

The American University in Cairo
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

**THE IMAGE OF WOMEN IN THE INTERPRETED QUR'ĀN:
TRANSLATIONS OF PICKTHALL, ALI, HILĀLI, AND ABDEL HALEEM**

A Thesis Submitted to
The Department of English and Comparative Literature

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts

By
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Under the supervision of **Dr. Tahia Abdel Nasser**

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DEDICATION

For her who pushed me to achieve, to my mother,
For him who provided me with the means, to my father,
To those who still think of Islam as oppressive to women,
I present my thesis.

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ABSTRACT

The Image of Women in the Interpreted Qur'ān: Translations of Pickthall, Ali, Hilālī, and Abdel Haleem

By Yasmine Muhammad Mahfouz (Under the supervision of Professor Tahia Abdel Nasser, The American University in Cairo).

I have intended this work with the premise of shedding light on the rights of women in the Qur'ān through examining its English translations since this topic has undergone much controversy between patriarchal and Islamophobic camps. However, through the examination of the translations, I have touched on how translation cannot only be problematic but also dangerously influential in presenting the sacred text. The main finding was that translation not only influences the rendered meaning of the original text but translations of sacred texts as the Qur'ān can influence the meaning the recipients absorb from the text depending on the mode of translation. To elaborate, through examining the translations of four Muslim translators who considerably differ in background, the study shows that they generally adopt a particular orientation varying in the level of conservatism, liberalism, or literalness. This diversity of modes leads to producing translations whose content embodies this conservative, liberal or literal resonance. Such resonance is usually the translator's in the target language not in the source language. Being a contestable subject that is often highlighted in Islamic studies, this study selects verses on women as examples of its argument. From the analysis, the study shows that conservative or literal translation can produce patriarchal or obscure translations in respect to the rights of women; hence influencing the intended message of

the Arabic text, while liberal translations support revolutionary interpretations of the Qur'ān, which may or may not find grounding in Islamic Law.

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Introduction: Approaches to Translation

“Never again will a single story be told as though it’s the only one”

(John Berger qtd. in Roy)

When considered in relation to translation, this quotation from *The God of Small Things* draws attention to the fact that, if translation is the art of retelling, then no matter to what extent the translator adheres to the source text, a translation may add to or modify the meaning. This is especially true of literary texts as they “contain features of expression, on any level of textual variables that emphasize, modify or actually create features of *content*” (Dickens et al 178, italics in original).

The translation of the Qur’ān, the sacred text of Islam, has always been a challenging task not only because of the issue of translatability, but also because the extent to which a translation can be faithful to the original has been the preoccupation of religious scholars. The Qur’ān has undergone many translations that vary between the poetic, semantic, thematic or liberal approaches, among others, and can also be classified according to explanatory, or conservative or literal criteria, which focus on imitating the text’s linguistic style. Liberal here refers to the revolutionary translations that offer new interpretations, which differ from the common views of medieval scholars on whom many religious institutions still rely. Such views are *ijtihādāt* or new opinions that are considered authentic only if based on the Qur’ān, the Prophet’s Tradition, consensus or analogies (*qiyās*). Moreover, a liberal translation attempts to simplify the classical language, figurative expressions, and cultural references that may be present in the Arabic text in order to clearly deliver its message in English to an audience who may be foreign to Arabic or Islamic culture or both. In this sense, the liberal translation conveys a

sense for sense or explanatory translation in contrast to the literal mode. This may cause a variation on the level of emphasis that an image or a classical expression implies with regard to the rights of women in the Qur'ān. However, a literal translation that conforms to the structure and wording of the Arabic text may also produce an obscure translation, which takes from the representation of women in the verses. Conservatism refers to the opposite views that are derived from religious trends that follow either medieval scholars or cultural concepts in patriarchal societies which may or may not have religious origins.

This study focuses on four different translations namely that of Pickthall, Ali, Hilālī with Khan, and Abdel Haleem, since Hilālī has a co-translator. The four translators differ in mode, background and perspective, producing translations that differ on the level of being literal, conservative, or liberal as well as the length or sparseness of commentaries. Hence, the study will focus on these particular modes to which the four translations lend themselves.

One of the reasons for examining these four translations is that the image of women in them has not been compared before although the modes each translator employs show considerable differences in their understanding of the verses related to women. Moreover, the translations are reflective of the prevailing cultures and social consensus. Abdel Haleem's translation, which is the most recent, has not been the focus of much scholarship and it lends itself to a comparative study with Hilālī's translation. No other translation reflects the writer's reflections and understanding of the verses more than Ali's translation, which can be seen in the abundance of explanatory notes and comments. This may be the reason why his influence and that of Pickthall reappear in Hilālī's translation. Moreover, the non-Arab background of two of the translators opens

up a space for assessing the extent to which their foreignness may have influenced their understanding or their choice of words. In addition, the fact that they are all Muslims strengthened their claims that they are attempting to devoutly transfer the message of the Qur'ān to non-Arabic readers. For example, Ansari notes that Ali put his thought into words and deeds to change the Western negative views of Islam (2), such as his efforts to open Al-Rashid Mosque, the third in North America in 1938. As translators' education and tendencies are significant in the issue of translation, they will be elaborated upon in the next chapter. Taking in consideration the conservative nature of some Muslim societies and the Orientalist interpretations this conservatism produces, the study focuses on the image of women in translations of some of the verses on marriage, divorce and equality by investigating the verses legally and ethically.

In its journey of emergence as a science, translation has passed through many evolutionary stages. Former practices of translation go back as early as Cicero (46 BCE) when the rendering of a text shifted between “word for word” translation, or literal translation, and “sense for sense” translation, which resembles translating the overall meaning of a specific content (Munday 19). It is interesting to see how such approaches still survive in debates over the ‘faithfulness’ or ‘loyalty’ of a translation to the original text versus translations of the whole sense, which scholars such as Hillaire Belloc have emphasized (Bassnett 12).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the term translation studies was used by Eugene Nida in a book entitled *Toward a Science of Translating* (Munday 9). Before that, however, translation was considered a subsidiary tool of learning a foreign language, especially through the traditional grammar translation method (Munday 7). Much as translation was

absent as a science, the role of the translator was underestimated and largely absent from the covers of translated works. The names of the translators of such classics as *War and Peace* were not written on its first editions, which gives modern readers an idea of how the role of a translator was marginalized or even eclipsed. Just as some translators assumed the role of authors when translating, it seemed as if there was a background battle over whose name was to be written: the author's or the translator's, in which the author often overcame the translator. However, as the study started to have clear boundaries, both were ready to share acknowledgement.

Venuti discussed this past approach of the translator's invisibility, which persists in the background of many readers. This notion, as he describes it, is "under the regime of fluent translating, the translator works to make his or her work 'invisible,' producing the illusory effect of transparency that simultaneously masks its status as an illusion: the translated text seems natural, i.e, not translated" (5). Bush comments on this concept: "one should simply accept the death of the translator, his or her name adorning the back flap of a bleak epitaph to the months . . . that selflessly . . . secreted the new spread of words" (25). This presupposition that a translated text is the original or that the translator should be masked as if nonexistent is, according to Venuti, an illusion that is nourished by the interests of the publishing market (8). Additionally, a wide readership has grown to accept the idea that a translation is "a second-order representation" and "potentially a false copy" (7-8). Hence, a translated work as such does not enjoy the same prestige as the original work. In this study, this theory of the translator's invisibility could be potentially dangerous since non-Arabic speakers could read the sacred text forgetting or overlooking the role of the translator who leaves his or her imprint and subjective

interpretation on the message of the original text because, as Riccardi says, “translation can never be value-free, neutral or transparent” (129). On the other hand, believing or pretending that a translated text is the original is not only degrading to the effort of the translator and the discipline, but it could have more serious implications. Jakobson emphasizes the same idea in his article, “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,” stating that from a linguistic point of view: “translation from one language into another substitutes messages in one language not for separate code-units but for entire messages in some other language” (114). The “recoding” that a translation does is in the heart of the theory that Jakobson introduces. However, if Jakobson thinks that, after decoding, a translation “involves two equivalent messages in two different codes” (114), the accuracy of his definition will depend on his notion of “equivalence,” since complete equivalence is as false as the notion of a translator’s invisibility. In other words, as Bal argues, it always seems as “an unfulfilled promise,” doomed to be “approximate” or “tentative,” carrying the imprint of the translator for the readers’ good or bad fortune (110).

