most correspondence rules are of a complex grammatico-lexical type. The corpus of knowledge about the rule-governed linguistic behaviour of the translation pair is the basis of the contrastive linguistics of translation." It is worthy to note here that translation theorists almost always prescribe certain methods in order to transfer the textuality of a particular ST into that of TT. Neubert (2000:19) argues "the

¹¹ Target language (TL)

¹² Source language (SL)

enculturation of translations into the L2 communicative culture is by no means the only way to apply the textual model of translation. A particular translation assignment may call for quite the opposite procedure, viz. the target version should openly betray L1 textual features because not familiarization but alienation is expressly intended.”

For Larson (1998:3), translation consists of conveying the meaning of the SL into the TL. The meaning remains constant but is conveyed by changing from the forms and structures of the first language to those of the second. He (ibid:6) stresses on the idea that the best translation is one which (1) uses the normal language forms of the TL, (2) conveys, as much as possible, to the TL speakers the same meaning that was understood by the SL speakers, and (3) maintains the dynamic of the original, which means that the TT is presented in such a way that it will, ideally, evoke the same response as the ST attempted to evoke.

In line with Larson’s methodology, it is obvious that he is in favour of the translator making changes and adjustments in the ST in order to suit the requirements of the TL linguistic system, and culture, as long as the meaning of the SL message is not altered.

Bell (1991:5), like Nida and Taber (1969), stresses textual equivalence. He maintains that “translation is the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another, source language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalence”. However, Postgate (1922:2) places grater emphasis on faithfulness in the process of translation. He (ibid:4) quotes Tucker as saying that “a translation should first and foremost be faithful”. However, Hatim and Mason (1990:12) hold the view that “translation is a matter of choice, but choice is always motivated: omission, additions and alterations may indeed be justified but only in relation to intended meaning.” It is apparent that they justify the act of omission, additions and alterations if the motive is to convey the meaning of the SL. They (ibid:12-13) even state that the translator’s motivation is either ‘client driven’ or ‘market driven’. Other motives include the ‘socio-economic circumstances’ of the production of the work, its ‘intended readership’, and the ‘reception by the TL readers’. Translation can also be a discourse practice, Katan (2003:137) argues that “the term ‘discourse’ refers both to the linguistic (propositional) and the social (interactional) aspects of discourse activity, since institutions and the social context play a crucial role in the

development, maintenance and circulation of discourse.” Now it is time to touch upon the different types of translation.

1.2.2 Types of Translation

It is argued that types of translation differ according to the objectives a translator proposes to himself/herself in dealing with the original text. However, two approaches can be proposed in translation: one requires that the author of a foreign text be brought across to the readers in such a way that they can look on him as theirs. The other requires that the readers themselves should cross over into what is foreign and adapt themselves to its conditions, its peculiarities, and its use of language.

Catford (1965:25) distinguishes between three kinds of translation that can be grouped into two: the “word-for-word” or “literal” translation and the “free” translation that can be grouped into *total translation* and *restricted translation*. In other words, both ‘word for word’ and ‘literal’ translation can be considered the same thing because they are faithful to the SL (source-oriented) whereas the ‘free’ is more target-oriented. Larson (1998:17) subcategorises translation into “literal” and “idiomatic”. The former, to Catford and Larson, is form-based translation, which entails all the characteristics of the formal equivalence translation (see 1.2.3.2 for more details) and the latter is meaning-based translation that does not sound like a translation. It should be noted here that meaning-based translation entails all the characteristics of dynamic equivalence translation (see 1.2.3.3 for more details). Newmark (1988:30-32) mentions some seventeen kinds of translation that he (1995:45) later reduces into eight kinds concluding with the distinction between communicative and semantic translations. The communicative translation, to him, focuses on the reader’s understanding of the identical message of the source language text, whereas the semantic translation focuses on rendering the exact contextual meaning of the original as closely as possible. He concludes that all translations must be in some degree communicative and semantic, social and individual. Our concern here relates to what translation procedures are most relevant to the translation of the Qur’ānic text.

Nida (1964:159) lists two fundamentally different types of translation:

1. Formal Equivalence Translation

This shifts attention away from TT to the ST itself, in both form and content. It is a ST-oriented translation, and is designed to reveal as much as possible of the ST form and content.

2. Dynamic Equivalence Translation

One of the first principles of the art of translation is that a text should be recreated in the same nuance, as far as the nature of the language allows. This what dynamic equivalence aims at: the complete naturalness of expression. Translators are very much inclined to relate the receptors to modes of behaviour relevant within the context of their own culture. In dynamic equivalence, change and adjustment of the ST are allowed to suit the TL linguistic system and culture as long as the translator does not deviate from the ST message.

Catford (1965:22) classifies translation into two different types:

1. Total Translation

This involves replacing the grammar and lexis of the SL by their TL equivalents, necessitating that SL phonology/graphology be replaced by non-equivalent TL phonology/graphology.

2. Restricted Translation

This is the replacement of SL textual material by equivalent TL textual material, at any one level. In other words, translation is performed only at the phonological or at the graphological level, or at only one of the two levels of the grammar and lexis.

Beekman and Callow (1974:21-4) distinguish four types of translation:

1. Highly Literal Translation

This has to dress according to SL customs, and behave accordingly and reproduces the linguistic features of the SL, with a high level of consistency.

2. Modified Literal Translation

Modified literal translation means tailoring the TL to accommodate with the SL. Any attempt to deviate from this norm is only allowed in case the meaning is jeopardized. Translators deviate to some lexical or grammatical adjustment to restore the meaning.

3. Idiomatic Translation

Here, the translator seeks to produce free imitations, as is most often the case; the translations certainly lost character and became more mannered. The meaning of the ST is overemphasised and realised by the natural grammatical and lexical forms of the TL.

4. Unduly Free Translation

This is a translation which may vary widely in style and still be accurate in content.

For Larson (1998:17), there are two main kinds of translation:

1. Literal Translation

This is SL form-based translation. It attempts to follow the form of the SL.

2. Idiomatic Translation

This is meaning-based translation. It makes every effort to convey the meaning of the ST in the natural forms of the TL.

However, Newmark (1988:45-7) has suggested eight types of translation:

1. Word-for-word Translation

The SL word order is maintained and words are rendered individually by their most common meanings, regardless of context, with the literal translation of cultural words. This method is used either as a technique to reveal the mechanics of the SL, or as the first stage of the translation of a difficult text.

2. Literal Translation

The SL grammatical constructions are converted to the nearest equivalent, but words are still rendered singly, out of context. It is often used as a pre-translation process to indicate problems to be solved.

3. Faithful Translation

This attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the ST, given the constraints of the TL grammatical structures. Cultural words are transferred and the degree of grammatical and lexical abnormality in the translation is preserved. It aims to be faithful to the intentions of the ST writer.

4. Semantic Translation

It is different from faithful translation only in that it is more sensitive to the stylistic values of the ST. Precise meaning translation attempts, where appropriate, to avoid assonance, word-play or repetition. Cultural equivalents may not be given for less important cultural words, while culturally neutral or functional terms can be employed instead. Semantic translation, unlike faithful translation, allows for the less than 100% fidelity, assuming the translator's empathy is with the ST.

5. Adaptation

This is the freest form of translation. The SL culture is converted to the TL culture, with consequent rewriting of the text, while the themes, characters and plots remain untouched. This form of translation is used mainly for plays and poetry.

6. Free Translation

It remodels the text to be more target-oriented or reproduces the content without the form of the original.

7. Idiomatic Translation

This reproduces the message of the ST, but can distort nuances of meaning by using expressions and idioms not present in the ST.

8. Communicative Translation

The original and the translation are, moreover, closely related; one could almost think of them as dialect and standard language, and in that case recreation has been known to succeed to an extent. Communicative translation, however, has adopted a totally

unconventional phraseology in translation and made it into an unbreakable rule, so that it is possible to grip the communicative force of the original. It attempts to give the exact contextual meaning of the ST so that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the TL reader.

It is our hope that the framework presented in the previous section will simplify discussions on translation by offering a parsimonious description of its types and qualities.

1.2.3 Equivalence in Translation

Our major concern in this section is encompassing the notion of equivalence and the possibility of achieving it in translation in general and in Qur'ān translation in particular. For this reason, I would like to quote:

Translate me so that I seem
Neither sea nor mountain,
Neither summer nor winter,
As though I were someone else, something else.

Jagannath Chakravorty (1994:126)

The explicit focus of our work has been on “equivalence”. Equivalence in translation by definition is the equality or interchangeability in value, quantity and significance between two interlingual texts. The optimal of equivalence is to achieve the compatibility of the various levels of lexis, structure, text, rhetoric, stylistics and pragmatics between two interlingual texts. This also necessitates the discussion of other factors that affect the production of the message, such as the cultural background, appropriateness, and acceptability. We shall give special attention to functional equivalence in translation, (see 1.2.3.8). In addition, structural equivalence as a factor that affects meaning will be looked into. According to Wilss (1982:134), the concept of translation equivalence has been an essential issue, in translation theory in general and modern translation studies in particular. He (ibid:138) maintains that the relative indeterminacy of the concept of target equivalence has a number of reasons. These reasons are primarily translator-specific, text-specific, and recipient-specific. The problem rests as to whether or not a translator can achieve equivalence at all levels, or if there exist certain levels for translatability between languages. Both are seen as “a major problem, because different scholars have proposed

different frames of reference” (Gutt 1991:10). According to Nord (1991:22), equivalence is the greatest possible correspondence between ST and TT. She (ibid:22) also claims that “the concept of equivalence is one of the most ambiguous concepts in translation studies, and consequently has been interpreted in very different ways. Equivalence implies that various requirements have to be met on all text ranks”. In the same vein, Bassnett (1980:29, 2002:36) is sceptical about the nature of equivalence and is of the opinion that equivalence cannot be defined in terms of sameness, and that “equivalence in translation should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two TL versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL version”. Ivir (1981:53), (cf. Neubert and Shreve, 1992:143), however, claims that equivalence is established at the level of messages, in the communicative act, and not at the level of linguistic units. Here translation theorists touch upon other important dimensions with regard to equivalence. When faced with attempting to reproduce the irreproducible, Nida and Taber (1969:5) thought of approximation as a way to alleviate the problem of the slim opportunity of equivalence among languages. As translation from one language to another is almost always a form of loss, a compromise of approximation is considered a way out. If equivalence is to be preserved at a particular level, which level is it to be? Bassnett (1980:25, 2002:32) claims that “once the translator moves away from close linguistic equivalence, the problems of determining the exact nature of the level of equivalence aimed for begin to emerge”. However, Knox (1975:4) summarised the entire topic in two questions: “Which should come first, the literary version or the literal; and is the translator free to express the sense of the original in any style and idiom he chooses?” It can be argued that to claim that one has arrived at the final, definitive, ultimate translation, one would be dreaming. Abdul-Raof (2001:7) holds the view that “a translator who aspires to achieve total lexical and/or textual equivalence is chasing a mirage: total equivalence at any level of language is impossible, relative equivalence at any level is possible. Amid the circularity of these contradictory definitions of the notion of equivalence, the translator is at a loss. At which level should he/she aim his/her translation?” (See Figure 1, p.24) However, this is not the end of the story, as Nida and Taber (1969:12) see translation equivalence as being completed in two phases, one at the semantic level, and the other at the stylistic level. According to them, translation “consists in reproducing in the receptor

language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style". However, Bell (1991:6) is of the opinion that "the ideal of total equivalence is a chimera. Languages are different from each other; they are different in form having distinct codes and rules regulating the construction of grammatical stretches of languages and these forms have different meanings." In view of the fact that there is no absolute synonymy, contrasting forms cannot coincide totally. Therefore to shift from one language to another is, by definition, to alter forms.

1.2.3.1 Types of Equivalence

The first to direct awareness towards the impact of different translation policies on the receptors was undoubtedly Nida (1964). Hatim and Mason (1990:7) point out that "Nida's reformulation of the problem in terms of types of equivalence appropriate to particular circumstances is a positive move. By distinguishing formal equivalence¹³ (closest possible match of form and content between ST and TT) and dynamic equivalence¹⁴ (principle of equivalence of effect on reader of TT) as basic orientations rather than as a binary choice, Nida shifts attention away from the sterile debate of free versus literal towards the effects of different translation strategies." Nida emphasizes the importance of the message conveyed to the readers and ascertains that the impact the ST has on readers should be taken into consideration when working out the target text. Nida and Taber (1969:1) highlight the issue as such: "The older focus in translating was the form of the message, and translators took particular delight in being able to reproduce stylistic specialties, e.g. rhythms, rhymes, plays on words, chiasmus, parallelism, and unusual grammatical structures. Concerning the categories of equivalence in translation, Hervey and Higgins (2002:18) hold the view that "the many definitions of equivalence in translation fall broadly into two categories: they are either descriptive or prescriptive. Descriptively, 'equivalence' denotes an observed relationship between source language utterances and target text utterances that are seen directly corresponding to one another. Prescriptively, 'equivalence' denotes the relationship between a source language expression and the standard target language rendering of it, for example as given in the dictionary, or as

¹³ See 1.2.3.2

¹⁴ See 1.2.3.3

required by a teacher or as a consonant with given theory or methodology of translation”. Abdul-Raof (2001:8) combines the different types of equivalence in one figure I would like to quote here (see figure 1 Types of Equivalence).

Levels of Equivalence

<i>Linguistic</i>	(textual material)	Nida 1964 ‘formal equivalence’, Catford 1965
<i>Cultural</i>		Larson 1984, Newmark 1982
<i>Stylistic</i>		Popovič 1976 (in Bassnett-McGuire 1980, Bell 1991
<i>Semantic</i>	(content)	Kade 1968a, Nord 1991
<i>Structural</i>	(textuality)	Filipec 1971 (in Snell-Hornby 1995), Reiss 1971 (in Snell-Hornby 1995), Wills 1982, Koller 1972, Neubert 1985 Hatim and Mason 1990, Neubert and Shreve 1992
<i>Response</i>	(effect)	Nida 1964a, 1964, 1966, Nida and Taber 1969, Newmark 1982, Adab 1996
<i>Communicative</i>		Beaugrand 1978, Neubert and Shreve 1992
<i>Functional</i>		Nida and Taber 1969, Kuepper1977, House 1981, de Waard and Nida 1986, Newmark 1991

Figure 1: Types of Equivalence

1.2.3.2 Formal Equivalence Translation¹⁵

The early emergence of the definition of a formal equivalence translation was meant to be “basically source-oriented; that is, it is designed to reveal as much as possible of the form and content of the original message”, (Nida, 1964:165). He (ibid:159) notes that “in such a translation one is concerned with such correspondence as poetry to poetry, sentence to sentence, and concept to concept”. Nida (ibid:159) also calls this type of translation ‘a gloss translation’, that is, translation whereby the translator attempts to reproduce, as literally and meaningfully as possible, the form and content of the original. Nida and Taber (1969:14), however, use the term ‘formal correspondence’ instead of ‘formal equivalence’. To sum up, Nida (1964) distinguishes between two types of translation: formal equivalence translation and dynamic equivalence translation. The former is source oriented and is intended to reveal as much as possible of the form and content of the original message. Such translation attempts to reproduce formal elements such as grammatical units/ word usage and meanings in terms of the source language. It also makes use of brackets and parentheses for words which are added by the translator and are missing in the original. The stylistic features have to be rendered literally; yet marginal notes must include explanations where needed. Explanatory notes will always be needed in this type of translation since many of the literal equivalents will not be intelligible to the TL reader. Nida (1964:165) lists the elements of this type of equivalence:

1. Grammatical units which may consist of: (a) translating nouns by nouns, and verbs by verbs, (b) keeping all phrases and sentences intact (i.e. not splitting up and reading the units), and (c) observing all formal indicators, e.g. marks of punctuation, paragraph breaks, and poetic indention,
2. Consistency in word usage, and
3. Meanings in terms of the source context.

In fact, what Nida calls ‘formal correspondence’ matches Widdowson’s (1979:65) ‘structural equivalence’, Popovič’s (1970:78) ‘linguistic equivalence’, Lörcher’s (1992:403) ‘sign-oriented translation’, Larson’s (1998:17) ‘form-based translation’, and similarly Nord’s (1991:72-3) ‘documentary translation’. In any case, the qualities the translation theorists have assumed for ‘formal equivalence’ complete the picture and can be depicted

¹⁵ See also 3.4.1.2 of this book: Formal Equivalence.

in what they argue: Kelly (1979:131) thinks it “depends on one-to-one matching of small segments, on the assumption that the centre of gravity of text and translation lies in the significance for terminological or artistic reasons”. Nord (1991:72-3) has assigned to her ‘documentary translation’ a function which (ibid:73) foregrounds some of the elements of the ST and backgrounds the rest and she argues further that in a word-for-word translation, for example, which aims to reproduce the features of the SL system, the focus is on the morphological, lexical, and syntactic structures presented in the ST, whereas textuality (for more details on textuality see p.15) is bound to be neglected.

Formal Equivalence Translation is like the exact translation hypothesis which does not hold true due to the diversity of languages and texts in the areas of vocabulary, syntax and semantics. This hypothesis relates to the transformational generative approach to meaning, whose main objective is the isolation of linguistic universals, which if established would have provided a basis for translation theory, Chomsky, (1965). This hypothesis has been proved to be unworkable, with respect to translation of the Qur’ān, Abdul-Raof (2001:12) holds “in the translation of the Qur’ān, language and cultural-bound linguistic and rhetorical features are simply ‘inimitable’ and ‘unproduceable’ into other languages to a satisfactory level that can create an equivalent mystical effect on the target audience similar to that on source language readers.”

For instance, there is no exact equivalent to (الصَّمَدُ) in Arabic, (ibid:34). Adul-Raof (ibid:25) is also against the notion of exact correspondence between languages. He provides examples that support his argument (ibid:25) “Qur’ānic cultural voids like (حرم) ...and other Qur’ānic expressions have culture-bound overtones; these include lexical items like (قطميرا ، نقيرا ، فتيل)”. Moreover, (ibid:13) “cross-cultural variations among languages lead to non-equivalence and can be translation traps; they can also be a source of misunderstandings among target language audience. Qur’ān translation is a unique case of non-equivalence in inter-textual translation. The semantic mapping of each language is different from those of all other languages.” Chesterman (1997:32) states that Nida’s rejection of the formal equivalence is related to his main interest in biblical translation “but he rejects the formal equivalence assumed by the Word-of-God stage because this so often leads to stylistic awkwardness or downright unintelligibility. In its emphasis on the naturalness of the target text, on readability, on ease of decoding, on translation as exegesis,

Nida's work reflects the idea of the Rhetoric stage¹⁶; but his insistence on sameness of effect (dynamic equivalence) is a clear symptom of this Linguistic stage¹⁷. It is as if the sameness simply *must* be somewhere: since it cannot be located at the formal level, and since the function of a sacred text is assumed to be constant across different readers (i.e. to convert to, or confirm in, the Faith), equivalence must lie precisely in the effect of such a text." See how Chesterman (1997:35) comments on the notion of 'effect', (1.2.3.3: p.28).

1.2.3.3 Dynamic Equivalence Translation

Dynamic equivalence, contrary to formal equivalence, focuses on the receptors' response. That is, it is based on the principle of equivalent effect. It aims at producing the closest equivalent to the SL message (Nida 1964). Dynamic equivalence, in Nida's words, is "a translation of dynamic equivalence that aims at complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behaviour relevant within the context of his own culture" (ibid:166). This means that the areas of the communication process have to fit the TL culture, the context of the message and the receptor. The process of producing a natural translation requires adaptation both in grammar and lexis. Nida holds the view put forward by Goodspeed (1945:8) which says: "The best translation is not one that keeps forever before the reader's mind the fact that this is a translation, not an original English composition, but one that makes the reader forget that it is a translation at all and makes him feel that he is looking into the ancient writer's mind, as he would into that of a contemporary", (quoted in Nida, 1964:163).

Dynamic equivalence is criticized for emphasizing the equivalent response of the receptor though no clear definition of this response is provided. It is compared to the response of the reader of the SL, which is also not identified. Moreover, responses of one reader may vary from those of another depending on factors such as the psychological background, previous experience, and the diverse expectations of readers.

The new focus, however, has shifted from the form of the message to the response of the receptor. What is meant exactly by dynamic equivalence has been stated by Nida and Taber

¹⁶ Chesterman (1997:25) makes out rhetorical tradition is represented in the emphasis on the value of the text and the target-reader orientation in translation.

¹⁷ "The linguistic stage builds on the value of contrastive studies, looking at the similarities and differences between language systems and the relations between such systems." Chesterman (1997:48).

(1969:24) as follows: “Dynamic equivalence is therefore to be defined in terms of the degree to which the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same manner as the receptors in the source language. This response can never be identical, for the cultural and historical settings are too different, but there should be a high degree of equivalence of response, or the translation will have failed to accomplish its purpose.” Nida emphasizes that equivalence is not only just mere comprehension of the text: it is much more than that. Nida argues about the ‘principal purposes of communications’ as found in the Bible (ibid:24): “It would be wrong to think, however, that the response of the receptors in the second language is merely in terms of comprehension of the information, for communication is not merely informative. It must also be expressive and imperative if it is to serve the principal purposes of communications such as those found in the Bible. That is to say, a translation of the Bible must not only provide information which people can understand but must present the message in such a way that people can feel its relevance (the expressive element in communication) and can then respond to it in action (the imperative function).” However, Chesterman (1997:35) has the following to say regarding the ‘same effect’ or ‘same function’: “Since any language-user interprets any utterance partly in terms of his or her previous experience of the language and of life, no two readers ever come to a given text with exactly the same set of cognitive assumptions; if this is true even within the same language, how much more true must it be for readers of a different language and/or culture altogether. We might consequently call the belief in the possibility of the ‘same effect’ the *homogeneous readership fallacy*. It represents a kind of linguistic idealism, but rests on no tenable theoretical foundations beyond the trivial truth that all readers are members of the human race.”

Larson (1998:6) further confirms that “maintaining the ‘dynamics’ of the original source language text means that the translation is presented in such a way that it will, hopefully, evoke the same response as the SL attempted to evoke.” Whereas Gutt (1991:73) points out the significant role of the context in eradicating possible misunderstanding or misinterpretation: “Context determines the disambiguation of linguistically ambiguous expression: wrong contextual assumptions can lead to the choice of the wrong semantic representation of such expressions. Context is usually needed to determine the

propositional form of an utterance: again mismatches of context can lead to the deviation of a wrong propositional form. Context is needed to determine whether a propositional form is intended as an explicature¹⁸, or whether it serves only to convey implicatures¹⁹.”

This plays an important role in the interpretation of literal versus loose or metaphorical talk. Thus, the interpretation of the sentence ‘I could have killed that fellow’ as either literal or metaphorical will depend on whether its propositional form is taken as an explicature or not. Since this depends on the contextual assumptions available, the use of inappropriate context can lead to misunderstandings.

Q107:4 can be a supportive illustration for the viability and vitality of context and its decisiveness in determining the underlying semantic characteristics of the proposition.

If the following is read in isolation, it gives completely different meaning which contradicts the importance of performing prayers according to the Qur’ān:

[“So woe to those that pray,” Q107:4] ﴿فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ﴾

The ambiguity is immediately cleared when the verse is read in its context, as follows:

﴿فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ﴾ ﴿الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ﴾ ﴿الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآؤُونَ﴾ ﴿وَيَمْنَعُونَ
الْمَاعُونَ﴾

[So woe to those that pray and are heedless of their prayers, to those who make display and refuse charity. Q107: 4-7] (Arberry 1980:356)

Arberry²⁰ has intentionally added the conjunctive particle *and* as a cohesive tool to make sure at the same time that the meaning is not confusing. However, *and* should have been put between brackets to show that it is not part of the Qur’ān.

Nida and Taber (1969:111) signal out that “it must be further emphasized that one is not free to make in the text any and all kinds of explanatory additions and/or expansions. There is a very definite limit as to what is proper translation in this difficult area: one may make explicit in the text only what is *linguistically* implicit in the immediate context of the problematic passage. This imposes a dual constraint: one may not simply add interesting

¹⁸ Verschueren Jef (1999:27) holds the view that *explicature* is “a term was invented for the products of fleshing out the meaning of an utterance by means of more explicit representations.”

¹⁹ The technical term *implicature* was introduced by the philosopher of language Paul Grice (a short version of which was published in 1975 in a paper ‘Logic and conversation’) to cover a variety of non-explicit meanings, such as suggestions, implications and the like.

²⁰ See also 3.4.5 of this book: ‘The Koran Interpreted’

cultural information which is not actually present in the meanings of the terms used in the passage, and one may not add information derived from other parts of the Bible, much less from extra-Biblical sources, such as tradition,” (Italics as in original).

The following verse in al-Hilālī’s is an example for what is linguistically implicit:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّقُوا مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَمَا خَلْفَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾

[And when it is said to them: “Fear of that which is before you (worldly torments), and that which is behind you (torments in the Hereafter), in order that you may receive mercy (i.e. if you believe in Allāh’s religion – Islamic Monotheism, and avoid polytheism, and obey Allāh with righteous deeds). Q36:45] (al-Hilālī 1998:592)

If this translation is compared with the same in Dawood²¹’s, the difference in style shows the whole story:

[When they are told: ‘Have fear of that which is before you and behind you, so that you may be shown mercy, Q36:45] (Dawood 2003:310)

Whereas in Arberry’s : [And when it is said to them, ‘Fear what is before you and what is behind you; haply you will find mercy.’ Q36:45] (Arberry 1980:147)

The following example given by Larson (1998:46) is to be taken into consideration: “Information which is left implicit when talking to one person might be made explicit when talking to another. A woman might say to her husband, ‘Peter is sick.’ In reporting the same information to the doctor she would say, ‘My son Peter is sick,’ or ‘My son is sick.’ The information (my son) was not needed to identify (Peter) when talking to her husband who knew very well who Peter was.”

Larson (ibid:47) then goes on to explain:

“There is difference between *implicit* information and information which is simply *absent* and never intended to be part of the communication. For instance, in the example ‘*My son Peter is sick,*’ the mother did not say, *Peter has brown hair and is ten years old.*’ This is not *implied* it is *absent*. It is not part of the communication and, should not be added.”

This leads to the manifestation of the direct orientation again, as the translator can plan unexpressed information which could be crucial to understand the text or vice versa. Here, Gutt (1991:83) has the following to say, “thus the crucial point that distinguishes implicit

²¹ See also 3.4.4 of this book: ‘The Koran’

information from ‘information which is simply absent’ is the communicator’s intention: only unexpressed information which the communicator *intended* to convey qualifies as implicit information.”

1.2.3.4 Semantic and Communicative Approaches

Newmark (1988:39) proposes semantic and communicative approaches; in fact he opines that communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original. In other words, it is an attempt to provide the reader with an experience comparable to reading a text in its original. This furnishes a key to the significance of creating the exact contextual meaning of the original. He discusses a comparative analysis between the two methods, namely, the semantic and the communicative. He holds that the basic difference between the two methods is that communicative translation emphasizes the ‘force’ rather than the content of the message. Newmark argues that semantic translation is used to translate authoritative texts, i.e., texts where the content, form, etc. are all important. These texts normally preserve the SL culture. Conversely, communicative translation deals with non-authoritative texts. These have to be well written and have to be adapted both culturally and linguistically to suit the comprehension of the reader. He adds that the more authoritative a text is, the closer the translation must be to the original.

Later in 1981, Nida and Reyburn again discussed the issue of approaches to translation. He explained that these approaches were complementary rather than opposed. They are basically four: the philological (Brower 1959), the linguistic (Catford 1965), the communicative, and the socio-semiotic. The philological is characterized as lacking in concern for basic linguistic elements needed or involved in the process. The strict linguistic approach is also criticized as it does not take into account the function of communication. The communicative theory as viewed by Nida and Reyburn (1981) fails to take into consideration the social setting and particularly the interpersonal relationship of sender and receiver.

1.2.3.5 The Socio-semiotic Approach

Thus the socio-semiotic approach complements the other three since it focuses on the structure which makes the relationship between any sign and its referent. It deals with meaning which is not restricted to sounds, words etc. but to cultural presuppositions and value systems. Thus, events in a text may have different meanings because of different cultural values. This approach distinguishes between two meanings: the designative and the associative meanings, which are parallel to denotation and connotation to some extent.

Widdowson (1979:101-112) advocates the communicative approach to translation, particularly in situations where cultural and shared knowledge are totally different, such as in Arabic and English. Communicative translation emphasizes the message of the text and not the form, the force rather than the content. It is argued that formal semantic equivalence in the TL may not convey or communicate the same message since the clues provided by such equivalence in the TL might not be sufficient, particularly when the shared knowledge between the readers of the target and source language is different, as is the case between Arabic and English. For this reason she suggests an approach to translation that accounts for effective communication.

It is interesting to note that Newmark, later in (1988:40), attempts to hold a compromise between the two translation types. He says: Communicative and semantic translation may well coincide in particular where the text conveys a general rather than a culturally (temporally and spatially) bound message and when the matter is as important as the manner, notably then in translation of the most important religious philosophical, artistic and scientific texts, assuming second readers as informed and interested as the first. Further, there are often sections in one text that must be translated communicatively and others semantically.

It can be argued here that the difference between semantic versus communicative translation shows the disparity which results from focusing on translation as a product rather than a product of a process. About the cultural input in translation, it can be suggested that if the SL and TL are linguistically and culturally close, then the translator has to follow a semantic approach; if not then he/she has to resort to communicative approach. However, the question remains whether what has been argued can be applied as far as the translation of the Qur'ān is concerned.

1.2.3.6 Re-codification

Frawley (1984:160) holds the view that translation is re-codification, or, in his own words: “Translation is the reduction of coded input into another code”. He argues that “re-codification is independent of whether or not an element of one code is synonymous with a correlated element in another code”. He claims that although synonymy across codes is important, if there is no synonymy the translation may still be acceptable. Translation occurs irrespective of the status of identity across codes. Because of the translator’s wide range of pursuits, the alteration between the smallest details, e.g., translating hyphens and other punctuation marks, and abstract themes, the translator is faced with a number of problems, such as synonymy, paraphrase, interpretation and ambiguity. Nida maintains (1998:128) “the real problem is not one of translation versus paraphrase but of correct versus incorrect paraphrase, and the fundamental question is ‘Does the translation serve essentially a corresponding function in the context of a different language-culture?’”

1.2.3.7 Synonymy²² Approach

Absolute synonymy across languages or even within the same language is considered an unfeasible model due to the lack of congruence in words, concepts, and culture among languages. Equivalence across languages entails many aspects such as lexis, grammar, semantics, and culture. It should not go without saying the difference in the contextual cultural setting across languages constitutes a difficulty in translation. In 5.8 *Synonymy in Qur’ān Translation* will be discussed in more detail.

What is meant by culture²³ in this connection is *the institutionalized values and their relation to the legitimation of power in certain languages*. Nida (1964:51) is of the view that “different languages exhibit quite different concentrations of vocabulary, depending upon the cultural focus of the society in question.” Nida (ibid:51) states that “a communication is not intelligible if it is treated as an event abstracted from the social context of which it is a part.” More importantly, Arabic and English do not relay the same weight when it comes to its syntax. The two-are-rarely-in-a-one-for-one relation concept impinges itself on the objectivity, validity and quality of the designated translation. Nida

²² See also 5.8 of this book *Synonymy in Qur’ān Translation*.

²³ This definition is built from Fitzgerald, Timothy (2000:235).

(1964:50) is of the opinion “that some languages fail to make distinctions which are made in English is regarded by many English-speaking persons as evidence of a deficiency in these languages. However, an objective evaluation of these seeming “omissions” indicates that they can be fully justified, since the language in question merely follows another way of classifying experience.”

The problem that synonymy raises in translation is that there is no exact synonym. Therefore, the inter-changeability of two or more words in the same context does not render exact synonymy. There will always remain a difference (a remainder). For example: (My friend has gone to the theatre.) A synonymous sentence is: (My mate has left and is now in the playhouse.) (Newmark, 1988:101)

Ullmann (1957:108) points out that “it is almost a truism that total synonymy is an extremely rare occurrence, a luxury that language can ill afford”. The problem is that a synonym is a context-domain. Translation should almost always go for the more contextual appropriate word. Synonymy is a thorny issue. Nida (1981:69) states “the translator’s task, however, is much more complex than simply studying the source-language features of content that have symbolic significance. Translators must also analyze the features of distinctive receptor-language objects and events to determine the extent to which the forms and meanings are parallel.” He emphasises that identity is impossible yet ‘some common functional basis’ is affordable. Whereas Newmark (1988) advocates the validity of equivalence in translation and offers an approach of four stages: first synonymy, if not then componential analysis²⁴, if not then definition, and the last resort is paraphrasing.

Concerning synonymy across languages, Frawley (1984:163) indicates that there are three basic arguments. The first²⁵ is referential and it equates identity or synonymy with semantic exactness, i.e., absolute synonymy. House (1997:30) is of the view that since the nature of

²⁴ Nida (1964:82) makes clear that componential analysis is a technique “employed to analyze the meaning of related words, provided that the relationships between terms are based on certain shared and contrastive features. Effective componential analysis depends upon two major features: (1) a well-defined corpus of related terms, e.g. a kinship system, a set of case endings, and a pronominal series, and (2) the possibility of finding in non-linguistic behaviour (i.e. the distribution of these terms in the practical world) certain features which are determinate as to the basic contrast between the symbols in question.” Munday (2001:39) comments “in general, techniques of componential analysis are proposed as a means of clarifying ambiguities, elucidating obscure passages and identifying cultural differences. They may serve as a point of comparison between different languages and cultures.”

²⁵ The second argument is conceptual/biological and the final position holds that there are universals of language, Frawley (1984:164-165)

the universe is common to most 'linguacultures', language communities, "the referential aspect of meaning is the one which is most readily accessible, and for which equivalence in translation can most easily be seen to be present or absent." This view adopted by House assumes that semantic referents are the same for everyone and hence this constancy of terms accounts for identity in translation. Semantic referentials are not the same and that meaning does not reside in the phenomena because worlds differ and the question of reference is not appropriate in this case.

Wilss (1996:159) contends that "the content orientation of transactional language entails in translation the need for semantically reliable information. If the TL message is semantically incorrect, the consequences will – almost inevitably – be that the TL reader is led astray and will make wrong inferences ..." That is why, there is a reason for semiotic textual analysis which would specify those discourse features of the source language message that must be maintained to convey an adequate TL version. Abdul-Raof (2005b:162) maintains that "the translator needs to be familiar with the micro- and macro-textual features of the source language (SL) which constitute major impediments during the process of translation." Nord (1991:35-36) also offers a checklist which includes the following questions:

Extratextual Factors: Who transmits, to whom, by which medium, Where, When, Why, a text, with what function?

Intratextual Factors: On what subject matter, Does he say, what, (what not), in what order, using which no-verbal element, in which words, in what kind of sentences, in which tone, to what effect?

Nord (ibid:35-36) argues that to produce an accurate translation, the translator should consider such questions in order to have a comprehensive account of the communicative act and its constituent factors. Such factors include sender, receiver, code and context or situation.

House (1977:29, 1997:31) defines translation as the "replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language".

However, when it comes to the translation of the Qur'ān, translators find it essential to make a further investigation (see chapter two) in order to explore the illocutionary act which means the communicative force that accompanies the Qur'ānic utterance; in other

words, the functions of the Qur'ānic utterance i.e. promising glad tidings, advising, instructing, teaching, warning, etc. That is because there are cases where the lexical "equivalence" of words translated across cultural and historical gaps often obscures semantic distance and intentional difference, especially where they occur in contexts alien to that represented in the translation tradition.

The picture Pickthall²⁶ (1997:iii) paints for the translator of holy Scripture emphasizes that any work of translation shows the direct orientation of its executors, that is, ideology runs under any work of translation, he claims that "... no holy Scripture can be fairly presented by one who disbelieves its inspiration and its message; ..." Pickthall states squarely clearly his ideology, the ideology of a Muslim who believes that Qur'ān is the verbatim word of Allāh when he maintains (ibid.iii), "... every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the glorious Qur'ān, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy." Abdul-Raof (2001:1) emphasizes that "the translation of the Qur'ān remains in limbo for the word of God cannot be reproduced by the word of man." In the same vein, Sheikh al-Sha'rāwī (1989:28) argues "in contrast, the language of the Qur'ān uses the same expressions and the same words when speaking to the educated and the illiterate, the offended and the offender, the aggressive and the peace loving. It conveys to each the meaning that is appropriate to his situation and satisfactory to his needs and state of mind. Thus, it soothes the angry, fills the heart of the desperate with hope, reminds the oppressor of Allāh's divine justice, and the lustful of the vanity of this transient world and the infinite rewards of the next. It speaks to them using the same words regardless of their education, socio-economic status, or psychological state or tendency; and answering all their varied needs. Throughout the world one can find people of all walks of life passively listening to its words and verses being elucidated or recited, which seem to reach their inner souls unhindered by barriers of any kind."

Translation of the Qur'ān necessitates a high degree of equivalence almost at all levels, namely at the linguistic, grammatical, structural as well as the functional, semantic and communicative level. Nord (2003:90) has arrived at the same results after years of getting involved in the translation of the Bible: "On the other hand, there are texts or text types where the notion of some kind of equivalence (in style, meaning, communicative effect,

²⁶ See also 3.4.1 of this book: The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān.

etc.) is still- implicitly or explicitly- considered to be the most important (if not the one and only) standard for measuring translation quality or for deciding whether a text can be called a translation of its source at all: this would apply to literary texts, for example, and certainly to biblical texts.” Nord (ibid:93) expands on the problem and argues that the functional aspects of the text should be maintained and loyalty as well (‘function plus loyalty’): “In other words, we want the translation to attain new functions for the target audience (=functionality) without betraying the communicative intentions and expectations of both the source-text readers and the target-text readers (=loyalty).”

In summary of Nida’s discussion of the Bible translation in old and modern times, we conclude that the essence of religious translation is the intelligibility of the message. The intelligibility of the message matches to some extent the rational of the Qur’ānic Cognitive Model (see chapter 2). Nida (1964:15) comments on the translation of Martin Luther of the Bible: “He also carefully and systematically worked out the implications of his principles of translation in such matters” which allow shifts of word order, addition of connectives, elimination of non acceptable equivalents in the receptor language, use of phrases in translating single words, adjustment of metaphors, and “careful attention to exegetical accuracy and textual variants.”

Nida (ibid:26-29) contends that “the conflicts which have arisen over principles and procedures in Bible translating can be viewed from a number of different perspectives. Perhaps one of the most meaningful ways to study these problems is to note the differences of opinion which have arisen over issues of (1) inspiration vs. philology,

This has witnessed two opposing stands:

- shifting attention from “the details of wording in the original to the means by which the same message can be effectively communicated to present-day readers.”
- favouring “quite close, literal renderings as the best way of preserving the inspiration of the writer of the Holy Spirit.”

(2) tradition vs. contemporary authority,

- the choice between adhering to the old traditional understanding of the text or reading into the text ‘contemporary learning’
- and (3) theology vs. grammar.”

- grammar is a basis for exegesis

- trusting the text as it is, rather than its meaning
- the awareness of the necessity of vital communication

1.2.3.8 Functional Equivalence

House (1977:42, 1997:31-32) indicates that equivalence is the criterion of translation quality. She argues that semantic and pragmatic equivalence requires equivalence of function, i.e., the application or use which the text has in the particular context of a situation. This function consists of two components: ideational and interpersonal, in Hallidayan²⁷ terms, which is equivalent to a SL function. She postulates that the function of a text is established as a result of analyzing the texts along situational dimensions of language user and use. In this connection Abul-Raof (2005a:22) is of the opinion that “the text is any occurring communicative event” and adds that “the text is also defined as language that is functional, i.e., language that is doing some job in some context. In other words, the text is in fact made of meaning. A text is a communicative occurrence which meets seven standards of textuality.²⁸ If any of these standards is not considered to have been satisfied, the text will not be communicative. Hence, non-communicative texts are treated as non-texts.”

For a translation of optimal quality there should be a match of dimensions in the source and target texts, since such dimensions contribute to the components of text function. Using such dimensions in analysis we get the profile which characterizes its function, such that each dimension contributes to the ideational and interpersonal functional components. This textual profile is considered the norm against which the quality of translation is measured. The degree to which the translated text’s profile and function match or mismatch is the degree to which a translated text is considered more or less adequate in quality.

Translation is not synonymy as synonymy represents only one aspect of it. Besides, translating entails more than finding corresponding words between two languages. Nida (2001:29) states that “the meanings of words constantly overlap with one another and the

²⁷ A systematic-functional theory of language advanced by M. A. K. Halliday in the latter part of the twentieth century. Halliday (1973) focuses on language in use, as a communicative act, and describes three strands of functional meaning co-occurring in a text: *Ideational Meaning, Interpersonal Meaning, and Textual*.

²⁸ Cohesion, coherence (consonance), intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality.

boundaries of meaning are fuzzy and poorly defined.” However, this does not mean that synonymy is not important in translation. On the contrary, synonymy continues to be a central concept in translation. But the translator has to keep in mind the pragmatic component because more attention to lexical and syntactic synonyms, regardless of their context, might result in producing awkward translations.

It is a fact of life that the effect of the Qur’ān on the hearer/ reader is so tremendous that people burst into tears and experience fits of guilt and imperfection when they listen to or read the Qur’ān. That is why the advocates of the untranslatability of the Qur’ān claim that however bilingually gifted and skillfully eloquent the translator is, there is a slim opportunity that he can transfer the effect of the Qur’ānic utterances as they are in the Qur’ān. The effect of the communicative force of the Qur’ānic verse can be experienced in the following example from Pickthall’s (Q88:1-16):

﴿ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ﴾ ﴿ وَجْوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاشِعَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ تَصَلَّى
نَارًا حَامِيَةً ﴾ ﴿ تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ آنِيَةٍ ﴾ ﴿ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيحٍ ﴾ ﴿ لَا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا
يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ ﴾ ﴿ وَجْوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاعِمَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ لِسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴾ ﴿ لَا تَسْمَعُ
فِيهَا لَآغِيَةً ﴾ ﴿ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَرْفُوعَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ وَأَكْوَابٌ مَوْضُوعَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ وَنَمَارِقُ
مَصْفُوفَةٌ ﴾ ﴿ وَزَرَائِبٌ مُبْتُوتَةٌ ﴾

[Hath there come unto thee tidings of the Overwhelming? On that day (many) faces will be downcast, Toiling, weary, Scorched by burning fire, Drinking from a boiling spring, No food for them save bitter thorn-fruit. Which doth not nourish nor release from hunger. On that day other faces will be calm, Glad for their effort past, In a high garden Where they hear no idle speech, Wherein is a gushing spring, Wherein are couches raised, And goblets set at hand, And cushions ranged, And silken carpets spread. Q88: 1-16] (Pickthall 1997: 451)

Nord (2003:90) maintains that “in the case of translation studies, functionalists claim that any text is meant to serve some kind of purpose, that it is the translator’s task first to find out what the intended purpose of the translation is and then to produce a text that suits this purpose. Non-functionalists maintain that a translation would reflect as many features as possible of the original text in order not to change anything the author may have wanted to

say. Functionalists, however, think that there is no middle ground between the two following options: In the first option, the translator reproduces as many source-language features as possible, thus inevitably changing the communicative effect (e.g. giving the target reader an impression of foreignness where the source reader found familiarity), in the second, the translator reproduces (their interpretation of) the source author's communicative intention and makes it comprehensible to target-culture readers by precisely changing form and style to patterns which such readers know and are able to interpret correctly." It is apparent that the notion of functionalists is distinct from that of non-functionalists: (1) Non-functionalists pay due respect for the SL. (2) They don't take liberty with the SL. (3) They keep close to the characteristics of the SL. (4) The target then is not to change the communication force of the SL. In this connection, House (1997:16) is of the view that "functionalistic approaches are closely concerned with the relationship between (features of) texts and the human agents concerned with them."

It is evident at this point that the ideal optimal translation is difficult to realize, and that leads once again to the issue of equivalence and the degree of its compatibility with the SL. Moreover, in the case of religious translation, the problem of equivalence becomes a big issue because the translation now relays sacred beliefs of the Other which have to be presented with great care, respect and no partiality. As this ideal image is hard to be attained, there is always a place for ideologies to come in as is always argued and exemplified. Harvey (2003:72) draws out that "...the translator's ethical responsibility: the translator is no longer a secondary figure but has become someone who, perhaps better than anybody else, recognizes the importance of re-presentation, knows that any crystallization can turn into snow, salt or flower on the end of a twig."

1.2.3.9 Stylistic²⁹ Equivalence

According to Nida and Taber (1969:132), "style is a multidimensional feature that affects the "tone" and "flavour" of discourse. Style is a matter of the exterior, amount and colour, landscaping and interior décor". For Enkvist (1973:19), stylistics is "the discipline that studies one type of language variety, namely that correlating with text type and situation". Thus he regards style as a quality of all texts but styles can be regarded as attractive or not

²⁹ See also 5.3 of this book: Stylistic Features of the Qur'ān.

depending on the eye of the beholder. He, like other advocates of the “style-as-deviation” school, considers style markers as those features which are more common or rare in a text compared to the standard established. Such style markers give the text its stylistic flavour. In this regard, Abdul-Raof (2004a:9) states that “stylistics is a branch of linguistics which studies the features of situationally-distinctive varieties of language. Stylistics also tries to establish principles capable of accounting for the particular choices made by the text producer.”

In translating literary discourse, recreating the stylistic idiosyncrasy of the original author represents one of the main challenging tasks. In a cross-lingual situation, the aim should be to produce in translation the general degree of style rather than the exact kind of style employed by the original. When translating any literary text, there seem to be two main approaches. Some translators do it intuitively, and hope for the best. Others favour a more systematic, analytical approach. My own view is that any literary translation must involve a careful stylistic analysis of the SL because translation is not merely transference merely of sense, but also of style, and in fact these often cannot be separated in a religious text. This is particularly true of the Qur’ān. Whether such analysis comes first, as groundwork, whether it comes after the translation in the form of editing, or whether it is done implicitly during the act of translation, itself is of little importance, and does not seem necessarily to have an effect on the result. But it must be done, and it must be an integral part of the translation of the Qur’ānic text.

Nida and Taber (1969) proposed that reproducing the style of the original author in translation involves combinations of a variety of features designed for efficiency and special effects. The greater the stylistic idiosyncrasy of an author the more complex the nature of style for special effects will be. Thus, the stylistic features of the author have to be listed and then it is important to indicate how features of the micro language function to bring about efficiency of communication. The important stylistic contrasts between the two versions should be presented and discussed in order to arrive at an evaluation of the rendering of these features in the two translations. This calls for more stylistic analysis studies and to follow Nida’s suggestion above, for using stylistic analysis as a means of evaluating translation.

Leech and Short (1981:158-164) offer a technique for analyzing style which is based on four main linguistic features: lexis, grammar, figures of speech, cohesion and context. By lexis they mean those features of vocabulary such as formal versus informal, complex versus simple, archaic or dialect words. They emphasize the question of frequency of lexical features when compared with a standard of what is normal in order to recognize what is special about a certain literary work. Grammar refers to the structure of sentences: complexity, subordination, coordination types, clauses, phrase structures, pre-modifiers, etc. Figures of speech refer to such features as metaphor and paradox, which usually arise from non-regularity in language use and from which they gain their communicative power. Such figures are considered features of meaning and expression peculiar to literary language.

According to Leech and Short, cohesion and context are parts of style and used here to include how a sentence fits into the wider context of discourse and its relation to the preceding and following sentences. Thus, cohesion can be considered style specific and also refer to a particular situation which the parts of discourse as a whole presuppose.

1.2.3.10 Ethnographic Equivalence

Ethnographic translation is another translation strategy that translators may choose depending on the text under study. The ethnographic translation, Casagrande (1954:336) maintains, is concerned primarily with the explication, either in annotation or in the translation itself, of the cultural context of the message in the source language. This method, Chau (1985:127) argues, claims that meaning in any language is culture-bound and translators, according to Casagrande (1954:138), do not in real terms, translate languages but cultures. It follows that accurate translation can be arrived at if meaning is addressed ethnographically, i.e., if the translator involves himself/herself in knowing how the SL meaning evolves in the source culture. Ethnographic translation, Casagrande (1954:336) maintains, follows a model which is mainly concerned with the explication of the cultural content of a given text either by giving further information where necessary or by referring the reader to footnotes and annotation. Although some may argue that referring readers to footnotes is boring and distracting, we believe that every culture has its non-transferable cultural material; and this procedure, therefore, is better than giving ambiguous or

inaccurate, literal equivalence. However, target-oriented translation theories are doubtful about the possibility of determining if and to what extent the target matches the source. If no word in a language is exactly the same as any other word in a different language, and languages are reciprocally incommensurable, either translating is impossible or it consists in freely interpreting the SL and recreating it. At this point what interests scholars is no longer the relationship between source and target but rather the effect of the translated text on the target culture. In this connection Neubert (2000:19) introduces the notion *familiarization and alienation*, and he comments: “At this point I hasten to add that the enculturation of translation into the L2 communicative culture is by no means the only way to apply the textual model of translation. A particular translation assignment may call for quite the opposite procedure, viz. the target version should openly betray L1 textual features because not familiarization but alienation is expressly intended, may be by the commissioner of the translation or by the circumstances of the concrete translational situation.”

In elaborating this analysis, a few examples from the field can further expand on the themes *familiarization and alienation*. Examples can be easily supplied: it is observed that al-Hilālī and Khan have used *transliteration* which can be considered a form of foreignness or alienation. Let us consider the following examples:

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

[This is the Book (the Qur’ān), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are *Al-Muttaqūn* [the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism who fear Allāh much (abstain From all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allāh much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)] Q2:2] (al-Hilālī 1998:3)

[Allāh is the *Walī* (Protector or Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light. But as for those who disbelieve, their ‘*Auliyā* (supporters and helpers) are *Ṭāghūt* [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. Q2:257] (al-Hilālī 1998:58)

﴿اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

[Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all is good (Islām), enjoining *Al-Ma'rūf* (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islām orders one to do) and forbidding *Al-Munkar* (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islām has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful. Q3:104] (ibid:88)

﴿وَلَتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

Empirically speaking, the translator almost always finds it best – bearing in mind the target readers – to employ *familiarization* as a supporting, assisting mechanism in order to make things appear familiar and undemanding as far as understanding the text is concerned. Taken together, the following verse in Dawood's illustrates further enough the point in discussion:

﴿وَكَانَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةٌ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ﴾ ﴿قَالُوا تَقَاسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ﴾

[In the town there was a band of nine men, who did evil in the land and nothing that was good. They said: 'let us swear in the name of God to kill him in the night, together with all his household. We will say to his next of kin: 'We were not even present when they were slain. It is the truth we are telling.' Q27:48-49] (Dawood 2003:268)

It is observed here that the translation is more target text-oriented and this is shown in the choice of the lexical items *band, nothing that was good, kill, next of kin, we were not present* and even the structure of the language *nothing that was good, we were not present*. Dawood has manipulated the text in such a way that serves the target readers. It will be immediately clear the boundaries between *familiarization* and *alienation* when contrasting Dawood's with al-Hilālī and Khan's translation:

[And there were in the city nine men (from the sons of their chiefs), who made mischief in the land, and would not reform. They said: "Swear one to another by Allāh that we shall make a secret night attack on him and his household, and thereafter we will surely say to

his near relatives: ‘We witnessed not the destruction of his household, and verily we are telling the truth. Q27:48-49] (al-Hilālī 1998:510)

Putting the lexical items and its grammatical structure from both translations side by side is an evidence for the argument being held: *did evil/ made mischief, nothing that was good/ would not reform, we were not present/ witnessed not*. In this regard, and in Bhabha’s words, (1997:14) ‘Cultural translation is not simply appropriation or adaptation; it is a process through which cultures are required to revise their own systems and values, by departing from their habitual or “inbred” rules of transformation. Ambivalence and antagonism accompany any act of cultural translation, because negotiating with the “difference of the other” reveals the radical insufficiency of our systems of meaning and signification.’”

It has been admitted as Jansen holds (1974:55), the Qur’ān “is a difficult book. Its language has always troubled people who attempted to understand it.” That is why translators tend to make their translation more informative, though this could lead to a source-centred translation.

There is a final issue that often causes confusion amongst scholars; that is the limit of intervention from the part of the translator. It should not go without saying that a translation can be a projection of the self on the production of the others. Steiner (1975:317) conceptualizes translation as “a mirror which not only reflects but also generates light”; however, more surprisingly, instead of guiding, the light sometimes misleads. Nevertheless, Harvey (2003:46) considers translation “as not merely the outcome of established determinations, manipulations in the receiving socio-cultural system but as an event opening up the possibility (however minor) of ideological innovation.”

1.3 Problems of Equivalence

A good case could be made that translation, as is well known, is the means of conveying others’ thoughts into our languages. This process of conveying thoughts entails dangers of not finding the right equivalent, whether at the word level or the sentence level. This is due to lexical, semantic or cultural problems. However, it is worthy of note that when these thoughts are the property of religion dangers become real threats to intelligibility of the original text. This applies to the translation of the Qur’ān. Not surprisingly, therefore,

Baker (1992:17) also maintains that the choice of a suitable equivalent between two languages depends on a wide variety of factors, some of which “may be strictly linguistic...other[s]...may be extra-linguistic”. This still leaves the important question of what the justification and explanation for Nida’s (1964:166) “closest equivalent to the source language message” might be, however the translators who had worked within Nida's paradigm had already generated quite a number of arguments in its support. Saedi (1990: 390) claims that translation usually searches for equivalence between any two languages. He suggests that to judge whether or not equivalence has been achieved, seven interrelated elements, namely, vocabulary, structure, texture, sentence meaning as opposed to utterance meaning, language varieties, stylistic effect and cognitive effect should be considered. He stresses that these conditions do not act in isolation from one another, but are heavily reliant on one another. There are a number of evident linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic. Linguistically speaking, English is a branch of the family of Indo-European languages, while Arabic is related to the family of Semitic languages (Hassan& Qasim 1982:313). Therefore, examples are abound where the translator cannot almost always find solutions for problems of equivalence in the rendition between English and Arabic.

1.3.1 Adjustments

Newmark refers to adjustments in several places. One occurrence is in (1981:31) and another is in (1995:85). Newmark promotes the approach of ‘shifts and transposition’. These involve changes in the grammar form the SL to the TL. He acknowledges that this process is called ‘shifts’ by Catford or ‘transpositions’ by Vinay and Darbelnet. Bell (1991:6) also supports freedom in translation: “to shift from one language to another is, by definition, to alter the forms”. Certain types of translation taken by Bell as indicative of free translation, e.g., transposition which means rendering the equivalent semantically but not committing itself to the same form of the SL because of many good reasons among which the word class for example. The second type is functional equivalence whose crux is the function of the message and not the form: swapping the function of SL by an equivalent function in the TL. However, the third type is adaptation which features the cultural difference between the two languages.

Lörscher (1992:410) refers to this semantic suitability as 'sense-oriented translation' because it aims to provide a semantic content to which the reader is invited to dwell. In the same vein Thelen (1992:113) holds the translator "should discover the SL meaning on the basis of the SL form. And only then he/she should try to re-express this SL meaning in the appropriate TL form". Thus, the working formula should adhere to the 'semantic suitability' rendered using the correct TL form reaching some degree of accuracy. For Baker (1992:57), accuracy "is no doubt an important common target-language pattern, which is familiar to the target reader, plays an important role in keeping the communication channels open". So we provide the target reader accurate language form so that he can understand the communicative force of the SL.

Again Nida very well indicates (1964:167) in his explanation of dynamic equivalence the necessity to make adjustments at two intrinsic levels, that is grammar and lexicon. There is, of course, the possibility that these adjustments or correctness techniques are (ibid:226) "designed to produce correct equivalents-not to save as an excuse for tampering with the SL message".

Nida (ibid.) goes on to list the purposes of such changes as follows:

- (1) to permit adjustment of the form of the SL message to the requirements of the TL structure,
- (2) to achieve the semantic suitability among equivalent structures,
- (3) to render an appropriate equivalent style, and
- (4) to carry an equivalent communication load.

He (ibid.) adds that, in order for the translator to fulfil these purposes, numerous minor alterations in form must be made. Therefore, these techniques are concerned with adjustments of grammar, lexicon and syntactic structure between the SL and TL. Nida is of the view that (1998:130) "whereas in the past there have been strong objections to making various types of creative adjustments in religious texts, this situation is changing rapidly. People are more interested in functional equivalence of meaning than in misleading literalism."

1.3.2 Additions

It is clear that addition is a translation strategy that aims to convey a semantically intelligible message. Winter (1961:69-70) comes very close to stating that no one can convey the content of a statement from one language to another without omission or addition. This is something that Nida clearly insists on when he contends: “though ellipsis occurs in all languages, the particular structures which permit such ‘omitted’ words are by no means identical from language to language” (Nida 1964:227).

Let us consider the following examples:

﴿ اذْهَبْ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَى ﴾

[“Go thou to Pharaoh, for he *has indeed transgressed all bounds.*” Q20:24] (Yūsuf ‘Alī, 2000:254)

It is worthy of note here how the verb *طَغَى* is translated into *has indeed transgressed all bounds* and how *نُسَبِّحَكَ* is rendered into *may celebrate Your praise*. Since there are no clear cut equivalents for both verbs in English, the translator opts for addition as a way of rendering an intelligible message for the TL.

﴿ كَى نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴾

[“That we *may celebrate Your praise* without stint. Q20:33] (ibid:254)

﴿ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴾

[Lo! We create man from *a drop of thickened fluid* to test him; so We make him hearing, knowing. Q76:2] (Pickthall 1997:434)

[We have created man from *the union of the two sexes*, so that We may put him to the proof. We have endowed him with hearing and sight. Q76:2] (Dawood 2003:413)

﴿ وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ نَبِيِّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴾

[And many a Prophet (i.e. many from amongst the Prophets) fought (in Allāh’s Cause) and along with him (fought) large *bands of religious learned men*. But they never lost heart for that which did befall them in Allāh’s Way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allāh loves Aṣ-Ṣābirin (the patient ones, etc.). Q3:146] (al-Hilālī 1998:95)

Some particularly glaring examples of addition in translation are that of the following:

نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ (a drop of thickened fluid) or (the union of the two sexes), *رَبِّيُونَ* (bands of religious learned men). Consider as well the following example where *النُّطْفَةَ* is transliterated as *Nutfah* which is an alien word for the target reader and *عَلَقَةً* translated as a *clot* with an exegetic phrase *a piece of thick coagulated blood* and then *مُضْغَةً* is rendered as *a little lump of flesh*. Here the translator provides a lengthy equivalent in TL to suit the meaning in SL. The translation does not stand out nearly as starkly as its Arabic equivalent does. Consequently we have a phrase used as an equivalent to one word. Obviously this will come at the expense of brevity and balance. Such words are translated on some occasions and transliterated on others; or, the reader is offered both a transliteration (e.g. ‘*Nutfah*’) and a translation (‘*a drop of thickened fluid*’ or *the union of the two sexes*). In this case, as in many others, translators are unlikely to reach quick agreement as to what the most ‘natural’ sense of a word might be. What implications may this have for the question of equivalence? If these words should be translated rather than transliterated (two unresolved issues), then we still have to make choices about the most appropriate translations of the above mentioned lexical problems.

﴿ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴾

[Then We made the *Nutfah* into a *clot* (a piece of thick coagulated blood), then We made the clot into *a little lump of flesh*, then We made out of that little lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We brought it forth as another creation. So blessed be Allāh, the Best of creators. Q23:14] (ibid:456)

All of the aforementioned examples point out clearly that it is often required to insert additional lexical items, to suit either the grammar or the stylistic norms and culture of the TL, as long as they do not counter-affect the meaning of the SL message.

