Appendix – I

Notable Arabic Works on Tafsīr
A. *Tafsir bil Ma’thur*, Exegesis based on Traditions.


B. *Tafsīr bil Ra’y*, *Exegesis through Reason*.


2. **AL-RĀZĪ, Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad bin ‘Umar bin Ḥusayn** (d. 606/1209), *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*:


   —— 8 vols. Published by Ahmad Khulūsī, Cairo: 1307/1889. Its margin contains the commentary of Abū al-Sa‘ūd’s *Irshād al-‘Aql al-Sālim*.


Appendix-I


4. AL-NASAFĪ, Abul Barakāt ‘Abdullāh bin Aḥmad bin Maḥmūd (d. 710/1310), *Madārik al-Tanzil wa Ḥaqā’iq al-Ta’wil*:


--- *Tafsīr Sūrah Ikhlās*, edited by Badr al-Dīn, Cairo: 1905


---

**C. Exegesis on Muʿtazilah Thought.**


Appendix-I

D. Juristic Exegesis.


E. Mystic Exegesis.


5. AL-NISĀBŪRĪ, Niẓām al-Dīn al-Ḥasan bin Muḥammad al-Qummi (d. 728/1327), *Gharā‘ib al-Qur‘ān wa Raghā‘ib al-
Appendix-I

furqān, edited by Ibrāhīm ‘Atwah ‘Awad, 5 vols, Muṣṭafā al-

F. Shi‘ī Exegesis.

1. AL-‘ASKARĪ, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḫasan bin ‘Alī al-Ḫādī (d.
2. AL-QUMMĪ, Abū al-Ḫasan ‘Alī bin Ibrāhīm (d. 328/939),
Tafsīr al-Qummī, edited by al-Sayyid al-Musawī al-Jaza‘īrī,
3. AL-TABARSĪ, Abū ‘Alī al-Fadl bin al-Ḫasan bin al-Fadl (d.
538/1143), Majma‘ al-Bayān Lī ‘Ulūm al-Qur‘ān, Tehran:
1314/1896. 12 vols., Dār Maktabat al-Ḫayāt, Beirut:
1380/1961.
4. AL-KĀSHĪ, Mullā Muḥsin Muḥammad bin al-Shāh Maḥmūd
(d. around 1100/1658), al-Sāfī fi Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-Karīm,
published in Persia, 1249/1833.
5. AL-ṬABĀṬABĀ‘Ī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn (d.
Mu‘assasat al-Ā‘lam lil Ṭabī‘at, Beirut: 1393-1394/1973-
1974.

G. Modern Exegesis.

1. AL-ĀLŪSĪ, Sayyid Maḥmūd (d. 1270/1353), Rūh al-Ma‘ānī,
9 vols, Idārah al-Ṭabā‘at al-Munīriyyah, Egypt: (n.d.)


—— Edited by AL-NAJJAR, MUḤAMMAD Zuhri,


Appendix-I


1. AL-ĂŞFAHĀNĪ, Al-Rāghib Abu al-Qāsim Ḥusayn bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad (d. 508/1108), Muqaddimat al-Tafsīr, Cairo: 1329/1911.


6. DIHLAVĪ, Shāh Wali Allah (d. 1176/1762), al-Fauz al-Kabīr, Cairo: (1346/1927).

Appendix – II

A Guide to English Translations of the Qur’ān
The translation of any text, however faithful and elegant, is at best only an approximation of the meaning of the original. In the case of the Qur'ān, a translation does not and cannot serve as a substitute for the word of God. In light of this, I should like to make a few points at the outset that will help allay some common misconceptions about Qur'ān translation.