Emerging in the 1990s as an interdisciplinary science, one of the foundations of translation was the paper Holmes wrote, “The Name and Nature of Translation Studies,” in which he established a framework that not only distinguished between “pure” and “applied” translation studies but divided each category into partial frames to differentiate between the theoretical and the practical aspects of translation (Munday 10). As a general guideline, Holmes’ map focuses on the theoretical aspect of translation, splitting it into explanatory translation theories and descriptive theories, which describe the “phenomena of translation” (Munday 11). The descriptive theories classify the three sides of explanation: that of “product, function, and process.” Whereas the first looks

synchronously and diachronically on the source text and the target text through a comparative analysis, the second element includes an examination of the socio-cultural aspects of the target text, which as Hatim argues is the modern alternative to the contrastive, micro-level based concerns that used to be the trend before (Gile 174). As for the process, it turns to the psychology of translation or the question of what happens in the translator's mind, which is employed in the analysis here (Munday 11). Generally the map of Holmes has worked as a guideline for many other theories that have attempted to breach the gap between translation theory and application. The social and cultural aspects, for example, are shown to have influenced the different translators' approaches to the Qur'ān. From another angle, the social and cultural reception of the verses themselves, as indeed is the case with any text, differs from one society to another and from one culture to another (Miller 150). Broadly speaking, however, Catford, Nida, and Newmark agree with Jakobson's definition of translation being a replacement of a text between languages whose criterion is "equivalence" (Jixing 37).

As for the cultural context in translation, Jixing also sees translation as dependent on "linguistic, cultural or social and psychological paradigms" (35), which determined not only the focus but the scope of the shifts that happened in translation studies. To elaborate, the difference between the linguistic paradigm and the cultural one is that the former focuses on the language while the latter focuses on the background of the text. This is relevant to this argument as Qur'ānic terms have to be understood in relation to their cultural context and unique Qur'ānic structure. While the first approach is prescriptive and focuses on the language, the second one is descriptive and focuses on the translator. Here also the study deals with the wide differences in backgrounds between

the four translators and how this influences their translations. In these aspects, both approaches are complementary but each alone may have points of deficiency (Jixing 37-8). The social and psychological paradigm combines the benefit of being descriptive besides paying attention to the ideological and poetical sides, which are present in the cultural paradigm. Since some of the issues the Qur'ān deals with are relevant to the historical era in which it was revealed while others are universal, tracing the social paradigm of the verses could be of use here while, as explained before, the personal inclinations of the translators and the different aspects each of them attempts to stress through translation relate to the psychological one. However, what is important is the emphasis on the position of the target text in the target language rather than the source language and culture. From this perspective, the cultural paradigm has its binary traps, which is also the case with the linguistic and social-psychological one (Jixing 38).

However, more modern theories have shed light on translation itself as an independently creative activity, arguing that the process of translation contributes to “identity formation” (Jixing 38). Gentzler finds a connection between translation and the development of human history. This also relates to what Mohamed Serag said in his lecture on “Translating Islamic Law” about the text as a living being that is revived and reborn with each new translation (Serag March 13, 2013). In this sense, he echoes Tymoczko who emphasizes that “translation is seen as an ethical, political, and ideological activity rather than as a mechanical linguistic exercise” (443). In the case of the Qur'ān, not only is the text itself alive because it is “intended for all times and all places” (Abdel Haleem, Introduction ix), divinely guarded against human violation as stated in verse (15: 9), but its translations also perpetuate such life because they allow its

readability by a wider public, to which the Qur'ān speaks anew instead of being read by a circle of believers however large.

This is not only relevant to the topic of the study insofar as translation paradigms are concerned, but, if we apply this to translations of the Qur'ān, it shows a development that is strongly linked to the identity formation of the Muslim community. To elaborate, the shifts that the translations of the Holy Qur'ān witnessed between literal, conservative, and liberal translations reflect the changing interpretation of its verses, which cannot be separated from the identity formation of the translators themselves. For example, the background of a British convert like Pickthall differs from somebody who was immersed in Qur'ānic studies from childhood like Ali. Similarly, a translator who comes from a literary background and works as a professor at the University of London as Abdel Haleem has a different approach from that of a Sufi thinker as Hilālī, who turned into a Salafi sheikh who gave religious lessons in Saudi Arabia. Though this will be discussed in depth later, it is worth noting here that the translator's self-image as a Muslim and his understanding of Islamic commands and regulations influence translation.

In this sense, translation is viewed as “a creative activity” that involves a rewriting of the text in each new translation (Jixing 38). However, not only is this view controversial, but creativity in doctrinal texts such as the Qur'ān does not evidently mean a rewriting of the original text, rather the subjective influence of the translator's understanding of the Arabic text, which, compared to other translations, could produce a different interpretation of the verse. This perspective of translation, however, is double-sided: a translator could be seen as a mediator between two cultures who not only resurrects a text in another language and ensures its longevity but creates a third language

in the text which is neither its source language nor the literal rendering of it in the target language. Susan Bassnett emphasizes this sense when she speaks of creating “a new original in another language. This positive view of translation serves to reinforce the importance of translating as an act both of inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication” (8). Translation in this sense can be seen as an act of recreation in which the translated target text converses semantically and linguistically with its culture. The temporal aspect is also significant in that the target text transfers to the target language a mixture of the source text and the translator’s language. However, just as translation was underestimated as a mere imitation, hence degrading the value of the translation, the view of a translator as a creator, on the other extreme, may also carry some negative implications. To elaborate, images of “penetration,” “appropriation” and “possession” promoted by the postcolonial approach sometimes imply political or socio-economic dangers that a translator may cause to the source language (Munday 6). However, these fears are reciprocal since a translator can influence the target language with the translated texts instead of producing a transparent translation. “Translation is intervention” and, as will be shown in the study, influences the reading of the text (Shwartz and Lange 17). The extent to which a translator, especially if influenced by modern theories of translation, can influence the text being translated is a question this study will attempt to answer.

Another major issue in translation, which is relevant to this study, is untranslatability. Untranslatability could exist because of the lack of a lexical, or syntactical equivalent. In this case, it is called linguistic untranslatability or the lack of a cultural equivalent (Bassnett 37). The lack of the present perfect in Arabic or some

classical references that can be found in old texts are examples of this--the former lack points to a linguistic untranslatability, the latter to a cultural one. Lotman, Catford and Popvic agree that untranslatability can occur in any process of translation, on the level of syntax, structure, or semantic levels (Bassnett 40). It is because each language has a particular system of signs that issues of untranslatability may occur depending on the closeness or distance of the source language to the target language. The solution to untranslatability could be, as Levy suggests, focusing on the pragmatic meaning of the text since, though the human experience in a particular situation is in many ways similar, differences may be found at any given stage of a particular situation (Bassnett 42). This is relevant to the argument because such terms as *qawāma* or *bilma'rūf* and *ma malakat aymanukum* are almost untranslatable except in the context of their social and historical context. Indeed, a multifaceted concept like *i'jāz*, which finds one of its many definitions in Khuli's explanation, "recognizing its [the Qur'ān's] absolute supremacy compared to human texts" (255), is itself untranslatable due to the various meanings to which it refers.

Of interest as well is the difference between notions of adaptation and interpretation that are affiliated with literary translation. It is because translation is not a transparent action in which a translator is an objective mediator between two contexts and two cultures but an act in which the translator is politically engaged, as Mona Baker argues, that the "in between space" he or she occupies is very subjective (Salama-Carr 213). This brings us to the initial argument that translation inevitably influences the source text, in this case the Qur'ān, instead of simply mirroring it. It also depends on the intention or the psychology of the translator since the realm of freedom in an adaptation, where the translator creates another text, differs from interpretation, where the translator

employs his or her own thought and language but is bound to express the ideas of the original writer. Evidently both ‘modes’ differ from the case of a translator concerned with producing a version in another language since the realm of freedom is more restricted. Hence, it is necessary here to emphasize the difference between the term “mode” and “voice,” which is used in literary writings to denote “a pervasive authorial presence” or an “implied author” (Abrams 228). The change in the reading of some verses does not reach the level of having such a presence or implying the existence of four different authors, but the translation is affected by a special mode that the translator’s background and understanding impose on the verses. This brings the discussion to the outcome that the translator is never detached nor objective when rendering a text from one language to another.

In the discussion of translation, I aimed to investigate some of the different approaches to translation since the emergence of the field. Whether giving more weight to form or content, translation must necessarily pass through basic stages in rendering a text intralingually, interlingually, or occasionally intersemiotically. Creative as it is, the field of translation elevated itself from the rank of being a mere imitation--hence in an inferior position to the original--to being creatively comparable with the original. The next chapters will attempt to reflect how the translation of Qur’ānic verses, specifically those on women, is influenced by the various factors involved in the act of translation. The translations reflect how the image of women differs according to the translators’ understanding of the text. Moreover, in comparing the four translators to the original, the image of women and women’s rights in the Qur’ān appear to contrast sharply with stereotypical images of women in Islam. The appendix in my thesis provides the reader

with juxtaposed translations of relevant verses by the four translators of the Qur'ān preceded by the original Arabic to help visualize overlap and differences in translation.

Chapter 1: Translations of the Qur'ān and the Translators' Background

This chapter deals with translations of the Qur'ān and the background of the four translators who have been selected in the study. The study aims to reveal how different translations, despite their best efforts to be faithful to the text, can influence the interpretation of a verse based on the translator's own background and understanding of the text. This poses the question that this study may not fully answer, namely, whether fidelity is possible at all in translation or whether it is deemed to be a subjective creation. The narrower focus of the verses will be the image of women in Islam with regard to the topics of marriage, divorce, and equality. As the topic of equality builds upon the discussion of marriage, it will be addressed in the last chapter. The reasons for selecting specific translations as well as the focus of the study will be further explained.

