



Facets from the Translation Movement in Classic Arab Culture

Hala Khalidi^a, BasmaAhmad Sedki Dajani^b *

^{a,b} University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

Abstract

When investigating the early evolution of the Arab Islamic civilization, one can hardly evade the role played by translation. It formed the cornerstone of the evolution of the Arab civilization and thought. Pioneers of translation were always in competition to expand their knowledge as well as introduce Islam to peoples of other faiths and civilizations. This led to the recognition by leaders of translators who were accorded a distinguished status that was well-deserved as many had dedicated their lives to the translation enterprise. Their devotion to transferring new ideas, especially those coming from ancient Greek origins, played a major role in introducing many novel ideas into the Islamic Arabic culture. Later, all these ideas were reintroduced into Western culture through Arabic because most of the original scripts were lost, and the only sources were preserved in Arabic.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd.

Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Research and Education Center.

Keywords: translation, Arab, culture, influence, philosophy

1. Introduction

Nations are small parts of a multi-cultural world whose identity lies somewhere between the local and the global. Human civilization can be defined as what man does as a result of dealing with nature and life. This includes whatever man/woman makes, creates or changes in the world around him/ her in addition to new ideas that make an ordinary thing become more valuable. Hence, the civilization that emerged in the Arab world is a collective creation of the people who settled in this region. Besides, Man always benefits from his fellow man. This means that nations have become indebted to each other in one way or another. Thus, civilizations live and thrive as a result of this intellectual and moral interaction (Atteya, G. *The Levant in the Byzantine Era*, p. 139, 141- 142) Civilization, according to Toynbee, is a reflection of a society that has a comprehensible historical unity. (Atteya, G.:139) However, a civilization does not appear in a vacuum. The Arab scientific heritage evolved gradually with the spread of Islam and afterwards. Philosophy, medicine and natural sciences, for example, emerged from different

* Corresponding author: *E-mail address:* bdajani@hotmail.com

origins and multiple sources, and translation played a major role in shaping the Arab scientific world; it was a distinctive civilization that resulted from the overlapping of human civilizations. (Dajani, B. 2009:204)

1. 2. The early traces of translating into Arabic

It was cited that some Arabs had spoken the languages of their neighboring countries in the pre-Islamic era. This makes us understand how Imreo Al-Qays, an Arab poet, could ask for the help of the king of Romans and visited Constantinople (in around 561 AD) in order to recover his father's lost monarchy (Ibn Qutayba: 58). As well as what was told about another poet, Umayya bin Abi Al-Salt, (died 5 AH/ 626 AD) who recited the stories of prophets and could read books written in languages other than Arabic. This enabled him to introduce foreign words that were never used before into Arabic (Shekhu, L. 1985: 219). Later, with the advent of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, it is reported that he ordered Zaid bin Thabit (died 45 AH / 665 AD) to learn Hebrew and Syriac languages to communicate with Jews in their own language (Asqalani, ch2: 23).

Furthermore, the framework of the Arab Islamic civilization had many grammarians and linguists who knew Persian or Turkish and were considered an integral part of the Arabic culture. Sibawayh, the Imam of Arabic grammar (died in 180 AH/ 796 AD) for example, originally discusses Arabic grammar in Farsi. (Hijazi: 122). Ibn Abbas (died in 68 AH/ 688 AD) was the first distinguished linguist who excelled in understanding foreign words. His deep interest in Qur'an motivated him to investigate the roots of the vocabulary used in Qur'an. Credit goes to him and to his school for extracting a number of words used in Qur'an that had foreign origins (Stetekevch: 130). Furthermore, he wrote *Languages in the Holy Qur'an* in which many languages such as Roman, Hebrew, and Nabataean among other languages were mentioned. (Ibn Abbas: 30) He also wrote *Tribal Languages Contained in the Holy Qur'an*, in which he looked for the origin of many languages spoken in the Arabian Peninsula. He mentioned the languages of Copts, Nabateans, Hebrews, Syriacs, and Ethiopians. (Ibn Salam: 20, 44, 69, 105, 134-35,146)