A Qur'ān translation is not synonymous with tafsīr (exegesis, commentary), an independent, rich and well-developed discipline of Qur'ānic studies. The elaborate usūl al-tafsīr (principles of exegesis, hermeneutics), practiced to varying degrees by muftassirūn (commentators) throughout the ages, cannot in fact be brought to bear in an evaluation of English translations as these are not, and mostly do not claim to be, tafsīrs.¹

The earliest instances of a Qur'ān translation dates from shortly after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (s). Salman Farsi produced a Persian translation of Sūrah al-Fatihah at the request of Persian-Speaking Muslims who wished to use it in their ritual Prayers until they had learned sufficient Arabic to recite the original. This gave rise to two important questions: is it permissible – and indeed, possible – to translate the Qur'ān? Is it proper to use a translated version for ritual purposes?

The first question is, of course, relevant to the topic at hand. It is linked also to the larger issue of the universality and inimitability (I'jaz) of the Qur'ān. Little wonder, then, that it has provoked a very lively debate, unresolved to this day. While it is undoubtedly true that the Qur'ān can best be grasped only in its original Arabic, and that Muslims should make every effort to learn Arabic, it is not possible to turn a blind eye to the ground reality: that since the very earliest days of Islam there have been, and
continue to be, millions of non-Arabic-speaking Muslims and this number is on the increase. There is, additionally, a large potential non-Muslim readership. That readership includes those with a spiritual interest in Islam. A translation for da'wah purposes (propagation and re-education) thus becomes indispensable too.²

In Sūrah Al Īmān (3/92), the Children of Israel are asked to bring the Tawr'at (Torah) and read from it in order for the Prophet to pronounce on a case of adultery referred to him for settlement. The Prophet accordingly asks them to inform him of the Torah’s ruling. As a result of this incident, the scholar of Ḥadith (traditions of the Prophet), Imām Bukhārī even has a chapter on the permissibility of translating the Torah and other scriptures into Arabic. The same issue is raised by the Prophet’s letter to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius - and indeed other foreign rulers-in which he includes a Qur’ānic verse (3/63) which he obviously knows will be translated into Greek.

And yet, it is hard to reconcile the need and desirability of a Qur’ān translation on the one hand, with its inimitability on the other. One might speak of “translating the untranslatable”. And there is always the serious danger of an unscrupulous translator interpolating his own views and passing them off as authentic to unsuspecting readers. This point is especially pertinent in the case of a fairly large number of Qur’ān translations by Christian missionaries, early Orientalists and certain sectarian groups. Indeed, the subjectivity of any translator is always an issue.

As regards the need for a translation, there is still certain ambivalence among Muslims. How does one balance a translation’s value as a source of information and guidance on the one hand, and its potential to lead people astray through
interpolation of extra - Qur'ānic material, misinterpretation, bias, and outright mistranslation on the other? . The need for such balance reference may be made to what was at one time the most popular - at any rate the most widely available - translation, the Penguin edition by N.J.Dawood {#50}. Not only did Dawood distort the meaning and message of the Qur'ān, but he unabashedly tampered with the received sūrah order. He also makes disparaging remarks about the Prophet. The same holds true, incidentally, for several blatantly sectarian and partisan translations.

Another significant and paradoxical point about English translations of the Qur'ān is the nature of their genesis. Muslims took up this activity as a response to the Christian missionary and Orientalist offensive that prejudiced the public against the Qur'ān, the Prophet, and Islam. But, if this activity started out as a defensive move, it is now a positive enterprise yielding rewarding translations - as the catalogue below attempts to show.

The translations are divided into 3 groups: I. By Muslims, II. By Qadiyanis, III. By other non-Muslims. Within each section, the order is chronological. Only complete translations are discussed. In all cases, the title and publication date are those of the first edition. The number of editions is often, of necessity, only an indication.

1. **By Muslims**

{1. 1862-68 (Dacca) S.M.ABDUL HAMID. *The divine Qur'ān. It contains the Arabic text with a very lucid translation and short explanatory notes...* 3 edns.}

---

427
2. 1899 (Sialkot) Anonymous. *The Koran (Translated into English by a Muhammedan Graduate)*. 1 edn — Eds

This volume includes translations into Persian and Urdu—Eds

3. 1905 (Patiala/Karnal) Mohamad Abdul Hakim KHAN. The Holy Qur’ān...All fictitious romance, questionable history and disputed theories have been avoided...2 edns

Khan was a physician with little knowledge of Islam. This undermines the value of his work. He was, moreover, initially drawn to Qadiyanism, which he later rejected. This effort is more of a rejoinder to then—strong missionary attacks on Islam than a standard translation. It is also often literal and contains only scant notes.