Looking into the translations of sacred texts, we note that the Qur'ān, as an example, has often been translated especially for the purpose of spreading the message of Allah to other nations and informing them of the new religion. Delivered by the Prophet's messengers, certain verses were translated to be read to rulers such as Heraclius (c. 610-41) and al-Muqawqis in Coptic Egypt presumably by court people who knew Arabic (Mustapha 202). One of the first verses that were translated carried the essence of introducing and calling people to Islam:

Say (O Muhammad): O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but God, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides God. Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims. (Hilālī 3: 64)

Early translations of the Qur'ān were undertaken in the Abbasid era (c. 750-1258) into Persian to suit the purpose of converts (Mustapha 203). The translation into Latin was what Mustapha calls “the first proper translation” though he says that it was undertaken by Robert of Chester in 1143 “with the explicit aim of refuting the beliefs of Islam” (203). When the Arabic text was printed in Venice in 1530, it was translated soon after into Latin in 1543 (Watt and Bell qtd. in Mustapha 203). The same scholar refers to the first translation, which unfortunately had an Oriental resonance arising from the stereotypical image of Muslims, commonly referred to as Turks, as well as other generalizations that do not differentiate between a race and a religion or one race and another. An example of this is the 1649 translation by Scotsman Alexander Ross, which starts with “And newly Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the Turkish vanities” (Watt and Bell, qtd. in Mustapha 200-1). Here, readers see that there is no distinction between Arabs and Turks, as the first Muslims were Arabs, or between the two races and Islam as a religion. Hence, such translations reflect the urgent need to reread translations in the light of the original text in order to compare how they add to or modify the text. Other translations followed in 1698 by Ludovici Marracci into Latin; in 1734 by George Sale in addition to Bell’s translation in 1937-1939. The last two were rendered into English with Bell’s translation shifting the order of the *suras* from the ‘Uthmanic arrangement, known as the standard one, to a chronological order (Mustapha 203). However, instead of delving into translations that clearly distort the original as Ross’s does, the study takes as its focus more modern translations. The narrower focus of the study is the analysis of selected verses related to women. This choice is made because

of a certain global stereotype of women in Islam, which will be questioned in chapters two, three, and four.

Being the exact words of Allah, as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur'ān contains the main source of commands and regulations that govern Muslim lives. Both M. A. Abdel Haleem and Hassan Mustapha agree about the centrality of the Qur'ān both in Arab culture as its masterpiece and in Muslim lives, which depend on the Qur'ān for everything as Abdel Haleem points out in his introduction (ix) as well as Mustapha (201). Hence, attempting to translate the Qur'ān represents years of a demanding task that is simultaneously important and hazardous. The translatability of the Qur'ān remained controversial until 1936, when a *fatwa* was granted to permit exegetical translations of the Qur'ān given that the words of Allah are untranslatable (Mustapha 200-1). The earlier *fatwas* show that there were some views that considered translations of the Qur'ān sacrilegious. This has to do with the divine nature of the text, being the exact words of Allah in contrast, for example, to the human nature of the Prophet's Tradition which makes its translation more acceptable (Mustapha 201). However, if translated at all, there was a tendency to favour a Muslim translator who could add annotations and exegetical references empowered by his belief in the text, which may be missing from non-Muslim translations. As stated in the Qur'ān itself, "We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'ān" (Abdel Haleem 12: 2), which is one of the reasons why Muslim non-Arabic speakers recite their prayers in Arabic (Mustapha 201). Moreover, as the verse shows mastering Arabic language is an imperative before undertaking such a task, which will be further discussed in the chapters. Hence, as Pickthall says when Abū Ḥanifa, the founder of one of the four main schools of Islamic law, tackled the subject of the Qur'ān's translatability,

he stated that “it was not lawful to put the whole together in one volume unless the Arabic text was placed opposite the translation throughout” (qtd. in Mustapha 201).

Among many early and modern translations, the first publications by (Muhammad) Marmaduke Pickthall (1930), A. Yusuf Ali (1934), Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din bin Abdil-Qadir al-Hilālī (1977), which was reprinted in (1999) by Darus-Salam, and M. A. Abdel Haleem (2004) stand out for reasons related to the dates of translation, the translators’ background and the mode of interpretation. Hilālī and Ali, for example, translate in the light of Tabari (839–923), Qurtubi (1214-1273) and Ibn Kathir (1301–1373). Abdel Haleem refers in his introduction to Ali’s translation and to Imam Abū Ḥanifa’s legal views (xxv-xxvi); and Pickthall’s translation is, as the translator admits, very literal and perhaps influenced by his literary education (Pickthall ix). Similarly to Abdel Haleem, he rarely uses footnotes but relies on *Jalālayn*, one of the fundamental books of the Golden Islamic (medieval) era starting with the beginning of the Abbasid period in the middle of the 8th century to the Mongol invasion in 1258 (Pickthall x). More interestingly are the diverse backgrounds of the translators: an English convert, Pickthall; an Indian with a command of English, Ali; a Moroccan who started as a Sufi then took a very conservative Salafī trend in his later years, Hilālī; and an Egyptian Azharite, Abdel Haleem. This relates to Lefèvre’s crucial statement that “translation is a rewriting of an original text,” and “all rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way” (qtd. in Xie 120). Translations of the Qur’ān, especially serious ones, differ in this respect as they cannot be a rewriting; however, they necessarily carry their writers’ special understanding of a particular verse, the sources he or she uses in

interpreting the verses and whether he or she is of a conservative or liberal inclination. This influences how the verses are finally translated which carry the meaning in a literal, or liberal, or conservative translation.

To understand the mode of a translator, it is important to have knowledge of their education and their respective backgrounds. Pickthall (1875-1936) comes from a literary background as he was a novelist who travelled widely through England, India, and the Ottoman Empire. Clark says about him that for “twenty years of Pickthall’s adult life he was a practicing Christian. For the last twenty years he was a conscientious Muslim” (2). He started his journey to the Middle East where he learned Arabic as a companion to a chaplain to “Bishop G. F. P Blythe, the fourth Angelican Bishop of Jerusalem” (Clark 10). As his family wanted him to join the Foreign Service, he started learning Eastern languages, which led him to travel to Naples then Port Said; wandering in Cairo, he started to learn Arabic (Clark 10). He developed a passion for the countries he was travelling to with missionaries and became fluent in Arabic, both classical and colloquial through the help of Reverend J. E. Hanauer (Clark 10). As Pickthall was reputed to have a pragmatic and independent mentality, he felt ashamed as a Christian from the practices of the British Empire, reputed to be “the school of civil and religious liberty” as mentioned in his writings, while encouraging missionaries to harass non-Christians in their attempts to proselytize them (Clark 37). He also hated the attacks on “revolutionary Turkey” by “hostile evangelical propaganda” and opportunist European powers (Clark 19). However, dissuaded from embracing Islam by the chief Sheikh of the Umayyad mosque in Damascus, who advised Pickthall in his twenties to return home and wait until he was older, Pickthall was to pursue a life of prolific literary production based on the

experiences he picked up from his travels and comparisons between eastern and western ways of life. Pickthall had to return to England, develop a career in journalism, marry and lead a life as a practicing Anglican, who had good ties with the vicar at Buxted and participated in Christian ceremonies (Clark 37). Throughout his life, he wrote twenty five books. However, Clark says that “the exploitation of Christian sentiment for the sake of sympathy for the Christian subjects of the Sultan disgusted him” (37-38) and he was torn between his loyalties to the British and Turkish empires until November 1917 when in a lecture organized by the Muslim Literary Society in Notting Hill, West London, he declared his acceptance of Islam. The talk he gave was about “Islam and Progress” in which he explained that Islam is the only religion he saw as progressive (Clark 38).

On the other hand, Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1872-1953) was an Indian who memorized the Qur’ān at a very early age, mastered the English language and became well versed in English literature through his studies at European Universities including that of Leeds. As a reward for his excellence in academia, he won the “much coveted Civil Service award . . . resulting from extremely competitive entrances for high positions in the Indian civil service” (iv). He started his translation while residing in Lahore as the Dean of the Islamic College (iv).

