

## **An Overview of English Translations of the Holy Qur'ān Written by Women**

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on women's participation in the translation of the Holy Qur'ān into English. A diminutive history of Qur'ānic translations and commentaries written by women in different languages has been shared. In addition to it, six women translators have been selected for this study who have rendered the Holy Qur'ān into English. These six translators belong to different regions of the world. One translator is Aḥmadī and others represent different sects of Islam, including Sunni, Shia and Sufism. The main purpose of this study is to present some biographical data of selected women translators and an overview of their Qur'ānic renderings. These translators can be divided into two groups: the first group contains translators who have translated the Holy Qur'ān in collaboration with other male partners. They are Amatul Raḥmān Omar, Samira Ahmed, and Aisha Bewley. The second group involves women who have rendered the Holy Qur'ān individually, namely Umm Muhammad, Tahereh Saffarzadeh, and Laleh Bakhtiar. However, in this study, the introductions of these women and their translations have been given according to the chronological order of publication of their translations.

**Keywords:** Holy Qur'ān, Translations, Women, Translators

### **Introduction:**

Throughout history, women have remarkably contributed to the field of Islamic Studies. They have also served in Qur'ānic translation and interpretation. They have produced various complete or partial interpretations of the Holy Qur'ān in different languages such as Arabic, Persian, Turkish, German, Urdu, and English. Prof. Dr. Hidayet writes that “women's activities and endeavors to write books in the realm of Qur'ānic exegesis, like in the other realms of Islamic disciplines, gradually increased in the last few decades. One can further predict that the increase of the

number of the women who go into higher religious education and the enterprise of graduate studies will naturally lead to an increase of the written works in the realm of Qur'ānic exegesis.”<sup>1</sup> In this paper, a short history of women's Qur'ānic translations has been given. After a general view of women's services in Qur'ānic translation, an overview of six selected women English translators of the Holy Qur'ān and their translations have been presented. These six translators are Amatul Raḥmān Omer, Samira Ahmed, Umm Muhammad, Aisha Bewley, Tahereh Saffarzadeh, and Laleh Bakhtiar.

### Women Translators of the Qur'ān:

A brief account of women translators of the Qur'ān and their translations has been given below:

**Zaib al-Nisā'** (d. 1702), daughter of Aurangzeb Alamgir (a Muslim king of the Indo-Pak subcontinent) wrote a commentary entitled “*Zaib al-Tafsīr*”. **Maḥmūd al-Nisā' Begum** was born in 1898 in Hyderabad Deccan (India). She wrote an Urdu commentary of the Holy Qur'ān entitled “*Tafsīr Qur'ān Majīd*”. This narration is now edited by Mawlānā Sirāj al-Hudā Azharī and published in two volumes. **Ā'ishah 'Abd al-Raḥmān** (d. 1998), an Egyptian exegete who is also known as **Bint al-Shāṭi'** “is one of a number of twentieth-century Muslim intellectuals who left their indelible mark on modern literary exegesis of the Qur'an”.<sup>2</sup> She wrote a Qur'ānic commentary with the title of “*Al-Tafsīr al-Bayānī li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*” published in 2 volumes by Dār al-Ma'ārif in 1962. This commentary includes only 14 short sūrahs of the Holy Qur'ān.

An Iranian scholar **Sayyidah Nuṣrat Begum Amīn** (d.1983) wrote a Persian commentary entitled “*Makhzan al-'Irfān dar Tafsīr Qur'ān*” which has 15 volumes published in 1978. **Dīna al-Zahrā Zidān** with her husband 'Abdul Munīm Zidān wrote an English translation of the Qur'ān entitled “*The Glorious Quran: Text and Translation*” which published in 1991 in the

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<sup>1</sup> Aydar, Hidayet, Dr, et al., “Female Scholars of Quranic Exegesis in the History of Islam”, *Journal of Theology*, Vol.1, No. 2 (2014): 3

<sup>2</sup> Naguib, Shuruq, “Bint al-Shāṭi'’s Approach to tafsīr: An Egyptian Exegete’s Journey from Hermeneutics to Humanity”, *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, Vol.17, No.1 (2015): 45

United Kingdom. **Zaynab Muḥammad al-Ghazālī** (d.2005) wrote the Arabic exegesis of the Holy Quran entitled “*Nazrāt fī Kitāb Allāh*”. It has 2 volumes: the first volume was published in 1994 and the second volume was published in 2003. A Palestinian scholar **Nā’ilah Hāshim Šābrī** published a commentary entitled “*Al-Mubaššir li-Nūr al-Qur’ān*” in 1997.

Camille Adams Helminski, an American who embraced Islam, wrote a partial translation of the Holy Qur’ān in English entitled “*The Light of Dawn: Daily Readings from the Holy Quran*.” It was published in 1999. A Syrian author named **Ḥannān al-Ḥām** wrote a partial commentary on the Holy Qur’an called “*Min Hadyi al-Qur’ān*.” The commentary of Samra Kūrūn, a Turkish researcher, entitled “*Tafsīr al-Qārī*” has been published in 2006. It consists of 8 volumes. An American Muslim woman Professor in collaboration with two males, Layth Saleh al-Shaiban and Edip Yuksel produced an English translation entitled “*The Quran: A Reformist Translation*” published in 2007. A Turkish Scholar **Kāmilah bint-e-Muḥammad al-Kavārī** made an interpretation entitled “*Tafsīr Gharīb al-Qur’ān*” published in 2008.

The Arabic commentary titled “*Taysīr al-Tafsīr*” by an Egyptian scholar **Fauqiya Ibrāhīm al-Sharbīnī** was published in 2008 in 4 volumes with complimentary words from the scholars of the University of Azhar. The Arabic commentary of the **Karimān Hamzah**, titled “*Al-lu’ lu’ Wa al-Marjān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*” appeared in 3 volumes in 2010. A German orientalist **Angelika Neuwirth** wrote a chronological exegesis of Qur’ān entitled “*Der Koran als Text der Spätantike: Ein europäischer Zugang*” published in 2010. Another translator and commentator of Karnatak (India) was **Surayya Shahna**. She was born in 1941. She wrote a literal translation of Qur’ān and its interpretation entitled “*Tabyīn al-Qur’ān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*” published in 2012. Two Pakistani scholars, **Dr. Faraḥat Hashmī** and **Dr. Nighat Hashmī** wrote Urdu translations of Qur’ān.