In this translation, frequent references to the Bible are intended to demonstrate the superiority of the Qur’ān and to refute the Charges leveled by missionaries. Fortunately, this is done in a convincing and scholarly manner.

5. 1916 (Delhi) Mirza Hairat DIHLAVI (ed). *The Kor’ān: prepared by various Oriental Learned Scholars*. 2 edns

Though intended as “a complete and exhaustive reply to the manifold criticisms of the Koran by various Christian authors such as Drs Sale, Rodwell, Palmer and Sir W. Muir”, this translation hardly delivers. Also, the verse numbering is unconventional—divided into parts instead of *sūrahs*—and the English is far from satisfactory.

One of the most popular translations, which has lost much of its appeal because of its archaic language and paucity of explanatory notes. It is a testament to the commitment of an English man of letters who embraced Islam and dedicated his life to it. Notwithstanding the appearance of A.H. Ansari, *Corrections of Errors in Pickthall’s Translation of the Glorious Koran* (Karachi, nd.) listing 248 mostly minor errors, it is widely used for its faithfulness to the original. But all in all, it is not very helpful for the uninitiated reader.


Another highly popular translation, of which two recent one-volume editions have appeared. It originally appeared in 30 parts, then in 2 volumes. Lucid and readable paraphrasing and renderings in idiomatic language with copious notes demonstrate Yusuf Ali’s wide-ranging scholarship. But his apologetic, pseudo-rationalistic, and Sufi interpretations vitiate an otherwise excellent work. Even the Sanitized ‘revised’ versions are not all together free of some of his unconventional views.

8. 1935 (?) (Simla) S.M.A. JAFRI. *Al-Qur’ān… English interpretation with Arabic text, and brief explanatory notes…* 1 edn—Eds

9. 1941-57 (Lahore) Abdul Majid DARYABADI. *The Holy Qur’ān… with lexical, grammatical, historical, geographical and eschatological comments…* 4 edns.
An excellent though largely unacknowledged translation. Free from apologia, it sets forth the traditional Islamic position convincingly and refutes Orientlist /missionary charges. It contains useful though not always exhaustive notes on historical and geographical allusions in the Qur'ān and insightful observations about comparative religion. It meets the needs of western-educated readers, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Its weaknesses include scant information about the circumstantial setting of sūrahs (asbāb al-nuzūl) and too-literal renderings.  


A slight work, betraying the biases of the group known as the Barelvi School. Though it claims to be the first “true and Easy translation ... in centuries,” it is marred by numerous mistranslations and often stretches the meaning of certain verses to support a sectarian position. A lengthy Appendix is attached, dealing with a variety of topics most of which are not at all related to the Qur’ān, for instance an abusive account of the Saudi rulers.


This translation tries to vindicate, with Qur'ānic authority, the soundness and legitimacy of certain shi'a belief, such as the Imamate, *mut'ah* (temporarily contracted marriage), the nomination of ‘Ali as the Prophet’s successor, *taqiyyah* (concealment of faith in unfavorable circumstances ), mourning in the month of Muharram, and ritual cursing of Umayyad and
‘Abbasid rulers. It also refutes the charge that the shi‘ah believe in Sunnis tahrif (tampering) of the Qur’ân.

12. 1964 (Mecca) Muhammad ASAD. The Message of the Qur’ân. 2 edns

Though idiomatic and by an illustrious new Muslim, this translation is marred by a departure from traditional Muslim views on several issues, including miracles and the theory of abrogation. Asad also appears to be swayed by pseudo-rationalism when explaining the nature of many Quranic assertions.9 The Gibraltar edition (1980) is the most widely available.