Al-Hilālī (1893-1987), who was born in Tafilalt region of southeast Morocco, was a Sufi and a memorizer of the Qur’ān (*hāfīz*) since the early years of his life. In his adolescence, he joined the *Tijāniyya* Sufi order, one of the most popular five orders, as Sufism in general was thriving in rural Morocco at that time (Lauzière 89). However, the journey of al-Hilālī, or Hilālī as he is referred to here, from Sufism to Salafiyya is an interesting one, which he started when he travelled to Algeria in 1915 to earn his living,

but wandering in the desert, his camel untied itself and all his attempts to invoke the help of his Sheikh and the founder of the order, Ahmad al-Tijāni, did not help (Lauzière 90). Sinking into a spiritual disappointment but blaming his insincerity, not his belief, he spent days in concentrated worship after which he had a vision of the Prophet directing him to study religious sciences. Asking whether he should learn exoteric or esoteric sciences (*‘ilm al-zāhir* aw *‘ilm al-batin*), the reply came he should learn exoteric sciences: the science of the Prophet’s Tradition, Islamic legal laws, etc. (Lauzière 91). For three years he learned Mālikī jurisprudence and Arabic grammar from Sheikh Shanqiti in Algeria substituting him in tutoring at times. However, he took the opportunity of being a tutor of a son of a *Tijāni* friend in Morocco and travelled to Fes, where there was ample opportunity to pursue his religious education at a higher level and obtain a diploma. Though until he was twenty eight, he never doubted his Sufi beliefs, it was in 1921 when he met the modernist Salafī Muhammad ibn al-‘Arabi al-‘Alawi, that he engaged with him in a debate about the basis of *Tijāniyya* and the visions of its founder that Hilālī quitted the trend and embraced Salafīyya basing each belief he has on the Qur’ān and the Prophet’s Traditions (Lauzière 100). Rather than digging into the rational side of Salafīyya nourished to mobilize people against French colonialism, Hilālī took an interest in scriptural studies especially that of the Prophet’s Tradition. Devoting his life to the call for Islam, he travelled to Egypt teaching at Mosques and seeking knowledge at al-Azhar and Dar ‘ulūm and elsewhere. He visited other countries including Iraq, India, Germany and Saudi Arabia. He was commissioned by the Saudi government to translate the Qur’ān with the assistance of Muhammad Muhsin Khan, an Afghan doctor famous for translating al-Bukhārī (Lauzière 137). Though referred to throughout

the study as (Hilālī) since this is how it is commonly known, the translation of Hilālī-Khan is the only one in this study that is a collaborative work. Some scholarly views consider it better if such a project as translating the Quran engages more than one translator because of the realm of linguistic, legal and exegetical disciplines that such a project requires.

Finally, Abdel Haleem is a notable scholar who was born in Egypt, educated at al-Azhar and, like Ali, memorized the Qur'ān in his childhood. He travelled to the United Kingdom, where he received his Ph.D. from Cambridge University and has taught Arabic since 1966 (Shah 1). He teaches at the University of London as a Professor of Islamic Studies and is an editor of the *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies*. As a recognition of his contribution to Arabic culture and inter-religion understanding, he was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2008 (Shah 1).

Similarly, the selection of these four translations is related to the diverse modes that appear in them. Generally speaking, Pickthall's translation reads as the most literal one, followed by that of Ali. The latter is characterized with its heavy parenthetical comments and footnotes that reflect the translator's understanding of the text, which he aspires to transfer to his readers (v). Pickthall presents his translation as "an almost literal" rendering of "the meanings of the words and the nature of the Qur'ān" written as a reaction to other dubious translations (ix). As for Hilālī's translation, which is presented with a glossary of the religious Arabic terms he and Khan use in their translation but no introduction, it is reputed to be a reflection of the conservative Salafi understanding of the Qur'ān. In this light, it stands against the other inclination of Abdel Haleem's translation which reflects a tendency to relate the interpretation of certain verses to the

historical context in which they were revealed and to offer the sacred text in a simple language free of explanatory comments (Introduction xxxi). Since exegesis (*tafsīr*) is generally a matter of controversy between Islamic scholars, the study pays more attention to the issue of translations, particularly how the translators' understanding of the verses, probably influenced by their educational and cultural backgrounds, makes the translated verses, particularly those on women, offer different meanings to their readers.

The interpretation of letters at the beginning of some *suras* as *alif lām mīm* is not certain despite many attempts at interpretation (Abdel Haleem 2: 1). It is not only the letters but also the selection of words in the Qur'ān that have a certain flexibility in that their meanings can encompass events in the past, present and future. This is of relevance to the discussion of translations of the Qur'ān because a translator has to be aware of the open realms that Qur'ānic Arabic has, not only with respect to the eloquence of form, but also the simultaneous accuracy and openness on the semantic level, which can allow for new interpretations which differ with the change of time and place. For example, *bilma'rūf*, repeated frequently in many of the analyzed verses can be rendered as "in kindness" or "according to what is reasonable." However, it also carries the other meaning derived from *'urf* or custom, which is changeable according to time and place. Hence, a good translator should be aware not only of the flexibility of the term itself but of how it should be translated in different contexts so as to produce an accurate translation. Scholars who undertake the challenge of translating the Qur'ān often reiterate that the translation can barely reflect the original despite the best efforts they can exert. The same difficulty applies to the structure since changing the structure in translation may result in a change in emphasis or meaning. Hence, the Qur'ān differs

from poetry though it sometimes carries poetic features. Its inimitability, therefore, comes not from its phonological style, but it is divinely “unsurpassable” and inimitable in many other ways, such as “style and composition . . . meaning and content” that attempting to translate it poses quite a challenging task” (Poonawala 198).

One of the important features of the Qur’ān is that it should be comprehensively and contextually read. This means that subordinate phrases should not be cut from their verses or else they may be interpreted to a different end from what they are intended. Sometimes successive verses interpret and explain a regulation, a concept or a story, so a translator, or generally any reader, should complete the whole and read the context of the verses in order to be able to absorb the meaning of Allah’s message. Abdel Haleem gives many examples of how misreading could happen when such rules are ignored. One of them is the verse “Kill them wherever you encounter them” (Abdel Haleem 1: 191), which can be interpreted as kill non-Muslims wherever you can lay hands upon them. The verse is actually directed at those who attacked Muslims, broke their treaty, hindered converts from embracing Islam and prevented them from joining the Muslim community. “Wherever you encounter them” is also read in the context that Muslims were attacked in the Meccan Holy Sanctuary, in which they abstain from killing anything (even a plant or an animal). Hence, the verse emphasizes that the holiness of the Sanctuary should not prevent Muslims from preserving their lives and defending themselves (Abdel Haleem, Introduction xxiii-xxiv).

The selected verses focus mainly on women, whose position is often contested and closely examined whenever Islamic social and legal views of men and women are discussed. As Heba Ezzat argues, there are always two camps: the one raising the slogan

of enlightenment and modernism through a secular lens and the fundamentalist camp that takes the position of defending the heritage and Islamic regulations (*shari'a*) (96). However, as Mir-Hosseini comments: there is a wide distinction between *shari'a*, or “the totality of God’s will as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad,” and *fiqh* which is “the science of jurisprudence,” literally *understanding* or “the process of human endeavor to discern and extract legal rules from the sacred sources of Islam—that is, the Koran and the Sunna” (“Muslim Women's Quest” 632). Both the liberals and fundamentalists often attempt to produce readings and interpretations that, if seeking authenticity, must be based on the Qur’ānic text or the Prophet’s Tradition (‘Ālim 45), which are the main two sources of the rules and regulations that govern Muslims’ lives.

However, as Kecia Ali comments: more Western scholars, interested in feminism, are reviewing *shari'a* not as a “punitive” source against women but as “a recourse for justice” (124). Among these arguments and perhaps because of them, the role of the Qur’ān’s translations gains a large significance because it is, on the one hand, an important tool in the call for Islam and deconstructing Islamophobia. The term Islamophobia emerged in 1997 in Runnymede Trust’s report, “Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All,” and has been nourished through wrong assumptions spread by the media, the wrong practices of some fundamentalist groups or the conflation in some Muslim societies between religion and tradition (Bleich 180). On the other hand, translations of the Qur’ān are a source for extracting legal, political, social and ethical rights that have a direct impact on the social and public rights of women, when considering non-Arabic speaking societies. Hilālī himself sees that one of the reasons for the reluctance of some non-Muslims to accept Islam is translation (Lauzière 357).

Therefore, translations of the Qur'ān cannot only offer a better understanding of Islam for non-Muslims, especially in relation to the position of women, but they can also lead to extracting new social and political rules that suit the specificity of the Muslim community in non-Muslim societies.

