

The Evolution of Translation Culture: Translating the Holy Quran into French

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(Received A. H. 11/6/1421; accepted A.H. 7/2/ 1422)

Abstract. Scholars in the West study the relationship between translation and the culture of the SL or TL. The present paper, however, attempts to study the evolution of a culture specific to translation. Building on the researcher's work on the language of translation, the paper investigates the following hypothesis: The translation of a given corpus (texts, topics, terminology) introduces a new culture, independent from the SL culture and the TL culture. The researcher maintains that translation is an act of interpretation, necessarily producing *difference*, and resulting in *inadequacy*. The results show that social situations may or may not uphold a translation as "standard" or "ideal"; but by its very nature, translation, the linguistic expression of the translator, is creative, risky and forward looking. The rise, culmination and decline of translation culture embody the success and failure of human enterprise. The present corpus is based on eight translations of the Holy Quran into French, starting with Du Ryer's translation (1647) and ending with King Fahd Society translation (1990).

The building of a translation culture (TC) is always swarmed with controversy. But when a TC is based on the Holy Book of a foreign nation and religion, as is the case of the translation of the Quran into French, this culture raises serious questions about the purpose, strategies and evolution of such an enterprise [1]. In the study of the translation of religious texts, the interpretive function of the translator occupies a central position [2; 3].

In many ways, the Quran is a unique text. It was revealed to Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, over a period of about twenty-two years. It was revealed in Arabic, and has received all kinds of textual, theological, historical and mystical treatments within Arabic scholarship [1; 4-6]. It has been the subject of translation more than any other Arabic text. Its translation into European languages has evolved over the last eight centuries [7], starting with 1647 Retensis and Dalmati [8]. The first French translation by Du Ryer was published in 1647 [9].

1. Theoretical Dimensions

The present paper traces the evolution of a “translation culture” in eight translations of the Quran into French. The aim is to establish the main features of this culture, and to show that it is a being of its own, an independent entity [10; 11]. To do this, the paper will study some aspects that maintain the culture, some individual contributions in terms of the translator’s interpretive strategy and purpose, and some aspects of the social circumstances which helped make each translation what it is.

Building on my previous work on the language of translation, I hold that translation is an act of interpretation [12]. As such, translation is bound to produce *difference*. The accumulative potential of producing difference, i.e., all the possible characteristics of translation corpora, has been designated a theoretical status under the umbrella term *the language of translation* [12; 13]. The creative and existential potential of a translated text is assumed to be open to empirical investigation through the recognition and practice of analytical – verifiable – procedures.

At the same time, difference, the legitimate child of interpretation, is seen to be embodied in a new social and historical context which justifies the independent status of the translated text (TT). The creative potential of interpretation is seen as operating in a forward manner producing new independent texts. Difference, therefore, need not be viewed as the whirlwind of an endless intertextual libertine assumed by the deconstructionists [14]. Interpretation, moreover, secures an unchallenged place for the translator, the ultimate interpreter of all texts [15].

To incorporate difference, found in a number of translations of the same source text, as a theoretical dimension within our discussion of translation, we must obtain evidence that supports another hypothesis which stipulates that all translations suffer from the inherent property of being “inadequate” [7]. Inadequacy is seen as the catalyst which urges new translators to produce (different) interpretations. The present paper seeks to produce evidence to support the two theoretical assumptions made above: (1) that the language of translation is different, i.e., independent, from the source language (SL) and the target language (TL); (2) that inadequacy is an inherent feature of all translated texts. Taking this argument a step further, we can say that interpretation in translation will produce difference at every level and in relation to every aspect (factor) of translation theory and practice. This means that the language of translation (LT) infinitely generates different translations. The inadequacy of translation will, moreover, thwart any attempt to search for absolutist solutions in the form of “*normative*” translation, “*ideal*” translation or “*ideal*” translator. The production of new translations cannot be blocked by the presence of a *translation* labeled “*normative*” or “*ideal*” [15 ; 16].

A number of theoretical questions can be posed at this point. What is the place of the first – predictionary – translation [12]? How much effort is made by the translator to balance his/her input with the previous translation(s) of the same text? Do successive translations of the same religious text, the Quran here, show a “logical” continuum which may reveal predictable pattern(s)? Is there enough ground to assume shared concerns by the translators of the same ST? Where would those concerns lead the issues of translation? Is translation inevitable? Is translation an endeavour which liquidates itself, via endless re-writings and far-fetched interpretations and manipulations leading to appropriation? Can there be a real multilingual “world” with no translation? Finally, is a culture specific to translators and their audience and critics a reality? Or is it just a mere “theoretical” fantasy? The present paper will make a case for posing the above questions as real and serious questions. Still there is no claim that they are going to be answered in this work.

One of the compelling and gratifying reasons for studying the translations of the Quran is the fact that each translation bears witness to the conscious and determined effort of the translator. Each translator indulges in a grand enterprise by building a brick and providing the “insightful” vision within the culture under study. Therefore, the stakes are high and the consequences are far reaching. The study of the translations of the Quran into European languages is pressing. But the main emphasis in the West is, naturally, on Bible translation [17]. The issues raised by translating the Bible are absolutely different from those involved in translating the Quran. While the Bible was introduced to the West by Christian translators [18], the Quran was primarily translated by European crusaders [19] and Christians orientalists and not by Muslims. Muslims, whatever their language or nation, cannot say their prayers using a translation, no matter what the target language is. This may explain why the study of Quran translations is somehow neglected and why only recently translation is used as a means for spreading Islam in the West [20 ; 21].

2. Translation and culture, and the culture of translation

Interpretation can be seen in the translator’s work at different levels of utterance/clause, statement, information, cohesion, discourse topics and the underlying attitudes and ideologies of the age, particularly the audience. However, there is a level for the translator’s operation(s) which goes beyond the genre and the text-type to maintain a culture, a level through which his/her contribution can be placed in a wider well-defined human context.

Each of the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) belongs to a given culture; source language culture (SLC) and target language culture (TLC) [10]. The present paper focuses on the emergence of a third independent culture which is specific to translators and their works. This culture of translation is called here translation culture (TC).

The present paper attempts to trace the professional-cultural properties of the translators who work in the same area, or who translate the same ST. Hence, the culture specific to translation is the result of translation activities in relation to a specific body of texts in which shared features and a sense of continuity are found. In each stage of its history, TC can be studied descriptively. But at more than one level, there are developmental dimensions. This level of translation can be examined within the frame of the following hypothesis: There is a translation culture independent from the ST culture and the TL culture. Translation culture (TC) is translation specific in the same way the language of translation (LT) is translation specific.