13. 1966 (Lahore) Tariq ABDUR RAHMAN and Ziauddin GILANI. The Holy Qur’ân: Rendered into English. 1 edn

Although this translation represents traditionally accepted meanings, it contains few explanatory notes and its language and style leave much to be desired.

14. 1967 (Lahore) Sayyid Abul Ala MAWDUDI. The Meaning of the Qur’ân. 15 edns

This is the English version of Mawdudi’s interpretive rendering of the Qur’ân and commentary, which originally appeared in Urdu under the title Tafhīm al-Qur’ân. In provides exhaustive notes on the circumstantial settings (asbab al-nuzul ) and the themes of each sūrah, seeks to bring out the Islamic worldview, and presents the Qur’ân as essentially a book of guidance. It stands out also as a stout rejoinder to secularist and modernist attacks on Islam. Mawdudi has, however, been accused of passing off his own political vision as the message of the Qur’ân itself. This particular English translation suffers from numerous defects: weak language,
lack of citations, and bad page layout. This is why an on-going new translation is being undertaken by the Islamic Foundation, Leicester (1988-).

15. 1968 (New York) M.H.SHAKIR.\textit{\textsuperscript{10}} \textit{Holy Qur'\textasciiacute{n}.} 4 edns

This is a regrettable instance of blatant plagiarism in a pursuit as noble as the translation of the Qur'\textasciiacute{n}. It lifts material verbatim from Muhammad Ali's 1917 translation (#35). Although it has no notes, its Subject Index reveals \textit{shi'ah} concerns by cataloguing topics such as the Imamate, the martyrdom of Husayn, \textit{\'ismah} (infallibility of the Imam) and so on according to verse number. This mistakenly leads one to believe that the Qur'\textasciiacute{n} makes categoric statements about these issues.

16. 1969 (Hyderabad) Syed Abdul LATIF. \textit{Al-Qur'\textasciiacute{n}: Rendered into English.} 1 edn

Devoid of notes and Arabic text, this translation does not much advance one's understanding of the Qur'\textasciiacute{n}. Latif also rendered into English Abul Kal\textasciiacute{m} Azad's incomplete Urdu translation and commentary, the \textit{Tarjuman al-Qur'an}.

\{17. 1974 (Karachi) Athar HUSSAIN. \textit{The Message of the Qur'\textasciiacute{n}.} 1 edn\}

18. 1974 (Rutland/ Tokyo) Hashim AMIR ALI. \textit{The message of the Qur'\textasciiacute{n} presented in perspective.} 1 edn

To bring into focus the thematic unity of the Qur'\textasciiacute{n}, Amir Ali devises an unconventional \textit{s\textasciiacute{u}rah} order, rearranging them into 5 sections, which he calls 'Books': 1. The Portal, \textit{al-Fatihah}, 2. The Enlightenment, al-Ruh, (the 18 earliest Meccan \textit{s\textasciiacute{u}rah}s) 3. The Guidance, \textit{al-Huda} (36 early Meccan \textit{s\textasciiacute{u}rah}s) 4. The Book, al
Kitab (36 Meccan sūrahs), 5. The Balance, *al-Mizan* (24 Medines sūrahs). He also experiments with a new *ruku* (subsection) arrangement, dividing the text into 600 of them instead of the usual 558, each representing, in his view, a particular perspective. In so doing, Ali fails to take cognizance of the fact that many Qur’ān scholars have effectively brought home the thematic unity of the Qur’ān without distributing, in the least, either the received sūrah order or the *ruku* divisions. This being said, the level of translation is fairly good.


An English summary of ibn Kathir’s celebrated *tafsīr*, supplemented by the comments of classical authorities, and relevant hadīths. The recent new version (1993) is a welcome improvement adding many useful notes culled from primary sources, elucidating a number of recurring Qur’ānic terms and concepts, and inserting explanatory parenthetical phrases. Some minor mistakes excepted, it is a noteworthy translation.11


Ahmad inexplicably interpolates his explanatory notes into the body of the translated text and grossly misinterprets many Quranic terms and concepts. For example, he defines *al-ghāyb* as “the consequences of one’s deeds.” An unreliable work overall.