As for the reception of the translations, Abdel Haleem discusses, in his introduction to the translation of the Qur'ān, the misinterpretation of verses on women in other translations of the Qur'ān. He gives as an example verse (2: 228), “Husbands have a degree [of right] over them [their wives]” which has been taken “to relegate women in general to a lower status, when in fact this cannot be based on this verse” (Introduction xxv). While the verse is commonly quoted to show that men, in general, have a degree of right over women, according to Abdel Haleem it is actually mentioned in the context of rules governing marriage (Introduction xxv). Hence, he translates *rijāl* (Arabic for men) as husbands to suit his understanding of the text. He explains that based on the other assumption, women were considered, for example, unworthy of being jurists, whereas in his translation, he makes use of the contexts of marriage and divorce in which the verse is mentioned to translate *rijāl* not as men in general but as husbands and *nisā'* not as women but as wives. Moreover, he highlights that in legal views such as that of Abū Ḥanifa women can be judges (Introduction xxv-xxvi). Abdel Haleem points out that the Qur'ān, which as a central doctrinal text is by nature “open to endless interpretation,” has been manipulated in some translations to extract “authoritative foundation for sometimes extremist ideologies” (Introduction xxvi). He argues henceforth in favour of a modernist interpretation suitable for “the non-specialist majority” which centers his task as a translator on bringing the “reader as close as possible to the meaning of the original

Arabic” (Introduction xxvi). Although Abdel Haleem’s style tends to simplify a difficult structure and smooth abstruse language used in previous translations, this sometimes intervenes in the fidelity to the original Arabic, making his translation faithful to *his* interpretation of the meaning of the verses (see Chapters 2, 3 and 4). However, Shah sees Abdel Haleem’s translation as very commendable given that “[n]o other translator of the Holy Qur’ān has such mastery of both languages” (2). He also sees the impact of Abdel Haleem’s residence and teaching in London since 1966 on his pluristic vision and on modifying his opinions which are reflected in his translation of women’s code of dress (9). Though Shah says that Abdel Haleem’s translation reflects his own understanding of the verses without relying on any other translation (7), it is evident from the footnotes, which sometimes quote Ali, as well as his review of other translations in the introduction, that Abdel Haleem had read other translations.

Pickthall’s translation, considered to be the first by a British Muslim, is still cited by scholars though its language, as Abdel Haleem reflects in his introduction to his translation of the Qurān, “now seems almost artificially archaic” and “keeps close to the original Arabic” (xxviii). Salah Ali also critiques Pickthall for his inaccurate use of some words and translation of certain structures (48-9). In fact, in his analysis of both Ali’s and Pickthall’s translations of a different selection, Ali concludes that both translations “indicate a negligence of etymological evidence, lexicography and semantics of form class in Arabic,” which, as his focus was ellipted structures, resulted in “misinterpretations” (53). This study notes some lexical inaccuracies, which may render the Qur’ānic message vague or wrong. However, this may find reason in the fact that the first language of both translators is not Arabic, which may be why their mode of

translation shows a tendency for literalism. In fact, Khatib criticizes the literal aspect of Ali's translation saying that he may not have a full command of the Arabic language though he must have mastered it to a certain level in his early childhood (183). However, Ali's translation is noted to be a very useful translation with its "6310 explaining notes, 300 pieces of running commentary in blank verse and fourteen appendices and indices" especially for a reader who is interested in the background of the text as Abdel Haleem points out in his introduction (xxviii). Although Tayob notes that "Islamist groups have tried to expurgate his [Ali's] commentary of so-called unorthodox leanings," Ali's translation was printed and reprinted in conservative and non-conservative societies (744). More than fifty years after his death, his translation has remained one of two most widely used translations after Pickthall's (Ansari 2).

Hilālī's translation is noted for its conservative tone though it is reprinted and widely published. Critics have noted the Salafi context that sponsored and influenced Hilālī's translation (Lauzière 357). For example, Lauzière says of Hilālī's translation that it "in some instances, provide[s] the readers with a particularly puristic rendition of the text without their knowing it" (357). By "puristic" Lauzière refers to the Salafi Wahhabi context that financially and culturally influenced Hilālī's translation (357). Generally, though the four translators have exerted clear efforts to translate the Arabic text as faithfully as they could, their understanding of fidelity to the original differed from one to the other. These differences between translators in terms of "mode of understanding" and background (Gentzler 129) will be further analyzed in the next chapters.

To conclude, as a sacred doctrinal text and "the divine arbiter" for all times, translations of the Qur'ān have aroused translators' interest (Khalidi ix). The motivation

of this study is to look at how different translations, regardless of their intentions, can provide different understandings of the text depending on the translator's interpretation of the verse. Focusing on the image of women in Islam, which has been contested, the study examines representations of women in four translations of selected verses on the topics of marriage, divorce, and equality.

Chapter 2: Modes of Translation of the Qur'ān and Women's Rights in Marriage

This chapter discusses the rights of women through the topic of marriage using examples from *Surat al-Nisā'* and *Surat al-Baqara*. The regulations Islam brought on the topic of marriage strengthened women's right to ownership on the financial level and obligated that wives should be treated in a humanistic way. Moreover, one of the many reasons for which a dowry is legally emphasized in the verses here is that it is one of the means to prove women's independent financial status in contrast to the former practice known as *shighār* or exchange by which two men would marry, for example, their sisters or daughters to each other without paying a dowry to either of them (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 90). Such pre-Islamic practices, as Izutsu mentions, were prohibited (*Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān* 81). The verses also address the subject of polygamy limiting the countless and rather unrestricted number of wives a man can have, which was often practiced in pre-Islamic times known as *Jāhiliyya* or "ignorance, dark ages" (Abū Zayd, "Religions" 16). The title "Women," which gives *Surat al-Nisā'* its name, confers such a status on women, especially since there is no chapter (*sura*) whose title is "Men" in the Qur'ān. The study supports the verses on women with legal interpretations from the Mālikī and Ḥanafī schools mentioned in Ibn al-'Arabi's and Jaṣṣāṣ' books, respectively. The reasons for the selection are that the two schools provide both conservative and moderate interpretations of the translated verses, which reflects the conformity or non-conformity of translators' understanding, helps in understanding the verses as well as the legal rights of women in Islamic law. The analysis will focus on the differences among the translations according to the translators' interpretations of these verses.

The topic of verse (4: 3), which is one of the most contested verses with regards to women's rights and polygamy, must be read in the context of verse (4: 2) on the rights of orphans ('Ālim 385). Being the two groups that suffered great injustice and were deprived of their rights in pre-Islamic times, women and orphans are given a central focus in the Qur'ān. Hence, verse (4: 2) warns strictly against doing any injustice to orphans who were usually wronged by patrons who may want to marry them without giving them any dowry or treating them unjustly (Ibn al-'Arabi I: 370). In verse (4: 3), Allah ordains that if a man fears doing the least injustice if he marries an orphan, it is better for him to marry any other woman or women (here the limit of four is stated) provided that he deals with them justly. Otherwise, he should content himself with one to avoid the sin of injustice. Looking comparatively at the translations, it is clear that the four translators translate verse (4: 2) quite similarly with the exception of Pickthall who translates the beginning of the verse as "Give (unto) orphans their property (their wealth)" whereas Ali starts the verse with "To orphans restore their property (when they reach their age)." The reasons for his use of "restore" instead of "give" could be that he had in mind the case of the guardian returning the orphan's property when he or she reaches maturity. However, "give" may be a better translation since, if the orphan is already of age, Muslim believers in general, whom the verse addresses, should not "consume their property with your [their] own—a serious crime" (Abdel Haleem 4: 2).

In verse (4: 3), the difference between translators is evident in the part allowing polygamy but conditioning justice. Hilālī translates it as "but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one (or the slaves) that your right hand possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice." On the other hand, instead of

“be able to deal justly,” Abdel Haleem renders the first part as “be equitable [to them].” Ali’s and Pickthall’s translations respectively resemble each other with a few differences: “be able to deal justly (with them)” and “do justice (to so many).” The difference in the verse’s translation is because the concept of justice in English does not identically correspond to that of equity. Whereas justice in *Oxford Dictionary* means “the quality of being fair” (“Justice”), equitable means “valid in equity as distinct from law” (“Equitable”). This means that it differs from the “impartiality in fairness” connected with the concept of equity (“Equity”). Actually, Allah says that equal treatment is impossible to attain and offers a solution to it: “You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire so do not incline too much to one of them (by giving her more of your time and provision) so as to leave the other hanging (i.e. neither divorced nor married)” (Hilālī 4: 129).

Although Shafī‘ī interprets the end of the verse, *’adna ’ala ta’dilu*, as so as not to have many children or many wives (that you cannot afford) (Ibn al-’Arabi I: 376), polygamist husbands can never be equitable or fully impartial to their wives given that they may have a sentimental inclination to one over the other(s). The notion of justice is nearer to the Arabic term, *ta’dilu*, generally understood to mean “be just” or as Mīqātī et al say, “weigh something with its equal, and its opposite is injustice” (668-9). Applying this to the translations, Abdel Haleem’s translation departs from the other three: “to prevent you from doing injustice” (Hilālī and Ali 4: 3) and Pickthall’s “that ye will not do injustice.” Abdel Haleem writes: “that is more likely to make you avoid bias,” which reflects Abdel Haleem’s pro-women attitude that cannot be missed in his translation. Since the definition of “bias” is associated with “one-sidedness,” “bigotry,” “intolerance”

and “discrimination,” it is semantically stricter in incriminating a person than “doing injustice” (“Bias”). These differences carry with them legal implications on restricting or allowing polygamy. Abdel Haleem writes in *Understanding the Qur’ān* that it is only permitted with the provision of being equitable otherwise one should take only one wife. Hence, “it is neither obligatory, nor highly recommended, merely allowed in certain circumstances” (47). Other scholars, however, do not limit it to cases where wives are unwell or sterile. Draz, for example, views a prohibition on polygamy as unnatural since in some cases it is a cure to some relations from “treachery, hypocritical acts that degrade women as ‘instruments of amusement’” as well as to societies from “venereal diseases, aborted children, prostitutes and so many other miseries” (388). A minor point noted in the translations is that whereas Hilālī and Abdel Haleem translate *wa ma malakat aymānukum* as “slaves,” Ali and Pickthall translate it as “captives.” It is noteworthy that the term, *ma malakat aymānukum*, which might be viewed by modern readers as degrading to women, was closely linked to the nature of Arab societies in early Islamic times where slaves and war captives constituted part of the strata of the society which gradually disappeared as Islam opened many ways of freeing slaves. This is reflected in verse (24: 33), as translated by Abdel Haleem: “. . . If any of your slaves wish to pay for their freedom, make a contract with them accordingly, if you know they have good in them, and give them some of the wealth God has given you. Do not force your slave-girls into prostitution, when they themselves wish to remain honourable, in your quest for the short-term gains of this world, although, if they are forced, God will be forgiving and merciful to them.”