1.3.3 Subtractions

Nida comes very close to stating (1964:231), “subtractions are neither so numerous nor varied as additions. They are, nevertheless, highly important in the process of adjustment”. He (ibid:224-5) maintains that not every SL lexical unit should be rendered into the TL. This is also stressed by Newmark (1995:85) who points out that some sort of shift “is

required when a SL grammatical structure does not exist in the TL”. In translations into English of Arabic texts, the translator is normally forced to introduce numerous stops which did not exist in the original text. Hernández-Sacristán (1994:120) holds the view that “a language with a richer concordant flexive morphology is more qualified for phoric reference than a poorer language in this domain. The short sentence of English propitiates analytic exposition and continual appeal to the reference world.” This can occur when translating from Arabic into English. The Arabic language is well-known for its long sentence which plays a crucial role in rendering the aesthetic meaning of the message and propitiates synthetic exposition (syntactic relationships) and ‘autoreferentiality’.

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ﴾

[Not so the steadfast who do good works. Forgiveness and a rich recompense await them. Q11:11] (Dawood 2003:157)

[Except those who show patience and do righteous good deeds, *those*: theirs will be forgiveness and a great reward (Paradise). Q11:11] (al-Hilālī 1998:287)

It is observed that *أُولَٰئِكَ* is left out at Dawood’s but is rendered as *those* at al-Hilālī’s translation. The subtraction here means less meaning and does not support the coherence and cohesion of the text as is meant in Qur’ānic discourse.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا﴾

[Believers, fear God and *speak the truth*. Q33:70] (Dawood 2003:299)

[Believers, be mindful of God, *speak in a direct fashion and to good purpose*. Q33:70] (Abdel Haleem 2004:271)

The subtraction can be easily observed when the translation is compared to another which does not follow the same methodology. It is obvious that Dawood’s translation is an example of ‘subtraction’ -*speak the truth*- whereas Abdel Haleem’s -*speak in a direct fashion and to good purpose*- is not; in fact it is rather ‘addition’ than ‘subtraction’.

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ فَمَا تُغْنِ النَّذْرُ﴾

[Cautionary tales, profound in wisdom, have been narrated to them: but warnings are unavailing. Q54:4-5] (Dawood 2003:374)

Dawood's formulation of the translation tends to divert from the sentence order of the original and rather blend the two as a clear example of subtraction. Compare Pickthall's and Abdel Haleem's.

[And surely there hath come unto them news whereof the purport should deter, effective wisdom; but warnings avail not. Q54:4-5] (Pickthall 1997:385)

[Although warning tales that should have restrained them have come down to them- far-reaching wisdom-but these warnings do not help. Q54:4-5] (Abdel Haleem 2004:350)

In the light of the examples in this section, we have seen that subtractions, or subtractions and compensation at the same time, are allowable in dynamic equivalence translation, as long as the meaning of the SL message is preserved, and the intention of the translator is to make his translation suit the grammar and style of the TL.

1.3.4 Alterations

Nord (2003:90) maintains that “ in the case of translation studies, functionalists claim that any text is meant to serve some kind of purpose, that it is the translator's task first to find out what the intended purpose of the translation is and then to produce a text that suits this purpose. Non-functionalists maintain that a translation would reflect as many features as possible of the original text in order not to change anything the author may have wanted to say. Functionalists, however, think that there is no middle ground between the two following options: In the first option, the translator reproduces as many source-language features as possible, thus inevitably changing the communicative effect (e.g. giving the target reader an impression of foreignness where the source reader found familiarity), in the second, the translator reproduces (their interpretation of) the source author's communicative intention and makes it comprehensible to target-culture readers by precisely changing form and style to patterns which such readers know and are able to interpret correctly.” It is evident at this point that the ideal optimal translation is difficult to realize, and that leads once again to the issue of equivalence and the degree of its compatibility with the SL. Moreover, in the case of religious translation, the problem of equivalence becomes a big issue because the translation now relays sacred beliefs of the other which have to be presented with great care, respect and no partiality. Popovič (1970:83) develops an argument in support of the functional equivalence. He holds, “the

incorporation of the linguistic impression of the original (that is, its style as a homogeneous expression) into the translation cannot be accomplished directly, but only by means of equivalent function, namely by appropriate shifts³⁰. This process does not involve the addition or omission of a lexical item in the ST, but rather, involves adjusting the units and syntactic structure of the ST so as to suit the linguistic system of the TL. Nida (1964:233) maintains that the “entire text must be subjected to a series of changes, involving not only additions and subtractions, but also alterations, some of them relatively radical”. Nida (ibid:233) comments that in doing so, the form of the SL is no longer the original but it has been transformed. Larson (1998:151) agrees with Nida, especially with regard to changing the form in the process of translation.

In addressing the issue of dynamic equivalence translation, Nida (1964:167) contends that “one is obliged to make such adjustment as shifting word order, using verbs in place of nouns and substituting nouns for pronouns”. This is attributable to the fact that there are differences between languages in respect of word classes, grammatical categories, and arrangements of word (Nida 1975a:33). Catford (1965:73) confirms the necessity of using shifts in translation, where they are required. In his words, “by a shift of level we mean that an SL item at one linguistic level has a TL translation equivalent at a different level”. Newmark (1985:31) also agrees with this practice, which he calls ‘transposition or shifts’ that is “the replacement of one grammatical unit by another”.

The following examples illustrate some possible textual alterations when translating from Qur’anic Arabic into English.

﴿وَأَخْرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَآخَرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ ﴿خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ
 صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

³⁰ “By ‘shifts’ we mean departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL. Two major types of ‘shift’ occur: level shifts and category shift,” (Catford, 1965:73). In this connection, Bakker M. et al. (1998:226) state that “the term shifts is used in the literature to refer to changes which occur or may occur in the process of translating. Since translation is a type of language use, the notion of shift belongs to the domain of linguistic performance, as opposed to that of theories of competence. Hence, shifts of translation can be distinguished from the systemic differences which exist between source and target languages and cultures. Systemic differences, which pertain to the level of competence, are part of the opening conditions for translation. Shifts, on the other hand, result from attempts to deal with systemic differences. Translation involves the transfer of certain values of expression or content across a semiotic border; shifts are concomitant with this transfer.”

[Others there are who have confessed their sins; their good works *had been intermixed with* evil. Perchance God will turn to them in mercy. God is forgiving and merciful. Take alms from them, so that they *may thereby be cleansed and purified*, and pray for them: for your prayers will give them comfort. God hears all and knows all. Q9:102-103] (Dawood 2003:144)

It is clear that the Qur'ān makes use of the active voice and conversely Dawood chooses the passive voice: *خَاطُوا* (*had been intermixed with*), *تُطَهَّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ* (*may be cleansed and purified*). In fact the impact of using the active voice is apparent and it highlights the personal involvement in case of *خَاطُوا* (*had been intermixed with*) and the direct influence of alms giving in purifying the believers (*تُطَهَّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ* *may be cleansed and purified*).

﴿ فِي بُيُوتٍ أُذِنَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ ﴾

[His light is found in temples which God has sanctioned to be built for the *remembrance* of His name. Q24:36] (Dawood 2003:249)

Two further possible or marginal observations are worth briefly noting as well: the shift from SL verb to TL verbal noun (*تَرْفَعُ* the *remembrance*) and the rendition of *بُيُوتٍ* as temples and not houses.

Having surveyed a number of significant adjustments in dynamic equivalence translation, including changes in grammar and style between English and Arabic, it is now useful to touch upon other related problems, namely, context, culture and metaphors, to see how these problems can be considered as constraints with regards to the translation of the Qur'ān.

1.3.5 Context

It has been argued that “a natural rendering must fit the context of the particular message” (Nida 1964:167). This means that we need to be aware of the nature of the message we are translating. A misunderstanding of the ST context will inevitably lead to an incorrect translation. Therefore, understanding the context of the SL message is a vital element in the process of translation.

For instance the different nuances the Arabic verb (مَسَّ) gives every time the context is changed. It could mean (*comes, had a sexual intercourse, overtake, beat, have sought to reach*).

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ ﴾

[Verily, those who are al-Muttaqūn (the pious), when an evil thought *comes* to them from Shaiṭān (Satan), they remember (Allāh), and (indeed) they then see (aright). Q7:201] (al-Hilālī 1998:230)

﴿ وَإِن طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عَقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَنسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴾

[And if you divorce them before you have touched (*had a sexual intercourse*) them, and you have appointed unto them the Mahr (bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), then pay half of that (Mahr), unless they (the women) agree to forego it, or he (the husband), in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to forego and give her full appointed Mahr. And to forego and give (her the full Mahr) is nearer to al-Ṭaqwa (piety, righteousness, etc.). And do not forget liberality between yourselves. Truly, Allāh is All-Seer of what you do. Q2:237] (ibid:52)

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُونَهَا فَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ وَسَرَخُوهُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ﴾

O you who believe! When you marry believing women, and then divorce them before you have sexual intercourse with them, no ‘Iddah [divorce prescribed period] have you to count in respect of them. So give them a present, and set them free i.e. divorce, in a handsome manner. Q33:49] (al-Hilālī 1998:568)

﴿ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيًّا ﴾

[“O my father! Verily! I fear lest a torment from the Most Beneficent (Allāh) *overtake* you, so that you become a companion of Shaiṭān (Satan) (in the Hell-fire).” Q19:45] (ibid:407)

﴿ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ﴾

[Those who eat Ribā (usury) will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like the standing of a person *beaten* by Shaiṭān (Satan) leading him to insanity. Q2:275] (ibid:62)

﴿ وَلَا تَرْكَبُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ ﴾

[And incline not toward those who do wrong, lest the Fire should touch you, and you have no protectors other than Allāh, nor you would then be helped. Q11:113] (ibid:302)

﴿ وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مَلِئَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهَبًا ﴾

[‘And we *have sought to reach* the heaven; but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. Q72:8] (ibid:790)

The question is whether the equivalence reached conveys the full sense and signification of the SL. Still some problems remain unresolved without any possible progress. Examples are also like: *‘idda*, *mahr*, *ṭaqwa*, etc. This particular class of words, by definition, cannot be translated. The literature gives it the name ‘semantic and cultural voids’ (cf. Dagut 1978 and Abdel-Raof 2001) and there is no equivalent words for it because of the cultural differences between Arabic and English.

1.3.6 Culture

Some translators may opt and display some local colour for the sake of intelligibility, regardless of whether it was there in the original. But the lexical ‘equivalence’ of words translated across cultural gaps often obscures semantic intelligibility and intentionality because most of the times they occur in contexts embodying ‘foreignness’.

Most translation theorists have focused on discussing the differences between culture and the extent of their impact on translation. Forster (1958:15) argues “opinions on this matter have differed, and much depends on the strength of the literary conventions in the translator’s own language”. However, since dynamic equivalence must fit the TL and culture as a whole (Nida, 1964:167), it is preferable to use a parallel expression so as to capture the response of the TL receptor, and make it equal to the response of the SL receptor. Therefore, the aforementioned example (*النُّطْفَةَ*) follows a method called translation by cultural substitution which is also strongly advocated by Baker (1992:31). Nida (1964:158), too, encourages substitution for cultural reasons. Nida (ibid:161) asserts

that cultural differences are more problematic for the translator than syntactical differences. A translator has to be acquainted with the SL culture in order to know how to deal with words which have a specific cultural meaning. The translator should ideally have the same level of understanding of the cultures-including the languages-of both SL and TL (Nord 1991:11).

Larson (1998:195) points out that one of the greatest difficulties facing the translator is how to find lexical equivalents for events which are not known in the TL culture. Larson (ibid:198) writes: “Terms which deal with the religious aspects of a culture are usually the most difficult, both in analysis of the source vocabulary and in finding the best receptor language equivalents”. For instance, English lacks culture-specific words such as **حور، قاصرات الطرف، الطمث**. Nida (1964:172), however, recommends that occasionally translators may have recourse to descriptive expressions or footnotes or transliteration in order to clarify a matter on which the audience is likely to be divided. It is suggested by Larson (1998:187) that loan words may be necessary when there is a great deal of difference between the two cultures. This can be especially applicable for such words in the Qur’ān for which there are no possible equivalents. Cultural equivalence, Nida (1964:91) argues, is centred round ecology, religion, social pattern, material culture and linguistic norms. That is to say cultural words lie in these potential areas. This apparently shows that translation is not always a question of pure linguistic capability but also a matter of understanding culture as well.

﴿ فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَّازِهِمْ جَعَلَ السَّقَايَةَ فِي رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيَّتُهَا الْعِيبَرُ
 إِنَّكُمْ لَسَارِقُونَ ﴾ ﴿ قَالُوا وَأَقْبَلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ مَاذَا تَفْقِدُونَ ﴾ ﴿ قَالُوا نَفَقِدُ صَوَاعَ الْمَلِكِ وَلِمَن جَاءَ
 بِهِ حِمْلُ بَعِيرٍ وَأَنَا بِهِ زَعِيمٌ ﴾ ﴿ قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا جِئْنَا لِنُفْسِدَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كُنَّا
 سَارِقِينَ ﴾ ﴿ قَالُوا فَمَا جَزَاؤُهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ كَاذِبِينَ ﴾ ﴿ قَالُوا جَزَاؤُهُ مَن وُجِدَ فِي رَحْلِهِ فَهُوَ
 جَزَاؤُهُ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

[So when he had furnished them forth with their provisions, he put the (golden) bowl into his brother’s bag, then a crier cried: “O you (in) the caravan! Surely, you are thieves!” They, turning towards them, said: “What is it that you have missed?” They said: “We have missed the (golden) bowl of the king and for him who produces it is (the reward of) a

camel load; I will be bound by it.” They said: “By Allāh! Indeed you know that we came not to make mischief in the land, and we are no thieves!” They [Yūsuf's (Joseph) men] said: “What then shall be the penalty of him, if you are (proved to be) liars.” They [Yūsuf's (Joseph) brothers] said: “The penalty should be that he, in whose bag it is found, should be held for the punishment (of the crime). Thus we punish the Zālimūn (wrong-doers, etc.)!” Q12:70-75] (al-Hilālī 1998:313-314)

Consider the following observations about cultural specific words e.g.:

السَّقَايَةَ، الْعَيْرُ، صَوَاعَ الْمَلِكِ، حِمْلُ بَعِيرٍ، قَالُوا جَزَاؤُهُ مَنْ وُجِدَ فِي رَحْلِهِ فَهُوَ جَزَاؤُهُ

The translator should be very well aware of the cultural and historical background of the original text or else he might fail to leave the same impact of the original and the result would be just a distorted flawed image of the original. It is worthy of note here that the part *قَالُوا جَزَاؤُهُ مَنْ وُجِدَ فِي رَحْلِهِ فَهُوَ جَزَاؤُهُ* is cultural-specific. At that old time the norm was to imprison that who steals something. Yet that punishment was not mentioned by name in the text but it should be understood if you are familiar with the cultural context. Nothing in the text point, however succinctly, at that.

﴿وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَا مَنْزِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ﴾

[We have determined phases for the moon until finally it becomes like an old date stalk. Q36:39] (Abdel Haleem 2004:282)

Between the two poles ‘literal’ and ‘free’ come a wide array of terms diagnosing translation and describing its elements. However the name is, translation is left with two options either mirroring ourselves with a touch of foreign colours or disowning our identity and losing ourselves to the other. Such a translation as Abdel Haleem’s is oriented toward the receptor’s response, as well as rendering the meaning of the SL message. It aims to produce a TT that is consistently coherent with the receptor’s culture, by eliminating almost every element of foreignness. Consequently, this results in necessary adjustments in grammar, lexicon, word choice and word order.

Consider for an example the following translation: the element of foreignness prevails. The explanatory phrase ‘the old dried curved date stalk’ does not help much in bridging the cultural and historical gap between the two universes, namely, Arabic and English.

[And the moon, We have measured for it mansions (to traverse) till it returns like the old dried curved date stalk. Q36:39] (al-Hilālī 1998:591) Dickens et al (2002:29) call the problem here as translation loss due to cultural differences between two languages. They gave the problem an umbrella term: ‘cultural transposition’. For Dickens et al (ibid:29) cultural transposition is “for the main types and degrees of departure from literal translation that one may resort to in the process of transferring the contents of an ST from one culture to another. Any degree of cultural transposition involves the choice of features indigenous to the TL and the target culture in preference to features with their roots in the source culture. The result is to reduce foreign (that is SL-specific) features in the TT, thereby to some extent naturalizing it into the TL and its cultural setting.”

1.3.7 Lexical Equivalence

The problem of equivalence arises when a word in the SL has more than one meaning. In the case of the Arabic language some lexical items do not have lexical equivalents in English due to their cultural specificity. These words are problematic for the translator: when transliterated they are alien; when translated they are still alien and they are usually rendered in lengthy equivalents, e.g., العُرْجُونُ Here we have a phrase (an old date stalk) used as an equivalent to one word. Obviously this will come at the expense of brevity and balance. Thus, effectiveness of the original, and sometimes comprehensibility, may also suffer. From this perspective translation theorists doubt the possibility of complete equivalence between languages. In this connection Rabin (1958:123-4) thinks “what is in one language ‘the same thing’ and called by one name appears in another under different names”.

﴿ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ﴾

Then We made the Nuṭṭah into a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood), then We made the clot into a little lump of flesh, then We made out of that little lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We brought it forth as another creation. So blessed be Allāh, the Best of creators. Q23:14[(a-Hilālī 1998:456)

The difficulty of choosing words lies in the fact that, as al-Jurjānī (n.d.:69) says, the equivalent synonym to a lexical item in another language might not be as good as the original, since it depends on its place in the sentence and its relations with the surrounding words. He also asserts that it is inconceivable to assign a function to any word without knowing its meaning and that the order in which words are arranged is determined by the order in which meanings are arranged in the speaker's mind. Once the ideas are arranged, exact and unambiguous expressions of these ideas are achieved without exerting any effort in arranging the words. This is because, as al-Jurjānī (n.d.:70) indicates, words are vessels and vehicles of meanings. A solid understanding and awareness of meaning determines the choice of words in which they are expressed.

Moreover, some words have a wide semantic province that will rarely be covered even by an equivalent word in English. For instance, words like *تَطَهَّرَهُمْ*, can hardly find exact equivalents in English. Thus, one word in Arabic requires more than one equivalent to cover the semantic shades implied in the Arabic word.

Another difficulty is that some Arabic concepts have more than one name in Arabic. For instance, the concepts of al-jannah and al-nār respectively, which refer to Heaven and Hell, are often used in religious context yet with different names:

(السعير، جهنم، سقر، حميم، الجحيم- الجنة، جنة النعيم، جنة الخلد، جنات عدن، جنة المأوى، الفردوس)

When accurately translated, such words appear quite alien to the English reader. It is also hard to find their exact equivalents since they are actually attributive names that carry specific qualities of Hell that are not common to the TL reader, though quite acceptable to the Arabic reader. Rendering these words as Heaven and Hell make them lose some of their semantic features. Dagut (1978:65) explicates that cultural voids are untranslatable because of "the impossibility, in any other way, of introducing the foreign reader into the cultural world of the speakers of the language being translated." In this connection, Abdel-Raof (2001:47) contends that the reason of using the transliteration in Qur'ān translation goes back to cultural voids.

Repetition of morphological pattern is also another problematic area which impedes the rendition of lexical equivalence translation from Arabic into English. This pattern cannot

be rendered in English by a verb form as is the case in Arabic. However, the translator has to find the closest equivalent as in the above example.

Arabic is a derivational language which is characterized by its root and pattern morphology. Arabic roots are set of usually three or four consonants, which carry the common meaning of the other forms, e.g. /ح/ ، /ت/ ، /ف/ / fataḥ 'to open'. Morphological repetition, which is typical of Arabic, is a problem area in translation, particularly when it appears in words which occur in syntactic proximity, that is, the presence of two patterns of the same root close to each other in the sentence.

For instance, root repetition in the following example is favoured in Arabic, yet it sounds unusual in English.

﴿ وَيَطَهِّرْكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴾

[and to purify you with a thorough purification. Q33:33] (a-Hilālī 1998:565)

﴿ فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا ﴾

[And speak to him mildly, Q20:44] (ibid:417)

﴿ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴾

[and speak to them words of kindness and justice. Q4:8] (ibid:107)

Such repetition is acceptable in Arabic. Yet, in English the noun is provided in the form of a morphologically unrelated noun which has almost the same meaning though it does not sound as effective as the original. Thus being so close with the verb it does not fit the English style when translated literally. Therefore it has to be given another equivalent in order to produce a reasonable acceptable English style (cf. Abdel Haleem's translation below). This becomes clear in Q83:2-3.

﴿ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ﴾ ﴿ وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ﴾

[Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, demand full measure, And when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due. Q83:2-3] (al-Hilālī 1998:821)

Who, when they measure against the people, take full measure

but, when they measure for them or weigh for them, do skimp. (Arberry 1998:635)

[Who demand of other people full measure for themselves, but give less than they should when it is they who weigh or measure for others! Q83:2-3] (Abdel Haleem 2004:413)

The verbs ‘iktāla اِكْتَالَ and kāla كَالَ have the same root K.Y.L. كَيْل, the problem lies in the fact that though the verbs (kāla كَالَ and ‘iktāla اِكْتَالَ) have the same root, they are different in derivational patterns. The two verbs also vary in contextual meaning: the former is against while the latter is for the people, though both are in the semantic area of measurement.

Some theorists argue that translation is, in principle, impossible. Rabassa (1989:1) argues: “We should certainly not expect that a word in one language will find its equal in another. ... A word is nothing but a metaphor for an object or, in some cases, for another word.” The shades of meanings may differ as every language charges its lexical inventory with a range of meaning that other languages may fail to reveal.

1.3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed at discussing three main points relating to the study. The first entails from translational perspective, the definition and types of translation. The second is a detailed account of the notion of equivalence in translation, definitions, types and levels of equivalence. The third is the problems of equivalence with special reference to Qur’ānic discourse and how the absence of equivalence in the TL affects the reliability of translation. Examples are given from the translations of the Qur’ān to illuminate the theoretical part of the study. Chesterman (1997:132) argues that “if the receivers of a message vary, the effect *cannot* be exactly the same. This is basically because receivers interpret any utterance in terms of their own knowledge of the world, their own current cognitive state; and since no two people, even within the same language community, have exactly the same knowledge of the world, no two interpretations can ever be identical.”

If the ‘same effect’ is a far- fetched ideal then the focus has to shift to the exploration of the text and its culture. The aim of this shift is to provide an intelligible TT which can carry across the same cognitive message of the ST. Chapter two will discuss the Qur’ānic Cognitive Model in more details.

Chapter Two

The Qur'ānic Cognitive Model

2. 1 Introduction

This chapter has been written with two objectives: first, to acquaint the Qur'ān translator with certain matters which he should take hold of at the very beginning to reach a more than superficial understanding of the Qur'ān; second, to illuminate the major tenets of faith referred to in the Qur'ān. Thus, the chapter attempts to clarify those disturbing questions that commonly arise in the mind of the translator prior and during the study of the Qur'ān for the sake of translating its meaning. Abu al-A'ālā Maudūdī (1988:9) holds “whether one *the translator* ultimately decides to believe in the Qur'ān or not, one *the translator* must recognise the fundamental statements made by the Qur'ān and by the man to whom it was revealed, the Prophet Muḥammad, to be the starting point of one's *the translator's* study.” (Italicised words are mine). These claims are epitomized and characterized by the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model. A meaningful account of these claims cannot be arrived at without looking deep into the literature of the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model which reflects Muslim religious and social thought at its best. In the same vein, Nida (1964:152) summarizes “the ideal role of the translator calls for a person who has complete knowledge of both source and receptor languages, intimate acquaintance with the subject matter, effective empathy with the original author and the content, and stylistic facility in the receptor language.” Chesterman (1997:9) contends that “(total) equivalence is a red herring and “virtually unattainable, and hence not a useful concept in translation theory.” He (ibid:10) even announces the decline of equivalence and comments “if translation theory studies translations, and all translations are by definition equivalent, it would seem that we can dispense with the term altogether, and focus instead on the wide variety of relations that can exist between a translation and its source.” That is what Qur'ānic Cognitive Model presents as a framework against which translations can be commented on; in other words, how far the translation of the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān is close or not so close to the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model.

2. 2 The Qur'ānic Cognitive Model

In this introductory section the pillars (tenets of faith) of the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model are to be introduced and investigated. We have relied on the Qur'ān Cognitive Model (QCM) as a descriptive tool that can be employed effectively for the analysis of translation problems, problematic features of Qur'ānic discourse, and other controversial issues such as the tenets of faith. Translation of the Qur'ān necessitates the discussion of its *sūras and āyās* in great depth, thus providing examples of the ways in which the interpretation of the text makes possible deeper understanding of the pillars on which the message of the Qur'ān is based. Hervey and Higgins (1992:139) hold that “the subject matter of theological and religious works implies the existence of a ‘spiritual world’. Seen from outside, that is, by an atheist or agnostic, there may seem little difference between this and the fictive and imaginary subject matter of literary/fictional genres.” As Forster (1958:1) indicates “a perfect translation is one which fulfils the same purpose in the new language as the original did in the language in which it was written, not a mere approximation to that purpose,” the translator of the Qur'ānic text needs to be familiar with the QCM in order to render the same purpose in the TT as the ST did. Therefore, the translator should not be far away from the pillars of the QCM if he/she plans to render the same impression the ST has on its readers. If authenticity is stressed and not the faint image of the original, emphasis is to be allotted to the QCM. QCM bears the textual components that outline the Qur'ānic knowledge system which translators have to connect with that of the English language. Neubert and Shreve (1992:69) have proposed the idea of transferring the frames and scenarios of L₁ into L₂ using the L₂ linguistic system. (See 1.2.1 for more detail). Hervey and Higgins (1992:139) make a point that religious genres have something to do with the ‘empirical/descriptive than with the ‘literary/fictional’ category. They (ibid:139-140) state that “the author is understood not to be free to create the world that animates the subject matter, but to be merely instrumental in exploring it.” Landers (2001:171) stresses the importance of references as the translator’s tools. He (ibid:171) holds that “no one questions the necessity of reference works for the technical translator, especially in rapidly evolving fields where terminology is growing at a dizzying pace.” The point is that it is far significant for the translator of a religious text in general and the meanings of the Qur'ān in particular to explore reference works and understand the text better.

The QCM is a 'frame'³¹ which refers to a knowledge structure or structured set of elements drawn from the Qur'ān conceptual domains and consisting of encyclopaedic knowledge associated with the Qur'ān linguistic form. Our new cognitive concept, i.e. QCM, is proposed as another type of Lakoff's ICM (Idealized Cognitive Models). We are going to discuss and explore the QCM embedded in the Qur'ān to form a criterion against which the translations of the meanings of the Holy Qur'ān are analyzed and evaluated. QCM helps the translator to find religious dictum. From here arises the need to discuss the QCM as it expounds the way it is read and the way it is understood. Lack of knowledge of QCM hinders understanding since it illuminates the Islamic profession of faith. In addition, translators often ponder upon the context or purpose of an *'āyah* or a *sūrah* and have to consult with QCM before they can possibly understand the ST. Translators of the Qur'ān have always been referred to further reading of the cultural Qur'ānic domain and further recapitulation of the QCM's aims and cultural background. To bypass those aims and background, the translator will risk misreading the ST. However, QCM helps translators exhibit most of the features of the Qur'ān in the TL. Such exhibition makes TL recognizable as an endeavor to fathom the SL. For Larson (1998:3), translation consists of conveying the meaning of the SL into the TL. The meaning remains constant but is conveyed by changing from the forms and structures of the first language to those of the second. He (ibid:6) stresses the idea that the best translation is one which:

- (1) uses the normal language forms of the TL,
- (2) conveys, as much as possible, to the TL speakers the same meaning that was understood by the SL speakers, and
- (3) maintains the dynamic of the original, which means that the TT is presented in such a way that it will, ideally, evoke the same response as the ST attempted to evoke.

Chau (1985:127) claims that meaning in any language is culture-bound and translators, according to Casagrande (1954:138), do not in real terms, translate languages but cultures. It follows that accurate translation can be arrived at if meaning is addressed ethnographically, i.e., if the translator involves himself/herself in knowing how the SL meaning evolves in the source culture. Ethnographic translation, Casagrande (1954:336)

³¹ See Dirven René, Roslyn Frank, Cornelia Ilie. (2001). (eds.) *Language and Ideology, vol. 2: Descriptive Cognitive Approaches*. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

maintains, follows a model which is mainly concerned with the explication of the cultural content of a given text either by giving further information where necessary or by referring the reader to footnotes and annotation (for more information see 1.2.3.10.). Therefore, it is time now to present QCM which constitutes the transferable cultural material of Qur'ānic discourse which can assist translators in giving unambiguous or inaccurate literal equivalence.

It is worthy to note here as well that this chapter is based on the linguistic exegesis of the Qur'ān. The views of al-Zamakhsharī, al-Farrā', Abu Ḥayyān, and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah will be taken into account.

Time and again it is emphasized that, for Muslims, the Qur'ān is the Holy Book of Islam. It embodies and symbolizes the true essence of their faith. For them, the Qur'ān is Book of guidance and inspiration for the fashioning of socio-economic and political life of Muslims. Due to the fact that the Qur'ān is the sacred book of Islam, the Qur'ān and Islam have been used interchangeably, mentioning one of them can necessarily refer to the other. Muḥammad Yūsif Mūsā (2002:29) maintains that in the Islamic profession of faith the Qur'ān promotes the themes of religious unity, political unity and social unity. It is the religion of the mind and intellect, of the instinct and clarity, of liberty and equality as well as of humanity. For all this, it can be said that Islam is a religion and a state, and it is this religion which proclaims the rights of man. The Qur'ān with its 114 *sūrah*s, for Muslim scholars, contains between its covers the complete last message from Allāh:

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

[This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. Q5:3]

QCM holds that only through the guidance of the Qur'ān does the individual learn where he/she came from, where he/she is going, why the universe exists, and what his/her role is in the universe. He/She knows that in truth, and there is a great difference between those who know and those who do not know:

﴿أَفَمَنْ يَمْشِي مُكِبًّا عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَىٰ أَمَّنْ يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

[Is he who walks without seeing on his face, more rightly guided, or he who (sees and) walks on a straight way (i.e. Islāmic Monotheism). Q67:22]

Irving, et al. (2002:xviii) hold that the Qur'ān was revealed to be realized and show that the ideas and values that inspire man to establish the Kingdom of God on earth characterize the basic teachings of the Qur'ān. QCM promotes the realization of the optimal vision of God-fearing man living in a just society fulfilling his mission here and seeking His rewards in the Hereafter, and this optimal vision can only come into effect by the ideal of man living at peace with himself and with the creation around him by living at peace with the Creator. What has been mentioned earlier can be epitomized by the following *āyah* which reiterates that the Qur'ān is the source of divine guidance for mankind. This often repeated reference to humankind and not to Muslims, Arabs, or any other ethnic group, is to emphasize the Qur'ān's eternal and universal message.

﴿ إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمٌ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴾

[Verily, this Qur'ān guides to that which is most just and right and gives glad tidings to the believers (in the Oneness of Allāh and His Messenger, Muḥammad.) who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a great reward (Paradise). And that those who believe not in the Hereafter (i.e. they disbelieve that they will be recompensed for what they did in this world, good or bad, etc.), for them We have prepared a painful torment (Hell) Q17:9-10].

An intrinsic part of QCM is that the Qur'ān is the Word of Allāh. The Qur'ān articulates truth and the necessary attributes to live by it which provides a good deal of self-identity in the world. Irving, et al. (2002:5-6) have elaborated the theme: “The Book contains the Divine Word, uncreated, unaltered and intact. The Book reveals those aspects of Divine Reality whose knowledge is required to develop a correct relationship with God and His creation, even though the totality of the Divine Reality remains beyond human comprehension. As such the real intent of the Revelation is not the disclosure of God's Person, but of His Will.”

﴿ ... مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ... ﴾

[... We have neglected nothing in the Book ... Q6:38].

It must also be observed that the Qur'ān, for Muslim scholars, contains the Divine constitution that is- according to QCM- applicable anywhere at anytime. It is the Book of guidance to the whole of mankind. Abu al-A'ālā Maudūdī (1976:14) states that “the Qur'ān is not a literary work of the common conventional type that develops its central theme in a logical order; nor does it conform to the style of such work. The Qur'ān adopts its own style to suit the guidance of the Islamic movement that was started by Allāh's Messenger under His direct command.” Abu al-A'ālā Maudūdī (ibid:20) contends that all the *sūras* of the Qur'ān contain reference to the basic creed: *tawhīd* (the Unity of Allāh, His attributes), the hereafter and accountability, punishment and reward, Prophethood, and belief in the Book. Abdul-Raof (2003:105) states that monotheism, prophethood, eschatology, and reward and punishment are the ‘four Qur'ānic notions’, and they are the ‘roots of Islam’, and are the ‘tenets of faith’ (*mabādi' al-ilmān*) at the same time.

There is indeed a period of excellence in the Islamic history which supports the previous claims. That is why some scholars comment positively on the unprecedented influence of a Book on the lives of its believers. Irving, et al. (2002: preface) state that “the Qur'ān is the foundation and the mainstay of Islamic life and culture. If ever a book transformed a people from a motley group of warring tribes into a civilized international community, gave them a distinct identity, fashioned their historical personality and continued to be their main source of inspiration for over a millennium, it is the Qur'ān.”

2.3 Tawhīd – Islamic Monotheism

While *tawhīd* is the essential comprehensive characteristic of the total Islamic doctrine and its primary basis, it is also one of its components. *Tawhīd* is the foundation of all the revealed religions given to the prophets by God. However, it is unique to Islam and QCM. Abdul-Raof (2003:238) defines monotheism in the light of the Qur'ānic '*āyas* that refer to *tawhīd* (Q7:59, Q16:36, Q17:23, Q21:25, Q47:19, and Q51:56) as “the relationship with the only One (i.e., Allāh) that excludes a similar relationship with anyone else. It is man's genuine commitment to God, the focus of all his reverence and gratitude, the only source of value.” The Qur'ān affirms that there is one God to whom alone divinity can be attributed and none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, none has the right to rule but Allāh, no legislator, no organizer of human life and of human relationships to the world, to living

things or human beings but Allāh. From Him alone is received all guidance and legislation, all systems of life, norms governing relationships and the measure of values. That is why Islamic monotheism is symbolized by *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh) constitutes the core of the notion of QCM:

﴿ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴾

[Such is Allāh, your Lord! *la ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the *Wakil* (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, etc.) over all things. Q6:102].

The following statement (the ḥadīth narrated by Anas below) of the Prophet brings to the foreground of the argument that the faith in a single God is deeply rooted in the theological literature of the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān is centered round this fact. More importantly, Allāh is the source for everything seen and unseen, known and unknown, and the source for all knowledge. In fact it was essential for Islam to promote monotheism in a society of idolaters and pagans where the idea of one God was not favoured. Therefore it was logical that the Meccan chapters concentrated on the theme of *tawḥīd* to uproot the idea of associating partners with Allāh from the minds and hearts of the believers. In view of Abdul-Raof (2003:137), the priority was for the faith over any other economic or socio-political issues. The stress then was on establishing a strong foundation based on the oneness of God. In this regard, ‘Umar al-Ashqar (2000:67) holds: “the Qur’ānic methodology makes the starting point of its message and the message of all the Messengers: the call to worship Allāh alone, with no partner or associate.” Hence *tawḥīd* is the central theme of the Qur’ān.

Anas narrated that the Prophet said: “Whoever said: “*lā ilāha illa allāh*” (None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh) and has in his heart good faith equal to the weight of a barley grain will be taken out of Hell. And whoever said: “*lā ilāha illa allāh*” (None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh) and has in his heart good faith equal to the weight of a wheat grain will be taken out of Hell. And whoever said: “*lā ilāha illa allāh*” (None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh) and has in his heart good faith equal to the weight of an atom will be taken out of Hell.”³²

³² al-Bukhārī, (2003:15)

The belief in *lā ilāha illa allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh) is the keystone of the Qur’ān. That is why it is common to find great emphasis on the theme of *tawḥīd* in the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth (Prophetic traditions). In fact the belief in *lā ilāha illa allāh* is not just muttering away words but it needs a tremendous and strenuous work to be implemented in the minds and the hearts of the believers. Consequently they have to execute all their actions, deeds and behaviours accordingly. The following Ḥadīth fosters the issue firmly: the Prophet lays the foundation for the call to Islam and emphasizes the importance of the priority of *tawḥīd*. The Ḥadīth sums up everything since everything stems from *tawḥīd*.

When the Prophet sent Mu‘ādh to Yemen, he said to him: “You are going to a nation from the people of the Scripture, so let the first thing to which you will invite them, be the *tawḥīd* of Allāh. If they learn that, tell them that Allāh has enjoined on them, five prayers to be offered in one day and one night. And if they pray, tell them that Allāh has enjoined on them *zakāt* (purifying alms) of their properties and it is to be taken from the rich among them and given to the poor. And if they agree to that, then take from them *zakāt* but avoid the best property of the people.”

The Prophet taught Mu‘ādh the etiquette for the call to Islam. The first thing to which people are to be invited to is the Islamic profession of faith none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh. Once the Islamic monotheism is instilled into the hearts and minds of the believers, only then comes the time for the Qur’ānic approach of *do-and-not-do*.

Mu‘ādh b. Jabal narrated that the Prophet said: “O Mu‘ādh! Do you know what Allāh’s right upon His slaves is?” I (Mu‘ādh) said: “Allāh and His Apostle know best.” The Prophet said: “To worship Him (Allāh) alone and to join none in worship with Him (Allāh). Do you know what their right upon Him is?” I (Mu‘ādh) replied: “Allāh and His Apostle know best.” The Prophet said: “Not to punish them (if they do so).”

Abu Sa‘īd al-Khudri narrated that a man heard another man reciting (in the prayers): ‘Say (O Muḥammad): “He is Allāh, the One.” (Q112.1) And he recited it repeatedly. When it was morning, he went to the Prophet and informed him about that as if he considered that

the recitation of that Sūrah by itself was not enough. Allāh's Apostle said, "by Him in Whose Hand my life is, it is equal to one-third of the Qur'ān."³³

In the previous *Hadith*, 'one-third' here shows the place the Qur'ān holds for the Islamic monotheism. Qutb (1998:11) elaborates the meaning of worshipping One God and attributes Divinity, Creatorship, and Omnipotence to Allāh. By worshipping One God, people "derive their conceptions, values and standards, institutions, legislature and laws, orientation ethics and morals from Him Alone.

In the Islamic profession of faith "none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, and Muḥammad is the messenger of Allāh" (لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله) *lā ilāha illa allāh, Muḥammad rasūl- allāh* can be expounded as follows: the first part defines the unconditional surrender to a One God who is one at all times. The second half reflects Muḥammad, the seal of Prophets, being chosen for the last message to mankind:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

[And (remember) when Luqmān said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allāh. Verily! Joining others in worship with Allāh is a great *Zūlm* (wrong) indeed." Q31:13]

In like fashion, Sayyid Qutb (1977:15-16) signals out: The first pillar of Islam is that we bear witness that there is no god other than God and that Muḥammad is the Prophet of God. The approximate meaning of bearing witness that there is no god other than God is this: God is the exclusive possessor of divinity, and none of His creation shares in any of the aspects or properties of divinity. The first aspect of divinity is absolute rule, whence arises the right to legislate for His worshippers, to ordain paths for their lives, to prescribe values on which their lives should be based. It is not possible that there is no god other than God without recognizing that God alone has the right to ordain the path which human life should follow. Bearing witness that Muḥammad is the Prophet of God means approximately admitting that this path has been conveyed to us from God; that it is truly God's path for the life of mankind; and that it is the only path we are obliged to follow and implement in human life.

³³ al-Bukhārī, (2003:1359)

Islam pays special attention to the intellect. When it calls for the worship of One Single God the Qur'ān gives the necessary proofs:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَأَنى تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴾

[O mankind! Remember the Grace of Allāh upon you! Is there any creator other than Allāh who provides for you from the sky (rain) and the earth? *lā ilāha illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). How then are you turning away (from Him)? Q35:3]

﴿ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ
الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

[Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down water (rain) from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allāh (in worship) while you know (that He Alone has the right to be worshipped). Q2:22]

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ مِنَ الْحَيِّ ذَلِكَمُ اللَّهُ
فَأَنى تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴾

[Verily! It is Allāh Who causes the seedgrain and the fruitstone (like datestone, etc.) to split and sprout. He brings forth the living from the dead, and it is He Who brings forth the dead from the living. Such is Allāh, then how are you deluded away from the truth? Q6:95]

﴿ فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴾

[(He is the) Cleaver of the daybreak. He has appointed the night for resting, and the sun and the moon for reckoning. Such is the measuring of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing. Q6:96]

﴿ وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

[It is He Who has set the stars for you, so that you may guide your course with their help through the darkness of the land and the sea. We have (indeed) explained in detail Our *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, Revelations, etc.) for people who know. Q6:97]

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ﴾

[It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and has given you a place of residing (on the earth or in your mother's wombs) and a place of storage [in the earth (in your graves) or in your father's loins]. Indeed, We have explained in detail Our revelations (this Qur'an) for people who understand. Q6:98]

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُّخْرَجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مَّتْرَاكِبًا وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِن طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ انظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكُمْ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

[It is He Who sends down water (rain) from the sky, and with it We bring forth vegetation of all kinds, and out of it We bring forth green stalks, from which We bring forth thick clustered grain. And out of the datepalm and its spathe come forth clusters of dates hanging low and near, and gardens of grapes, olives and pomegranates, each similar (in kind) yet different (in variety and taste). Look at their fruits when they begin to bear, and the ripeness thereof. Verily! In these things there are signs for people who believe. Q6:99]

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ بَلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ﴾

[Allāh is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see. Then, He *Istawā* (rose above) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He has subjected the sun and the moon (to continue going round)! Each running (its course) for a term appointed. He regulates all affairs, explaining the *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) in detail, that you may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord. Q13:2]

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا وَمِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكُمْ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

[And it is He Who spread out the earth, and placed therein firm mountains and rivers and of every kind of fruits He made *Zawjain Ithnain* (two in pairs - may mean two kinds or it may

mean: of two sorts, e.g. black and white, sweet and sour, small and big, etc.) He brings the night as a cover over the day. Verily, in these things, there are *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.) for people who reflect. Q13:3]

﴿وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قِطْعٌ مُّتَجَاوِرَاتٌ وَجَنَّاتٌ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَزُرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِنَوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنَوَانٍ يُسْقَىٰ بِمَاءٍ وَاحِدٍ وَنَفْضًا بَعْضُهَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي الْأَكْلِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

[And in the earth are neighbouring tracts, and gardens of vines, and green crops (fields etc.), and date-palms, growing out two or three from a single stem root, or otherwise (one stem root for every palm), watered with the same water, yet some of them We make more excellent than others to eat. Verily, in these things, there are *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs) for the people who understand. Q13:4]

﴿اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنْثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ﴾

[Allāh knows what every female bears, and by how much the wombs fall short (of their time or number) or exceed. Everything with Him is in (due) proportion. Q13:8]

Q112 below manifests the attributes of Allāh, the Self-Sufficient Master, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. al-Zarqā (1976:110) points out, “through belief in the unity of God, Who is invested with all the attributes of perfection, Islam seeks to purge human intellect of idolatry and superstitious fancies. Polytheism and idolatry which are opposed by Islam degrade man to a level which is incompatible with his dignity.”

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ﴾ ﴿اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ﴾ ﴿لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ﴾ ﴿وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ﴾

[Say (O Muḥammad): “He is Allāh, (the) One. *Allāh-al-Ṣamad* (السيد الذى يصمد اليه) [Allāh the Self-Sufficient Master, whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)]. He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him. Q112:1-4].

Ibn Taymiyyah in Harrās (n.d.:35) mentions that Abu al-‘Abbās b. Suraij expounds the saying of the Prophet ‘Q112 equals one third of the Qur’ān’ and says that the Qur’ān is divided into three sections: (1) the rulings, (2) glad tidings and warnings, (3) *al-‘asmā wal-ṣifāt* the names and the qualities of Allāh and Q112 (b. Suraij adds) encompasses *al-‘asmā wal-ṣifāt*.

The Qur'ān gives a report of full evidence of the existence of Allāh, the Creator. The Qur'ān as the last message from Allāh, for Muslim scholars, should demonstrate all possible means to promote the theme of One Single God. The Qur'ān emphasizes Allāh's lordship and ultimate power in all of His creation. It addresses the intellect and the intellectual faculties of man. al-Ashaqar (2000:124) gives the example of a camel herder in the desert who knows who created the universe: He says: "the camel dung indicates the presence of a camel and footsteps indicate that someone walked here. So the heavens with their stars and the earth with its mountains and valleys must indicate the existence of the All-Knowing, All-Aware."

Thus the QCM instils into the minds and the hearts of Muslims the fact that believing in monotheism truly means observing and consequently implementing the straight way predestined by Allāh. Therefore, the spiritual capabilities of the Muslims are elevated as a result of the fear of Allāh and the establishment of relations consequently between the rulers and the ruled and between different categories of the Islamic society on the basis of a communal support for the benefit of justice and virtue.

Sayyid Qutb (1977: 26) points out that we are bound to attempt the realization of the divinely ordained path for human life, to turn humanity back towards its One True God; towards a purpose for existence worthy of the rank of human being; towards the norms that embrace all creation including man. This is the truth established by the Holy Qur'ān. It rejects the view of those who wish to follow other than the law of God and the way of life He had ordained.

﴿أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ﴾

[Do they seek other than the religion of Allāh (the true Islāmic Monotheism worshipping none but Allāh Alone), while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly. And to Him shall they all be returned. Q3:83] (ibid:83)

QCM addresses human nature - implemented in people - which by instinct worships one true Allāh. Consequently it identifies itself with the true Allāh and holds Islamic monotheism as a corner stone of its message and all consequences thereof:

﴿قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ اتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ
أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

[Say]O Muḥammad) ‘Shall I take as a *Wali* (Helper, Protector, lord or God) any other than Allāh, the Creator of the heavens and the earth? And it is He Who feeds but is not fed.’ Say: ‘Verily, I am commanded to be the first of those who submit themselves to Allāh (as Muslims).’ And be not you (O Muḥammad) of the *Mushrikūm* [polytheists, pagans, idolaters, and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allāh]. Q6:14].

More significantly, the notion of the unity of Allāh in Islam is repeatedly emphasized in the Qur’ān. This builds enthusiasm in the hearts and minds of the believers to lovingly adhere to the message of Allāh throughout all circumstances. A celebrated instance of the thorough and drastic change in the behaviour of the Muslim once he declares his submission to Allāh is found in Arnold’s (1935:71-72) emphatic comment: “ Islam was a revolt against empty theological polemics; it was a masculine protest against the exaltation of celibacy as a crown of piety. It brought out the fundamental dogmas of religion—the unity and greatness of God, that He is merciful and righteous, that He claims obedience to His will, resignation and faith. It proclaimed the responsibility of man, a future life, a Day of Judgment, and stern retribution to fall upon the wicked; and enforced the duties of prayer, almsgiving, fasting and benevolence. It thrust aside the artificial virtues, the religious frauds and follies, the perverted moral sentiments, and the verbal subtleties of theological disputes. It replaced monkishness by manliness, and recognition to the fundamental facts of human nature.”

The theme of unity of God in the Qur’ānic message also advocates that all scriptures were sent down from Allāh to mankind on Earth. It also calls for the belief in all the prophets of Allāh because they represent the same very message, the complete whole as embodied in the Qur’ān. Let us consider the following Qur’ānic *āyah*:

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ
إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ﴾

[He (Allāh) has ordained for you the same religion (Islām) which He ordained for Nūh (Noah), and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad), and that which We ordained for Ibrahīm (Abraham), Mūsa (Moses) and ʿĪsā (Jesus) saying you should establish religion (i.e. to do what it orders you to do practically), and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). Intolerable for the Mushrikūn, is that to which you (O Muḥammad) call them. Allāh chooses for Himself whom He wills, and guides unto Himself who turns to Him in repentance and in obedience. Q42:13]

﴿قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ
وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ
مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

[Say (O Muslims), “We believe in Allāh and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrīhim (Abraham), Ismāʿīl (Ishmael), Ishāque (Isaac), Yaʿqūb (Jacob), and to Al-Asbāṭ [the twelve sons of Yaʿqūb (Jacob)], and that which has been given to Mūsa (Moses) and ʿĪsā (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islām).” Q2:136]

The message of unity is reiterated at the end of Q2:

﴿آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا
نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ﴾

[The Messenger (Muḥammad) believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say), ‘We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers’ – and they say, ‘We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your forgiveness, our lord, and to You is the return (of all).’ Q2: 285]

2.4 God’s Omnipotence and Monotheism

Qur’ān discourse usually links between God’s omnipotence and monotheism. In other words, the Qur’ān, in order to drive the message of monotheism to the reader, it offers the reader with details about the power of Allāh which is referred to as God’s omnipotence

such as reference to the rain, mountains, the sun, the moon, the womb, the creation of humans, etc. In the same vein, Abdul-Raof (2005:201, 204) emphasises that monotheism is echoed by God's omnipotence and how He alone has subjected everything for our own interests and needs. It has been agreed now that as long as man submits himself in worship to Allāh the only one God, his submission needs to be activated in terms of obedience to whatever Allāh or His Prophet have commanded.

It follows from this the *Shahadah* the confession of a Muslim as it has been mentioned earlier incarnates the notion of QCM. This leads the argument to the importance of the concept of *tawhīd* in Islam which is represented in the Islamic concept of God that can be highlighted in the following Qur'ānic *āyas* which show God's omnipotence as a link to monotheism:

﴿فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ
لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

[The Creator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you mates from yourselves, and for the cattle (also) mates. By this means He creates you (in the wombs). There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer. Q42:11]

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

[No vision can grasp Him, but His Grasp is over all vision. He is the *al-Latīf* (the Most Subtle and Courteous), Well-Acquainted with all things. Q6:103]

The Qur'ān provides evidence which affirms the oneness of Allāh. In this regard, the Qur'ān proposes the rational proofs needed to urge people to believe in the one God. In this way the Qur'ān respects the intellectual faculties Allāh has bestowed on man and reminds the faithful of God's presence:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ﴾

[He it is Who sends down water (rain) from the sky; from it you drink and from it (grows) the vegetation on which you send your cattle to pasture; Q16:10]

﴿يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

[With it He causes to grow for you the crops, the olives, the date-palms, the grapes, and every kind of fruit. Verily! In this is indeed an evident proof and a manifest sign for people who give thought. Q16:11]

﴿وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

[And He has subjected to you the night and the day, the sun and the moon; and the stars are subjected by His Command. Surely, in this are proofs for people who understand. Q16:12]

﴿وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ﴾

[And whatsoever He has created for you on this earth of varying colours [and qualities from vegetation and fruits, etc. (botanical life) and from animal (zoological life)]. Verily! In this is a sign for people who remember. Q16:13]

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ مَوَاجِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلِعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾

[And He it is Who has subjected the sea (to you), that you eat thereof fresh tender meat (i.e. fish), and that you bring forth out of it ornaments to wear. And you see the ships ploughing through it, that you may seek (thus) of His Bounty (by transporting the goods from place to place) and that you may be grateful. Q16:14]

﴿وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾

[And He has affixed into the earth mountains standing firm, lest it should shake with you, and rivers and roads, that you may guide yourselves. Q16:15]

The reason for this preference is due to his acceptance to bear all the duties which Allāh has ordained. In this connection, the spiritual capabilities of men are elevated as a result of the fear of Allāh and the institution of the relations consequently between the rulers and the ruled and between different categories of the Islamic society on the basis of a communal support for the benefit of justice and virtue.

Thus man is elevated to the position of a conscious member of society with a will of his own, choosing his own job as well as the place he would like to work in freely. He enjoys

freedom to comply with the orders of the ruler or refuse to obey him if the ruler should happen to transgress the bounds set by God's obedience and Islam. Thus Islam makes every individual a guardian of the community's morals besides holding him responsible for the eradication of all forms of evils.

It is crucial to remember that man is the only one among all creatures who has been given the power of choice whereas the rest were left with no choice. It is a call for man to use his mind to know his God. The Qur'ān claims that the signs that point to the direction of God's unity and activity in the universe are multifarious and countless:

﴿قُلْ لِمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ ﴿سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾ ﴿قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾ ﴿سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ﴾ ﴿قُلْ مَنْ يَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ ﴿سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ﴾

[Say: "Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein? If you know!" They will say: "It is Allāh's!" Say: "Will you not then remember?" Say: "Who is (the) Lord of the seven heavens, and (the) Lord of the Great Throne?" They will say: "Allāh." Say: "Will you not then fear Allāh (believe in His Oneness, obey Him, believe in the Resurrection and Recompense for each and every good or bad deed)." Say "In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything (i.e. treasures of each and everything)? And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, (i.e. if Allāh saves anyone none can punish or harm him, and if Allāh punishes or harms anyone none can save him), if you know." They will say: "(All that belongs) to Allāh." Say: "How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth?" Q23:84-89]

Irving, et al. (2002:1) point out that "man does not stand alone in the firmament of Creation. His existence is not a fortuitous accident of history. The world around him is not unrelated to him and his purpose in life. Everything is part of Divine Plan – the overall scheme of Providence. He Who has created man has also provided for him all that he needs for the good life: whether that be in the nature of physical providence ensuring his existence and growth, or of moral and social guidance for the full flowering of the human

personality and culture.” The following verses embody the unity of creation and its impact on man:

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ﴾ ﴿الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ﴾

[Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allāh (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): “Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.” Q3:190-191].

The Qur’ān as a revelation to the Prophet Muḥammad and to believers was determined in emphasizing Allāh’s lordship and ultimate power in all of creation. The Qur’ān speaks of Allāh’s sustenance and provision for creation, particularly for human beings and of recreating of new forms of creations:

﴿قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ ؕ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ ﴿أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ يَدَايِنَا بِهَيْجَةٍ مَّا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا ؕ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَنْ يُعَدِّلُونَ﴾ ﴿أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيًا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ؕ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ ﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ؕ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾ ﴿أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ يُرْسِلِ الرِّيَّاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ؕ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ ﴿أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ؕ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا تَصَدَّقُونَ﴾

[Say (O Muḥammad): “Praise and thanks be to Allāh, and peace be on His slaves whom He has chosen (for His Message)! Is Allāh better, or (all) that you ascribe as partners (to Him)?” (Of course, Allāh is better). Is not He (better than your gods) Who created the

heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water (rain) from the sky, whereby We cause to grow wonderful gardens full of beauty and delight? It is not in your ability to cause the growth of their trees. Is there any *ilāh* (god) with Allāh? Nay, but they are a people who ascribe equals (to Him)! Is not He (better than your gods) Who has made the earth as a fixed abode, and has placed rivers in its midst, and has placed firm mountains therein, and has set a barrier between the two seas (of salt and sweet water). Is there any *ilāh* (god) with Allāh? Nay, but most of them know not. Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations. Is there any *ilāh* (god) with Allāh? Little is that you remember! Is not He (better than your gods) Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His Mercy (rain)? Is there any *ilāh* (god) with Allāh? High Exalted be Allāh above all that they associate as partners (to Him)! Is not He (better than your so-called gods) Who originates creation, and shall thereafter repeat it, and Who provides for you from heaven and earth? Is there any *ilāh* (god) with Allāh? Say, “Bring forth your proofs, if you are truthful.” Q27:59-64]

The reminders of Allāh’s signs are then meant to indicate that everything is dependent on God; that God, with all his might and glory, is essentially the Lord of mercy and the Giver of Mercy; and that this establishes the relationship between human beings and God, where humans are made to love Him through surrendering the entire self to Him. QCM reveals an important idea of God’s centrality in all the themes of the Qur’ān. Time and again the Qur’ān reiterates that man carries the ethos of Islam in himself, meaning for the sake of teaching and education Allāh has grandly and repeatedly emphasized *the faith of tawḥīd* in order to establish *imān* (belief) in the recesses of the hearts and minds of the believers. To make *the faith of tawḥīd* more comprehensible Allāh has given examples, set parables and told stories of the past generations for the truth and falsehood, i.e. Belief and disbelief.

At this juncture Muḥammad Yūsif Mūsā (2002:100) signals “the belief in the oneness of God leaves also a great imprint on the hearts and souls of men and consequently upon their deeds. If man is faithful to God alone, and if he fears and pleads to none but Him, soliciting Him alone to bestow upon him whatever is good and to save him from ills – if man does

that he is consequently rendered strong in himself, becomes capable of upholding truth and would in all that which concerns him depend on God alone.”

﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾

[And when My slaves ask you (O Muḥammad) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright. Q2:186]

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ أُوْلَئِكَ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا
مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾

[Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations. Is there any ilāh (god) with Allāh? Little is that you remember! Q27:62]

2.5 Prophethood and the Message of the Qur’ān

Muslim scholars claim that the Qur’ān is the last Scripture to be sent down to earth and the Prophet Muḥammad is the seal of all the Prophets. The Qur’ān repeatedly attempts to make this message to all mankind, and that is what makes the Qur’ānic message universal. Muḥammad Yūsif Mūsā (2002:58) envisages the universality of Islam as inevitable because “Islam is the last of all divine messages sent from Heaven to Earth, and as such, it has to be a universal religion for all people.” For Muslim scholars, the nature of this message must be of a kind that makes it fit for humanity in every age, generation and time. The personality, character and nature of the Prophet must be of the ideal type befitting his being the elect Messenger for all God’s slaves so that every person can find in him his ideal and the light which will guide him/her throughout his/her life:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ

عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ
الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿

[Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muḥammad) whom they find written with them in the Taurāt (Torah) (Deut, xviii 15) and the Injil (Gospel) (John xiv, 16), - he commands them for *Al-Ma'rūf* (i.e. Islāmic Monotheism and all that Islām has ordained); and *forbids* them from *Al-Munkar* (i.e. disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islām has forbidden); he allows them as lawful *Aṭ-Ṭayyibāt* (i.e. all good and lawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods), and prohibits them as unlawful *Al-Khabā'ith* (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods), he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allāh's Convent with the children of Israel), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muḥammad), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur'ān) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful. Q7:157]

Qamar al-Hudā (2003:278) holds that the noble message of the Qur'ān is meant to guide followers to God's will so that they may implement the guidance in their lives. The Qur'ān is revelation for humankind and is aimed for redirecting human beings toward Allāh. Consider Q2:185 when it defines the mission of the Qur'ān into people's lives:

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ﴾

[The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). Q2:185]

Qamar al-Hudā (2003:278) adds that “this often repeated reference to humankind and not to Muslims, Arabs, Chinese, or the Quraishī tribe is to underscore the Qur'ān's eternal and universal message.”

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

[And We have not sent you (O Muḥammad) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not. Q34: 28].

﴿قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَأَمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾

[Say (O Muḥammad): ‘O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allāh – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). It is He who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allāh and His Messenger (Muḥammad), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muḥammad), who believes in Allāh and His words [(this Qur’ān), the Taurāh (Torah) and the Injīl (Gospel) and also Allāh’s Word: ‘Be!’ – and he was, i.e. ‘Īsa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary)], and follow him so that you may be guided. Q7:158].

A supportive evidence for the argument being held is the *Ḥadīth* reported in al Bukhārī³⁴ in which the Prophet says:

“The likeness of me and the Prophets preceding me is as the example of a man, who constructed a house perfectly and beautifully, except at one angle where a brick was missing. People who saw that house toured around it appreciating its beauty and expressing the desire to have that brick put in the empty place. So, I am that brick and I am the last of all prophets.”

We should not go without emphasizing the human nature of the Prophet. Qamar al-Hudā (2003:278) stresses this point and is of the view that “the Prophet in Islam is purely a human being that was divinely selected to serve as a messenger of Allāh’s message to humanity.” Q41:5, puts an emphasis on the human element in the Prophet:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ﴾

[Say (O Muḥammad): “I am only a human being like you. It is inspired in me that your Ilāh (God) is One Ilāh (God - Allāh). Q41:6]

Irving et al. (2002:17) holds that “The Qur’ān spells out the Message which was revealed to Muḥammad and which represents the permanent and ultimate source of guidance for mankind.”