The definition of “culture” is well beyond the scope of this paper [22, pp. 190- 91 ; 23, 16-18, 161-62]. But for the sake of limiting the scope of the present concern, a working definition can be suggested. TC can be “defined” as a body of translated texts, translation problems, topics, and issues shared by a group of translators and language users as evident in translated texts produced over a well- defined span of time. The present paper investigates a TC in eight French translations of the Quran, carried out over 343 years extending from 1647 [9] to 1990 [21]. Over this period of Modern Times, the European civilization in general and French civilization in particular, moved through maturation and nationhood to a semi retreat, a second position in world affairs.

3. Du Ryer’s translation of the Quran: the initiation of a translation culture

Before carrying out any analysis of Du Ryer’s translation, published 1647 [9], we must try to establish his source(s) and whether or not he made use of the previous translation(s) of the Quran into Latin by Retenensis and Dalmati (1143) [24], into Italian by Arrivabene (1548) [25] or into German by Schweiggern (1623) [26]. Du Ryer lived in Alexandria in Egypt and went into the trouble of securing through Turkish officialdom permission from the Sultan to translate the Quran. Badawi mentioned that Du Ryer knew Arabic [27, p. 222].

In his preface, Du Ryer made no reference to any previous translation of the Quran. But the language he used in his translation should be examined in order to assess the premise that he used the Arabic text as his source text (ST). At the same time, a close examination of his language would reveal his interpretive strategy and the proximity of his language to the Arabic ST. In the following verse (Sura 2, verse 255) the lexical choices and the structure of sentences show that Du Ryer attempts to approximate the ST utterance. The Arabic is given in the first line, Du Ryer’s translation in the second and Ross’s English translation [28] in the third.

(1)

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ (سورة البقرة ، آية ٢٥٥)

Dieu! Il n’y a qu’vun seul Dieu vivant & eternal ... [9, p. 40]

God! There is but one only God, living, and eternal ... [28, p. 25]

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ

ne pensez pas qu'il sommeille ou qu'il dorme ... [9, p. 40]

Think not that he slumbereth or sleepeth ... [28, p. 25]

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

tout ce qui est au Ciel & en la Terre est à lui ... [9, p. 40]

What ever is in heaven or in earth is his ... [28, p. 25]

Du Ryer tries to render the words and the structure of the ST as they occur. It is clear in the English translation how Ross follows Du Ryer's example to the letter. The Arabic "لَا تَأْخُذُهُ" is rendered by Du Ryer as "pensez pas" which is mirrored in Ross's as "think not." In Arabic the "same" verb is used after a negative "article." Du Ryer uses "pensez pas" in the imperative mood, and Ross follows this in his translation "think not." The last sentence in (2) above follows a similar line. The French by Du Ryer places "est à lui" at the end; the Arabic equivalent "لَهُ" is used initially. Ross in his English translation of Du Ryer follows the French arrangement as in

- (2) tout ce qui est au Ciel & en la Terre est à lui [9, p. 4]
What ever is in the heaven or in earth is his [28, p. 25].

"Is His" is final like "est à lui." This shows that Du Ryer followed Arabic lexis and structure only to a certain degree. Savary, who produced the second translation of the Quran into French in [29], accused him of deforming the "noblesse" of the "ideas" with his phrases.

- (3) Du Ryer, sans respect pour le texte, a lié les versets les uns aux autres, et en a fait un discours suivi. Pour opérer cet assemblage difforme, il a recours à de froides conjonctions, à des bouts de phrase qui détruisant la noblesse des idées, le charme de la diction, rendent l'original méconnoissable [29, Preface, p. viii].

The example cited in (2) above may justify Savary's claim. One has to bear in mind that Du Ryer's translation was the first translation into French, and that he did not have an elaborate translation, such as Marracci's (which Savary had), to be guided by. Still, one has to examine Du Ryer's language more closely to form a valid judgement. In (4) below, God is addressing Jesus:

(4)

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قُمْ هَاهُنَا فَاذْبَحْ بِالنَّاصِيَةِ (سورة آل عمران ، آية ٤٥)

Souviens-toi! comme le Seigneur a dit; O Jesus, je te ferai mourir, je t'esleverai à moi, je t'eloignerai des infidelles ... [9, p. 54].

Remember thou, how the Lord said to Jesus, I will cause thee to die, I will elevate thee to my self ... [28, p. 34]

Here one finds Du Ryer's rendering of the Arabic statement against his own belief. He refers to the belief of the "Turcs" (i.e., Muslims) in his preface as being different from that of the Christians. His language, however, shows the French word order in the expression "ferai mourir." He also adds "Souviens-toi comme," which is elliptic in the Arabic text. The English translation by Ross follows Du Ryer to the word using Du Ryer's addition "Souviens-toi" literally to give "Remember thou, how..."

Naturally, one would expect a first pre-dictionary translation to be general and periphrastic, rather than literal and to the point. In (5) there is a description of how the believers would fare in paradise:

(5)

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا (سورة النبا ، آية ٣١)

Ceux qui auront eu la crainte de Dieu deuant les yeux seront dedas un lieu de felicité [9, p. 618].

They who shall have the fear of God before their eyes, shall be in a place of felicity [28, p. 373].

حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا

dans des jardins d'une terre tres-fertile, enrichis de raisins & de grenades [9, p. 619].

in gardens of a most fertile Land, enriched with grapes, and pomegranates [28, p. 373]

وَكَوَاعِبَ أُنثَىٰ

[No translation] [9, p. 619]

[No translation] [28, p. 373]

It is significant that Du Ryer's translation has omitted the mention of "young ladies of the same age with breasts just forming." It is not feasible that Du Ryer simply forgot this verse. After all in terms of a pictorial description, the ladies in paradise constitute an important element of the portrait [30, 8, p. 434]. One may explain the omission by Du Ryer by suggesting that out of his experience of living in a Muslim society in the seventeenth century, he sought a neutral stand vis-à-vis the sensitivity of making this reference to beautiful young ladies in

paradise. This manipulation of the texture of the portrait of paradise shows a sophisticated level of cultural understanding of Muslim sensitivity.

Du Ryer, therefore, was not distorting the ST as Savary claims. Rather, Du Ryer was restricted in that he was making his own text not guided by any previous translation. The first phrase in (5) is rendered in a lengthy paraphrase, which shows lack of accuracy and a fluffy style, typical of a first translation and of its direct translation into English by Ross. Savary, who described his own translation as a translation of “meaning” rather than a translation of “words,” was concise and to the point when he rendered the verse about “young ladies of the same age with breasts just forming”:

(4a) Des filles célestes au sein arrondi, & palpitant, en feront l’ornement [29, 2, p. 407].