Strangely, the interpretation of verse (4: 3) shows that Pickthall's interpretation encourages an interpretation of monogamy more than Hilālī and even Ali. Pickthall's use of "and" in "and if ye fear" links the case with the difficulty of doing justice to more than one wife more clearly than does "but," which tends more towards exception in Ali's and Hilālī's versions. As for the end of the verse, Pickthall and Abdel Haleem are also the first to use "more likely" with "likely" meaning "such as well might happen or be true" to translate *'dna 'alla ta'ūlu—'dna* means approximating ("Likely"). This rendition is stronger in showing the possibility of doing injustice than Ali's "more suitable" with "suitable" meaning "right or appropriate for a particular person" ("Suitable") or Hilālī's mild "nearer to" meaning "close to" ("Near to").

Verse (4: 4) states the right of wives to a dowry given by the husbands upon marriage, which husbands have no right to take back except if a wife asks for *khul'*--a kind of divorce practiced by wives (Ibn al-'Arabi I: 236)--or if she commits an outrageous act, which many interpreters restrict to illicit intercourse. The difference between translators appears in this verse with the Arabic word *niḥla*, meaning a grant without a return given with good will (Mīqātī et al 1652), in "And give unto the women (whom ye marry) free gift of their marriage portions" (Pickthall), which is interpreted to mean a gift or obligation. This difference appears as Hilālī renders it as "with a good heart"; Abdel Haleem as "a gift"; Ali as "an obligation" and Pickthall as "free gift of marriage." In this verse, all the translations miss part of the meaning since *niḥla* is an obligation that is to be given with good heart. Ibn al-'Arabi even mentions that it is a gift from Allah to women because in pre-Islamic times, a father or a guardian would deny it to the bride and take it for himself (I: 378). However, contrary to any view which could

perceive a dowry as a price given by a man to buy a woman, (Mir-Hosseini, “Marriage” 329) such a gift becomes a necessity when the couple is united in matrimony even if they break up before consummating their marriage (Ibn al-‘Arabi I: 439). The Qur’ān emphasizes the meaning that it is a gift given on the occasion of the sacred bond of marriage which a wife-to-be alone has the right to either keep for herself or remit a part to her husband.

Pertaining to the issue of marriage is verse (2: 233) that discusses the rights of mothers and children, which are further elaborated upon in *sura* 65 discussing divorce. Verse (2: 233) shows that nursing mothers, who want to give their babies a full breast-feeding period, should do this within the first two years of a baby’s life, and that a father should bear the responsibility of maintaining them according to his means. A mother whose peers do not breastfeed should not be expected to do this. If she willingly does, her husband has to reward her financially (Ibn al-‘Arabi IV: 281). Above all, family life must be based on “discussion and mutual agreement” (Draz 310). The verse starts with women when it states that a baby should never be made a burden to either his mother or his father. From such an early stage, mothers are given this high rank in the family of which the Prophet’s Tradition, which gives the mother the priority of good company three times over the father, gives more evidence (Abdel ‘āl 357). There is not much difference between translators with regard to this part except that *bilma’rūf* is mentioned two times in describing how a father should provide for his family and how a deal, if both parents agreed to have a wet nurse, should be made. However, in this verse, Ali gives the most conservative translation in sharp contrast to Abdel Haleem who gives the most pro-women translation, which changes the verse’s meaning. To elaborate, the verse states that

mothers breastfeed their children for two years for whoever wants to complete the period. Ali translates the latter part as: “if the father desires to complete the term.” The difference becomes highlighted when compared to Abdel Haleem’s “Mothers suckle their children for two whole years, if they wish to complete the term” or Hilālī’s “for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling.” Hence, the legal meaning of the verse differs when Ali makes it the right of the father to choose whereas Hilālī and Pickthall make it a decision by both parents. As for Abdel Haleem, though his use of the third plural pronoun does not specify the mother or father, if the reference is considered with the rest of the sentence, it would mean that it is the decision of the mothers. Though the long verse later mentions that weaning should be a matter of consultation between the parents, the attempts of the translators differ considerably in who decides the term of breastfeeding because the Arabic is literally translated as “for who wants to complete the breastfeeding period.” As for the image of women, the verse is significant with regard to the rights of women in Islam as it states even in Hilālī’s rather conservative translation that women have a say in handling their marital life’s issues such as the example the verse gives for weaning a child: “if they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them” (Hilālī 4: 233). The reference to both “consent” and “consultation” also emphasizes the significance Islam gives to such a decision as weaning, which highlights the care it devotes to family life (Ibn al-‘Arabi I: 249). As for translations, conservative modes minimize the rights the Qur’ān gives to women while pro-women ones, which literally capture the meaning, reflect women’s privileged status.

The end of the verse (4: 19) states what a husband should do if he dislikes or hates his wife: “for if ye hate them it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good” (Pickthall 4:19). This establishes an important rule, namely, that family life in Islam is not governed by love alone, but that there are many ties that could still encourage husbands and wives to maintain the stability of their families and “to live harmoniously, even in cases of mutual antipathy” such as the fear of doing injustice to the other partner in case of desertion, which leads to the preservation of the sacred meanings of mercy and aspiration to Allah’s reward (Draz 310). Still the word “mutual” used in Draz’s argument does not sound quite accurate since the verse only discusses a change of feeling from the husband’s side. Generally taken, however, his view of the importance of creating a harmonious life is correct since the discussed verses emphasize the importance of fair and kind treatment between married couples. Translators differ here in two respects: Pickthall’s “it may happen”; Hilālī’s “it may be”; Ali’s “it may be” and Abdel Haleem’s literally emphatic “it may well be” which is nearer to the Arabic, *fa’asa*, in the sense that it introduces a hopeful encouragement to the husband to stay with his wife. The second aspect also shows another Qur’ānic inclination that is in favour of women. However, the translators differ in terms of specifying or generalizing the basis on which a husband may remain with his wife despite feelings of antipathy; namely that Allah may bring much good out of this relation. Ali and Hilālī translate the verse’s end as: “brings about through it a great deal of good,” and “brings through it a great deal of good” respectively. Abdel Haleem comes closer to Pickthall in “something in which God has put much good” and “a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good,” respectively. Abdel Haleem’s and Pickthall’s translations are simultaneously the most literal and most pro-

women since they respond to the Arabic preposition *fī hī* meaning “in it” which is more general in terms of anticipating goodness and pertaining to the woman herself than “through it,” which some interpreters may read as a reference to good offspring only. In this sense, the verse in general calls upon husbands to be more patient and more tolerant with their wives in order not to misuse the right of divorce.

Verse (4: 20) together with the next two verses are in the form of two questions that reject any thought of a husband taking or retrieving anything of the dowry he gave or promised his wife upon marriage on the occasion of a divorce. Hilālī, offering a conservative translation, uses the weakest form of reproach in “Would you take it wrongfully with a right and (with) a manifest sin?” (4: 21). Pickthall, Ali and Abdel Haleem, on the other hand, agree on the form “How could you . . . ?” which carries the meaning in a stricter tone. However, Hilālī changes this in the second verse, which is also a question. The negation in the next verse is stricter and more reproachful: “And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other, and they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant?” (Hilālī 4: 21). Here, the Arabic word, *'afḍā*, translated as “lain with each other” by Abdel Haleem or “gone in unto each other” by Ali, Pickthall and Hilālī succeed in capturing the sexual implication of the Arabic word (Mīqātī et al 806), which embeds other psychological, spiritual, and social implications that characterize the matrimonial relation in Islam.