2. The evolution of translation in the Abbasid era

The Abbasid era is considered one of the brightest eras of Arabs in terms of literature, science and art. Arabs began to realize, by means of direct contact, what neighboring nations had reached pertaining certain aspects of culture and civilization. (Fakhoury. H. 1951: 759). The first signs of the new adaptation in Islamic thought were revealed in the production of great Arabic translations of important global materials about philosophy and science. It was eighty years after the end of the *Umayyad* state when the Arab world had translations of most of the works of Aristotle, commentaries on updated Platonism, some works of Plato, most of the works of Galen, parts of other works on medicine and their explanations as well as many Greek, Indian, and Persian books. (De lacy, 1961: 129)

Historian Marshall Hodgson says in *The Venture of Islam* (1974: 3) that during the five centuries that followed 945 AD, a new and wider community replaced the old caliphate community. This community witnessed a great expansion at both lingual and cultural levels under the umbrella of independent governments. It was not a community controlled by the central political order, or by one common language or culture. Nevertheless, that community remained one whole which was conscious about its culture, existence and particularity. This transcultural and multi-lingual community was undoubtedly the most extensive and influential in the whole world.

Syriacs, for instance, played an important role in the transfer of many parts of the Arabic heritage. They played the mediator's role because Arabs did not understand Greek while Syriacs were in contact with Greece for more than ten centuries. (Hitti, P. 1959:174) Among the most famous of these translators were Hunayn Bin Ishaq, his son Ishaq, and his nephew Hubeish.

Translation was the most prominent cultural activity in the Abbasid era as it gained great interest from the caliphs. The beginning however, was in the Umayyad era when the first transfer from a foreign language into Arabic after Islam was recorded. This was done by Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiyah (85AH/704 AD). During the continuous conquests that extended to reach Transoxiana in Turkistan as well as Morocco and Andalusia, the Arabic language

pervaded the people of those countries; it also overcame their original tongues. Muslims of different races and nations used Arabic in writing. Thus, the unity of religion necessitated the unity of language and civilization. Persians, Egyptians as well as people of Iraq and of the Levant started to place their ancient sciences into the frame of the new Islamic civilization. (Ameen A., 1965:266) Still, translation in the Umayyad era was considered to be an individual endeavor which ended with the death of the translator. It was also up to the translator to choose what to translate and what not to translate depending on his personal interest. Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiyah, for example, was interested in chemistry; he was fascinated by it after encountering Greek chemistry which was translated into Arabic by Maryanus who was a pupil of Istan (Stephanus) of Alexandria. In the Abbasid state, on the other hand, translation became the work of the nation and not the work of individuals. Consequently, a large school of translators was established, and this school did not suffer from the death of one of its members. (Ameen A., 1965:271)

3. Bayt al-Hikma

Modelled after the ancient Library of Alexandria, Bayt al-Hikma was a center of scholarly activities where books from the Greek, Syriac, and Persian languages were translated into Arabic by expert Arabists. Sabra (1987) takes the thoughtful view that it was a forum for translating and documenting the rational sciences which were called the ‘sciences of the ancients’ (*ulūm al-awā’il*) to distinguish them from disciplines that dealt with Islamic religion and Arabic language. Ahmed went as far as to describe it as the Baghdad Academy of Sciences (Ahmed 2008:10). Abdus Salam, on the other hand, described it as an institute of advanced study (Dalafi and Hassan 1994), while Youssef Eshe described it as a stronghold of Mu’tazelite Thought during the reign of al-Ma’mun (Al-Awady 1997: 80). At the time, al-Ma’mun supported theological positions many Muslims considered unacceptable. (Cooperson 2005 cited in Zou’bi. M. R. 2012: 28)

Although the second half[†] of the existence of Bayt al-Hikma (AD 990 – 1258) is not well documented, there is a general consensus among contemporary historians and scientists that what was left of the original grandiose Bayt al-Hikma eventually came to a violent end at the hands of the Mongols when they occupied Baghdad under Hulagu in AD 1258 (Mustafa 1988 cited in Jawahiri 2001).