The translation of this verse and other points related to women’s affairs in the Quran takes an extremely significant dimension in Fatma Zaïda’s translation into French, published in 1861 [31].

4. Savary’s translation of the Quran: the building of a translation culture

Had the translation of Du Ryer not been developed and built on by Savary [29], there would have been no case for a TC in the present research. Savary, who was a prominent orientalist, found weaknesses in Du Ryer’s translation. This is a natural development, since Du Ryer’s translation was published 137 years before Savary’s. More significant is the fact that Du Ryer’s translation was the first translation into French which relies on no previous translation; unlike Sale’s famous English translation (1734) which was produced after Ross’s English translation [28], and more importantly after the second Latin translation by Marracci [32]. This last translation proved to be extremely influential on the European scene [1].

It is quite safe, therefore, to assume that Savary benefited from Du Ryer’s and Marracci’s translations, despite his dissatisfaction with the language of the former (see 3 above) and the method of the latter, as (6) below shows.

(6) Marracci, ce savant Religieux qui a passé quarantes ans à traduire, & à réfuter le Coran, a suivi la vraie marche. Il a séparé les versets comme ils le sont dans le texte; mais négligeant ce précepte du grand maître:
Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus Interpres ec, [29, Preface, p. x].

Examining the Quranic text, Savary wanted to translate “l’élévation de son style” rather than the words per se. However, the possibility of influence or borrowing from Marracci’s translation, has to be explored in his translation. Savary wrote in his preface:

(6a) Persuadé que le mérite d’un traducteur consiste à rendre l’original avec vérité, je me suis efforcé de faire passer dans notre langue les pensée de

l'Auteur, avec le coloris, la nuance qui les caractérisent; j'ai imité autant qu'il a dépendu de moi la concision, l'énergie, l'élévation de son style; & pour que l'image soit ressemblante au modèle, j'ai traduit verset pour verset [29, Preface, pp.xi-xii].

It was seen in (2) above that Du Ryer tried to keep the words of the Arabic ST, and he followed the structure in as far as he could. For Savary, the essence of his work as he stated was to "faire passer dans notre langue les pensée de l'Auteur, avec le coloris, la nuance qui les caractérisent." But one needs to compare the two translations of a specific stretch of words to clarify the point. The following example is taken from Sura 80, verses 24-30, in which one finds a vivid description of what God has bestowed on human beings. The squared brackets are used to give a rough rendering of the verses by the researcher.

(7)

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِهِ (سورة عبس ، آية (٢٤)

[Look, O Man, at your food]

Il et [il] ne considere pas les biens qui le nourrissent [9, p. 622]

[and he does not consider the goods which nourish him]

- Qu'il considère sa nourriture [29, 2: 413]

[Let him consider his food]

The Arabic imperative is missing in both translations. Both translations avoid the literal meaning of " ينظر " (look in English and "regarder" in French) and opt for the contextual meaning of "look" as "think" and "consider." Hence, Du Ryer has not been inaccurate. In fact he tends to gloss the meaning by giving French "synonyms" of Du Ryer's choice, as it is clear in the verse after the one quoted above.

(7) cont.

أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا (٢٥)

[We poured rain heavily.]

Nous auons envoyé la pluie [9, p. 622]

[We have sent the rain.]

Nous faisons couler la pluie des nuages [29, 2: 413-14]

[We make the rain drop from the clouds.]

Du Ryer's use of "envoyé" does not seem to be an elaborate choice. Savary's choice of "faisons couler la pluie" is more "appropriate" for the idea of the Arabic "صب" [pour]. But to add an explanation from Quran exegesis, Savary inserts the phrase "des nuages" [of the clouds] [33, 4: 703; 34, 9: 127; 35, p. 785].

In the verses which follow the previous one, one sees the difference between the strategies used by the two translators.

(7) cont.

ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا (٢٦)

[Then we opened up the Earth.]

nous aurons ouvert les trésors de la Terre [9, p. 622]

[We have opened the treasures of the Earth.]

- Nous ouvrons le sein de la terre [29, 2: pp. 413-14]

[We opened the breast of the earth.]

In both translations, one finds a metaphor used to help bring out the meaning. Du Ryer uses "les trésors" [the treasures] and Savary uses "le sein" [the breast]. In Arabic there is no metaphor [33]. To continue with our example, we find the following verse:

(7) cont.

فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا (٢٧)

[We grow (cause to grow) in it cereals.]

nous avons fait produire toute sorte de grains, [9, p. 622]

[we make all kinds of grain be produced.]

Nous faisons germer le grain, [29, Vol. 2, p. 413-414]

[We cause the grain to germinate.]

Again Du Ryer uses the general descriptor "produire toute sorte" [produce all sorts] and Savary opts for the specific process of creation in "germer" [germinate].

(7) cont.

وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا (٢٨)

des blettes, [9, p. 622]

[??...]

-Pousser la vigne, verdir l'herbe [29, 2: 413-14]

[grow the grapes, make the herb green]

وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا (٢٩)

des olives, des dattes [9, p. 266]
[olives, dates]

- Croître l'olivier, le palmier [29, 2: 413-14].
[olive trees, palm trees]

وَحَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا (٣٠)

des jardins, & de vergets [9, p. 622]
[gardens and vineyards]

-Et les arbres qui ornent vos
jardins [29, 2: 413-14].
[and the trees which fill his gardens with ornament]

وَفَاكِهَةً وَأَبًّا (٣١)

remplis de fruits & d'herbages [9, p. 622]
[full of fruits and herbage]

-La terre se couvre de fruits, & de pâturages [29, 2: 413-14]
[The earth covers itself with fruits and pasture.]

In using “des blettes,” “des olives, des dattes” and “des jardins, & de vergets,” Du Ryer strives to be brief and to give the general meaning. In each of these cases Savary is more elaborate and specific. The above case is typical of the strategies employed by the two translators.

The last example in this comparison comes from Sura (24) verse (35). In the following verse an extended metaphor illustrates the splendor and glamour of God. The periphrastic and glossing nature of Ryer's phraseology is seen in using 42 words to translate the same stretch of words which takes 61 words in Savary's translation. The first part of the verse runs as follows:

(8)

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي
زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا ... (سورة النور، آية ٣٥)

[God is the light of Heaven and Earth...]

Dieu eclaire le Ciel & la Terre comme la lampe qui est dans le fanal de
crystal allumée de huile ... [9, p. 337]

Dieu est la lumière des Cieux & de la Terre. Il eclaire comme la lampe
allumée dans le verre, & dont l'éclat ressemble à ... [29, 2: 112].