Verse (4: 25) confirms how translation is very subjective and differs considerably according to the writer’s understanding and background even when translating sacred texts. The context of the verse offers a solution to those who cannot marry free Muslim women in a society which was still divided into war captives and free people. If because

of social class or poverty or any other reason a man could not marry a free believing woman and he felt the urge to marry, he is allowed to marry the captive Muslim girls who may be working as slaves for other people (‘Ālim 386). Noteworthy is that Abū Ḥanifa and other scholars permit a Muslim to marry a captive who is from the people of the Book (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 116). However, this license should be used only if a man fears committing a sin, otherwise marrying a slave may result in having a child who would be socially considered a slave (Ibn al-‘Arabi I: 68), which Islam, valuing human liberty, fought against.

Abdel Haleem’s innovative interpretation changes the meaning of the Arabic verse, describing these girls as chaste or married--the Arabic word *muḥṣanāt* can mean either according to the context (Mīqātī et al 209)--not prostitutes or lovers. He changes the address to men: “[Make them] married women not adulteresses or lovers.” The other translators depart considerably from this as they follow the phrase in the original text with Pickthall and Ali being similar: “they being honest, not debauched nor of loose conduct” and “They should be chaste, not lustful, nor taking paramours” respectively. Hilālī, adding parenthesis, translates the phrase as “[they (captive and slave girls)] should be chaste, not committing illegal sex, nor taking boyfriends.” Here, Abdel Haleem’s translation comes nearest to a pro-woman translation since it starts clearly with the imperative directed to men to take slave girls in a lawful marriage with a proper dowry if he cannot marry a free woman. While Pickthall chooses to follow the Arabic literally, Ali and Hilālī considerably differ from Abdel Haleem since their translation classifies the kind of slave girls a man could marry.

One of the most contested and quoted verses is (4: 34) which assigns the roles of leadership and dealings between men and women or husbands and wives. Abdel Haleem's interpretation is important because he interprets the verse in the context of marriage. Hence, he translates *rijāl* meaning men in Arabic, not as men per se but as "Husbands should take full care of their wives, with [the bounties] God has given to some more than others and with what they spend out of their money." The other translators keep a literal rendering of the word regardless of the context; thus they translate *rijāl* as "men." Although in English "man" is sometimes used to mean "husband" ("Man") and "woman" to mean "wife," it is not certain that Pickthall, Ali or Hilālī had this meaning in mind given that the verse is commonly quoted in its literal sense ("Woman"). Often misquoted and misunderstood as a privilege, the verse introduces the concept of *qawāma*. The term means "continue to take care of" or "set something or someone right" (Mīqātī et al 878). Hence, it is a responsibility (*taklīf*) not a privilege (*tashrīf*). Even Hilālī's translation, the most conservative so far, translates it as "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means" (4: 34). Ali retains almost the same translation but changes the rest of the verse to "because Allah has given one more (strength) than the other." Pickthall provides other words that imply responsibility but simultaneously assume the sovereignty or superiority of men over women: "Men are in charge of women because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other." Hence, in this respect his translation is the most conservative. As shown, the verse includes two explanations for the one holding the responsibility of care and protection over the others within one family. Because a man, the head of the family, is required to provide

financially for his wife and his family, this is given as the second reason for his being responsible. However, the Arabic word *faḍḍala*, meaning “distinguished” or “referring to bounty,” has been interpreted according to each translator’s understanding of the verse (Mīqātī et al 805). For example, Abdel Haleem’s opinion is that the verse states only one reason as the first part of the verse *faḍḍala* explains *’anfaqu*, or what they spend through the article in Arabic, *ma maṣdariyya*, that “turns the verb into a verbal noun” (Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qur’ān* 52). As Abdel ‘Āl comments on the verse, “with what they spend out of their money” is linked to the financial obligation which is a basic right to wives and children, even if they were rich and their husbands poor (353). A further privilege entailed in *qawāma* is that of a wife to be served in her husband’s house if she is brought up to this custom (Abd al-‘Āl 353). A legal interpretation that confirms that this much-discussed verse privileges women rather than men is that if the wife is rich and wants to support her husband and children, she is rewarded twice as much as her husband (Abū Shuqqa 112).

The second part of verse (4: 34) shifts the focus to women who should be righteous, obedient, taking care of the things they should take care of in front of Allah, or the “required and recommended qualities” as Draz names them (308). The discrepancy in translations happens because Abdel Haleem interprets *qunūt*, which means to obey and become submissive, and which is used to refer to obeying Allah in many other verses in the Qur’ān, as “devout” meaning “having or showing deep religious feeling or commitment” (“Devout”). The other translators understand it to describe a wife’s relationship with her husband, not God, which changes the reading. Whereas Abdel Haleem translates it as “Righteous wives are devout and guard what God would have

them guard in their husband's absence," Hilālī renders it as "Therefore righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and their husbands) and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard." Ali opts for a similar translation using "devoutly obedient" and "guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard." Only Pickthall chooses to be generally literal as is his tendency, "So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded." Without highlighting the correct *ta'wīl*, or giving preference to one interpretation over the other (Saeed 58), here also there is a discrepancy in the meaning of the text. Clearly, from the above analysis, Abdel Haleem appears to be revolutionary, liberal, and pro-women in his reading; Hilālī is the most conservative; Ali stands between both; and Pickthall is literal, tending towards conservatism.

The last part of this verse shifts the address to husbands as the heads of the family and instructs them about the steps they should take if they fear their wives to be high-handed or regarding themselves as superior in a way that endangers the family's stability. It should be noted that this flaw of husbands is also discussed with instructions given to wives in another verse of the same *sura*. The steps, as mentioned in Abdel Haleem is "If you fear high-handedness from your wives, remind them [of the teachings of God], then ignore them when you go to bed, then hit them." "High handedness" is replaced by "ill-conduct" in Hilālī; "rebellion" in Pickthall, and "disloyalty and ill-conduct" in Ali. Here, Abdel Haleem's translation is the most accurate given that *nashaza* in the Arabic has the meaning of raising oneself outside the norm or becoming hard-going and behaving in an unacceptable way towards the partner (Mīqātī et al 1040). All four translations stress that the steps should be followed in the mentioned sequence using either "first," "next" or

“then.” However, whereas Abdel Haleem uses the soft form, “remind them [of the teachings of God],” Hilālī, Ali and Pickthall use the stronger form “admonish” for *wā-‘zuhunna*, which means according to Mīqāṭī et al to give advice, remind them of obedience, and good behavior so as to soften him or her either by fear or soft words (1161).

However, a more important discrepancy appears in the translation where Pickthall uses “banish them to beds apart” whereas the three other translators understand it to refer to the husbands leaving the sleeping place, not the other way round. For example, Ali and Hilālī say: “refuse to share their beds” while Abdel Haleem translates “ignore them when you go to bed.” This part of the verse shows a conservative or rather inaccurate instance that is sometimes a feature of Pickthall’s translation. The last step as emphasized by Hilālī’s conservative translation remains “(and last) beat them” but he interferes to clarify the rule “lightly, if it is useful,” or “lightly” as Ali also stresses following the law that beating should neither be strong nor leave a mark (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 150). Being aware of the mistranslations of this verse and how it is often quoted to misrepresent Islam, these two translators, known for their conservative modes, add these explanatory clauses and adverbs. In sharp contrast is Pickthall’s most shocking translation: “scourge them.” The oddness of Pickthall’s translation is compared to Abdel Haleem’s “hit them,” which he contextualizes in more than one page in his book, *Understanding the Qur’ān*. Initially, Abdel Haleem brings evidence that it is only permissible in the case of marital infidelity using his translation of part of the Prophet’s Farewell Speech heard by many of his companions: “You have rights over your wives and they have rights over you: you have the right that they should not defile your bed, and that they should not commit flagrant

lewdness. If they do, God allows you to put them in a separate room, and to beat them, but not with severity” (53). In addition to being a permission not an order, Abdel Haleem shows that all Muslim actions should find a model in the Prophet’s code of conduct as stated in, “The Messenger of God is an excellent model for those of you who put your hope in God and the Last Day and remember Him often” (Abdel Haleem 33: 21). Hence, it should be noted that he has never hit a woman (Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qur’ān* 56). This discrepancy in translation in general reflects a difference in the translators’ understanding of the concept of *nushūz*, how outrageous or slight it could be. It also stresses the patriarchal or pro-women translations, highlighting the choices each translator makes.

Verse (4: 128) deals with the other kind of high-handedness, or that on the husband’s part and discusses what Draz calls “reconciliation in cases of conflict” (311). Focusing on women, the study gives special attention to a verse that reflects the awareness that some husbands could be a threat to their families’ stability as much as some wives are. Hence, to maintain an atmosphere of peace and mercy and preserve the rights of women, who are often faced with injustice and oppression, solutions are offered. The verse says in this respect, “If a woman fears high-handedness or alienation from her husband, neither of them will be blamed if they come to a peaceful settlement, for peace is best” (Abdel Haleem 4:128). As Hilālī and Ali move towards a conservative translation, they render *nashaza* not as “ill conduct” mentioned in their translations of the verse on women, but as “fears cruelty or desertion on her husband’s part” and Pickthall as “feareth ill treatment from her husband, or desertion.” It is strange that though the word used for the misconduct of husbands and wives is the same in the Qur’ān, the three

translators, Pickthall, Ali and Hilālī, highlight a stronger offence that a husband may be guilty of in order for a couple to be urged to reconsider matters between them and seek a settlement, which differs from Abdel Haleem's pro-women translation.