4. Pioneers of translation and the role of Abbasid caliphs in the development of translation

Those who mastered Arabic and Persian languages translated many books from Persian into Arabic. Ibn al-Nadim, in *The Fihrist*, had a whole chapter on the names of those who translated from Persian into Arabic. For example, he mentioned Abdullah bin Al-Muqaffa, Al Naubakht, Moses and Joseph, the sons of Khaled, Aba Al-Hasan, Ali bin Zima Al-Tamimi, Al Hassan bin Sahel, Al-Baladhuri, Jebeles bin Salem, Isaac bin Yazid, Muhammed bin Al-Jahm Al-Bermki, Hisham bin Al-Qasim, Musa bin Isa Al-Kurdi, Zadowayeh bin Shahoah Al-Asfahani, Muhammad bin Bahram bin Mttiyar Alasfahani, Bahram bin Mardan Shah, and Omar Bin Alfarkhan.

The Abbasid caliph, Al-Mansur (AD 754 - 776) was the one who did much to attract Nestorian doctors to Baghdad, which was founded by him. He also encouraged those who were willing to produce Arabic translations of works in Greek, Syriac and Persian. He was particularly interested in transferring astronomy books into Arabic.

Another Abbasid Caliph, Al- Ma'mun, founded the aforementioned Bayt al Hikma in Baghdad in 217 AH / 832 AD (The House of Wisdom). This school was placed under the supervision of Yahya bin Masawayeh, best known for his medical book about causes of fever. Bin Masawayeh was succeeded by his disciple Abu Zeid Hunain bin Ishaq Al Abadi, who died in 263 AH / 876 AD. He was a Nestorian doctor that had his fingerprint on the most important works of this school. He translated major medical books and parts of the *Organon* by Aristotle into Syriac. This

[†] This period spans from the death of *Ibn al-Nadim* until the fall of Baghdad in 1258.

scholar also translated works of Euclid, various parts of Galen, Hippocrates, Archimedes and Apollonius into Arabic. Furthermore, he translated *The Republic* and *Timaeus* by Plato as well as *The Nicomachean Ethics*, *Physics* and *Categories* of Aristotle. He also translated the Bible into Arabic (De lacy, 1961:127). Then Yahya bin Uday Al-Tikriti came, one of the most famous Jacobins translators, who came after the Nestorians. He was a disciple of Hunain (364 AH). He worked on the refinement of a number of previously- translated books, and he produced translations of *Categories*, *Sophism*, *Poetics*, and *Metaphysics* of Aristotle. Tikriti also translated the commentary by Aleskander AlAferdojse on *Categories*, and the commentary of Theophrastus on *Nicomachean Ethics* (De lacy, 1961:128).

Furthermore, translation at its beginning was associated with Abdullah bin Al Muqaffa, a Persian Zoroastrian, who translated *Khaddaanamh* which was a book about the history of Persians from its onset of time until that day, that book was called *History of Persian Kings*. He also translated *Ayin Nameh* which had a description of Persian laws, traditions and rituals. Later, he translated the *Legends of Bedba* or *Kalila wa Dumna*. The Persian copy however, was lost while the Arabic copy is preserved until today to be considered a model of Arab prose. Hence, the Arabic translation gave this book a broader scope and more significance as it was presented to the Western world in the Arabic language. (Ameen, 1935: Doha al Islam, p.117. De lacy,1961: 123)

One of the literary arts that were transferred from Persian into Arabic was the so called door signatures. It is an art that revealed how pre-Islam Persians exquisitely cared about rhetoric. They submitted papers that included requests or complaints to their rulers, just like what we call petitions nowadays. These papers were called "stories" by the Arabs, and a "story" was submitted to the king. Kings and rulers of Persia, on their part, used to sign these "stories" with eloquent words or with a wisdom which combined eloquent words with the finest sense. These statements became sayings, and Persians had plenty of them so that they established "the bureau of signature". (Ameen A., 1965:187) Furthermore, Bermkis was a Persian family that played a great role in protecting Persian culture as well as protecting other cultures. Ibn Al-Nadim, for example, says that the first to interpret *Almagasty's Book on Appearance* into Arabic was Yahya bin Khalid bin Barmak who also ordered translators to translate a book by the Indian Lamnakah on medicine. (Ameen A., 1965:194)

