



## THE PROBLEM OF STUDYING ISLAMIC TERMS IN TRANSLATIONS OF THE HOLY KORAN

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### ABSTRACT

*This article addresses issues related to translations of Islamic terms.*

**KEYWORDS:** *term, equivalent, translation, holy Quran.*

## ПРОБЛЕМА ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ИСЛАМСКИХ ТЕРМИНОВ В ПЕРЕВОДАХ СВЯЩЕННОГО КОРАНА

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### Аннотация

*В данной статье рассматриваются вопросы, связанные с переводами исламских терминов.*

**Ключевые слова:** *термин, эквивалент, перевода, священный Коран.*

### DISCUSSION

Currently, research on the Koran has been rapidly developing, which can be divided into different groups: research on the history of the Koran; research on the content of the Quran, such as research on the interpretation and clarification of the content of the Quran, its scientific miracles, etc.; studies on the Qur'an text, such as linguistic studies, which include studies on semantics, terminology, translation studies, etc.

Due to the appearance of many foreign and Uzbek translations in the last century, linguistic studies of these translations of the Qur'an have developed significantly.

Despite the fact that a number of studies have been conducted on the analysis of Russian translations of the Koran (A.A. Dolinina [1], A. Pakatchi [2], L.N. Frolov [3], UZ Sharipov [4], M Shojai [5] A. Mansour, [16] and others), some issues remain unresolved, requiring further study and clarification. Among such little-studied questions is the classification of typical

errors when choosing suitable equivalents for the most frequent terms of the Qur'an. Solving this issue can help translators

The Koran does not repeat the mistakes of its predecessors when choosing Russian equivalents.

The Holy Qur'an as the main source of Islamic creeds and precepts is of great importance for Muslims. Muslims consider the Qur'an a revelation from Allah and a constitution that Allah sent down to his messenger Muhammad to instruct people. The Qur'an provides the basics of Muslim dogma, the principles of the relationship of man with the Lord, with himself and society; the life and instructive stories of the prophets are told.

But the significance of the Qur'an is not limited to the above factors. The Qur'an is the first major work of Arabic prose containing the highest wisdom, deep moral precepts, sacred knowledge, a set of social, political and religious norms and unique scientific phenomena [6, 12].



This circumstance led to its translation into various languages, including Russian. From the 18th century, the first printed translations of the Koran in Russian appeared by P. Postnikov (1716), M.I. Verevkin (1790), A.V. Kolma-kovym (1792), and in the XIX century - K. Nikolaev (1864), D.N. Boguslavsky (1871), G.S. Sablukov (1878). They were made mainly from French, English and other Western European languages. Later there was a need for a direct translation of the Koran from the original. The most famous of the translations published in the 19th century were the works of D.N. Boguslavsky (1871) and G.S. Sa-blukova (1878), carried out in the Arabic text of the Koran. Despite the fact that the translation D.N. Boguslavsky (1871) was the first Russian translation of the Koran directly from the Arabic language, at that time it was not widely distributed, since the book was published only in 1995. Finally, in the second half of the 20th century, the first Russian-language literally translated from the Arabic original appeared Quran I.Yu. Krachkovsky (1963). Since the 90s of the last century, Russian translations of other authors began to be published, including V.M. Porokhova (1991), T.A. Shumovsky (1995), M.-N. O. Osmanova (1995), E.R. Kulieva (2002) [4, p. 70-72].

As a material for research in this work, we used translations of four famous translators - I.Yu. Krachkovsky [7], V. Porokhova [8], M.-N. O. Osmanova [9] and E. Kuliev [10]. The reason for this choice is the popularity and authority of these translations. When compiling a list of the most frequent Islamic terms (about a hundred units), we settled on the most frequent word list of the Qur'an published by the Nur Computer Science Research Center, the center for creating computer programs for studying Islamic sciences. When selecting these terms, we took into account not only their frequency in the Qur'an, but also their lexical meanings, since the most frequent words of the Qur'an include prepositions, conjunctions, particles, and from the semantic point of view, everyday vocabulary.

Further, presenting the translations used in our article and their features from the point of view of the approach to translation, we explain the results of our analysis.