Du Ryer uses an action verb “eclairer” instead of “est” giving the following translation:

Dieu eclaire le Ciel & la terre ... [9, p. 337]

Dieu est la lumière des Cieux & de la Terre [29, 2: 112].

“Le Ciel” is singular [heaven] in Du Ryer, while in Arabic and in Savary it is plural. The continuation of the above statement in Arabic is “مَثَلُ نُورِهِ” [the resemblance of His light] is rendered by Du Ryer as part of the previous utterance and with a subject. Savary, very much like Marracci who strives for exactitude, renders the “meaning” of grammatical clauses one by one [1]. Thus the verse in Savary’s translation starts with an equative structure: “Dieu est la lumière des Cieux & de la Terre” [God is the light of Heavens & Earth]. Then Savary starts the second sentence with a subject and a verb: “Il eclaire ...” [He lightens...]. Later, the same practice of merging clauses and reducing clauses to phrases by Du Ryer is attested in the following instance from the same verse:

(8) Cont.

كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ

[Brilliant star, kept lumière burning from a blessed olive tree...]

allumée d’huile d’olivier béni; [9, p. 337]

[a crystal lampadaire burning from the oil of a blessed tree..]

Savary used a finite verb for the last phrase above:

& dont l’éclat ressemble à celui d’une étoile. Sa lumière vient de l’arbre béni [29, 2: 112]

[... of a star. Its light comes from a blessed tree...]

The subject and the verb are underlined to show how in order to illustrate the “meaning”, Savary paralleled the ST by adapting the original verb “يُوقَدُ” into a subject and a verb “Sa lumière vient...”. It is clear that Du Ryer, the initiator of this text into French, tried to paraphrase “the words of the original” and did not mind the boundary of clauses or even boundaries of Quranic verses, as seen in (8) above. Savary, on the other hand, went for “the meaning” in a way that made him clarify the boundaries and relations within clauses and Quranic verses. Where Du Ryer was general and periphrastic at the level of the word, Savary tried to render the meaning and stayed within French collocations, producing lengthy, but always clear, stretches. The comparison shows differences in interpretation. But both translations have used the French language to introduce the topics, language, and concepts of the Quran to the speakers of French.

5. Fatma Zaïda's translation of the Quran: the interruption of a translation culture

Moving to the third translation of the Quran, published in 1861 [31] and the only translation of the Quran by a woman, one finds a complete breakdown of the "tradition" which Savary worked from. This breakdown and a number of peculiarities make Zaïda's translation a special case of individual interpretation.

Fatma Zaïda was a Muslim "djaria" (slave-maid who enjoyed the status of a wife) of a Turkish dignitary named "Benjamin Ali Afandi Agha" to whom she dedicated her work [31]. She may have lived in Europe for a part of her life. In her preface to her translation, Zaïda expresses deep concern and dissatisfaction with the West's conception and treatment of Islam, its Prophet and its Holy Book. She makes no mention of any previous translation of the Quran, and it is likely that she has not read any. This fact is evident in her translation which thrives with misprints and structural and lexical peculiarities and above all a great deal of changes in the ordering of Quranic Suras (Chapter's) and number of verses in each Sura. The second Sura which contains 282 verses in the Arabic ST and all other translations, has 450 verses in Zaïda's translation. Some Suras are given as two with an interruption in the middle. Sura 80 in the ST is number 8 in Zaïda's translation [31, pp. 21-23].

A simple example will show the adaptation strategy used by Zaïda. Her translation of the verse discussed in (7) above, Sura 24, verse 35 in the ST, shows a high level of personal interpretation and a loose expression, features typical of predictionary translation [12] as illustrated in (9) below.

(9)

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ (سورة النور ، آية ٣٥)

je suis la lumiere des Ciels et la terre ...[31, p. 286]

[I am the light of the Heaven and the Earth ...]

"Je suis la lumiere" [I am the light], is used instead of "Dieu est la lumiere" [God is the light], in Savary and "Dieu eclaire le Ciel & la Terre" [God lightens the Heaven and the Earth] in Du Ryer in (8) above. Turning the descriptive third person reference to "God" into the "I" point of view, is a change of the perspective from God as described to be there, removed up in Heaven, to the "existentialist" entity asserting itself. The logic of "je" [ego] is the irrefutable logic of existence, while the logic of "il" is that of describing and asserting a report which is open to falsification [36]. Zaïda may have chosen "je" to give the metaphor in the verse the power of the Truth. This use of "je" is reinforced when it is repeated later in the same verse as "je suis lumiere sur lumiere." Zaïda's individual interpretive judgement is the only factor responsible for using the "je" point of view. None of the other seven translations under study uses the "je" in this context.

But the “potential” interpretive strategy appears to function in the situation where women’s affairs are in the background. This is clear in the case of “*وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا*” [young ladies of the same age and with breasts just forming], which Du Ryer omitted and Savary mentioned in a reasonable proportion. Here Zaïda seizes this opportunity to elaborate on the “role” of women and to project her own views concerning women’s issues. In fact, she projects *her own* portrait of man and woman in Paradise giving a new purpose (message) to her translation.

(10)

وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا (سورة النبأ ، آية ٣٣)

[and young ladies of similar age and just coming breasts.]

Omission: no translation [9, pp. 618-19]

– Des filles célestes au sein arrondi, & palpitant, en feront l’ornement.[29, pp. 407-408]

34- Les femmes y prendront une jeunesse et une beauté incomparables, elles paraîtront toujours Vierges à leurs époux bienheureux par leur extrême délicatesse, elles s’appelleront *Houri*. 35- Elles viendront au devant des embrassements de celui qu’elles choisiront [31, p. 18].

Eventually, Zaïda is not “faithful” to the Arabic ST, but in terms of cultural translation, she is projecting the “role” of women as she saw it. Her interpretation needs a thorough investigation which lies well beyond the scope of the present paper. Still, in the current interest in female translators, it should be said that the above example from Zaïda is anything but accidental [37, pp. 31-63; 42; 43].

Women’s topics reflecting Zaïda’s personal experience as a “djaria” (slave-maid kept as a wife) are frequently inserted and/or elaborated on. This is seen in her repeated reference to the duties of slaves, their education and treatment, Sura 4 in the ST, Sura 3 in her numbering, verses 29-99. A few exemplary instances will make the point. In sura 3 verse 57 - Zaïda’s numbering are used in the following examples - she writes that:

(11) La femme née libre, mais que vous avez dotée, a le même droit [31, p. 126].

[A woman’s is born free, but though you give her a dowry, still has the same rights.]