Now the biographies of selected women translators and introductions to their translations have been presented below:

### 1) **Amatul Raḥmān:**

Amatul Raḥmān, daughter of Sher Alī Qādiyānī, was born in Qādiyān on August 17, 1914. She got her BA in English and Arabic languages. In 1950, The University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan awarded

her Masters' degree in Arabic with a gold medal. Soon after she received her degree of BA she was immediately appointed as headmistress of Nuṣrat Girls High School in Qādiyān (now in the East Punjab, India) and served the school till the time of partition of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. As her family moved to Lahore, she initiated a school under a tree. She was very proud of starting the class after partition without wasting her time. After the establishment of Rabwa, she took over the charge as the headmistress of a Girls School there. She resided in Rabwah for about 5 to 6 years. For a short period of 2 to 3 years, she worked as the headmistress of a Girls School in Rawalpindi. She traveled extensively within Europe and the United States. She died on July 15, 1990, in Germany, however, buried in Aḥmadī colony Dār al-Salām Lahore, Pakistan.<sup>3</sup>

It is narrated by Amatul Raḥmān's offspring that love for Allah and His Book motivated her to render the Holy Qur'ān into English so that it can be easily understood by English speakers. So, she rendered the Holy Qur'ān in easy English along with her husband 'Abdul Mannān 'Omer. 'Abdul Mannān's "erudition and knowledge of Arabic and Islamic studies, the fact alone, besides others, is a living testimony that for years he had been the Editor of the Encyclopedia of Islam, which includes more than a hundred published articles of his own on Islam."<sup>4</sup> Their Translation of the Holy Qur'ān entitled "*The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Text - English Translation*" was published in 1990 by Noor Foundation International Inc. In fact, this is a re-translation which is based on her father-in-law 'Allāmah Nooruddīn's handwritten notes, Friday-Sermons (published), books, and Qur'ānic seminars or 'Dars'.<sup>5</sup> 'Allāmah Nooruddīn was the first successor of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qadiyānī.

This translation includes original Arabic text, a long Introduction to the Holy Qur'ān, an eighty-three-page Glossary, and an extensive Subject

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<sup>3</sup> Bibliographic information presented here has been shared to the researcher by daughter of Amatul Raḥmān 'Omar named Rehana Omar through email on 22-07-2019.

<sup>4</sup> 'Omar, Amatul Raḥmān, 'Abdul Mannān, *The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Text – English Translation* (Hockessin: Noor Foundation International Inc., 2000), 73-A

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

Index. It does not provide footnotes deliberately to avoid interruption in the smooth flow of the Holy Book.

Amatul Raḥmân avoids using contemporary English archaism that may make ambiguous meanings of the Holy Qur'ān. She has let fall Biblical style with 'hath', 'doth' and 'thou' forms. The use of parentheses plays a significant role in a Qur'ānic translation. She applies parentheses to insert, either an explanation or alternative meanings of words, or words not found in Arabic text but required by the rule of English grammar or Arabic idiom.

Representing her Aḥmadī beliefs, she seriously departs from orthodox Muslim beliefs and interprets some verses in a rationalistic way. She interprets Prophet Adam's story symbolically and denotes *Ādam* and *Banī Ādam* as the whole human race. She does not accept the physical occurrence of miracles of prophets, such as she rejects the resurrection of birds on Abraham's call and mentions this verse as a parable. She is also not convinced of the miraculous creation of the she-camel. She believes in the natural death of the Prophet Jesus and denies his physical ascension to Heaven. She also rejects the miracle of Prophet Jesus' speaking in the cradle. Consider the verse:

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ارْقُطْ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ بَنِي إِدْرِيءَ وَأَنْزِلْ إِلَيْكَ الرُّوحَ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلِي سَمِعُوا وَأَطَاعُوا

Amatul Raḥmân renders this verse as given below:

“(Recall the time) when Allah said, ‘O Jesus! I will cause you to die a natural death, and will exalt you to Myself’<sup>7</sup>

Amatul Raḥmân renders other miracles of the Prophet Jesus as parables e.g. creation of birds from clay in order to instill in his people a new spirit so that they can become spiritual persons. She denies that these miracles occur physically. She renders the verses related to Jesus's miracles metaphorically that people whom the Prophet Jesus cured were not physically diseased but spiritually sick. Consider the verse mentioned below:

<sup>6</sup> Al-Qur'ān, *Āl-Imrān* 3:55

<sup>7</sup> ‘Omar, Amatul Raḥmân, The Holy Qur'ān, 58

أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ  
الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدْخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَكُمْ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ<sup>8</sup>

Amatul Raḥmān renders this verse as follows:

“And (He will appoint him) a Messenger to the Children of Israel (with the Message), “I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. (I have come so that) I determine for your benefit from clay (a person) after the manner of a bird, then I shall breathe into him (a new spirit) so that he becomes a flier (- a spiritual person) by the authority of Allāh, and I absolve the blind and the leprous, and I quicken the (spiritually) dead by the authority of Allāh, and I inform you as to what you should eat and what you should store in your houses. Behold! These facts will surely serve you as a definite sign if you are believers.”<sup>9</sup>

In fact, the traditional commentaries have clarified that all the above-mentioned miracles occurred physically. For example, Imam Rāzī writes that it was God who created life with His power in the form of a live bird when the prophet Jesus blew into it, so it could be a miracle for him.<sup>10</sup> Imām Baghwī explains that in the period of Jesus his people were excelled in medicine so he was given a miracle of healing.<sup>11</sup>

Mawlānā Shabbīr Aḥmad ‘Uthmānī says truly that only the perverts and sweeping hearts misinterpret the known meanings of firm verses of the Holy Qur’ān.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Al-Qur’ān, *Āl-Imrān* 3:49

<sup>9</sup> ‘Omar, Amatul Raḥmān, *The Holy Qur’ān*, 57

<sup>10</sup> Al-Rāzī, Fakhar al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Umar, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb* (Bayirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Ilmiyah, 2000), 8:227