Notwithstanding the claim of being a thoroughly checked and revised translation, this is essentially a rehash of N.J. Dawood's earlier work (# 50), even repeating the mistakes. Moreover, it does not draw a distinction between sunni and shi'ah beliefs and practices.


This is an attempt to present the message of the Qurʾān in readable English but without explanatory notes. It does not represent an improvement on earlier translations.

23. 1983 (Tehran) Syed Muhammad Husain AL-TABATABAI. *Al-Mizan*. 1 edn

A translation into English of a shi'ah Persian translation by Saeed Akhtar Rizvi. It stoutly defends shi'ah beliefs, *mut'ah* and *vilāyat* for instance, and uses the formulaic curse against the Umayyad rulers throughout. It also contains an appendix on the Twelve Imams.\(^1\)


Like Asad (#12), Ali, a noted writer, rejects miracles. Guilty of serious instances of mistranslation and apologia, this translation is brazenly apologetic and erroneous. Indeed, it compounds the mistakes of Asad and Muhammad Ali (#35).\(^2\)

25. 1985 (Rutland) T.B.IRVING. *The Qurʾān: The First American Version*. 2 edns.\(^3\)
A translation by a new Muslim. The first edition was strongly criticized for its curious title and for Irving’s inadequate grasp of Qur’anic idiom. The slightly revised edition (1992) amends the title but still suffers from mistakes arising from Irving’s misunderstandings.\(^{15}\)

26. nd (Lahore) H. FATMI. Holy Qurʾān. 1 edn

The English version of Ahamd Raza Khan Barelvi’s Urdu translation and commentary of the Qurʾān. It has a predictably strong sectarian bias.

27. 1986 (London) M.M.KHATIB. The Bounteous Qurʾān. 40 edns

Free from the obtrusion of unorthodox views in the explanatory notes, this stands out as a generally faithful translation though it does exhibit some faults of omission and the use of hackneyed expressions. It draws on standard Islamic writings when elaborating meaning and message.\(^{16}\)

28. 1987 (Mauritius) Houssein NAHABOO. The Holy Qurʾān:
The Arabic Text and its translation in the English Language. 1 edn

Nahaboo, who earlier translated the Qurʾān into Mauritian Greole, embarked upon his English translation “in order to serve the needs of the ordinary (English) readers in an easily readable language, with just enough notes to understand the text”. A serious flaw in his work, however, is his heavy reliance on Yusuf Ali (#7). As a result, it is more of a simplified version of Yusuf Ali than a new independent translation. The explanatory notes are brief in their extent and too limited in their range and coverage.\(^{17}\)

This represents an addition to the growing body of translations into English based on renderings originally into another language. This English version of the Urdu Kanzul Iman (1910) by Shah Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi, it displays the sectarian bias of the Barelvis. The level of the English is pitiably low, and the work is marred by numerous typographical errors.¹⁸

30. 1991 (Leicester) Q. ARAFAT. The Qur’ān: The Conclusive word of God. 1 edn

This translation is disfigured by numerous errors and Arafat’s firm beliefs that scientific theories of the day are to be uncovered in the Qur’ān.¹⁹

31. 1991 (Karachi) {M. HASAN and} S. Ahamd USMANI. The Noble Qur’ān: Tafsīr-e-Usmānī, presented in English by Mohammad Ashfaq Ahmad. 1 edn

This English version of the Urdu translation and commentary by a leading sub-continental Islamic scholar represents the Deobandi School. It draws heavily on classical works for elucidation of the Qur’ānic messages. An acceptable translation, it nonetheless stands in need of some updating.

32. 1991 (London) Ahmad and Dina ZIDAN. Translation of the Glorious Qur’ān. 1 edn

This is another regrettable instance of plagiarism. It is almost a copy of Yusuf Ali’s 1934 translation (#7).²⁰ In the absence of notes, little can be said about its other merits or demerits.