Zaïda carries on to say:

(12) Il serait arbitraire, que la femme qui sort de votre Harem fut condamnée à un éternel veuvage [31, p. 126].

[It would be arbitrary that a woman who leaves your Harem (ladies taken as wives) is condemned to eternal widowhood.]

She also projects her own conception of man-woman relations in marriage, stating that a man who is fifty-five years old should not buy a young “slave-maid” to “share his bed.”

- (13) L’homme de cinquante-cinq ans, ne peut acheter une jeune esclave dans l’intention de partager son lit, qu’après lui avoir fait demander, si elle n’éprouvera point de répugnance pour une union avec un homme de cet âge. [31, p 127]

In another statement Zaïda calls for the right of young slave-maids to education:

- (14) Les jeune filles que l’on destine à être Odalisques (épouses) doivent, avec la foi de l’Islam et l’amour d’Allah, recevoir l’instruction les sciences utiles et agréables [31, p 127].

These educated “slave-maids,” the translator adds, are too expensive for men from lower classes to keep.

- (15) Ces jeunes filles coûteront trop cher pour la classe pauvre, et leur éducation les en éloignera [31, p 127].

In the next verse she goes on to specify the duties of the families who keep these girls and the “conditions” of contracting these “slave-maids”:

- (15a) [verse 73] Je dis à toutes familles: Envoyez vos filles s’instruire dans les cours gratuits; elles y recevront toujours une éducation passable; elles gagneront les manières délicates, et l’élocution distinguée, par le contact de Almées (vierges destinées à être odalisques) ... les filles pauvres si elles sont belles, et du moins des maîtres aisés, et moins bourrus que certains hommes du peuple, si, quoique moins jolies, elles ont de la distinction et une teinte d’éducation [31, pp. 127-28].

Zaïda later states that men cannot put up with suffering and are weak; while women are strong, verse 80, p. 128. In “verse” 81 below, she states that a man should only have (one) child from every wife:

- (16) N’ayez, autant que possible, qu’un enfant de chaque femme. [31, p.128]

In verse (83), there is a warning to Muslims against following the Hindu tradition of burning the wife alive with her dead husband. Later on the same page, “slave-maids” are urged to respect their master and be honest and loyal to him and look after his wealth and belonging. One peculiar twist appears in the form of distinguishing between “white” and “black” slave-maids:

- (17) L’esclave blanche destinée au service, n’est que pour l’usage des odalisques, elle ne doit faire aucun ouvrage de force [31, p. 130].

Thus, a white slave-maid should not do heavy duties; while a black one could:

- (18) La femme noire peut faire des travaux plus forts ... [31, p. 130]
 [The black woman can do harder tasks ...]

Is Zaïda condemning her own age? Was she herself white? Never mind whether she was this or that. The fact is that she inserted this information which calls for thorough investigation to establish which part of her work is based on the Quran, which comes from other books, and which is her own projection as is the case of much of what has been discussed in this section.

6. Blachère's translation of the Quran: the culmination of a translation culture

Regis Blachère's translation, published in 1957 [40], came 310 years after Du Ryer's translation of 1647 [9]. Although Blachère makes no mention of any previous translation of the Quran in his preface, his translation bears witness to a long tradition in French scholarship.

Studying verse 35 from Sura 4, one finds a good example of Blachère's balanced well-studied translation:

- (19)
 اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ
 كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ... (سورة النور، آية ٣٥)

35 Allah est la Lumière des cieux et de la terre. Sa Lumière est à la ressemblance d'une niche où se trouve une lampe: la lampe est dans un [réceptient de] verre; celui-ci semblerait un astre étincelant; elle est allumée grâce à un arbre béni, [grâce à] ... [40, p. 380]

First, Blachère adopts the Arabic word "Allah" for the name of Almighty God. This is the same as Zaïda's choice which was followed by a number of European translators [6, pp. 28-29]. Some other words in (19) above are also found in Savary's translation. These include "lumière, cieux, Terre, l'huile" and "feu." Blachère also used squared brackets [] to insert explanatory information, not as part of the text so much as an additional element. This is used as a qualifier in "un [recipient de] verre ..." to clarify the phrase a [grâce à] un olivier" and a clarifying clause to parallel the Arabic meaning "dont l'huile [est si limpide qu'elle] éclairait même si nul feu." The use of brackets to insert background information not integrated in the texture of current discourse, is a common practice of the TC under investigation. Marracci's Latin translation [32], Sale's English translation [41] and Savary's French translation [29] resort to this practice. A third feature of the present TC found in Blachère's translation is the extensive use of explanatory comments in footnotes. Marracci, Sale and Savary also exploit this feature.

Furthermore, Blachère tries to observe a high level of exactitude by staying as close as possible to the Arabic meaning. The term “exactitude” has been used by Al-Shabab to refer to this close translation [1].

(20)

زَيْتُونَةٌ لَّا شَرْقِيَّةٌ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٌ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي
اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (سورة النور ،
آية ٣٥)

... un olivier ni oriental ni occidental, dont l'huile [*est si limpide qu'elle*] éclairait même si nul feu ne la touchait. Lumière sur Lumière. Allah, vers Sa Lumière, dirige qui Il veut. Allah propose des paraboles aux Hommes. Allah, de toute chose, est omniscient [40, p. 380].

Here the translator strives to render the meaning of phrases, clauses, utterances, and even collocations as found in the ST. This may incur retaining the words and structural properties of the ST. If the second line below is read from right to left, it reads exactly like the Arabic:

زَيْتُونَةٌ	لَّا	شَرْقِيَّةٌ	وَلَا	غَرْبِيَّةٌ	يَكَادُ	زَيْتُهَا
un Olivier	ni	oriental	ni	occidental	dont l'huile	
يُضِيءُ	لَوْ	لَمْ	تَمْسَسْهُ	نَارٌ	عَلَى	نُورٍ
éclairait	si	même	ne la touchait nul	feu		

In fact the four general features which have been mentioned above give us enough ground to acknowledge the scholarly effort behind Blachère's achievement. If social acceptability at the level of specialists in the field of oriental and Islamic studies is added, then Blachère's translation can be rightly recognized as the “standard” French translation of the Quran. The concept of “standard” in translation is extensively discussed in Schäffner [15]. It can be said that this is the culmination of more than three hundred years of work in the field of Islamic and Arabic studies in the context of the French language and culture.

7. More French translations of the Quran: the dispersion of a translation culture

All four French translations which were completed in the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century, were carried out by Muslim translators. The religious and cultural background of the translator is, of course, an important factor in the interpretive process in the translation of religious texts. Three translators are from Maghreb countries, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia [42-44]. The fourth is an adaptation of another translation, authorized by a body of Saudi Islamic scholars and published by the King Fahd Society (KFS) [21] for Quran Printing in Saudi Arabia. Each of the four translations is a serious reliable effort.