<sup>11</sup> Al-Baghwī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas‘ūd, *Mu‘ālīm ‘l Tanzīl* (Riyadh: Dār al-Tayyabah, 1989), 2: 40

<sup>12</sup> ‘Uthmānī, Shabbīr Aḥmad, Mawlānā, *The Noble Qur’ān*, Tr, Muḥammad Ashfaq Ahmad (Karachi: Dār al-Isha‘āt, 1999), 199

## 2) Samira Ahmad:

Samira Ahmad produced an English translation of the Holy Qurʾān in collaboration with her father Mohamed Ahmed under the title “*The Koran: Complete Dictionary and Literal Translation*” published in 1994 from Canada. Samira spent five years producing her translation. She writes, “This is just a short word to explain how we came to spend over five years in the process of preparing this literal translation and complete Koranic dictionary.”<sup>13</sup> She faced many difficulties in preparing this translation; one of them was the lack of punctuation in the Arabic Qurʾān, except at the end of a verse. So, she punctuates the translation with quotation marks, commas, etc. where required.<sup>14</sup>

She offers a brief introduction to the translation. She shares reasons with her readers for undertaking the task of translating the Holy Qurʾān. She states, “[w]e never fully intended to take such a task. As it began, we found our non-Arabic speaking friends questioning available translations, for there is a lack of a literal English translation.” She shows her dissatisfaction with all available translations of the Holy Qurʾān because they unintentionally reflect the translator’s thoughts or sects. Yet, her main aim seems to present an unbiased and neutral translation that does not reflect any particular sect. She introduces an innovative strategy in her translation. She provides various possible meanings of certain words and asks readers to choose their own definitions and draw their own conclusions. She presents all her personal input between brackets so that her “understanding of the meaning does not become mixed with the words of God.”<sup>15</sup> The term *idrib* in Qurʾānic verse (4:34) is translated by the majority of translators as ‘beat them’; they understand it as a symbolic beating, i.e. very slight beating which does not break a bone or leave a mark. According to Samira, only God knows the intentional meaning of a word, yet she hopes that she has provided the reader with an enhanced and comprehensive understanding of the definitions in question. Justifying her work, she states that all translators render the term

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<sup>13</sup> Ahmed, Samira, Mohamed, *The Koran: Complete Dictionary and Literal Translation* (Canada: M., J., & S. Ahmed, 1994), Forward

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ahmed, Samira, Mohamed, *The Koran*, Forward

*ḍaraba* into various meanings but when they translate *iḍribūhunna* in verse 4:34, they all translate it as 'beat'. She writes

“...the word *ḍaraba* which is used throughout the Koran with various meanings, and translators have used the definitions of the word at their discretion to explain a verse, however, when it came to the word *iḍribūhunna* (4:34), sadly all translations (that we have seen to date) took only the meaning "beat". This is why we have made the extra effort to give Moslems a better understanding of the wide variety of meanings expressed throughout the Koran by God.”<sup>16</sup>

While translating the word *iḍribūhunna* in this verse she renders it as “to ignore”, “to disregard”, and “to push”; she totally dispenses the word 'to beat' out. Her “emphasis on gender-related issues”<sup>17</sup> in the Holy Qur'ān is reflected with this understanding of the term *ḍaraba* and her “attempt to provide an egalitarian or woman-sensitive translation.”<sup>18</sup>

She renders verse 3:55 regarding Prophet Jesus' ascension like Aḥmadīs as “When God said: "You Jesus I am, I am making you die and raising you to Me”.”<sup>19</sup>

### 3) Umm Muhammad:

Janice Huff (Nowadays she is better known by her selected Islamic name, Aminah Assilmi or Umm Muhammad) was born in southern California (USA) on January 01, 1945. She was a Southern Baptist preacher, a radical feminist, and a broadcast journalist.<sup>20</sup> After a partial comparative religion presentation by a history teacher, she first became interested in Islam.<sup>21</sup> Assilmi's husband was from Syria, so she moved to Syria where she

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<sup>16</sup> Ahmed, Samira, Mohamed, *The Koran*, Forward

<sup>17</sup> Hassen, Rim, *English Translations of the Quran by Women: Different or Derived?*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Warwick, 2012, 71

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ahmed, Samira, *The Koran*, 37

<sup>20</sup> ‘Abdul Ghanī, Dr., *Hum Muslmān kīūn hōē* (Lahore: Kitāb Saraey, 2010), 42

<sup>21</sup> Katie Zavadski, How Three American Women Translated One of the World's Most Popular Qurans, accessed 05-06-2020, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-three-american-women-translated-one-of-the-worlds-most-popular-qurans?ref=scroll>



completed intensive Arabic language courses and grammar lessons<sup>22</sup> and embraced Islam in 1977 in front of a Muslim named Abdul-Aziz. Despite her family's initial reaction and divorce from her husband, she stayed in contact and addressed them with regard. Her many family members, grandmother, father, mother, sister, brother, oldest son, embraced Islam gradually. Assilmi later married another person and Allah blessed her with a beautiful boy.<sup>23</sup> She migrated to Saudi Arabia in 1981. She has been teaching classes in *tafsīr* and basic *fiqh* at the Islamic Cultural Center in Jeddah since 1991.<sup>24</sup> In 1990, she visited Pakistan and delivered lectures in different educational institutions of Lahore and Islamabad such as the University of the Punjab, Lahore College for Women University, and Kinnaird College, Lahore, etc. In 2005, she was spotted in a documentary film about North American Muslim females, *Me and the Mosque* in National Film Board Canada. She worked as an activist for women's rights. In 2009, the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre in Amman (Jordan) named her as one of the 500 most important Muslims in the world.<sup>25</sup> She was the President of the International Union of Muslim Women. On March 05, 2010, she died in a car accident outside of Newport Tennessee while returning with her son from a speaking engagement in New York.<sup>26</sup>

Umm Muhammad wrote an English translation of the Holy Qur'ān entitled "The Qur'ān, Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meaning" which was published in 1997 by Abul-Qasim Publication House Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) under the pseudonym of Saheeh International. It includes over 2,000 explanatory footnotes, an appendix including the merits of some particular sūrahs and verses, and an extensive subject index. Umm