Translation then witnessed a prosperous era during the rule of Al-Ma'mun .This seventh Abbasid caliph, Abdullah Al-Ma'mun bin Al-Rashid bin Muhammad Al-Mahdi, followed in the footsteps of his great grandfather, Al-Mansur. He wanted to acquire knowledge from its original sources. Thus, he communicated with Roman kings, who received precious gifts from Al Ma'mun. In return, he enquired about what philosophical books they had, and he asked for copies of those books. The Roman kings responded by sending him books about philosophy by Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Galen, and Ptolemy among others. This Greek culture had a significant impact on Muslims, especially when Arabic sciences were influenced by Greek logic and were based on its methods. (Ameen A., 1965:269, 274)

5. Fields of translation

Arabs borrowed from all known cultures. For example, they relied on Greek knowledge when dealing with philosophy, medicine, engineering, astronomy and music. Arabs relied on Indians as they studied the stars, biographies, literature, history and law. They gained from Nabataeans and Chaldeans in the fields of agriculture, astrology, magic and incantations. Also, Arabs depended on Egyptians in the fields of chemistry and anatomy. Some of the most important books that were translated from Greek into Arabic were:

1. Philosophical books

Many books of Plato on philosophy were translated into Arabic. *The Sophist*, for example, was translated by Hunain bin Ishaq, *The Laws* was translated by Hunain and Yahya bin Udai, *Timaeus* was translated by Ibn Al Betreeq, and *Sense and Pleasure* was translated by Yahya bin Udai. Many of Aristotle's books on philosophy as well were also translated. *Categories* was translated into Arabic by Hunain bin Ishaq; *The Book of Measurement Analysis* was first transferred by Theodorus whose copy was later edited by Hunain bin Ishaq; *The Book of Universe and Corruption* was also translated into Syriac by Hunain bin Ishaq whose book was later translated into Arabic by Ishaq Al

Demashqee; *The Soul* was translated into Syriac by Hunain and into Arabic by Ishaq, and *Ethics* was translated by Ishaq as well. Works by other Greek philosophers such as Aleskander Alaferdjse, Prodicus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Favorinus were also translated.

2. Medical Books

Nearly ten books of Hippocrates, including *the Age of Hippocrates*, *The book of Seasons*, *the Book of Acute Diseases*, and *The Nature of Man* were all translated. Many other books of Galen were also translated such as *The Industry*, *The Pulse*, *The Cure*, *Fevers*, and *Great Anatomy*. Translators of that era also transferred works by Rufus of Ephesus, Oribasius, and Dioscorides.

3. Mathematical and Astronomical books

Euclid's *Geometry*, *The Phenomena*, and *Music* were all translated into Arabic. Nearly ten books by Archimedes such as *The sphere and the Cylinder*, *The Squared Circle and the Circle to the Power Seven*, *Tangent Circles* and *The Squared Circle*. Major works by Apollonius of Perga, such as *Cones and Parabola*, were translated. Later, books by Aristarchus of Samos and Ptolemy were also translated (Fakhoury, H. 1951: 762). When a translation of the *Almagest* by Ptolemy was presented to astrologists living in the Abbasid era, they managed to increase their knowledge about the shape of the Earth and its relationship with other planets. Furthermore, they proved the earth's spherical shape and measured its circumference as well as its all related degrees. They also corrected some of the errors that were made by Ptolemy (Fakhoury, H. 1951: 773).