Undertaken by a committee of 4 Turkish academics, this new translation is more important as a living testimony to turkey's renewed commitment to Islam than as a valuable translation. It relies heavily on Pickthall's 1930 effort (#6).²¹

34. nd (Hyderabad) Abu Muhammad MUSLIH. The instructive translation of the Holy Qur'ān. 1 edn

II. By Qadiyānis

35. 1917 (Woking) Muhammad ALI. The Holy Qur'ān. 10 edns

Supplemented with copies notes, this translation betrays Ali's Qadiyāni beliefs. It twists the Qur'ānic statements about the promised Messiah (al-Mehdi) and Prophet Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets ( Khatm al-anbiya). Swayed by pseudo-rationalism, Ali denies the occurrence of miracles: the springs gushing forth as Prophet Mūsā struck his rod (2/60) for instance; or Abraha's army being routed by the birds (105/3). Ali's English is also far from satisfactory.

36. 1928 (Singapore) Ghulam SARWAR. The Holy Qur'ān. 9 edns

In view of the paucity of information about Sarwer, and the absence of tendentious notes accompanying his translations, it is difficult to establish with certainty whether Sarwer was in fact Qadiyani. His glowing tribute to the Qadiyani translator Muhammad Ali does however argue for it.²² A valuable element in this early translation, however, is its insightful critique of then
existing translations, in particular those of Sale (#44) and Palmer (#47).

37. 1947-63 (Rabwah). *The Holy Qurʾān, the English translation and commentary*. 13 edns

A translation published “under the auspices of Hadrat Mirza Bahir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, by the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya. See #41 below.”

38. 1955 (Rabwah) Sher Ali. The Holy Qurʾān. 13 edns

An authorized Qadiyani translation. In addition to incorporating Muhammad Ali’s (#35) faults of mistranslation and misinterpretation, Sher Ali interpolates many of his views in order to elicit approval for Qadiyani beliefs.

39. 1960 (Aminabad) Peer Salahud-Din. The wonderful Koran. 2 edns

Another Qadiyani version without much to commend it.


A new English version of the Urdu original by the Qadiyani chief of the day (see #37 above). Published “under the auspices of Hadrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the Third Successor of the Promised Messiah and Head of the Ahmadiyyah Movement in Islam.” Understandably, it presents Qadiyani dogma as the message of the Qurʾān itself.

41. 1971 (London) Muhammad Aasrullah Khan. The Qurʾān; Qurʾān Majid. 4 edns
A notable Qadiyani translation by a distinguished public figure of the day. It is vitiated by numerous inexplicable liberties with the Quranic text. Like other translators of his ilk, Khan does not recognize the Prophet as the Last Messenger.\(^\text{23}\)

### III. By Other Non-Muslims

42. 1649 (London) Alexander ROSS. The Alcoran of Mahomet, Translated out of Arabique into French; by the Sieur Du Ryer, Lord of Lalezair, and Resident for the king of France, at Alexandria. And newly Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to Look into the Turkish vanities. 8 edns

This is the very first English translation. It is based on the first French translation (1647). It is a very crude specimen of the Orientalist/Missionary School. In his prefatory note, Ross warns the Christian readers against. “The enemy {Islam}”. Appended to the work is an “admonition” warning than to the dangers in reading the Qur’an.\(^\text{24}\) Regarding the quality of the translation, the opinion of noted anti-Muslim missionary is illuminating: “Ross was utterly unacquainted with Arabic, and was not a thorough scholar; therefore his translation is faulty in the extreme.”\(^\text{25}\)

43. 1734 (London) George SALE. The Koran. 123 edns

The most widely circulated English translation in the west, of which the latest edition appeared in 1975. It contains an exhaustive and well-known ‘preliminary Discourse’ on the essentials of Islam, but from a predictably Orientalist/missionary perspective. For instance, in his preface Sale suggests rules for “the conversion of Mohammadans”, and he interprets the piecemeal revelation of the Quran as a “contrivance”. The rendering is littered with errors of omission and mistranslation.
For example, the recurrent address, *ya ayyuha al-nas* is translated "O people of Mecca"; khalifah as "Substituted"; and *al-ghayb* as "secret History". Moreover, parts of several verses are left untranslated, 3/98 for instance.