³⁴ al-Bukhārī (2003: 642).

Arnold (1935:28) states that the message of Islam was not for Arabia only; the whole world was to share in it. As there was but one God, so there was to be but one religion into which all men were to be invited. The claim to be universal, to hold sway over all men and all nations, found a practical illustration in the letters which Muḥammad is said to have sent in the year A.D. 628 (A.H. 6) to the great sovereigns and monarchs of that time. An invitation to embrace Islam was sent in this year to the Emperor Heraclius, the king of Persia, the governor of Yemen, the governor of Egypt and the king of Abyssinia. The letter to Heraclius is said to have been as follows: - “In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, Muḥammad, who is the servant of God and His apostle, to (Heraclius) the (Caesar) of Rome. Peace be on whoever has gone on the straight road. After this I say, Verily I call you to Islam. Embrace Islam, and God will reward you twofold. If you turn away from the offer of Islam, then on you be the sins of your people. [O people of the Book, come towards a creed which is fit both for us and for you. It is this-to worship none but God, and not to associate anything with God, and not to call others God. Therefore, O ye people of the Book, if ye refuse, beware. We are Muslims and our religion is Islam.]”

This shows that the Prophet has wasted no time in launching his campaign to convey his message to the whole world and that is why he has sent delegations to kings and governors of the neighbouring countries to deliver to them the Word of Allāh as revealed in the Qur’ān. It should be noted that the Prophet has not started his mission before he witnesses the emergence of the Islamic State and the applicability of the Islamic teachings. Abu al-A^lā Maudūdī (1976:29) states that “it is neither necessary nor useful to start from the very outset on international lines any ideological movement that is meant to be ultimately international. The only right method of beginning this will be to start the movement in the country of its origin and present with full force its theories and fundamental principles which are to form the basis of the required system of life. Then its exponents should impress these things on the mind of their own people who have a common language, common habits and common customs. They should first of all put these principles into practice in their own country and prove their worth by evolving a happy and successful system of life.” In fact that was the strategic plan the Prophet and his companions had implemented successfully and attempted to establish the universality of the message of the Qur’ān.

2.6 The Mission of Man on Earth

The meaning of *Islām* underlies the ethos of the message of the Qur'ān: complete submission to Allāh, and in this particular context, complete submission to the Word of Allāh - the Qur'ān. When the Qur'ānic approach of *do* and *not do* is realized in Muslims-their own selves- only then Muslims become in harmony with the unity of Allāh, implementing the ethos of Islam. Thus the guidance and light from Allāh is insurmountably indispensable for man to achieve and maintain the balance. An important issue which has not so far been investigated is how Q1 (*sūrat al-Fāṭīḥah*) symbolizes the mission of man on earth. al-Zarkashī (1988,1:39-40) states that Q1 is the mother of the Book because it entails the three main pillars of the Qur'ān: (*tawḥīd* monotheism), (*tadhkīr* reminder), and (*aḥkām* rulings). al-Zarkashī (ibid:39) elaborates that *tawḥīd* is from the beginning of Q1 till Q1:4 (*yawm al-Dīn* the day of Resurrection), (*aḥkām* rulings) is in [إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)], and (*tadhkīr* reminder) is from (اهدِنَا Guide us) till the end of Q1. Q1 symbolises the mission of man when it outlines his (*taḥlīf* duties) and sets him for (*meḥnah* testing).

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ ﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ ﴿الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ ﴿مَالِكِ يَوْمِ
الدِّينِ﴾ ﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾ ﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾ ﴿صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ
عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the 'Ālamīn (mankind, jinn and all that exists). The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection). You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). Guide us to the Straight Way. The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger, nor of those who went astray. Q1:1-7]

In this connection, Abdel Haleem (1999:15) holds “this compact passage, an independent *sūrah* of the Qur'ān consists of seven verses divided into three groups: invocation, affirmation and petition, in a sequential progression that exemplifies the conclusively

convincing logic of Qur'ānic material... the passage embodies the essence of Islam which is *tawhīd* (oneness of God)" Thus if man considers *sūrat al-Fātiḥah* thoughtfully and meditatively he/she will realize the meaning of the Oneness, Supremacy, Sustenance, Beneficence and Sovereignty. Taken together, man becomes in harmony with His Creator and His creation consequently he/she acts in this life accordingly. It should be clear by now that man cannot do without the guidance from Allāh for Allāh is the All-Knowing, the All-mighty, the All-Wise, the All-Sufficient, the owner of Great Bounty.

Let us consider the following *āyahs* in Q1:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾ ﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾

[You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). Guide us to the Straight Way.]

The mission of man on earth is well versed in the previous *āyahs*, namely, worshipping Allāh, populating the earth and following the Straight Way. Man in his/her endeavour to accomplish all the aforementioned assignments seeks the guidance and support from Allāh. Abu al-A'ālā Maudūdī (1988:9) embraces that "God bestowed upon man a kind of autonomy and appointed him His vicegerent on earth. It was made clear to man that life in this world, for which he had been placed and invested with a certain honour and authority, was in fact a temporary term, and was meant to test him; that after the end of this earthly life man must return to God, Who will judge him on the basis of his performance, declaring who has succeeded and who has failed."

Muḥammad Qutb (1964:337) argues that "Islamic ideology looks upon man rather as a being that aspires to soar high in the realms of spirit and thought, although he walks on earth and possesses a physical body. Nor are his needs limited to food, shelter and sexual gratification as Karl Marx claimed." He adds (ibid:341-2) that Islam attaches great importance to the individual and relies more on him than on society for the realization of its ends. Islam civilizes man from within so that he would willingly discharge all his responsibilities as a member of a community.

Moreover, man bears the responsibility of guiding the other as is clear from the mission of the Prophet who is a model of the individual character:

﴿كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

[Similarly (to complete My Blessings on you), We have sent among you a Messenger (Muḥammad) of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Qur'ān) and purifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Qur'ān) and the *Ḥikmah* (i.e. *Sunnah*, Islāmic laws and *fiqh* - jurisprudence), and teaching you that which you used not to know. Q2:151]

In this connection, it is worthwhile to classify *sūrat al-Fāṭiḥah* as the code for the QCM, in other words, it proves the unity of Allāh, the unity of the message and the unity of mankind. In fact these three types of unity harmonize with *Shahādah* – the confession of a Muslim:

(لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله) *lā ilāha illa allāh, Muḥammad rasūl- allāh*

(None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh). Q42:13 emphasises the unity of the message, Q16:22 the unity of Allāh, and Q6:98 the unity of mankind:

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى﴾

[He (Allāh) has ordained for you the same religion (Islām) which He ordained for Nūh (Noah), and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad), and that which We ordained for Ibrahīm (Abraham), Mūsa (Moses) and 'Īsā (Jesus) Q42:13]

﴿إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ﴾

[Your Ilāh (God) is One Ilāh (God – Allāh, none has the right to be worshipped but He). Q16:22)

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ﴾

[It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and has given you a place of residing (on the earth or in your mother's wombs) and a place of storage [in the earth (in

your graves) or in your father's loins]. Indeed, We have explained in detail Our revelations (this Qur'ān) for people who understand. Q6:98]

In this respect Irving et al. (2002:4-5) point out “divine Guidance is the greatest moral and social need of man. If he needs air and water for his physical existence and growth, he needs Divine Guidance for his moral and social existence and development. That is why the central quest of man is for guidance and not just for physical survival or economic advancement. This is born out by the invocation which a Muslim in *sūrat al-Fāṭīḥah* (The Opening) which is recited in every prayer and crucial to the understanding of the spirit of Islam.”

Ibrahim Stokes writes in a forward by him to *Journey of the Universe* by Haeri Fadhlalla (1985:forward) “man contains within himself something of his Creator. He was born to worship his Creator in order for him to return from this outward-bound journey of separation in a state of conscious awareness. The gate to worship is through submission to the unseen and the reward for complete abandonment is perfect freedom. Viewed from this standpoint, all knowledge that moves man to unity with the Creator is useful and what separates him from his goal is to be avoided as evil and off the well-defined path. There is no way in which he can find this royal road by his own efforts, try as he may. The way is in the message of those guides who were sent in times past and who have left a record and an example for us to follow.” QCM articulates that Man has been cherished and honoured by His Creator and even man has been preferred above the angles.

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا﴾

[And indeed We have honoured the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with *al-Ṭaiyyibāt* (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference. Q17:70]

The reason for this preference is due to his acceptance of all the duties which Allāh has ordained. It is crucial to remember that man is the only one among all creatures who has been given the power of choice whereas the rest were left with no choice.

﴿إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا
وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾

[Truly, We did offer *al-Amānah* (the trust or moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which Allāh has ordained) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it (i.e. afraid of Allāh's Torment). But man bore it. Verily, he was unjust (to himself) and ignorant (of its results). Q33:72] (ibid:572)

Haeri Fadhlalla (1985:11) stresses “when man's inner memory becomes the looking glass, the man of *tawhīd*, the lover of Allāh, will receive all the surrounding manifestations as emanating from Allāh. The Qur'ān is the key which can unlock the divinity within his heart by its most glorious discriminating and divine light.” It should not go without saying that the Qur'ān has epitomized the essence of the notion of QCM as the wisdom beyond the creation of man and his life cycle on earth:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

[And I (Allāh) created not the jinn and humans except they should worship Me (Alone). Q51:56].

So *يَعْبُدِي* Worship is the purpose of existence and the key of excellence through abandonment and submission to the Creator Allāh. The notion of QCM revolves around: لا

إلا الله محمد رسول الله *lā ilāha illa allāh, Muḥammad rasūl- allāh*

(None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh).

Abu al-A'ālā Maudūdī (1988:28) holds: “The Qur'ān is a Book of broad general principles rather than of legal minutiae. Its method of guidance for practical Islamic life does not consist of laying down minutely detailed laws and regulations. It prefers to outline the basic framework for each aspect of human activity, and to lay down certain guidelines within which man can order his life in keeping with the Will of God.” Therefore an opportunity of manoeuvring has been given to man to do what he/she has to do with an air of freedom, yet within the frame of the general guidelines articulated in the Qur'ān.

Having given an outline of what QCM proclaims, we are going to touch upon the problematic features of Qur'ānic discourse in some details.

2.7 Conclusion

There is a need for QCM to be established as a preliminary basic background for those who find in themselves the potentiality to indulge in as strenuous a work as that of the translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. It has almost always been observed that in the absence of QCM the result is not authenticated by Muslim scholars because in some cases the translation fails to present the Islamic religion as believed and performed by main stream Muslims. It is essential then that the basic beliefs and principles on which QCM based should be taken into account on the part of the translator of the meaning of the Qur'ān. Focusing on the basic Islamic concepts which QCM presents the translator of the meaning of the Qur'ān can reach considerably a profound solid understanding of Qur'ānic discourse. By Islamic concepts here, we mean the concepts about the unity of God and His Attributes, about the Hereafter, about man's accountability and about reward and punishment, about prophethood and belief in the revealed scriptures. Abu al-A'ālā Maudūdī (1988:23) contends: "anyone who really wishes to understand the Qur'ān, irrespective of whether or not he believes in it, must divest his mind, as far as possible, of every preconceived notion, bias, and prejudice, in order to embark upon his study with an open mind. Anyone who begins to study the Qur'ān with a set of preconceived ideas is likely to read those very ideas into the Book. No book can be profitably studied with this kind of attitude, let alone the Qur'ān which refuses to open its treasure-house to such readers." Here arises the need for QCM to present the basic claims of the Qur'ān and minimise the degree of deviation from the main stream Islam. Thus, the translator can focus more on the problematic features of Qur'ānic discourse, the subject matter of the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Translations of the Qur'ān

3.1 Introduction

The present chapter aims to provide a brief historical account of the translation tradition among early Muslims. Thus, in its very constituting event, Islam acknowledged that its message could be heard 'in translation': that the differences between one's own native tongue and the original text of revelation would not stand as a barrier to the proclamation of the Qur'ān. In response to the universality of Islam, the Holy Qur'ān is available in various vernaculars. The chapter also provides an outline of several translations of the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān. Each outline offers the major features of the translation approach in terms of style, accuracy, and inaccuracy. It should be noted that the selected translations have been chosen because of their large readership, their prominence and because they are on the whole representative of the translation notions we are discussing. The examination of the selected translations has involved the description and evaluation of each looking at the language/text, and the conformity to the Qur'ānic Cognitive Mode. Before I start elaborating on the translation traditions among early Muslims, I will present a brief account of the Latin translations of the Qur'ān based on Hartmut Bobzin (1993:193-206). The Qur'ān was translated into Latin for the first time (1142) on the order of Peter the Venerable (1092-1156) and the translator was Robert of Ketton (Robertus Ketenensis) with the help of a Spanish Muslim. In the beginnings of 1542 Johannes Oporinus (1507-68) the great Basle printer started with the help of Bibliander as editor the printing and publishing of the Basle Qur'ān (the Latin translation of the Qur'ān). A second edition was required in 1550. Hartmut (ibid.:197) comments that "this translation served as the basis for several translations into European vernaculars during the subsequent 150 years, such as into Italian, German and Dutch." The first of these translations, the Italian one, appeared three years before the "reprint" in Venice. This Italian Qur'ān was found in Constantinople when the German Salmon Schweigger (1551-1622) visited the Ottoman capital in the years (1578-1581). He translated the Italian Qur'ān into German in 1616. Shweigger's edition was first translated anonymously into Dutch and then re-edited in 1659 and 1664. The second

printed Latin Qur'ān translation is the work of the Italian father Ludovico Marracci (1612-1700). It was a German protestant and Hebrew scholar, Christian Reineccius (1668-1752), who edited an abridged edition of Marracci's work. Another translation into German appeared and the translator was David Nerreter (1649-1726). A re-edition was published as late as 1800. Among other translators of the Qur'ān into Latin were Mark of Toledo, Cardinal Juan de Segovia, and Gabriel Terrolensis. Two other translations should be mentioned: the first is ascribed to the Greek patriarch of Constantinople and the second is by Franciscan Dominicus Germanus de Silesia (1588-1670).

3.2 Translation Traditions Among Early Muslims

It will be useful, by way of introduction, to say something about how the early emergence and prevalence of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula encouraged the Prophet to start thinking of the neighbourhoods. The issue was of urgent concern to the Prophet so he sent his companions to the neighbouring Kings and Emperors. In response, the Prophet assigned some of his companions for the mission. Late in the sixth year A.H., on his return from Ḥudaibiyah³⁵, the Prophet decided to send messages to the Kings beyond Arabia calling them to Islam. Envoys were chosen on the basis of their experience and knowledge, and sent on their errands in Muḥarram in the year 7 A.H., a few days before heading for Khaibar³⁶.

³⁵ A peace and treaty reconciliation took place in Dhul Qa'da 6 H and was conducted between the people of Mekka (Quraish) and the Prophet.

³⁶ Khaibar was a spacious strongly fortified territory, studded with castles and farms, lying at a distance of 60-80 miles north of Madinah (Saudi Arabia).

The Negus, King of Abyssinia (Ethiopia), received the Prophet's message³⁷, dispatched by 'Amr b. Omaiyyah al-Ḍamarī, which al-Ṭabarī referred to, either late in the sixth year or early in the seventh year A.H. Another letter was sent to Egypt. As a matter of fact, Ḥāṭib b. Abu Balta'a was chosen to communicate the message to Juraij b. Matta, called Muqawqas, vicegerent of Egypt and Alexandria. Saifur Rahmān al-Mubārakpurī (2002:354) mentioned that a letter was sent to the Emperor of Persia³⁸ and 'Abd Allāh b. Hudhafa al-Sahmī was chosen to carry the letter to the King of Bahrain but we do not know as yet if the letter dispatched to Chosroes by one of his men or chose 'Abd Allāh himself. al-Bukhārī³⁹ (2003:1328-29) gave a long narration of the contents of the letter sent by the Prophet to Heraclius, King of the Byzantines. The tradition showed that the Muslim envoy,

³⁷ (الكتاب إلى النجاشي)

وروى البيهقي عن ابن إسحاق نص كتاب النبي إلى النجاشي وهو هذا: هذا كتاب من محمد النبي إلى النجاشي الأصحم عظيم الحبشة، سلام على من اتبع الهدى، وأمن بالله ورسوله، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، لم يتخذ صاحبة ولا ولداً، وأن محمداً عبده ورسوله، وأدعوك بدعاية الإسلام، فإني أنا رسوله فأسلم تسلم، ﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾، فإن أبيت فإن عليك إثم النصرى من قومك.

al-Baihaqī, on the authority of Ibn Ishāq, gave the following narration of the Prophet's letter sent to the Negus: "This letter is sent from Muḥammad, the Prophet to the Negus al-Ashama, the King of Abyssinia (Ethiopia). Peace be upon him who follows true guidance and believes in Allāh and His Messenger. I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh Alone with no associate, He has taken neither a wife nor a son, and that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger. I call you unto the fold of Islam; if you embrace Islam, you will find safety, [Say, 'people of the Book, let us arrive at a statement that is common to us all: we worship God alone, we ascribe no partner to Him, and none of us takes others as lords beside God as lords.' If they turn away, say: 'Witness our devotion to Him.' Q3:64]

Should you reject this invitation, then you will be held responsible for all the evils of the Christians of your people."

³⁸ (الكتاب إلى كسرى)

وكتب إلى كسرى: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم من محمد رسول الله إلى كسرى عظيم فارس سلام على من اتبع الهدى وأمن بالله ورسوله وشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأن محمداً عبده ورسوله أدعوك بدعاية الله فإني أنا رسول الله إلى الناس كافة لينذر من كان حياً ويحق القول على الكافرين أسلم تسلم فإن أبيت فعليك إثم المجوس.

A Letter to Chosroes, Emperor of Persia:

"In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

From Muḥammad, the Messenger of God to Chosroes, King of Persia.

Peace be upon him who follows true guidance, believes in God and His Messenger and testifies that there is no god but Allāh Alone with no associate, and that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger. I invite you to accept the religion of God. I am the Messenger of God sent to all people in order that I may infuse fear of God in every living person, and that the charge may be proved against those who reject the Truth. Accept Islam as your religion so that you may live in security, otherwise, you will be responsible for all the sins of the Magians."

³⁹ The Book of judgement, chapter: 'Translation of the Rulers'.

Dihyah b. Khalifah al-Kalbī, was ordered to hand the letter⁴⁰ over to the King of Basra, who would in turn, send it to Heraclius. Incidentally, Abu Sufyān b. Ḥarb, who by that time had not embraced Islam, was summoned to the court and Heraclius asked him many questions about the Prophet and the religion which he preached. The testimony which this avowed enemy of the Prophet gave regarding the personal excellence of the Prophet's character and the good that Islam was doing the human race left Heraclius wonder-struck.

al-Bukhārī, on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās, narrated that Heraclius sent for Abu Sufyān and his companions, who happened to be trading in *al-Shām*, Jerusalem. That was during the truce that had been concluded between the polytheists of Quraish and the Prophet. Heraclius, seated amongst his chiefs of staff, asked: "Who amongst you is the nearest relative to the man who claims to be a Prophet?" "I (Abu Sufyān) replied, 'I am the nearest relative to him from amongst the group.' So they made me sit in front of him and made my companions sit behind me. Then, he called upon his translator and said (to him). 'Tell them (i.e. Abu Sufyān's companions) that I am going to ask him (i.e. Abu Sufyān) regarding that man who claims to be a Prophet. So if he tells a lie, they should contradict him (instantly)'. By Allāh had I not been afraid that my companions would consider me a liar, I would have told lies", Abu Sufyān later said.

If we have so much difficulty guaranteeing that the language used by ʿAmr b. Umaiyyah al-Ḍamarī to deliver the message of the Prophet to the Negus, King of Abyssinia was Aramaic not Arabic, should we not be somewhat skeptical that Arabic was used in case of Heraclius

⁴⁰ (الكتاب إلى هرقل)

ثبت في " الصحيحين " عنه صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه كتب إلى هرقل : بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم من محمد رسول الله إلى هرقل عظيم الروم سلام على من اتبع الهدى أما بعد فإنني أدعوك بدعاية الإسلام أسلم تسلم يؤتك الله أجرك مرتين فإن توليت فإن عليك إثم الأريسيين ﴿ قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿

The Envoy to Caesar, King of Rome:

al-Bukhārī gave a long narration of the contents of the letter sent by the Prophet to Hercules, King of the Byzantines:

In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

From Muḥammad, the slave of God and His Messenger to Hercules, King of the Byzantines.

Blessed are those who follow true guidance. I invite you to embrace Islam so that you may live in security. If you come within the fold of Islam, God will give you double reward, but in case you turn your back upon it, then the burden of the sins of all your people shall fall on your shoulder.

[Say, 'people of the Book, let us arrive at a statement that is common to us all: we worship God alone, we ascribe no partner to Him, and none of us takes others as lords beside God as lords.' If they turn away, say: 'Witness our devotion to Him.' Q3:64]

and translators were summoned to do the interpretation? The crux of the argument here is to focus on the evidence that sustains the fact that the Prophet had tolerated translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān into other languages.

Quraish could not tolerate the prospect of a secure haven available for the Muslims in Abyssinia; so they dispatched two envoys to demand their expulsion. They were ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ and ʿAbd Allāh b. Abu Rabīʿah — before embracing Islam. They had taken with them valuable gifts to the King and his clergy, and had been able to win some of the courtiers over to their side. The pagan envoys claimed that the Muslim refugees should be expelled from Abyssinia and made over to them, on the ground that they had abandoned the religion of their forefathers, and their leader was preaching a religion different from theirs and from that of the King.

The King summoned the Muslims to the court and asked them to explain the teachings of their religion. The Muslim emigrants had decided to tell the whole truth whatever the consequences were. Jaʿfar b. Abu Ṭālib, who was well known for his power of reasoning and eloquent speech, stood up and addressed the King in the following words: “O King! We were plunged in the depth of ignorance and barbarism; we adored idols, we lived in unchastity, we ate the dead bodies, and we spoke abominations, we disregarded every feeling of humanity, and the duties of hospitality and neighbourhood were neglected; we knew no law but that of the strong; when Allāh raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty, and purity we were aware; he called to the Oneness of Allāh, and taught us not to associate anything with Him. He forbade us the worship of idols, and he enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful and to regard the rights of the neighbours and kith and kin; he forbade us to speak evil of women, or to eat the wealth of orphans; he ordered us to abandon the vices, and to abstain from evil, to offer prayers, to render alms, and to observe fast. We have believed in him, we have accepted his teachings and his injunctions to worship Allāh, and not to associate anything with Him, and we have allowed what He has allowed, and prohibited what He has prohibited. For this reason, our people have risen against us, have persecuted us in order to make us forsake the worship of Allāh and return to the worship of idols and other abominations. They have tortured and injured us, until finding no safety among them; we have come to your country, and hope you will protect us from oppression.”

The King was very much impressed by these words and asked the Muslims to recite some of God's Revelation. Ja'far recited the opening verses of Q19 wherein is told the story of the birth of both Yaḥyā (John) and 'Īsā (Jesus Christ), down to the account of Maryam (Mary) having been fed with the food miraculously. Thereupon the King, along with the bishops, was moved to tears that rolled down his cheeks and even wet his beard. Here, the Negus exclaimed: "It seems as if these words and those which were revealed to 'Īsā (Jesus) are the rays of the light which have radiated from the same source." Turning to the disappointed envoys of Quraish, he said: "I am afraid; I cannot give you back these refugees. They are free to live and worship in my country as they please."

The two envoys again went to the King and said that the Prophet and his followers blasphemed 'Īsā (Jesus Christ). Again, the Muslims were summoned and asked what they thought of 'Īsā (Jesus). Ja'far again stood up and replied: "We speak about 'Īsā (Jesus) as we have been taught by our Prophet, that is, he is the servant of Allāh, His Messenger, His spirit and God's Word is breathed into Maryam (Virgin Mary)." The King at once remarked: "Even so do we believe. Blessed be you, and blessed be your master." Then turning to the frowning envoys and to his bishops who got angry, he said: "You may fret and fume as you like but Jesus is nothing more than what Ja'far has said about him." He then assured the Muslims of full protection. He returned the envoys of Quraish, the gifts they had brought with them, and sent them away. The Muslims lived in Abyssinia unmolested for a number of years till they returned to Madinah.

We can claim that the conversation must have been in the language of the host. However, if the countries are adjacent or in the same general neighbourhood, particularly where there have been occasional intermarriages, commercial ties, communication between the two parties may not be all that hard. Basic concerns tend to be similar or analogous.

So, my topic, in principle, concerns the problems - one problem, anyhow - of translating the meaning of the Qur'ān, specifically of translating from Arabic into English. The texts are in different languages - Aramaic, Persian, Greek, Arabic, and Latin - but, in the historical continuities of the discourse, one finds, despite a number of differences and disagreements on important theoretical issues and several fundamental divergences, a more or less similar way of talking and similar or analogous meanings voiced about a core of basic themes. Within this restricted perspective, translations and analyses of the Arabic

texts are presented, and for the most part quite appropriately, in the much same language as are those of the Persian or the Roman texts.

It is related in a tradition that the Prophet asked Zaid b. Thābit to learn Hebrew which he managed to learn in a very short time. It is plain to see here that the Prophet had given a clear permission to learn other languages so that Muslims could interpret what the other wanted to convey to them and vice versa. Zaid b. Thābit⁴¹ narrated: The Prophet ordered him to learn the language of the Jews “so I wrote the Prophet his letters and read him their letters (the Jews) if they wrote to him.” And ‘Umar said and he was in company of ‘Ali, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and ‘Uthmān: “what is this lady saying?” ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥāṭib interpreted: “She informs you about her husband and what he did to her.” And Abu Jammrah said: “I used to interpret between Ibn ‘Abbās and the people.” And some people said the ruler should have translators.” We can possibly conceive of what has been mentioned in the tradition that translation is an old art and it is as old as there were people of different tongues wanted to communicate. People almost always realized the need to understand each other, bridge the language gap and keep the channel of communication open; so they opted for translation to do the job. The reason behind attaching significance to this tradition is that the Muslims had to carry the call of Islam to the other and that necessitated that they should convey the word of God into the other’s languages so that they could understand. It is relevant to point out that the Muslims learnt the other’s languages as in the case of Zaid b. Thābit or they sought the help of translators, as in the case of Abu Sufyān and Heraclius. Consequently, it is clear that it is permissible to translate the meaning of the Qur’ān which is the crux of the argument. Undoubtedly, the translator has to follow the apparent sense of the text as understood by an Arab well-versed in the Arabic language. There is no doubt about the significance of the translation of the meanings of the Qur’ān if it is rendered by a reliable translator who masters both Arabic and English. But what if the translation does not meet the norm in respect to accuracy, appropriateness, and other notions; this is what we are going to focus on in the next section. But before we can possibly do so, a list of such notions and their definitions is presented below.

⁴¹ al-Bukhārī 2003:1328

3.3 Qur'ān Translation Notions

Throughout the present thesis, the following translation notions are referred to recurrently. Therefore, they have been listed below and defined in brief due to space limitation. It must be put forth that in compiling this section I have mainly relied on Shuttleworth, Mark & Cowie Moira (1997), *Dictionary of Translation Studies*.

Acceptability: A term used by Toury (1980:75) to denote one of two tendencies (the other one is *adherence*) which can be observed in translated texts. Translations which lean towards acceptability can thus be thought of as fulfilling the requirement of “reading as an original” written in the TL rather than “reading as an original”, and consequently generally have a more natural feel.

Accuracy: A term is used in translation evaluation to denote how far a translation matches its original. Where it usually refers to preservation of the information content of ST in TT, with an accurate translation being generally *literal* rather than *free*, its actual meaning in the context of a given translation must depend on the type of Equivalence found in the translation. Venuti (1995:37) claims that the “canons of accuracy are culturally specific and historically variable.”

Adaptation: A term used by Vinay & Darbelnet (1958/1995) to refer to one of the seven translation procedures. Adaptation is described as a type of oblique translation, which means that it does not rely on the existence of structural and conceptual parallels between SL and TL (1958/1995:31). According to Vinay & Darbelnet, adaptation is a strategy which should be used when the situation referred to in ST does not exist in the target culture, or does not have the same relevance or connotations as it does in the source context. They (1958/1995:39) argue that adaptation represents “the extreme limit of translation”, in that it involves a considerable amount of rewording.

Adequacy: A term used by some commentators on translation to discuss the nature of the relationship between ST and TT. However, even where it does occur there is little agreement over the proper application of the term, as it is used sometimes synonymously

with, sometimes instead of, and sometimes in contrast with the related term *equivalence*. However, where the two terms are used side by side, adequacy generally refers to a looser, less absolute ST-TT relationship than equivalence. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997:5)

Adjustment: For Nida (1964:226), it is a set of techniques used in Bible translation which are designed to “produce correct equivalents” in TL and thus help a translation achieve *dynamic equivalence*. Nida (ibid:226) defines the purpose of these techniques as follows: (1) permit adjustment of the form of the message to the requirements of the structure of the receptor language; (2) produce semantically equivalent structure; (3) provide equivalent stylistic appropriateness; (4) carry an equivalent communication load”. Although such aims will frequently entail minor changes in form, Nida emphasizes that the translator’s task is to reproduce not to improve. Radical changes may be necessary in certain circumstances, however, if the use of a close Formal Equivalence gives a translation which is meaningless or causes TT to convey a wrong meaning (ibid:226). The techniques which are used in adjustment comprise addition or subtraction of material, alteration, inclusion of footnotes and modification of the language to fit the experience of TL.

Archaism: A term refers to the use of old-fashioned language in a translation. Both *thy* and *hath* are archaic words and are no longer used in English at present but they are used in Pickthall’s. It is apparent that the implementation of *archaism* makes the translation difficult to understand. Steiner (1975:30) argues that translators may opt for forms of expressions centuries older than current speech. Most frequently, the bias to the archaic produces a hybrid” text, the language of which doesn’t accurately replicate older usage.

Back-Translation: A word-for-word translation of a TT back into the SL, often retaining the structure of the TT. This can be used to explain the translation process for an audience that does not understand the TL. Ivir (1981:59) defines back-translation as “a check on the semantic content.”

Borrowing: It is one of seven translation procedures described by Vinay & Darbelnet (1958/1995). The seven translation procedures are: *adaptation*, *borrowing*, *calque*,

equivalence, literal translation, modulation, and transposition. Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995:31) define *borrowing* as a type of *direct translation* in that elements of ST are replaced by “parallel” TL elements. They describe the procedure as the simplest type of translation, since it merely involves the transfer of an SL world into TT without it being modified in any way.

Calque: It is sometimes used as Loan Translation. The term is used to refer to the process whereby the individual elements of an SL item (e.g. morphemes in the case of a single word) are translated literally to produce a TL equivalent. It is a type of Direct Translation. Calque is one of the seven translation procedures. According to Hervey & Higgins (1992:33) calque differs from the similar procedure of cultural borrowing in that it appropriates only the model of SL grammatical structures, and does not borrow expressions verbatim from ST.

Category Shift: Catford (1965:73) used the term to denote one of two major types of shifts, or departure “from formal correspondence in the process of going from SL to the TL”. The term entails the following “fundamental categories of linguistic theory”: *the class, the structure, the system*⁴² and *the unit* (the linguistic level at which ST is rearranged in TL) (ibid:5-7).

Class Shift: A type of category shift which involves translating an SL item by means of a TL item belonging to a different grammatical class. Catford (1965:78)

Cohesion: The requirement that a sequence of sentences display grammatical and/or lexical relationships which ensure the surface continuity of *text* structure. Hatim (2001:228) defines cohesion as “the various lexical and grammatical devices which ensures that elements of a text exhibit surface connectivity.”

⁴² Evan-Zohar (1990:27) defines a system as “the network of relations that can be hypothesized for a certain set of assumed observals”; the ‘assumed observals’ here can entail an interactive body of linguistic, textual, literary or cultural nature.

Communicative Translation: Hatim & Basil (1990:3) refer to any approach which views translation as a “communicative process which takes place within a social context.” Obviously, all approaches will to some extent consider translation as communication; however, a so-called communicative translation will typically be generally oriented towards the needs of the TL reader or recipient. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997:21) argue that if a text is communicatively rendered, the translator needs to treat the SL as a message rather than a mere cluster of linguistic units.

Compensation: Hervey & Higgins (1992:34) contend that “compensation in translation means reconciling oneself to the fact that, while one would like to do full justice to the ‘richness’ of the SL, one’s final TL inevitably suffers from various translation losses.” Hervey & Higgins describe translation as a process “fraught with compromise” (ibid:34), and present various strategies of compensation as a means of partly overcoming this situation. They list four different types of compensation. Compensation in *kind* involves “making up for one type of textual effect in the ST by another type in the TT” (ibid:35). Compensation in *place* makes up for the loss of a particular effect at a certain place in ST by recreating this effect at a different place in TT (ibid:37); the omission of an untranslatable pun on one word and subsequent punning on another word. Compensation by *merging* “[condenses] ST features carried over a relatively short stretch of text (say, a complex phrase) into a relatively short stretch of the TT (say, a single word or a simple phrase)” (ibid:38); this practice often involves substituting a TL word for a longer ST item which has no literal TL equivalent.

Correspondence: A term used to refer to the relationship which exists between elements of SL and TL that are in some way considered to be counterparts of each other. Hermans (1991:157) claims that correspondence is usually presented as a somewhat weaker notion than the perhaps more frequently encountered concept of *equivalence*, although the relation between the two varies from author to author. Nida (1964), for example, uses the term *correspondence* to denote a broad concept which covers both *dynamic* and *formal equivalence*. However, he (ibid:156) states that “there can be no absolute correspondence between languages”.

Cultural Borrowing: A term used by Hervey & Higgins (1992:31-33) to describe the type of *cultural transposition* in which an SL expression is transferred verbatim into TL because it is not possible to translate it by a suitable TL equivalent. Cultural borrowing differs from *calque* in that it takes the whole SL expression over into TL, whereas *calque* borrows only the model of the SL grammatical structure.

Cultural Substitution: For Baker (1992:31) the term entails a strategy in which the translator replaces a source language culture-specific item with a target language item which does not convey the same propositional content of the original but which is thought of as carrying over a similar impact on the target language order.

Cultural Transplantation: A term used by Hervey & Higgins (1992) to denote the highest degree of *cultural transposition*, in which details of the source culture contained in ST are replaced by target culture elements with the result that the text is partially rewritten in a target cultural setting. It is more of an adaptation than a translation.

Cultural Transposition: A general term used by Hervey & Higgins (1992:28) to describe “the various degrees of departure from literal translation that one may resort to in the process of transferring the contents of a ST into the context of a target culture”. Cultural transposition is considered more target oriented than source oriented.

Domesticating Translation (or Domestication): Venturi (1995:19-20) describes the term as the translation strategy in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for TL readers.

Ethnographic Translation: One of the four classifications of translation proposed by Casagrande (1954). The aim of the ethnographic translation is to explicate the cultural background and anthropological significance of ST and the differences in meaning between “apparently equivalent elements of messages in the two languages” (ibid:336); this may be achieved in translation itself, or in explanatory annotations.

Exegetic Translation: Defined by Hervey & Higgins (1992:250) as “a style of translation in which the TT expresses and explains additional details that are not explicitly conveyed in the ST; that is, the TT is, at the same time, an expansion and explanation of the contents of the ST”.

Exoticism: A term used by Hervey & Higgins (1992) as the lowest degree of *cultural transposition*. Linguistic and cultural features of ST are taken over into TT with little or no adaptation, so that TT has an obvious “foreign” appearance.

Gist Translation: A term common in discussions of translation, and used by Hervey & Higgins to refer to “a style of translation in which the TT expresses a condensed version of the contents of the ST” (1992:250); in other words a gist translation is a translation which gives “a synopsis of the ST”.

Idiomatic Translation (or Idiomatic Approach): A term used by Beekman & Callow (1974) in the field of Bible translation, and by Larson (1998) more generally, to refer to a translation strategy which aims for a TT which reads as naturally as possible. The approach is similar to that of *dynamic equivalence*, in that it stresses the importance of reproducing the original’s impact on the target audience. An idiomatic translation is defined by Larson (1998:11) as one “which has the same meaning as the source language but is expressed in the natural form of the receptor language”, and one in which “the meaning not the form, is retained”.

Interlineal Translation: A term coined by Hervey & Higgins (1992:251) to refer to “a style of translation in which the TT provides a literal rendering for each successive meaningful unit of the ST (including affixes) and arranges these units in their order of occurrence in the ST, regardless of the conventional grammatical order of units in the TL.”

Interlinear Translation: A type of extremely *literal* translation in which TL words are arranged line by line below (or above) the ST items to which they correspond. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997:81-82)

Level Shift: Catford (1965:73) refers to *level shifts* as SL items which in the process of going from SL to TL will have a TL translation equivalent at a different linguistic level from its own.

Loss See Compensation

Naturalness: A term used to refer to the extent to which a translation is expressed in clear, unforced terms in TL. Naturalness is described by Beekman & Callow (1974:39) as “a perquisite to ease understanding”. Nida & Taber (1969:12) contends that the notion of *naturalness* “consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” and add that (ibid:12) *naturalness* is characterised by “the use of grammatical constructions and combinations of words which do not violate the ordinary patterns of a language”.

Omission: Deliberate or accidental absence of a ST element or aspect of sense in the TT (Basil & Munday 2004:346).

Polysemy: When one word has two or more senses (e.g. *mouth* as part of the body and as part of a river) (ibid:346)

Rhetorical Features of a Text: Nida (2001:78-79) gives a detailed account of the rhetorical features of a text which include: unusual word order, repetition of words or phrases, embedding, the incorporation of parenthetical information, parallelism (responses between speaker and audience), a telegraphic style in comparison with elaborate rhetorical structures, back-flashes and forward-flashes (information that is not in a normal temporal sequence), rhyme, rhythm, highlighting, purposeful deletion, ungrammatical arrangement of words to call special attention to certain aspects of a text, pun, irony and sarcasm, oxymorons as means of calling special attention to some entity or features, and figurative language.

Structure Shift: According to Catford (1965), a type of category shift which involves a change in grammatical structure between ST and TT. The Arabic phrase رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ

العَظِيمِ is translated into *the Lord of the Mighty Throne* with a slightly different word order; this change from Arabic to English is an example of structure shift. It is worthy to note that the notion of the structure shift serves as an illustration of the micro-structural incompatibility between the linguistic systems of SL and TL.

Textual Equivalence: Defined by Catford (1965:27) as a type of equivalence which occurs when any TL text or portion of text is “observed on a particular occasion ... to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text”. Thus for example in the following expression فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ and *on the land and the sea* the Arabic phrase فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ and the English expression *on the land and the sea* would be said to be textual equivalents.

Translatology: A term suggested as a possible title for the discipline now generally known as *translation studies*. While the term in German has the advantage of explicitly including both written translation and spoken interpreting (Reiss & Vermeer 1984:1)

Transposition: According to Vinay & Darbelnet (1958/1995:36) is one of the seven translation procedures. Transposition is defined as the process of “replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message”.

Transcription: Translation that retains the form of the ST item in the TT, frequently used for names. According to Nord (1991:30), transcription represents one of the two extreme limits of translation, the other being free text production. “Between these two poles we find several forms of translation, which are characterised by different percentages of adaptation, depending on the translation skopos⁴³.”

Unit Shift: For Catford (1965:79), unit-shift means changes of rank - that is, departure from formal correspondence in which the translation equivalent of a unit (*sentences, clauses, groups, words and morphemes*) at one rank in the SL is a unit at a different rank in the TL (Italics are mine). Like other types of category shift, unit shifts as envisaged by

⁴³ According to Hatim, B. (2001:233) Skopos theory is “a theory which holds that translation strategy is determined by the function of the translated text, which may not be the same as that of the source text.”

Catford represent an obligatory rewording forced on the translator through minor linguistic incompatibilities between SL and TL.

Version: Its technical use denotes a TT in which so many modifications, additions or cuts have been made that it cannot properly be called a translation (Hatim & Munday 2004:353)

Voids (Semantic Voids): Defined by Dagut (1978:45) as the “non-existence in one language of a one-word equivalent for a designatory term found in another”. Voids are found only at a word level, as larger SL units may always be expressed in TL, if necessary through the use of rewording. The most effective way to deal with voids is through *transcription*; as can be seen from the example: *اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ Allāh-al-Ṣamad*, such transcribed forms are frequently accepted into TL as new words. The second type consists of cultural voids, divided by Dagut into the religious and the secular. Adul-Raof (2001:25) is also against the notion of exact correspondence between languages. He provides examples that support his argument (ibid:25) “Qur’ānic cultural voids like (حرم) ...and other Qur’ānic expressions have culture-bound overtones; these include lexical items like (قطميرا ، نقيرا، فتيلا)”. With this type of void the problem is that a particular set of semantic features denoted by a single word in one language may only be expressible by a phrase in another. Consider the following example (Abdul-Raof 2004b:93): *تَيَمُّمٌ tayammum*: to strike your hands on the earth and pass the palm of each hand on the back of the other and then blow off the dust from them and pass (rub) them on the face. It is a kind of ablution that is adopted when someone is spiritually unclean and there is no water.

3.4 Outline of Selected Translations of the Meanings of the Qur’ān

No substantial work has so far been done to critically examine the mass of existing English translations of the Qur’ān . An effort has been made in this chapter to bring out the characteristics and drawbacks of selective complete translations of the Qur’ān. Nida and Taber (1969:12) stipulate that the best translation does not sound like a translation. Tancock (1958:45) holds that “the ideal translation, like the ideal stage play, should have the power to suspend the reader’s disbelief, to make him think he is reading an original piece of work written in his own tongue”. Consequently, authenticity and normality of the

translation are to be foregrounded. This means that the impact of the translation on the readers should create the same response of that of the original text. Besides, the purpose should be alike as well. In this connection, a good translation should enjoy the following criteria:

- i) content equivalence
- ii) stylistic equivalence
- iii) authenticity
- iv) faithfulness
- v) communicability
- vi) cultural homogeneity

Nida and Taber (1969:33), for instance, suggest a way of testing translation quality which is based on three main factors:

- i) correctness (whether the target readers understand the message as correctly as possible)
- ii) the simplicity of comprehension.
- iii) the adequacy of the form of translation (whether or not the translator is experienced enough to render the correct form of the language).

However, this way of testing is short of the practical method for measuring the communication force on behalf of receptors. In the same vein, House (1977:13) states that “a good translation is one which fulfils the same purpose in the new language as the original did”. She (1997:39) suggests a model for assessing translation quality based on eight situational dimensions. These consist of three language-user dimensions (geographical origin, social class, time) and five language-use dimensions (medium, participation, social role relationship, social attitude and province). The source text’s textual profile represents the yardstick against which the target text is measured. The degree to which a target textual profile and function match or mismatch the source text’s textual profile is the degree to which the target text is more or less adequate in quality.

Newmark (1995:184-193) also suggests a plan for criticising translation which covers the following topics:

- A brief analysis of the SL text stressing its intention and functional aspects.

- The translator's interpretation of the SL text's purpose and method as well as the translator's likely readership.
- A selective but representative comparison of the translation with the original.
- An evaluation of the translation in the translator's and in the critic's terms.
- Where appropriate, an assessment of the likely place of the translation in the TL culture or discipline
- The analysis of the text undergoes the following steps:
 - Determining the extent to which the translator has deviated from the original.
 - Judging whether the author has been misrepresented by the translator, through omitting certain sections or by providing a lengthy translation.
 - To assess to what extent the text has been deculturalized or transferred to the TL culture. How the translation could manage with the problems of proper names, metaphors, etc.
 - Assessing the referential and pragmatic accuracy of the translation by the translator's standards.

The critic then has to evaluate the translation by his own standards of referential and pragmatic accuracy. He/she should consider the semantic problems and whether it was inevitable to avoid them. In this connection, it shouldn't go without saying that the idea of presenting the QCM (see chapter two) is to function as a model for reference when there is no coresspondance between the original and the target text.

3.4.1 'The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān'

Muhammad Marmaduke William Pickthall⁴⁴, an English man of letters who embraced Islam, holds the distinction of bringing out a first-rate rendering of the Qur'ān in English, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān* (London:1930).

⁴⁴ Marmaduke William Pickthall was born in Cambridge terrace, London, on 7 April 1875, the son of Mary O'Brien (1836-1904) and the Reverend Charles Grayson Pickthall (1822-81), Clark, Peter (1986:7). Pickthall took on the name Muhammad and immediately became one of the pillars of the British Islamic community, (ibid:39). Pickthall's declaration of his faith in November 1917 was the turning point of his life. Round his declared faith he picked up the pieces of his emotional and personal life that had been shattered by the war. He identified himself totally with the world Islamic community, (ibid:42). Marmaduke Pickthall is best remembered, when remembered at all, as a translator of the Qur'an, but he was also a novelist of whom E.M. Forster wrote in 1921 that he 'is the only contemporary English novelist who understands the Nearest East'. Pickthall's translation has been in print since it was first published. The text with English on the left and Arabic on the right was not published until after his death. This was the ideal presentation of a translation. It

Although it is one of the most widely used English translations, it provides scant explanatory notes and background information. This obviously restricts its usefulness for an uninitiated reader of the Qur'ān. The case of Pickthall is considered to be one of the earliest attempts to translate the meanings of the Qur'ān; it is a faithful rendering, supplemented by useful notes on historical, geographical and eschatological issues, particularly the illuminating discussions on comparative religion. Though the notes are not always very exhaustive, they help to dispel the doubts in the minds of non-Muslim readers. However, it too contains inadequate background information about the Sūrah's (chapters of the Qur'ān) and some of his notes need updating .

The picture Pickthall (1997: forward) paints for the translator of holy Scripture shows his right faith in the Qur'ān "... no holy Scripture can be fairly presented by one who disbelieves its inspiration and its message; ..." Pickthall states squarely clearly his presupposition, the supposition of a Muslim who believes that the Qur'ān is the verbatim word of God when he maintains (ibid:forward) that "... every effort has been made to

satisfied some conservative Muslim scruples and as such it became and remains a guide for Anglophone Muslims. The English can be seen to stand, not as a translation but as an explanation, a tafsir of the Arabic text. It has been accepted with least reserve by Muslims of India and Pakistan, as well as of Britain and the United States, (ibid:66-67).

Between 1903 and 1921 he published nine novels set in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Yemen and Turkey. He also wrote six novels set in England, and short stories mainly about the Near East published in three collections. In addition to his fiction, Pickthall devoted much of his time after his conversion to Islam in 1971 to writing and lecturing about that faith. For several months in 1919 he was the acting Imam of the Muslim community in London, preaching and publishing pamphlets. The last fifteen years of his life were based in India, and the lectures he delivered in madras on 'The Cultural Side of Islam' were reprinted in New Delhi in 1981. His translation of the Qur'an, first printed in the United States in 1930, has since been reprinted several times in the United Kingdom, the United States, India, the United Arab Emirates and Libya, (ibid:1).

Six of his Near Eastern novels deserve to be re-issued: *Said the Fisherman*, *The Children of the Nile*, *The Valley of the Kings*, *Knights of Araby*, *oriental Encounters* and *The Early Hours*. All, save *Knights of Araby*, are set in the Near East Pickthall knew. In the detail of personal habits, changing patterns of behaviour, turns of speech, social attitudes and physical description, these novels resemble photograph albums of the period. They disclose much that is inaccessible through the medium of novel writing. The best of the Near East novels contain the circumstantiality of Sir Walter Scott, the exuberance of Charles Dickens, the moral strength of George Eliot, the compassionate tragedy of Thomas Hardy and the universality of E.M. Forster. I am suggesting not that Pickthall is as great as any of these but that his writings are recognizably influenced by the literary heritage to which these others have contributed. But what makes *Knights of Araby* and *The Early Hours*, two of his last novels, unique is that we have a mature and accomplished author writing the English Islamic novel, (ibid:2-3).

Pickthall wrote prolifically on different aspects of Islam in the nineteen years between his public embracing of Islam and his death. He identified himself with the world Islamic community and talked of 'we Muslim', (ibid:44).

He died at eleven o'clock on 19 May 1936 of coronary thrombosis. The body was brought to the Muslim cemetery at Brookwood, Surrey, not far from Woking. It was lowered into the grave to funeral prayers delivered by the Imam of the Mosque on Saturday 23 May, (ibid:68).

choose befitting language. But the result is not the glorious Qur’ān, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy.” In this connection, Abdul-Raof (2001:1) emphasizes that “the translation of the Qur’ān remains in limbo for the word of God cannot be reproduced by the word of man.”

3.4.1.1 Archaism

Where appropriate and while assessing the selected translations, certain translation features mark a particular translation. These features constitute translational problems, (see 3.3, p. 100). The present discussion highlights and focuses on various Qur’ān translation features, such as archaism, paraphrase, familiarization, etc. However, Salama-Carr (2000:48) states that “ a historical reading of translation practice, and indeed associated discourse, shows only too well the complexity of factors which bear upon the translator’s work – not only translation norms but also publishing constraints and personal preferences.”

It has been said earlier that Pickthall’s translation keeps meticulously close to the original in elegant, though now somewhat archaic English. The translation abounds with examples, as in:

﴿ فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

[So set thy purpose (O Muḥammad) for religion as a man by nature upright-the nature (framed) of Allāh, in which He hath created man. There is no altering (the laws of) Allāh’s creation. That is the right religion, but most men know not Q30:30] (Pickthall 1997:288).

Both *thy* and *hath* are archaic words and are no longer used in English at present and that makes the translation difficult to understand. Nida (1998:129) comments “archaic grammar is being dropped in most modern translations, so that no longer must people struggle with such pronouns as *thou*, *thee*, *ye* or be confused by verb forms such as *art*, *hath*, *hast*.” It is not an easy task still to explicate certain parts of the translation: *as a man by nature upright-the nature (framed) of Allāh, in which He hath created man*, where keeping close to the word order of the original makes it sound strange. Consider Abdel Haleem’s translation of Q30:30 below:

[So {Prophet} as a man of pure faith, stand firm in your devotion to the religion. This is the natural disposition God instilled in mankind-there is no altering God's creation-and this is the right religion, though most people do not realize it.] (Abdel Haleem 2004:258-259)

حَنِيفًا here is closer to *pure faith* than to merely *upright*. However, Pickthall never departed from the idea of textual loyalty, which is an essential part of translation. He is more source-text than target-text oriented.

3.4.1.2 Formal Equivalence

Our first concern will be to seek some clarity about the approach Pickthall implemented in his translation. It is apparent from the way Pickthall attempted to reproduce, as literally and meaningfully as possible, the form and content of the Qur'ān that he adopted the formal equivalence approach (cf. 1.2.3). The advocates of formal equivalence consider the strict adherence to ST is the “fulcrum” that is needed to move a word from one language into another. Most people typically assume that this fulcrum is provided by the “meaning” or “definition” of the word. Nida (1964:23) comments on matching grammatical forms and employing the same word order and states that “the attempt to be literal in the form of the message has resulted in grievous distortions of the message itself.”

The formal equivalence approach accepted by Pichthall is demonstrated in the following example:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي يُسَيِّرُكُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا كُنْتُمْ فِي الْفُلِكِ وَجَرِينَٰ بِهِمْ بِرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ
وَفَرِحُوا بِهَا جَاءَتْهَا رِيحٌ عَاصِفٌ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْمَوْجُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ أُحِيطَ بِهِمْ دَعَوُا
اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ لَئِنِ أَنْجَيْتَنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ﴾

[He it is Who maketh you to go on the land and the sea till, when you are in the ships and they sail with them with a fair breeze, and they are glad therein, a storm-wind reacheth them and the waves cometh unto them from every side, and they deem that they are overwhelmed therein, (then) they cry unto Allāh, making their Faith pure for Him only: If Thou deliver us from this, we truly be of the thankful. Q10:22] (Pickthall1997:141)

It is worthy to note here that the translation follows the formal equivalence approach where the translator shifts attention away from TT to the ST itself, in both form and content. It is a ST-oriented translation, and is designed to reveal as much as possible the ST form and

content. Words like: *maketh, reacheth, cometh unto, Thou, deem* are typically archaic English. Expression such as *He it is Who* is a sign of strict adherence to the original word order and so is *the thankful*. ‘Allāh’, the name of ‘God’, is retained and preferred to ‘God’, as it is the accepted name among Muslims. It is observed as well that (وَجَرَيْنَ بِهِم بِرِيحٍ) (طَيِّبَةٍ وَفَرِحُوا بِهَا), [they sail with them with a fair breeze, and they are glad therein,] where ambiguity arises from anaphoric pronouns: *they...them*, a typical problem of formal equivalence, whereas it could be something like the following if dynamic equivalence is applied: [when you are sailing on ships and rejoicing in the favouring wind].

3.4.1.3 Familiarization⁴⁵

It is noticed throughout the translation that English proper names have been used than Arabic names. Examples abound: Abraham, Ishmael, Joseph, Jonah, Noah, Moses, Aaron, and Pharaoh. Transliteration is used, when it comes to the names of chapters (the title of each sūrah). Besides, the introductory paragraph for each sūrah is found helpful, however brief. Consider the following introductory paragraph for Q11:

“*HŪD* takes its name from v.50, which begins the story of Hūd, of the tribe of ‘Ād, one of the prophets of Arabia who is not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Sūrah also contains the stories of two other Arab prophets, Ṣāliḥ, of the tribe of Thamūd, and Shu‘eyb of Midian (identified with Jethro), which with those of Noah and Moses, are quoted as part of the history of Divine Revelation, the truth of which is here vindicated in a manner supplementary to Sūrah 10. A late Makkan Sūrah, except v. 114 f., revealed at al-Madinah.” (Pickthall 1997: 148)

The case in hand shows Pickthall at his best as is always the situation throughout the translation. It is natural after almost less than a century to find the language of the translation different from the language at present but this does not mean that Pickthall should be deprived of his deserved appreciation. Here is an edifying tale:

﴿ قَتَلَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ ﴾ ﴿ مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ ﴾ ﴿ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ ﴾ ﴿ ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ ﴾ ﴿ ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ ﴾ ﴿ ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْشَرَهُ ﴾ ﴿ كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَا أَمَرَهُ ﴾ ﴿

⁴⁵ See also *Domestication*: 3.3, p. 101 of this book.

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ ﴿١٧﴾ أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا ﴿١٨﴾ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا ﴿١٩﴾ فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَعَيْنَبًا وَوَقْضًا ﴿٢١﴾ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٢﴾

[Woe to man! How ungrateful is he! From what thing doth He create him? From a drop of seed. He createth him and proportioneth him, then maketh the way easy for him, then causeth him to die, and burieth him; Then, when He will, He bringeth him again to life. Let man consider his food: How we pour water in showers, then split the earth in clefts, and cause the grain to grow therein, and grapes and green fodder, and olive-trees and palm-trees. Q80:17-29] (ibid:441-442)

What really matters in translation is the transference of the content of a text from one language to another, which Pickthall did artistically. He almost fulfils the same purpose in English as the original did in Arabic in which it was written, not a mere approximation to that purpose at all. However, *نُطْفَةٍ* can be rendered now as *droplet* and *burieth* is better transferred in the modal passive voice *be buried*. The structural pattern of the sentences made it necessary for Pickthall to repeat the conjunctive element (وَ / and) because he strictly kept close to the source text, he didn't join the sentences together to avoid the over use of *and*. Also *green fodder* is archaic and can be *fresh vegetation* for example. In the same vein, Abdel Haleem (2004:xxviii) comments on Pickthall's translation: "Although his language may now seem almost artificially archaic, his translation keeps close to the original Arabic, and is still very popular among Arabs and Muslims."

3.4.2 'The Holy Qur'ān: Translation and Commentary'

Abdullah Yūsuf 'Ali's *The Holy Qur'ān: Translation and Commentary*, perhaps the most popular translation, stands as another major achievement in this field. Yūsuf 'Ali has given the English reader an authentic and reliable translation and commentary which they could make a serious study. Yūsuf was quick to point out that there can be no absolute or perfect translation of the Qur'ān, and at best, only an interpretation of the understanding of the meaning can be offered. In the introduction to the translation, the reader should be able to

access the authenticity of Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Ali’s work. ‘Ali⁴⁶ provides detailed commentaries for his readers. The work of this studied and gifted writer has been a main stay in the daily life of so many people. Thus, it is the fact that Yūsuf ‘Ali without a doubt was one of the few Muslims who enjoyed an excellent command over the English language. It is fully reflected in his translation. Though his is more of a paraphrase than a literal translation, yet it faithfully represents the sense of the original . Abdel Haleem. (2004:xxviii) remarks that Yūsuf ‘Ali’s translation “has appeared in numerous editions, normally including the Arabic text parallel with the translation, along with 6,310 explanatory notes, 300 pieces of running commentary in blank verse, fourteen appendices and indices. It is an extremely useful work, especially his notes and indices, for those who want a fuller and more guided understanding of the background and text of the Qur’ān. His language contains poetic features and archaic words that make the style outdated.”

3.4.2.1 Representation of the Original Sense

The translation text itself should be the starting point in any comparative study of translation criticism. Therefore, for a critic, the adoption of a comparative approach to this text rather than any other approach is predominant. In short, the act of comparative study

⁴⁶ “In 1872 A.C. 1289 A.H., ‘Abdulla Yūsuf ‘Ali was born in a family of the Bohra community in Bombay, India. His father, a merchant, was a very religious man who made sure that his son learned Qur’ān before anything else. Upon the completion of young Yūsuf’s committing the entire Qur’ān to memory, his father celebrated the occasion with a grand banquet, thus showing to his son the importance of his achievement and the importance of the Qur’ān. In addition to studying contemporary knowledge at school, Abdulla continued to receive lessons in Arabic language and never ceased in his studies of the Qur’ān. He was a superior student who excelled in academic achievement and won the much coveted Indian Civil Service Award, a prestigious honour resulting from the extremely competitive entrance examinations for high positions in the Indian Civil Service which wealthy families would aspire for their sons to receive. Abdulla was easily able to absorb English literature and was considered to be among the best of his fellow countrymen in writing English. Many of the most well-known scholarly in India published his works and expressed their appreciation for his beautiful literary style. Later, Abdulla Yūsuf left India for Europe and visited many European capitals and eventually resided in London for a considerable period of time. While in London, he was exposed to many translations of the Qur’ān and continued to have a tremendous interest in it and its studies. He then began to closely study the Qur’ān giving special attention to its various interpretations, both old and new. After studying what was written about the Qur’ān in both European and Eastern languages, he returned to India and took up new residence in Lahore where he became the Dean of the Islamic College. He then began his monumental work of translating and commentating on the Qur’ān and later died in Lahore in 1948 A.C. 1367 A.H.” Abdulla Yūsuf ‘Ali (1998:IV). *Modern English Translation of the Holy Qur’ān Meanings & Commentary*. Beirut: Ouloom Al Qur’ān Est.

must be performed within the framework of a critical system that implies judgment and a sense of value, otherwise it becomes a mere set of procedures or simply a mechanical act whose content, subject matter, and objectives are value-free. It can be possibly conceived of what has been aforementioned that the comparative approach helps show dimensions which might not be shown otherwise. In this connection the following translation of Yūsuf ʿAli will be compared to that of Abdel Haleem because, he is a native speaker of Arabic, a Qurʿān specialist, and has a native command of English. It should be taken into consideration that there is a lapse of almost 75 years between the two translations.

Yūsuf ʿAli stated his mission in the introduction to his translation (Yūsuf ʿAli 2000: x):

“My service to the Qurʿān should be to present it in a fitting garb in English. That ambition I have cherished in my mind for more than forty years. I have collected books and materials for it. I have visited places, undertaken journeys, taken notes, sought the society of men, and tried to explore their thoughts and hearts, in order to equip myself for the task. Sometimes I have considered it too stupendous for me, the double task of understanding the original, and producing its nobility, its beauty, its poetry, its grandeur, and its sweet practical reasonable application to everyday experience.”