7. Muslims interest in transferring Aristotle philosophy through translation

It was Aristotle who received the greatest part of interest in terms of translation and explanation of ideas. Ibrahim Madkour says in *The Millennium Anniversary of the Death of Abu Naser Al-Farabi* (1983:68-70) that Muslims considered Aristotle as the greatest philosopher of antiquity. According to Madkour, this was not a matter of personal taste; it resulted from the fact that the general philosophical doctrine of Aristotle was in agreement with the Islamic perception of the world, which was influenced by their idea about revelation. Aristotelian doctrine is based on mind and analysis; it uses reasoning and argument then compares between them so as to make everything seem reasonable and interconnected. All these acts are in agreement with the Islamic tendency since the basis of transfer, according to eloquent men, is the mind. Also, jurists say that accurate transfer agrees with what the mind says. Furthermore, according to philosophers, philosophy and religion basically agree with each other. Aristotle managed to combine reality with example; he also combined knowledge with happiness as well as taking what is public and what is private into consideration. These combinations distinguish the Islamic perception of creation and life from other religions as it combines this life and the life hereafter; Islam also combines soul and body as well as combining the individual with his society. The aforementioned combinations were presented in the doctrine of Aristotle in a balanced manner, just like that of the Islamic perception. Another reason for this choice of Aristotle's works is the fact that Aristotle marks the end of the Greek historical controversy; it represents the peak of Greek civilization and philosophy. Madkour says that Alexander explained Aristotle, and Favorinus was one of his students while Galen was one of the followers of Aristotelian philosophy.

8. Ibn Rushd and his contributions

Ibn Rushd, Averroes in Latin, was a medieval Muslim polymath. He was one of the most prominent scholars of the Islamic world. He was also one of the greatest philosophers who wrote commentaries on most of the surviving works of Aristotle. Ibn Rushd was born in the city of Cordoba, Al Andalus in 520 AH / 1126 AD. He was introduced to Prince Abu Yacoub Yousef by Ibn Tufail in 548 AH / 1153 AD, who asked him to explicate the doctrine of Aristotle. Ibn Rushd managed to do so and wrote three types of commentaries: the short commentary which is mostly an epitome, the medium commentary which is a summary and the long commentary which includes the whole text with a detailed analysis of each line. His commentaries are longer than the original Greek ones. Then, it did not take long to have these annotations and commentaries translated from Arabic into Latin, and these works of translation paved the way to the popularization of Aristotle in the Western world (Mahfouz, 1982: p123)

9. Ibn Rushd's approach to explaining and commenting on Aristotle's philosophy

In his long commentary, Ibn Rushd translates the original text of Aristotle paragraph by paragraph then he starts to clarify it part after part. He distinguishes the original text from his comments by the word "said." This method is also followed in his interpretation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. In the medium commentary, on the other hand, he mentions only the beginning of each paragraph first and then starts to explain the rest of the text without

mentioning what ideas belong to him and what ideas belong to Aristotle, but he can still retrace the original text. The third type of his commentaries, the short commentary or the total summary, is different from the other two as Ibn Rushd writes in his own name without referring to the doctrine of Aristotle. Thus, he adds, deletes and looks in other books of Aristotle to complete and illustrate his ideas (Al-Erqi, 1971: 357).

In the perspective of those who are interested in philosophy, these commentaries are true expressions of the real thought of Ibn Rushd as he discusses various ideas of Islamic philosophers such as Al Farabi and Ibn Sina. Ibn Rushd says that both of them committed many mistakes in their translations due to mixing the ideas of Aristotle with the opinions of Plato. Furthermore, Ibn Rushd also refers to the interpretations of Greek commentators which were originally written by Aristotle's pupils such as Al Eskander Al Aferdojse and Thaoffrasits.

Not only does Ibn Rushd translate the works of Aristotle, but he also adds to those works. He sometimes plays the role of the author as he moves away from the original text and starts to express his own views. This also happens when analysing and debating all the views of Aristotle as well as showing the bases upon which these views relied. In addition, he constantly introduces the reasons why he supports the views of Aristotle whenever doing so. For example, Ibn Rushd presents Aristotle's view on the cause of earthquakes in his book *Meteorology*. Aristotle says that there was a hill in one of the country's islands which kept on moving upwards and downwards until it cracked, and it let some strong wind with a lot of ashes come out of it. That action burned the whole island. In this instance, Ibn Rushd writes his own addition by saying that it is true to say that because those who eye-witnessed the earthquake incident in Cordoba and nearby areas in 566 AH strongly believed in this since there was a lot of banging sounds. I was out of Cordoba, but as soon as I reached it, I heard sounds just before the occurrence of the earthquake "(Al-Eraqi, 1971: 359)