{44. 1882-86 (London/Boston) E.M.WHERRY. A comprehensive commentary on the Qur'an, comprising Sale's translation... 6 edns

This 4-volume work is based on the 1844 edition of Sale (#44). The 1921 reprint was re-issued in 1973 (Osnabruck).}

45. 1861 (London) J.M.RODWELL. The Koran. 33 edns

Rodwell questions received surah order, devising a new one purportedly based on chronology. He speaks of the prophet as the Qur'an's crafty author; insists on Jewish, Christian and Zoroastrian sources of the Qru'an; instructs missionaries on how to carry out their work among Muslims; and brands the Prophet a victim of "self-deception, a catapletic subject from his early youth... liable to morbid and fantastic hallucinations". This effort is guilty of serious mistranslation of several phrases, e.g. *fa-salli li-rabbika wa 'nhar* is rendered "pray therefore the Lord and slay the victims" (al-Kawthar 108/2). It also offers a bizarre rationale for the Quranic expression *abd*, viz. that since it was slaves who embraced Islam, this form of address was appropriate.

46. 1880 (Oxford) E.H. PALMER. The Qur'an. 15 edns

Palmer, a Cambridge scholar, produced this translation for F.Max Muller's 'sacred Books of the East' Series. Nykl discovered as many as 70 inexplicable mistakes of omission, deletion and
mistranslation. To cite but one example, *rabbika* is rendered "their Lord".

47. 1937-39 (Edinburgh) Richard BELL. The Qur’an. Translated with a critical re-arrangement of the surahs. 5 edns

Aside from reiterating the position that the prophet was the author of the Qur’an, Bell insists that he wrote it with his own hand. Dismissing the traditional surah and ayah arrangement, he devises a new one and claims to have discovered "alterations, substitutions, and derangements" in the text. For him, 2/209 is a later addition; 2/206-208 are unconnected scraps which have by mistake found their way into the text; and 2/210 is originally the continuation of 2/205. Almost every page reveals the fruits of his "research".


This translation is bereft of explanatory notes or background information. By a distinguished Orientalist, it is free of diatribe against Islam and the Prophet, and acknowledges the miraculous power and appeal of the Qur’an. Notwithstanding Arberry’s impeccable credentials, his translation exhibits some curious errors. Al-Nabiy al-ummi is translated as "the prophet of the common folk" for instance; and *amr bi’l-ma’ruf wa nahi an al-munkar* as "bidding honour and forbidding dishonour".

49. 1956 (Harmondsworth) N.J.DAWOOD. The Koran. 13 edns.

Dawood emphasizes the influence of Christian and Judaic sources on the prophet and also adopts a chronological ordering of surahs. His Jewish faith occasions harsh criticism of the prophet for his
treatment of the Jews in Medina, which he calls atrocities. Serious instances of mistranslation undermine the work, such as "children of Allah" for bani Adam (al-A’raf 7/31), and "idolatry is worse than carnage" for wa‘l-fitnatu ashaddu min al-qatl (al-Baqarah 2/191). The recently revised edition (1991) regrettably retains almost all the original mistakes. Its two redeeming features are facing Arabic (in some printings), and restored surah order.\(^{30}\)

50. n.d. (Shillong, India) Khadim Rahman Nuri, the Running Commentary of the Holy Quran. 2 edns

Although Nuri speaks highly in his Introduction of the Qadyani translation by Muhammad Ali, his work of which the first edition came out in 1964 is free form Qadyani proclivity. It is a too literal translation which does not advance one’s understanding of the Qur’an. Is comprehensive Index of the Quranic subjects running into more than one hundred pages, is perhaps its only redeeming feature.\(^{31}\)


Seeks to present a garbled meaning and message of the Qur’an. Contains scathing dismissive comments about the companions. Hadith and Sirah. Offers an unreliable and whimsical rendering of the Qur’an, abounding in his interpolations.\(^{32}\)


Marred by instances of unpardonable omission of the translation of Qur’anic verses or parts thereof and the use of such obnoxious terms as Apostle and shrine for the Prophet (peace and blessings
be upon him) and the ka'ba respectively. Contains scant notes which is not a helpful feature for uninitiated readers of the Qur'an. The few notes appended to the work tend to spawn the errors and lapses of earlier translators.  