Yūsuf ʿAli introduced his methodology in translating the Qurʿān and his tools in achieving equivalence in translation. It is obvious from Q2:102, Q23:84-89, Q31:25 and Q45:24 the strict adherence to the source and the presentation of the sense of the original.

Example 1

﴿وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الْمَلَائِكِينَ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَبِتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلَّمُوا لِمَنْ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

[They followed what the evil ones gave out (falsely) against the power of Solomon. The blasphemers were, not Solomon, but the evil ones, teaching men magic, and such things as

came down at Babylon to the angels Hārūt and Mārūt. But neither of these taught anyone (such things) without saying: “We are only for trial; so do not blaspheme.” They learned from them the means to sow discord between man and wife. But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allāh’s permission. And they learned what harmed them, not what profited them and they knew that the buyers of (magic) would have no share in the happiness of the Hereafter. And vile was the price for which they did sell their souls, if they but knew! Q2:102] (ibid:13-14)

‘Ali was really proud of the rendition of Q2:102 as he stated in his introduction (ibid:V). There have been some observations about Q2:102: {1} *gave out (falsely) against the power of Solomon* is a good translation as *تتلو* does not mean *recite over* but *narrate as lies or fabricate about* Solomon’s Kingdom and it is all lies: Consider [And when We decreed death for him, nothing showed his death to them save a creeping creature of the earth which gnawed away his staff. And when he fell the jinn saw clearly how, if they had known the unseen, they would not have continued in humiliating torment. Q34:14] (ibid:306) {2} *فلا تكفر* was translated as *so do not blaspheme* but in the rest of the translation under discussion was translated as *do not disbelieve*. {3} [*the means to sow discord*] and [*would have no share in the happiness of the Hereafter*] are examples of addition. He added the words (*means, happiness*) which do not exist in the original. ‘Ali has somewhat departed from the idea of textual loyalty, which is an essential part of translation.

Consider Q2:102 thus translated by Dawood:

[And accept what the devils tell of Solomon’s Kingdom. Not that Solomon was an unbeliever: it is the devils who are unbelievers. They teach men witchcraft and that which was revealed to the angels Hārūt and Mārūt in Babylon. Yet they never instruct any man without saying to him beforehand: ‘We have been sent to tempt you; do not renounce your faith.’ From these they learn a charm by which they can create discord between husband and wife, although they can harm none with what they learn except by God’s leave. They learn, indeed, what harms them and does not profit them; yet they know full well that anyone who engaged in that traffic would have no share in the life to come. Vile is that for which they have sold their souls, if they but knew it! Q2:102] (Dawood 2003:19-20)

It is worthy to note here that *gave out (falsely)* is better than *tell* because it does not entail the lies or fabrication the evil ones had propagated. *Do not renounce your faith* is less

effective than *do not disbelieve*. From these they learn a charm by which they can create discord between husband and wife is an example of a paraphrase.

Example 2

﴿ قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾ ﴿ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴾
 ﴿ قُلْ مَنْ مِنْ يَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُحْيِيهِ وَيُمِيتُهُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ ﴿ سَيَقُولُونَ
 لِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ ﴾

[Say: “Who is the Lord of the seven heavens, and the Lord of the Throne (of Glory) Supreme?” They will say, “(They belong) to Allāh.” Will you not then be filled with awe? “Say” Who is it in whose Hands is the governance of all things, who protects (all), but is not protected (of any)? (Say): if you know. They will say: “(It belongs) to Allāh.” Say: “Then how are you deluded?” Q23:86-89] (Yūsuf^oAli 2000: 240-241)

[Say, “Who is the Lord of the seven heavens? Who is the Lord of the Mighty Throne?” and they will reply, “God.” Say, “Will you not be mindful?” Say, “Who holds control of everything in His hand? Who protects, while there is no protection against Him, if you know [so much]?” and they will reply, “God.” Say, Then how can you be deluded? Q23:86-89] (Abdel Haleem 2004: 218)

Both translations have been employed to convey the true essence of the Qur’ān through close proximity to the source. However, Abdel Haleem finds new solutions for the voids in the Qur’ān, for instance, *تَتَّقُونَ* *mindful* and *mindful of God* elsewhere is more appropriate a translation than *awe* or *fear* because the Arabic word implies much more than that.

Example 3

﴿ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

[If thou ask them who it is that created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly say “Allāh.” Say: “Praise be to Allāh!” But most of them understand not. Q31:25] (Ali 2000:344)

[If you ask them who created the heavens and earth, they are sure to say, 'God.' Say, 'Praise belongs to God,' but most of them do not understand. Q31:25] (Abdel Haleem 2004: 262)

It is recognizable that there is no such a substantial difference between the two translations.

3.4.3 'The Qur'ān, Translated, with a Critical Re-arrangement of the Sūrah's'

Watt (1970:176-177) holds that "Richard Bell⁴⁷ set out the first fruits of his work on the Qur'ān in the form of lectures on *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment* (London, 1926). The major results of his work, though in a slightly incomplete form, are to be found in his translation- *The Qur'ān: Translated, with a critical re-arrangement of the Sūrah's* (two vols., Edinburgh, 1937, 1939)." It has to be noted that Watt's *Introduction to the Qur'ān* (1970) is a revised version of Bell's *Introduction to the Qur'ān* (Edinburgh 1953). Watt (1970:179-180) mentions a complete list of Bell's articles on Qur'ānic subjects⁴⁸.

It has been admitted, as Jansen holds (1974:55), that the Qur'ān is "a difficult book. Its language has always troubled people who attempted to understand it." That is why translators tend to make their translation more informative, though this could lead to a source-centered translation but in translating the Qur'ān it is noticed that strict adherence to the text is really accommodating as in all the cases it is not without good reasons.

There is another issue that often causes confusion amongst scholars: that is the limit of intervention on the part of the translator. It is a truism that translation is not at all times a sort of betrayal but in fact as Harvey (2003:45-46) conceives "a translation has the potential to reveal (and should be probed for) challenges, transgressions, contradictions and fissures, (weaknesses) all of which are outcomes of the interaction between, on the one hand, an

⁴⁷ "Born in Scotland in 1876 and educated at Edinburgh, receiving degrees in both Semitic studies and divinity, Richard Bell came to some prominence in the field of the study of the Qur'ān and early Islam with the publication in expanded form of his 1925 Edinburgh University Gunning Lectures, under the title '*The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment*.' A little over a decade later, he published the work for which he has become most famous (and infamous), '*The Qur'ān, Translated, with a Critical Re-arrangement of the Sūrah's*,'" Rippin, A. (1992). "Reading the Qur'ān with Richard Bell". *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, V.112:4, pp. 639+.

⁴⁸ 'A duplicate in the Koran; the composition of Surah xxiii', *Moslem World*, xviii (1928), pp. 227-33.

'Who were the Hanifs?' *ibid.* xx (1930), pp. 120-4.

'Muhammad's Call', *ibid.* xxiv. (1934), pp.13-19.

'Muhammad's Visions', *ibid.* xxiv. pp. 145-54. For the complete list, see Watt (1970:179-180).

underlying systematic configuration, of values and assumptions and on the other, the irruption of alterity within a domestic sphere.” In fact a translation is a projection of the self on the production of the others. Steiner (1992:317) conceptualizes translation as “a mirror which not only reflects but also generates light”; however, this light doesn’t always have a safe journey home. More surprisingly, instead of guiding, the light sometimes misleads. Nevertheless, Harvey (2003:46) considers translation “as not merely the outcome of established determinations, manipulations in the receiving socio-cultural system but as an event opening up the possibility (however minor) of ideological innovation.” In this connection, Bobzin (1993:193) states that “the refutation of the Koran as the logical basis for any successful missionary effort towards Muslim people became from the very beginnings of Western Christian interest in the Islam the principal impetus for any attempt at translation.”

If the translation of Richard Bell is to be taken as a case in point, there are immediately a group of issues which should be raised. First, he (1937:VI) claims that Muḥammad has written the Qur’ān himself (and as such he contradicts the QCM, see chapter two): “The translation goes frankly on the assumption that the Qur’ān was in written form when the redactors started their work, whether actually written by Muḥammad himself, as I personally believe, or by others at his dictation.” Secondly, he has carried out his own transformation of the order of the Qur’ān and that does not at its best benefit the readers or even incite them to understand. On the contrary, the readers almost spend quite sometime to find where the location of a certain *’āyah* (verse) is, because it does not carry the same number as the original. It is interesting to mention here that Nida (1964:162) quotes Oliver Edwards stating “we expect approximate truth in a translation ... What we want to have is the truest possible feel of the original. The characters, the situations, the reflections must come to us as they were in the author’s mind and heart, not necessarily precisely as he had them on his lips.”

Bell (1953:82) proposes in *Introduction to the Qur’ān* that he has doubts as to the compilation and collecting of the Qur’ān which leaves its impact on his translation of the Qur’ān. He personally believes (ibid:83) that “... the most conclusive proof of the Prophet’s part in the compiling of the sūrahs comes from a detailed study of their structure, which discloses evidences of revisions and alterations such as could hardly been made

Meccan; it has been done at the same time as the revelation of the preceding passage, and the insertion of the following one, which must date from after the complete break with the Jews and the resolution to produce an independent Book.” It should not go without saying that Bell’s comment is ideological. More significantly still, he does not employ as most of the rest of the translators of the Qur’ān the informative model of translation as presented by QCM (see chapter two). The informative model of translation means giving the reader all information possible to make a sensible understanding of the Qur’ān by so many ways and devices, name a few, interpolation, footnotes, and endnotes. Taken together and in contrast with Bell’s translation, it is observed that cohesion is maintained in the rest of the translations. Bobzin (1993:195) mentions in his elaborative account of the Latin translations of the Qur’ān that Johannes Oporinus (1507-68), the great Basle printer was forbidden to continue printing the Qur’ān translation because “the government was unable to reach a clear, unanimous decision as to whether or not the Koran should be classified as a dangerous book that should not be read by the common people.” Bobzin (ibid:196) points out that one of the reports on the case of Oporinus “delivered by the most influential jurisconsult of the city, Bonifacius Amerbach, pointed out that a heretical book such as the Koran according to Roman Law ought no to appear in a Christian city.”

The Muslim need for translating the Qur’ān into English arose mainly out of the desire to combat the missionary effort. Following a long polemical tradition, part of whose goal was also the production of a - usually erroneous and confounding - European version of the Muslim scripture; Christian missionaries started their offensive against a politically humiliated Islam in the eighteenth century by advancing their own translations of the Qur’ān. As already noted, origins of this orientalist tradition may be traced back to the anti-Islamic motives of the missionaries . Apart from hurling all sorts of wild and nasty allegations against the Prophet and the Qur’ān in the Preface, we believe that Bell is inaccurate in having invented the so-called Critical Re-arrangement of the Sūrahs Order of the Qur’ān.

3.4.4 'The Koran'

N. J. Dawood⁴⁹ is an Iraqi who translated the Qur'ān into English. Dawood's translation, *The Koran* (London: 1956) is perhaps one of the most widely circulated English translation of the Qur'ān. Dawood stated his aim in the introduction to his translation as to make the language modern and intelligible. He did not choose the literal approach in translation because "in adhering to a rigidly literal rendering of Arabic idioms, previous translations have, in my opinion, practically failed to convey both the meaning and the rhetorical grandeur of the original." (Dawood 2003:3)

3.4.4.1 Paraphrase Translation

﴿ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾ ﴿ أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ يَدَايِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ مَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا إِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴾ ﴿ أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَّ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا إِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ ﴿ أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾ ﴿ أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ إِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾ ﴿ أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

[Say: 'Praise be to God, and peace upon His servants whom He has chosen! Who is more worthy, God or the idols they serve besides Him? [Surely worthier is] He who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water from the sky for you, bringing forth gardens of delight. Try as you may, you cannot cause such trees to grow.' Another god besides God? Yet they make others His equals. [Surely worthier is] He who has established the earth and

⁴⁹ "Born in Baghdad, N. J. Dawood came to England as an Iraq state scholar in 1945 and graduated from London University. In 1959 he founded the Arabic Advertising & Publishing Co Ltd, London (ARADCO), which is now one of the major producers of Arabic typesetting outside the Middle East. His translation of *Tales from the Thousand and One Nights* was first published in 1954 and has since been printed in twenty various editions. He is best known for his translation of the (Koran) Qur'ān which was published in 1956 and has since sold over one million copies" Dawood (2003:I) Penguin Classics' introduction.

watered it with running rivers; who has set mountains upon it and placed a barrier between the Two Seas. Another god besides God? Indeed, most of them have no knowledge. [Surely worthier is] He who answers the oppressed when they cry out to Him, and relieves their affliction. It is He who has given you the earth to inherit. Another god besides God? How little you reflect! [Surely worthier is] He who guides you in the darkness of land and sea, and sends the winds as harbingers of His mercy. Another god besides God? Exalted be He above their idols! Q27:59-63] (Dawood 2003: 268-269)

The previous example shows as Abdel Haleem (2004: xxxii) contends “a particular kind of rhetorical question, frequent in the Qur’ān, which expresses disapproval through its grammatical structure rather than by any lexical addition.” Dawood did not keep close to the original for example, in translating the rhetorical question as a declarative telling sentence. The rhetorical question is immediately clear when we read Abdel Haleem’s translation: [Who is better: God, or those they set up as partners with Him? Who created the heavens and the earth? Who sends down water from the sky for you-with which We cause gardens of delight to grow: you have no power to make the trees grow in them-is it another god beside God? No! But they are people who take others to be equal with God.] The rhetorical question here is stated clearly. It is further noticeable in Abdel Haleem’s that the sentence is more coherent as the cohesive particles *No* and *But* help make the sentence more intelligible. Moreover, Dawood took liberty with the grammatical structure (questioning) and used another lexical addition (Surely worthier is) which did not maintain the grammatical structure of the rhetorical question. Instead of using three consecutive questions, namely, [*Who is it that answers the distressed when they call upon Him? Who removes their suffering? Who makes you successors in the earth?*] Dawood changed the grammatical structure and used declarative sentences in its place: [*Surely worthier is*] *He who answers the oppressed when they cry out to Him, and relieves their affliction. It is He who has given you the earth to inherit.*] It should be noted that changing the grammatical structure of the rhetorical question makes the power of reasoning and persuasion less effective.

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا ﴾
 ﴿ ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا ﴾

[Do you not see how your Lord lengthens the shadows? Had it been His will He could have made them constant. But We make the sun their guide; little by little We shorten them. Q25:45-46] (Dawood 2003:255)

Again the rhetorical question has not been conveyed intelligibly: [Have you not considered how your Lord lengthens the shade?] *ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا* is ambiguously rendered and we believe that the verb: *قَبَضْنَاهُ* should be translated into rather (draw) or (withdraw) but not (shorten). Where *الظِّلُّ* is singular in Arabic it is used in the plural form in the translation *shadows* and consequently the anaphoric pronouns were made plural as well.

﴿ أَوْ لَمْ يَنْظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَأَنْ عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدِ اقْتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمْ قَبَائٍ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

[Will they not ponder upon the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and all that God created, to see whether their hour is not drawing near? And in what other revelation will they believe, those that deny this? Q7:185] (Dawood 2003:124)

The translated text is understood as such: the Qur'ān calls for contemplating the universe and all what God created in order to see whether the end of their time is drawing near or not. There is misrepresentation here: *to see whether their hour is not drawing near* is a question in itself and *to* here should be replaced by *and* in order to convey the intentionality of the ST, as in:

[Have they not contemplated the realm of the heavens and the earth and all that God created, and that the end of their time might be near? What (other revelation) will they believe in if they don't believe in this?]

3.4.4.2 Anaphoric Reference

Other examples from Dawood's show that he sometimes mentions the pronoun references in the footnote whereas in some other cases he does not - an action which can cause confusion on the part of the reader, as in:

﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ وَلِيَقُولُوا دَرَسْتَ وَلِنُبَيِّنَهُ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

[Thus do we make plain Our revelations, that they may say: ‘*You* (Muḥammad) have studied deep,’ and that this may become clear to men of knowledge. Q6:105] (Dawood 2003:102)

﴿أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْتَغِي حَكْمًا وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ مُنَزَّلٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ﴾

[Should *I* (Muḥammad) seek a judge other than God when it is He who has revealed the Book for you with all its percepts? Those to whom We gave the Scriptures know that it is the truth revealed by your lord. Therefore have no doubts. Q6:114] (Dawood 2003:103)

In both the previous examples, Dawood mentioned in the footnote what the pronoun referred to Prophet Muḥammad. While in the following examples he did not mention the referent though it is Prophet Muḥammad as well, as in:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

[We have sent *you* forth to all mankind, so that you may give them good news and forewarn them. But most men have no knowledge. Q34:28] (Dawood 2003:302)

﴿مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا﴾

[Whatever good befalls you (Man), it is from God: and whatever ill from yourself. We have sent *you* forth as an apostle to mankind. God is all-your sufficient witness. Q4:79] (Dawood 2003:69)

It is worth mentioning here that in the four previous examples, (you - *ت*) in Q6:105, (*ي* - I) in Q6:114, (*ك* - you) in Q34:28, and (*ك* - you) in Q4:79, all refer to the Prophet Muḥammad. Consider the same verses (Q34:28) & (Q4:79) in Pickthall’s and al-Hilālī’s where the referents name is mentioned between brackets:

[And We have not sent thee (O Muḥammad) save as a bringer of good tidings and a warner unto all mankind; but most of mankind know not. Q34:28] (Pickthall 1997:34)

[Whatever a good befalleth thee (O man) it is from Allāh, and whatever of ill befalleth thee it is from thyself. We have sent thee (Muḥammad) as a messenger unto mankind and Allāh is sufficient as witness. Q4:79] (Pickthall1997:62)

[And We have not sent you (O Muḥammad) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not. Q34:28] (al-Hilālī and Khan 1998:577)

[Whatever of good reaches you, is from Allāh, but whatever of evil befalls you, is from yourself. And We have sent you (O Muḥammad) as a Messenger to mankind, and Allāh is Sufficient as a Witness. Q4:79] (al-Hilālī and Khan 1998:122)

3.4.5 'The Koran Interpreted'

Arthur J. Arberry⁵⁰'s translation, *The Koran Interpreted*, appeared in 1955 and is undoubtedly one of the most respected translations of the Qur'ān in English. Arberry shows great respect towards the language of the Qur'ān, particularly its musical effects. His careful observation of Arabic sentence structure and phraseology makes his translation very close to the Arabic original in grammatical terms i.e. he adopts a literal translation approach where the SL grammatical structure is maintained in the TL. To those unfamiliar with the ST itself, this feature, along with the lack of any notes or comments, can make the TT difficult to understand and confusingly unidiomatic. The reason why Arberry's translation is seen as unidiomatic, is because an idiomatic translation is defined by Larson (1998:11) as one "which has the same meaning as the source language but is expressed in the natural form of the receptor language", and one in which "the meaning not the form, is retained". However, it remains a popular version of the Qur'ān in English, particularly in academic circles. Arberry's translation, we can claim, is an ST oriented rendering of the Qur'ān in which he attempts to recapture some of the stylistic features of Qur'ānic discourse.

A.J. Arberry was a renowned Orientalist and Professor of Arabic at the Universities of London and Cambridge. Arberry's *The Koran Interpreted* (London:1957) no doubt stands out above the other English renderings in terms of both its approach and quality.

⁵⁰ "Arthur J. Arberry (1905-69) was born at Buckland, Portsmouth, and educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge. In 1944 he was appointed to the Chair of Persian at London University. In 1946 he became Professor of Arabic and Head of the Near and Middle East Department and in the following year he returned to Pembroke as Sir Thomas Adam's Professor of Arabic, a post which he held for the remainder of his life. A profound and inspiring teacher, he was also an immensely prolific and versatile writer, publishing over sixty works on a wide range of topics in Arabic and Persian studies." Arberry, A. J. (1998:I) Oxford University Press' introduction.

Nonetheless, it is not altogether free from mistakes of omission and mistranslation, as we observe in the following examples:

Example 1

﴿ يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَأَسْجُدِي وَأَرْكَعِي مَعَ الرََّاكِعِينَ ﴾

[“Mary, be obedient to thy Lord, prostrating and bowing before Him.” Q3:43] (Arberry 1998:51)

It should be abundantly clear by now that the part Arberry omit (and bow down with those who bow down) is a supportive example of subtraction in translation. Arberry omitted words which have equivalents in Arabic, and can easily be rendered. This case makes sense when Hodge and Kress (1979:22) state that “reducing the complexity of an argument and limiting the terms which it can contain is a drastic intervention. Showing less means someone else seeing less. And seeing less means thinking less.”

Example 2

﴿ إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ ﴾

[Your friend is only God, and His Messenger, and the believers who perform the prayer and pay the alms, and bow them down. Q5:55] (Arberry 1998:109)

What is intended here is *bow down in worship* and not the misrepresented expression *bow them down* which hampers the intelligibility and makes the text difficult for readers to understand.

Example 3

﴿ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمُ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

[Those to whom We have given the Book recognize it as they recognize their sons. Those who have lost their own souls, they do not believe. Q6:20] (ibid:123)

The anaphoric pronoun *it* here is misplaced and it does not refer to *the Book* but it refers instead to the Prophet Muḥammad as mentioned in al-Ṭabarī (1987, 7:104-105) and al-Rāzī (1997, 4:500).

Example 4

﴿ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ
وَالْإِنْجِيلِ... ﴾

[Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet of the common folk, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel ... Q7:157] (Arberry 1998:161-162)
The expression *النبي الأمي* is mistranslated as *the Prophet of the common folk* where it should be *the unlettered Prophet*. The translation suffers here a grave error: the fact that the Prophet is unlettered is a central notion in Islam and is closely related to the inimitability of the Qur'ān.

3.4.6 'The Nobel Qur'ān: English Translation of the meanings and commentary'

The Nobel Qur'ān by al-Hilālī⁵¹ and Khan⁵² is another clear embodiment of literal translation. This text appeared including the Arabic text parallel with the translation, along with numerous explanatory notes, appendices, indices and glossaries. It is replete with its short notes based on the Qur'ān or the authentic traditions of the Prophet. The early English translations of the Qur'ān by Muslims stemmed mainly from the enthusiasm on their part to refute the allegations levelled by the Christian missionaries against Islam in general and the Qur'ān in particular. In this connection *The Nobel Qur'ān* by al-Hilālī is no different. As to the translation itself, it abounds in numerous instances of interpolations. It should go without saying that the translators have adopted a way of translating in which they use parentheses to indicate the interpolation, as in the following examples:

Example 1

⁵¹ Dr. Muḥammad Taqī-ud-Dīn al-Hilālī is a formerly Professor of Islamic Faith and Teachings at the Islamic University, al-Madīnah al-Munawarah, (al-Hilālī 1988:V).

⁵² Dr. Muḥammad Muḥsin Khan is a formerly Director of University Hospital, Islamic University, al-Madīnah al-Munawarah, (al-Hilālī 1988:V).

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

[This is the Book (the Qur'ān), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are *Al-Muttaqūn* [the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism who fear Allāh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allāh much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained) Q2:2]. (al-Hilālī 1988:3)

In this connection, it has been observed that the interpolation implemented here serves many a good reason. First of all, the translators intend to direct their readers towards their understanding of the ST which ultimately represents their belief. Secondly, their understanding which appears in the text goes back to the social bearing al-Hilālī and Khan hold. It will be immediately clear when the translation of the same verse is investigated in other different translations.

Example 2

﴿ وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ بَشَرٍ مِّن شَيْءٍ قُلْ مَن أَنزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ مُوسَىٰ نُورًا وَهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ تَجْعَلُونَهُ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا وَعَلَّمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا آبَاؤُكُمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴾

For the sake of comparison, the employment of interpolation is quite noticeable in al-Hilālī and Khan's. Such an interpolation carries their belief as well:

[“They (the Jews, Quraish pagans, idolaters) did not estimate Allāh with an estimation due to Him when they said: “Nothing did Allāh send down to any human being (by revelation).” Say (O Muḥammad): “Who then sent down the Book which Mūsā (Moses) brought, a light and guidance to mankind which you (the Jews) have made into (separate) papersheets, disclosing (some of it) and concealing much. And you (believers in Allāh and His messenger Muḥammad) were taught (through the Qur'ān) that which neither you nor your fathers knew.” Say: “Allāh (sent it down).” Then leave them to play in their vain discussions. Q6:91] (al-Hilālī 1988:183-184)

It is true then the TT has become a complete whole, a complete unit of semantics due to its cohesion and its astound comprehensibility. Suffice it here to say that it is the ideological orientation of the translators which makes all the difference in deciding the final version of

the text and assisting in creating such discrepancies in the translations as it is investigated so far.

Example 3

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ﴾ ﴿اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ﴾ ﴿لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ﴾ ﴿وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ﴾

[Say (O Muḥammad): “He is Allāh, (the) One. *Allāh-al-Ṣamad* (السيد الذى يصمد اليه) (في الحاجات nor drinks)]. He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him. Q112:1-4] (al-Hilālī 1988:854-855)

There are some important features which should be kept into consideration in the process of evaluating al-Hilālī and Khan’s translation. These features are summarized here:

1. They have sacrificed effect for accuracy.
2. Peculiar terms in Islam, such as *al-Muṭṭaqūm*, *al-Ṣalāh*, and *Zakāh* etc. have been retained in Arabic form yet given explanatory notes.
3. ‘Allāh⁵³’, the name of ‘God’, is retained and preferred to ‘God’, as it is the accepted name among Muslims.
4. Proper names and words have been transliterated.

The translators figured out that there is a necessity to match the original on its own linguistic level, i.e., word for word. They embodied this style which did not rely on the illocutionary force (see p.26) of the original but on interpolated text replete with explanatory addition. Then they use the facilities offered by the language into which they translate to try to match the original text. They sometimes reach vastly different conclusions.

3.4.7 ‘The Qur’ān: A New Translation’

Since Abdel Haleem⁵⁴ is a reputed Islamic scholar, both the quality of the translation and level of scholarship are very high and his work is of great translational interest.

⁵³ The Arabic word Allāh is a cognate of the Hebrew *Elohim* and the Syrian and Aramaic *Alaha*. In English, the word that signifies this Eternal, Self-Sufficient Creator is “God,” and this is the term which Muslim theologians therefore do not hesitate to translate the Arabic *Allāh*, Mattson (2008:36).

⁵⁴ “M. A. S. Abdel Haleem was born in Egypt, and learned the Qur’ān by heart from childhood. Educated at al-Azhar, Cairo, and Cambridge Universities, he has taught Arabic at Cambridge and London Universities since 1966, including courses in advanced translation and the Qur’ān. He is now Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of

This text represents a notable addition to the body of English translations couched in chaste English. With target readers in mind, particularly those unfamiliar with the ST, Abdel Haleem has employed the notion of dynamic equivalence. Abdel Haleem did a strenuous job to see such equivalence work for the best of the Qur'ānic genre. It is considered as a significant venture in this field. Special note has been taken of his compliance with the emblems of QCM.

It has been claimed that differences in cultural and historical context between languages make identical response impossible; unless there is a high degree of equivalence of response, the translation cannot be said to have fulfilled its purpose (Nida and Taber 1969:24). Such a translation is oriented toward the receptor's response, as well as rendering the meaning of the SL message. It aims to produce a TT that is consistently coherent with the receptor's culture, by eliminating almost every element of foreignness. Consequently, this results in necessary adjustments in grammar, and idioms. These procedures have been tried in Abdel Haleem's translation. The translation reflects a mature and scholarly effort. Short introductions to the sūrahs have been supplied and notes have been kept to a minimum and have been provided only when necessary for proper understanding. Abdel Haleem contends (ibid:xxxv) "these are designed to help the reader by identifying where the title comes from, and giving some information on the background and the general structure of the sūrah. 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.

Since Abdel Haleem, a Professor of Islamic Studies, enjoyed mastery of both Arabic and English Languages, his work helps one develop an understanding of the Qur'ān as a Divine source. Apart from setting the Sūrahs in the circumstances of its time, the translator constantly relates the universal message of the Qur'ān to his own time and its specific problems. His logical line of argument, generous sensibility, judicious use of classical Muslim scholarship (Fakhar al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Abu Ḥayyān, and al-Bayḍāwī) and practical solutions to the problems of the day (cf. Abdel Haleem:ix-xxxv) help to give his translation

Oriental and African Studies, University of London. His most recent publications are *Understanding the Qur'ān: Themes and Style* (2001) and *English Translation of the Qur'ān: The Making of an Image* (2004). He is also working on *An Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'ānic Usage*, with El-Said Badawī. He is the Editor of the *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* and the *London Qur'ānic Studies* series." (Abdel Haleem, 2004:cover page).

a speciality. It shouldn't go without saying that it is not mentioned in the introduction whether Abdel Haleem has consulted major exegetical sources such as al-Ṭabarī or no. He has not consulted Abdul-Raof (2001) which could have been a useful source for his translation and accuracy of rendering.

However, as it has been investigated throughout, it is obvious by now that the common feature in Abdel Haleem's is the style of translation he offers in which he does not provide a literal rendering for each successive meaningful unit of the ST. Moreover, he does not even arrange the sentences in their order of occurrence in the ST. It is worthy to note here as well that he does not adhere to the conventional grammatical order of units in the TL.

In fact, Abdel Haleem adopts the notion of naturalness and follows the dynamic equivalence characteristics. Where, as has been explicated earlier, he expresses himself in clear unforced term in TL. In the same vein, Nida & Taber (1969:12) contend that the notion of *naturalness* "consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" and add that (ibid:12) *naturalness* is characterised by "the use of grammatical constructions and combinations of words which do not violate the ordinary patterns of a language". The problem which arises is the use of common English that does not cope with the noble grandeur and supreme sublimity which Qur'ānic discourse observes. Consider the following two examples:

Example 1

﴿وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُو مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُ بِيَمِينِكَ إِذًا لِآرْتَابِ الْمُبْطِلُونَ﴾

[You never recited any Scripture before We revealed this one to you; you never wrote one down with your hand. If you had done so, those who follow falsehood might have had cause to doubt. Q29:48] (Abdel Haleem 2004:255)

Q29:48 manifests some of the underlying characteristics of *naturalness*, consider:

Exegetic translation, as in:

قَبْلِهِ is translated as *before We revealed this one to you*.

Addition, as in:

الْمُبْطِلُونَ is rendered as *those who follow falsehood*.

Subtraction, as in

إِدًّا is ignored though it is used as an affirmation particle in the ST.

Paraphrase, as in:

بِيَمِينِكَ is transferred in the TT as *your hand*.

Example 2

﴿ فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنَ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ
أَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴾

[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 duty is to convey the message. God is aware of His servants Q3:20] (Abdel Haleem 2004:20-21).

Q3:20 witnesses the loss of the cohesive articles (ف) and (وَ) as a departure from the typical grammatical structure of SL, which is a common feature in *dynamic equivalence*. The crux of the argument is that the cohesive articles (ف) and (وَ) have been used in ST for the realization of the cohesion and textuality. Where in TT the cohesive articles are missing and that affects the TT being a complete whole. In this connection, it is worthy to note what Bell (1991:7) maintains that if the translator picks *formal equivalence*, he is criticized for the ‘ugliness’ of a ‘faithful’ translation; if he picks the *functional equivalence*, however, he is criticized of the ‘inaccuracy’ of a ‘beautiful’ translation.

Applicably, it is observed that Qur’ān-specific features (rendered in the TT) such as Qur’ānic rhetoric and structural organization are in general rather simple, forceful, and memorable than complex, sophisticated, and elusive. The overall structure of the translation, like that of the descriptions within it, exhibits, in general, paratactical organization and includes devices typical of such organization; for example, the idiomatic nature of “the language”, instances of creating solutions to problems ever disputed over.

3.5 Conclusion

Now that we have analyzed the selected translations of the meaning of the Qur'ān, we have come to conclusion that translation is transformation. In other words, transformation can occur either by not conveying the same impact of the original due to certain recurrent features, such as archaism, paraphrasing, alienation or familiarization, etc. In archaizing the text for example, the translator makes the rendition difficult to understand. In taking liberty with the text, the TT suffers from noticeable deformity in case of Richard Bell for instance. As it has been seen throughout the present chapter, translations of the meaning of the Qur'ān may suffer from mistranslation in the form of addition, subtraction and alteration which lead to semantic loss. In addition, translations of Qur'ānic discourse must present the message in such a way that people feel its relevance (the expressive element in communication) and can respond to it in action (the imperative function) (cf. Nida and Taber, 1969:24). However, Abdul-Raof (2005b:172) holds that “the translator’s creativity is tied to the SL linguistic and cultural norms. Paraphrase, through domestication, transposition or dynamic equivalence, may be the solution, but it robs the Qur'ānic text of its distinctive religious character.”

Chapter Four

The Theory of *Naẓm*⁵⁵ and Qur'ān Translation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with the Qur'ān: an overview, deals with the notion of *ī'jāz* (inimitability) of the Qur'ān: its definition (which will be dealt in 4.4 after providing the reader with an exhaustive elaboration of different views of Arab scholars), origin and the views of speculative theologians Mutakallimūn- Mu'tazilites and As'harites. *ī'jāz*, for Arab rhetoricians, provides significant evidence that considers the Qur'ān the verbatim Word of Allāh. The views of al-Rummānī, al-Khaṭṭābī, al-Bāqillānī will be taken into account in more details: both their views concerning the notion of *al-ṣarfah* (aversion) and the notion of *naẓm* (order system) are introduced and discussed. It has been drawn heavily throughout the chapter upon the works of al-Jurjānī, the famous philologist and literary critic: *Dalā'il al-ī'jāz* (The Proofs for the Inimitability of Qur'ānic Style), and *Asrār al-Balāghah* (The Secrets of Rhetoric). The views of al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār will be compared to that of al-Jurjānī on certain issues such as, *al-Ṣarfah* (aversion), *faṣāḥah* (eloquence), and *ī'jāz* (inimitability) of the Qur'ān. Within his work, al-Jurjānī organized his ideas into the disciplines of *'ilm al-bayān* (figures of speech) and *'ilm al-ma'ānī* (word order) which both will be looked into in more details. The question which arises is: What is the impact of *'ilm al-balāghah* (the science of rhetoric) on the degree of equivalence in translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān? That will also be looked into when dealing with Arabic rhetoric and equivalence in Qur'ān translation. Then, the third discipline of *'ilm al-balāghah*: *'ilm al-badī'* and Ibn al-Mu'taz will be dealt with towards the end of this chapter.

4.2 The Qur'ān: an Overview

The codification of Islam emerged in the structure of a book: the Qur'ān. Muslims consider the Qur'ān to be the verbatim revelation of the Word of God as transmitted by the archangel Gabriel, in the Arabic language, through the Prophet Muḥammad during the

⁵⁵ I'd rather keep it as *naẓm* because there is no equivalent translation for it. However, Abdul-Raof (2006:98) translates it as 'the order system' which I think, does not reflect the rhetorical meaning of the Arabic expression.

twenty-three year period of his prophetic mission. The first verses were revealed when the Prophet was meditating in the cave of *Hirā'* on *jabal al-nūr* (the Mountain of Light) near Mecca, and the last verses were revealed elsewhere not long before his death. The Muslims hold that the Qur'ān supplants earlier revelations; it is regarded as their summation and completion. The kernel of the argument is that the Qur'ān is the final revelation, as Muḥammad is regarded as the 'the Seal of the Prophets.'⁵⁶ "In consequence the Qur'ān has a place of unparalleled importance at the very centre of Muslim religious life and practice. Qur'ānic teachings are the guide both to personal and social life and to religious responsibility."⁵⁷ Suleiman (1999:18-19) holds the view that "The status of the Qur'ān as the primary linguistic source in Arabic grammatical tradition arises from its position in Islam as God's revealed word verbatim. This property of the Qur'ān in turn underlies the universally held view in the Arabic intellectual tradition concerning the status of this text as the purest and most eloquent construction in Arabic. This view is further supported by the Prophet's status as one of the most eloquent speakers of his own community by virtue of his having been brought up among the *Banū Sa'īd* who were renowned for the purity, correctness or eloquence (*faṣāḥah*) of their speech. It is further supported by the generally held view that the Qur'ān was revealed in the *Hijāzī* variety which, probably for sociolinguistic reasons, was regarded as one of the purest dialect of Arabic, if not the purest."

The sacred Book of Islam has many names, of which al-Qur'ān, meaning 'recitation,' is the best known. The Qur'ān is thus also known as *al-Furqān*, literally, 'the standard,' that is, that which enables man to distinguish between truth and falsehood, good and evil. The Book is known also as *al-Hudā*, the Guidance, since it contains the knowledge that the Muslim must possess in order to remain upon the straight path (*al-Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*). Besides, *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* is itself a name of the Qur'ān. Moreover, the Qur'ān is the *Umm al-Kitāb*, the Mother of Books, since it is the prototype of all 'books,' par excellence. Another name of the Qur'ān is *al-Dhikr*, the commemoration of God. The Qur'ān is itself

⁵⁶ A supportive evident for the argument being held is the Ḥadīth reported in al Bukhārī in which the Prophet says: "The likeness of me and the Prophets preceding me is as the example of a man, who constructed a house perfectly and beautifully, except at one angle where a brick was missing. People who saw that house toured around it appreciating its beauty and expressing the desire to have that brick put in the empty place. So, I am that brick and I am the last of all prophets." The book of virtues, chapter 18: the seal of prophets (al Bukhārī (d. 256H) (2003: 642)

⁵⁷Eliade, Mircea, Charles, J. Adams, et al. (1987) *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. Volume12, 'Qur'ān'.

the reminder of God's Truth and Presence, and to recite it is to remember God. Abdul-Raof (2003:36) holds the view that "the Qur'ān is also referred to by a variety of descriptive words each of which is considered as one of the meanings of the Qur'ān," such as: *Nūr*: light, *Maw'za*: a direction, *Shifā'*: healing, *Hudā*: guidance, *Mubārak*: bringing blessings, *Mubīn*: perspicuous, *Bushrā*: glad tidings, *'Azīz*: of exalted power, *Majīd*: glorious, *Bashīr and Nadhīr*: good news and warning, *al-Faṣḥ*: decisive. Abdel Haleem (1999:3) contends "the Qur'ān describes itself as a book which God 'sent down' to the Prophet: the expression 'sent down', in its various derivations, is used in the Qur'ān well over 200 times. In Arabic this word conveys immediately, and in itself, the concept that the origin of the Qur'ān is from above and that Muḥammad is merely a recipient."

The Qur'ān is divided into 114 *sūrahs*, or chapters, and the *sūrahs* are conventionally assigned to two broad categories: those revealed at Mecca and those revealed at Medina. All the *sūrahs* are divided into *āyahs* or verses and, for purposes of pedagogy and recitation, the Qur'ān as a whole is divided into thirty parts, which in turn are divided into short divisions of nearly equal length, to facilitate study and memorization. The *sūrahs* themselves are of varying length, ranging from the longest, *Sūrah 2*, with 286 verses, to the shortest, *Sūrahs 103, 108, and 110*, each of which has only three verses. With some exceptions, the *sūrahs* are arranged in the Qur'ān in descending order of length, with the longest at the beginning and the shortest at the end: *Sūrah 2, al Baqarah*, the cow, has 286 verses; *Sūrah 3, Āl 'Imrān*, the family of Imran, has 200; *Sūrah 4, al-Nisā'*, women, has 177, and so on. The major exception to this arrangement is the opening *sūrah, al-Fātiḥa*, which contains seven verses and which serves as an introduction to the entire revelation. However, Abdul-Raof (2005:27) is in agreement with Muslim scholars that the arrangement of the Qur'ānic *āyahs* is by *توقيفي tawqīfī* (a divine revelation) but as for the arrangement of Qur'ānic chapters is *اجتهادي ijtihādī* (by independent judgement) and then offers three different views on the problem of arrangement in the Qur'ān: (1) All Qur'ānic *āyahs* and chapters are arranged by the Prophet. The advocates of this view are al-Qinūjī (1989, 1:31), al-Qurṭubī (1997, 1:96), al-Suyūṭī (1976:73, 1996, 1:175 and 1996, 2:300), and al-Rāfī (1990:41). (2) All Qur'ānic *āyahs* are arranged by the Prophet but the Qur'ānic *ṣūrahs* are arranged by the Companions, Ibn Ḥajar al-^cAsqalānī (1997, 9:50). (3)

All Qur'ānic *āyahs* and chapters are arranged by the Prophet save Q8 and Q9 which arranged by the companions, (al-Ṣāliḥ, 1997:72).

The Arabs of the early 7th century were not accustomed to the Qur'ānic stylistic patterns.⁵⁸ The Qur'ān, for Muslim scholars, is thus the apex of linguistic perfection. Although they were distinguished in the art of literary style and were celebrated for the eloquence of their language, their linguistic abilities were challenged by the sublime technique of the Qur'ānic expression which was worded in the shortest of forms without loss of *bayān* (clear meaning). Its stylistic structure was unique as in the beginning of verses, their termination, and the places of pauses. Its easiness of linguistic construction and word order made the best Arab linguists and poets amazed and the understanding of the masters of the tongue struck. The wisdom behind this intended differentiation in which the Qur'ān was revealed was, for Muslim scholars, to leave no doubt for those with wit or give them reason to counter the like of it. For Muslim scholars, the Qur'ān is Allāh's speech revealed to His chosen Prophet Muḥammad as a challenge to man and jinn⁵⁹, a challenge to those who have freedom of choice, as well as the mental capacity to distinguish between right and wrong. The Qur'ān's inimitability was all the more astonishing because Muḥammad himself was illiterate when the Qur'ān was revealed to him. When the Arabs failed to match the language of the Qur'ān, they accused Muḥammad of sorcery and of being insane:

﴿وَأَن يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ﴾

[And verily, those who disbelieve would almost make you slip with their eyes through hatredness when they hear the Reminder (the Qur'ān), and they say: “Verily, he (Muḥammad) is a madman!” Q68:51]

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ أَأِنَّا لَتَارِكُوا آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجْنُونٍ﴾

[And (they) said: “Are we going to abandon our āliha (gods) for the sake of a mad poet? Q37:36]

⁵⁸ For a detailed investigation of Qur'ānic stylistics, see Abdul-Raof (2004).

⁵⁹ ‘Intelligent, often invisible, beings made from flame (by contrast with the angels, made from light, and mankind, made from clay). The jinn also have the ability to assume various kinds of perceptible forms. They are mentioned in the Qur'ān and, like man, some will be saved and go to paradise since there are good as well as bad jinn, and jinn who help men as well as those who hinder and harm as they meddle in the lives of men. The mission of the Prophet Muḥammad was both to mankind and to the jinn’ (Netton, I.R. 1992:137).

Arberry (1957:228ff) refutes, in an epilogue in his book *The Seven Odes*, the views that were raised against the pre-Islamic poetry that it was forged or did not exist at all. The refutation relates to the inimitability of the Qur'ān in that it proves the Arabs were real masters of the Arabic language and that the challenge they received from the Qur'ān was genuine. On the contrary to what great scholars like Ṭāhā Ḥussein (1958) and Margoliouth⁶⁰ had expressed towards the pre-Islamic poetry, Arberry (1957:243) states “unless Professor Margoliouth would have us believe that he, or men like him, were the inventors of Arabic poetry—and if they were, was it not equally miraculous that such ‘primitives’ should immediately produce such finished work?—unless that miracle be granted, to whom else could the new poets turn for instruction if not to the living repositories of the old masterpieces, which, on the evidence before us, they faithfully imitated?” Arberry (1965:1) comments on pre-Islamic poetry that “the number and complexity of the measures which they use, their established laws of quantity and rhyme, and the uniform manner in which they introduce the subjects of their poems, notwithstanding the distance which often separated one composer from another, all point to a long previous study and cultivation of the art of expression and the capacities of their language.”

The Qur'ān is so different from common Arabic. The Qur'ān in spite of its formal language and literary eloquence is uncommonly successful in getting its message across very effectively. Its style, sentence structure and even its grammar have made scholars, Ṭāhā Ḥussein, suggest that it is a language in its own right and might be called the Qur'ānic rather than the Arabic. Zakī Mubārak (n.d.:37) maintains that Ṭāhā Ḥussein decrees that the Qur'ān is neither prose nor poetry; it is the Qur'ān. However, 'Ammār (1998:140) contends that Ṭāhā Ḥussein has transmitted some of the views of al-Bāqillānī: the Qur'ān is neither poetry, nor prose, nor *saġ'* (rhymed prose).

al-Jurjānī (n.d.:7) holds “if we know that the direction from which the proof (*ḥujja*) of the Qur'ān emanates and appears and shines forth, that it attains such a degree of eloquence that human powers fall short of it and that it reaches an extreme of excellence that is not even imagined; it is impossible for anyone but he who knows poetry ... to appreciate that

⁶⁰ D. S. Margoliouth of Oxford had published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* a monograph entitled ‘the Origin of Arabic Poetry’, cited from Arberry (1957:229).

this is so; then anyone who would reject that is preventing God's proof from being known." Thus, the notion of inimitability of Qur'ānic discourse has begun to evolve, as we shall discuss in 3.3 below.

4.3 The Notion of *I'jāz* (Inimitability) in Qur'ān Translation

The inimitability of the Qur'ān has engaged Muslims scholars for centuries. 'Ammār (1998:48) notes that among the first scholars who had discussed the notion of *i'jāz* in general were the speculative theologians Mutakallimūn- Mu'tazilites and Asha'ries. However, Mu'tazilites were the pioneers in this regard and the stance of al-Nazzām and his students towards this issue heated the debate among Muslim scholars and intensely deepened this controversial notion. Eventually after frenzied discussions, they contended that the divine style of the Qur'ān makes it impossible to be countered: any attempt to do so is an absolute failure.

Language usage provides several meanings for the word *i'jāz* (inimitability) and its derivatives. These include: to be unable to do a certain thing, to find that someone is unable to do a certain thing, or to cause someone to be unable to do a certain thing. Hence using various forms of the word *i'jāz*, we say: (*a'jazat hādhihī al-mas'alah fulān*), meaning that (this task is beyond so-and-so's ability; and (*a'jaztu Zāydan*) meaning that (I made him incapable of doing something) or, alternatively, (caused him to be incapable of doing it). *I'jāz* literally means (the rendering of someone incapable or powerless). It is the concept relating to the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān. In its conventional application, *i'jāz* means that a person claiming a divine appointment proves the truthfulness of his claim by doing things that go beyond the laws of nature and that others cannot accomplish because it best resembles the most advanced arts of the time (i.e. the art of oration and poetry was prevalent among the people of that time). Abdul-Raof (2006:57) holds "the expression *i'jāz* is a nominalised noun derived from the transitive verb (*a'jaza* – to make someone unable to do something) and is also morphologically related to the expression *mu'jizah* (inimitability). Theologically, *i'jāz* denotes the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān and its divine source."

Mu'jizah, from a religious perspective, is therefore a way of supporting the truthfulness of the claimant to a divine appointment. This is because miracles exceed the laws of nature

and therefore cannot be performed without divine providence and empowerment. Therefore, a miracle wrought by a prophet (the flood in case of Noah, and the fire in case of Abraham.) must be an indication of his truthfulness and a sign of God's acceptance of his prophethood:

﴿ وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضَ الْأَقَاوِيلِ ﴾ ﴿ لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ﴾ ﴿ ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ ﴾

[If (the Prophet) had attributed some fabrication to Us, We would certainly have seized his right hand and cut off his lifeblood, Q69:44-46] Abdel Haleem (2004:388)

The force of the argument lies in the fact that the supremacy of the Qur'ān convinced the knowledgeable in language among the Arabs of its inimitability. The words of al-Walīd b. al-Mughīra⁶¹, describing the Qur'ān, explain this for us. He said, on being asked, by Abu Jahl, to say what he thought of the Qur'ān: "What should I say about it? By God, there is no one among you who is more knowledgeable than me in poetry or who is more conversant than me in the *rajaz* meter of poetry, or in the odes, or the poetry composed by the jinn. I solemnly declare that the Qur'ān does not contain anything that resembles any of this that I know about. By God, it is the most refined speech; it demolishes what is inferior to it, and it surely surpasses but cannot be surpassed.

Abu Jahl said: "By God, your people will not be satisfied until you talk about it." To this, al-Walid said: "Then give me time to think about it." After thinking, he said: "This is magic which has been related to him on the authority of someone else." In another version, al-Walid is reported to have said: "By God, I have heard from him a discourse that is neither the words of humans nor of jinn. It is indeed the most refined speech; it has elegance; the loftiest of it is most fruitful, and the basest is most bountiful. Indeed, it surpasses without being surpassed, and this has not been said by a human being."

4.3.1 The Views of Arab Rhetoricians

In very broad terms, Arab rhetoricians' understanding of *ī'jāz* rested on the way in which the Qur'ān joins different parts together in order to establish the unity of each *sūrah*. *ī'jāz*, for Arab rhetoricians, provides a remarkable aspect that puts the Qur'ān above all human styles old and new.

⁶¹Ibn Hishām. *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah* (175-176).

Larkin (1995:8) contends that although the notion of the inimitability (*ī'jāz*) of the Qur'ān was broadly accepted within the Muslim community of the second half of the ninth century, this point of doctrinal agreement had not been attained without intense controversy concerning several key issues logically underlying this belief. From as early as the first half of the eighth century, the question of the nature of *Kalām* (speech/discourse) as a divine attribute had been the subject of intense discussion among Muslim theologians. The problem found its most specific formulation a century later with the debate over whether the Qur'ān was created, or was uncreated and co-eternal with God.

The Mu'tazilites were among the early Mutakallimūn who indulged in politico-religious polemics. They believed that the arbiter of whatever is revealed has to be speculative reason. Larkin (ibid:8) declares "this group saw its heyday during the period 833-848 A.D., when this doctrine (the Qur'ān was the created, temporal speech of God) was officially sanctioned by the Abbasid caliphs." The kernel of the argument here lies in their emphasis on the absolute unity of God and on His justice. In consequence, they embraced the notion of *al-ṣarfah* (aversion) when dealing with the issue of the inimitability of the Qur'ān. In this connection, al-Baghdādī (1987:128) rejects al-Nazzām's views on the inimitability of the Qur'ān namely that it can be countered and people can produce better than the like of it. Abdul-Raof (2006:21) proposes the two claims of both the Mu'tazilite and Ash'arī scholars: "The Ash'aries claim that the *ī'jāz* of Qur'ānic discourse is not attributed to *al-ṣarfah* notion but rather to Qur'ān-bound linguistic and rhetorical features that are beyond the human faculty's ability to produce in a sublime style identical to that of the Qur'ān. Among the diction and linguistic features of Qur'ānic discourse the Ash'arī scholars refer to assonance, naturalness, linguistic, semantic and phonetic congruity, textual harmony, and thematic sequentiality. However, the Mu'tazilite scholastics claim that it is possible for an Arab to produce a style similar to that of the Qur'ān but Allāh has dissuaded the Arabs from doing so. Although the Mu'tazilite and Ash'arī scholastics hold distinct theological views on the notion of *al-ṣarfah*, both research camps, as rhetoricians, exegetes, grammarians, or theologians, have been rigorously engaged in rebutting the claims made against Qur'ānic discourse such as its ill-formedness, ungrammaticality, and poor style." Larkin (1995:9) announces that there were calls to confrontation to the Mu'tazilite viewpoint within *Kalām* presented by the Ash'arī, whose eponym, Abu al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī

(d.324 A.H.), was a former Mu'tazilite. Mu'tazilites were distinguished with their traditionalist positions, and their rational argumentation. The Ash'ari scholars affirmed the co-eternity of the Qur'an with God. Unlike the Mu'tazilites who viewed the Qur'an as created of the same speech as that employed by human beings, the Ash'aries distinguished between the internal speech or word of God and its external expression in sounds and letters. The former, referred to as *kalām nafsī* or internal speech, eternal and uncreated, exists as an attribute in the divine Essence. The outward linguistic expression (*Kalām lafzī*) of that inner speech is what we experience in the words and sounds of the Text."⁶²

Larkin (ibid:9) maintains since the notion of the inimitability of the Book referred to its linguistic form as well as its content, the *ījāz* was a rhetorical question as much as it was theological, and in the logocentric atmosphere of medieval Islamic scholarship, the question of the inimitability of the Qur'an was necessarily the subject research among scholars within the disciplines of grammar, rhetoric, and theology alike. By establishing the notion that the Qur'an would be judged to be inimitable when considered from the point of view of known standards of stylistic excellence, Muslim doctrine imposed a requirement of consistency upon scholars who dealt with this question: anything said about the phenomenon of speech (*kalām*) had to be consistent with the scholar's theological view of the speech of God (*kalām Allāh*).

4.3.2 The Views of Mu'tazilites on the Notion of Aversion *al-Ṣarfah*

﴿ وَإِذَا مَا أَنْزَلَتْ سُورَةٌ نَّظَرَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ هَلْ يَرَاكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ ثُمَّ انصَرَفُوا صَرَفَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴾

[Whenever a sūrah is revealed, they look at each other and say, 'Is anyone watching you?' and then they *turn away-God has turned their hearts away* because they are people who will (not) understand. Q9:127]

Among Mu'tazilite doctrines, is *al-ṣarfah*, aversion, which means God's turning man away from taking up the Qur'anic challenge (*taḥaddī*) to produce a text matching the Qur'an in excellence. This theory of *al-ṣarfah* that relates the Arabs' failure (to produce a text like the Qur'an) to God's intervention does, in fact, view the Qur'an as a miracle, *mu'jizah* that

⁶² Bearman, P. J., et.al. (ed.) (2000) *The Encyclopedias of Islām*.

falls beyond human capability. It should be noted here that miracles performed by previous prophets -such as Moses, transforming the stake into serpent, and Jesus, curing diseases and bringing the dead back to life- were limited to certain people in a certain place because of communication constraints at those times. Allāh knows that communication will not be a problem in later centuries so He sent the Qur'ān as the miracle, *mu'jizah*, upon which depends the truthfulness of Muḥammad and the authenticity of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān, according to Q2:23 and Q 10:37-39, has challenged all humanity to produce a chapter like one of its chapters, and, so far, no one has been able to take up the challenge:

﴿ وَإِن كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

[If you have doubts about the revelation We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a single sūrah like it – enlist whatever supporters you have other than God- if you truly [think you can]. Q2:23]

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ أَن يُفْتَرَىٰ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِن تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ ﴿ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا مَن اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾ ﴿ بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا بِعِلْمِهِ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِهِمْ تَأْوِيلُهُ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

[And this Qur'ān is not such as could ever be produced by other than Allāh (Lord of the heavens and the earth), but it is a confirmation of (the revelation)] which was before it [i.e. the Taurāt (Torah), and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.], and a full explanation of the Book (i.e. laws and orders, etc, decreed for mankind) - wherein there is no doubt from the Lord of the 'Ālamīn (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). Or do they say: “He (Muḥammad) has forged it?” Say: “Bring then a Sūrah (chapter) like unto it, and call upon whomsoever you can, besides Allāh, if you are truthful!” Nay, they deny that; the knowledge whereof they could not compass and whereof the interpretation has not yet come unto them. Thus those before them did deny. Then see what was the end of the Zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.)! Q10:37-39] al-Hilālī (1998:275-276)

The ability to bring forth the like of a word of the Qur'ān, or even of one of its sentences, does not entail the ability to bring forth the like of the [entire] Qur'ān, or even of one of its *sūrah*s. In the view of Muslim scholars, this is because the ability to produce one element of a structure does not entail the ability to produce the whole. Consider the following (المقطعات) cryptic letters:⁶³

(Q.19:1) ﴿كهيعص﴾ (Q.12:1) ﴿الر﴾ (Q.7:1) ﴿المص﴾ (Q. 2:1) ﴿الم﴾

[Alif-Lām-Mīm.] (Q. 2:1) [Alif-Lām-Mīm-Sād.] (Q.7:1) [Alif-Lām-Rā.] (Q.12:1) [Kāf - Hā-Yā-^cAin-Ṣād.] (Q.19:1) These letters, for Muslim scholars, are one of the miracles of the Qur'ān and none but Allāh (alone) knows their meanings.

Abdel Haleem (ibid:4) argues that “these letters indicated to the Arabs who first heard the Qur'ān that the Qur'ān consists of letters and words of their own language, although it was superior to any speech of their own, being of divine origin.” Abdul-Raof (2003:358) comments “cryptic letters can also refer to the fact that the Qur'ān is made up of these simple letters of the Arabic alphabet and therefore it was a challenge to the Arabs to imitate it if they could.” For this reason, it is not correct to say that every Arab is able to write speeches and compose masterpieces because he/she knows all the words and vocabularies that are used in them. We can claim that the grammar, words and letters are the components of Qur'ānic Arabic. What even the best Arab poets and linguists cannot do is to get these components of the language and put them together to imitate the style of the Qur'ān. It was probably this mistaken view that led al-Naẓẓām and his associates to argue that the inimitability of the Qur'ān was in its being ‘averted’ from other human beings. This view is very difficult to sustain because of the following points:

- (i) If by aversion they mean that God is able to empower a human being to bring forth the like of the Qur'ān, but that God has kept this ability away from the rest of mankind, this would be correct. However, it will apply to all miracles, not only to the Qur'ān.
- (ii) If it means that people possess the ability to bring forth the like of the Qur'ān, but God has kept them away from countering it, then this is wrong because many people have attempted to match the Qur'ān but failed, and have admitted their failure.

⁶³ Abdul-Raof (2003:357-358) holds “there is no unanimous agreement among Muslim scholars to what their exact meanings are. He cites al-Rūmī (1997:12) where he claims that cryptic letters refer to some names of either Allāh, the Prophet, the angels, the Qur'ānic Chapters in which they occur, or the Qur'ān. They may also refer to abbreviations of certain meanings or used as an oath.

(iii) If the inimitability of the Qur'ān rests on aversion, then something like it would have existed in pre-Islamic Arabic literature before the Prophet challenged mankind to do that. Had such a thing existed, it would have been reported by an uninterrupted transmission, for there were many good reasons for it to be reported. Since it neither existed nor was narrated, this gives support to Muslim scholars' view that the Qur'ān is by itself a divine miracle, beyond human capacity for achievement.

Sulṭān Munīr (1986:55) comments that al-Nazzām's view of *al-ṣarfah* is the summation of the Mu'tazilites' views of God's justice. Concerning the nature of God's Word, the Mu'tazilites had thought that the notion of its eternity was in contradiction with the doctrine of the absolute unity of God: namely, that if the Qur'ān and God are eternal, then God's absolute oneness is compromised. It should be, therefore, maintained that God's Word is created. Like God's justice and human responsibility, the createdness of God's Word became an essential part of the Mu'tazilites' system. The theories supported by the Mu'tazilites are the more rationalistic ones. Their analysis of the relation between man, language, and the holy book concentrates on man as the addressee of the text, and on human society as the public to whom its teachings are directed. Language is a human invention because relating sound to meaning is a social convention. Language never refers directly to reality, but reality is conceived, conceptualized, and then symbolized by the sound system. This is exemplified by the fact that in Arabic, as in any other language, there are words without referent in reality: a word like *al-tenīn* (comparable with the English 'dragon') does not refer to any existing reality. The Mu'tazilites, therefore, saw the Qur'ān as a divinely created action, and not the eternally existing text. Even in the Qur'ānic language, the relation between the signifier and the signified existed only by human convention; they maintained there is nothing divine in this relationship itself. Sulṭān Munīr contends (ibid:93) the Mu'tazilites insisted that language was the product of man mediated by a certain historical culture, and he cites (ibid:93) al-Qāḍī (*tanzīh al-Qur'ān*:325) where he mentions:

﴿ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ
لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

[And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colours. Verily, in that are indeed signs for men of sound knowledge. Q. 30:22]

and comments that the Divine Word respected the rules and forms of human language.