It is clear that the Arab philosopher expresses his admiration of the great Greek philosopher. Ibn Rushd says that Aristotle is the most prudent person, and his doctrine represents the absolute truth since his mind had reached the maximum limits of human mind. Aristotelian philosophy, according to Ibn Rushd, is the origin of all philosophy. In his translation of the introduction of Aristotle's *Natural Law*, Ibn Rushd says that "Aristotle is the one who has the greatest mind ever. He has his contributions in the fields of logic, natural sciences, and metaphysics. The reason is that all the books that were written in these fields before the advent of Aristotle are not worthy to be read." He also says in the summary of *The Animal* that "we have to thank God so much for choosing that man to be perfect; God put him in the highest degree of human superiority which could not be reached by any other man at any age "(Al-Eraqi, 1971: 358)

The process of translation and explanation done by Ibn Rushd is not done just to explain some ideas but it has the purpose of directing Muslim readers as well. Hassan Hanafi thinks that Ibn Rushd addresses his readers in the second person so that he can explain to them what is ambiguous as an act of enlightening the readers about the doctrines of others, and as an act of adjusting their ideas and information. Ibn Rushd always asks the readers to judge things themselves and to use their good insight to evaluate the sincerity of their understanding. Ibn Rushd is not only a translator of Aristotle's works, but also a researcher. His style proves that a translator should be more informed about what he transfers than the original author. (Hanafi 1978:3,4,8)

Before commencing translation, Ibn Rushd used to study the translated subject deeply. This is evident as he initiates his writings by saying "Abu Al Waleed said..", and then he cites Aristotle and starts saying "Aristotle said.." because Ibn Rushd believed in his abilities as a researcher and a translator. Ibn Rushd is successful in making Aristotle support, prove and comment on his ideas. According to Hanafi, this makes the mental structure govern the temporal relationship, and the main purpose of doing this, benefits the Islamic civilization. Ibn Rushd usually has the unity of Aristotle works in his mind as well as the unity of his doctrine when studying different subjects, and he does not limit his perspective to a particular book which is the one under translation. Moreover, Ibn Rushd is accustomed to addressing the Greek civilization as a whole including philosophy, science, art, and medicine. He never restricts himself to Greek philosophy only. Therefore, we find that the study of medicine in which Muslims excelled was not an independent science, but it was part of the natural philosophy that dealt with the body. Chemistry, another field where Muslims excelled, was not an independent science as well; it was studied as a part of that natural philosophy that dealt with the matter (Hanafi 1978: 3, 4, 8)

Ibn Rushd is the author of two other important works which were lost. The first of which is called *An Article about the Statement of the Truth of the Evidence in the Light of the Distinction between the Point of View of Abu Nasr Al-Farabi and the Point of View of Aristotle*. The purpose behind it, as he states in *the Commentaries*, is to solve the confusion which occurred to the people of his time when looking at his book, *The Evidence*. The second work is called *The Important Logical Reasoning Issues on the Evidence*; it includes subsequent articles from *the*

Commentaries where he resolves problems pertaining the theory of measurement (Al-Alawi, 1985: 52). The above makes Ibn Rushd one of the more important translators of the time despite the fact that some western authors do not acknowledge that. For example, E. Renan, thinks that the style of Ibn Rushd is dry and not smooth. According to Hassan Hanafi, this could have happened because the commentaries of Ibn Rushd are based on translating from Syriac into Arabic, and not based on translating from the original Greek texts. This factor, in addition to the fact that there is a profound difference between the Semitic languages and the Greek language, could have led to some disturbance in Aristotle's ideas amid these frequent translations. Hence, there could be some confusion in his commentaries between philosophers and philosophical groups. He also sometimes mixes between Protagoras and Pythagoras, and Heraclitus becomes the founder of a philosophical group. These errors are found especially in Ibn Rushd's translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (Al-Eraqi, 1971: 356)

Ibn Rushd faced his severe ordeal when a number of his enemies went to Abu Yusuf Al-Mansour saying that they had found in one of Ibn Rushd's summaries him saying that one of the philosophers said that "it was shown that Venus is one of the Gods". This sentence was taken out of context, but unfortunately, the Caliph prosecuted Ibn Rushd. He then disgracefully banished Ibn Rushd in 1195, and issued an order to have all his works on philosophy burned while keeping his works on medicine and mathematics (Qanawati, 1978: 20)