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.saheehinternational.com/> accesses 02-02-2019,

<sup>23</sup> Abdul Ghanī, *Hum Muslmān kīn hōē*, 46

<sup>24</sup> Faraz Omar, Interview With Umm Muhammad Of Saheeh International, accessed 05-10-2020, <https://www.muslimink.com/interview/interview-umm-muhammad-saheeh-intl/>

<sup>25</sup> Ed Marques, Usra Ghazi, editors, *The 500 Most Influential Muslims in the World* (Amman, Jordan: The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, 2009), 129

<sup>26</sup> International Union of Muslim Women, Our Condolences at the Passing of Aminah Assilmi, Muslim Matters, March 6, 2010, accessed 20-7-2019 <https://muslimmatters.org/2010/03/06/our-condolences-at-the-passing-of-aminah-assilmi/>

Muhammad adds footnotes only where the explanation of points is necessary or when more than one meaning is acceptable. She also provides a brief introduction to some sūrahs in footnotes. Throughout the translation, with the Name of the Prophet Muhammad she writes (ﷺ) in Arabic. Umm Muhammad reveals why she feels a need for a new rendering:

“There is clearly a need for a presentation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'ān in English which is precise enough to be useful as a reference for Muslims and students of Arabic yet also suitable for *da'wah* purposes to non-Muslims.”<sup>27</sup>

Umm Muhammad declares in the preface that she has translated the Holy Qur'ān according to the beliefs of *Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*.<sup>28</sup> She adopts the communicative translation approach to present the overall message of the text. She also emphasizes consistency, as she translates consistently the same Arabic word with the same English equivalent throughout the translation. However, some required adjustments have been made in some particular instances. She gives very importance to Islamic religious classical sources. She intends to write an accurate translation, relies only on classical sources, and evades the use of modern Arabic dictionaries “which are often variant with the language of the Qur'ān reflecting the degree of change which has crept into the understanding of and certain concepts with the passing of time.”<sup>29</sup> She uses brackets to enclose words that are not derived from the Arabic text but are added for clarification or the completion of English sentences in accordance with standard regulations. This translation has been endorsed by numerous recognized Muslim scholars, e.g. Dr. Zakir Naik, Dr. Bilal Philips, Dr. Jamal Badawi, and Sheik Yusuf Estes.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Saheeh International, *The Qur'ān: English Meanings and Notes* (Jeddah: Al-Muntada al-Islami Trust, 2012), 1

<sup>28</sup> Saheeh International, *The Qur'ān*, 1

<sup>29</sup> Saheeh International, *The Qur'ān*, 1

<sup>30</sup> <https://dawahbooks.com.pk/product/the-quran-saheeh-international/>

#### 4) Aisha Bewley:

Aisha Abdurrahman Bewley, born in 1948 in the United States. She obtained a BA in French and earned an MA in Near Eastern Languages from the University of California, Berkeley (USA). She was raised as a Christian but she finally thought that Christianity lacked something. That eventually resulted in her involvement in Zen Buddhism for a number of years, which was a process of realizing that this world is not as genuine or permanent as it seems. At the same time, she studied a lot on philosophy, but when she read some books on Islam, she immediately recognized that was what she had been looking for.<sup>31</sup> So, she converted to Islam with her husband, Shaykh Abdalhaqq Bewley, in 1968. They belonged to the Maliki School of jurisprudence.<sup>32</sup> They are Sufis.<sup>33</sup> In Sufi *tarīqah*, they follow the *Habibiyya* branch of the *Shādhilī Darqawī Tarīqah*.<sup>34</sup>

Aisha Bewley understands Arabic and she is aware of Islamic history as well. She spent more than twenty-five years translating several Arabic classical works into English to make them more accessible to English readers. She rendered a translation of the Holy Qur’ān in the collaboration of her husband titled “*The Noble Qur’ān: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English*” published in 1999 in Norwich (England). The main objective of Bewleys was to present a new easily readable rendering which “allow the meaning of the original, as far as possible, to come straight through with as little linguistic interface as possible so that the English used does not get in the way of the direct transmission of the meaning.”<sup>35</sup> They adopt a communicative translation approach in this Sufi-inspired work in order to make this fresh translation easy to read. This translation is based only on

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<sup>31</sup>Biography: Aisha Bewley, accessed 05-06-2019

<https://murabitblog.wordpress.com/2009/11/21/biography-aisha-bewley/>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> Afsar, Ayaz, et al., “From the Word of Allah to the Words of Men: The Qur’ān and the Poetics of Translation”, *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (Summer 2012): 197

<sup>34</sup>Biography: Aisha Bewley

<sup>35</sup> Bewley, Aisha, Abdalhaqq, *The Noble Qur’an* (London: Ta-Ha Publishers Ltd, 2016), iii

English. Arabic text does not exist in it. She states that the Holy Qur'ān “is not poetry in any formal sense, nevertheless Allah makes full and free use of natural rhythms and rhymes of the Arabic language to the extent that these form an integral part of the Qur'anic Message and are definitely an important factor in the way its meaning is conveyed to the heart of both reciters and listeners. Therefore, to convey the meaning in plain dry prose would not be faithful to the original.”<sup>36</sup> For this reason, she uses the natural rhythm of English as well as adopts a particular style of page “to pass on to the reader at least a taste of this essential attribute of the original text.”<sup>37</sup> She renders each verse in the form of the stanza that “evokes the poetry and rhythm of the original text. In this respect, the translation does great service to the character of the Arabic source. There is, however, a drawback to the structure, in that, visually and conceptually one loses the sense of unity in the text, which one gets from the original.”<sup>38</sup> She presents her translation in excellent, readable English, rendered in a manner that is neither flowery nor prosaic.<sup>39</sup> She uses modern English due to her American background.