The anti-Mu'tazilites, on the other hand, hold different views on language in general and God's word in particular. Language, according to their notion, is not a human invention but a divine gift to man. If the referent does not exist in the real world, it ought to exist in the metaphysical reality. Here the anti-Mu'tazilites quote some Qur'ānic verses that support their assumptions about the divinity of language when taken literally.

﴿ وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

[And He taught Adam all the names of (everything), then He showed them to the angels and said, 'Tell me the names of these if you are truthful.' Q.II:31] (ibid:8).

Naṣr Abu Zayd, (1982:70-82) elaborates on the issue that the Mu'tazilites favour a metaphorical interpretation of the verse. As for the relationship between the signifier and the signified in the view of orthodoxy, God Himself created it. It is therefore divine. It is logically concluded that God's Word is not a created action but it is one of His eternal attributes. It is worthy noting that the choice in favour of one of the two trends has important implications for other doctrines of theology. The belief that the Qur'ān is eternal implies, for instance, that God preordained any event mentioned in the Holy Book and leads to the notion of God's absolute predestination of human action. He who wants to deny predestination will believe the Qur'ān to be created by God. To mention yet another example, those who advocate the doctrine of God's absolute unity and uniqueness *tawḥīd* and wish to take it in its strictest sense, deny the existence of an uncreated, or eternal, Qur'ān sharing eternity with God. The notion of an eternal Qur'ān leads to strict adherence to the literal meaning of the text.

4.3.3 al-Nazzām

The pagan Arabs failed to produce something like the Qur'ānic text by simply imitating its style. In consequence, Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Nazzām (d. 232/846), who was a rationalist

Muʿtazilite theologian and thinker introduced the theory of *ṣarfah*. The Muslim thinker and theologian was one of the major figures of the Muʿtazilite school of thought. al-Nazzām was educated in Baṣra and spent most of his active life in the Abbasid capital, Baghdad. He lived during the reign of Caliphs al-Maʿmūn and al-Muʿtaṣim. He was a peerless literary person and poet. He studied Greek philosophy and made full use of it in his works. Although his main impact was to be upon orthodox Muslim theology, his writings have come down to us only in fragmentary quotations in later Muslim writers. al-Baghdādī (1987:128) holds that al-Nazzām lays the groundwork of his argumentation by declaring that *ījās* al-Qurʾān is not in the supremacy of its composition nor in the excellence of its syntactic arrangement; al-Nazzām also states that the Qurʾān has no special merit over other speeches and people are capable of countering it if they are allowed to do so, and even to create better than it but God has averted them from producing the like of it. In like fashion, ʿAmmār (1998:51) cites Abu al-Qāsim al-Balkhī al-Muʿtazilī⁶⁴ where he claims that al-Nazzām sees the inimitability of the Qurʾān in the ‘prediction of the unseen’ and not in *naẓm* (order system) because he holds the view that producing the like of the Qurʾān would have been possible if Allāh had not averted people from taking up such a mission. The theory of *al-ṣarfah* meant that God had deliberately intervened and prevented the Arabs from producing or countering a text like the Qurʾān. Without such intervention the Arabs could have easily met the challenge. This is the doctrine of *al-ṣarfah*, which al-Nazzām is said to have professed. This intervention of God was a miracle in itself as it rendered the Arabs, who were supposed to be very capable in poetic composition, incapable. It was probably this mistaken view that led al-Nazzām and his associates to argue that the inimitability of the Qurʾān was in its being ‘averted’ from other human beings. They also say that the Arabs did not counter the Qurʾān; not because it was a miracle and thus beyond human capacity to imitate but because of other reasons that have nothing to do with inimitability. Those who were contemporary with the Prophet’s mission, and those who came a little later, were prevented from challenging the Qurʾān by the domination of the Muslims. They refrained from countering the Qurʾān for fear for their lives and goods from those who were in power. The response to this is as follows: (i) the

⁶⁴ Abu al-Qāsim al-Balkhī, wal-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, wal-Ḥakīm al-Jashmī, (1986:70) Edited by Fūʿād Sayyid. *Faḍl al-ʿitizāl wa Ṭabaqāt al-Muʿtazilah*. Tunis: al-Dār al-Tūnisīyah lil -Nashr wal-Tawzīʿ.

challenge with the Qur'ān, and the demand to counter it by matching one of its chapters, were made by the Prophet in Mekka, before the power of Islam had prevailed and the Muslims had consolidated their authority. In spite of that, none of the masters of Arabic style were able to meet this challenge. al-Jurjānī (n.d.:32) proclaims that the pagan Arabs of the 7th century were not able to counter the like of the Qur'ān because of its unsurpassed excellence, and this is the reason why they chose to face war and death and not to produce such a *mu'ārāḍah* (the production of the like of the Qur'ān).

Larkin (1995:15-16) comments on the previous passage as follows:

(i) it is a clear rejection of *al-ṣarfah*.

(ii) *al-Ṣarfah* was not a part of 'Abd al-Jabbār's accounting of *ī'jāz* al-Qur'ān.

(iii) 'Abd al-Jabbār and his followers held to the view that the Qur'ān was stylistically inimitable and that those to whom the challenge *al-taḥaddī* was addressed could not produce anything of comparable merit with which to invalidate Muḥammad's apologetic miracle because the Qur'ān was so superior linguistically that they were unable to produce the like of it. Their inability to meet the challenge was not the result of Divine intervention that averted them from the task *al-ṣarfah*.

(iv) 'Abd al-Jabbār holds that the notion of the *ī'jāz*, since for man to be challenged by God to match the Qur'ān in excellence presumes that he/she is first able (*qādir*) to take up the challenge. Without the prerequisite power *qudrah*, the very idea of this challenge is pointless.

'Ammar (1998:43) states that al-Mutakallimūn who believe in *al-ṣarfah* see *al-ṣarfah* as the aversion from producing the likes of the Qur'ān and this indicates at the same time that they have the power to do so. They believe that there is a kind of inimitability in the fact of aversion which consequently proves the prophethood of Muḥammad. What 'Ammār (ibid:43) presents about Mutakallimūn contradicts the fact that the Qur'ān is, in itself, impossible to reproduce, for a reason inherent in itself. Thus, the inimitability of the Qur'ān is a greater proof and more instructive of the excellence of the Qur'ān. The statement of those who profess the doctrine of *al-ṣarfah* is nothing more than the statement of those who say that the miracles of previous prophets were forgery and counterfeit. 'Abd al-Jabbār points out (1960:322-325) that there would be no glory attributed to the miraculous character of the Qur'ān if God has averted others from producing the likes of it: 'It would

not be proper to challenge someone who has been averted from accomplishing the object of the challenge.'

4.3.4 al-Jāḥiẓ

°Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/688), was a pupil of al-Nazzām and was himself one of the Imams of the Muṭazilites. Both the master and the student, it was held, were almost of one mind. al-Jāḥiẓ had drunk deep of Greek philosophy. He had a keen sense of humour and was a good anecdotist. However, Abdul-Raof (2006:37) indicates that al-Jāḥiẓ has not been influenced by Aristotle's *Poetics (De Poetica)* for a number of reasons:

1. He did not quote Aristotle directly or indirectly;
2. His book *al-Bayān w al-Tabayīn* was written around 230 H; and
3. It is unlikely that the translations of Aristotle's works have been available during that particular time especially during the years that preceded the writing of al-Jāḥiẓ's book.

The name that is virtually synonymous with *adab* literature is al-Jāḥiẓ, the litterateur, whose *al-Bayān w al-Tabayīn* and *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, along with his *Rasā'il* contain the kernels of many important and persistent discussions in Arabic criticism. From as early as the first half of the ninth century, discussion of literary excellence had been influenced profoundly by the thinking of the speculative theologian (*mutakallimūn*), and, most obviously, by those who wrote about the widely held notion of the inimitability of the Qur'ānic text. One of the most influential of the early scholars was the Muṭazilite al-Jāḥiẓ, who also transmitted some of the views of his predecessor and teacher, al-Nazzām. al-Khaṭṭīb (1974:164) is of the view that al-Jāḥiẓ is a distinguished litterateur who knows for sure the rhetorical eloquence and elocution of the Qur'ān and it is impossible for him to embrace the same view on *ī'jāz* as his teacher al-Nazzām. al-Jāḥiẓ maintains the same views as these of al-Bāqillānī and al-Jurjānī namely: the inimitability of the Qur'ān is in its *naẓm*: the excellence of its syntax and the eloquence of its composition.

According to Ḍaif (2004:205), al-Jāḥiẓ wrote a book or treatise entitled *Naẓm al-Qur'ān*, but unfortunately this text is lost. It should be safe to claim, however, that al-Jāḥiẓ must have altered the concept of *naẓm* to include other factors than meter and rhyme in order to apply it meaningfully to the Qur'ān. What is certain is that from the time of al-Jāḥiẓ onwards the concept *naẓm* was used extensively in the literature on *ī'jāz* al-Qur'ān.

al-Jāhiz says in his *Rasā'il* (Ḥujaj al-Nibūwwah: 3/274-280) what proves the inability of the Arab to take up the challenge and counter the Qur'ān is that if they were able to produce the like of the Qur'ān, they would not have left that and resorted to sacrifice the self and money and they would not have left their country for the sake of getting rid of the Prophet and his call by force. It would have been enough if one of their poets or orators has said something matching the shortest *ṣūrah* of Qur'ān in excellence. That would have ended the mission of the Prophet. It should be taken into account that the pagan Arabs are known for their zeal and fanaticism. Therefore, their being unable to counter the like of the Qur'ān proves their incapacibilities.

It should be noted that the dichotomy of form and content, *lafz* and *ma'nā*, which prevailed in Arabic literary criticism, has its roots in the earlier discussion about whether language is based on social human conventionality, *mūwāḍa'ah*, or on divine inspiration by God. al-Bāqillānī mentions (1991:45) whether the language is a divine matter or a kind of *tawaḍu'* (conventionality) is an amazing cause since in both cases the whole situation goes back to Allāh Who has power over all things. This discussion focused on the verse in the Qur'ān:

﴿ وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

[And He taught Adam the names of all things, then He showed them to the angels and said, 'Tell me the names of these if you truly (think you can).' Q2:31].

The Mu'tazilites were very fervent to establish theologically a strong connection between God's speech, the Qur'ān, and human language. They, therefore, persistently advocated the notion of human convention against the notion of divine inspiration. In order to interpret Q2:31 properly without contradicting their view they had to explain the term *asmā'* (names), to include the 'concept' or the 'idea' within its referent. It was al-Nazẓām's student, al-Jāhiz (1965(1:262) who explained:

It is not possible for Him to teach him [Adam] the name and put aside the meaning *ma'nā* and teach him the signifier (*al-dalālah*) and not establish for him the signified *al-madlūl 'alayhi*, for the name without a meaning is a useless word *laghu*, like an empty vessel. A word *lafz* cannot be a name unless it comprises a meaning *ma'nā*. The meaning may exist with no name for it, but a name cannot exist but that it has a meaning *ma'nā*.

Naṣr Abu Zayd (1982:84) notes that what al-Jāḥiẓ refers to as meaning *maʿnā* is the “connection between the name/signifier and the named/signified”. Larkin (1995:33) maintains that “*maʿnā*” in al-Jāḥiẓ’ usage refers to the entity in reality to which a name can potentially be associated (i.e., as synonym for “*madlūl ʿalayhī*”). At the same time, “*maʿnā*” indicates the association itself between that entity and the linguistic name that is linked with it, that is the lexical “meaning” of the individual word. In other words, “*maʿnā*,” as used by al-Jāḥiẓ, has both an ontological and noetic/linguistic referent⁶⁵.

In like fashion, it is worthy of note what al-Jurjānī (n.d.:416) contributes in this regard:

Conventional languages (*mūwāḍaʿah*) cannot exist and is conceivable except for a knowable entity (*maʿlūm*), for it is impossible for a name or anything else to be established for other than what is knowable because conventional language is like gesturing. Just as when you say, ‘take this,’ this gesturing is not for the purpose of defining that to which you are gesturing in itself, but rather so that it be known that that is the intended object (*maqṣūd*) from among all the things that you see and view, so too is the case for a word (*lafẓ*) vis-à-vis what it was designed for.

From the title of al-Jāḥiẓ treatise *Naẓm al-Qurʾān* which has not survived, it can be elicited that al-Jāḥiẓ means to prove that the Qurʾān is inimitable by its *naẓm*, sublime composition and the excellence of its syntactic arrangements. However, he is cited to be infatuated by the notion of *al-ṣarfah*. He also ridiculed judging poetry and favouring it due to its content. He emphasized that poetry should be evaluated according to the quality of its imagery, thus solving the dichotomy of form and content, *lafẓ* and *maʿnā*, that long prevailed in Arabic literary criticism. al-Jāḥiẓ in *al-Ḥayawān* (1966, v.3, 131) evidently declares that: “Meanings (ideas) are to be found on the highways and byways (everywhere) and are easily accessible to Arabs and non-Arabs, to Bedouins as well as to town-dwellers.” It is evident as exemplified earlier that al-Jāḥiẓ lays more emphasis on the grammatical construction than on meanings.

4.3.5 al-Rummānī

During the tenth century, three *mutakallimūn* produced significant works on the subject of the *ījāz*. They were the Sunnī *muḥaddith* Abu Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 386/996), author

⁶⁵ The object or idea to which a word or phrase refers.

of *Bayān Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān*, the Muʿtazilite Scholastic Abu al-Ḥasan ʿAli b. ʿĪsa al-Rummānī (d. 384/994), who wrote, among other relevant works, *al-Nukat fī Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān*. The Ashʿarī *mutakallim* Abu Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013), whose *Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* represents the most extensive specific treatment of the doctrine of Ashʿarī other than al-Jurjānī.

al-Rummānī in his work *al-Nukat fī Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* listed seven components of *iʿjāz*: leaving countering the Qurʾān though the motives were available, its challenge to created beings, *al-ṣarfah* (aversion), *balāghah* (rhetoric), the prediction of futuristic incidents, contradiction of convention; however he wrote at length only on rhetoric and stylistic effectiveness. Writing in details about *balāghah* indicates that it is the primer factor of *iʿjāz* to al-Rummānī. al-Rummānī classifies rhetorical inimitability as the highest rank of rhetoric and the rhetoric of the Qurʾān as the most inimitable because it reaches the apex of Arabic language and it is the highest kind of *balāghah*. al-Rummānī (n.d:75-76) says *al-balāghah* is conveying the meaning to the heart in the best syntactic arrangement.

al-Rummānī believes that the inimitability of the Qurʾān is in its *naẓm* (order system) and *bayān* (figures of speech⁶⁶). For him, the Qurʾān is not poetry because poetry is constrained by meter and rhyme, and that the shortest of the chapters of the Qurʾān is as inimitable as its longest. Though this view does not match the saying of *al-ṣarfah* because *al-ṣarfah* contradicts and undermines all what he said about the inimitability of the Qurʾān.

4.3.6 al-Khaṭṭābī

Ḥamad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrahīm al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 386/996), a Sunnī author, in his *Bayān Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* wrote that the powerful psychological effect of the Qurʾān results from the totality of its rhetoric uniqueness and not from imagery as al-Rummānī believed. Ḥamad al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 386/996), in his *Bayān Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* (n.d:21-22) reiterates the same view of al-Jāhīz (see 4.3.4) and emphasises the inability of the Arabs to take up the challenge and counter the Qurʾān. If they were able to produce the like of the Qurʾān, they would not have jeopardized themselves to danger and they would not have opted for the choice of war. al-Khaṭṭābī has sustained his argument by giving an example: that if a mature person was so immensely thirsty that he was afraid he might die and within his means a place

⁶⁶ Abul-Raof (2006:196)

where he can clinch his thirst but he did not opt for it. What that means is that he was unable to drink, that is quite obvious. Therefore, their being unable to counter the like of the Qur'ān proves their incapacibilities. They realized that the eloquence of the Qur'ān is beyond human power. This was acknowledged by all Arabs who were not obstinate. In *Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, al-khaṭṭābī (ibid:23) refutes the views of those who believe in *al-sarfah* and points to Q.17:88.

﴿ قُلْ لَّيْنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴾

[Say, 'Even if all mankind and jinn came together to produce something like this Qur'ān, they could not produce anything like it, however much they helped each other.' Q.17:88] (Abdel Haleem 2004:180)

al-khaṭṭābī maintains (n.d:23) telling about the events of the unknown future is one of the constituents of *i'jāz* in the Qur'ān, but this structure of *i'jāz* is not generalized in every sūrah. That is why there should be some other classes of *i'jāz* because Allāh challenges created beings to produce one sūrah of the like of the Qur'ān:

﴿ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

[If you have doubts about the revelation We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a single sūrah like it – enlist whatever supporters you have other than God- if you truly [think you can]. Q2:23]

al-khaṭṭābī strongly emphasizes the peculiar and very unique stylistic dimension of the Qur'ānic style, i.e. its *i'jāz*, by emphasizing its rhetoric *balāghah*. He explains (ibid:26-27) the eloquence of the Qur'ān entails superiority and elegance of its diction. *I'jāz* is in keeping these two qualities (superiority which entails simplicity and elegance which entails incomprehensibility) in juxtaposition. He further pronounces that the supremacy of the Qur'ān is in both the form and content *lafz* and *ma'nā* in a distinguished style of composition: he expounds the diction of the Qur'ān is characterized by three dimensions, i.e. *lafz*, form, *ma'nā*, content and *ribāṭ*, linking or connection.

Abdul-Raof (2006:43) mentions that al-Khaṭṭābī “describes Qur’ānic style as solid *raṣīm* which is beyond human linguistic and rhetorical faculties. al-Khaṭṭābī also differentiates between three kinds of style: solid, eloquent but easy, and permitted but unrestrained. For him, Qur’ānic discourse includes all these three styles.”

al-Khaṭṭābī (ibid:70) writes about the psychological effect of the Qur’ān on hearts and minds of its listeners. In the same connection, I draw the attention here to what al-Walīd is reported to have said: By God, I have heard from him a discourse that is neither the words of humans nor of jinn. It is indeed the most refined speech; it has elegance; the loftiest of it is most fruitful, and the basest is most bountiful. Indeed, it surpasses without being surpassed, and this has not been said by a human being.

4.3.7 al-Bāqillānī

al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013), an Ash‘arī theologian, in his *ʿĪjāz al-Qur’ān* contrasts several orations of the Prophet, his companions and others with the Qur’ānic style to demonstrate the unusual character of the Qur’ān. He also presents a detailed critique of Imru’u al-Qais’ *mu‘allaqah* and of al-Buḥturi’s poem called the *lāmmiyyah*, both considered masterpieces of literary achievement, and points out the defects and weaknesses. He however believes *ʿĪjāz* does not depend on rhetoric but is enhanced by it. al-Bāqillānī holds the view that although the Prophet’s own style is the most concise and eloquent human speech, it is far less concise and rich in meaning than the Qur’ān. He (1991:178-184) presents the text of a number of statements by the Prophet, *al-Khulafā’ al-Rāshidūn* (the four Most Guided Caliphs) and by other Prophet’s companions. He admits that their orations and sayings are of great literary talent, tackling different themes and are known to have been made on different occasions. However, they are characterized by a different style. He holds (ibid:86-89) that if the speech of the Prophet and his companions are read together, one after the other, in the same way as one reads a single speech, without adding or omitting anything of them it will be observed that neither their meanings nor their texts would be consistent with one another.

﴿ اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِيَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ
 ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ
 اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴾

[Allāh has sent down the best statement, a Book (this Qur'ān), 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 heart soften to the remembrance of Allāh. That is the guidance of Allāh. He Guides therewith whom He pleases and whomever Allāh sends astray, for him there is no guide. Q. 39:23] (al-Hilālī 1998:621-622)

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴾

[Do they not then consider the Qur'ān carefully? Had it been from other than Allāh, they would surely have found therein many a contradiction. Q. 4:82]

On the contrary, al-Bāqillānī concludes (1991:87) they would clearly betray a degree of discrepancy and patching up that is hardly ever noticed in a single speech, of similar or greater length. If you wish to know that the Qur'ān is not authored by the Prophet but is revealed to him, observe how his speech is distinguished from that of the Qur'ān, and notice the difference there is between the two modes of expression and the two literary styles. Thus al-Bāqillānī calls on readers to compare the Prophet's mode of expression and his literary style with those of the Qur'ān. He (ibid:184) contends that *naẓm* al-Qur'ān is divine but the statements of the Prophet is prophetic which means that there is no saying of the Prophet that compares with the Qur'ānic stylistics. Another inimitable characteristic of the Qur'ān is that it is unique. On the contrary, poets have not ceased to point out the borrowings made by some poets from others: for instance, that al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/ 965) borrowed from the ideas of al-Buḥturī (d. 284/ 897). al-Bāqillānī (ibid:157) mentions that it has been said to al-Buḥturī that he had borrowed ideas from Abu Tammām (d. 231/844) and he did not deny it; however he commented that there was no harm in borrowing from him.

4.4 The Notion of *Nazm* (Order System)

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078) composed two works on rhetoric namely, *Dalā'il al-ʿIjāz* (The Proofs for the Inimitability of Qur'ānic Style) and *Asrār al-Balāghah* (The Secrets of Rhetoric). Within his work, al-Jurjānī organized his ideas into the disciplines of *ʿilm al-bayān* (figures of speech) and *ʿilm al-maʿānī* (word order⁶⁷) and he located these stylistic concerns within a wider context that included grammar, logic, and prosody. Accordingly, al-Jurjānī's work represented not only a rhetorical textbook, but a complete handbook on expression in Arabic.

4.4.1 Definition

Here we have to consider the concept of *nazm*. Originally, this word seems to have denoted piercing and stringing objects such as pearls, beads and the like. The secondary connotation of arranging these objects in a certain order arises naturally out of the basic meaning, and the passive form *manzūm* soon came to be used metaphorically for a speech that is 'strung' and 'arranged' through the use of meter (and rhyme), that is, for poetry. Where meter and rhyme were absent—that is, for prose—the corresponding term *manthūr*, 'scattered, strewn out', applied. This terminology must have been well known by the time of al-Jāhiz (d.255/688). The Qur'ān, however, could not easily be fitted into this dichotomy. It might not be *manzūm* in the strict sense of the term, but it certainly was not *manthūr* either. Shauqī ʿAli al-Zahra (1996:52) is of the view that al-Jurjānī sees *nazm* as stylistics and thus *nazm* includes every artistic form which is related to the literary work. al-Jurjānī does not differentiate between *nazm* and stylistics but he contends they are identical. Abdul-Raof (2006:98) holds that "the order system (*al-nazm*) is a grammar-based linguistic notion that refers to the various orders of sentence constituents for different communicative functions." This corresponds to *maʿānī al-naḥu* of al-Jurjānī who finds *maʿānī al-naḥu* as the meaning of the approaches the Arab follows in constructing the sentence.

In sum, Abdul-Raof (ibid:16) proposes how Arab rhetoricians argue that rhetoric is concerned with the order system (*al-nazm*), whereas the elegance of discourse (*jamāl / ḥusn al-kalām*) is concerned with the impact of a speech act upon the addressee's behaviour. Therefore, rhetoric is concerned with the semantics of stylistics because one of its major

⁶⁷ Abdul-Raof (2006:97)

objectives is the clarification of the features of the effective discourse. Abdul-Raof (ibid:16) concludes that rhetoric and the order system have become two sides of the same coin.

4.4.2 The Views of al-Rummānī

The choice and arrangement of words, referred to as *naẓm* was the focus of discussion by al-Jāhīz. al-Rummānī and his contemporary al-Khaṭṭābī (d. d. 386/996) discussed the psychological effect of *naẓm* of the Qur'ān in their *al-Nukat fī I'jāz al-Qur'ān* and *Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, respectively.

al-Rummānī in his work *al-Nukat fī I'jāz al Qur'ān* (n.d.:75) listed seven components of *i'jāz* (see 4.3.5 for further detail). He emphasizes the distinction of *balāghah* in the work of *i'jāz*. He classifies eloquence into ten categories: succinctness, simile, metaphor, appropriateness, asyndeton, assonance, explicatures, implicatures, hyperbole, the excellence of figurative usage. To sum up, al-Rummānī believes that the inimitability of the Qur'ān is in its *naẓm* (order system) and *bayān* (figures of speech). It is not poetry because poetry is constrained by meter and rhyme. The shortest of the Qur'ān's sūrahs is as inimitable *mu'jiz* as its longest. Though this view does not match the saying of *al-ṣarfah* because *al-ṣarfah* contradicts and undermines all what he said about the inimitability of the Qur'ān.

4.4.3 The Views of al-Khaṭṭābī

al-Khaṭṭābī's book *Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'ān* is an important book because it represents the views of Sunnī mutakallimūn insomuch the same way as al-Rummānī represents the views of mu'tazilites and al-Bāqillānī the views of Asha'arī. al-Khaṭṭābī represents a school of thought which focuses on *al-i'jāz al-bayānī* of the style of the Qur'ān. He sees *naẓm* as *ta'liḥ* (composition). He contends (n.d.:37) that the characteristics of *naẓm* are refining the form, giving priority for the context, and orientation towards content more than form. He (ibid:37) stresses the inimitable style of the Qur'ān which adds exquisite eloquence to smooth simplicity. It should not go without saying that al-Khaṭṭābī, though did not arrive at the same understanding of *naẓm* as al-Jurjānī did, was about to classify *naẓm* as the sole player and the only proof of *i'jāz* (the inimitability of the Qur'ān). Muḥammad Zaghlūl

Sallām (n.d.:259) makes a point that the way al-Khaṭṭābī understands *naẓm* is close to the way al-Jurjānī does. al-Khaṭṭābī embraces *naẓm* as the interaction between *lafẓ*, form and *maʿnā*, content to express the composition process. He, unlike his predecessors, neither employs a dividing line between *lafẓ* and *maʿnā* nor gives one of them the priority over the other.

4.4.4 The Views of al- Bāqillānī

al-Bāqillānī, an Ashʿarī theologian, devoted a book *Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* to explain what distinguishes the Qurʾān from all other texts including earlier holy texts. He starts by refuting al-Nazzām’s theory that relates the inimitability, *iʿjāz*, to one feature only. He points out that previous Holy Scriptures also contain some prophecies. Nevertheless, they do not fall under the heading of inimitability. However, *taʿlīf* (the composition) of the Qurʾān should be considered as an essential factor of the inimitability of the Qurʾān. The uniqueness of the Qurʾān, according to him, is that it is neither poetry nor prose; it is a literary genre apart, the same view which developed later by Ṭāhā Ḥussein (1958). For the sake of argument, it is important to mention al-Suyūṭī even goes further to devalue the great, well celebrated, pre-Islamic Seven Odes as inferior in comparison to the Qurʾān.⁶⁸ al-Bāqillānī (1991:85) lists *Ummiyah* (the condition of being unable to read and write) of the Prophet – the fact that Muḥammad was illiterate – as a factor of *iʿjāz* al-Qurʾān and claims that the Qurʾān stands as additional proof to the conclusion that it is the very nature of the speaker himself, God, that makes it impossible to speak of any kind of similarity or comparability between the Qurʾān and any other text. As an Ashʿarī, al-Bāqillānī emphasizes (1991:62) the distinction between the ‘eternal’ speech of God, *kalām Allāh al-azalī al-qadīm*, and its manifestation in the present Qurʾān, between *matlū* (the recited), and *tilāwa* (the recitation). Nevertheless, inimitability according to him is related to the existent text as presented in our human *tilāwa* not only to the eternal divine speech, *matlū*.⁶⁹ The devaluation of the exemplary Arabic poems in order to preserve the supremacy of the Qurʾān seems to echo the negative attitude towards poetry established by the Qurʾān. If the poetic creativity of the Arabs was so weak according to al-Bāqillānī’s view, the challenge,

⁶⁸ al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fi ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān*, vol. 1, 150-54

⁶⁹ al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fi ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān*, vol. 11, 169.

taḥaddī, is insignificant, *ījāz*, according to al-Bāqillānī, is to be proven by enumerating three aspects: “One of them is that it contains information about the unseen, *al-ghayb*, and this is something beyond the powers of humans, for they have no way to attain it.” The second aspect, al-Bāqillānī (ibid:85) continues: is that it is well known that the Prophet was *ummī* (an unlettered man), who could not write, and who could not read very well. Likewise, it was generally recognized that he had no knowledge whatever of the books of earlier peoples, nor of their records, their histories, their biographies. Yet he produced summaries of what had happened in history, told about mighty matters of past days, and gave the important life histories from the creation of Adam. He also makes mention of the story of Noah, Abraham, all the other prophets mentioned in the Qur’ān.

The Prophet, according to al-Bāqillānī, had no way to obtain knowledge of all this, except that of being taught. The conclusion is that he did not obtain this knowledge save by aid from revelation. The third aspect is that the Qur’ān is wonderfully arranged and marvellously composed, and so exalted in its literary elegance as to be beyond what any mere creature could attain. al-Bāqillānī, in his systematic and comprehensive study entitled *ījāz al-Qur’ān* upheld the rhetorically unsurpassable style of the Qur’ān, but he did not consider this to be a necessary argument in the favour of the Qur’ān’s uniqueness and emphasized instead the content of revelation. Had al-Jurjānī been content with no more specificity regarding the functioning of discourse than this, he would have differed only slightly from his Ash‘arī contemporary, al-Bāqillānī. This was not the case, however, for al-Jurjānī sought to identify how connections between words are created, in other words, the mechanism of *naẓm*.

4.4.5 The Views of al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār⁷⁰

al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), Mu‘tazilite scholastic theologian, in his extensive discussion of *ījāz*, emphasized that eloquent expression, *faṣāḥah*, is not related to either content or to style alone. He related *faṣāḥah* to the structure (syntax) that includes both the ‘position’ and the grammatical ‘function’ of its lexicon. The intrinsic excellence of the Qur’ān lies particularly in its outstanding quality of *faṣāḥah*. Moreover, he (1969:197)

⁷⁰ For the sake of elaboration, the views of al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār will be discussed in contrast with that of al-Jurjānī.

defines *faṣāḥah* as ‘elegance of diction and superiority of content.’ In like fashion, he (ibid:199) holds that *faṣāḥah* does not show itself in individual (parts) of speech, but rather in speech that is joined together in a particular way, *aḍ-ḍamm* ‘*ala ṭarīkatin makhṣūṣah*, along with this every word should acquire a particular quality, *ṣifa*. Beside *aḍ-ḍamm* he emphasises other three factors which are (conventional language) *al- mūwāḍa‘ah*, (grammatical function) *al-ī‘rāb* and (position) *al-mawqī‘*.

In stark contrast to al-Qāḍī, his Mu‘tazilite counterpart, al-Jurjānī (n.d.:47) eliminates *faṣāḥah* from being the most essential in *balāghah*, “... there is no harm in this disagreement, since it means no more than that we turn to *faṣāḥah* and exclude it from the domain of *blāghah* and *bayān* and from being considered a synonym of these two and likewise of *barā‘ah* and *jazālah* and their synonyms ... or consider it an ambiguous term, sometimes applicable for that for which these [i.e., the other terms of praise mentioned] are applied, and other times for that which derives from the vocables⁷¹, freedom from that which is heavy to the tongue. Neither of the two detracts from what we are concerned with.”

‘Abd al-Jabbār (1965:586) states that the Qur’ān had challenged the Arabs to produce the like of it and the Arabs, though were known for their eloquence, could not counter or match the Qur’ān because they were doomed hopeless and helpless. He (1969:199) says “With composition, each word must necessarily have a particular characteristic, *ṣifah*. This quality may exist due to the conventional language involved in the composition [lexical choice], the grammatical function, *ī‘rāb*, that is operative in it, or the position, *mawqī‘* and to those three categories there is no fourth.”

The early theological discussions on *ī‘jāz* introduced the notion of *al-ṣarfah* (aversion) and argued that the inimitability of the Qur’ān lies in the fact that God turned the competent away from taking up the challenge of imitating the Qur’ān. The implication of *al-ṣarfah* is that the Qur’ān otherwise could be imitated. However, ‘Abd al-Jabbār rejected *al-ṣarfah* because of its obvious weaknesses. ‘Abd al-Jabbār rejects the doctrine of *al-ṣarfah* for two main reasons. Firstly, because it contradicts the verse of the Qur’ān stating that neither *jinn* nor human can rival the Qur’ān, and secondly because it makes the inimitability of the

⁷¹ Any word, either written or spoken, regarded simply as a sequence of letters or spoken sounds irrespective of its meaning.

Qur'ān in *al-ṣarfah*, the averting from producing the like of the Qur'ān, and not the Qur'ān itself. In addition to this, according to ʿAbd al-Jabbār, the doctrine of *al-ṣarfah* displays four major weaknesses:

1. It ignores the well-known fact that the Arabs of Muḥammad's time had acknowledged the superior quality of speech of the Qur'ān;
2. It is in direct conflict with the meaning of the verses of the Challenge;
3. It implies that the Qur'ān is not inimitable; and
4. It asserts that the Arabs were out of their minds (*khurīj ʿan al-ʿaql*).

This doctrine, in fact, implies that they could have produced the like of the Qur'ān, but simply decided against doing so. It effectively calls into question either their motives or their sanity. Therefore, according to ʿAbd al-Jabbār the correct interpretation of *ṣarfa* is that the motives to counter the Qur'ān disappeared (*in al-ṣarafa*) because of the recognition of the impossibility of doing so.

ʿAbd al-Jabbār insisted on the inimitable quality of the Qur'ān's extra-ordinary eloquence and unique stylistic perfection. In his work 'al-Mughnī', he argued that *faṣāḥah* (eloquence) resulted from the excellence of both meaning and wording, and he explained that there were degrees of excellence depending on the manner in which words were chosen and arranged in any literary text, the Qur'ān being the highest type.

In *Tanzīh al-Qur'ān ʿan al-Maṭāʿin*, ʿAbd al-Jabbār (n.d.:203) concludes that *iʿjāz* is *faṣāḥah* where he comments on Q.13:31.

﴿ وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْآنًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كَلَّمَ بِهِ الْمَوْتَى ﴾

[And if there had been a Qur'ān with which mountains could be moved (from their places), or the earth could be cloven asunder, or the dead could be made to speak (it would not have been other than this Qur'ān) Q.13:31].

He elaborates (n.d.:203) on and explains that the answer is ellipted and meant *it would have been this Qur'ān*. This proves that *faṣāḥah* reached the apex here and everywhere and that is why the Qur'ān is inimitable.

﴿ قُلْ لَّيْنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ

بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴾

[Say, 'Even if all mankind and jinn came together to produce something like this Qur'ān, they could not produce anything like it, however much they helped each other.' Q.17:88] (Abdel Haleem 2004:180)

ʿAbd al-Jabbār (n.d.:232) refutes the idea of *al-ṣarfah* because if the Arabs could have produced the like of the Qur'ān but they had been averted, Q.17:88 would have been rendered meaningless.

The author who best elaborated and systematized the theory of *naẓm* in his analysis of the *ʿijāz* is ʿAbd al-Qāhīr al-Jurjānī (d. 471H) in his *Dalā'il al-ʿijāz*. His material was further organized by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606H) in his *Nihāyāt al-ʿijāz fī Dirāyāt al-ʿijāz* and put to practical purposes by al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538H) in his exegesis of the Qur'ān entitled *al-Kashāf*, rich in rhetorical analysis of the Qur'ānic style. Hardly anything new has been added to al-Jurjānī's achievement by later authors.

al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār (n.d.:325) elaborates a different understanding of the notion *al-ṣarfah* than that of al-Nazzām or al-Jāhīz. He contends that the Arabs knew that they would not be able to match the inimitable Qur'ān. Consequently, their knowledge of their inability averted them from countering the Qur'ān. The Arabs are masters of *faṣāḥah*, *balāghah* and *bayān* and they have realized by instinct that the Qur'ān enjoys sublime elegance of diction and distinguished superiority of content and thus, it is beyond countering. So the aversion here is a sort of withdrawal from an imbalanced confrontation.

4.5 The Theory of ʿIlm al-Maʿānī (Word Order)

Abdul-Raof (2006:47) holds "al-Jurjānī's word order theory is concerned with the grammar-governed word order system in Arabic. This is a sentence-level syntactically based approach that has a rhetorical orientation. Word order is a linguistically based theory that investigates the various possible changes in the order of the constituent units of a given proposition. This theory has made rhetoric a bridge between syntax and semantics. For al-Jurjānī, the theory of word order is related to eloquence, effective style, and communicative functions." Larkin (1995:10) is of the view that "there has been a tendency on the part of some modern critics studying the scholarship of ʿAbd al-Qāhīr al-Jurjānī to treat the body of his work quite apart not only from the intellectual context in which he thrived, but also as unique in the chain of literary scholars whose work he inherited. ʿAbd al-Qāhīr al-Jurjānī

fertile contributions to the field of literary theory did not appear in vacuum, unrelated to all that had gone before. On the contrary, al-Jurjānī availed himself fully of the ideas of his predecessors and contemporaries and made ample use of them. To minimize this is to underestimate the reformer in him bent on redressing what he saw as flawed in earlier literary discussions.” In a chapter titled *Word Order*, Abdul-Raof (2006:97) identifies the rhetorical discipline of *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī* as the one which is “concerned with the juxtaposition of sentence constituents in various word orders that lead to distinct pragmatic significations. Rhetorically, *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī* is interrelated to semantic syntax and discourse analysis.”

For the sake of argument, al-Jurjānī ponders over *lafẓ*, wording and *ma‘nā*, meaning or content and which of them takes the credit for the excellence of any discourse. In this connection, it was discussed in 3.1.5 that al-Jāhīz evidently declares that, meanings, ideas, are to be found on the highways and byways, everywhere, and are easily accessible to Arabs and non-Arabs, to Bedouins as well as town-dwellers. It is evident as exemplified earlier that he lays more emphasis on the construction than on meanings. On the contrary, al-Jurjānī puts down more emphasis on *ma‘nā* which Larkin (1995:11) identifies as the conductor orchestrating the linguistic expression or *lafẓ* used in a piece. Leaving no doubt as to his stance on this issue, al-Jurjānī responds not only to al-Qādī’s view of *kalām*, (3.2.5) but also to the prevailing view among the *‘bulaghā* rhetoricians that excellence in discourse derives from the *lafẓ*. This matches quite well- as Larkin (ibid:10) holds- “the prevailing wisdom is that the Arabs in general held the view that the *lafẓ* is the focus of excellence, while the *ma‘nā* is the common property of everyone and therefore cannot be seen as being the cause of the superiority of one piece of discourse over another.”

al-Jurjānī (n.d.:42)⁷² expresses his refutation against the idea that excellence is in *lafẓ* only:

⁷² For more clarification on my own translation below, the following is the original Arabic text by al-Jurjānī وأوضح من هذا كلة، وهو أن هذا (النظم) الذي يتواصفه البلغاء، وتتفاضل مراتب البلاغة من أجله، صنعة يستعان عليها بالفكرة لا محالة. وإذا كانت مما يستعان عليها بالفكرة، ويستخرج بالروية، فينبغي أن ينظر في الفكر، بماذا تلبس؟ أبا المعاني أم بالألفاظ؟ فأى شيء وجدته الذي تلبس به فكرك من بين المعاني والألفاظ، فهو الذي تحدث فيه صنعتك، وتقع فيه صياغتك ونظمك وتصويرك. فمحال أن تتفكر في شيء وأنت لا تصنع فيه شيئاً، وإنما تصنع في غيره. لو جاز ذلك، لجاز أن يفكر البناء في الغزل، ليجعل فكره فيه وصلة إلى أن يصنع من الأجر، وهو من الإحالة المفردة ...

More evident than all of this is that this composition (*naẓm*) which the rhetoricians describe among themselves, and by virtue of which rank in eloquence varies, is a craft in which one inevitably enlists the help of thought. And if it is something for which one enlists the help of thought, and is brought forth with reflection, then we must examine thought: with what is it clothed? Is it in meanings or vocables? Whichever you find your thoughts fused with, meanings or vocables, is what your craft takes place in and where your moulding and arranging and shaping occur. For it is impossible for you to think about a thing, while you make something, not in it, but rather in some other medium. If that were possible, it would be possible for a builder to think about weaving, as a lead-up to his crafting something of brick, and that is utterly impossible.

Accordingly, al-Jurjānī (ibid:199) also differentiates between levels or degrees of meaning, the explicit and the implicit, as is clear from the following passage:

One of two verbal expressions cannot have merit over the other, unless it produces some effect on the meaning that its companion doesn't ... by our using the word *ma'nā* in a context such as this, we mean the 'intent' (*gharaḍ*) and that which the speaker intends to affirm or negate.

You add a nuance **كَانَ زَيْدًا الْأَسَدَ** to the comparison of him to it, i.e., the man to a lion that was not in the first, **زَيْدًا كَالْأَسَدِ** which is that because of the excess of his bravery and strength of heart and the fact that nothing frightens him, you make him out to be indistinguishable from a lion and no less than one, to the point that one might imagine him to be a lion in the form of a human.

al-Jurjānī (ibid:326) comments on this simile that there is a rhetorical gap between the two expressions: **زَيْدًا كَالْأَسَدِ** is a normal way of likening something to another, where **كَانَ زَيْدًا الْأَسَدَ** increased the nuances of the meaning because the expression enjoys a special syntactical arrangement.

Larkin (1995:61) admits that there is no allowance made in al-Qāḍī's system for the second level of meaning *al-Maqṣūd*, the intent, that al-Jurjānī identifies. Conversely, for al-Jurjānī it is the description of precisely this type of reference to what is primarily an intellectual entity that transforms his theological viewpoint into a fruitful approach to discourse. al-Jurjānī's view of discourse is most eloquently embodied in his concept of *ṣūrah*. In order

for us fully to appreciate this notion, however, we need first to examine more closely how al-Jurjānī establishes the noetic reference it rests on.

﴿ وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

[And He taught Adam the names of all things, then He showed them to the angels and said, ‘Tell me the names of these if you truly (think you can).’ Q.II:31]

al-Jurjānī (n.d.: 416) says on discussing Q.II:31 mentioned above:

If we say, regarding knowledge of words in the beginning, that it was inspiration, that inspiration does not apply to the meanings of the words, but rather to the words’ being signs for those meanings and to their being intended by them. Regarding the verse, “He taught Adam all the names.” how could it be said to them, “tell me of the names of these (*asmā’i hā’ūlā’i*), “ if they didn’t know what was indicated by the word *hā’ūlā’i*.”

al-Jurjānī’s view of reference is put into meditation when he discusses the individual names of the language. He contends (ibid:416) that individual names do not provide knowledge of the items referred to rather, they are dependent on some prior knowledge of these entities. Otherwise, it would be that one would not recognize a man, a horse and a house unless the words “*rajul, faras and dār*” had been established for them.

Larkin (1995:62) observes al-Jurjānī’s view here is “very different from the view taken by al-Qāḍī. For him, names refer not to an intellectual model for the given entity, but to the entity itself. In other words, the reference of words in the view of the theologian is to ontological reality. This is not the case for al-Jurjānī. On the contrary, that is precisely the view he wishes to reject. The distinction he makes echoes closely the one we observed in the quotation from al-Jāḥiz between *ma’ānī* as the lexical definition of words, and *ma’ānī* as their ontological referents.”

al-Jurjānī (ibid:407) comments on the idea of ontological referents by refuting the advocates of ontological ideas and what they have arrived at: That which is signified (*al-madlūl*) by words is not the existence of the entity (*ma’nā*) or its non-existence, but the judgment (*ḥukm*) of the existence of the entity or its non-existence. Indeed, that – i.e., the judgment of the existence of the entity or its non-existence – is the true meaning (*ḥaqīqah*) of *khbar*.

Larkin (1995: 63) takes special note of the nuances of the word *ḥukm*. “*ḥukm*” carries more than the general sense of “*judgment*” we must commonly encounter. In the language of *kalām* and, indeed, of earlier Islamic law, a judgment was based on the existence of a particular qualifying accident, i.e., the cause of something being what it is, the *‘illa* or *ma‘nā*. Larkin (ibid:63) adds that the distinction al-Jurjānī takes pains to make here is between the reality of the existence of the *ma‘nā* and judging or reckoning it present. The latter involves assessment on the part of the speaker, who is in this way organically involved in the production of discourse. The reference involved here is thus the noetic one deriving from a particular speaker, as opposed to the ontological reference suggested by al-Qāḍī’s formulation.

Let us consider now the meaning in the sense of ideas and thoughts. al-Jurjānī (n.d.:415) holds individual words are just the logical starting point for the discussion: meanings in the sense of ideas or thoughts are not possible without construction among the lexical items in the language: Individual words, which are the vocabulary (*awḍā‘*) of the language, were not set down so that their meanings be known, in and of themselves, but rather that they be joined to one another, so that meanings from among them jointly be made known.

Ma‘ānī al-kalām, al-Jurjānī (ibid:405) tells us, “are all meanings (*ma‘ānī*) that are inconceivable except among two things, and the foundation and primary one of these is the *khavar* (prediction).” *Khavar* is divided into affirmation of (*ithbāt*) and negation (*naḥy*), and it is well established in everyone’s mind that the former requires both something affirmed (*muthbat*), and that of which it is affirmed (*muthbat lahū*), just as the latter requires the subject of the negation and that which is negated of it. In other words, a *khavar*, which al-Jurjānī (ibid:406) treats as the prototype for all *kalām*, is not a *khavarī* unless there is attribution (*isnād*): *khavar* (prediction) and all discourse are *ma‘ānī* that a person sets up within himself and disposes of in his thinking and whispers about in his heart and refers to his intellect about, and which are described as being objects (*maqāṣid*) and intents (*aghrāḍ*).

Larkin (1995:64) then concludes discourse is set up on an intellectual level and the *ma‘ānī* disposed of there “are described as being *maqāṣid* and *aghrāḍ*.” In other words, it is these *ma‘ānī* that are targeted; *they* are the objects of discourse and it is necessarily to them first that reference is made. These terms, “*maqāṣid*” and “*aghrāḍ*,” used by al-Qāḍī to refer to

the object of the speaker's communication in reality, are here explicitly defined as operations on the noetic level. Discourse, according to al-Jurjānī, refers to this noetic configuration.

al-Jurjānī's (n.d.:563) expresses explicitly the noetic representation, the conceptualization of a certain discourse, the *'ilm* that derives from perception. Just how broadly al-Jurjānī wishes to apply this criterion is clear from the next statement:

If that is established, then it is also true that there is no agent (*fā'il*), but he finds in himself the predicting of a *ma'nā* to a thing. If we said regarding the word "*darba*" that it is set down for predicting the idea/accident (*ma'nā*) of something, we would thereby be pointing regarding it (i.e., the word *daraba*) to that idea/accident (*ma'nā*) that he recognized in his mind. Likewise, if we said that the word "*rajul*" is established for the male human being, we would thereby be pointing to that which he has actually encountered. But now what matters is that with the noun, we point to something he has come to know as existent. So we have to consider, if we said, "the verb is set down for predicating an idea/accident (*ma'nā*) of something," would we thereby be indicating a *ma'nā* he has come to know exists or a thing the existence of which has been attested?

Larkin (1995:66) avows the main points al-Jurjānī means in a short and clear form: "When a speaker uses the name of a particular object in reality, he is referring to the image established in his mind of that reality, on the basis of prior actual experience of that entity. He is not referring to an actual instance of it as he speaks. Verbs do not refer to set objects in reality, but to actions that may exist in reality for some particular duration of time. As with the names of stable entities, the speaker, having known a particular action to occur, refers, in his use of a verb, to the concept established in his mind consequent to his experience of that particular event in reality. He is referring not to an actual occurrence but to the image of it in his mind, which could always be realized again at some other time."

It is worth noting here how Abdul-Raof (2006:102) divides *'ilm al-mā'ānī* (word order) into eight sections which are: reporting, informing, subject status, predicate status, verb status, restriction, disjunction and conjunction, and succinctness, verbosity, and moderation. It is relevant here to mention that the translator needs to understand the different layers and shades the meaning of a proposition offers. Consequently he/she can explore the implicit meaning Qur'ānic discourse grants. Abdul-Raof (ibid:107) elaborates a discussion which

supports our claims, “the linguistic level provided by the grammar has been added an extra pragmatic level of decoding the communicator’s attitude to the thought expressed by his or her reporting statement. The addressee *translator* needs to have an inferential ability for his or her pragmatic interpretation of the communicator’s reporting speech acts. Therefore, communication can be successful if the addressee *translator* is able to understand the implicit meaning of the communicator’s statement rather than understanding the linguistic meaning or form of the same speech act.” (Italics are mine).

4.5.1 ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī

The works by the late scholastic theologians⁷³ and their school cannot stand comparison with the two books by ‘Abd al-Qāhir b. ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī, the famous philologist and literary critic, on which they were based, namely, *Dalā’il al-’jāz* (The Proofs for the Inimitability of Qur’ānic Style) and *Asrār al-Balāghah* (The Secrets of Rhetoric). ‘Abd al-Qāhir was a Persian born in Jurjān and never left this area. Not having studied under any famous teacher himself, he nevertheless built himself a considerable reputation as a scholar. His writings were mainly on grammar and rhetoric. His works on rhetoric include the two mentioned above, as well as a shorter *risālah* on *’jāz al-Qur’ān*. Abu Deeb (1979:303) contends that “almost all writers on al-Jurjānī describe his work in similar and sometimes even more complimentary terms. His critical method, his analytical approach to literary creation and indeed his whole mentality, have been said to belong to the twentieth century rather than the critical tradition of the tenth century.”

We may even go so far as to say that ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī is considered the founding father of Arabic literary criticism. Among Arabic and Western scholars alike, his two books are hailed as ‘the summit of Arabic rhetoric’. Deservedly, ‘Abd al-Qāhir was best known as a grammarian (*faqīh and naḥawī*).

In his emphasis on order system *naẓm*, al-Jurjānī is taking up where – to name a few – al-Jāḥiẓ, then al-Khaṭṭābī and finally al-Bāqillānī left off. For each of these, the superiority of the text of the Qur’ān derives, at least in part, from its inimitable composition. In a very perceptive remark, al-Bāqillānī explains that while rhetorical figures can be imitated,

⁷³ al-Rāzī (d. 606), Ibn Abu al- Iṣba‘ (d. 654), al-Sakkākī (d. 626), etc. cited in Bint al-Shāṭi’ (2004:129). *al-’jāz al-Bayānī Lil Qur’ān*.

practiced and learned, the characteristics for which the Qur'ān is inimitable – i.e., its *ta'lif* – are something that cannot be learned. This view of composition is one that is strikingly close to al-Jurjānī's, the difference being, of course, that the latter was able to elaborate it linguistically to a degree far beyond al-Bāqillānī's powers.

The Mu'tazilites' influences on al-Jurjānī were numerous. His reliance on al-Rummānī, perhaps via the work of Abu Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (d. 400/1010), in his categorization of simile is clear. At an even earlier and more fundamental stage, however, ʿAbd al-Qāhir was virtually weaned on the work of several important Mu'tazilites.

It is not surprising, then, for ʿAbd al-Qāhir to have been thoroughly familiar with the works of the Mu'tazilite al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, to the point of being able to re-use his ideas creatively within his own theo-rhetorical system. Larkin (1995:55) emphasises that “what makes al-Jurjānī's theoretical edifice even more tantalizing from a polemical point of view is that he takes as his starting point the very words of al-Qāḍī.”

In a chapter on ‘the clarification of *faṣāḥah* by which certain speech is preferable to the other’ in his *al-Mughnī*, al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār (1960:197) embodies the same definition for *faṣāḥah* as that of his teacher, Abu Hāshim, who defines it as “*jazālat al-lafẓ wa-ḥusn al-māʿnā*, ‘elegance of diction and superiority of content.’ He adds that eloquence necessitates mastering both *lafẓ* and *māʿnā*, ‘form and content.’ ʿAtīq, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (n.d:22) comments that the eloquence of speech is not realized unless speech is free of weakness in its composition, discord of words and complication in form and content. Larkin (1995:40) expresses the inconsistency in the way al-Qāḍī looks at *faṣāḥah*:

According to al-Qāḍī, “*faṣāḥah*” does not manifest itself in individual units of speech, but rather in speech that is joined together in a particular way. When a word occurs in such connected speech, it acquires a particular quality, which may derive from lexical choice, from its *irāb* or from its position (*mawqīʿ*). In other words, despite his emphasis on ‘speech that is joined together,’ al-Qāḍī, in the end, views *faṣāḥah* as a quality that redounds to the individual word.

al-Jurjānī (n.d.:38) comments on the preference of *lafẓ* “you see a particular word dazzle and please you when it occurs in one position, and then you find the very same one heavy and unpleasant to you in another place, ... and you find it far heavier to the spirit and far

more opaque and unsettled than it was satisfying and light, pleasing and delightful in the other instances.”

It should be mentioned here al-Jurjānī has not been given his credit in the literature, let us look for example at what Richards has to say about the same issue and we shall find presentation of the same kind similar to that of al-Jurjānī. Richards (1936:51) writes: “I have been leading up or down, if you like, to an extremely simple and obvious but fundamental remark: that no word can be judged as to whether it is good or bad, correct or incorrect, beautiful or ugly, or anything else that matters to a writer, in isolation. That seems so evident that I am almost ashamed to say it, and yet it flies straight in the face of the only doctrine that for two hundred years has been officially inculcated-when any doctrine is inculcated in these matters. I mean that there is a right or a good use for every word that literary virtue consists in making that good use of it.”

al- Jurjānī also touches upon the linguistic approach he pioneers to study literary criticism. In other words, he proposes a stylistic system to the very same problem and the stylistic system he proposed as a means to establish his new theory of *maʿānī and bayān*. Larkin (1995:43) asserts “approaching this issue from the point of view of a scholar in the linguistic sciences, he manipulates the selfsame concepts that the Muʿtazilite al-Qāḍī presented and fashions a very different response in an idiom familiar to Muʿtazilite and Ashʿarī *mutakallim* alike.” In a chapter on ‘the difference between letters that are arranged and words that are arranged,’ al- Jurjānī specifically contrasts his own definition of *kalām* with that of al- Qāḍī. In explaining why the letter’s definition is in no way applicable to words, he offers the first explicit articulation of his key concept of *naẓm*.

al-Jurjānī (n.d.:40) holds: ‘arrangement of letters’ is their consecutive occurrence in pronunciation, where their arrangement is not required by a particular meaning, nor is their arranger following in it any track in the mind that necessitated his aiming at that which he aimed at in their arrangement. Had the originator of language laid down *rabaḍa* in place of *ḍaraba*, there would have been nothing improper about that. The matter is not like that, however, with the placement *naẓm* of words, for in placing them, you follow the tracks of meanings, and you arrange them in accordance with the way the meanings are arranged in your mind. Therefore, it is a kind of ordering *naẓm* in which the situation of one part of it in relation to the rest is taken into consideration; it is not that kind of ordering *naẓm* that

means joining one thing to another in a random manner. al-Jurjānī elaborates (ibid:42) that “this composition *naẓm* which the rhetoricians describe among themselves, and by virtue of which rank in eloquence varies, is a craft in which one inevitably enlists the help of thought. And if it is something for which one enlists the help of thought, and is brought forth with reflection, then we must examine thought: with what is it fused? Is it in meanings or vocables? Whichever you find your thoughts fused with, meanings or vocables, is what your craft takes place in and where your moulding and arranging and shaping occur. For it is impossible for you to think about a thing, while you make something, not in it, but rather in some other medium. If that were possible, it would be possible for a builder to think about weaving, as a lead-up to his crafting something of brick, and that is utterly impossible.”

With this passage al-Jurjānī adds a new important element to his argument, one that must have raised not a few Muʿtazilite eyebrows. We have already seen that the basis of his view of discourse is meaning and the relation of the meanings of the words to one another. Here al-Jurjānī states in no uncertain terms the level on which this associating of meanings takes place. The arrangement of words necessarily follows a ‘trace in the mind’ *ʿaql*. Unlike al-Qāḍī’s *naẓm* among letters, which is a random combination of sounds, *naẓm*, in al-Jurjānī’s view, is a matter of meaning and is first and foremost an operation of the mind.

Larkin (1995:53) proclaims under a subtitle *the role of grammar* discussing al-Jurjānī’s mechanism of *naẓm* “had al-Jurjānī been content with no more specificity regarding the functioning of discourse than this, he would have differed only slightly from his Ashʿarī contemporary, al-Bāqillānī. This was not the case, however, for al-Jurjānī sought to identify *how* connections between words are created, in other words, the mechanism of *naẓm*. Let us take a closer look at the concept of *naẓm* as al-Jurjānī develops it by juxtaposing several key statements in which he defines *naẓm*: There is no *naẓm* or ordering in words until they are connected with each other and are structured on each other, one being tied with another. al-Jurjānī also states that connecting or linking and constructing among them i.e., words has no meaning other than that you target a noun and make it the subject or the object of a verb, or you take two nouns and you make one the predicate of the other (n.d:44).

For the sake of argument, let us look to the way the same issue has been dealt with ten centuries later on after al-Jurjānī. Richards (1960:73-74) elucidates “how a word is

understood depends on the other words you hear it with, and the other frames you have heard it in, on the whole setting present and past in which it has developed as part of your mind ... Words only work together. We understand no word except in and through its interactions with other words.” It is worthy to note here that the way Richards understands the work of a word is not much different than the way al-Jurjānī understood it ten centuries ago. This is the occasion to discuss the evident overlap between the two terms *naẓm* and *stylistics* in the work of al-Jurjānī. Moreover, the way Murry (1936:2-7) writes about style and *stylistics* is a replica of what al-Jurjānī did in *Dalā'il al-ʿġāz*. Consider the way al-Jurjānī states that (n.d.:64) *naẓm* is nothing other than your composing/putting down your speech/discourse (*kalām*) as the science of grammar requires and that you operate according to its laws and principles. Larkin (1995:59) claims that al-Jurjānī looks to *maʿānī al-naḥū* in two different ways, the first of which is about the features of grammar that are the mechanisms of connecting words in discourse. The second entails *stylistics* the term we are discussing here. Larkin (ibid:59) expounds that correctness of the proposition is among the reasons beyond implementing the laws of grammar. In other words, the *maʿānī al-naḥū* in this case functions as merely the grammatical features that form the hinges between the words of the composition. As such, they cannot, in and of themselves, result in the kind of discourse al-Jurjānī is interested in his discussion of excellence. On another hand, al-Jurjānī finds the *maʿānī al-naḥū* as the original manipulation of the syntactic possibilities and the deliberate exercise of artistry in the service of creating a particular form that gives rise to superior discourse. Larkin contends that (ibid:59) “it is appropriate, therefore, that we distinguish in translation between ‘grammar’ or ‘syntax,’ in the first instance, and ‘stylistics,’ which involves creative selection, in the second.” Moreover, al-Jurjānī’s theory of word order, as Abdul-Raof (2006:72) states, is echoed by *relevance theory* developed by Sperber and Wilson in 1986 which refers to the form of the speech act and its impact on the main explicature of the proposition. In other words, the different propositional forms of the speech act lead to different propositional attitudes and contextual implicatures.

Shauqī ʿAlī al-Zahra (1996:51) holds that al-Jurjānī writes about the term *style* when he writes about a distinguished creative topic which is *al-iḥtidhāʾ* (poetic plagiarism), (matching the style of other writers). al-Jurjānī (n.d:468-469) is of the view that poets and experts in poetry distinguish *al-iḥtidhāʾ* where a poet embodies a notable style of his own-

and style is a kind of *naẓm* and its own technique- then another poet matches the same style in his poetry. al-Zahra maintains (1996:52) al-Jurjānī holds *naẓm* as style and in this way *naẓm*, for him, entails all literary forms and when he writes about the technique of style he means the technique of *naẓm*. al-Jurjānī then applies the concept of poetic plagiarism on a verse by al-Farazdaq matched by al-Buʿaith:

(الفرزدق)	بخير وقد أعيا ربيعاً كبارها	أترجو ربيعاً أن يجئ صغارها
(البعيث)	بخير، وقد أعيا كلياً قديمها	أترجو كليباً أن يجئ حديثها

How can the tribe of *Rabiʿ* hope its offspring bring forth any good whereas its antecedents have disappointed it? (al-Farzdaq)

Would the tribe of Kulaib hope its new comers bring forth any good whereas its old generation failed it? (al-Buʿaith)

Larkin (2008:107) contemplates whether it is ‘borrowing’ or ‘plagiarism’ when she mentions that “one obsessive focus in the vast body of criticism of al-Mutanabbi’s poetry was on the notion of *sariqa* ‘literally theft’. She (ibid:107) elaborates how *muʿāraḍa* or *contrefacta* of well-known poems “conveys the communal nature of the poetic experience for Arab practitioners and aficionados.” For Chaudhuri (2007:88) “the text that inaugurates a sequence of reception is itself the culmination of an earlier one. Thus a ‘dead’ author impregnates the reception not only of his own work but also of others further down the line.”