10. The impact of translation on the Muslim community: cultural and religious

The Arab world between 750 and 850 AD represented a scene of one of the leading movements in the history of thought. It was a unique opportunity to help Arabs in the Fertile Crescent become the intellectual heirs of ancient Greek knowledge and ancient civilization advances. Arabs were able to seize this opportunity; they devoured knowledge like a hungry wolf with a lot of innate talent and potential. Thus, they translated from Persian, Greek and Syriac into Arabic. Most importantly, Arabs were able to grasp what they translated first and then to build upon it with a great capability of innovation; their position was not only the position of the recipient (Hitti, P., 1959:174)

One of the main impacts of translation on the Muslim Arab community was the religious impact of Greek philosophy on Islamic philosophy. When explaining the Aristotelian psychology in light of the comments of Al Eskander Al Aferdojse, we discover that it is shaped with divinity which is more evident in the teachings of modern Platonism, and it is known as Aristotle's ethology. This concept however, appeared in Arabic in 226 AH. When this kind of philosophy reached the hands of Muslim philosophers, it evolved until it became an Islamic platonic philosophy which was continuously updated until it appeared in its final shape. It also affected the Islamic mysticism, and this philosophy was responsible for the theoretical theology which was the main reason behind the development of mysticism. Some principles stemming from these two sources gathered in a modified form to ultimately enter the science of speech amid the Sunnis (De lacy, p.131).

Mu'tazila, a Muslim school of theology based on reason and rational thought, believed in the importance of Greek philosophy. They found it crucial to defend their beliefs against their opponents. This is due to the fact that both Jews and Christians armed themselves with Greek logic and philosophy to use them in debates with Muslim philosophers, and Muslims wanted to fight back with the same tools. Therefore, Muslims embarked on studying logic and philosophy, and they engaged themselves in studying Greek philosophy to the extent that they actually reached the level of having mental pleasure resulting from that act, and later studying philosophy became an end in itself. Moreover, the results of Greek philosophy and its methods gradually created a strong analytical impact on the Salafi Islamic beliefs as well (Ameen A., 1965:266).

Conclusion

Nowadays, one wonders what has happened to this influential art of translation in the modern age. Why do Arabs forget about the value of translating from and into their own sciences and arts so that they can equally communicate and interact with different nations on common ground? They should not keep themselves remote from the spotlight of the modern world that is only realized by mastering the art of communicating and interacting with the other using their own language, which is Arabic, and the language of other nations as well. Immediately after understanding the role played by Muslim translators throughout history in building a distinctive, superior and distinguished culture, contemporary generations of Arab and Muslim translators should realize the significance of their role which they have to play in the advancement of their modern societies as well as their responsibility towards their nation. Moreover, Muslim or Arab translators should always keep in mind those pioneers of translation in the Islamic culture, who deserve admiration for preserving ancient knowledge and science from being lost while many original works were permanently lost.

It could be true that most of the suffering during the last century was due to the misunderstanding of the features of the Arab-Islamic civilization since Arabs and Muslims were not able to convey the most prominent ideas upon which their civilization is based to non-Arabs. Therefore, we have to recall the enormous benefits that the Islamic Arab civilization gained from the focus on translation, and then work to restore the mastery of this art. People should also go back to that golden era of translation and study it carefully to answer some questions pertaining the true participation of members of minorities in building the structure of culture and science in any society. They should also investigate the extent to which those people were involved in public work as well as their influence on the societies in which they lived next to other members of the social structure.

Today, we still feel proud of that golden era when the Islamic Arab civilization reached its peak, thanks to the role played by translation. It was such a distinguished era in which translation was one of its main pillars. This was a touch of progress and prosperity to every aspect of life, and that was reflected in the great amount of communication and interaction with people of other cultures. Thus, Arabs played a major role in connecting cultures and making nations become familiar with each other's sciences and innovations.