All the above translations of the Holy Qur'ān written by women follow Imām Ḥafṣ reading except Aisha Bewley. She is the only translator who follows the Imām Warsh reading. Therefore, there is a slight difference, in a few instances, between Bewley's translation and other translations. For example, verse 10:45 is rendered by Bewley as “On the Day We gather them together”, while other translators render it as “On the Day He gathers them together”, or something similar. Bewley asks readers not to consider it a mistake rather check it against the Warsh reading.<sup>40</sup>

Bewley does not only show her reliance on the European Arabic lexicographers, Hans Wehr and E.W. Lane, and to their great Arab

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<sup>36</sup> Bewley, Aisha, Abdalhaqq, *The Noble Qur'an*, iii

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, iv

<sup>38</sup> Molloy, Rebecca B., Review, “The Noble Qur'ān: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English”, *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Summer 2001): 134

<sup>39</sup> Khaleel Mohammed, “Assessing English Translations of the Qur'an”, *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol.12 No.2 (Spring 2005): 58-71, accessed 05-07-2020 <https://www.meforum.org/717/assessing-english-translations-of-the-quran>

<sup>40</sup> Bewley, Aisha, *The Noble Qur'an*, iv

predecessors who compiled *al-Lisān al-‘Arab* but also “owe a great debt of gratitude to the great *mufasssīrūn* of the past who spent so much time and energy in unearthing, preserving and passing on the meaning of Allah’s Book and in protecting it from unacceptable interpretation and deviation.” In particular, she has made much of use of the *Jalālayn* with Ṣāwī’s gloss, the *Kitāb at-Taḥṣīl* of Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbī, and the *Jāmi‘ li-Aḥkām al-Qur’ān* of al-Qurṭubī and the *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān* of Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī and consulted many other works.<sup>41</sup> She hopes that dependence on these sources safeguarded the rendering from a mistake and retained it within the bounds of adequate meaning.

Bewley keeps annotations to a minimum as she also avoids interpolation. She, rather, in every instance attempts to allow the basic Qur’ānic message “to speak for itself in clear, modern English, even if that sometimes means allowing certain judicious departures from the original grammar and/or literal meaning of the text.”<sup>42</sup> Since Bewley’s target reader of her rendering is primarily English-speaking Muslims, therefore, she chooses to keep some of these keys in the transliterated form inside the content, as their translation would delude. She decides not to translate certain key Islamic terms, such as *dīn*, *īmān*, *kufr*, *ākhirah*, which have no exact equivalents in English. Dr. Yasin Dutton (Chairperson of Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Edinburgh University) comments on Bewley’s choice that “some readers may react to this at first, but it will soon become evident that a great wisdom exists in this choice, for it allows the Qur’an to speak directly to the reader without the meaning being cluttered up by interpretation and/or the false associations of many English equivalents.”<sup>43</sup> However, at the end of the translation, she adds a glossary to define such terms. She also provides a glossary of proper names because she does not provide their biblical equivalents inside the text. She just transliterates Qur’ānic proper names but she does not adopt a proper transliteration method. Readers hardly find any indication of long vowels, i.e., ā, ū;

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<sup>41</sup> Bewley, Aisha, *The Noble Qur’an*, v

<sup>42</sup> Dutton, Yasin., Dr, Book Reviews, “The Noble Qur’an: A New Rendering of Its Meaning in English”, *Journal of Qur’anic Studies* Vol.II, No. 2 (2000): 82

<sup>43</sup> Dutton, Yasin., Dr, Book Reviews, 83

however, she uses 'ee' for 'ī'. There is also no indication of emphatic consonants.<sup>44</sup> Dr. Yasin Dutton reviews *The Noble Qur'an* as:

“This new translation of the Qur'an immediately outdates all the others in the English-speaking world. The result of over twenty-five years of detailed study of the Qur'anic text, the Bewley translation has the advantage of high quality, naturally fluent English, along with the benefits of access to the traditional understanding of the text.”<sup>45</sup>

Dr. Andreas Christmann from the University of Manchester reviews:

“Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley's (translation) has, perhaps, the potential of setting new standards in this discipline... For those who want to familiarise themselves with the content of the Qur'an, this is the ideal translation to start with.”<sup>46</sup>

#### 5) **Tahereh Saffarzadeh:**

Tahereh Saffarzadeh, an Iranian Muslim poet, writer, translator, and researcher, was born on November 18, 1936, in Sirjan city which is the capital of Sirjan County, Kerman province of Iran. She belonged to a middle-class family having a background of mysticism.<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, during her very childhood, she lost her parents and was deprived of their kindness.<sup>48</sup> After graduation from high school, she went to study English

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<sup>44</sup>Molloy, Rebecca B., “The Noble Qur'ān: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English,” Review of *The Noble Qur'an*, Aisha Bewley and Abdalhaqq Bewley, *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, vol. 35, no.1, Summer 2001, 134

<sup>45</sup>Dutton, Book Reviews, “The Noble Qur'an: A New Rendering of Its Meaning in English”, 88

<sup>46</sup>Christmann, A., Dr, Book reviews, “The Noble Qur'an: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English”, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Vol. 47, Issue 2, Autumn: 372

<sup>47</sup>Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, *The Holy Qur'ān: English & Persian Translation with Commentary* (Iran: Osveh Publisher), 1451

<sup>48</sup> Zeinab Bagheri, Najafabad, et al., “The Quran Impact On the Contemporary Poetry of Iran (Case Study: Tahereh Safarzadeh and Dr. Seyed Ali Mousavi Garmaroudi),” *International Journal of Current Life Sciences* 4, No, 7 (July, 2014): 3552

language and literature.<sup>49</sup> So, she was awarded a bachelor's degree in English literature in 1958 by Pahlavi University, Shiraz.<sup>50</sup> At a young age, she was married to a doctor but after separation from her husband, Saffarzadeh was responsible for her son's education and brought up as a single parent.<sup>51</sup> In 1961, she was hired as the editor of scientific booklets in the translation department of the Oil Operation Companies but after a few years, she was forced to leave the job in the Pahlavi regime because she gave a lecture to the kids of workers in a summer camp opposing Government ideology. She saw this leisure time as a chance and therefore decided to go abroad to continue her studies.<sup>52</sup> She lost her only child and left Iran in 1967 for Britain and then for the United States<sup>53</sup>. She was awarded a master's degree in creative writing by the University of Iowa.<sup>54</sup> In this university, she was accepted into the international group of writers. In autumn 1967, she was enrolled for an MFA degree,<sup>55</sup> an independent degree of Iowa University given to writers and artists who are volunteers for university study. When she returned to Iran, because of her political thinking, she confronted issues of employment. However, National University (now Shahid Beheshti University) employed her at the Department of Foreign Language.<sup>56</sup> In this department, she taught a course under the title "A Comparative Revision of the Islāmic Translated Texts".<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Qurani Works of Tahereh Saffarzadeh, accessed 2-05-2019, <http://old.ido.ir//en/en-a.aspx?a=1390082207>