Murry (1936:7-8) almost produced the like of what al-Jurjānī did when he cited a poem of Marlowe:

Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.

Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flies.

Murry comments (ibid:7-8) “they are Marlowe’s lines. No one else could have written them; not even Shakespeare. When Shakespeare was writing in the style of Marlowe he was incapable of this magnificence; when he became capable of it he had worked out a style of his own, utterly different from Marlowe’s; but when we say that Marlowe had style, we are referring to a quality which transcends all personal idiosyncrasy in order to be manifested. Style, in this absolute sense is a complete fusion of the personal and the universal.” It is conspicuous that al-Jurjānī relates style to *naẓm* and maintains *naẓm* is the style: the particular idiosyncrasy of the literary style.

Larkin (1995:54) acknowledges al-Jurjānī has here added another element to the equation. On the one hand, he says, *naẓm* is the arranging in the mind of the meanings of the words, i.e., it is the connecting or associating that takes place among the meanings of the words. He also stipulates that *naẓm* comes down to the connecting of words by means of the various features of grammar (*maʿānī al-naḥu*). It is “nothing other than” this. In other words, for al-Jurjānī, the mental process of associating words in meaning corresponds to the connecting that goes on the manifest linguistic level. The nature of the connection between the meanings of the words is reflected in that of the grammatical *maʿnā*. This corresponds to his view of individual meanings: the only difference is that the *maʿānī al-naḥu* refers to the ligatures between them. It does not go without saying that al-Jurjānī finds *maʿānī al-naḥu* the meaning of the approaches the Arab follows in constructing the sentence. Later the rhetoricians assign *ʿilm al-Maʿānī* to cover what is meant by *maʿānī al-naḥu*. That is why Aḥmed Badawī (2004:21) holds that *maʿānī al-naḥu* is meant to expound the differences between verbal and nominal sentences, the theme and rheme, ellipsis, Hysteron and Proteron and others which help explore the beauty of composing the Arabic sentence.

The greatest thing by far is that al-Jurjānī had a new insight of looking into lafẓ and maʿna, literary expression and stylistics and the linguistic approach of studying literature and criticism. al-ʿAshmāwī (1994:282) remarks al-Jurjānī does not differentiate between our knowledge of the grammatical laws, fundamentals of the language and our ability to explore its stylistics. As we read on more of al-Jurjānī we find that all the questions that matter in linguistics and literary criticism take new interest and a wider relevance to his theory of *naẓm*. Larkin (1995:54) observes that al-Jurjānī elevates grammar to a very high position indeed. Since the devices of grammar that connect words in expression reflect the nature of their connection in the mind of the composer, it is as if grammar is a blueprint for the thinking of the originator of discourse. Since connection is the essence of *naẓm*, and *naẓm*, in turn, is the essence of *faṣāḥah*, al-Jurjānī has thus allotted grammar a pre-eminent place in the discussion of excellence in discourse.

The basic point in al-Jurjānī’s theory of *naẓm*, which he attributes to al-Jāhīẓ, by way of re-interpretation and elaboration, its first articulation in the history of rhetoric, *balāghah*, is (Ḍaif, 2004:215) close to that of both Abu Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī (d. 321/973) and ʿAbd al-

Jabbār's synthesis of 'content' and style. It is right to refer here that al-Jurjānī did not refer absolutely to either of the two in his works. al-Jurjānī made no direct reference to 'Abd al-Jabbār, but the attack is evident enough. He had no trouble identifying 'Abd al-Jabbār's work as the basis for his comments. But his extensive analysis and elaborate explanation of its details led him to uncover 'the laws of syntax', *qawānīn al-naḥw*. For the sake of elucidation and clarification, al-Jurjānī maintains (n.d.:64) *Naẓm* is nothing other than your composing/putting down your speech/discourse (*kalām*) as the science of grammar requires and that you operate according to its laws and principles.

It is interesting to summarise al-Jurjānī's views in the same way Abdul-Raof (2006:71) has put as follows:

1. Word order is the manifestation of eloquence, and eloquence cannot be a feature of word order nor of its meaning or sounds. However, he does not ignore the word level completely. He attributes rhetorical features to words, i.e. the word is the vehicle for aesthetic aspects such as metaphor. He also refers to how semantic ambiguity can undermine an elegant word order.
2. Meaning is not related to eloquence and effective style but rather to word order.
3. Context of situation is paramount.
4. The psychological and ideological state of the addressee is taken into consideration. There are three categories of addressee: *khali al-dhin* (open-minded), *mutaraddid* (uncertain, special), and *munkir* (denier).
5. Stylistic elegance and effectiveness are attributed to word order and the special arrangements of sentence constituents rather than to the individual lexical items that may embody a given rhetorical feature such as metaphor or metonymy.

4.6 Arabic Rhetoric and Equivalence in Qur'ān Translation

Indubitably, this section attempts to indicate some adjacent fields of research which are of special interest to translation studies and translation of the Qur'ān. The question is whether *'ilm al-balāghah* (the science of rhetoric) in general has an impact on the degree of equivalence in translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. That will be looked into throughout this section. We obviously draw heavily on al-Jurjānī's *Dalā'il* because it is the

most useful of the famous works on rhetoric, the best arranged, the most completely organized and brings together the greatest number of basic principles.

A special mention is due to Abdul-Raof (2006) who has sustained the reader with a comprehensive historical account along with an informative outline of the research contribution of major Arab rhetoricians. He has provided a detailed exemplary account of the three disciplines of Arabic rhetoric, namely, *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī* (word order), *‘ilm al-bayān* (figures of speech), and *‘ilm al-badī‘* (science of embellishment). Abdul-Raof (ibid:50) explicates that al-Zamakhsharī holds that an exegete and similarly a translator must be equipped with the knowledge of the rhetorical disciplines of *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī* (word order) and *‘ilm al-bayān* (figures of speech) in order to be able to understand and interpret the Qur’ān.

Hussein, al-‘Imām Muḥammad al-Khiḍr (1997:12-22) in a chapter on translating the meaning of the Qur’ān into foreign languages holds that the Qur’ān renders two types of meanings: the original straightforward meaning and the secondary meaning (the consequential underlying semantic characteristics of the Arabic syntax). The translatability of the original meaning may be possible in some foreign languages but that of the accompanying extra consequential meaning is proved to be a chimera.

That is why it is essential for translators of the Qur’ān to be familiar with the science of Arabic rhetoric *blāghah* (*‘ilm al-ma‘ānī*, *‘ilm al-bayān* and *‘ilm al-badī‘*) in order to render the text as close as possible to the meaning of the original. Let me now come down to detail. We invite the readers to compare how Ibn Khaldūn classifies and determines the three sciences with what is common now in the literature. Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808H) (1958, 3:335-336) states the discipline, which he calls (*bayān*) and translated by Franz Rosenthal as (syntax and style), expresses the meaning that the forms and conditions of speech have in various situations. He divides the discipline into three subdivisions.

The first subdivision has as its subject the investigation of forms and conditions of speech, in order to achieve conformity with all the requirements of a given situation. This is called “the science of rhetoric” (*balāghah*). The second subdivision has as its subject the investigation of what a word implies or is implied by it – that is, metaphor and metonymy, as we have just stated. This is called “the science of style” (*al-bayān*). (Scholars) have added a (third) subdivision, the study of the artistic embellishment of speech. Such

embellishment may be achieved through the ornamental use of rhymed prose (*sajf*), which divides speech into sections; or through the use of paronomasia (*tajnīs*), which establishes a similarity among the words used; nor through the use of internal rhyme (*tarṣf*), which cuts down the units of rhythmic speech (into smaller units); or through the use of allusion (*tawriyah*) to the intended meaning by suggesting an even more cryptic idea which is expressed by the same words; or through the use of antithesis (*ḥibāq*); and similar things. They called this 'the science of rhetorical figures' (*ilm al-badf*).

We may go as far to say that it is indubitable that the knowledge of Arabic rhetoric is recommended to understand what eloquence is and accordingly present a comprehensible explanation of Qur'ānic discourse. No thinking translator intent upon a full appreciation of the Qur'ān can do without examining the pillars and banners of Arabic linguistics. Study of Arabic linguistics is a necessary pre-requisite to understanding the linguistic phenomena that are inimitably employed in the Qur'ān. Ignorance of the science of Arabic rhetoric, *balāghah*, whose laws can only be reached through the study of Arabic linguistics, makes it impossible to attain any knowledge of the Qur'ān and its interpretation. This may accordingly result in inadequacy or even incompetence in translating and rendering the meaning of Revelation in another language. al-Zahra (1996:57) contends that a man of art should be a grammarian in the first place: he has to know all the grammatical differences which indicate a value of pure literary taste. al-Zahra here counters al-Jurjānī (n.d.:71-72) when he states that a man of art should show the syntactical creativity in the syntactical arrangement of the structure of a language. This syntactical arrangement means *al-naẓm* because *al-naẓm* deals with whatever related to the grammatical patterns of lexis and consequently deals with whatever may result from that in a particular privilege or beauty of the style. So paying attention to the grammatical correctness does not impede the aesthetic of syntactical arrangement of a discourse. Moreover this correctness protects the writer from falling into grammatical mistakes. It is time to refer to al-Jurjānī when he expounds (n.d:64) that *naẓm* is nothing other than your composing/putting down your speech/discourse *kalām* as the science of grammar requires and that you operate according to its laws and principles. Ḥussein, al-'Imām Muḥammad al-Khiḍr (1997:25) stipulates that the interpreter/translator should be aware of the exquisite metaphorical language of the Qur'ān and the areas where it is best to understand the Qur'ānic rhetoric rather

metaphorically than literally. Thus, those who want to be translators of the Qur'ān must know the sciences connected with the Arabic language. In fact he (ibid:25) comments that the best is to transmit into other languages the translation of the interpretation of the Qur'ān and not the translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. However, Tammām Ḥassān (2004:26-27) is of the view that language is more limited than thought. He elaborates that every language names the experiences of its community but finds difficulty in naming the experiences of other communities. Hence, it fails to surround the areas of human thought in general. Moreover, language fails to contain individuals' thought, where an individual might not be able to express an acute idea because of lack of words. The following poem by a thirteenth-century poet of Andalusia, Ibn al-Khabbāzah, manages to describe eloquence with succinctness.

Your life was of the order true

Of Arab eloquence

The tale was brief, the words were few,

The meaning was immense⁷⁴.

Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808H) (1958:321) comments on the special rhetorical features of the Arabic language. He (ibid:321) holds "therefore, we find non-Arabs lengthier in their speech than we would consider necessary in Arabic. This is what was meant in the following remark by Prophet Muḥammad: 'I was given the most comprehensive words, and speech was made short for me.'"

4.7 *ʿIlm al-Bayān* (Figures of Speech)

This section while keeping al-Jurjānī's two main books in focus, will investigate some of the work done by Arabic rhetoricians on *ʿilm al-bayān*. The main interest of *ʿilm al-bayān* is imagination which strongly clarifies the idea whose influence consequently increases in the mind and heart of the reader or listener. In like fashion, *ʿilm al-bayān* is a pictured imagination and its main interest is simile, metaphor, hyperbole and *majāz*. The major constituents of the rhetorical discipline of *ʿilm al-bayān* as of Abdul-Raof (2006:197) are as follows: (1) simile, (2) allegory [cognitive, linguistic (metaphor, hypallage)] and (3) metonymy.

⁷⁴ Arberry A.J. (1957:250). *The Seven Odes*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

It is interesting to determine the position of *‘ilm al-bayān* amongst the other sciences of Arabic language. Ibn Khaldūn (1958:319) identifies “the pillars of Arabic language are four: lexicography, grammar, syntax and style *bayān*”, whereas Aḥmed Badawī (2004:22) mentions twelve sciences of literature. Aḥmed Badawī (2004:22) elaborates these sciences are *‘ilm al-lughah* (science of linguistics) which deals with the individual word as a unit, *‘ilm al-ishtiqāq* and *‘ilm al-ṣarf* (science of morphology), the former studies word formation, the latter explores the word and its posture, *‘ilm al-naḥw* (science of grammar) which tackles the sentence: its original meaning, *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī* (science of word order or science of semantics) which deals with the consequential extra meaning of the sentence, *‘ilm al-bayān* (science of figures of speech) which emphasises figures of speech, and *‘ilm al-badf* (science of embellishment) which is meant for beautification and embellishment. We are left with five other sciences which are irrelevant to the study: *‘ilm al-‘urūd* (science of prosody), *‘ilm al-qawāfī* (science of rhyme), *‘ilm al-shīr* (science of poetry), *‘ilm al-nathr* (science of prose) and *‘ilm al-muḥaḍarāt* (science of lectures). It is now becoming clear that as ‘Atīq proclaims (n.d:437) “it is indubitably that the less the litterateur *and consequently the translator* knows of these sciences, the more he lacks in the tools that qualify him perfectly to practice literature of any form.” Italics are mine.

The status of *‘ilm al-bayān* becomes somewhat clearer if we recall a statement made above in the discussion of *faṣāḥah*; namely, that *ta‘qīd*, undue intricacy or obscurity, may arise from a less than successful use of metaphorical expressions. The science of *bayān*, or ‘clarification’ teaches how to use metaphorical language, in the widest sense of this term, in a way that is clarifying rather than the opposite. There is, however, a strong interpretative bias in the (science of rhetoric) *‘ilm al-balāghah*, probably due to the strong connections this science has to that of Qur’ānic exegesis. An alternative description might therefore be that *‘ilm al-bayān* teaches how to interpret metaphorical language. As the knowledge of the second art is dependent upon the knowledge of the first, these two descriptions are not really conflicting, although they may seem to be so. In this connection, the Qur’ān uses multiple hermeneutical strategies in its discourse including similitude, analogies, similes, metaphors, recurring refrains and hyperbole.

Tammām Ḥassān (2004:19) holds that *‘ilm al-bayān* is closely related to lexicography than to the grammatical rules that search the functional meanings. The area of *‘ilm al-bayān* is

the study of the relationship between the word and its underlying semantic characteristics. It should be noted that language is put conventionally so that words match the exact objects in reality; however, any language is too limited-as far as lexis is concerned- to cover all language expressions, thoughts, images and particularly nuances. Hence, Language needs metaphor alongside the conventional factual usage of its Lexis.

Abu Deeb (1979:309) summarizes al-Jurjānī's theory of *majāz* in the following form:

- i) *Majāz* is a general linguistic process based on transferring a word from its normal context to a new unconventional one as well as on a number of other stylistic and syntactic features. As such, *majāz* is not only a semantic phenomenon.
- ii) *Majāz* is not identical or always conditional on the occurrence of transference. Similarly, there may be a transference which does not produce any form of *majāz*.
- iii) Transference can produce not only *isti'ārah* but other figures of speech also, such as the type of *tammthīl* in the expression, "the maker of the bow is now taken possession of it."
- iv) Most important of all, *isti'ārah* is not identical with *majāz* or with transference because only one type of *majāz* can produce it, namely, that which is based on similarity. On the other hand, there is a type of *isti'ārah* which is not at all related to, or produced by, transference. In fact, as has been said before, *isti'ārah* is not transference of a name at all. It is an interaction of meanings and contexts.

Those who specialize in literature of a certain language counter a great challenge when they try to understand different contexts in which language occurs. The contextual occurrence of a language entails acute, detailed social, intellectual, tasteful and emotional relationships. These relationships can only be understood and reacted to by aboriginal speakers.

al-Jurjānī (n.d.:44) ponders over the following proposition: could one imagine, even if he tried, that two individual words, without reference to the particular position they occupy vis-à-vis the whole composition and arrangement, rival each other in merit, by anything more than that one is familiar and commonly used and the other is unusual and barbarous, or that the letters of one are lighter and more harmonious and removed from that which tires the tongue?

Do you find anyone saying "This is a blemishless (*faṣīḥ*) utterance," but they are taking into account its place within the composition *naẓm*, the harmony of its meaning with that of its neighbours, and its splendid conviviality with its sister-utterances?

We shall provide in this section different examples from different translations of the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān of the main categories of *'ilm al-bayān*: simile, allegory and metonymy.

4.7.1 Simile, as in:

﴿ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِئَةٌ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

[The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allāh, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allāh gives manifold increase to whom He pleases. And Allāh is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower. Q2:261]

where the simile feature (giving) common to both simile ends (those who spend their wealth) and (the grains) is mentioned. The simile element is a particle (ك/ like), the likened to is (those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh) and the likened is (the grains).

It is interesting to note how the same simile is translated in Dawood's:

[Those that give their wealth for the cause of God can be compared to a grain of corn which brings forth seven ears, each bearing a hundred grains. God gives abundance to whom He will; God is magnificent and all-knowing.]

where the simile element (like or as) has been rendered as *can be compared to*.

4.7.2 Allegory, as in:

﴿ وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكَ وَيَا سَّمَاءُ أَقْلِعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَاسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

[And it was said: "O earth! Swallow up your water, and O sky! Withhold (your rain)." And the water was diminished (made to subside) and the Decree (of Allāh) was fulfilled (i.e. the destruction of the people of Nūḥ (Noah). And it (the ship) rested on Mount Judi, and it was said: "Away with the people who are Zalimūn (polytheists and wrong-doing)!" Q11:44)

where the verb (اَبْلَعِي swallow) is attributed to the non-intrinsic, i.e. allegorical subject (the earth), whereas the non-allegorical subject is cognitively understood as (Allāh). The same analysis applies to اَقْلِعِي withhold, اَسْتَوْتُ rested.

4.7.3 Metaphor, as in:

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاسْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا ﴾

[He said: “My Lord! Indeed my bones have grown feeble, and grey hair has spread on my head, And I have never been unblest in my invocation to You, O my Lord!” Q19:4]

where the likened element (fire) is ellipted whereas its likened-to element (grey hair) is mentioned. Pickthall submits a translation where he attempts to keep the impact of the metaphor on the reader:

[Saying: My Lord! Lo! The bones of me wax feeble and my head is shining with grey hair, and I have never been unblest in prayer to Thee, my Lord.]

4.7.4 Hypallage, as in:

﴿ أَوْ كَصَيْبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴾

[Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder, and lightning. They thrust their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunderclap for fear of death. But Allāh ever encompasses the disbelievers (i.e. Allāh will gather them all together). Q2:19]

Where (أَصَابِعُ /fingers) refer to the whole but in fact what is meant is the part so the semantic relationship here is whole-to-part.

Yūsuf ʿAli (2000:5) interprets Q2:19 as:

[Or (another similitude) is that of a rain-laden cloud from the sky. In it are zones of darkness, and thunder and lightning. They press their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunder-clap, the while they are in terror of death. But Allāh is ever round the rejecters of Faith!]

4.7.5 Metonymy, as in:

﴿ مُهْطِعِينَ مُقْنِعِي رُءُوسِهِمْ لَا يَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِمْ طَرْفُهُمْ وَأَفْئِدَتُهُمْ هَوَاءٌ ﴾

[(They will be) hastening forward with necks outstretched, their heads raised up (towards the sky), their gaze returning not towards them and their hearts empty (from thinking because of extreme fear). Q14:43]

where the modifier and the modified are mentioned but the affinity word is ellipted. It has not been referred to the characteristic attribute (frightened) but, instead, the following different lexical items are mentioned: *أَفْئِدَتُهُمْ هَوَاءٌ* , *مُهْطِعِينَ مُقْنِعِي*.

Let us consider the following translation of both Dawood and Pickthall:

[As they come hurrying on in fear, their heads upraised, their gaze returning not to them, and their hearts as air.]

Pickthall translates explicitly what is meant to remain implicitly for readers to infer and ponder on so the translation loses the impact of the source text. Besides, the image *hearts as air* does not help the readers to grasp the underlying meaning because it is straightforwardly literal.

Whereas Dawood renders the translation as:

[They shall rush in terror with heads uplifted and hearts utterly vacant. They shall stare, but see nothing.]

It is a translation of the effect of the metonymy. It fails to convey the grandeur of the ST and it can be looked into as a paraphrase.

For the sake of completeness, we shall borrow the major constituents of the figures of speech in Arabic discourse as summarised by Abdul-Raof (2006:238): figures of speech *‘ilm al-bayān*.

Figures of Speech *‘ilm al-Bayān*

Simile	Allegory		Metonymy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single • Multiple • Compound • Synopsis • Detailed • Unrestrained • Confirmed • Perceptible-perceptible • Cognitive-cognitive • Cognitive-perceptible • Perceptible-cognitive • Imaginary • Reverse • Effective 	Cognitive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause relationship • Time relationship • Place relationship • Morphological relationship • Subject relationship • Object relationship 	Linguistic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metaphor • Hypallage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of an attribute • Of a modified • Of an infinity

4.8 *‘Ilm al-Badī‘* (Science of Embellishment)

We shall dwell upon the remark Herbjørn Jensen made (1998:13) “four different angles of approach to the subject of *‘ilm al-balāghah* have been suggested by western scholars: that of literary criticism, that of grammar, that of logic, and that of Qur’ānic exegesis. Of these four, literary criticism is clearly dominant. The main point to be noticed, however, is that none of these areas of scholarship has provided us with a full and exhaustive description of *‘ilm al-balāghah*, nor has any of them succeeded in furnishing us with an understanding of the function which this science was intended to fulfill.”

Of all the scholarly literary works of ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Mu‘tazz (d. 296/908) the most accepted is indubitably his *Kitāb al-Badī‘* (The Book of Embellishment). Ignatius Kratchkovsky⁷⁵ (1935:1) expresses an urgent need to investigate the priority of Ibn al-

⁷⁵ Kratchkovsky edited *Kitāb al-Badī‘* from the unique Escorial (library in Madrid) manuscript with introductory, notes and indices.

Mu‘tazz, as the first theorist in this field who left a systemic treatise; elsewhere he (ibid:6) states “the really important point is that this work has had a vivid and effective influence over the development of that branch of knowledge to which it is devoted.” Ibn al-Mu‘tazz divides the book into five chapters in which he writes about the origin of *al-badī‘* from his own perspective: *isti‘ārah*, *jinās*, *muṭābaqah*, head-tail/ tail-head structures and ‘dialectical mannerism’⁷⁶. He proceeds to classify thirteen further categories or ‘beauties’ of the poetical style. This leaves us with ‘*ilm al-badī‘*, the *enfant terrible* of Arabic rhetoric. The form this discipline takes in Ibn al-Mu‘tazz’s work has been well described by ‘Atīq (n.d.:430-435). His work can hardly be improved upon, but a few remarks are necessary in order to explain the position this science occupied within the totality of (the science of rhetoric) ‘*ilm al-balāghah*. In fact, discarding the element of embellishment as an important rhetorical feature when criticising any work of art is unfair. Abu Hilāl al-‘Askarī (1960:1-3) has an imperative lecture on this issue where he asserts that *al-Balāghah* is the worthiest science to be learned and it comes next to the awareness of Allāh. We may go as far to say that Abu Hilāl al-‘Askarī maintains that ‘*ilm al-Balāghah* is the way to acknowledge the inimitability of the Qur’ān and what Allāh has allocated in His book, namely, eloquence of composition, excellence of syntactical arrangements, embellished brevity, elegance of diction and superiority of content. Whereas al-Qazwīnī (1996:31-32) defines *al-Balāghah* as *muṭābaqat al-kalām li muqtaḍā al-ḥāl* the suitability of the signification to the intents of discourse and added that *al-Balāghah*, in the sense he understands it, is what al-Jurjānī means by *naẓm* when he states that *ma‘ānī al-naḥu* (the grammatical features) should match *aghrāḍ* (the intents) for which the discourse is set.

The definition given by al-Qazwīnī (ibid:383) in *al-Īḍāḥ fī ‘Ulūm al-Balāghah* of ‘*ilm al-bādī‘* goes as follows:

It is a science through which the various ways to beautify an utterance, *wujūh taḥsīn al-kalām*, after due consideration has been made for the suitability and the clarity of the signification, *muṭābaqat al-ḥāl wa-wudūḥ al-dalālah*.

It will be noticed here that ‘*ilm al-badī‘* is said to be a science dealing with various modes of beautification that are to be considered only after due consideration has been given to the objects its sister disciplines. ‘The basis of the aptness and appeal in all this’, he writes, ‘is

⁷⁶ المذهب الكلامي translated as ‘dialectical mannerism’ by Kratchkovsky (1935:17).

that the words are a product of the meaning, not the other way around (*aṣṣ al-ḥusnī fī dhalika kullihī an takūna al-alfāz tāb^catan lil ma^cānī duna al-^caks*). The reader familiar with later developments in Arabic literature in general, and works on rhetoric in particular, is aware of the danger against which he warned.

The modes of embellishment taught in this discipline, it would appear, are considered to be of an external nature. They are considered to be embellishments added to the utterance but not contributing in any significant way towards its main function of conveying a meaning. Yet about fifty percent of the figures treated in the section are classified as figures of meaning. The paradox is only skin deep, since the subject matter of *‘ilm al-badī^c* is, so to speak, word-play. The meanings referred to within this discipline are therefore the meanings of individual words, not the meanings of whole statements.

Why, if what is taught in *‘ilm al-badī^c* does not contribute to the expression of the meaning of the utterance, was it felt to be necessary to include a section on this discipline, and even give it the same status as *‘ilm al-ma^cānī* and *‘ilm al-bayān*? Does it have any function at all within a science which, as mentioned, aims to teach linguistic efficiency? The answer is probably to be found within the framework of the aesthetic opinions of Arabo-Islamic civilization. The user of the Arabic language was keenly aware of competition. To catch the attention of his listener, and to keep it from flagging, was for him not a question of finding the right forum for his speech or one of gaining authority, but a problem that had to be solved as part of the act of composition. Once the listeners' attention had been caught, the solution found for holding it was, in the main, to provide infinite variety. In the early works of *adab*, al-Jāḥiẓ's *al-Ḥayawān* for instance, this variety is one of content, but such a method could hardly be applied within a scholastic context where strictly linear argumentation becomes necessary.

Variety of form, rather than of content, became the solution and this, put succinctly, is what *‘ilm al-badī^c* seeks to provide. It offers a method to make each statement in a speech, each line of a poem, each sentence of a prose text carry its own little surprise, sometimes achieving beauty, sometimes merely provoking astonishment or even mild surprise, but never allowing the reader to settle down into that mode of intellectual and aesthetic neutrality which can only be kept up by deliberate concentration on his part. The question arises whether the translation of an Arabic text can preserve such subtlety the

embellishments can offer. Let us consider Q85:2-5 in which there is a clear example of assonance (the agreement in the last letters of two propositions) and consider its translation:

﴿وَالْيَوْمَ الْمَوْعُودِ﴾ ﴿وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ﴾ ﴿قَتَلَ أَصْحَابَ الْأَخْدُودِ﴾ ﴿النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوَقُودِ﴾

[And by the Promised Day. And by the witness and that whereunto he beareth testimony, destruction overtook the owners of the ditch. Of the fuel-fed fire.] where it is quite noticeable that the translation cannot keep the embellished characteristics nor the decorative elegance of the ST.

Abdul-Raof (2006:244, 260, 261, and 270) categorises embellishments into semantic and lexical as follows:

Embellishments	
Semantic embellishments	Lexical embellishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirmed dispraise • Antithesis • Apostrophe • Asteism • Chiasmus • Conceit • Epanodos • Epistrophe • Epitrope • Epizeuxis • Euphemism • Evasive response • Exordium • Hyperbole • Litotes • Multiple antithesis • Observation • Oxymoron 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliteration • Al-jinās - Complete Jinas - Distorted Jinas - Fabricated Jinas - Incomplete Jinas - Morphological Jinas - Non-resemblance jinas - Resemblance jinas - Reverse jinas • Assonance • Head-tail • Metabole • Onomatopoeia • Parallelism • Tail-head • Zeugma

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paronomasia • Personification • Quotation • Rhetorical question • Sarcasm • Scholastic approach • Shift • Tapinosis 	
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4.9 Conclusion

To look at al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm*, his linguistic approach in literary criticism and the establishment of *'ilm al-ma'ānī*, *'ilm al-bayān* and *'ilm al-badī'* makes us realize sharply that this discipline is needed most by Qur'ān translators. Most translators disregarded it, but now the need for it appeared. When translators accept the responsibility of the rendition of the translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān, they need to investigate each verse of the Qur'ān according to the rules of this discipline. This brings out, in part, its inimitability. It gives the work greater distinction than is possessed by any other translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. To conclude Ibn Khaldūn (1958:338) asserts that it should be known that the fruit of this discipline is understanding the inimitability of the Qur'ān. The inimitability of the Qur'ān consists in the fact that the (language of the Qur'ān) indicates all the requirements of the situations, whether they are stated or understood. This is the highest stage of speech. In addition, the Qur'ān is perfect in choice of words and excellence of arrangements and combination. This is its inimitability, a quality that surpasses comprehension. Something of it may be understood by those who have taste for it is the result of their contact with the Arabic language and their possession of the habit of it. They may thus understand as much of the inimitability of the Qur'ān as their taste permits. Therefore, the Arabs who heard the Qur'ān directly from the Prophet who brought it to them had a better understanding of its inimitability than later Muslims. They were the champions and arbiters of speech, and they possessed the greatest and best taste for the

language that anyone could possibly have. Muslim theologians (scholastics) belong to different schools of thought and this has its bearing on their interpretation of Qur'ānic discourse. Consequently, the disagreement on the interpretation of different theological issues results in different translations of the meaning of the Qur'ān. The question which arises is: How far are these translations from the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model?

Chapter Five

Problems of Translating the Qur'ān

5.1 Introduction

If we wish to produce a good translation of the Qur'ān we need to consider the linguistic, stylistic, phonetic, theological, and textual features that cause translation problems. In trying to capture the riches of so vast a religious tradition in so restricted a space, I have been aware that the risks are considerable, since what is left out will always exceed what is included by a large margin. However, if readers of this work find themselves tempted to explore the religious heritage of Qur'ānic discourse in more detail and, dare one hope, in the original language, then this work's task of analyzing and evaluating translations of the meanings of the Qur'ān will have been achieved.

Qur'ānic discourse is considered particularly difficult in view of the fact that both Arabic and English languages belong to two different cultural and intellectual traditions. In addition to the Qur'ānic specificity of the text to be translated, translating the narrative prose of Qur'ānic discourse of Arabic expression into English presents additional problems. Any translation from Arabic to English demands a certain modulation or change in the way of looking at reality. In the field of literary and religious translation from Arabic to English the translator also has to have an appreciation of the cultural differences between the two linguistic groups. Knowledge of the Arabic language background is essential, for, the Qur'ānic text tends to be teeming with the details of the Arabic language stylistics.

The Qur'ān is a hybrid genre and is characterised by a diversity of moral themes and Islamic legal rulings (aḥkām). The textual fibre of the Qur'ān involves legal, instructional, description and expository styles. The translator of Qur'ānic discourse, for instance, has to go beyond the Qur'ānic Arabic expression or sentence to the other layer of meaning which involves cultural and ethical aspects to reach the Qur'ānic context underlying message which is its focus. Although the work to be translated exists in English, the translator has to make evident the Qur'ān stylistics which informs Qur'ānic discourse and which is its driving force.

This explains that translating Qur'ānic discourse is a 'transposition'⁷⁷ process: a transfer of the Qur'ānic thought from Arabic into English. The translator's task is to deal with the problems posed by Arabic as it is incongruent and non compatible to the English language. At the secondary level, the translator deals not only with the inter-lingual but also the inter-semiotic translation process, as both the content and formal characteristics of the Qur'ān oral⁷⁸ narrative are crucial to the full representation of meaning in the written target language. Nida (2003:164) expresses this same view in stating that: "If a translation is to meet the four basic requirements of:

- (1) making sense,
- (2) conveying the spirit and manner of the original,
- (3) having a natural and easy form of expression, and
- (4) producing a similar response,

it is obvious that at certain points the conflict between content and form will be acute, and that one or the other must give way." The question which arises is whether for the most part, the Qur'ān's content and form have possibly been captured by translation, and what the translator needs to do in order to carry across into the target English language the same Qur'ānic content and form. In other words, the critical translator has to be alive to the socio-cultural systems involved in the Qur'ānic text so that his or her translation will be able to carry the Arabic stylistics into the English medium of expression. Of course, finding equivalent expression implies that the translator, as pointed out, has to be sensitive to the

⁷⁷ Cultural transposition: A general term used by Hervey & Higgins (1992:28) to describe "the various degrees of departure from literal translation that one may resort to in the process of transferring the contents of a ST into the context of a target culture". (See 2.3)

⁷⁸

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ﴾

[He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muḥammad) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, ... Q62:2]

﴿بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ﴾

[Nay, but they, the clear Āyāt are preserved in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge, ... Q29:49]

The Qur'ān was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad orally for the following reasons:

- Both the Prophet and his community have been considered as *unlettered*.
- Because the Qur'ān did not come down all at once but as piecemeal and was revealed constantly to the Prophet till the end of his life.
- For the purpose of memorisation.
- For the sake of flexibility because some *āyahs* were abrogated in the course of revelation.
- The *āyahs* and *sūras* were not always revealed as classified now in the Book.

differences between Arabic and English languages since these languages do not share the same world view. This divergence in perception often results in linguistic and cultural differences between the two language groups, which will thus add to the difficulty of transferring Qur'ānic thoughts from Arabic language into English language. Newmark (1998:120) adds another dimension to the problems faced in translation when he states that "even in a 'sacred' text, you may have to translate, not just what the writer means rather than what he writes, but what you think he means." That is why QCM should be revisited every now and then to make sure that what the translator thinks the text means matches the pillars of QCM (monotheism, prophethood, eschatology, and reward and punishment). By doing so, the translator avoids additional problems by not rendering to the expected readership a translation which contradicts the original.

Thus it can be envisaged that the problematic dimension of Qur'ān translation lies precisely in the issue of language and its relation to the notion of translation. This study, therefore, attempts to examine how translation functions as a critical as well as a creative activity in Arabic. In this context, to 'translate' means, literally, 'to carry across,' and this implies all other forms which carry the prefix *trans-*. It also means not only transportation or transmission or transposition but also transformation and transmutation, for all these activities take place when the translator writer sets out to write in English language. My approach to the notion of translation will be understood first in its most established sense as the linguistic operation that consists in transporting meaning from one language to another.

5.2 Problematic Features of Qur'ānic Discourse

Translation is an intermediary task performed by human beings to make human communication possible. In translating we first understand the source text and then elucidate it for ourselves or someone else. Translators often say something quite different in order to get across the *meaning* of a certain difficult source text which identifies the fact that they have their own understanding. Venuti (1998:81-82) holds "a translation ethics, clearly, can't be restricted to a notion of fidelity. Not only does a translation constitute an interpretation of the foreign text, varying with different cultural situations at different historical moments, but canons of accuracy are articulated and applied in the domestic

culture and therefore are basically ethnocentric, no matter how seemingly faithful, no matter how linguistically correct.”

It is related in a tradition that the Prophet said: ‘The superiority of the Speech of God over other speeches is like the superiority of God over His creatures.’⁷⁹ It is explicitly acknowledged that the Qur’ān enjoys specific Arabic linguistic features. Abdul-Raof (2001:68) believes that Qur’ānic discourse is characterized by prototypical linguistic, rhetorical, textual and phonetic features which constitute translation hurdles. We are going to mention in the forthcoming section such features which impede the translation process as mentioned by Abdul-Raof (ibid:68ff); however, the analysis of the examples is mine. We shall be introducing our additional features which we found and were not mentioned by Abdul-Raof (ibid). This is outlined in the following cases:

Syntactic Features:

1. Structural Ambiguity

Ignorance of the exegetical milieu of Qur’ānic discourse is a serious barrier to Qur’ān translation and can constitute a source of misunderstanding, as in:

Example 1

﴿ قَالُوا يَا شُعَيْبُ أَصَلَاتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ نَتْرِكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ نَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ ﴾

[They said: “O Shu‘aib! Does your Salāt (prayer) (i.e. the prayers which you offer has spoiled your mind, so you) command that we leave off what our fathers used to worship, or that we leave off doing what we like with our property? Verily, you are the forbearer, right-minded!” (They said this sarcastically) Q11:87]. (al-Hilālī, 1998:298)

[They said, ‘Shu‘aib, does thy prayer command thee that we should leave that our fathers served, or to do as we will with our goods? Thou art the clement one, the right-minded.’ Q11:87]. (Arberry 1998:249)

[Said they: “Oh Shu‘ayb! Does thy (habit of) praying compel thee to demand of us that we give up all that our forefathers were wont to worship, or that we refrain from doing

⁷⁹ Muḥammad b. ‘Isā al-Tirmidhī, al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣāḥiḥ, in Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-‘Arabī al-Ahwāzī, ‘Āriḍat al-Ahwāzī bi-Sharḥ Ṣāḥiḥ al-Tirmidhī, 12 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Jamī‘, [1972]), vol. 11, p. 47.

whatever we please with our possessions? Behold, (thou wouldst have us believe that) thou art indeed the only clement, the only right-minded man!” Q11:87]. (Asad1997:329)

Here, al- Hilālī repeated the verb *leave* for the sake of wiping off any structural ambiguity which can lead to the opposite meaning (that his prayers tolerate the opportunity that they can do what they like with their property). In fashion like, Asad prefers to use verbs like (give up, refrain) which may not lead to ambiguity in meaning. On the contrary, Arberry renders a translation which can yield different shades of meanings which are not present in the ST; namely, the prayer commands them that they should stop the idol worshipping and they should do what they like with their possessions. However, the theme of sarcasm is not depicted in any of the three translations and translation as such is another case of translation loss. al-Zamakhshari⁸⁰ (2003, 2:403) states that the expression (أَصْلَاتِكَ تَأْمُرُكَ) *Does your praying compel you*) indicates sarcasm. The people of Shu‘aib used the expression sarcastically. They want to announce that refraining from worshipping idols is invalid and incorrect. They even attributed lunacy to him because anyone who says so about their belief must be insane. It is observed that the function of the expression or the communication force (sarcasm) is not captured in the translation.

2. Hysteron and Proteron

These are structures with foregrounded and backgrounded elements which do not correspond to the regular language norm, as in:

Example 3

﴿ وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ﴾

[And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrāhim (Abraham) [i.e., Allāh] tried him with (certain) commands, which he fulfilled. Q2:124] (al-Hilālī, 1988:24).

[And (remember) when his Lord tried Abraham with (His) commands, and he fulfilled them. Q2:124] (Pickthall, 1997:15).

[And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain Commands, which he fulfilled. Q2:124] (Yūsuf^cAli, 2000:16).

⁸⁰ See al-Nasafi (1999, 2:78-88), al-Baiḍāwī (1999, 1:466), Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. °Ashūr (1997, 6:141)

[When his Lord put Abraham to the proof by enjoining on him certain commandments and Abraham fulfilled them. Q2:124] (Dawood, 2003:22).

al-Zamakhsharī⁸¹ (2003, 1:182-183) reads Q2:124 in two different ways: (1) Allāh has tested Ibrahim through the instructions ‘do’ and ‘not do’ in order to reward him accordingly. (2) Ibrahim has asked Allāh in supplication and Allāh has responded to his invocations. The problem which faces translation here is that if translators prompt to adhere to the structure of SL they cannot keep foregrounding (as in al-Hilālī) and if they choose to keep the foregrounding, there will be no way to avoid voice shift (as in Yūsuf °Ali). In both cases, however, TL fails to leave the same impact of SL. It is true as Nida (1981:69) emphasises that identity is impossible yet ‘some common functional basis’ is affordable. It is expected that the translator should maintain the function basis of the utterance so as not to distort the original meaning and its nuances. Suffice it here to say that the foregrounding of (ابتلى - to try) is not without a good reason: the issue of testing is the most significant. Whereas in translation the structural word order of the ST cannot be adhered to and this leads to a different TT structure which consequently renders different nuance of meaning. The way ابتلى is rendered in translation is considered to be translation loss. Hervey & Higgins (1992:34) contend that “compensation in translation means reconciling oneself to the fact that, while one would like to do full justice to the ‘richness’ of the SL, one’s final TL inevitably suffers from various translation losses.” “However, whenever necessary, the receptor language form should be changed in order that the source language meaning cannot be distorted” (Larson 1998:12). The problem is even with paying less adherence to the form of L₁ the richness of Qur’ānic discourse is distorted.

Example 4

﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ﴾

[Those who disbelieve [in the Oneness of Allāh, and in the Message of Prophet Muḥammad], and hinder (men) from the Path of Allāh (Islāmic Monotheism), He will render their deeds vain. Q47:1] (al-Hilālī, 1998: 687)

⁸¹ Compare al-Nasafī (1999, 1:126-127), al-Baiḍāwī (1999, 1:85), al-Rāzī (1995, 2:38-39), Muḥammad al-Tāhir b. °Ashūr (1997,1:700-703)

[As for those who are bent on denying the truth and on barring (others) from the path of God – all their (good) deeds will He let go to waste. Q47:1] (Asad, 1980: 777)

[God will bring to nothing the deeds of those who disbelieve and debar others from His path. Q47:1] (Dawood, 2003: 356)

where the foregrounding of the aforementioned verse is not without a good reason. The first possibility is that Q47:1 is connected with the end of the preceding *sūrah* Q46:35:

﴿فَهَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

[But shall any be destroyed except the people who are *al-fāsiqūm* (the rebellious, disobedient to Allāh) Q46:35]. The second possibility is that the foregrounding is meant to show the image of the disbelievers and their deeds. The third possibility is that the foregrounding is planned to make a parallel association with Q47:2:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَآمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالِهِمْ﴾

[But those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and believe in that which is sent down to Muḥammad, for it is the truth from their Lord, He will expiate from them their sins, and will make good their state. Q 47:2]

Nord (2003:91) claims that “there is no doubt that, from an empirical perspective, real-life translations very rarely meet the high utopian standard of something called equivalence (of form, function, and effect at the same time).” In this case, the alternative is only creative translation and more freedom with ST. It is immediately clear now that the rendition of Dawood lost the impact of the ST because he did not take into consideration the implementation of the same semantic nuance of the ST by foregrounding *those who disbelieve*. The foregrounding here has a function as Q47:1 is closely related to Q46:35 (a clear declaration that those who are rebellious against Allāh’s command will be destroyed). Therefore, the foregrounding of God in Dawood’s hinders the smoothness and the flow of thought from a Qur’ānic *āyah* to another.

3. Shift

The Qur'ān was revealed as an oral statement and this justifies these impressive shifts in pronoun, voice, word order and themes from *āyah* to another. Such shifts presuppose awareness with the language and add to the rich features of Qur'ānic discourse. Abdul-Raof (2003:336) expresses the view that “shift in pronoun is a recurrent linguistic feature in the Qur'ān and is known in Arabic rhetoric as *'iltifāt*. It is understood that *shift in pronoun* causes confusion for non-Arabic speaking. That is why the literature finds Robinson (1996: 111, 112, 224, 229), and Theodor Noldeke (1910) – mentioned in Abdel Haleem (1992:407) – have misunderstanding towards the idea of employing the pronoun shift in the Qur'ān. It is clear that this misunderstanding represents the unawareness of stylistic qualities and values of *'iltifāt* in the Qur'ān and its communicative force. However, Hatim (1997:137) states that this shift (*'iltifāt*, reference switching) is appropriate only when the context is performing a managing act of persuading and not a monitoring act of informing,” and a context as such mirrors the Qur'ānic context. It is worth pointing out right here that shift is apparently a distinguished feature of Qur'ānic discourse. Abdul-Raof (2001:77-80) classifies shift into three sections:

A. person and number shift as in:

Example 5

﴿ وَيَقُولُونَ لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا الْغَيْبُ لِلَّهِ فَانْتَبِهُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِّنَ الْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴾

[And they say: “How is it that not a sign is sent down on him from his Lord?” Say: “The unseen belongs to Allāh Alone, so wait you, verily I am with you among those who wait (for Allāh's Judgment).” Q10:20] (al-Hilālī, 1998: 272)

While Arberry renders Q10:20 as:

[They say, ‘Why has a sign not been sent upon him from his Lord?’ Say: ‘The Unseen belongs only to God. Then watch and wait; I shall be with you watching and waiting.’ Q10:20] Arberry (1980:198-199)

At first sight the texts presented here in translation do not seem to be different. None the less, on closer investigation it turns out that both texts render different understanding: in al-Hilālī's the shift in persons is clear from third person plural *they* (disbelievers) to third person singular *him* (the Prophet) to second person singular *you* (the Prophet) to second person plural *you* (disbelievers) to first person singular *I* (the Prophet) again. Now, let us reflect on the intentionality of the switch in pronoun reference: the function of *him, his* represents the idea of rebuttal and denial of the Qur'ān and the message of Islam. The switch to *wait you* articulates the tone of threatening and illocutionary act of warning.

Arberry prefers not to refer to the pronoun in *watch and wait* and leaves the readers ponder on who is meant in the context and thus deprives the utterance from its illocutionary force. However, Hatim (1997:88) proves that both Arabic and English languages are incongruent when he states that "omitting the subject pronoun, is conventionally associated in English with familiarity and solidarity (in terms of politeness theory, it is a way of minimizing face-threat by 'claiming common ground')." On the contrary the Qur'ān does not intend to reduce the threat or the warning, in fact the Qur'ān emphasises it.

B. word order shift as in:

Example 6

﴿ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنْنَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴾ ﴿ وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا مِيلًا
عَظِيمًا ﴾ ﴿ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخَلِقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴾

[Allāh wishes to make clear (what is lawful and what is unlawful) to you, and to show you the ways of those before you, and accept your repentance and Allāh is All Knower, All Wise. Allāh wishes to accept your repentance, but those who follow their lusts, wish that you (believers) should deviate tremendously away from the Right Path. Allāh wishes to lighten (the burden) for you; and man was created weak (cannot be patient to leave sexual intercourse with woman). Q4:26-28] (al-Hilālī, 1998:111-112)

[Allāh would explain to you and guide you by the examples of those who were before you, and would turn to you in mercy, Allāh is Knower, Wise. And Allāh would turn to you in mercy; but those who follow vain desires would have to go tremendously astray. Allāh would make the burden light for you, for man was created weak. Q4:26-28] (Pickthall, 1997:57-58)

In addressing the issue of dynamic equivalence translation, Nida (1964:167) contends that “one is obliged to make such adjustment as shifting word order, using verbs in place of nouns and substituting nouns for pronouns”. This goes back to the fact that there are discrepancies between languages in respect of word classes, grammatical categories, and arrangements of words. Abdul-Raof (ibid:80) holds that the translation does not retain the ST word order because of the TT grammatical requirement. (يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ) is rendered in translation as *Allāh wishes, Allāh would* where the ST word order is not maintained leading to a forced shift from verbal to nominal sentences. However, the verbal sentences in Qur’ānic discourse are loaded with weighty underlying semantic characteristics. It should not go without saying that the meaning of nominal propositions is related to consistency and steadiness whereas the verbal to revitalization and changeability. When issues of translation specific (the need to use different word classes) arise, translators deviate to shift from verbal to nominal sentences and thus deprive TT from its spontaneity.

C. voice shift as in:

Example 7

The following examples illustrate some possible textual alterations of form when translating from Qur’ānic Arabic into English.

﴿وَأَخْرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَآخَرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ ﴿خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

[Others there are who have confessed their sins; their good works *had been intermixed with* evil. Perchance God will turn to them in mercy. God is forgiving and merciful. Take alms

from them, so that they *may* thereby *be cleansed and purified*, and pray for them: for your prayers will give them comfort. God hears all and knows all. Q9:102-103] (Dawood 2003:144)

[And there are others who have confessed their wrongdoing, who have done some righteous deeds and some bad ones: God may well accept their repentance, for God is most forgiving and merciful. In order to cleanse and purify them (Prophet), accept a gift out of their property (to make amends) and pray for them—your prayer will be a comfort to them. God is all hearing, all knowing. Q9:102-103] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:125)

It is clear that the Qur'ān makes use of active voice and conversely Dawood chooses the passive voice for no obvious reasons: *خَاطُوا* (*had been intermixed with*), *تُطَهَّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ* (*may be cleansed and purified*). In fact the impact of using the active voice is apparent and it highlights the personal involvement in case of *خَاطُوا* (*had been intermixed with*) and the direct influence of alms giving in purifying the believers (*تُطَهَّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ may be cleansed and purified*). On the contrary to Dawood, Abdel Haleem renders the translation in the active voice emphasising the personal involvement in wrongdoing and the direct influence of alms giving. However, Abdel Haleem does not preserve the foregrounding of (*خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً*) *accept a gift out of their property (to make amends)* and adds (*to make amends*) which is not in SL.

Example 8

﴿إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ﴾

[When the sun ceases to shine; when the stars fall and the mountains are blown away; when the camels big with young are left untended, and the wild beasts are brought together; when the seas are set alight. Q81:1-6] (Dawood, 2003:419)

where the passive structures are meant to convey underlying semantic impact, the active voice falls short to yield the same impact. The priority here is for the consecutive events which show the massive destruction. However, the translation does not cope up with the same semantic pattern yielded by ST structural requirement.

In this connection, Toury (1995:12) expresses the view that “translation may be said to operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating, however they conceive of that interest. In fact, the extent to which features of a source text are retained in its translation (or even regarded as requiring retention, in the first place), which, at first sight, seems to suggest an operation in the interest of the source culture, or even of the source text as such, is also determined on the target side, and according to its own concerns: features are retained, and reconstructed in target-language material, not because they are ‘important’ in any inherent sense, but because they are assigned importance, from the recipient vantage point.” But this recipient vantage point may not serve the function or the value of Qur’ānic discourse and consequently translation fails to provide the equivalence which has always been sought for.

D. Shift from Masculine to Feminine Pronoun

The literary technique of the verse and the style of its vocabulary and phrasing can sometimes lead one’s understanding to believe that the verses are alike and there is no significant difference in meaning between similar or semi similar verses in the Qur’ān. But this is not true because there is always a subtle difference in meaning between the different verses. The unawareness of such subtle differences causes problems of mistranslation, as in:

Example 9

﴿وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً نُّسْقِيكُم مِّمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِ مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَبَنًا خَالِصًا سَائِغًا لِلشَّارِبِينَ﴾

[And verily! In the cattle, there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, from between excretions and blood, pure milk; palatable to the drinkers. Q16:66] (al-Hilālī, 1998:356)

[And, behold, in the cattle (too) there is indeed a lesson for you: We give you to drink of that (fluid) which is to be eliminated (from the animal’s body) and (its) life-blood: milk pure and pleasant to those who drink it. Q16:66] (Asad, 1980:404)

Example 10

﴿وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً تَسْقِيكُمْ مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهَا وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ﴾

[And Verily! In the cattle there is indeed a lesson for you. We give you to drink (milk) of that which is in their bellies. And there are, in them, numerous (other) benefits for you, and of them you eat. Q23:21] (al-Hilālī, 1998:456)

[And, behold, in the cattle (too) there is indeed a lesson for you: We give you to drink of that (milk) which is within their bellies; and you derive many (other) uses from them: for, you eat of their flesh. Q23:21] (Asad, 1980:521)

This is an eloquent feature of Qur'ānic rhetoric which cannot be captured in translation. It is translation loss where TT fails to deliver the same rhetorical impact of ST and renders a translation which does not mirror the Arabic rhetoric. To touch upon this point in more details, consider the use of pronouns in both Q16:66 and Q23:21: *بُطُونِهَا* and *بُطُونِهِ* it is apparent that the pronoun is masculine in the former and feminine in the latter. It is observed that both pronouns are translated as *their bellies* where the difference in gender is overlooked. al-Sāmarrā'ī (2004:177) has the following to say about the seemingly similarity in both phrases *بُطُونِهَا* and *بُطُونِهِ*: Q16:66 shows that milk is not begot from all the cattle but from a section of the female so the Qur'ān employs the plural of paucity (implied by the masculine pronoun) to substantiate that it is not the masses of cattle which can produce milk. On the other hand, Q23:21 addresses the numerous benefits of cattle so the Qur'ān takes up the feminine pronoun which is used in Arabic to denote the multitude. Besides, Q23:21 mentions the benefits of the cattle and these benefits cover all the cattle: male and female, young and old. Consequently, the feminine pronoun is functioned to mean this extra nuance of mass.

E. Stylistic Shifts

It has been sustained that the Qur'ān employs its own strategy in preferring one word to another or backgrounding a word or foregrounding another. The strategy can entail

ellipsis⁸² of a certain word, phrase, structure or a pronoun in a certain situation. There will always be a function for any superfluous particle, demonstrative pronouns, or any other structural expression which does not lend itself easily to understanding. It becomes immediately clear that every tactic is planned to yield communicative signification.

Example 11

﴿فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءُ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ﴾

[Indeed, they rejected the truth (the Qur'ān and Muḥammad) when it came to them, but there will come to them the news of that (the torment) which they used to mock at. Q 6:5] (al-Hilālī, 1998:169)

Example 12

﴿فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا فَسَيَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءُ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ﴾

[So they have indeed denied (the truth this Qur'ān), then the news of what they mocked at, will come to them. Q26:6] (al-Hilālī, 1998:488)

It has been observed that Q6:5 employs the word (الْحَقِّ) whereas it is not mentioned in Q26:6 and both Q6 and Q26 put up different forms of future (فَسَوْفَ) in Q6:5 while it is only the letter (سَ) in Q26:6. Now, the use of (الْحَقِّ) in Q6:5 is because of reasons related to the textual features of Q6 where (الْحَقِّ) is mentioned 12 times while (الْحَقِّ) is not mentioned at all in Q26. al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 2:6) informs that (الْحَقِّ) means the Qur'ān and the disbelievers will know that they were disdainful of such a great Book which tells the truth when all sorts of punishment inflict upon them in this world or the hereafter or when Islam becomes prominent. In addition, the implementation of different forms of future is related to the underlying semantic characteristics of the context: where the context of Q6 necessitates the concept of the postponement of the punishment and that is why (فَسَوْفَ) is preferred because in Arabic it indicates delay. Whereas (سَ) is the opposite in Q26 : 6 as it

⁸² See Abū Shādī, Muṣṭafa 'Abd al-Rahmān. (1992:16-29).

demonstrates the imminence of the execution of punishment that is why only the letter (س) is applied. It is immediately clear that (س) in Arabic attests promptness and speediness. The literature of exegeses has witnessed a multitude of examples as such which serve the claim QCM almost always raises, namely, the Qur'ān is the verbatim word of Allāh.

Example 13

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَأْتِينَا السَّاعَةُ قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

[Those who disbelieve say: “The Hour will not come to us.” Say: “Yes, by my Lord, it will come to you.” (Allāh, He is) the all-Knower of the unseen, not even the weight of an atom (or a small ant) or less than that or greater, escapes from His Knowledge in the heavens or in the earth, but it is in a Clear Book (*al-Lauh al-Mahfūz*). Q34:3] (al-Hilālī, 1998:573)

[The unbelievers declare: ‘The Hour of Doom will never come.’ Say: ‘Yes, by the Lord, it is surely coming! He knows all that is hidden. Not an atom’s weight in the heavens or the earth escapes Him; nor is there anything smaller or greater but is recorded in a glorious book. Q34:3] (Dawood, 2003:300)

Example 14

﴿وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُو مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْآنٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

[Whatever you (O Muḥammad) may be doing, and whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur'ān, - and whatever deed you (mankind) may be doing (good or evil), We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it. And nothing is hidden from your Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom (or small ant) on the earth or in the heaven. Not what is less than that or what is greater than that but is (written) in a Clear Record.Q10:61] (al-Hilālī, 1998:278-279).

[You shall engage in no affair, you shall recite no verse from the Qur'ān, you shall commit no act, but We will witness it. Not an atom's weight in earth or heaven escapes your Lord, nor is there any object smaller or greater, but is recorded in a glorious book.] (Dawood, 2003:152)

Now consider the differences between Q34:3 and Q10:61. The differences are:

Q34:3	Q10:61
لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ not even... escapes from His Knowledge not ... escape Him	مَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ and nothing is hidden from your Lord not... escapes your Lord
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ the weight of an atom (or a small ant)	مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ (so much as) the weight of an atom (or small ant)
فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ in the heavens or in the earth	فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ On the earth or in the heaven

The negation particle **لَا** in Q34:3 denotes future negation and it suits the context as the context about the Hour and the Hour will take place in future. The negation particle **مَا** denotes the present state and Q10:61 is about the present state so it fits in the context properly. The superfluous particle⁸³ **مِنْ** in **مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ** denotes Allāh's omnipotence and encompassing of the unseen and everything else since the context in Q10:61 is about the unseen while the context in Q34:3 is about the Hour so there was no need for the use of the overwhelming **مِنْ**. As for the foregrounding of **السَّمَاوَاتِ**, it is because the context is about the Hour and it is related to the heavens whereas the foregrounding of **الْأَرْضِ** is employed because the context is related to the people of the earth. The point to make here is that most of these stylistic nuances of Qur'ānic discourse are translation resistant: the reader of the TT will not feel the difference in the use of the negation particles because both are translated as *not* in the TT and the use of the overwhelming particle **مِنْ** is lost in translation as well.

⁸³ al-Razī (1995,9:129 -131)

4. Lexical Compression

It should be stressed here that the need to have adequate understanding and communicative proficiency in Arabic language is mandatory in order to be able to accurately communicate the semantic nuances of Qur'ānic discourse. This applies (Abdul-Raof, 2001:81) to lexical compression where lengthy details of semantic features are compressed and encapsulated in a single word, as in:

Example 15

﴿حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أَهْلٌ لِّغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ
وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ﴾

[Forbidden to you (for food) are: al-Maitah (the dead animals - cattle-beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and the meat of that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allāh, or has been slaughtered for idols, etc., or on which Allāh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, 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 - Q5:3]. (al-Hilālī, 1998:141)

For instance, there is no exact equivalent to (وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ/ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ/الْمَيْتَةُ) / (وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ/ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ) in Arabic. Abdul-Raof (2001:25) calls the aforementioned words “Qur'ānic cultural voids” which enjoy culture-bound overtones, and as such cannot be captured in translation. The way these Qur'ānic cultural voids are translated indicates ‘cultural transplantation’⁸⁴ which is rather an adaptation than a translation. In the same vein, Nord (1997:34) comments on the concept of culture and culture-specificity stating that “everything we observe as being different from our own culture is, for us, specific to the other culture. The concept of our own culture will thus be the touchstones for the perception of otherness.”

Example 16

﴿فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا غَفُورًا﴾

⁸⁴ See 2.3 for more detail.

[Perform *Tayammum* with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands. Truly, Allāh is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving. Q4:43]

[then take resort to pure dust, passing (therewith) lightly over your face and your hands. Q4:43] (Asad, 1980:112)

al-Hilālī transliterates *tayammum* and gave a detailed commentary in the footnote. Whereas Asad paraphrases *tayammum* as take resort to pure dust, and provides an explanation as a footnote - This symbolic ablution, called *tayammum*, consists in touching the earth, or anything supposed to contain dust, with the palm of one's hands and then passing them lightly over face and hands.- consider:

Tayammum is another example of Qur'ānic cultural voids and *Tayammum* as such does not lend itself to natural translation because simply English does not have an equivalent for *Tayammum* or similar cultural voids.