The editor succeeds largely in offering a simple, highly readable of Pickthall's original version published in 1930. Corrects also some minor mistakes which had crept into the original. A remarkable piece of editorial assiduity and of a genuine concern for conveying the meaning and message of the Quran in a simple yet attractive manner.


A representative work of sectarianism in its approach to the Qur'an in that this work was conceived and executed in response to the "Shiah believers' request for a clear, concise English tafsir." Betrays also the translator's poor acquaintance with English grammar and usage.


Another English translation by a shia scholar who unreservedly expresses in this work his narrow and unsubstantiated sectarian
views. Seeks to discredit the Prophet’s companions. Shows scant regard for the norms and principles of tafsir.36

56. 1997 (Surrey, UK). Late Maulwi Sher Ali, The Holy Qur’an: Arabic Text and English Translation. 1 edn

A posthumously revised edition of the Qadyani translator’s work which appeared first in 1995. Contains some alternative translations and exegetical notes along side Sher Ali’s original version, which is very confusing for readers as to which of the two is to be taken as he correct one. Unabashedly asserts the peculiar Qadiyani stance on the finality of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) as the last Messenger and Prophet Jesus’s crucifixion. Dismisses the miracles stated in the Qur’an as symbolic representations.37


Carried by a new Muslim couple under the guidance of their spiritual mentor Shaikh Abulqadir Sufi. Devoid of the Quranic text and explanatory notes and abounding in the use of awkward and incomprehensible, this work does not have anything to recommend itself to the English-speaking reading public who need a faithful translation with helpful notes in chaste English.38
ENDNOTES


2 {The world Assembly of Muslim Youth is undertaken such a translation. M. Al-Johani (WAMY) and W. Peachy ( King Saud University) are collaborating on the project – Eds}.


5 {This taxonomy is not unique to Kidwai. Pearson divides his catalogue into versions by Christians, by Muslims, and by Ahmadis-Eds}.


[An undated translation by Mahomedali Habib, identified in Binark et al, *World Bibliography*, seems to be identical to this work].


[For an excellent overview of the Shi’ah, see H. Halm, *Shiism* (Edinburgh, 1993), part of the Islamic Survey Series – Eds].

[Regrettably reissued as a revised – but unimproved- paperback by Princeton University Press – Eds].

[The first American translation of the Qur’an was in fact an edition of Ross’s translation (#43), published in 1806 in Springfield, Massachusetts – Eds].


17 For a more detailed critique, see the review by Kidwai in *MWBR*, 17/2 (1997), pp 9-10.


19 See Kidwai’s review in *MWBR*, 13/1 (1992), pp 14-15

20 For a detailed review indicating the unacknowledged borrowings, see Kidwai in *MWBR*, 13/1 (1992), pp 10-13.


22 [Pearson does not classify G.Sarwar as a Qadiyani – Eds].

23 [Of interest is the subtitle, which reads “The eternal revelation vouchsafed to Muhammad, seal of the Prophets” – Eds].

24 [The admonition appeared in the 1688 edition – Eds].

25 See S.M. Zwemer’s review in *The Muslim World* 5(1915), pp 244-61.


27 [The entire Series, including Palmer’s The Qur’an, is being reissued by Curzon Press this year – Eds].

28 [For these reasons, and because of the elegance of the English, this translation is widely used in academia – Edn].


Appendix-II


(With due acknowledgement of Prof. Abdul Raheem Kidwai)