<sup>50</sup> Mumit Al Rashid, Md., "Tahereh Saffarzadeh: Poet of Humanity", *Philosophy and Progress*, LI-LII, (January-June, July-December, 2012): 92

<sup>51</sup>Zeinab, *The Quran Impact on The Contemporary Poetry of Iran*, 3552

<sup>52</sup> Ameneh Mohaghegh, Hossein Pirnajmuddin, "The Trace of Translators' Ideology: A Case Study of English Translations of the Qur'an", *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies* 19, No.1 (2013): 52

<sup>53</sup>Millani, Farzaneh, *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women Writers* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 1992), 158

<sup>54</sup> Hosseini, Mahrokhsadat, *Iranian Women's Poetry from the Constitutional Revolution to the Post-Revolution*, Ph.D. thesis, *University of Sussex*, November 2017, 176

<sup>55</sup> Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, *The Holy Qur'an*, 1454

<sup>56</sup> <http://old.ido.ir//en/en-a.aspx?a=1390082207>

<sup>57</sup> Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, *The Holy Qur'an*, 1452

After seven years, in 1976, “she was dismissed from the teaching job because of her criticism of the previous regime as a freedom-seeker poetess.”<sup>58</sup> At that time when she was alone at home, she felt God's support increasingly and experienced a great evolution so that she devoted herself to make a bilingual translation of the Holy Qur'ān. After the Islamic Revolution, Shahid Beheshti University appointed Saffarzadeh as the chancellor and at the same time, she was the head of the literature faculty of this university.<sup>59</sup> Saffarzadeh worked as a director of the FSP (Foreign Languages for Scientific Purposes) project for many years.<sup>60</sup>

She was elected as one of the five founders of the Asian Committee of Translation at the Dhaka International Poetry Festival in 1987 to recognize her contribution to the field of translation. In 2005, the Association of African and Asian Writers had selected Tahereh Saffarzadeh as the most prominent Muslim woman of the year.<sup>61</sup> When she published the translation of the Holy Qur'ān into English and Persian in 2001, she got the title of the “Qur'ān servant.”<sup>62</sup>

She died on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2008 in Tehran due to cancer. Iran's Pen Association announced to commemorate the late Iranian poet Tahereh Saffarzadeh in a session on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2010, titled *Poet of Vigilance*.<sup>63</sup> In October 2014, a literary and scientific festival was held in memory of Tahereh Saffarzadeh.<sup>64</sup> Besides scientific and social articles and interviews, Saffarzadeh had a collection of stories, ten books on the principles of translation regarding literature, fourteen volumes of poetry, five selections of her poems, and scientific and Quranic text.

Tahereh Saffarzadeh made a translation of the Holy Qur'ān entitled “*The Holy Qur'ān: English & Persian, Translation with Commentary*.” It was published in 2001, in Iran. It was the first bilingual version of the Holy

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<sup>58</sup> Hassen, Rim, English Translations of the Quran by Women, 82

<sup>59</sup> <http://old.ido.ir/en/en-a.aspx?a=1390082207>

<sup>60</sup> Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, The Holy Qur'ān, 1456

<sup>61</sup> Saffarzadeh Commemoration Due, Iran. Daily, oct18, 2010 <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/1609.html?catid=3&title=Saffarzadeh-literaryfestival-due-in-Oct->

<sup>62</sup> <http://old.ido.ir/en/en-a.aspx?a=1390082207>

<sup>63</sup> Saffarzadeh Commemoration Due, Iran. Daily, oct18, 2010

<sup>64</sup> Ibid



Qur'ān by an Iranian woman. Saffarzadeh spent 27 years completing this translation. It is presented in a different style. Each line of English translation starts with a capital letter. It provides a comprehensive introduction that also discusses the flaws and shortcomings of previous translations of the Holy Qur'ān. It is a Shia representative translation. Saffarzadeh's translation is based on the interpretive approach that has significantly influenced her choice of translation equivalents.<sup>65</sup> She avoids literal translation. She makes the use of brackets which works as a means for paraphrasing the concise meanings when required. She does not make any attempt to reproduce the Arabic rhetorical patterns of the Holy Qur'ān in English. She does not notice "the rhyme, the alliteration, or any conventional literary element while absorbed and stunned by ecstasy of the meanings".<sup>66</sup> Professor Ahmad Noor Vahidi comments that "Saffarzadeh has not paid attention to the appearance of words in his translation and laid the foundation for his semantic and interpretive translation, although in this place the word is also blessed; because it is the Holy Word of God, and it should be carefully given in its carriage, and it shouldn't be ignored, but in general this translation is an acceptable translation."<sup>67</sup>

She gives a central position to classical Islamic sources in her work. She describes that she has studied thousands of pages of different interpretations written within twelve centuries to write this translation. She acknowledges the contribution of both Shia and Sunni Iranian Muslim scholars in interpretations of the Holy Qur'ān. However, as her first choice, she relies on Shia *Tafsīr* entitled *Majma' al-Bayān*.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Beigi, S. Mohammad & Rezai, S., "A Comparative study of Tahereh Saffarzadeh's Persian and English translations of the Holy Quran", *Pazhuhesh name-ye Quran va Hadith*, No. 10 (Spring-Summer 2012): 1 Also available in, Scientific Information database,

<http://en.journals.sid.ir/ViewPaper.aspx?ID=349966>

<sup>66</sup> Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, *The Holy Qur'ān*, 1449

<sup>67</sup> Vahidi, Ahmadnoor, et al, "A Survey of the English Translation of the Quran by Tahereh Saffarzadeh (The First Ten part)", *The Islamic University College Journal*, No. 53, Part: 2, 219

<sup>68</sup> Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, *The Holy Qur'ān*, 1451

For example, consider the following verse:

وَأَحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْلِفِينَ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ  
فَأْتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً<sup>69</sup>

Saffarzadeh renders this verse as given below:

“All others are lawful, provided that you seek marriage with them and offer marriage portion from your property and desiring chastity, not lust. So with those whom you have enjoyed tentative marriage, give them their marriage-portion as prescribed;”<sup>70</sup>

She adds ‘tentative marriage’ deliberately into her translation and does not insert this interpretation into the bracket or footnote. By adopting this addition strategy she makes this interpretation a part of the original text to convey the dominant religious ideology which is common in her country. While tentative or temporary marriages are considered unlawful in Sunni Commentaries. Though temporary marriage was allowed at first in Islam however it was prohibited gradually.