Except for the King Fahd Society translation, none mentions any previous translation of the Quran. Each of the four translations justifies itself on the merit of projecting a “unique” point of view. But at the same time, it is obvious that all four translations have benefited from the existing culture of Quran translation into French.

In each translation, the individual treatment of the TT and the following of TC conventions go hand in hand. This can be clearly exemplified in the following instance from KFS translation:

(21)

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ (سُورَةُ آلِ عِمْرَانَ، آيَةٌ ٤٥)

(45) (Rappelle-toi,) quand les Anges dirent: “O Marie, voilà qu’Allah t’annonce une parole de Sa part: son nom sera “al-Masih” “'ssa”, fils de Marie, illustre ici-bas comme dans l’au-delà, et l’un des rapprochés d’Allah” [21, p. 57].

45/40 [*Rappelle*] quand les Anges dirent: “O Marie! Allah t’annonce un Verbe [*émanant*] de Lui, dont le nom est le Messie. Jésus fils de Marie, [*qui sera*] illustre dans la [*Vie*] Immédiate et Dernière et parmi les Proches [*du Seigneur*] [40, p. 81].

Comparing the first clause with Blachère’s translation, one finds the same lexical choices and the same word order. Later in the same sentence, Blachère uses “Verb [emanant] de lui, ...” KFS uses “parole” instead of “Verb.” But when it comes to the name of Jesus, KFS uses the Arabic definite article “al” followed by the name in Arabic giving ‘ “al-Masih” “'ssa.” This emphasis on preserving the Arabic name and supplying information in brackets is a characterizing feature of KFS translation.

This strategy is prominent also in the translation of Sheikh Hamza, the Algerian Imam of the Paris Mosque, who translates the above verse as follows:

(22)

(45) [*Rappelle*] lorsque les anges dirent: “O Marie! Dieu, en vérité, t’annonce comme bonne nouvelle un Verbe émanant de lui dont le nom sera l’Oint Jésus, fils de Marie. Il [sera] illustre en la vie d’ici-bas et dans la vie future, et comptera parmi les rapprochés [*du Seigneur*] [42, p. 68].

Adherence to the conventions set by Blachère is clear in the use of the same type of brackets enclosing the same information “[*Rappelle*],” a word which is ellipsed in the ST. But Hamza’s use of “Dieu” does not agree with Blachère’s choice of “Allah.” Also with the word “Verb,” Hamza introduces some explanation to give “comme bonne nouvelle [as good news] un Verb.” Thus,

while benefiting from the existing translation culture, especially from Blachère, Hamza has his own interpretive agenda.

Kechrid and Ben Mahmoud are smooth and fluent in their translations. They do not use explanations or background information in brackets. This allows the text to have a smooth flow, a feature which can be illustrated in the first part of the verse used in (21) and (22) above:

(23)

(45) lorsque les Anges dirent: "O Marie! Dieu t'annonce la bonne nouvelle de la prochaine venue d'une Parole de lui. Son nom est le Messie, Jésus-fils-de-Marie, notable dans ce monde et dans l'autre et parmi les rapprochés." [43, p. 70]

(24)

44- Voici que les anges dirent: "O Marie, Dieu t'envoie le message suivant: Il se nommera le Messie, Jésus, fils de Marie, sera intercesseur dans ce monde et dans l'autre et un des familiers de Dieu [44, pp. 71-72].

The point here is that while Blachère's translation is primarily an academic work, KFS's translation is ideological or argumentative, Kechrid's, Mahmoud's and Hamza's are primarily communicative. This shift in translation strategy deserves thorough investigation. The language flows non-interrupted and the interpretative stance is modulated with emphasis on helping the reader and clarifying the message. The communicative flow is crystal-clear in Kechrid's translation. This can be seen in the following.

(25)

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ (٢٤) أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا (٢٥) ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا (٢٦) فَأَبْيَدْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا (٢٧) وَعَيْنًا وَقَضْيَاءً (٢٨) وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا (٢٩) وَجَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا (٣٠) وَفَارِكَهَاتٍ وَأَبَا (٣١) مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَالْأَنْعَامَ لَكُمْ (٣٢) فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّلَاحَةُ (٣٣) يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ (٣٤) وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ (٣٥) وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ (٣٦) لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ (٣٧) وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُسْفَرَةٌ (٣٨) صَاحِبِكُمْ مَسْبُورَةٌ (٣٩) وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ (٤٠) تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ (٤١) أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكُفْرَةُ الْفَجْرَةُ (٤٢) (سورة عبس ، الآيات ٢٤-٤٢)

(25) Que l'Homme regarde donc ce qu'il mange. (25) Pour voir que Nous avons déversé l'eau en abondance. (26) Puis que Nous avons largement fendu la terre. (27) Nous y avons fait pousser des graines. (28) De la vigne et des plantes fourragères. (29) Des oliviers et des palmiers. (30) Des vergers à la végétation abondante. (31) Des fruits et du pâturage. (32) Pour que vous en jouissiez vous et vos troupeaux. (33) Quand viendra le cri assourdissant. (34) Le jour où l'Homme fuira son frère. (35) Sa mère ainsi que son père, (36) Sa compagne et

ses enfants, (37) Chacun d'eux sera ce jour-là trop préoccupé de lui-même pour penser aux autres. (38) Des visages ce jour-là seront resplendissants de lumière, (39) Riants et pleins d'optimisme. (40) Et des visages ce jour-là seront couverts de poussière. (41) Une fumée noire les accablera. (43) Ce sont les Mécréants sans foi ni morale. [43, pp. 792-93].

No English translation, not even Irving's translation [45; 46] which places the message above the ideological debate, typically using "ordinary" language and simple diction, can match the simplicity and directness of the language found in Kechrid's translation [7, pp. 26-32]. In (25) above more than anywhere else, does the succession of verses remind one of the effects evident in the Arabic text. The flow of information may capture the attention of the reader keeping the message paramount. A similar effect, but to a lesser degree, is found in Ben Mahmoud's translation of the same stretch of verses. The choice of simple words plays a role in Kechrid's communicative drive. He is the only translator who uses the ordinary word "mange" in the first line in (25) above. All other seven translations opt for "nourriture(s)."