#### 1. Translation of Krachkovsky (1963):

Krachkovsky's translation is the first Russian-language Quran literally translated from the Arabic original. The main thing for Krachkovsky is the authenticity of the transmission of the text of the Koran in the philological sense. "He was interested in the Qur'an primarily as a monument of Arabic oral literature, created in a certain environment in a certain era using prshms of verbal art, familiar in this environment. When interpreting the text of the Qur'an, such an approach to translation presupposes an appeal, first of all, to the text itself and to its wide context - to the language, art and oratory of Arabia of the 7th century, to religious beliefs, ideological searches, social

psychology of the then residents of settled centers of Arabia" [1, p. nine].

#### 2. Translation of Gunpowder (1995):

Porokhova's translation is a semantic translation and the first poetic version based on the Arabic Quran. One of the main features of the translation of Porokhova is that she is the first translator of the Qur'an professing Islam. This translation has caused a lot of controversy among scientists. Many accused the translator of incompetence due to her insufficient knowledge of the Arabic language. Others, by contrast, noted the beauty of her tongue. Negative feedback on Porokhova's translation decreased after scientists of the Al-Azhar Academy of Islamic Studies, having examined and corrected this translation, gave Porokhovaya permission to publish it, indicating that it was made in the spirit of Islam [11, p. 17-18].

Unlike Krachkovsky, Porokhov in his translation does not convey the literal meanings of Quranic words and phrases, but their meanings. She speaks about this in the introduction to the second edition of her translation: "a translation of the Scripture is not only and not so much a translation into another language of vocabulary-language units in their grammatical design, but rather a transfer of the meaning of the Word" [8, p. 15].

#### 1. Translation of Alaudin Mansour (1992):

Unlike Krachkovsky, Osmanov does not focus on the authenticity of the transmission of the text of the Koran, for him the main thing is to approach the reader, that is, the clarity and intelligibility of the meaning of the text. Therefore, the addressee of his translation is not scholars, philologists, but primarily Uzbek Muslims who do not know the Arabic language [9, p. eleven]. To achieve this goal, A. Mansur often replaces the original text with semantic definitions from different interpretations of the Koran. Therefore, the "commentary" nature of A. Mansur's translation does not allow him to be attributed to translations that are fully documented in accordance with the Arabic text — his work is considered only a translation of the meanings of the verses of the Koran [4, p. 72].

#### 4. Translation of Kuliev (2002):

Kuliev's translation is also one of the semantic translations of the Qur'an. For Kuliev, as well as for A. Mansur, the main thing is clarity and simplicity of the translation text. In order to make the translation text simpler and more understandable, Kuliev, observing the style of the text and using stylistically colored vocabulary, sought, whenever possible, to get rid of the inclusion of obsolete and old vocabulary in his translation, incomprehensible to Russian-speaking readers.

Comparing the variety of equivalents proposed by the translators of the analyzed translations of the Qur'an, we can conclude that Kuliev, to maintain the simplicity of the text, tries, if possible, to offer less equivalents for the same word, while Prokhorov does exactly the opposite.



In the process of analyzing the data of the four translations of the Holy Quran, we identified the following typical errors.

Mistakes in choosing equivalents for Islamic realities. The text of the Qur'an contains terms denoting concepts that are unique to Islam, such as zakat / sunset (Muslim cleansing tax), salad / namaz (Muslim daily five-fold prayer), jihad (holy struggle in defense of Islam).

Quran translators have different approaches to the issue of translation of these terms. In many cases, for the full expression of these concepts without loss of meaning, translators use exoticisms - borrowed words expressing concepts that exist in certain regions, religions or cultures. The existence of these Arabisms in the text without their explanation leads to the fact that they become incomprehensible to those who are not at all familiar with Islamic tradition and terminology. This feature, most of all, is found in the translation of A. Mansour, where Arabisms like sunset, salad, and munafics are introduced without indicating values.

In the second approach to solving this problem, translators offer equivalents from the vocabulary of the translating language, close in meaning to these concepts. But in most cases they are not able to fully express the meaning of these terms, for example, in the translations of Krachkovsky and Porokhovaya the word "prayer" is used as the equivalent of the Arabic word "salat", although they do not coincide in content. The concept of prayer is broader and salat is a special form of prayer by Muslims. In the translation of Kuliyevev for this Islamic term, the equivalent "namaz" borrowed from the Persian language is proposed.