#### 6) Laleh Bakhtiar:

Laleh Bakhtiar, with an Iranian Muslim father (Abol Ghassem) and a Christian American mother (Helen Jeffreys), was born on July 29, 1938, in Tehran. After her parents’ divorce, her mother brought her back to America.<sup>71</sup>

She grew up as a Christian in Lost Angeles and Washington, D.C. Her mother was a Presbyterian yet she sent Bakhtiar to a Catholic school. When Bakhtiar was eight years old she desired to become a Catholic, to

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<sup>69</sup>Al-Qur’ān, Al-Nisā, 4:24

<sup>70</sup> Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, The Holy Qur’ān, 170

<sup>71</sup> Qarehgozlou, Maryam, “An Exploration Into Life of American-Iranian Who Fell in Love with Islam[inc. Seyyed Hossein Nasr],” *Mehr News Agency* (Iran), March 13, 2019 <https://www.meforum.org/campus-watch/57994/an-exploration-into-life-of-american-iranian-who>

which her mother had no objection.<sup>72</sup> However, she drifted away from that faith after five years. She passed B.A. in History from Chatham College in Pennsylvania. When she was 19 years old and studying at the college, she planned to spend a weekend at Harvard with her brother who was at that time at Harvard University. There, she met one of her brother's friends, Seyyed Hossein Nasr who was getting his Ph.D. at Harvard.<sup>73</sup>

Bakhtiar married an Iranian architect who was raised in America.<sup>74</sup> When Bakhtiar was twenty-four years old, she went to Iran for the first time with her husband and two daughters. At that time, Dr. Nasr had come back to Iran and was teaching at the University of Tehran. She started learning Islamic culture and civilization from Dr. Nasr. One day in the class, Dr. Nasr asked Bakhtiar about her religion. She replied that she had been brought up as a Christian. He said to Bakhtiar that people will expect her to be a Muslim due to the daughter of a Muslim father. Bakhtiar answered that she did not know anything about Islam, then Dr. Nasr advised her to learn about Islam.<sup>75</sup> So, the reading of Islam resulted in Bakhtiar's conversion to Islam in 1964.

Bakhtiar's husband divorced her in 1976.<sup>76</sup> In 1979, Laleh Bakhtiar found her publishing bureau in Tehran named Hamdani Foundation. After nine years, she came back to the U.S where she enrolled in the University of New Mexico and got two master's degrees in Philosophy and Counseling Psychology and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology.<sup>77</sup> In 1991, Bakhtiar found the Institute of Traditional Psychoethics where she uses the Enneagram in counseling, working mainly with immigrant Muslim teenage girls. She is a "Licensed Professional Psychotherapist in Illinois. She also

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<sup>72</sup> Bakhtiar, Laleh, *The Sublime Quran* (Chicago: Kazi Publications, 2012), xx

<sup>73</sup> Qarehgozlou, Maryam, *An Exploration Into Life of American-Iranian Who Fell in Love with Islam*

<sup>74</sup> "A Bridge between Two Cultures", accessed 05-06-2020 <https://iranian.com/May96/Arts/Bakhtiar.html?site=archive>

<sup>75</sup> Bakhtiar, Laleh, *The Sublime Quran*, xx

<sup>76</sup> <https://iranian.com/May96/Arts/Bakhtiar.html?site=archive>

<sup>77</sup> Garbi Schmidt, *Islam in Urban America: Sunni Muslims in Chicago* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 150

taught at the University of Chicago.”<sup>78</sup> She is an author of more than 20 books on Sufism, psychology, architecture, moral healing through the Enneagram, and other topics. She is also an English translator of more than 25 books on Islamic beliefs.

The last and latest English translation of the Holy Qur'ān by a female entitled “*The Sublime Quran*” was produced by Laleh Bakhtiar. It was published in 2007 in the United States. Within the text of her translation, she has provided an accompanying concordance too. Actually, before starting her translation of the Holy Qur'ān she translated just the words of the Holy Qur'ān and prepared a volume entitled “*Concordance of the Sublime Quran*”.<sup>79</sup> She utilized the transliteration method developed by the American Library Association to transliterate the words in this *Concordance*. According to her, she used a unique English word to translate an Arabic word that is not repeated for another Arabic word. She found that there were “5790+ unique Arabic verbs and nouns, excluding most prepositions that appear at least one time in the Quran. Only in some 76+ cases was it necessary to use the same English word twice for two different Arabic words and most cases refer to the prepositions such as with, to, before, among, and so on.”<sup>80</sup> So, after preparing concordance she started a translation of the Holy Qur'ān.

Bakhtiar's translation is offered<sup>81</sup> line by line, much like a translation of the Old or New Testament, in a larger font size so that it can be read and understood more easily while listening to the Arabic recitation. The numbering of verses is based on the *Kūfī* numbering system. Comparing to the formats of usual English translations, the numbering of verses is placed at the start of verses instead of placing at the end of verses because the numbering system, added later, does not always mark the end of a verse. The sentence often proceeds to the next verse. Therefore, she applies this choice

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<sup>78</sup> To the Interfaith Observer, “Laleh Bakhtiar”, accessed 06-10-2020  
<https://www.theinterfaithobserver.org/contributors/?offset=1467435600619>

<sup>79</sup> Bakhtiar, Laleh, *Concordance of the Sublime Quran* (Chicago: Kazi Publications, 2011), lxiii

<sup>80</sup> Bakhtiar, Laleh, *The Sublime Quran*, xiii-xiv

<sup>81</sup> This is the layout of 15<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Sublime Quran* which is consulted by the researcher.

to put less emphasis on a verse number and to make reading uninterrupted. She writes that as the Holy Qur'ān “was revealed in the oral tradition and is still recited in Arabic as it was revealed, this English translation is arranged to match the Arabic oral recitation.”<sup>82</sup> Instead, on top of the page, the number and name of each Chapter along with the Stage, Part, Section, and the Signs appear on the side of each page of the translation which promotes the sense of the oral tradition of the Qur'ān and the importance of its recitation.