(26)

24- Qu'il médite cependant sur les nourritures que nous lui accordons. 25- Nous faisons tomber l'eau du ciel. 26- Nous fendons la surface de la terre. 27- Nous faisons pousser les grains, 28- La vigne et le fourrage, 29- L'olivier et le palmier, 30- Les bocages épais, 31- Les fruits et les légumes, 32- Pour vous alimenter, vous et vos bestiaux. 33- Lorsque la trompette sonnera, 34- L'homme fuira son frère, 35- Sa mère et son père, 36- Sa femme et ses enfants, 37 Chacun ayant assez, ce jour-là, de s'occuper de lui. 39- Ce jour-là, on verra des visages épanouis de joie, 39- Souriants et pleins de quiétude. 40- Ce jour-là, on verra aussi des visages confondus 41- Et ternis par la honte. 42- Ces visages seront ceux des impies et des corrompus [44, pp.792-93].

In the case of Hamza's translation, the restricted corpus we have studied enables us to say that the emphasis is on communication and the message, but not to the extent seen in the above two translations.

(27)

(24) Que l'homme prête attention à sa nourriture! (25) [Pour la lui faire acquérir] nous faisons pleuvoir abondamment. (26) Puis nous fendons largement le sol (27) et y faisons pousser des graines, (28) des vignes, des légumes, (29) des oliviers, des palmiers, (30) [et y créons] des jardins touffus, (31) des fruits et des pâturages (32) comme subsistance pour vous et votre cheptel. (33) [Mais] quand se produira le fracas, (34) le jour ou l'homme fuira son frère, (35) sa mère et son père, (36) sa compagne et ses enfants, (37) chacun ayant, ce jour-là, assez à se préoccuper de son sort, (38) ce jour-là [il y aura] des visages rayonnants, (39) souriants et optimistes, (40) et des visages terreux, (41)

couverts de poussière. (42) Ceux [dont les visages seront ainsi] seront les infidèles et les libertins [42, 2: 606].

KFS's translation is clearly in favor of the point being argued, trying to be, first and foremost, a translation of the "meanings" of the ST.

(28)

(24) Que l'homme considère donc sa nourriture: (25) C'est Nous qui versons l'eau abondante, (26) puis Nous fendons la terre par fissures (27) et y faisons pousser grains, (28) vignobles et légumes, (29) oliviers et palmiers, (30) jardins touffus (31) fruits et herbages, (32) pour votre jouissance vous et vos bestiaux. (33) Puis quand viendra le Fracas, (34) le jour où l'homme s'enfuira de son frère, (35) de sa mère, de son père, (36) de sa compagne et de ses enfants, (37) car chacun d'eux, ce jour-là, aura son propre cas pour l'occuper. (38) Ce jour-là, il y aura des visages rayonnants, (39) riants et réjouis. (40) De même qu'il y aura, ce jour-là, des visages couverts de poussière, (41) recouverts de ténèbres. (42) Voilà les infidèles, les libertins [21, p. 585].

The explanatory information in brackets and assertive language as in "C'est Nous qui versons l'eau abondante ..." are the trademarks of this translation.

Regis Blachère is the academic whose eye is on the history of French oriental studies and the building of a translation culture. Below is his translation of the above stretch of verses.

(29)

34- Que l'Homme considère sa nourriture! 25- Nous avons versé l'eau [*du ciel*] abondamment, 26- puis Nous avons fendu la terre largement, 27- et Nous y avons fait pousser graines, 28- vignes, cannes, 29- oliviers, palmiers, 30- jardins touffus, 31- fruits et paturâges, 32- objet de jouissance pour vous et vos troupeaux (*'an'âm*). 33- Et quand viendra le Fracas, 24- le jour où l'Homme fuira son frère, 35- sa mère et son père, 36- sa compagne et ses fils, 37- [car] chacun alors aura sujet de ne considérer que soi, 38- ce jour-là des visages seront rayonnants, 39- souriants et joyeux, 40- tandis que d'autres, à ce moment là, seront couverts de poussière, 41- recouverts de ténèbres: 42- ceux-là auront été les Infidèles et les Libertins. [40, p. 638]

Hence, Blachère seems to remain the pivotal figure in the present TC. His translation seems to be mainly addressed to non-Muslims as was the case of the three translations produced before him by Du Ryer [9], Savary [29] and Zaïda [31]. KFS's translation is also addressed to non-Muslim readership.

But in a most ironic twist in the history of this TC comes the generation of mainly North African Muslim emigrants in France and elsewhere who may need to use the French translation to read the Quran. The Trojan Horse of translation has, in contrast to Pym's suggestion [47], turned against its inventor, and instead of introducing Arabic culture to a French "audience," it is allowing French to be the

vehicle of the Holy Book of Islam. In this eventuality, Kechrid's communicative translation would be extremely suitable. Still, it would take those Muslim readers away from the ST, the word of God. One feels an undertone that hints in this direction and that can be discerned in the title of Kechrid's translation: *Initiation à l'Interpretation Objective du Text Intraductible du Saint Coran* [43].

8. Discussion of the translation culture under study

Studying the eight translations used in the present paper, one cannot overemphasize the fact that each of them has a distinctive contribution to make. Still, the emphasis of the present paper is on the continuity and development of this TC, as much as on "difference" [13] resulting from the inadequacy [7] of translation and the interpretation [12 ; 48] involved in the production of each translation. In this sense, each translation is significant and stands to offer interesting and unique insights. This calls for a thorough investigation of each translation and its relation to the ST, on the one hand, and its role in the TC to which it belongs, on the other.

The present paper is exploratory in that it is a step in a large-scale project aiming at the study of the translation of the Quran into European languages. The two main aims of this paper are (1) to examine the question of interpretation and difference, and (2) to outline the TC realized in the translation of the Quran into French.

This culture is initiated by Du Ryer, who takes credit for his role as a first translator, in contrast to Nord and Sparrow's suggestion [49, pp. 8-10]. Being a product of *his* age and culture, he did not show respect towards "les Turcs" [The Turks] or to their religion, an attitude he shared with other translators at that time [1]. This anti-Muslim sentiment is seen in Ross's English translation from Du Ryer's French translation [28], and Marracci's Latin translation [7], Al-Shabab [1], and Daniel [50]. Du Ryer's work was propagated through the English translation by Ross, and it remained unchallenged on the French cultural scene for 136 years.

In the French cultural context, Du Ryer's translation would have been forgotten except for Savary, who found Du Ryer's translation inadequate and provided his own ST oriented translation. Savary's translation has almost certainly benefited from Marracci's Latin translation. Savary's translation is, among other things, well organized: each verse is marked by starting a new line,

background information is supplied in brackets in the body of the text and an abundance of footnotes is available [58]. With Savary, the vanguard of the French school of colonialism was in the making. The agenda was elaborate, and the Arabic-Islamic culture was no more a threat to Europe, while French language and diplomacy were preparing for a role in international supremacy [52 ; 53]. Translation would soon operate as a tool for the control and subjugation of a “lower” culture [54]. Savary’s translation was an embodiment of a France which was preparing to penetrate Arab Muslim regions first in Egypt (1797) where Savary translated the Quran, and later in Algiers (1832). Above all, Savary built on the heritage of Du Ryer.