The problem of choosing equivalents for Islamic realities can be solved by using exoticism, adding comments and explanations to them. These comments can be entered into the text as very short explanations in brackets. For example, when explaining the literal translation of the phrase "and <sup>^</sup> / Masjid-ul Haram /" (literal meaning: a forbidden mosque), Porokhova semantizes this phrase in brackets in such a way: "a forbidden (for sin) mosque". Using such comments, equivalent and obscure words are clarified and clarified.

Errors in choosing equivalents for proper names Along with Islamic creeds and regulations, the Koran contains instructive stories about the prophets. Twelve of these stories are also told in the Torah and two in the Gospel [12, p. 1].

Among the analyzed translations of the Koran, Krachkovsky, Porokhov and A. Mansur offer only Arabized forms of character names, and Kuliev points to their equivalents in the Bible: Ayub (Job), Isa (Jesus), Maryam (Mary), Musa (Moses), Harun (Aaron), Ibrahim (Abraham), Ismail (Ishmael), Ilyas (Elijah), David (David), Ishaq (Isaac), Yusuf (Joseph), Yakub (Jacob), Yunus (Jon), Suleiman (Solomon), Jibril (Gabriel), etc. The introduction into the text of the

translation of only the Arabized form of the names of these characters can lead to the reader's misconception that the Bible and the Koran are talking about different characters. On the other hand, the introduction of both forms of proper names in the text of the translation facilitates the understanding of the translation for Christians and Jews.

Another rule that is rarely violated in the analyzed translations is the unification of the spelling form of the proposed equivalents. For example, in Porokhova's translation, the proper name "Salih" is written in two forms: Salih and Saleh.

Errors resulting from a misunderstanding of the meaning of the vocabulary of the Qur'an source text.

The first Russian translations of the Koran are made from English and French. Due to the failure of the English and French translations, as well as due to the directness of the translation, these translations were full of inaccuracies and errors. But with the advent of Russian philologists trained in Arabic, more accurate translations of the Koran were published [11, p. 18-19].

In addition to knowledge of both languages, the translator must also know the language in the diachronic dimension: the language of the Qur'an, the language of Arabic classical, including pre-Islamic literature. To understand some of the deeper meanings of the Qur'an, the translator needs to use reliable Islamic translations, interpretations, as well as the opinions of experts in the Koranic sciences. Most of the shortcomings in the Koranic translations are caused by the fact that the translators, apparently, paid little attention to these sources. At the same time, the translation of the Qur'an without using interpretations is impossible [13, p. 88].

The Arab scholar, Abula Yussef Ali, who translated the Koran into English and was canonized by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, points out the following difficulties in highlighting the main difficulties: "In classical Arabic, the meanings of each root word are so voluminous that they are transferred to the modern analytical language with one equivalent word and use this equivalent, every time you meet him, it threatens not only with an inaccurate transfer of meaning, but also often with a distortion of it" [3, p. 210]. This problem, although rare, is found in the analyzed translations of the Koran. For example, we consider the equivalents of the Arabic word "t ^ b / ayat /", proposed in the translation of verse 2: 129:

The principles of selecting equivalents for foreign words include the fact that for a word having one specific meaning, only one equivalent should be offered, except if the word has different meanings in different areas [15, p. 44]. But this rule is not always taken into account when translating the Koran, for example, in the translation of Alautdin Mansur for the word "s ^ 1b / sunset /", which has only one meaning, different equivalents are offered that do not completely coincide in meaning: cleansing, cleansing file, sunset, alms, alms for purification, cleansing alms, alms for



purification and commanding alms. And in the translation of Kuliyeu for this term in all verses of the Qur'an one equivalent is proposed: "sunset".

In conclusion, we note that all the translations of the Koran we analyze are very valuable, and each of them represents a great step towards the perfection of the following Russian translations of the Koran. To get rid of these errors, it is recommended to bring the proposed equivalents into uniformity with the help of editors and use reliable Islamic translations, interpretations, as well as the opinions of experts in the Koranic sciences when choosing equivalents of Islamic terms.

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