Bakhtiar practices to italicize those words, which do not appear in Arabic, but essential for understanding in English. A distinctive aspect of Bakhtiar's translation as compared to other English translations is that the words selected to translate Arabic words have inclusive and universal meanings. According to her, this technique enhances the scope of the Holy Qur'ān so that it becomes understandable to more groups rather than one particular group of people. Consequently, more audiences may understand the message of the Holy Qur'ān.<sup>83</sup> An example of inclusive language is “the translation of the derivatives of *k f r*, literally meaning: To hide, to deny the truth, or to cover something. Most English translations use the verb “to disbelieve” making the active participle “one who disbelieves” or “one who is an infidel.” In the present translation, the more inclusive viable terminology is used, namely, “to be ungrateful,” the active participle being “one who is ungrateful.”<sup>84</sup> Likely, she renders words Muslim, *kāfir*, *zakāh* respectively as the “one who submits to God”, “one who is ungrateful” and, “purifying alms”. Another example is the use of God instead of Allāh.

Bakhtiar, in the preface to the translation, focuses particularly on her position as a woman translator and on gender issues in Islam. She distinguishes herself from other contemporary English translators and their translations by asserting that she is the first American woman who has translated the Holy Qur'ān into English and her translation is the first critical English translation of the Holy Qur'ān by a woman who includes the view of women in the verses wherever relevant.

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<sup>82</sup> Bakhtiar, Laleh, *The Sublime Quran*, xx

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, P.xviii

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, xvii

Bakhtiar criticizes not only male translators but also female translators like Saffarzadeh and Umm Muhammad for not speaking for women in their translations. She objects that they both have not challenged the interpretations of men, but have supported them by writing translations like men.

Like Samira, Bakhtiar also deals with the “gender balance” challenge and the patriarchal tone of the Holy Text strategically. She used the letter (f) in the target text to ensure feminine visibility. She highlights the need to reconsider gender relations in Islam. According to her, women are considered inferior when their husbands are allowed to beat their wives. Therefore, by devoting a major part of the introduction, she discusses the most debated verse (4:34) in the Holy Qur'ān. She translates the word *idribūhunna* as “go away from them”.<sup>85</sup> She challenges the translation of this term traditionally translated as ‘beat’, which according to feminists has been used to justify the exploitation of women. Various scholars look at Bakhtiar as a feminist translator of the Holy Qur'ān but she does not admit her as a feminist translator.<sup>86</sup>

Dr. Hamid Sayed comments on *The Sublime Quran*, “Bakhtiar repeats same mistranslation of Ahmed Ali in a number of examples particularly the verses related to women. In the same irksome fashion, she unmistakably reverberates Arberry's translation.”<sup>87</sup> Abdul Raheem Kidwai also pointed out this similarity. He presents similarities between *The Sublime Quran* and Arberry's translation in three passages.<sup>88</sup> But, Bakhtiar devotes an entire page of her translation's introduction to give her response. She argues that the similarities between them are on the grounds that all Qur'ān interpreters are deciphering the same book, the Holy Qur'ān, that's why the similarities are inescapable. She answers to Kidwai that “What he

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<sup>85</sup> Bakhtiar, Laleh, *The Sublime Quran*, P.76

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, xix

<sup>87</sup> Ahmed, Hamid Ekram, *Pragmatic Dimensions of Select English Translations of the Holy Quran*, Ph.D. Thesis, *Aligarh Muslim University*, Aligarh, U.P, India, 2017, 31

<sup>88</sup> Kidwai, Abdur Raheem, *Translating the Untranslatable: A Critical Guide to 60 English Translations of the Qur'an* (New Delhi: Sarup Book Publishers, 2011), 146-147.

did not do is to compare the translation of The Sublime Quran to Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Marmaduke Pickthall, and Saheeh International translations which are also as similar.”<sup>89</sup> While presenting examples from Arberry, Yusuf Ali, Marmaduke Pickthall, and Saheeh International, and her own translation to show similarities, she writes, “since all translators are translating the same text and in some cases using the method of formal equivalence, they are similar and dissimilar to the same extent”.<sup>90</sup> A research scholar named Shaem Khan concludes in his research that Bakhtiar actually plagiarized in his Concordance from “The Concordance of the Qur’an” compiled by Hanna Kassis which is based on Arberry’s translation. Therefore, Bakhtiar’s translation reflects Arberry’s translation.<sup>91</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

The women selected for this article who have written the English translation of the Holy Qur’ān are from different geographical backgrounds: Amatul Raḥmān is Pakistani, Samira is Canadian, Umm Muhammad is Saudi, Laleh Bakhtiar and Aisha Bewley are American, and Tahereh Saffarzadeh is Iranian. Amatul Raḥmān is a first lady who translated the Holy Qur’ān into English. Umm Muhammad, Bakhtiar, and Bewley are western converts to Islam, however, they belong to different schools of thought. All selected translators have adopted different translation approaches. The ideologies of women translators have affected their translations. Amatul Raḥmān’s rendering represents Aḥmadī beliefs. Bakhtiar’s translation shares some similarities with feminist translators of the holy Qur’ān. Her translation is alleged as a feminist Qur’ānic translation but she rejects this allegation. Umm Muhammad and Saffarzadeh’s translations are based on Sunni and Shia beliefs respectively. In the introduction of their translations, Bakhtiar and Samira focus on gender issues but the other four women translators remain silent regarding this issue.

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<sup>89</sup> Bakhtiar, Laleh, *The Sublime Quran*, xli

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>91</sup> Khan, Sheam, *Laleh Bakhtiar’s Eligibility to be a Qur’an Translator and her Methodology of Translating it into English Language: A Critical Study*, Thesis, *Qatar University*, 2018, 81