Zaïda’s translation, published in Lisbon [31], is outside the mainstream of this TC. Hers is an individual, idiosyncratic translation which reflected her own world of a rich slave-maid who was eager to explain Islam to the Western layman. But most importantly, in her translation Zaïda expresses her aspirations for a well-organized fair society in which women are educated, appreciated, and better treated [31].

Three hundred and ten years after Du Ryer’s translation, Blachère published his own which showed a number of features of a standard work. The culture of translating the Quran into French has come of age (see the place of Blachère as an encyclopedic orientalist in [6, pp. 331-36]. No disrespect to Islam or its world is shown, and a great care is taken to verify various aspects of the translated text. Blachère’s translation came after the Second World War at a time when Europe as a whole was tired of its internal wars and France was locked in a deadly confrontation in the war of Algerian independence. Blachère’s translation constitutes the landmark of the TC which was initiated by Du Ryer.

From the climax of Blachère’s translation, the translation of the Quran into French could have taken one of two tracks. The first, which did not materialize, was the possibility of a translation near to an appropriation of the Arabic ST, claiming authority and addressing possible French people who might have adopted Islam. The actual “frame of reference,” to use Wittgenstein’s term, developed in a different direction. The frame that prevailed was a new one resulting from “Frameworks that are so divergent that there is a serious question as to whether there can be any possible shared meaning between them; these form the limit situations” [57, p. 103]. Wittgenstein says that “If a lion could speak, we would not be able to understand him” [58, item 223]. But those who try to communicate with lions produce a new breed in cultural terms. The present paper has shown that in the absence of a congenial frame comes the “decline” of TC into a diversified culture in which rival translations express rival views embodied in rival interpretations.

The socio-ideological background which led to the dispersion of this TC is outside the scope of this paper. Still, it is remarkable that in the span of about

twenty years (1970-1990) four translations of the Quran into French were published and each has its own contribution and merits [59]. This culture relates to colonialism and power [52]. But the direction of translation, into French, the language of the colonizer rather than into Arabic which is supposed to replace French, needs to be investigated. Surely, there are translations outside this corpus, but it is hoped that the main ones are sufficient to support the existence of a TC specific to French.

From the above sketch of the TC under study, the following findings can be reported.

1. Successive translations of a given ST, set of terms, topics or knowledge domains, show shared conventions, translation strategies and translation problems. This continuity in developing a tradition in translating a given work, or a set of technical terms, leads to the birth of a TC.
2. TC starts with an initial translation which is adapted, developed and may be turned into a convention or a set of conventions.
3. TC produces translated texts different from the ST. Within TC difference is seen in terms of new topics, language and worldview.
4. Inadequacy is an inherent feature of translation. It is the continuous urge for new interpretations which, in turn, yield difference. The “*ideal translation*” and the “*ideal translator*” are inventions of social norms, contrast [15], or romantic metaphysics as seen in Benjamin [16].
5. TC may develop to the extent of producing a translation which shows formal language and high standard and which gains social acceptability. This translation achieves the status of a “standard translation.”
6. TC may develop in the direction of achieving/producing an “authorized version,” a kind of appropriation of the ST.
7. TC, as in the case of the French TC of the Quran, can fall into dispersion seen in a number of rival translations, all correct and insightful, but none widely acknowledged by the society of the TL culture. In this state of dispersion, every translation thrives with the point of view of the translator.
8. Within a TC, each translation, ultimately each translator, produces an individual text which independently and positively engages with the rest of the TC. The contribution of each member of the TC is essential for the development of the other members in a network. Individual

translations within a TC project the translator's point of view in terms of the translator's voice, topics, language and world-view.

9. Finale

The present paper has just scratched the skin of the TC under study. Still, it has in more than one sense paved the way for studying this TC. Interpretation, which is bound to produce difference, is the backbone of the enterprise of translation. But the paper has also explored different venues of this culture and shown some important common features transmitted from one translator to another. Furthermore, the present paper has tried to assess the contribution of each translation in terms of difference, inadequacy, purpose, strategy and belonging/ contributing to its TC.

A great deal remains to be done. The initiation, culmination and decline of TC may be expected, but the achievement of any cultural enterprise stands as a witness of human endeavor. The triumph and failure of translation are those of human language and human civilisation.

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تطور ثقافة الترجمة : ترجمة القرآن الكريم إلى اللغة الفرنسية

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ملخص البحث . بينما يُركّز الباحثون في الغرب على دراسة علاقة الترجمة بثقافة اللغة المستقبلية أو اللغة المصدر، يقوم هذا البحث بدراسة ثقافة خاصة بالترجمة وذلك في ثمان ترجمات للقرآن الكريم إلى اللغة الفرنسية . ولهذا الغرض يقوم الباحث باستقصاء الفرضية التالية : تؤدي ترجمة نصوص أو موضوعات أو مصطلحات محددة إلى قيام ثقافة جديدة مستقلة عن ثقافة اللغة المصدر وثقافة اللغة المستقبلية .

ويرى الباحث أنه لكون الترجمة ترتكز على التأويل بلغة جديدة ، فهي بالضرورة تُنتج الاختلاف وتتسم بانعدام الكفاية . وتوصلت الدراسة الحالية إلى أنه قد تساهم الحالة الاجتماعية في وصول ترجمة ما إلى مكانة الترجمة " المعيارية " أو الترجمة " المثالية " حيث يكتسب العرف قوة " السلطة اللغوية " ، لكن الترجمة على ما تجسده من التعبير اللغوي للمترجم هي بطبيعتها عمل إبداعي ينضوي على المجازفة والنظر إلى الأمام . كما بينت الدراسة مكانة الترجمات المدروسة من حيث مساهمة كل ترجمة في تطوير ترجمات القرآن الكريم إلى اللغة الفرنسية من جهة ، ومساهمة كل ترجمة في تقديم نص مترجم إبداعي يحاول تحقيق هدف المترجم من جهة أخرى . من هنا يدعم البحث القول إن الترجمات الفرنسية المدروسة تشكل ثقافة خاصة بها ، ثقافة انبثقت مع ترجمة دو ريبير (١٦٤٧م) وتألقت بترجمة بلاشير (١٩٥٧م) وبدأت بالتشردم في الترجمات التالية .