5. Syntactic Chunking

This is the syntactic breaking of structures and pausing at a specific word within a given linguistic construction. Syntactic chunking has a semantic function. When a syntactic break is used incorrectly, a serious distorted interpretation takes place, as in:

Example 17

﴿إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ وَالْمَوْتَىٰ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ﴾

[It is only those who listen (to the Message of Prophet Muḥammad), will respond (benefit from it), but as for the dead (disbelievers), Allāh will raise them up, then to Him they will be returned (for their recompense). Q6:36] (al-Hilālī, 1998:174)

Here, we need the syntactic break after the lexical item (يَسْمَعُونَ) so that we can get the required meaning. The meaning, however, will change dramatically if we break the structure after (وَالْمَوْتَىٰ). In this case the wrong meaning will be:

[It is only those who listen (to the Message of Prophet Muḥammad), will respond (benefit from it), and the dead (disbelievers). Allāh will raise them up, then to Him they will be returned (for their recompense).] It is noticeable that the semantic breaks are distinguished by a special sign (م) on top of the word where the break should occur. However in

translation the same thing cannot be conserved so translators choose to add words which compensate the function of the sign and maintain the flow of meaning. In this connection, al-Hilālī adds the word *but* which is not in the original and therefore, it is considered a case of addition in translation.

6. Pronominal Non-correspondence

Some Qur'ānic structures have a pronominal reference which does not match the number or gender of the noun; this is not without a good reason, as in:

Example 18

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

[And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said, “Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful.” Q2:31] (al-Hilālī, 1998:8)

Yūsuf ʿAlī renders Q2:31 as:

[And He taught Adam the nature of all things, then He placed them before the angels, and said, “Tell me the nature of these if you are right.”] (Yūsuf ʿAlī 2000:6)

Mossop (2001:47) contends that “readers need to be able to process a text easily. They should not find the wordings getting in the way of the meanings. Readers should not have to go over a sentence two or three times just to see how the parts of the sentence are connected to each other and to get the basic point.” In this connection, the pronominal non-correspondence can distract and mislead readers: it is not understood in Yūsuf ʿAlī’s translation what *them* refers to because according to the ST context it should refer to *the names of things* but ʿAlī has a different rendition *the nature of things*⁸⁵ that is why *them* should read *it* not *them*. (cf. 3.1.3 & 3.1.5). Suffice to say ʿAlī favours a metaphorical interpretation of the verse which represents the theology of Muʿtazilites- the theological interpretation of Qur'ānic discourse will be discussed in 4.6 in this chapter-and prefers *nature of things* to *names of (all things)*. Q2:31 is evidence that pronominal non-correspondence can show different patterns of thought. It is worth pointing out, right here

⁸⁵ See al-Rāzī (1995,1:192-193), cf. Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. ʿĀshūr (1997,1:407-411)

that in trying to capture the riches of so vast a Qur'ānic discourse in so restricted a space, we have observed that the risks are considerable, since what is left out will always exceed what is included by a large margin.

7. Homonymy

The term homonymy is used when a word such as (الرُّوحُ) has two or more unrelated meanings. The homonymy الرُّوحُ can mean the soul of human being, Gabriel, the Qur'ān, revelation, and power. Translators should project on TL the cultural features of SL by doing some research before submitting the rendition of the translation. In the same vein, Venuti (1998:64) contends that “a translation does not copy in the sense of repeating that text verbatim; rather, the translation enters into a mimetic relation that inevitably deviates from the foreign language by relying on target-language approximations. Even though a contemporary translation is required to imitate the entire foreign text, their linguistic and cultural features are sufficiently distinct to permit them to be considered autonomous works.” The different nuances of the term (الرُّوحُ) can be depicted as in:

Example 19

﴿يُنزِّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَّقُونِ﴾

[He sends down the angels with the Rūḥ (revelation) of His Command to whom of His slaves He wills (saying): “Warn mankind that *lā ilāha illa anā* (none has the right to be worshipped but I), so fear Me (by abstaining from sins and evil deeds) Q16:2.] (al-Hilālī, 1998:347)

[He causes the angels to descend with this divine inspiration, (bestowed) at His behest upon whomever He wills of his servants: “Warn (all human beings) that there is no deity save me: be, therefore, conscious of Me!” Q16:2.] (Asad, 1980:393)

where الرُّوحُ means *inspiration or revelation*.

Example 20

﴿فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ﴾

[“So, when I have fashioned him completely and breathed into him (Adam) the soul which I created for him, then fall (you) down prostrating yourselves unto him.” Q15:29]

[And when I have formed him fully and breathed into him of my spirit, fall down before him in prostration!”

where *الروح* means *soul*.

Example 21

﴿تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ﴾

[in hosts descend in the angels, bearing divine inspiration by their Sustainer’s leave; Q97:4] (Asad, 1980:966)

[Therein descend the angels and the Rūḥ [Jibrael (Gabriel)] by Allāh’s Permission with all Decrees, Q97:4] (al-Hilālī, 1998:844)

where *الروح* means *the arch angel Gabriel* while Asad writes different translation – divine inspiration.

Example 22

﴿أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ﴾

[For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with Rūḥ (proofs, light and true guidance) from Himself. Q58:22] (al-Hilālī, 1988:748)

[These are the people in whose hearts God has inscribed faith, and whom He has strengthened with His spirit. Q58:22] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:364)

where *(الروح)* means power, light, or guidance.

Most published translations render *(بروح منه)* as spirit from Him. al-Nasafī (1999, 3:453) elaborates that *(بروح منه)* may mean a book Allāh sent, or the faith which once fills the heart, the heart becomes full of life. al-Zamakhsharī⁸⁶ (2003, 4:484) holds it could be guidance which energizes their hearts. However, al-Baidāwī (1999, 2:478) interprets *(بروح)*

⁸⁶ See al-Rāzī (1995, 15:278)

منه) as light of the heart, the Qur'an or victory in a struggle against enemies. Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. ʿĀshūr (1997, 13:61) contends that (بَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ) may mean the care and protection of Allāh. It should go without saying that the discrepancy in the rendition of Qur'ānic discourse is almost always due to the particular theological reference book the translation draws on. In fact Q58:22 shows that homonymy can be translation resistant: al-Hilālī employs two devices, (1) transliteration, (2) interpolation to deliver the meaning of the homonymy (الرُّوحُ) while Abdel Haleem prefers to use the broad term *spirit* rather than identifying the referent meaning as interpreted in the exegeses reference books.

Example 23

Qur'ānic discourse is teemed with homonymic expressions whose meaning differs according to the contextual setting in which the word arises, as in (السبيل⁸⁷) which has 13 different meanings whereas the equivalent in English does not cope up with these varied meanings. So it is another example of translation loss:

a) (طاعة الله): Obedience of Allāh

﴿وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

[And spend in the Cause of Allāh. Q2:195]

b) (بلاغ): affordability

﴿وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا﴾

[And Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka'bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allāh, those who can afford the expenses (for one's conveyance, provision and residence); Q3:97]

c) (مخرج): outlet

﴿انظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا لَكَ الْأَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلًا﴾

[See what examples they have put forward for you. So they have gone astray, and never can they find a way. Q 17:48]

⁸⁷ al-Balkhī Muqātil b. Sulaimān (d.150 H) (1994:185-188) *al-Ashbāh wal nazā'ir fi al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. Edited by ʿAbd Allāh Maḥmūd Shaḥātah. Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyyah al-ʿāmmah lil Kitāb.

d) (المسلك): conduct

﴿وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا﴾

[And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and most hateful, and an evil way. Q4:22]

e) (علل): causes

﴿وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا﴾

[As to those women on whose part you see illconduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful), but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance). Surely, Allāh is Ever Most High, Most Great. Q4:34]

f) (دين): religion

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ﴾

[Invite (mankind, O Muḥammad) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'ān) and fair preaching. Q16:125]

g) (الهدى): guidance

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لَهُمْ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ﴾

[And they will have no Auliyā' (protectors) to help them other than Allāh. And he whom Allāh sends astray, for him there is no way. Q 42:46]

h) (حجة): proof

﴿وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا﴾

[And never will Allāh grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers. Q4:141]

i) (طريقاً): way

﴿إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانَ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا﴾

[Except the weak ones among men, women and children who cannot devise a plan, nor are they able to direct their way. Q4:98]

j) (طريق الهدى): the way of guidance

﴿أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ﴾

[Such are worse in rank (on the Day of Resurrection in the Hellfire), and far more astray from the Right Path (in the life of this world).” Q5:60]

k) (عدواناً): liability

﴿وَلَمَن انْتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِم مِّن سَبِيلٍ﴾

[And indeed whosoever takes revenge after he has suffered wrong, for such there is no way (of blame) against them. Q42:41]

l) (بطاعته): in the cause of obeying Allāh

﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَن شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا﴾

[Verily, this is an admonition, therefore whosoever will, let him take a Path to His Lord! Q73:19]

m) (ملة): religion

﴿قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي﴾

[Say (O Muḥammad): This is my way; Q12:108]

8. Verbal Idioms

Verbal idioms give to Qur’ānic discourse its unprecedented specialty so that Mir (1989:4) gives it the function of the sparkle of diamonds set in gold. Mir (ibid:2) elaborates on how one can come across plenty of verbal idioms within the span of few lines. Abdul-Raof (2001:90) holds “Qur’ānic discourse is extensively rich with verbal idioms which are a significant component of Qur’ānic vocabulary.” Translators are faced with the reality that linguistic systems in both Arabic and English languages are not congruent in the way they convey information contextually, consequently, this adds to the density of the problem of equivalence. The problem is twofold as Baker (1992:65) elaborates two problems arise when translating idiomatic and fixed expressions: “the ability to recognize and interpret an idiom correctly; and the difficulties involved in rendering the various aspects of meaning

that an idiom or a fixed expression conveys into the target language.” In this connection, Nida (2003:238) consents in case of non-corresponding idiomatic expressions in TL, a slight adjustment in SL makes it acceptable in TL. Newmark (1981:153) expresses this same view in stating that: “when such words *symbolic, idiomatic, figurative, etc.* are translated they must have to be supported with an attribute unless there is a strong cultural overlap between source and target language countries.” Italics are mine. This ‘overlap’ does not apply to English and Arabic language, so an adjustment is needed in the translation. However, the adjustment needed is to be within the frames of QCM in order to minimize the loss of meaning components.

Example 24

﴿كَيْ تَقْرَّ عَيْنَهَا﴾

[That she might cool her eyes] (Q20:40)

where Dawood renders it as [so that her mind might be set at ease], Arberry uses [that she might rejoice], Pichthall writes it as [that her eyes might be refreshed], ‘Ali approves the same translation as al-Hilālī but in the passive voice [that her eyes might be cooled], and finally Asad’s rendition is: [so that her eyes be gladdened]. Whatever the translation is, the Qur’ānic verbal idioms read and sound smoother, more eloquent, and more informative in the Arabic. Newmark (1988:212) holds that “every item – words, idioms, structures, emphases – has to be accounted for by the translator, in the sense that he must be able to give reasons for its transference, direct or indirect translation or deletion, if challenged.”

Example 25

﴿وَإَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِي صَغِيرًا﴾

[And lower unto 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 small” Q17:24.] (al-Hilālī, 1998:371)

where the verbal idiom is rendered as *lower unto them* in al-Hilālī’s, *spread over them* in Asad’s, *treat them with humility and tenderness* in Dawood’s, and *lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy* in Pichthall. It must be stated that the translation here is

a kind of paraphrase which does not capture the same rhetorical effect of the original and thus it does not register the cognitive, affective, and cultural nuances of SL.

Example 26

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا﴾

[And it is He Who has let free the two seas (kinds of water), one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter, and He has set a barrier and a complete partition between them Q25:53.] (al-Hilālī, 1998:484)

where Dawood sees (مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ) as *sent the two seas rolling*, while Arberry captures it as *let forth the two seas*, and Asad delivers it as *has given the freedom of movement to the two great bodies of water*. Thus, it is substantiated how verbal idioms can be a hurdle in translation. Moreover, there will always be the problem of translation loss of some or all of the meaning constituents.

9. Adjective Phrases Forms

Another property that distinguishes Qur'ānic discourse is the nicety of using the adjective phrases. Adjective phrases and attributive adjectives in noun phrases differ significantly with respect to the semantic underlying nuances they yield. Consider the difference in meaning between عَجِيبٌ in Q50:2, Q11:72 and عَجَابٌ in Q38:5:

Example 27

﴿بَلْ عَجَبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ﴾

[Nay, they wonder that there has come to them a warner (Muḥammad) from among themselves. So the disbelievers say: "This is a strange thing! (Q 50:2] (al-Hilālī, 1998:701)

[The disbelievers are amazed that a warner has come from among them and they say, 'How strange! Q50:2] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:340)

[But nay – they deem it strange that a warner should have come unto them from their own midst; and so these deniers of the truth are saying, “A strange thing is this! Q50:2] (Asad, 1980:796)

Example 28

﴿قَالَتْ يَا وَيْلَتَى أَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ﴾

[She said (in astonishment): “Woe unto me! Shall I bear a child while I am an old woman, and here is my husband, an old man? Verily! This is a strange thing!” Q11:72] (al-Hilālī:)

[Said she: “Oh, woe is me! Shall I bear a child, now that I am an old woman and this husband of mine is an old man? Verily, that would be a strange thing indeed!”Q11:72] (Asad, 1980:326)

Example 29

﴿أَجَعَلَ الْآلِهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجَابٌ﴾

[“Has he made the *āliha* (gods) (all) into One Ilāh (God - Allāh). Verily, this is a curious thing!” Q38:5] (al-Hilālī, 1998:609)

[Does he claim that all the deities are (but) one God? Verily, a most strange thing is this!” Q38:5] (Asad, 1980:695)

where three different meanings are introduced by means of adjective phrases which are written sentence finally in Q50:2, Q11:72 and in Q38:5 respectively.

﴿هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ﴾ ﴿إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ﴾ ﴿إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجَابٌ﴾

It is observed that the stylistic variation is represented by the occurrence of different adjective phrases and different affirmation styles: there are no affirmation particles at all in Q50:2, there is only the adjective phrase *عَجِيبٌ*. Q11:72 witnesses the affirmation particle (إِنَّ), the affirmation letter (ل), and the adjective phrase *عَجِيبٌ*. In addition, Q11:72 bears the affirmation particle (إِنَّ), the affirmation letter (ل), and a different adjective phrase *عَجَابٌ* in Q38:5.

The reasons for such gradual stages in the three Qur’ānic sentences are put as follows:

What the disbelievers found strange in Q50:2 is that just a warner has come to them from among themselves, while in Q11:72 the amazement is greater because it is not normal for an old lady to bear a child, more surprisingly, this lady is sterile who can never bear a child along with the fact that her husband is an old man too⁸⁸, the amazement should be even far greater. Because of all these it was a must that the structural pattern should cope with these factors. Whereas Q50:2 the surprise was not affirmed. In Q38:5 the amazement is far greater because it has to do with their pagan belief in associating other deity with Allāh. Such belief was deeply rooted in them so that the pagans chose the way of war rather than embracing Islamic monotheism symbolized in *lā ilāha illa allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh). The noticeable thing is the change of form from عَجِيبٌ to عَجَابٌ where in Arabic عَجَابٌ renders different shades of meaning from عَجِيبٌ like (طَوِيلٌ) *ṭawīl* and (طَوَالٌ) *ṭiwāl*, (كَرِيمٌ) *karīm* and (كُرَامٌ) *kurām*, we say (رَجُلٌ طَوِيلٌ) *rajuḷ ṭawīl* (a tall man) (رَجُلٌ طَوَالٌ) *rajuḷ ṭiwāl* (a far taller man). This is another edifice that shows how the Qur’ānic expressions are all eloquent and fit into the context in an incomparable manner. It should be taken into consideration the different translations shown do not manage to capture the subtleties of the different Arabic adjective phrases where English adjective phrases such as *strange, amazed, a most strange thing or a most curious thing* have been used but they have not given the same impact as that of ST.

Example 30

﴿فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَهُ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَهُ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ﴾

[When he saw the sun rising up, he said: “This is my lord. This is greater.” But when it set, he said: “O my people! I am indeed free from all that you join as partners in worship with Allāh.Q6:78] (al-Hilālī, 1998:181-182)

⁸⁸ al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 2,295, 4,70,371), al-Nasafī (1999, 2:73, 3:144-145,361), al-Baiḍāwī (1999, 1:463, 2:307,420), al-Rāzī (1995,9:28-29, 13:178-179).

[Then, when he beheld the sun rising, he said, “This is my Sustainer! This one is the greatest (of all)!” – but when it (too) went down, he exclaimed: “O my people! Behold, far be it from me to ascribe divinity, as you do, to aught beside God! Q6:78] (Asad, 1980:183)
 [When he saw the sun rising in splendour, he said, “This is my Lord, this is the greatest (of all).” But when the sun set, he said, “O my people! I am indeed free from your guilt of giving partners to Allāh. Q6:78] (°Alī, 2002:92)

Example 31

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ﴾

[And (remember) when Ibrāhīm (Abraham) said to his father and his people: “Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, Q43:26] (al-Hilālī, 1998:663)

[And when Abraham spoke to his father and his people, (he had this very truth in mind) “Verily, far be it from me to worship what you worship! Q43:26] (Asad, 1980:752)

[Behold! Abraham said to his father and his people, “I do indeed clear myself of what you worship. Q43:26] (°Alī, 2002:344)

The same analysis applies to Q6:78 and Q43:26 where the shift was from *بَرِيءٌ* to *بَرَاءٌ*⁸⁹.

The two different forms of adjective phrases render a kind of discrepancy in meaning because each usage is related to a completely different context:

Q6:78 exposes Prophet Ibrāhīm perplexed as to what god he can worship after he experienced seeing different stars of different sizes while Q43:26 Prophet Ibrāhīm speaks out of the duties of his prophethood. It is clear that once the context changes, the morphological structure of the word also changes to match the impact of the new context. That is why the form changes from adjective phrase to nominalization and it is quite apparent that in Arabic the nominalization is more emphatic. Consider as well the change in the affirmation particles in both situations: *إِنِّي* and *إِنِّي* where the superfluous particle *ن*

here is articulated for more affirmation. It is worthy to note that the affirmation here is of special significance because Q43:26 is followed by

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِينِ﴾

⁸⁹ al-Baiḍāwī (1999, 1:308, 2:371), al-Razī (1995, 14:208-209).

[“Except Him (i.e. I worship none but Allāh Alone) Who did create me, and verily, He will guide me.” Q43:27]

where (إِلَّا) is an exception particle and as such represents along with Q43:26 the Islamic monotheism symbolized in *lā ilāha illa allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh), consider Q43:26 and Q43:27 read as such:

إِنِّي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي

[“Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, [“Except Him (i.e. I worship none but Allāh Alone)].

See al-Zamakhsharī (1998, 5:436-437), al-Nasafī (1999, 3:270), Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. ʿĀshūr (1997, 12:192), and al-Baidāwī (1999, 2:371).

10. Plural of Multitude and Plural of Paucity

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا﴾

[Will they not contemplate the Qur’ān? Do they have locks on their hearts? Q47:24]

Arabic language provides different meanings for different forms of plural. It is observable that the Qur’ān uses a form of plurality which just encompasses the context, and the meaning. For Hitti (1937:91) “the triumph of Islam was to a certain extent the triumph of a language, more particularly of a book.”

Example 32

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِئَةٌ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

[The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allāh, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allāh gives manifold increase to whom He pleases. And Allāh is All-Sufficient for His creatures’ needs, All-Knower. Q2:261] (al-Hilālī, 1998:59)

[The parable of those who spend their possessions for the sake of God is that of a grain out of which grow seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains: for God grants manifold increase unto whom He wills; and God is infinite, all-Knowing. Q2:261] (Asad, 1980:59)

Example 33

﴿وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ إِنِّي أَرَى سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَسَبْعَ سُنبُلَاتٍ خُضْرٍ
وَأُخْرَى يَاسَاتٍ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي رُؤْيَايَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّؤْيَا تَعْبُرُونَ﴾

[And the king (of Egypt) said: “Verily, I saw (in a dream) seven fat cows, whom seven lean ones were devouring - and of seven green ears of corn, and (seven) others dry. O notables! Explain to me my dream, if it be that you can interpret dreams.” Q12:43] (al-Hilālī, 1998:309)

[And (One day) the King said: “Behold, I saw (in a dream) seven fat cows devoured by seven emaciated ones, and seven green ears (of wheat) next to (seven) others that were withered. O you nobles! Enlighten me about (the meaning of) my dream, if you are able to interpret dreams!” Q12:43] (Asad, 1980:344)

Q2:261 & Q12:43 give the same number seven but in Q2:261 سَنَابِلٌ designates the plural of multitude and in Q12:43 سُنبُلَاتٍ designates the plural of paucity. The question which arises here why does the Qur’ān use different forms of plural to designate the same number seven? This is not without a good reason. The possibility is that سَنَابِلٌ is a plural form of multitude and the context necessitates the use of سَنَابِلٌ where the theme of manifold good deeds is emphasized either because of the individual differences among the people who spend their money in the cause of Allāh. Another reason could be the manifold here as a reward from Allāh is unlimited even by seven hundred fold. So the plural of multitude suits the context of the countless bounties of Allāh and Allāh gives manifold increase to whom He pleases.⁹⁰ Whereas in Q12:43 the context is meant for scarcity that is why سُنبُلَاتٍ is used. The whole context is that of famine, insufficiency and shortage of food.

⁹⁰ al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 1:306), al-Nasafī (1999, 1:216-17), and al-Baiḍāwī (1999, 1:138), al-Razī (1995,4:48 -49).

Example 34

﴿إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾ ﴿شَاكِرًا لِّأَنْعَمِهِ اجْتَبَاهُ
وَهَدَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

[Verily, Ibrāhim (Abraham) was an *Ummah* (a leader having all the good righteous qualities), or a nation, obedient to Allāh, *Hanifā* (i.e. to worship none but Allāh), and he was not one of those who were *al-Mushrikūn* (polytheists, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allāh, and those who joined partners with Allāh). (He was) thankful for His (Allāh's) Graces. He (Allāh) chose him (as an intimate friend) and guided him to a Straight Path (Islamic Monotheism, neither Judaism nor Christianity). Q16:120-121] (al-Hilālī, 1998:365)

[Verily, Abraham was a man who combined within himself all virtues, devoutly obeying God's will, turning away from all that is false, and not being of those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God: [for he was always] grateful for the blessings granted by Him who had elected him and guided him onto a straight way. Q16:120-121] (Asad, 1980:415)

Example 35

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ
ظَاهِرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً﴾

[See you not (O men) that Allāh has subjected for you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and has completed and perfected His Graces upon you, (both) apparent (i.e. Islāmic Monotheism, and the lawful pleasures of this world, including health, good looks, etc.) and hidden [i.e. One's Faith in Allāh (of Islāmic Monotheism) knowledge, wisdom, guidance for doing righteous deeds, and also the pleasures and delights of the Hereafter in Paradise, etc.]? Q31:20] (al-Hilālī, 1998:552)

[Are you not aware that God has made subservient to you all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth, and has lavished upon you His blessings, both outward and inward? Q31:20] (Asad, 1980:630)

Examples 34 and 35 could give the impression that they target the same thing and render the same underlying nuances but this is far to be true. Allāh's blessings and bounties are

countless and not a soul can give exclusively such blessings their due gratefulness because it is simply beyond man's power. In like fashion, counting Allāh's blessings is impossible so how we can appreciate all of them if we can not even count them:

﴿وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا﴾ [And if you would count the graces of Allāh, never

could you be able to count them. Q16:18] That is the reason why the context necessitates that Ibrāhīm uses the plural of paucity (أَنْعَمَ) and not the plural of multitude (نِعَمٌ)⁹¹.

Whereas example 34 imposes that the plural of multitude be used where the context of Q31:20 exposes the countless graces Allāh has bestowed upon us. So the plural of multitude (نِعَمٌ) is used and not the plural of paucity (أَنْعَمَ). The observation which arises is that TT could not capture these fine differences in translation: in both Q31:20 and Q16:120-121 the phrase *His blessings* is utilized, however, al-Hilālī introduces as interpolation what these blessings could possibly be: [apparent (i.e. Islāmic Monotheism, and the lawful pleasures of this world, including health, good looks, etc.) and hidden [i.e. One's Faith in Allāh (of Islāmic Monotheism) knowledge, wisdom, guidance for doing righteous deeds, and also the pleasures and delights of the Hereafter in Paradise, etc.] It is again a feature of addition (as a technique of adjustment) incorporated into TL. In this connection, Nida (1964/2003:227) classifies nine types of additions: (a) filling out elliptical expressions; (b) obligatory specification; (c) additions required because of grammatical reconstructing; (d) amplification from implicit to explicit status; (e) answers to rhetorical questions; (f) classifiers; (g) connectives; (h) categories of TL which do not exist in SL; (i) doublets.⁹²

Example 36

﴿ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ وَغَرَّبَهُمْ فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ﴾

⁹¹ al-Razī (1995, 14:152 -153)

⁹² Two words derived from the same historical source by different routes of transmission, such as *skirt* from Scandinavian and *shirt* from English.

[This is because they say: “The Fire shall not touch us but for a number of days.” And that which they used to invent regarding their religion has deceived them. Q3:24] (al-Hilālī, 1998:71)

[Simply because they claim, The fire will most certainly not touch us for more than a limited number of days”: and thus the false beliefs which they invented have (in time) caused them to betray their faith. Q3:24] (Asad, 1980:69-70)

Example 37

﴿وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ
أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

[And they (Jews) say, “The Fire (i.e. Hell-fire on the Day of Resurrection) shall not touch us but for a few numbered days.” Q2:80] (al-Hilālī, 1998:16)

[And they say, “The fire will most certainly not touch us for more than a limited number of days.” Q2:80] (Asad, 1980:17)

It is worthy of note that both *مُعْدُودَاتٍ* and *مَّعْدُودَةً* are rendered in TT as “a limited number of”; however, al-Hilālī gives two different noun phrases (a number of and a few number of) to show the meaning intended in the ST. al-Sāmerā’ī (2004:41) states that if the feminine individual exists as an adjective for a plural form it shows that the epithet is a lot more (جبال شاهقة) *jibāl shāheqah* tall mountains means many mountains while (جبال شاهقات) *jibāl shahiqāt* means less mountains. The same applies on *أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ* and *أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً*. It is clear that the translation fails to capture these semantically-oriented morphological forms and thus becomes disloyal to the three general laws of translation by Tytler (1978:16):

- 1 The translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work.
- 2 The style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original.
- 3 The translation should have all the ease of the original composition.

11. Oath as a Solemn Declaration

The Qur'ān states its proposition in many of its verses by the way of an oath as definitive evidence of its truthfulness. Abdul-Raof (2001:87-88) is of the view that “stylistically, oath in Arabic is an ornamental element of an elevated style. Oath occurs frequently as a prototypical discourse feature.” It should go without saying that the rules that govern the idiosyncrasies of Qur'ānic discourse are not one and the same. Let us take the oath as an example and explore its different forms and how these forms are translated to touch upon the problematic features of Qur'ānic discourse, as in:

Example 38

﴿وَالنَّازِعَاتِ غَرْقًا﴾ ﴿وَالنَّاشِيطَاتِ نَشْطًا﴾ ﴿وَالسَّابِحَاتِ سَبْحًا﴾ ﴿فَالسَّابِقَاتِ سَبْقًا﴾
﴿فَالْمُدَبِّرَاتِ أَمْرًا﴾

[By those (angels) who pull out (the souls of the disbelievers and the wicked) with great violence; By those (angels) who gently take out (the souls of the believers); And by those that swim along (i.e. angels or planets in their orbits, etc.). And by those that press forward as in a race (i.e. the angels or stars or the horses, etc.). And by those angels who arrange to do the Commands of their Lord, (so verily, you disbelievers will be called to account). Q79:1-5] (al-Hilālī, 1998:812)

[By the forceful chargers raring to go, sweeping ahead at full stretch, overtaking swiftly to bring the matter to an end. Q79”1-5] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:407)

[By those that pluck out vehemently and those that draw out violently, by those that swim serenely and those that outstrip suddenly, by those that direct an affair! Q79:1-5] (Arberry, 1998:322)

[Consider those (stars) that rise only to set, and move (in their orbits with steady motion, and float (through space) with floating serene, and yet overtake (one another) with swift overtaking: and thus they fulfil the (Creator's) behest!) Q79:1-5] (Asad, 1980:926)

How oath is satisfactorily translated depends first on how satisfactorily the translator is able to do justice to the linguistic and theological features of Qur'ānic discourse itself, and secondly on whether the translator provides a translation based on one of the theological interpretation of the oath. Time and again, it has been observed that the translation of

Qur'ānic discourse may owe much to a particular theological stance. However, it is preferable that the translation is oriented towards the views of the main stream Islam. For the sake of completion, al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 4:679) and al-Nasafī (1999, 3:595) interpret (النَّازِعَاتِ) either as angels or stars and build their exegesis accordingly. The exegeses resources are, of course, called upon to a much greater degree in translating Qur'ānic discourse which lends itself to more than one single interpretation. It is noted that Asad and al-Hilālī translate (النَّازِعَاتِ) according to the *tafsīr* exegesis literature and as such would minimize the translation loss to some extent whereas both Abdel Haleem and Arberry render it figuratively. However, al-Rāzī (1995, 16:28-34) elaborates on the issue, expounds Q79:1-5 and presents so many probabilities for what Q79:1-5 could mean. al-Rāzī (ibid:28-34) starts with probability (1) the angels and their qualities, (2) stars, (3) souls, (4) horses, (5) enemies, and (6) status of hearts. The more one reads the exegeses books, the more one confirms that the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān is not that easy task at all.

Example 39

There has been an interesting argument among Muslim scholars on certain features considered oath specific in the Qur'ānic discourse, such as the use of 'no' before the oath. The question is whether 'no' functions as a negation or non-negation particle. Naṣṣār Ḥussein (2000:51 -57) lists the different hermeneutical analyses of Muslim scholars in their attempt to understand the meaning that can be rendered by oath preceded by 'no' and he mentions that Ibn 'Abbās is of the opinion that 'no' functions as a relative pronoun and there is a phonetic pause between 'no' and the oath verb which means 'no' is non-negation particle in this context. He adds the use of (لَ) is for affirmation purposes as when one says:

(لَا وَاللَّهِ، بَلَى وَاللَّهِ). In the same vein, Abu Ḥayyān (2001, 8:213) expounds that (لَ) is an affirmation for hyperbole and it functions as (أَلَمْ) meaning (have you not) in the beginning of an Arabic sentence. al-Zamakhsharī comments that if 'no' comes within the sentence it is a superfluous relative pronoun which has the stylistic function of affirmation of the oath, as in:

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

[But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, Q4:65]

Q4:65 is translated as above in ‘Ali’s, Hilālī’s, Pickthall’s but it is rendered differently in Abdel Haleem’s:

[By your Lord, they will not be true believers ...]

whereas if ‘no’ comes at the beginning of the sentence it functions as a negation particle. What matters here in this connection is that the oath is another example of the excellence of the Qur’ān syntactic arrangement and the eloquence of its composition which cannot be captured in translation. Moreover, the subtlety of the Qur’ānic oath is lost in translation and cannot be encompassed in rendition. Consider the use of affirmation particles along with the use of ‘no’ in each oath and they are all translated as one thing only: *I swear!*

﴿فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِمَوَاقِعِ النُّجُومِ﴾

[So I swear by *Mawāqī‘* (setting or the mansions, etc.) of the stars (they traverse). Q56:75]

﴿فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ الْمَشَارِقِ وَالْمَغَارِبِ إِنَّا لَقَادِرُونَ﴾

[So I swear by the Lord of all [the three hundred and sixty (360)] points of sunrise and sunset in the east and the west that surely We are Able Q 70:40]

﴿لَا أَقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

[I swear by the Day of Resurrection; Q75:1]

﴿وَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ﴾

[And I swear by the self-reproaching person (a believer). 75:2]

﴿لَا أَقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ﴾

[I swear by this city (Makkah); Q90:1]

12. Syntax Mandatory

Oftentimes it is contemplated why the Qur’ān settles on a certain expression, preposition, etc. and not the other. The point of departure is when reflecting on the subtlety of the language of the Qur’ān; it is observed that the language is in such a precision and elegance that it succeeds in leaving a persuasive impact. In fact the Qur’ān is meant to enjoy such style in order to engage the readers in meditation on the subject matter. It is always claimed

that the Qur'ān is characterized by its syntax mandatory which fits the context of its verses as in:

Example 40

﴿بِأَنْ رَبِّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا﴾

[Because your Lord will inspire it. Q99:5] (al-Hilālī, 1998:846)

[Because your Lord will inspire it (to do so). Q99:5] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:431)

[For your Lord will have inspired her. Q99:5] (Dawood, 2003:430)

[As thy Sustainer will have inspired her to do. Q99:5] (Asad, 1980:969)

ʿĀ'isha ʿAbdul Rahmān (2004:89-91) contends that the Qur'ān uses the verb (أَوْحَىٰ) 71 times. In 67 cases the Qur'ān employs the preposition (إِلَىٰ) after the verb (أَوْحَىٰ), one time (فِي) and in Q99:5 only the Qur'ān uses (لَهَا). This is a prototypical example for what we mean by *syntax mandatory*. There is no clear consensus in exegesis books about the meaning of (لَهَا): Abu Ḥayyān⁹³ thinks it is because of the phonetic co-text and adds another possibility that the inspiration here is through a messenger from the angels. ʿAbdul Rahmān (2004:91) expounds that the use of (إِلَىٰ) is meant for an animated inspired to whereas (فِي) is meant for an unanimated inspired to, as in:

﴿وَأَوْحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ أَمْرَهَا﴾

[and He made in each heaven its affair. Q41:12] (al-Hilālī, 1998:644)

[and assigned an order to each. Q41:12] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:307)

where circumstantial preposition (فِي) indicates the Decree of Allāh. Whereas in Q99:5 the passive structure of Q99, the violent shaking of the earth in its last quaking and speaking to it substantiate the impossibility of inspiring it via a messenger. That is why the context here necessitates that the earth speaks to itself spontaneously. This spontaneousness is represented in the preference of using (لَهَا) because it offers the meaning of specificity, commitment and distinguished communication. It is observed that this deep insight into the

⁹³ al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ (2001, 8:501), al-Rāzī (1995, 16:61)

layers of meaning which Qur'ānic discourse unfolds cannot be captured in translation and is considered as translation resistant.

5.3 Stylistic Features

1. Eloquence of Diction

The eloquence of the Qur'ānic diction is surpassingly difficult. It is quite apparent throughout the Qur'ān; it is Arabic specific and cannot be easily captured in translation. It is worth noting that individual Qur'ānic words can yield dissimilar SL nuances of meaning. Consider the following examples which illustrate the eloquence of the Qur'ānic diction and the incongruence in meaning between Arabic and English. Both of the words *al-maṭar* and *al-ghayth* mean the same thing (rain) in English. Unlike the English language, Arabic has special usage for each one of them: *al-maṭar* is always used in situations where revenge is taken against warned criminals, polytheists, and sinners. Whereas *al-ghayth*⁹⁴ is used in situations where glad tidings and good deeds are inferred as legitimate purposes for sending down *al-ghayth*:

Example 41

﴿وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا قَسِيًّا مَطَرُ الْمُنذَرِينَ﴾

[And We rained down on them a rain (of stones). So evil was the rain of those who were warned. Q27:58] (al-Hilālī, 1998:511)

[And We brought (an awesome) rain down on them. How dreadful that rain was for those who had been warned! Q27:58] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:242)

It is worthy of note here how Abdel Haleem adds (awesome) to the translation to make up for the Loss in meaning inasmuch as al-Hilālī adds (of stones). Translation as such suffers from addition and still does not render the eloquence of diction Qur'ānic discourse demonstrates in its brevity.

Example 42

⁹⁴ See al-Rāzī (1995, 14:172), Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. 'Āshūr (1997, 12:95)

﴿وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾

[And We rained down on them a rain (of stones)⁹⁵. Then see what was the end of the *mujrimūn* (criminals, polytheists, sinners, etc.). Q 7:84] (al-Hilālī, 1998:212)

The same approach goes on with Abdel Haleem (2004:100)

[And We showered upon (the rest of them) a rain of (destruction). Thus addition here to the TT is to compensate the loss in meaning. It is as well observed that the English word *rain* does not yield more than one meaning whereas it yields more than one meaning in the Arabic language. It becomes immediately clear that the addition to the English word *rain* is necessary to make the intended message more intelligible because if the translation stops at the word *rain* the reader cannot predict the following part *then see what was the end of the criminals* whereas if the reader of the ST stops at the Arabic word *مَطَرٌ rain* he/she can still predict the following part of the text because of the nuances of meaning the Arabic word *مَطَرٌ rain* renders. This case in discussion shows how Arabic synonyms, derivational patterns, and morphological forms cannot be captured in translation.

Example 43

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَتَوْا عَلَى الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي أَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا سَوْءَ الْمَطَرِ لَقَدْ أَنذَرْنَاهُمْ إِذْ سَاءُوا وَكَفَرُوا بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ إِذْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ
نُشُورًا﴾

[And indeed they have passed by the town [of Prophet Lout (Lot)] on which was rained the evil rain. Did they (disbelievers) not then see it (with their own eyes)? Nay! But they used not to expect for any resurrection. Q25:40] (al-Hilālī, 1998:483)

Example 44

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَنْزِلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا وَيَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُ وَهُوَ الْوَلِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ﴾

[And He it is Who sends down the rain after they have despaired, and spreads abroad His Mercy. And He is the *Walī* (Helper, Supporter, Protector, etc.), Worthy of all Praise. Q42:28] (al-Hilālī, 1998:656)

⁹⁵ See al-Rāzī (1995,7:179), Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. ʿĀshūr (1997, 5:237)

[It is He who sends rain after they lost hope, and spreads His mercy far and wide. He is the Protector, Worthy of All Praise. Q42:28] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:313)

It was expected that an adjective is to be added to give the meaning of *al-ghayth*, namely, rain of glad tidings and good omens but the translator was satisfied with just mentioning rain without any modification in meaning.

Example 45

﴿ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يَعْصِرُونَ﴾

[“Then thereafter will come a year in which people will have abundant rain and in which they will press (wine and oil).” Q12:49] (al-Hilālī, 1998:310)

The details of the Qur’ānic linguistic usage are myriad but we mean to touch upon the eloquence of the Qur’ānic diction by giving some examples to describe vividly what is meant by eloquence of diction. Q12:49 utilizes (يُغَاثُ) as another morphological form of (الْغَيْثَ) with the same shade of meaning. al-Hilālī chooses to add *abundant* in the phrase *abundant rain* to compensate the translation loss if *rain* is used alone without any modification. It should be taken into consideration that the Arabic language of Qur’ānic discourse achieves the intended meaning and far more by using very few words. That is what makes its eloquence diction.

In this context, it is worthy to note that the two Arabic terms *الحلف* and *القسم* do not render the same underlying semantic characteristics. The term *الحلف* in Qur’ānic discourse is always connected with false swear, whereas the term *القسم* relays nothing but the truth, (cf Naṣṣār Ḥussein, 2000:79-83). As far as translation is concerned, it is observable that the two terms are translated as *swear*, as in:

Example 46

﴿وَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَمِنْكُمْ وَمَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْرَقُونَ﴾

[They swear by Allāh that they are truly of you while they are not of you, but they are a people (hypocrites) who are afraid (that you may kill them). Q9:56] (al-Hilālī, 1998:253)

﴿يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ﴾

[They swear by Allāh that they said nothing (bad), but really they said the word of disbelief, and they disbelieved after accepting Islām Q9:74] (al-Hilālī, 1998:256)

﴿وَيَخْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

[and they swear to a lie while they know. Q58:14] (al-Hilālī, 1998:747)

﴿يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ أَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ﴾

[On the Day when Allāh will resurrect them all together (for their account), then they will swear to Him as they swear to you (O Muslims). And they think that they have something (to stand upon). Verily, they are liars! Q58:18] (al-Hilālī, 1998:748)

﴿وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ﴾

[And obey not everyone who swears much, and is considered worthless. Q68:10] (al-Hilālī, 1998:775)

[Furthermore, defer not to the contemptible swearer of oaths. Q68:10] (Asad: 884).

﴿ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةٌ لِّأَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ﴾

[That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. Q5:89] (al-Hilālī, 1998:161-162)

[This shall be the atonement for your oaths whenever you have sworn (and broken them). Q5:89] (Asad, 1980:161-162).

﴿وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ﴾

[And on the Day that the Hour will be established, the *Mujrimūn* (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners.) will swear that they stayed not but an hour. Q30:55] (al-Hilālī, 1998:548)

[And when the last Hour dawns, those who had been lost in sin will swear that they had not tarried (on earth) longer than an hour. Q30:55] (Asad, 1980:624).

Asad renders Q68:10, and Q5:89 differently than that translation of al-Hilālī. Asad attempts to show the difference in meaning between *القسم* and *الحلف* in Arabic so he adds to the translation to show the difference: *the contemptible swearer of oaths, oaths whenever you have sworn (and broken them)*. This addition according to Nida (1964/2003:227) is a sort of amplification from implicit to explicit status. In Q30:55 the Qur'ān attributes *القسم* to

the disbelievers because they deep at heart think that they are telling the truth, so Asad uses the term swear without any interpolation or addition.

2. Brevity and Conciseness

Careful studying of the Qur'ān shows many interesting points regarding its linguistic and stylistic patterns which call for careful reflection. For instance, by saying that the Qur'ān enjoys brevity and conciseness, we mean that the Qur'ān is a Book whose linguistic and stylistic significations are impressive. It should go without saying that the aim for the eloquence of diction, brevity and conciseness of Qur'ānic discourse is by far to achieve the communicative force of persuasion.

Example 47

﴿إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ﴾

[When they came in to him, and said, “*Salām*, (peace be upon you)!” He answered; “*Salām*, (peace be upon you),” and said: “You are a people unknown to me,” Q51:25] (al-Hilālī, 1998:708)

Q5:25 introduces two different kinds of *Salām* (greetings): *سَلَامًا* which is in the accusative case and *سَلَامٌ* which is in the nominative case. In trying to capture the varied layers of meaning which the two words render, we end up in having translation loss. *سَلَامًا* which is in the accusative case means *we greet a greeting nusolim salaman*, i.e. an implicit accusative case of a verb *nusolim* (greet: verbal sentence). While *سَلَامٌ* in the nominative case is an articulation of the implicit nominative case (greeting: nominal sentence).⁹⁶ It has been mentioned what the nuances the verbal and nominal sentence can give. It is understood that the use of noun renders meanings which are more consistent and constant than the verb does. Ideally, Prophet Ibrāhīm has greeted the angels in a better way by resorting to the nominal case and not repeating the verbal case. Even the words of greeting carry the function of showing the hospitality and generosity to the guests of Prophet Ibrahim and reiterating the courtesy shown in Q4:86:

﴿وَإِذَا حَيَّيْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا﴾

⁹⁶ al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 4:391-392), al-Rāzī (1995, 14:212-213)

[When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally. Certainly, Allāh is Ever a Careful Account Taker of all things. Q4:86] (al-Hilālī, 1998:123)

The intertextual relationship between Q51:25 and Q4:86 has become clear: Q51:25 presents the two forms of (سَلَام) used – that of the angels (سَلَامًا) and that of Prophet Ibrahim (سَلَامٌ). Now the rule is that when you are greeted either you greet in return in a better way or in the same manner. Consider the greeting used by Prophet Ibrahim and whether it is done in a better or same way. Prophet Ibrahim used (سَلَامٌ) in the nominative case which renders more consistent and constant meanings than that of the angels (سَلَامًا) in the accusative case which entails less consistent meanings. Therefore Q5:5 applies the ruling in Q4:86. It is worthy to note that in translating such riches of the ST the myriad nuances of meanings are left out making the TT appear defective.

Example 48

﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ﴾

[So when she came, it was said (to her): “Is your throne like this?” She said: “(It is) as though it were the very same.” Q27:42] (al-Hilālī, 1998:509)

[When she arrived, she was asked, ‘Is this your throne?’ She replied, ‘It looks like it.’ Q27:42] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:241)

The way the question is answered in Q27:42 is a prototype of brevity and conciseness.

al-Zamakhsharī⁹⁷ (2003, 3:357) elaborates on the words of the question (هَ) is an attentive particle, (كَ) is a simile particle, and (لَآ) is a declarative particle. The Qur’ān does not phrase the question inasmuch as *Is this your throne?* in order for the answer not to be a dictated one. The answer is not (*yes, it is*) or (*no, it is not*). However the answer is articulated as (*it looks like it*). The answer as such does not appear to conform to the question. However, the answer shows the brevity and the conciseness of the Qur’ān at its best because this two-word answer unfolds a degree of wisdom on the part of the Queen of Sheba. In fact, she prefers not to indulge into probabilities and that is why she chooses to take precautions before she either says yes or no. The theme of uncertainty and excitement

⁹⁷ See al-Nasafi (1999, 2:608), al-Baiḍāwī (1999, 2:177), al-Razī (1995, 12:200-201)

is intensified by the Qur'ānic use of the voiceless sound /h/ (هـ + هـ) in (كَانَهُ هُوَ) as the voiceless sound /h/ (هـ) is not like other voiced sounds. Consider the use of (بَلَى/yes, indeed!) with its voiced sound /b/ (ب) and its decisive implication. Therefore, the Qur'ānic expression (كَانَهُ هُوَ) is justified as eloquently befitting the context of situation. Although the translation manages to render the expression (كَانَهُ هُوَ), it does not manage to produce the same pragmatic and phonetic effect of the original and is not as concise as the ST. Thus, it is another case of translation loss.

5.4 The Phonetic Feature *al-Madd* (Lengthening of Sound)

Hervey and Higgins (1992:74) hold that when dealing with any text “one may come across problems that have to do specifically with the phonic/graphic level”. Hervey and Higgins (ibid:74) mention that some translators make every effort to recreate the phonic/graphic effects of the ST. One may contemplate how the phonic/graphic effects of Qur'ānic discourse can ever be captured in translation. It has again sometimes been acknowledged that (ibid:74) “some texts would lose much of their point if deprived of their special phonic/graphic properties.” Newmark (1995:168) admits that “sound-effects are bound to come last for the translator”, though he (ibid:58) stresses that “sound-effects, even at the level beyond the sentence, should be taken into account, and adds (ibid:58) “the continual repetition of sounds and syllables ..., words and interjections has a powerful effect.” In this connection, lengthening is considered a form of sound-effects and it is a musical element for euphony and cadence which is lost in TL because it is language specific.

It will immediately be clear how Qur'ānic discourse loses much of its musical impact when we compare the translation with the Arabic transliteration:

﴿تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ﴾ ﴿مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ﴾ ﴿سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ﴾
 ﴿وَأَمْرَاتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ﴾ ﴿فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ﴾

[Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he!

His wealth avails him not, neither what he has earned;

He shall roast at a flaming fire

And his wife, the carrier of the firewood,

Upon her neck a rope of palm-fibre.

Q111] (Arberry, 1998:666)

Tabbat yadā ‘Abī Lahabiw wa tabba

Mā ‘aghnā ‘anhu māluhu wa mā kasaba

Sayaṣlā nāran thāta lahab

Wa amra’atuhū ḥammālata al-ḥaṭab

Fī jīdihā ḥablum mim masad

Much of the ‘special phonic/graphic effects’ is lost in translation. Qur’ānic discourse is distinguished by its rhyme which is lost here. Robinson (1996:10) observes that “the whole of the Qur’ān is in rhymed or assonanced prose, and rhyme and assonance are the basis for the subdivision of the sūrahs into āyahs.” In this vein, Sells (1993:405) contends that Qur’ānic discourse employs a scheme of phonological patterning which leaves heavy phonological communicative force with emotive values. For Abdul-Raof (2003:401-402) euphony (cadence) has its psychological weight on whoever deals with the Qur’ān. Abdul-Raof (ibid:402) elaborates that “lengthening, assimilation, nasalization, lowering (concealment) of certain sounds, darkening or clearing one sound rather than another, etc. are all employed as musical instruments to produce the unique symphony.” Abdul-Raof (ibid) states that the syntax and morphology do have their own impact on the musical smoothness of the Qur’ānic sounds.

The implementation of the phonetic feature *madd* (lengthening of sound) in Qur’ānic discourse is not employed without a good reason as the Qur’ān renders whatever it has to render for a specific target. The question which may arise is ‘What is the benefit beyond this particular feature of sound (*madd*) apart from the factors of euphony and elucidation of the recitation?’ We haven’t found so far in the literature any elaboration on this problem of the semantics of the *madd* in the Qur’ān in any of the exegesis books. *Madd* has a function in Qur’ānic discourse and this phonetic feature of the Qur’ān has an influential impact on the readers of the ST. Nevertheless, the concept of *madd* is translation resistant and is not captured in TT. In this regard, Hervey and Higgins (1992:75) consider the phonetic features as ‘special effects’ which means “the use of phonic/graphic features in order to create or – more usually – reinforce a thematic motif or mood within a text.” This thematic motif or mood will be taken care of when we examine the semantics of *madd* in Qur’ānic discourse.

It is worthy to mention here that there are different types of *madd*: (مد لازم) necessary prolongation (6 vowel counts), (مد واجب) obligatory prolongation (4-5 vowel counts), (مد جائز) permissible prolongation (2, 4 or 6 vowel counts), and (مد طبيعي) normal prolongation (2 vowel counts).

We have explored the added meaning which the *madd* (lengthening of sound) empowers Qur'ānic discourse with, and we have found out consistency in utilizing the *madd* to clothe the text with extra semantic nuances as in:

Example 49

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَقَدْ جَاءتْ رُسُلٌ رَبَّنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَتُودُوا أَنْ تِلْكُمْ الْجَنَّةَ أَوْرَثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

[And We shall remove from their breasts any (mutual) hatred or sense of injury (which they had, if at all, in the life of this world); rivers flowing under them, and they will say: “All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, Who has guided us to this, never could we have found guidance, were it not that Allāh had guided us! Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth.” And it will be cried out to them: “This is the Paradise which you have inherited for what you used to do.” Q 7:43] (al-Hilālī, 1998:206-207)

Q7:43 marks *madd* in four positions⁹⁸: **وَتُودُوا** – **جَاءتْ** – **لَوْلَا**

where the act of (**وَتُودُوا**) *crying out to the believers* will possibly entail quite a large number of believers so the *madd* here gives the impact of a loud voice covers a multitude of believers. Also, (**جَاءتْ**) highlights the number of Allāh's messengers who were sent to man since Adam. Whereas **لَوْلَا** utilizes the *madd* as an attention point to Allāh the sole cause of all guidance.

Abdul-Raof (2001:58) holds the view that in the translation of the Qur'ān, we sacrifice the flow of sound to sense while in the Qur'ān, sound and sense are interrelated. Q69 and Q101 represent this sort of interrelation and integration of lengthening of sound and the

⁹⁸ For the sake of observation, we have meant to show the words in which *madd* occurs appear slightly different.

compacted sense it carries. The following onomatopoeic⁹⁹ expressions are double stressed by the way of lengthening of the sound for the sake of adding this shivering and quivering heinous background. The accompanying prolongation of the sound [l] in (الْحَاقَّة) – *al-hāāāāāqah* necessary prolongation (6 vowel counts: six vowels each of which is about half a second) – is essential to a Muslim’s sense of the Inevitable Hour. Again this specific Qur’ānic phonetic feature is translation resistant, as in:

Example 50

﴿ الْحَاقَّةُ ﴿ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ﴿ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ﴾

[The Inevitable Hour! What is the Inevitable Hour? What will explain to you what the Inevitable Hour is? Q69:1-3] (al-Hilālī, 1998:780)

Another example which shows what *madd* adds to the meaning of onomatopoeic Qur’ānic expression is Q80:33, in which the expression (الصَّاخَّةُ) is pronounced as *al-ṣāāāāākhkhah*. Here the accompanying prolongation of the sound [l] in (الصَّاخَّةُ) depicts the unimaginable horror and tremor of the blow of the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection.

﴿ فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاخَّةُ ﴾

[Then, when there comes Aṣ-Ṣākhkhah (the Day of Resurrection’s second blowing of Trumpet). Q80:33]

It is immediately clear that the semantic impact of the *madd* in Q7:43 and Q69:1-3 can never be captured in translation and this consequently constitutes another hindrance to the rendition of ST. In such a way, translation cannot encompass the layers of meanings in Qur’ānic discourse. For the sake of consideration, we shall exhibit further examples of what *madd* can add to the semantic impact of the proposition as in:

Example 51

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ وَكُلِّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴾

⁹⁹ Abdul Raof (2001:59) holds that “Onomatopoeic expressions are language-specific and have a communicative purpose; Qur’ānic onomatopoeic sound effects defy translation into another language.”

[We shall certainly bring the dead back to life, and We record that what they send ahead of them as well as what they leave behind: We keep an account of everything in a clear record. Q36:12] (al-Hilālī, 1998:589)

where the *madd* in (فِي) draws attention to a weighty expression of great importance: *a clear record*.

Example 52

﴿أَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً إِنْ يُرِدْنِ الرَّحْمَنُ بَضْرًا لَّا تُغْنِي عَنِّي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُنْقِذُونِ﴾

How could I take beside Him any other gods, whose intercession will not help me and who would not be able to save me if the Lord of Mercy wished to harm me? Q36:23] (al-Hilālī, 1998:590)

where the *madd* in (دُونِهِ) refers to (الرَّحْمَنُ) the Lord of Mercy, in other words it is like a charter of declaration: *lā ilāha illa allāh* (None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh).

It has been observed that *lā ilāha illa allāh* almost always starts with the permissible separated *madd* (four or five counts) which sets the scene for the word of *tawhīd lāāāāā ilāha illa allāh*, as in:

﴿اتَّبِعْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

[Follow what has been inspired to you (O Muhammad) from your Lord, *lā ilāha illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He) and turn aside from Al-Mushrikūn. Q6:106]

Example 53

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

[When He wills something to be, His way is to say, “be”-and it is! Q36:82] (al-Hilālī, 1998:596)

where again the *madd* brings to attention the Will Of Allāh so that people may meditate thoughtfully and carefully.

To further support the idea that *madd* in Qur’ānic discourse has its semantic implication more examples will immediately be cited:

Example 54

﴿وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا﴾

[And your Lord comes with the angels in rows, Q89:22]

where the theme of horror, fear, exalted majesty, grandeur and more can be depicted as the obligatory attached *madd jāāāā* (four or five vowel counts) announces the coming of Allāh (God).

Example 55

﴿أَتُمَّ إِذَا مَا وَقَعَ آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ ءِالآنَ وَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ﴾

Is it then, that when it has actually befallen, that you will believe in it? What! Now (you believe)? And you used (aforetime) to hasten it on! Q10:51)

﴿ءِالآنَ وَقَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾

[Now (you believe) while you refused to believe before and you were one of the Mufsidun (evil-doers, corrupts, etc.). Q10:91]

where the obligatory *madd* (four or five vowel counts) *aaaaalān* (ءِالآنَ) adds the theme of sarcasm, impeachment, reproach and final prosecution.

Example 56

﴿فَاذْكُرُوا آلاءَ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

[So remember the graces (bestowed upon you) from Allāh, so that you may be successful. Q7:69]

where the necessary *madd* (six vowel counts) *āaaaaa* (آلاءَ) intensifies the theme that Allāh's bounties are countless and not a soul can give exclusively such bounties their due gratefulness because it is simply beyond man's power.

Example 57

﴿وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ أَنْ أَفِيضُوا عَلَيْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ قَالُوا إِنَّ

اللَّهُ حَرَّمَهَا عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

[And the dwellers of the Fire will call to the dwellers of Paradise: “Pour on us some water or anything that Allāh has provided you with.” They will say: “Both (water and provision) Allāh has forbidden to the disbelievers.” Q7:50

where the obligatory *madd* (four or five vowel counts) *nādaaaaa* (نَادَى) describes the scenario of how the call of the dwellers of fire is echoed and intensified. The *madd* in (نَادَى) is in harmony with the theme of distance the call should cover, the number of people involved and the pain, sorrow and thirst inflicted upon them.

Example 58

﴿الم﴾ ذَلِكِ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

[Alif-Lām-Mām. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’ān and none but Allāh (Alone) knows their meanings]. This is the Book (the Qur’ān), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are Al-Muttaqūn [the pious and righteous persons who fear Allāh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allāh much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained). Q1-2:2]

﴿المص﴾ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِّنْهُ لِتُنذِرَ بِهِ وَذِكْرَى لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

[Alif- Lām-Mīm-Ṣād. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’ān and none but Allāh (Alone) knows their meanings]. (This is the) Book (the Qur’ān) sent down unto you (O Muḥammad), so let not your breast be narrow therefrom, that you warn thereby, and a reminder unto the believers. Q7:1-2]

﴿الر﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ

[Alif-Lām-Rā. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’ān, and none but Allāh (Alone) knows their meanings]. These are the Verses of the Clear Book (the Qur’ān that makes clear the legal and illegal things, legal laws, a guidance and a blessing). Q12:1]

where the necessary *madd* (six vowel counts) in the opening inimitable (المقطعات/ cryptic) letters (الم, المص, الر, *alif lāāāāāāṃ mīīīīīm*, *alif lāāāāāāṃ mīīīīīm ṣāāāāāāḍ*, *alif lāāāāāāṃ ra*) is meant to arrest and direct the attention to the Book which carries the verbatim Word Of Allāh.

It should be taken into consideration that the number of vowels for every type of prolongation of sound may differ according to the modes of recitation the Qur'ān is recited with and this necessitates that we should touch upon the Qirā'āt of the Qur'ān.

For the sake of completion, consider the following figure¹⁰⁰ for *madd*:

(المدود) The <i>Mudūd</i>				
المد الطبيعي Natural Medd الألف والياء والواو المادية Includes the separated letters حي طهر That start some <i>sūrah</i> s	المد الفرعي Secondary Medd			
	بسبب همزة Due to a Hamzah		بسبب سكون Due to a Sukūn	
	With a حرف مد medd letter in two different words (المد الجائز المنفصل ومد الصلة الكبرى) The permissible separated medd and greater connecting medd (four or five counts - two counts from (طريق الطيبة) al-Ṭibah way of reciting the Qur'ān	With a حرف مد medd letter in the same word الهمزة (1) glottal stop (ء) حرف المد is after المد الواجب المتصل The obligatory attached medd (four or five vowel counts). الهمزة (2) is before medd حرف المد letter المد البديل The exchange medd [medd badl] (two vowel counts).	السكون الأصلي Original Sukūn المد اللازم The necessary medd كلمي (1) أ. مثل (in a word) Heavy ب. مخفف Light (2) حرفي (in a letter) أ. مثل Heavy ب. مخفف Light Six vowel counts.	السكون العارض Presented Sukūn المد العارض للسكون ومد اللين The presented with a sukoon and soft (leen) medd (Two, four, or six vowel counts).
يلحق بالمد الطبيعي Followers of the Natural Medd 1. مد الصلة الصغرى Lesser connecting medd 2. مد العوض Substitute medd يمد بمقدار حركتين It is lengthened two vowel counts				

¹⁰⁰ The figure with some alteration is from Karimah Carol Czerepinski (n.d.).