References

- Al-Alawi, J. (1985). Proof Theory and its Significance in the Philosophical Discourse of Ibn Rushd, *A Link between The West and the East*. Symposium conducted at the Royal Moroccan Academy, Morocco.
- Al-Awady, Ibrahim A. (Editor), 1997. *Role of Books and Libraries in the Arab and Islamic Civilization (In Arabic)*. Ahmed, S. A., 2008. *Islam and Scientific Enterprise*. New Delhi: I. K. International Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. Amman, Jordan: International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).
- Ameen, U. (1958). *A Summary of Metaphysics by Ibn Rushd*. Cairo: Library of Mustafa Albab Alhalabi and Sons.
- Ameen, A. (1935) *Doha al-Islam*. Cairo: Library of Alnahdah Almesriah.
- Ameen, A. (1965). *Fajr al-Islam*. Cairo: Library of Alnahdah Almesriah.
- Atteya, G. N. (1986). 'Syriac Effect on Intellectual and Scientific Life in the Levant', *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on the History of the Levant*. The Levant in the Byzantine Era. Jordan.
- Cooperson, Michael, 2005. *Makers of the Muslim World: Al Ma'mun*, Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications.
- Dajani, B. (May 2009) *The role of translation in the dialogue of civilization*, Fikr wa Ibdaa', Cairo. P:201-228.
- Dalafi, H. R. and Hassan, M. H. A., 1994. *Renaissance of sciences in Islamic countries/ Muhammad Abdus Salam*. Singapore, World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.
- De Laci, O. Tr. Tammam Hassan. (1961) *Arabic Thought and its Place in History*. AlMo'sasa al Arabeya al Amma. Cairo.
- Al-Eraqi, M. A. (1971) "Explaining Ibn Rushd's Metaphysics." *Heritage of Humanity*, V.8.
- Fakhoury, H. (1951) *History of Arabic Literature*. Lebanon. Al-Matba' Al-Boulsyah.
- Hanafy, H. H. (1978) *Ibn Rushd Explaining Aristotle*. Algeria: Mahrajan Ibn Rushd.
- Hitti, P. (1959). *The History of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine*. (K. Yazegi, Trans). Beirut: Dar Al-Thakafah.
- Hijazi, M. *Elm AlLugha AlArabeya*,
- Hodgson, M. *The Venture of Islam* (1974) The University of Chicago Press.
- Ibn Abbas, Lughat al-Qur'an. Ed: Salah al-din al-Munjed, Dar al Kitab al-jadid. Lebanon.
- Ibn Hajar AlAsqalani, *Al Issaba*. 1415 H. Ed: Adel Ahmad AbdelMaqsoud, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmeya. Lebanon.
- Ibn Qutayba, *Tabaqat al Sho'ara'*. 1932, Ed, Mostafa Saqqa, Matbat al-Ma'hed, Egypt.
- Ibn Sallam, Al-Qasem. Lughat al Qaba'el alwareda fi al Qura'n. Maktabat al-Ma'raf, Reyad.
- Qanawati, G. S. (1978). *Ibn Rushd Works*. Presented by Dr. M. Saber, Algeria: Mahrajan Ibn Rushd.
- Madkour, I. (1983). *The Millennium Anniversary of the Death of Abu Naser Al-Farabi*. Cairo: The General Egyptian Book Body.
- Mahfouth, A. (1982). *The Genius of Arab-Islamic, the Source of Renaissance. A Translation of an Article by Averros, Abu Alwaleed bin Rushd*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture and National Guidance.
- Morad, Y. (1982). *Physiognomy among Arabs and Physiognomy by fakheradeen Al Razi*. (M. Wahba, Trans). Cairo: The General Egyptian Book Body.
- Sabra, A. I. (1987) *The Appropriation and Subsequent Naturalization of Greek Science in Medieval Islam*. In: *Hist. Sci.*, xxv, pp. 223-43.
- Sheikho, L. (1985). *Articles by Eminent Muslim and Christian Philosophers*. Cairo: Dar Al-Arab LeIbostani.
- Stetkevch, M. *Modern Classical Arabic*.
- Zou'bi, M. (2011) *Academies of Sciences and the scientific enterprise in the Islamic World and the West: A Comparative study with reference to selected OIC and Western Countries*. University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.