5.5 Modes of Readings (*al-Qirā'āt*)

It has been maintained among Muslim scholars that the seven famous readings of the Qur'ān have been reported through uninterrupted transmission *tawātur* (reliably) from the Prophet. Philips (1997:182-3) contends that the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven different readings (dialects/modes) made its recitation and memorization much easier for the various tribes. As a result, a greater number of the Prophet's followers were able to memorize large portions of the Qur'ān while the Prophet was still alive. Since the majority of the Arabs could neither read nor write and most of the Qur'ān was preserved during the Prophet's lifetime by memorization, any factor which eased its memorization was of great importance. Hence, it could be said that the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven modes played a crucial role in the actual preservation of the Qur'ān after the Prophet's death. Abdul-Raof (2003:300) is of the opinion that the seven famous readings of the Qur'ān are different modes of readings that are connected to the "articulatory phonetics" of Qur'ānic discourse. Abdul-Raof (ibid:300) contends that the seven modes of reciting the Qur'ān are transmitted uninterruptedly and reliably from the Prophet. The following two *Hadīths* will immediately make it clear that the seven famous readings of the Qur'ān date back to the Prophet himself. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb narrated¹⁰¹: I heard Hishām b. Ḥakīm reciting Q25 *sūrat al-Furqān* during the lifetime of Allāh's Apostle and I listened to his recitation and noticed that he recited in several different ways which Allāh's Apostle had not taught me. I was about to jump over him during his prayer, but I controlled my temper, and when he had completed his prayer, I put his upper garment around his neck and seized him by it and said, "Who taught you this *sūrah* which I heard you reciting?" He replied, "Allāh's Apostle taught it to me." I said, "You have told a lie, for Allāh's Apostle has taught it to me in a different way from yours." So I dragged him to Allāh's Apostle and said (to Allāh's Apostle), "I heard this person reciting *sūrat al-Furqān* in a way which you haven't taught me!" On that Allāh's Apostle said, "Release him, (O 'Umar!) Recite, O Hishām!" Then he recited in the same way as I heard him reciting. Then Allāh's Apostle said, "It was revealed in this way," and added, "Recite, O 'Umar!" I recited it as he had taught me. Allāh's Apostle then said, "It was revealed in this way. This Qur'ān has been revealed to be recited

¹⁰¹ al-Bukhārī (2003:699)

in seven different ways, so recite of it whichever (way) is easier for you (or read as much of it as may be easy for you).”

‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb narrated¹⁰²: Allāh’s Apostle said, “Gabriel recited the Qur’ān to me in one way. Then I requested him (to read it in another way), and continued asking him to recite it in other ways, and he recited it in several ways till he ultimately recited it in seven different ways.”

In conclusion, al-Zarkashī (1988, 1:278-279) names the seven dialects which are found in the Qur’ān as Quraish, Huthail, Tamīm, Asad, Rabī‘ah, Hawāzin, and Sa‘d b. Bakr. Abdul-Raof (2003:301) gives a brief account of each of the reciters of the Qur’ān. For Aḥmed Sa‘d Muḥammad¹⁰³ (2000:17) there are different orientations for the modes of recitation:

1. Difference in reading names (singular, dual, plural, masculine or feminine) as in

﴿كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ﴾

[Each one believes in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. Q2:285] (al-Hilālī, 1998:66)

where it is read His books and His book.

2. Difference in case markings, as in:

﴿هَؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ﴾

[Here are my daughters (i.e. the daughters of my nation), they are purer for you (if you marry them lawfully). Q11:78] (al-Hilālī, 1998:297)

where أَطْهَرُ is read in the nominative case or أَطْهَرَ in the accusative case.

3. Difference in morphology, as in:

﴿فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَاعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا﴾

[But they said: “Our Lord! Make the stages between our journey longer,” Q34:19] (al-Hilālī, 1998:575)

¹⁰² al-Bukhārī (2003:582)

¹⁰³ See Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276) Ta’wīl Mushkil al-Qur’ān. Edited by al-Sayyid Aḥmed Ṣāqir (1973).

where **بَاعِدْ** is read as an imperative verb, **بَعَدَ** , and **بَاعَدَ** as a past verb.

4. Difference in foregrounding and backgrounding, as in:

﴿أَفَلَمْ يَيَّاسِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا﴾

[Have not then those who believe yet known... Q13:31] (al- Hilālī, 1998:325)

where **يَيَّاسِ** is read with two consecutive **ي**, and it is also read as **يَاسِ**. Backgrounding and foregrounding can also take place in words, as in:

﴿فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ﴾

[so they kill (others) and are killed. Q9:111] (al- Hilālī, 1998:264)

where it is read as **فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ** or as **فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيَقْتَلُونَ** and as such there is a voice shift from active into passive or vice versa.

5. Difference in substitution as in:

Substitution can either mean using a letter in place of another letter or a word in place of another word, as in:

﴿وَأَنْظِرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا﴾

[Look at the bones, how We bring them together. Q2:259] (al- Hilālī, 1998:59)

where **نُنشِزُهَا** is read as **نُنشِرُهَا** which means using **ر** instead of **ز** .

﴿كَالْعِزِّنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ﴾

[like carded wool. Q101:5] (al- Hilālī, 1998:847)

where it is read **كالصوف المنفوش**.

6. Difference in addition or omission as in:

﴿فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ﴾

[Then Allāh is Rich (Free of all wants), Worthy of all praise. Q57:24] (al- Hilālī, 1998:743)

where it is read as **فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ** without the pronoun **هُوَ** which is omitted.

Having provided an informative discussion above on the various modes of reading the Qur'ānic ext, we now focus on the applied (practical) aspect of Qur'ān translation and the impact of the different modes of recitation¹⁰⁴ on the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān, as in:

Example 59

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾

[O you who believe! Say not (to the Messenger) *Rā'inā* but say *Unzurnā* (Do make us understand) and hear. And for the disbelievers there is a painful torment. Q2:104] (al-Hilālī, 1998:20)

[O You who have attained to faith! Do not say (to the Prophet), 'Listen to us,' but rather say, 'Have patience with us,' and hearken (unto him), since grievous suffering awaits those who deny the truth. Q2:104] (Asad, 1980:22).

[Believers, do not say *Rā'inā*, but say *Unzurnā*. Take Heed; woeful punishment awaits the unbelievers. Q2:102] (Dawood, 2003:20).

[O you of Faith! Say not (to the Messenger) words of ambiguous import, but words of respect, and hearken (to him). To those without Faith is a grievous punishment. Q2:104] (Yūsuf °Ali, 2000:14).

[O ye who believe, say not (unto the Prophet): 'Listen to us' but say 'Look upon us,' and be ye listeners. For disbelievers is a painful doom. Q2:104] (Pickthall, 1997:14)

[O believers, do not say, 'Observe us,' but say, 'Regard us'; and give ear; for unbelievers awaits a painful chastisement. Q2:104] (Arberry, 1998:41)

[Believers, do not say (to the Prophet), *rā'inā*, but say, *unzurnā*, and listen (to him): an agonizing torment awaits those who ignore (God's words) Q2:104]. (Abdel Halcem, 2004:13).

It is worthwhile to note what al-Zamakhsharī has to say concerning the readings of *rā'inā* and *unzurnā* before the different translations of the meaning of the Qur'ān can be dealt with. al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 1:174) expounds Q2:104 and provides different readings (1)

¹⁰⁴ It should be noted here that the modes of recitation which have been reported through uninterrupted transmission *tawātur* (reliably) from the Prophet should not be compared as to which is better than the other because they are all reported from the Prophet. And even the companions of the Prophet used to disown such a deed. See, *I'rāb al-Qur'ān lil- Naḥḥās* (d. 338) Edited by Zuhair Ghazī Zahid. (1985).

(انظُرْنَا) *unẓurnā* from (نَظَرَهُ) *nazarahū* (انتَظَرَهُ) (*intazarahū*), namely, *he waits for him* but he gives another reading of ‘Ubayy: (انظرنا من النظرة) *unẓurnā* from *al-naẓrah*, i.e. *be patient until we learn*. (2) ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd reads (رَاعِنَا) *rā’inā* as (راعونا) *rā’unā* which means they use *first person majestic plural* for further respect. Whereas al-Ḥasan reads it as (راعنا) *Rā’inan* using nunation from (الرعن) *al-Ra‘n* which means (الهورج) (recklessness) i.e. ‘do not say anything which is reckless’. To look back at the different translations provided above, the following observations are to be taken into account:

- (1) Most translations render the transliteration and not the translation,
- (2) ‘Abdel Ḥaleem adds the following explanatory footnote (‘The word *rā’inā* can be used politely as an expression for ‘look at us’. However, a group of Jews in Medina hostile to Muḥammad subtly changed its pronunciation to imply ‘you are foolish’ or you herd our sheep’ in order to abuse the Prophet. So the believers are advised to avoid the word and use *unẓurnā*, also meaning ‘look at us’, instead.)
- (3) al-Hilālī employs interpolation but gives different translation (Do make us understand) based on a different interpretation of the word.
- (4) Yūsuf ‘Alī paraphrases saying (*Say not (to the Messenger) words of ambiguous import, but words of respect*), and in this way he avoids the whole situation but it is a case of translation loss.
- (5) Arberry writes it as *do not say, ‘Observe us,’ but say, ‘Regard us’* which does not offer the reader of TT the same impact the reader of ST gets.

Example 60

﴿وَإِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ ائْتِ الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ ﴿قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَلَا يَتَّقُونَ﴾

[And (remember) when your Lord called Mūsa (Moses) (saying): “Go to the people who are Zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doing). The people of Fir‘aun (Pharaoh). Will they not fear Allāh and become righteous?” Q26:10-11] (al-Hilālī, 1998:489)

[Hence, (remember how it was) when thy Sustainer summoned Moses: “Go unto those evildoing people, the people of pharaoh, who refuse to be conscious of Me!” Q26:10-11] (Asad, 1980:561)

Where *يَتَّقُونَ* is read ¹⁰⁵ *تَتَّقُونَ*. al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 3:293) expounds *al-'iltifāt* (person shift) indicates reproach, infringement, disparagement, and ridicule of the people of Pharaoh. Moreover, the person shift makes Prophet Moses startle at their extreme evil behaviour and action. For those who read it as *تَتَّقُونَ*, the mode of recitation stresses reprimandment and reproach of the wrong doers. The mode of recitation also benefits the purposes of communication among the believers so that they become more cautious and more God fearing. It is worthy to mention here that Asad relies on the exegesis of al-Zamakhsharī and al-Rāzi¹⁰⁶ in rendering his literal translation of Q26:11 to secure the communicative force (a statement of fact). Asad (1980:561) comments “lit., “Will they not be [or “become”] conscious [of Me]?” Zamakhsharī and Rāzi understand this rhetorical question in the sense apparent in my rendering, namely, as a statement of fact.”

Example 61

﴿لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنْزَفُونَ﴾

[Neither they will have Ghoul (any kind of hurt, abdominal pain, headache, a sin, etc.) from that, nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom. Q37:47] (al-Hilālī, 1998:599)

[Causing no headiness or intoxication. Q37:47] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:286).

[No headiness will be in it, and they will not get drunk thereon. Q37:47] (Asad, 1980:37)

﴿لَا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنْزَفُونَ﴾

[Wherefrom they will get neither any aching of the head, nor any intoxication. Q56:19] (al-Hilālī, 1998:734)

[That cause no headache nor intoxication. Q56:19] (Abdel Haleem, *ibid*:356).

[By which their minds will not be clouded and which will not make them drunk. Q56:19] (Asad, 1980:831)

The mode of recitation is either *يُنْزَفُونَ Yunzifūna* or *يُنْزَفُونَ Yunzafūna*. In the coming section we shall elaborate on the semantics of the two modes of recitation. For Mekkī b. Abu Ṭāleb (d. 437)¹⁰⁷ *Anzafa Yunzifu* (أَنْزَفَ يُنْزَفُ) means to get drunk and in this sense

¹⁰⁵ See al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ 7/7

¹⁰⁶ al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 3:293), al-Rāzi (1995, 12:122-123)

¹⁰⁷ Mekkī b. Abu Ṭāleb, al-'Ibānah 'an Ma'ānī al-Qirā'āt (1978).

يُنزَفُونَ reads *Wine does not make them drunk so they lose their brains as wine of this world does*. In another mode of reading, it is said *Anzafa Yunzafu* (أَنْزَفَ يُنْزَفُ) meaning they don't run out of wine as it is always the case in this world. In Q37:47 the priority is for *running out of drink* because ﴿لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ﴾ means they don't lose their brains. Whereas Q56:19 can render both meanings.¹⁰⁸ It should go without saying that the translation fails to capture this part *running out of drink* and registers the rendition as *suffering from intoxication* in the selected translations above. It is interesting to mention here what Munday (2001:52) pronounces concerning the translation of the legal texts which can apply to a sacred text as well “the goal of equivalent effect is also crucial in a legal text ... In order to function correctly, each text must stand for the same idea in each language and produce the same response. Otherwise, varied interpretations would give rise to legal confusion and potential loopholes.” It has always been witnessed that this state of confusion is always the case when it comes to the translation of religious arena because the translation fails to produce the same response in ST as Munday proclaims.

Example 62

It is worthy to note that the different modes of recitation can be exploited to twist the rendition of the text in order to serve certain theological issues. Consider Q7:156:

﴿قَالَ عَذَابِي أُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَاءُ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾

[He said: (As to) My Punishment I afflict therewith whom I will and My Mercy embraces all things. Q7:156] (al-Hilālī, 1998:222)

[God answered]: “With my chastisement do I afflict whom I will – but My grace overspreads everything. Q7:156] (Asad, 1980:226)

Muḥammad (2000:30) elaborates that the modes of recitation can be used to prove certain theological beliefs or to support their claims and views. The Muʿtazilites read أَشَاءُ as ¹⁰⁹أَسَاءُ and in this way the mode of recitation is exploited to serve their theological stance of divine justice, and the creation of deeds by man. Ibn Jinnī (d.392) (1969:1,261) holds that this mode of recitation ‘asā’ (أَسَاءُ) – meaning whoever commits wrongdoing –

¹⁰⁸ See Maʿānī al-Qurʾān lil Farā’ 2:385, 3:123, al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ 7:360.

¹⁰⁹ al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ, 4:402, al-Zamakhsharī 2003, 2:159, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, 8:23.

articulates more explicitly the divine justice than the other mode of recitation, namely ‘*ashā*’ (أَشَاءُ) – meaning whom I will – because punishment in the former reading is conditioned by wrong doing whereas the latter does not determine the reason of punishment, and it does not communicate the responsibility of man for his actions. Ibn Jinnī promotes further the rejection of the exegesis by Sunni exegetes¹¹⁰ that Allāh inflicts His punishment upon Whom He will whether s/he is a wrong-doer or not.¹¹¹

Example 55 above makes it necessary in this juncture to touch upon the exegetical and theological interpretation of Qur’ānic discourse and how this can affect the rendition of the translation of the meanings of the Qur’ān.

5.6 Exegetical and Theological Interpretation

Muqātil narrated that Sufyān al-Wāsiṭī said that someone who reads the Qur’ān and does not know its exegesis is like someone who upon receiving a book from the dearest people to himself, he rejoices in it and begs someone to read it to him, since he is unlettered himself, but finds no one. This is similar to someone who reads the Qur’ān and does not understand what is in it.¹¹² In the same way it is possible to read Arabic fluently, but have little understanding of the Qur’ān. This little understanding causes semantic ambiguity which can only be cleared if exegeses of the Qur’ān are consulted, as in:

Example 63

﴿ فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّي حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ ﴾

[And he said: “Alas! I did love the good (these horses) instead of remembering my Lord (in my ‘Asr prayer)” till the time was over, and (the sun) had hidden in the veil (of night). Q38:32]. (al-Hilālī, 1998:298)

[He would say, “Verily, I have come to love the love of all that is good because I bear my Sustainer in mind!” – (repeating these words as the steeds raced away,) until they were hidden by the veil (of distance-) Q38:32]. (Asad, 1980:698)

¹¹⁰ ibn Kathīr, Ṭabarī, Qurtubī.

¹¹¹ al-Muḥtaseb, 1/261.

¹¹² al-Balkhī, Muqātil B. Sulimān. (1979:26-27). *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*. Edited by ‘Abd Allāh Maḥmūd Shiḥātah. Cairo: al-Hayy’ah al-Miṣriyyah al-‘Āmmah Lil-Kitāb.

[He said, 'Lo, I have loved the love of good things better than the remembrance of my Lord, until the sun was hidden behind the veil. Q38:32]. (Arberry, 1998:466)

al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 4:88-90) mentions that **حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ** means 'horses' and **بِالْحِجَابِ** indicates the sundown. al-Baidāwī¹¹³ (1999, 2:312) mentions that Prophet Suleiman was busy parading his horses till the sun set and he missed the prayer. He adds (ibid:312) (**الخيل** horses) can be named **الخَيْر** (great amount of money) because making money is related to horses. What we deduce from Q38:32 is that, **الخَيْر** is translated as *horses* in al-Hilālī and *all that is good* as in Asad's, while in **تَوَارَتْ** the annexed pronoun **ت** is rendered as *the sun* in the former example and as *the horses* as in the latter's. Moreover, Asad translates **حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ** as *horses were hidden by the veil (of distance)* whereas it is the veil of darkness because of the dusk. We have seen above how both translations differ due to different exegesis they refer to for interpretation; in case of Asad, he refers to Rāzī's¹¹⁴ interpretation of this passage, whereas al-Hilālī refers to Ibn Kathīr, Ṭabarī, and Qurṭubī. Semantic ambiguity constitutes a special problem in dealing with Qur'ānic discourse norms as Q38:32 demonstrates. In this regard, the problem this time concerns the translatability of some Qur'ānic words.

When the Qur'ān is accepted by the Muslim as an infallible source of revelation, a theology responsive to any intellectual climate can possibly proceed by making deduction from the Qur'ānic revealed data to sustain the claims of this particular intellectual climate. Believers relate the knowledge of God they believe they possess in their own religious consciousness and community, and read the Qur'ān in the light of that. However, Morgan & Barton (1988:13) claim that previous determination precedes interpretation and this applies on religious societies and their scriptures. They (ibid:13-14) elaborate that "the social function of legal texts requires a single interpretation which can be known with sufficient certainty and consistency to allow some confidence about how the courts will decide particular cases. How far, if at all, this applies to a religious community's use of its scriptures varies according to how the religion is understood, and especially how revelation is understood within it."

¹¹³ See al-Nasafi (1999, 3:154-155), al-Rāzī (1995, 9:44-45)

¹¹⁴ al-Rāzī (1995, 13:204-207)

The interpretation of Qur'ānic discourse may owe much to a particular theological position, but it is an interpretation of the information that is there in the text. It is no coincidence that the exegetes almost always attempt to fathom out the Qur'ān and draw much theological capital from it supporting their theological point of view and that applies to all theological schools from Mu'tazilites through Ash'aris to the present day. Kees Versteegh (1997:22) expounds how Qur'ānic exegesis can give totally different insight of the revelation and exemplify it by naming the mystical interpretation. He adds on (ibid:22) "for the mystics, the Qur'ān as we have it is only the surface of the truth: beneath the text there are hidden meanings that only the initiated who are inspired by divine knowledge can understand. They operated with the two categories of *zāhir* "outer, manifest" and *bāḥin* "inner, hidden" and maintained that the common believers could understand only the manifest meaning of the text, whereas the initiated were able to penetrate into its symbolic, hidden meaning."

The question that arises is: How do Muslim scholars evaluate any translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān? It is expected that they will depend first on how satisfactorily it is able to do justice to the linguistic, semantic, and theological reality of the text itself, and secondly on whether it is thought to provide an authentic expression of the Qur'ān. In this context, it is worthy to note here that Abdul-Raof (2001) did not refer to the theological implication on the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān. Harrās (n.d.:106) supports Ibn Taymiyyah who represents the main stream Islam when he comments on the issue of 'rising over the Throne'. He (ibid:106-107) holds that Salafī scholastics have agreed on authenticating the 'rising over the Throne' by Allāh without going into details concerning the manner or the measure of the rising, without giving a similitude, without interpretation or disowning the fact that Allāh rises or descends. It will be immediately clear that the different schools of thought (Mu'tazilites, Ash'aris, Shi'ites, al-Jahmiyyah¹¹⁵) yield different renditions of Q7:54. The major differences between the Qur'ān exegetes referred to above are represented by the following theological notions which have direct impact on Qur'ān translation. These are:

1. Metaphor

¹¹⁵ *al-Jahmiyyah* is called after al-Jahm b. Şafwān al-Termidhī (d. 128/745).

Sunni theologians believe that the Qur'ān does not involve metaphorical expressions with regards to the names and attributes of Allāh (اسماء وصفات الله) such as (الاستواء), as in example 56 below; however, non-Sunni scholars, such as Shī'i, Ibāḍi and Sunni Mu'tazili claim that the Qur'ānic expression of (الاستواء) is metaphorical.

Example 64

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ﴾

[Indeed your Lord is Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He rose over (*Istawa*) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). Q7:54] (al-Hilālī, 1998:208)

It is known that al-Hilālī represent the Sunni Islam. In the Islamic profession of faith as Harrās maintains (n.d:106-107) Allāh rose over the Throne in a manner or measure that Allāh alone knows. Whereas in Shī'i, Ibāḍi and Mu'tazili profession of faith, Q7:54 is interpreted differently and consequently, this interpretation affects the translation into English. Lalani (2000:93) elaborates on the views of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir regarding the attributes of Allāh. She (ibid.:93) mentions that “when al-Bāqir was asked about the relationship of divine attributes to God, he is believed to have replied: ‘There is nothing like God and nothing resembles Him.’ She (ibid.:95) adds that God in al-Bāqir’s view, does not resemble anything and is beyond imagination and limitation. He cannot be seen with the naked eye but can be apprehended by the inner reality of faith and can be described by signs and symbols.” The following translation *An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'ān* represents the Shī'i view. Q7:54 is translated and furbished by a commentary which is vital in shedding the light on the claim is being made:

[Verily your Lord is Allāh, who created the heavens and the earth in six days; then He mounted the Throne (of authority) Q7:54]. (Ayatullah Sayyid, 2001:364-365).

The previous translation is furbished with the following commentary: ‘... then He mounted the Throne (of Authority),’ “this Phrase metaphorically points out to the absolute encompassment of Allāh, and His dominion, upon the management of the affairs of the heavens and the earth after their creation. However, after the creation of the heavens and

the earth He held the reins of leading them. This statement means that not only creation belongs to Him, but also running and leading the world of existence are with Him.”

It should be noted here the metaphorical reference to the ST contradicts the doctrine of Sunni Islam and is considered as mistranslation. The view is supported by Sunni Muslim scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah in Harrās (n.d.) and Ibn Qayyim (1992) and Al al-Sheikh (1992). Harrās (n.d.:64) states in his commentary on Ibn Tayyimiyyah that Allāh comes, descends, approaches and rises over His Throne. These are all acts done by Him and any call to negate, or disown Allāh of these acts is against the tenets of the Islamic faith.

Yūsuf ʿAlī as a Muʿtazilī translates Q7:54 as:

[Your Guardian-Lord is Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and is firmly established on the throne (of authority), Q7:54]. (Yūsuf ʿAlī, 2000:120).

It is apparent that Yūsuf ʿAlī opts for the metaphorical reference to support his Muʿtazilite views as another example of the impact of the theological stance of the translator on the translation of the meanings of the Qurʾān.

Asad renders Q7:54 as:

[Verily, your Sustainer is God, who has created the heavens and the earth in six aeons, and is established on the Throne of His almightiness. Q7:54] (Asad, 1980:211)

The translation is different in two ways (1) the use of *aeons* (an indefinitely long period of time) and not days, and (2) *the Throne of His almightiness*. It is observable in the commentary that he contends that rising over the Throne is meant to be metaphorically used. He states (ibid:211) that “as regards for the term ʿarsh (lit., ‘throne’ or ‘seat of power’), all Muslim commentators, classical and modern, are unanimously of the opinion that its metaphorical use in the Qurʾān is meant to express God’s absolute sway over all His creation.”

Example 54 left no room for doubt that the impact of theological orientation of the translator imposes itself on the translation.

2. The ‘Seeing of Allāh’ (رؤية الله)

Example 65

﴿وَجُوهِيَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاصِرَةٌ﴾ ﴿إِلَى رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ﴾

[Some faces that Day shall be Nādirah (shining and radiant). Looking at their Lord (Allāh); Q75:22-23] (al-Hilālī, 1998:801)

[Some faces, that day, will beam (in brightness and beauty), looking towards their Lord. Q75:22-23] (Yūsuf^cAlī, 2000:514)

[Some faces will on that day be bright with happiness, looking up to their Sustainer. Q75:22-23] (Asad, 1980:913)

For al-Mannā^cī (1992:205-207), Mu^ctazilites negate the capability of seeing Allāh and prove this concept by referring to Q7:103:

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

[No vision can grasp Him, but His Grasp is over all vision. He is the Most Subtle and Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things. Q6:103] (al-Hilālī, 1998:187)

[No Human vision can encompass Him, whereas He encompasses all human vision: for He alone is unfathomable, all-aware. Q6:103] (Asad, 1980:187-188)

[No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision. He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted with all things. Q6:103] (Yūsuf Alī, 2000:107)

It is said that الإدراك followed by الأَبْصَارُ is a synonym of vision. However, الإدراك in general could mean understanding, puberty, maturity, ripeness, etc. Mu^ctazilites believe as long as Q6:103 states that Allāh is not to be seen by human, then Q75:23 does not mean that Allāh can be looked at. They interpret نَاطِرَةً in Q75:23 as consideration, ponderment, or waiting for Allāh's mercy but not sight vision. al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 4:649-650) holds that نَاطِرَةً could mean expectation and hope.

The way both Q6:103 and Q75:22 are captured in translation illuminates the claim that the exegetical and theological stance of the translator has its impact on the translation. On one hand, al-Hilālī renders (نَاطِرَةً) explicitly as *looking at their lord*. Thus, it can be said that al-Hilālī represents the views of Sunni Muslims. On the other hand, Asad chooses to translate it as *look up to* meaning *to admire* or *to have a feeling of respect for*. It is interesting to register here how *to look up to* means in the Oxford English Dictionary (V.IX, 1989:7):

a) to direct the look or face up towards; to raise the eyes towards, in adoration, supplication. (b) *fig.* to have a feeling of respect or veneration for.

Now let us consider some of the usages of the expression *look up to*:

- These three ladies ... **look up to** him, as their patron and Defender.
- Sweden **looks up to** British agriculture as the model for imitation.
- England had at last found the man **to whom it could look up**.
- The Whig members still **looked up to** him as their leader.

3. 'The Hand of Allāh' (يد الله)

Example 66

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ﴾

[Verily, those who give Bai'ā (pledge) to you (O Muḥammad) they are giving Bai'ā (pledge) to Allāh. The Hand of Allāh is over their hands. Q48:10] (al-Hilālī, 1998:694)

[Behold, all who pledge their allegiance to thee pledge their allegiance to God: The Hand of God is over their hands. Q48:10] (Asad, 1980:786)

In order to show the theological influence on the translation, it is interesting to mention in this connection the commentary footnote of Asad's translation. Asad holds (ibid:786) "the phrase "the Hand of God is over their hands" does not merely allude to the hand-clasp with which all of the Prophet's followers affirmed their allegiance to him, but is also a metaphor for His being a witness to their pledge." On the contrary, al-Hilālī (1998:892) states in the appendix to his translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān "we must believe in all the qualities of Allāh which Allāh has stated in His Book (the Qur'ān) or mentioned through His messenger (Muḥammad) without changing their meaning or ignoring them completely or twisting the meanings or likening them (giving resemblance) to any of the created things." In the same vein, Mattson (2008: 40) comments that "the Qur'ān therefore, does not generally allow the listener/reader to approach God by associating Him with corporeal images and indicates that human imagination simply cannot comprehend the reality that is God. At the same time, the Qur'ān does not refrain from describing God, but it does so mostly by invoking his "names" or "attributes" (*asmā*)."

﴿هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿

[He is Allāh, than Whom there is *lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He) the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen (open). He is the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. He is Allāh than Whom there is *lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He) the King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects, the Giver of security, the Watcher over His creatures, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allāh! (High is He) above all that they associate as partners with Him. He is Allāh, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the Best Names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. Q59:22-24]

5.7 The Suitability of the Answer to the Intents of the Question

(The expression ‘the suitability of the answer to the intents of the question) means
(مطابقة الجواب لمقتضى السؤال)

The norm in any common communicative situation is that the answer should follow the question, namely, linguistically, semantically and stylistically. This might appear not applicable as far as Qur’ānic discourse is concerned though it always does. In this regard, we shall draw attention to the ways in which the response of the question comes out as if it does not always follow suit. What makes the issue a problem for translation is that the meaning of Qur’ānic discourse may be rendered in translation; however, the same response the TT inflicts upon the readers cannot be captured in translation. This is all the more so when translation cannot explore the nuances of the question and answer in Qur’ānic discourse, as in:

Example 67

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَى
وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿

[They ask you (O Muḥammad) what they should spend. Say: Whatever you spend of good must be for parents and kindred and orphans and *alMasākīn* (the poor) and the wayfarers, and whatever you do of good deeds, truly, Allāh knows it well. Q2:215] (al-Hilālī, 1998:45)

Where the question *what they should spend* appears not to complement with the answer which fully explains the ways of spending. al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 1:254) expounds the underlying motives of the question: clarifying the ways of spending. He (ibid:356) adds the Qur’ān spells out what is more important, namely, the ways of spending but what they should spend is clearly understood. Hindāwī, ‘Abd Allāh (1995:22) elaborates that a part of the question is ellipted: who the target for spending is, so the question can read: *what they should spend and to whom they should give*. That is why the answer covers both parts: *whatever you spend of good must be for parents, etc.*

[They will ask you about almsgiving. Say: ‘Whatever you bestow in charity must go to parents and to kinsfolk ... Q2:215] (Dawood, 2003:31-32)

[They ask you (Prophet) what they should give. Say, ‘Whatever you give should be for parents... Q2:215] (Abdel Haleem, 2004:24)

Consider how Dawood renders the translation without managing to depict the subtlety of the question and its inimitable eloquence. It is considered a paraphrase which lacks the same response the TT has on its readers. It is observed also that Abdel Haleem has lost the word (خَيْرٍ) in translation with all what is said about the term in the books of exegesis and how the word (خَيْرٍ) refers to the good lawful money spent in good lawful ways. So, it is another example of translation loss and it demonstrates the unique inimitable style of ‘asking’ in Qur’ānic discourse.

Example 68

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ﴾

[And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: “That which is beyond your needs.” Q2:219] (al-Hilālī, 1998:47)

[And they will ask thee as to what they should spend (in God’s cause). Say: “Whatever you can spare.” Q2:219] (Asad, 1980:48)

Among the many characteristics of the inimitability of Qur'ānic discourse is its succinctness and brevity. It appears that the question: *what they ought to spend* does not comply with the answer *al-ʿAfu* (that which is beyond your needs). Hindāwī (1995:25) mentions more meanings of the word *al-ʿAfu* which can not be captured in translation: overlooking the sin and abolishing the punishment, a name of Allāh¹¹⁶ who overlooks the sin and abolishes its effect – the meaning here suits he who spends his money in the cause of Allāh because he waits for multiplying his good deeds and eradicating his bad deeds – one of the qualities of those who fear Allāh, multiplicity, and the easiness and tolerance. The word could mean all these especially when there is unity of meaning. It should go without saying that both translations of al-Hilālī and that of Asad: “That which is beyond your needs”, “Whatever you can spare” cover only part of the meanings the TT can render. Another point to make here is that the question *what they should spend* reads *what the amount of money they should spend* and that is why the answer is suitable to the intents of the question.

Example 69

﴿قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ﴾

[They said, “Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us what it is. Verily to us all cows are alike, And surely, if Allāh wills, we will be guided.” Q2:70] (al-Hilālī, 1998:15)

﴿قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولَ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا شِيَةَ فِيهَا﴾

[He [Mūsa (Moses)] said, “He says, ‘It is a cow neither trained to till the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no other colour except bright yellow.’ ” Q2:71] (al-Hilālī, 1998:15)

The story here shows how astonished the people were when the prophet Moses describes the cow. Out of their surprise they ask what it is when in fact they want to know the qualities of this miraculous cow.

¹¹⁶ al-Halveti, Shaykh Tosum Bayrak al-Jerrahi, (2000:177) contends “*al-ʿAfu* is the opposite of *al-Muntaqim*, the Avenger. Its meaning is close to that of *al-Ghafur*, the All-Forgiving One, only here the sense is more intensive. The root of the word *Ghafour* means to overlook sins, while the root of the word *ʿAfu* means to destroy sins, eliminate them altogether. In the first instance the overlooked sins still exist; in the second, the eliminated sins disappear.”

Example 70

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا﴾

[They ask you (O Muḥammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: “In them is a great sin, and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit.”Q2:219] (al-Hilālī, 1998:46-47)

The question again here does not mean what alcoholic drink is or what gambling is, but it means what the reasons behind prohibiting drinking and gambling are, in other words they want to know its ruling.

Example 71

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ﴾

[They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months (i.e. 1st, 7th, 11th and 12th months of the Islāmic calendar). Say, “Fighting therein is a great (transgression)”Q2:217] (al-Hilālī, 1998:46)

The question is supposed to read *they ask you about fighting in the Sacred Month* but Qur’ānic discourse employs a different style *they ask you about the Sacred Month therein fighting occurs*. The foregrounding here of the sacred month is not without good reasons. The reasons to be mentioned now are considered translation loss because they are not captured in translation. The foregrounding emphasises the great importance of the Sacred Months, it is a unique Qur’ānic style where elements of succinctness first then detail are used for the sake of drawing attention and interest to the issue under discussion. For the sake of completion, al-Razī (1:299) contends that the repetition of *fighting* as an indefinite word twice identifies with two different kinds of fighting: that in the cause of Allāh and consolidating Islam and that which is not. That fighting in the cause of destroying Islam and empowering the disbelieving is the fighting worthy of being described as *كَبِيرٌ* - great). However, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. ‘Āshūr (1997, 2:325-326) holds the repetition does not always render different meanings. The point is that fighting in the Sacred Months is a great sin and the use of indefinite words serves the purpose of generalization (any fighting) and

not specificity (a particular fighting). So it is a ruling for any fighting occurs in a Sacred Month.

5.8 Synonymy in Qur'ān Translation

Ullmann (1957:108) points out that “it is almost a truism that total synonymy is an extremely rare occurrence, a luxury that language can ill afford”. The problem is that a synonym is a context-domain. Translation should almost always go for the more contextual appropriate word. Quite justifiably of course then, the work of a translator is so strenuous that the translator constantly strives to find the matching magic formula that will help him/her achieve his/her task in the most appropriate manner. The problem that synonymy raises in translation is that there is no exact synonym. Therefore, the inter-changeability of two or more words in the same context does not render exact synonymy. There will always remain a difference (a remainder). It has to be recognized that the issue of equivalence in translation is one of the most complicated issues: the problem of which exists within the system of synonymy in the very same language - there is no complete identical synonymy within, for instance, the Arabic language - and between one language and another. Taken together, these particulars embody a fact that equivalence in translation is hard to realize. al-Zarkashī (1988, 2:491-492) rejects both equivalence and synonymy in the Arabic language and mentions that al-^cAskarī embraces the same view. He (ibid:492) expounds that the use of (الواو / and), and (أو / or) between the synonyms shows that the synonyms are not identical in meaning and each denotes a shade of meaning different than the other.

Example 72

﴿وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا﴾

[And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, Q4:128] (al-Hilālī 1998:131)

[And if a woman has reason to fear ill-treatment from her husband, or that he might turn away from her, Q4:128] (Asad 1980:129)

[If a wife fears high-handedness or alienation from her husband, Q4:128] (Abdel Haleem 2004:62)

[If a woman fears ill-treatment or desertion on the part of her husband, Q4:128] (Dawood 2003:74)

[If a woman fears rebelliousness or aversion in her husband, Q4:128] (Arberry 1998:91)

It is observed that though both the two Arabic words (نَشُورًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا) are synonyms they provide different shades of meaning. al-Zarkashī argues that the use of (أَوْ) confirms that the two synonyms do not denote the same meaning. It is also clear from the different ways of translating the two words (نَشُورًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا) into English: cruelty or desertion, ill-treatment from her husband, or that he might turn away from her, high-handedness or alienation, ill-treatment or desertion, rebelliousness or aversion that the semantic notion of synonymy constitutes a kind of difficulty in translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. It has been argued that there is no absolute synonymy in Arabic. As it has been clarified that although (نَشُورًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا) are synonymous they do not stand for the same meaning. Synonymy represents a more persistent problem when it is between one language and another since there is no complete identical synonymy.

Example 73

﴿فَالْمَلَقِيَّاتِ ذِكْرًا﴾ ﴿عَذْرًا أَوْ نَذْرًا﴾

[And by the angels that bring the revelations to the Messengers, To cut off all excuses or to warn; Q77:5-6] (al-Hilālī 1998:805-806)

[and then giving forth a reminder, (promising) freedom from blame or (offering) a warning! Q77:5-6] (Asad 1980:919)

[delivering a message that excuses or warns. Q77:5-6] (Abdel Haleem 2004:403)

[Then spread abroad a message, whether of justification or warning. Q77:5-6] (Yūsuf °Ali 2000:518)

al-Zarkashī (1988, 2:492) states that (العذر والنذر واحد) *al-°udhr* and *al-nudhr* is of the same kind which means they are synonymous. The problem which arises is that even though (نُذْرًا / عَذْرًا) are synonymous, they indicate different meanings¹¹⁷. Tammām Ḥassān (2000, 1:289-290) elaborates on the issue of synonymy and mentions that the insufficiency of words and the abundance of meaning are among the reasons why

¹¹⁷ Cf. Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. °Ashūr (1997,14:422-423)

synonymy is rejected. Synonymy identifies a number of words for a single meaning and this is the opposite of the fact that there are multi-meanings for a single word. He (ibid:290) contends that there is no synonymy and each word has its own special shade of meaning.

Example 74

﴿لِتَسْلُكُوا مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا﴾

[That you may go about therein in broad roads. Q71:20] (al-Hilālī 1998:789)

[so that you might walk thereon on spacious roads. Q71:20] (Asad 1980:897)

[to walk along its spacious paths. Q71:20] (Abdel Haleem 2004:391)

[That ye may tread the valley-ways thereof. Q71:20] (Pickthall 1997:425)

[that thereof you may thread ways, ravines. Q71:20] (Arberry 1998:609)

Both (سُبُلًا and فِجَاجًا) are of the same kind and they mean ways/ roads. However, each word has its own special shade of meaning, for example (فِجَاجًا) means *spacious roads*. So when translation renders (سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا) as broad roads or spacious roads it is considered as translation loss. In other words, the translation here does not encompass all the shades of meaning which the two words entail.

Example 75

﴿وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيْضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ﴾

[and among the mountains are streaks white and red, of varying colours and (others) very black. Q35:27] (al-Hilālī 1998:585)

[just as in the mountains there are streaks of white and red of various shades, as well as (others) raven-black. Q35:27] (Asad 1980:670)

[That there are in the mountains layers of white and red of various hues, and jet black. Q35:27] (Abdel Haleem 2004:278)

[And in the mountains are tracts white and red, of various shades of colour, and black intense in hue. Q35:27] (Yūsuf^cAli 2000:365)

Where the translation encounters the difficulty of providing two distinguished words having the same communication force as that which (غَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ) employs in the SL.

Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. ʿĀshūr (1997, 11:302-303) states that (غَرَابِيبٌ) is the plural form of (غَرَابِيبٌ) and (غَرَابِيبٌ) is a name for a very black thing and it can refer to (الغراب - crow) since crow is popular for its black colour. (سُودٌ) (ibid:303) is the plural form of (أَسْوَدٌ) which means anything coloured black.

Example 76

﴿وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِ بَرِيئًا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا﴾

[And whoever earns a fault or a sin and then throws it on to someone innocent, he has indeed burdened himself with falsehood and a manifest sin. Q4:112] (al-Hilālī 1998:128)

[and anyone who commits an offence or a sin, and then throws the blame on to some innocent person, has burdened himself with deceit as well as flagrant sin. Q4:112] (Abdel Haleem 2004:61)

[He that commits an offence or a crime and charges an innocent man with it, shall bear the guilt of calumny and gross injustice. Q4:112] (Dawood 2003:72)

[And whoso committeth a delinquency or crime, then throweth (the blame) thereof upon the innocent, hath burdened himself with falsehood and a flagrant crime. Q4:112] (Pickthall 1997:66)

al-Zarkashī (1988, 2:492) elaborates that (خَطِيئَةٌ *khāṭi'ah*) is whatever is done by mistake whereas (إِثْمًا *ithm*) is whatever is done on purpose. al-Zamakhsharī (2003, 1:552) argues that (خَطِيئَةٌ *khāṭi'ah*) and (إِثْمًا *ithm*) are of the same kind but (خَطِيئَةٌ *khāṭi'ah*) is small in degree whereas (إِثْمًا *ithm*) is greater.

Example 77

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ

يَفْقَهُونَ﴾

[It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and has given you a place of residing (on the earth or in your mother's wombs) and a place of storage [in the earth (in

your graves) or in your father's loins]. Indeed, We have explained in detail Our revelations (this Qur'ān) for people who understand. Q6:98] (al-Hilālī 1998:186)

[And He it is who has brought you (all) into being out of one living entity, and (has appointed for each of you) a time-limit (on earth) and a resting-place (after death): clearly, indeed, have We spelled out these messages unto people who can grasp the truth! Q6:98] (Asad 1980:186)

[It was he that created you from a single being and furnished you with a dwelling and a resting-place. We have made plain Our revelations to men of understanding. Q6:98] (Dawood 2003:101)

[And it is He Who hath produced you from a single being, and (hath given you) a habitation and a repository. We have detailed our revelations for a people who have understanding. Q6:98] (Pickthall 1998:94)

[It is He Who has produced you from a single person. Here is a place of sojourn and a place of departure. We detail Our signs for people who understand. Q6:98] (Yūsuf 'Ali 2000:107)

[It is He Who produced you from one living soul, and then a lodging-place, and then a repository. We have distinguished the signs for a people who understand. Q6:98] (Arberry 1998:133)

[It is He Who first produced you from a single soul, then gave you a place to stay (in life) and a resting place (after death). We have made Our revelations clear to those who understand. Q6:98] (Abdel Haleem 2004:87).

For the sake of completion, Asad (1980:186) mentions in his commentary on Q6:98 that “the commentators differ widely as to the meaning of the terms *mustaqarr* and *mustawda* in this context.” He (ibid:186) defines *mustaqarr* as “the limit of a course” – i.e., the point at which a thing reaches its fulfilment or end – and *mustawda* as “a place of consignment” or “repository”¹¹⁸. It is worthy to note here that *mustaqarr* according to Tammām Ḥassān (2000, 1:316-317) is the womb and cites Q22:5

﴿وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى﴾

[And We cause whom We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, Q22:5]

¹¹⁸ Cf. Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b. 'Āshūr (1997,4:395-397)

and Q23:13

﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ﴾

[Thereafter We made him (the offspring of Adam) as a Nuṭfah (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge) (and lodged it) in a safe lodging (womb of the woman). Q23:13]

to substantiate this claim. While he (ibid:317) decides that *mustawda*^c is the grave. The rendition of (*mustaqarr* مُسْتَقَرٌّ) the womb as *a time-limit, a dwelling, a habitation, a place of sojourn, a lodging-place and a place to stay* demonstrates how the semantic notion of synonymy can be misleading.

Example 78

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

[The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Q1:3] (al-Hilālī 1998:1)

[The Lord of Mercy, the Giver of mercy. Q1:3] (Abdel Haleem 2004:3)

[The Most Gracious, the Dispenser of Grace. Q1:3] (Asad 1980:1-2)

[The All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate. Q1:3] (Arberry 1998:1)

[The Beneficent, the Merciful. Q1:3] (Pickthall 1998:2)

Tammām Ḥassān (2000, 1:294) contends that (الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ) though having the same meaning, denotes various shades of meaning. He (ibid:294-298) lists different *sūrah*s in the Qur'ān where (الرَّحْمَنُ) collocates with specific usage which indicates special meaning unlike that of (الرَّحِيمُ). al-Sāmarrā'ī (2004:39) mentions that (الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ) are two forms of the same root. (الرَّحْمَنُ) weighs (فَعْلَانُ *fa'lān*) the same as عَطْشَانُ *āṭshān* thirsty, جَوْعَانُ *jaw'ān* hungry, غَضَبَانُ *ghaḍbān* angry while (الرَّحِيمُ) weighs (فَعِيلُ *fa'īl*) the same as كَرِيمُ *karīm* generous, طَوِيلُ *ṭawīl*, and جَمِيلُ *jamīl* beautiful. It is noticeable that the form of (فَعْلَانُ *fa'lān*) signifies regeneration and revival whereas the form of (فَعِيلُ *fa'īl*) indicates consistency and unchangeability. al-Sāmarrā'ī (ibid:39) comments that the Qur'ān uses the two forms (فَعِيلُ *fa'īl*) and (فَعْلَانُ *fa'lān*) to assert that Allāh's attribute of mercy is ever regenerated and unchangeable. The problem is the semantic

denotation of *regeneration* and *consistency* which (الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ) communicate cannot be captured in translation.

Example 79

﴿الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ﴾ ﴿وَإِذَا كَالُواهُمْ أَوْ وَّزَنُوا لَهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ﴾

[Who, when they take a measure from people, take in full. But if they give by measure or by weight to them, they cause loss. Q83:2-3]

The verbs 'iktāla اِكْتَالَ and kāla كَالَ have the same root K.Y.L. كَيْل, the problem lies in the fact that though the verbs (kāla كَالَ and 'iktāla اِكْتَالَ) have the same root, they are different in derivational patterns. The two verbs also vary in contextual meaning: the former is against while the latter is for the people, though both are in the semantic area of measurement.

5.9 Conclusion

The difficulty of translating the inimitable Qur'ān does not stem only from the lack of necessary cultural knowledge but it also goes back to the unique linguistic, stylistic and phonetic features of the Qur'ān. Abdul-Raof (2003:432) is of the opinion that the study of the subject-matters of the Qur'ān and the exploration of its linguistic patterns come among the priorities to understand the Qur'ān. These claims have been exemplified throughout the chapter to disclose any misunderstanding or ambiguities. The preset determination to follow certain school of thought can raise issues of tainted ideologies and can deprive the translation of large readership. The issue of sticking to the main stream Islam guarantees the translation an acceptable readership, especially when dealing with the Book of Islam which is considered the creed book for millions of Muslims all over the world.

We shall conclude this chapter by summarising briefly the views of al-Rāfi'i (1990:224-258) on the i'jāz (inimitability) of the Qur'ān because his valuable views will help clinch the reasons behind the difficulties that stem from the aforementioned features of Qur'ānic discourse. These views are as follows:

- 1 Perfection of the language.
- 2 The multifarious inimitable repetition in the rendition of the Qur'ānic 'āyas.

- 3 The inimitability of the compatibility of every single Qur'ānic structure.
- 4 The impossibility of the Qur'ān being conceived by a human.
- 5 Qur'ānic discourse is anxiety and instability free.
- 6 The apprehensive grandeur of Qur'ānic discourse.
- 7 The wide range of suppleness and malleableness of its exegetical interpretation.
- 8 The fittingness of its rhetoric to its discourse.
- 9 Its unique prototypical music.
10. The psychological encompassment of the different attitudes and states of humans.
- 11 The composition of its phonemes and lexis and the absolute harmony among them all.
- 12 The consideration of the self's natural habits.
- 13 Qur'ānic linguistic features are above the language.
- 14 The rhetoric and eloquence of its morphological and grammatical case endings.
- 15 Due to all the above, the Qur'ān never makes weary because of repetition or the passage of time.

Conclusion and Recommendations

We have presented a detailed account of the notion of equivalence in translation, definitions, types and levels of equivalence and the problems of equivalence with special reference to Qur'ānic discourse and in the context of the Qur'ānic Cognitive Model.

We have also provided an outline of several selected translations. Each outline has offered the major features of the translation approach in terms of style, accuracy, and inaccuracy. Translations of Qur'ānic discourse must present the message in such a way that people feel its relevance (the expressive element in communication) and can respond to it in action (the imperative function) (cf. Nida and Taber, 1969:24). On the other hand, it has been observed that the 'equivalent response' is hard to realize and even harder to measure. House (1997:4) is of the view that "assuming it is true that a translation should produce equivalent responses, the question remains, however, whether the degree to which this requirement is met, can be empirically tested. If it cannot be tested, it seems fruitless to postulate the requirement, and the appeal to "equivalence of response" is really of no more value than the philologists' and hermeneuticists' criterion of "capturing the spirit of the original." The point of departure here is that equivalence (though it has always been the central part of translation studies) cannot be attained at all levels, equivalence is not identicalness, equivalence is a chimera, etc. Therefore, the QCM has been proposed as the frame model. However, Munday (2001:50) argues that "equivalence is an issue that will remain central to the practice of translation, even if translation studies and translation theory has, for the time being at least, marginalized it." Abdul-Raof (2005b:172) holds that "the translator's creativity is tied to the SL linguistic and cultural norms. Paraphrase, through domestication, transposition or dynamic equivalence, may be the solution, but it robs the Qur'ānic text of its distinctive religious character."

The inimitability of the Qur'ān consists in the fact that the (language of the Qur'ān) indicates all the requirements of the situations, whether they are stated or understood. This is the highest stage of speech. In addition, the Qur'ān is perfect in choice of words and excellence of arrangements and combination. This is its inimitability, a quality that surpasses comprehension. Something of it may be understood by those who have taste for it

is the result of their contact with the Arabic language and their possession of the habit of it. They may thus understand as much of the inimitability of the Qur'ān as their taste permits. There is a need for QCM to be established as a preliminary basic background for those who find in themselves the potentiality to indulge in as strenuous a work as that of the translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. It has almost always been observed that in the absence of QCM the result is not authenticated by Muslim scholars because in some cases the translation fails to present the Islamic religion as believed and performed by Sunni Muslims. It is essential then that the basic beliefs and principles on which QCM is based should be taken into account on the part of the translator of the meaning of the Qur'ān. Here arises the need for QCM to present the basic claims of the Qur'ān and minimise the degree of deviation from the main stream Islam. Thus, the translator can focus more on the problematic features of Qur'ānic discourse. The difficulty of translating the inimitable Qur'ān does not stem only from the lack of necessary cultural knowledge but it also goes back to the unique linguistic, stylistic and phonetic features of the Qur'ān.

We have elaborated an exemplary and analytical account of the perfection of the language, the inimitability of the compatibility of every single Qur'ānic structure, the apprehensive grandeur of Qur'ānic discourse, the fittingness of its rhetoric to its discourse, its unique prototypical music, the composition of its phonemes and lexis and the absolute harmony among them all, the rhetoric and eloquence of its morphological and grammatical case endings, and how the Qur'ānic linguistic features are above the language. Due to all the above, achieving the equivalence in translating the meaning of the Qur'ān is a chimera. In the same vein, Abdul-Raof (1999:45) believes that "translation theory fails to provide a solution to problems similar to the ones cited above, that translation is no more than an act of interpretation and an approximation, and that there is no total equivalence." In this connection, al-Zarkashī (1,262-263) holds that no translator can translate the Qur'ān because translation tries to exchange a word for its equivalent and this is not possible as far as Qur'ānic discourse is concerned and he substantiates his claims by Q8:58:

﴿وَمَا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَى سَوَاءٍ﴾

[If you (O Muhammad) fear treachery from any people throw back (their covenant) to them (so as to be) on equal terms (that there will be no more covenant between you and them). Q 8:58]

al-Zarkashī (1988,1:549) clarifies that to translate Q8:58 one needs to explain what is implied, restore what is excluded, and to probe the consequential underlying semantic characteristics of the Arabic syntax. He (ibid:549) offers interpretation of what Q8:58 entails:

If you have a convent with some people and you fear treachery from them, inform them that you breach the convent and declare war so that both of you will be equal in having the right information about the breachment of the convent

Therefore, finding equivalent English words - which can render the same meaning the Arabic ones in Q8:58 can render - is unfeasible.

There are some important features which should be kept into consideration in the process of evaluating the translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān. These features are whether they have sacrificed effect for accuracy, how the peculiar terms in Islam, such as *al-Muṭṭaqūn*, *al-Ṣalāh*, and *Zakāh* etc. have been translated and whether they have been retained in Arabic form or given explanatory notes, whether 'Allāh', the name of 'God', is retained and preferred to 'God' or not, and how proper names and words have been transliterated. Other features are what the extent to which the translator has deviated from the original, whether the author has been misrepresented by the translator, through omitting certain sections or by providing a lengthy translation, to what extent the text has been deculturalized or transferred to the TL culture, and how the translation has managed with the problems of Arabic linguistics in general and Arabic rhetoric *balāgha* in particular. One further point is assessing the referential and pragmatic accuracy of the translation.

Based on my present research, I can provide useful recommendations to the Qur'ān translator. The Qur'ān translator has to achieve the semantic suitability among equivalent structures, render an appropriate, equivalent style that carries an equivalent communication load. He/she must underline the knowledge of translations problems such as adjustment, addition, subtraction, alteration, etc. He/she is to manipulate techniques of adjustments of grammar, lexicon and syntactic structure between the SL and TL. However, he/she has to avoid paraphrasing and taking liberties with the text of the Qur'ān as this leads to misrepresentation and serious faults in the rendition. To help identifying an intelligible product he/she can insert additional lexical items, to suit either the grammar or the stylistic

norms and culture of the TL, as long as they do not counter-affect the meaning of the SL message.

It has become clear the centrality of understanding the context of the SL message as a vital element in the process of translation. So he/she should avoid the lexical 'equivalence' of words translated across cultural gaps which often obscures semantic intelligibility and intentionality. He/she has to explore the SL culture in order to know how to deal with words which have a specific cultural meaning. This necessitates that he/she has the same level of understanding of the cultures – including the languages of both SL and TL.

The optimal outcome includes rendering translation which enjoys content equivalence, stylistic equivalence, authenticity, faithfulness, communicability, and cultural homogeneity. Moreover, the idea of incorporating correctness of the message, and the form of the language to assure the simplicity of comprehension is emphasized. He/she has to carry out certain translational techniques such as analysing the SL text stressing its intention and functional aspects, interpreting the SL text's purpose and method as well as the translator's likely readership, running a selective but representative comparison of the translation with the original, assessing the likely place of the translation in the TL culture or discipline, determining the extent of deviation from the original, finding out whether the text has been misrepresented by the translator through omitting certain sections or by providing a lengthy translation, checking to what extent the text has been deculturalized or transferred to the TL culture, assessing the referential and pragmatic accuracy of the translation.

Equally important, he/she should acquire the knowledge of the rhetorical disciplines of *'ilm al-ma'ānī* (word order) and *'ilm al-bayān* (figures of speech) in order to be able to understand and interpret the Qur'ān. He/she is recommended to appreciate the knowledge of Arabic rhetoric to understand what eloquence is and accordingly present a comprehensible explanation of Qur'ānic discourse. This appreciation entails examining the pillars and banners of Arabic linguistics as a necessary pre-requisite to understanding the linguistic phenomena that are inimitably employed in the Qur'ān, studying the science of Arabic rhetoric, *balāghah*, whose laws can only be reached through the study of Arabic linguistics, to avoid inadequacy or even incompetence in translating and rendering the meaning of the Qur'ān, investigating the discipline of *'ilm al-ma'ānī*, *'ilm al-bayān* and *'ilm al-badī'* to its full, focusing on the basic Islamic concepts which QCM in order to reach

considerably a profound solid understanding of Qur'ānic discourse, taking account and establishing the awareness of the various modes of reading (*al-Qirā'āt*) before rendering the translation, consolidating the awareness of Qur'ān exegesis and the different views of different exegetes, strengthening the knowledge of the theological and jurisprudential aspects of the Qur'ān, as these have a semantic impact on the verse, and reinforcing the awareness of pre-Islamic, Islamic and Arab culture.

Appendix

Throughout the present study quite a number of examples from the selected translations of the meaning of the Qur'ān have been analysed and evaluated. For the sake of completion, it is thought of presenting recommended rendition of some of the cited examples. It should not go without saying that the conformity with QCM has been taken into consideration. In addition, Nida (1964:144) concludes that “a really successful translation, judged in terms of the response of the audience for which it is designed, must provide a challenge as well as information. This challenge must lie not merely in difficulty in decoding, but in newness of form-new ways of rendering old truths, new insights into traditional interpretations, and new words in fresh combinations.” In this connection, House (1997:26) holds that the functional, communicative or pragmatic equivalence have always been relevant for translation.

﴿الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ
وَإِلَّاِنْجِيلٍ...﴾

[Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet of the common folk, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel ... Q7:157] (Arberry 1998:161-162)

[Those who closely follow the Messenger, the Prophet, the illiterate one, whom they find written down in the Torah and the Gospel that are with them...]

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ
كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

[And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said, “Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful.” Q2:31] (al-Hilālī, 1998:8)

Yūsuf^cAli renders Q2:31 as:

[And He taught Adam the nature of all things, then He placed them before the angels, and said, “Tell me the nature of these if you are right.”] (Yūsuf^cAli 2000:6)

[And He taught Adam all the names, then He set them before the angels; so He said, “Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful.]

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ﴾

[Indeed your Lord is Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He rose over (*Istawa*) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). Q7:54] (al-Hilālī, 1998:208)

[Verily your Lord is Allāh, who created the heavens and the earth in six days; then He mounted the Throne (of authority) Q7:54]. (Ayatullah Sayyid, 2001:364-365).

[Surely your Lord is Allāh, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, (and) thereafter He levelled Himself upon the Throne.]

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَقْضِي بِالْحَقِّ﴾

[And God will judge in accordance with truth and justice. Q40:20] (Asad, 1980:720)

[And Allāh will judge (with justice) and truth. Q40:20] (Yūsuf °Alī, 2000:397)

[And Allāh decrees with truth.]

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ

يَفْقَهُونَ﴾

[It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and has given you a place of residing (on the earth or in your mother's wombs) and a place of storage [in the earth (in your graves) or in your father's loins]. Indeed, We have explained in detail Our revelations (this Qur'ān) for people who understand. Q6:98] (al-Hilālī 1998:186)

[And He it is who has brought you (all) into being out of one living entity, and (has appointed for each of you) a time-limit (on earth) and a resting-place (after death): clearly, indeed, have We spelled out these messages unto people who can grasp the truth! Q6:98] (Asad 1980:186)

[It was he that created you from a single being and furnished you with a dwelling and a resting-place. We have made plain Our revelations to men of understanding. Q6:98] (Dawood 2003:101)

[And it is He Who hath produced you from a single being, and (hath given you) a habitation and a repository. We have detailed our revelations for a people who have understanding. Q6:98] (Pickthall 1998:94)

[It is He Who has produced you from a single person. Here is a place of sojourn and a place of departure. We detail Our signs for people who understand. Q6:98] (Yūsuf ‘Ali 2000:107)

[It is He Who produced you from one living soul, and then a lodging-place, and then a repository. We have distinguished the signs for a people who understand. Q6:98] (Arberry 1998:133)

[It is He Who first produced you from a single soul, then gave you a place to stay (in life) and a resting place (after death). We have made Our revelations clear to those who understand. Q6:98] (Abdel Haleem 2004:87).

[And He is (the One) Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and has given you a repository and depository. We have already elucidated the revelations for a people who understand.]

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

[This is the Book (the Qur’ān), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are *Al-Muttaqūn* [the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism who fear Allāh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allāh much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)] Q2:2] (al-Hilālī 1998:3)

[This is the Book. There is no doubt about it, a guidance to those who are heedful.]

﴿ اذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ﴾

[“Go thou to Pharaoh, for he *has indeed transgressed all bounds.*” Q20:24] (Yūsuf ‘Ali, 2000:254)

[“Go to Pharaoh, surely he has tyrannized.”]

﴿ كَيْ تَسْبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴾

[“That we *may celebrate Your praise* without stint. Q20:33] (ibid:254)

[That we may hymn You much.]

﴿ يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَأَسْجُدِي وَأَرْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ﴾

[“Mary, be obedient to thy Lord, prostrating and bowing before Him.” Q3:43] (Arberry 1998:51)

[“Mary, be devoted to your lord, and prostrate yourself and bow down with those who bow down.”]

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