It is important to note that despite the translators' best efforts, they can only capture part of the meaning that does not retain the eloquence of the original. Moreover, with regard to the difference between translations, this chapter shows that despite the existence of certain prevalent modes in each translation, they differ in certain instances. In other words, though Pickthall has the tendency to be conservatively literal, Abdel Haleem to be liberal, Hilālī to be the most conservative, and Ali to be moderately literal tending to interpretation only in his comments, though this is not consistent throughout the translations. The choices largely reflect the translators' background and understanding of the text; hence their translations mirror their inclinations to favour one exegetical or even personal interpretation over the other. However, the discrepancies in the translations sometimes vary the meaning of the verses, which influence their legal and public reading. In this light, looking closely at the translations, a patriarchal or a conservative translation may enforce the stereotypical image of women while a sense for sense translation or one that retains the literal *meaning* rather than the literal *style* subverts this image and shows that the regulations of the Qur'ān have recognized the rights, role, and humanity of women. This misrepresentation or inadequate translation play into the Orientalist or Islamophobic perspective of women in Islam that persists in the world.

Chapter 3: Modes of Translation of the Qur'ān and Women's Rights in Divorce

This chapter deals with selected verses on the topic of divorce from *Surat al-Baqara* (the Cow) and *al-Ṭalāq* (Divorce). This topic gains its importance from the new regulations that Islam established in comparison to what was prevalent in pre-Islamic times restricting the countless number of divorce pronouncement that a husband could misuse against his wife divorcing her then waiting until her *'idda* is almost over then returning her with no intention but to do so again; hence, holding her in his possession so that she would remain neither married nor unmarried (Ibn al-'Arabi I: 230). For the preservation of family life and clamping angry impulses, the *sura* limits the number of divorces to two times (Jaṣṣāṣ II: 78). However, this is not the only improvement the *sura* introduces. Ali says in one of his elaborate footnotes: “reconciliation is possible, and is indeed recommended at every stage. The first serious difference between the parties are to be submitted to a family council on which the two sides are represented. Divorce is not to be pronounced when mutual physical attraction is at an ebb . . . provision has to be made for many things on equitable terms” (1265). The discussion of each verse will elaborate on those rights. This chapter will attempt to subvert the stereotypical images of women in Islam by shedding light on the rights given to women in addition to highlighting the different modes among the four translations.

The selected verses show the discrepancy between the translators in order to investigate its reasons. For example, Abdel Haleem translates *yatarabaṣṣanna* in (2: 228) in the verse about the amount of time a divorced woman should wait before remarrying simply as “wait,” while Ali adds the more strict sense of “wait concerning themselves”

following the emphasis in the Arabic text. In contrast, Pickthall retains the ambiguous phrase of “keeping themselves apart,” which is not a very accurate translation of the Arabic nor commonly used in English (see *Oxford Dictionary of English*). However, what makes Abdel Haleem’s translation problematic is that he uses his understanding of the verse to provide the ellipted phrase “before remarrying” without using any quotation marks or brackets to indicate that this is his addition to the text as Hilālī does in “as regards their marriage” which he writes in parentheses. Though Abdel Haleem’s translation is clearer to non-Arabic readers than Hilālī’s, the license he uses here raises a question about when the divine words end and his interpretation begins. Although this license may interfere according to some opinions with the issue of fidelity, Abdel Haleem explains in his introduction that “care has been taken to avoid unnecessarily close adherence to the original Arabic structures and idioms, which almost always sound unnatural in English . . . Moreover the Arabic language at the time of the Qur’ān was very concise. Parts of the sentence could be omitted because they were well understood from the context . . . In some cases it is possible to use dots to indicate that something is missing. In others it is better to supply the omitted clauses” (xxxix). This instance shows the liberal mode that Abdel Haleem uses in translating Qur’ānic verses, which differs from the literal or conservative translation of the other translators. Throughout, he does not hesitate to supply the missing ellipses that are a feature of the eloquence of the Qur’ānic language. Though such a difference does not always dramatically change the meaning, Abdel Haleem’s translation is easy to read despite not conforming to the original text word for word. He tends to translate the sense behind the words. The legal interpretation of the verse guards women and families against the misuse of divorce so

that it is not the outcome of some hasty impulse. Hence, *ṭalāq* is carried out according to the Prophet's tradition; i.e, a husband should wait until the wife has her period for two successive cycles. After this period, if he still wants to divorce her, he may divorce her (Ibn al-‘Arabi I: 225; Jaṣṣāṣ II: 56).

What is more interesting is that while Ali conforms to the original text structure and brings “if they have faith in Allah and the Last Day” after “Nor is it lawful for them to hide what Allah Hath created in their wombs” and so does Hilālī, Abdel Haleem brings the conditional phrase before the Qur’ānic rule. This change stresses that the rule is dependent on women having piety and observing their relation with Allah (Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qur’an* 45), which is the basis for the stability and welfare of a Muslim family. This is also the case with her waiting period after a divorce. In other words, she is made a trusted guardian over the matters of her womb and is only guided by her own devoutness (Ibn al-‘Arabi I: 227). Hence, though the verse gives the right to men to return their wives to the bond of marriage after divorce if they are pregnant “provided they wish to put things right” (Abdel Haleem 2:228), the wives are empowered by the fact that they can tell or conceal their pregnancy. Therefore, urged by their observation of Allah, they are to take the initiative of disclosing their pregnancy in order to give themselves and their husbands a second chance to build their family. Abdel Haleem’s translation stresses this sense by bringing the conditional phrase before the rule.

The translators also vary in translating the second part of the verse that is commonly interpreted to mean that because men have a degree of right over women, they can take their unwilling wives back after divorce in case they are pregnant. Actually

there is more to prove the weakness of such an assumption. For example, Pickthall and Abdel Haleem use the present in establishing equality between men and women, which the original states: “Wives have [rights] similar to their [obligations], according to what is recognized to be fair” (Abdel Haleem 2: 228); “And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in kindness” (Pickthall 2: 228). The rendering of Abdel Haleem is more pro-women and closer to the Arabic text since it does not set a comparison between the rights or duties of men and women, but rather emphasizes that women must have rights as they are obliged to abide by duties. As for Ali, his version “women shall have rights” introduces a future sense that decreases the sense of affirmation that the present tense has. Ali’s use of “against” in “women shall have rights similar to the rights against them” takes from the credit that women are given, which other translations have better reflected. Moreover, his use of “but” in “but men have a degree (of advantage) over them” implies a contradiction that appears in the Arabic text as an addition through the use of *wa* (commonly translated as “and”). This reflects what he says in his introduction that replacing an Arabic word for an English one, “the translator necessarily exercises his own judgment and may be ‘unconsciously’ expressing a point of view, but that is inevitable” (Ali vii). The note number 225 on this verse proves his saying: though he states that both sexes are equal before the law, he mentions that “[t]he difference in economic position between the sexes makes man’s rights and liabilities a little greater than the woman’s,” which justifies the contrast reflected in his translation (Ali 2: 228). In sharp contrast to Abdel Haleem is Hilālī, who specifies and interprets “And they (women) have rights similar (to those of their husbands) over them to what is reasonable” to mean that the rights wives have are “living expenses” without listing, for example,

kind treatment or leaving it open as it is in the original text. He does the same with husbands whose rights he lists are “obedience and respect.” Moreover, he specifies that the degree men have rights refers to the “responsibility” they have over “women.” Hilālī does not have an introduction to explain his choices; however, this generalized rule over men and women, in addition to the specification of the rights he gives for both, reflects his conservative background, especially in comparison to other translators and especially when scholars such as Draz mention this verse under the “equity of rights and duties” (310).

In the following verse on divorce, Pickthall produces a translation that can mislead an unknowledgeable reader because of his use of the modal verb: “Divorce must be pronounced twice” (2: 229). On the other hand, Ali, Abdel Haleem and Hilālī use their understanding of the verse and interpret it respectively as “A divorce is only permissible twice”; “Divorce can happen twice”; and “The divorce is twice.” However, Ali’s continuation of the verse is interesting: whereas Pickthall, Hilālī and Abdel Haleem make an overt reference to women in “(a woman) must be retained in honour or released in kindness”; “either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness”; “wives either be kept on in an acceptable manner or released in a good way” respectively, Ali does not specify the partner, but writes: “the parties should either hold together on equitable terms, or separate with kindness.” This is an interesting interpretation whose motive could be adhering to the original text, which does not mention women, especially as women could have the right of divorce. However, the other translators specify because it suits the conventional understanding of women being either held or released from the bond of marriage given that it is the husbands who commonly have the right to divorce

(Rehman 108). Hence, the choice given in the verse between kind or fair continuation or release conventionally suits the status of women more. Ali's translation may cause this difference in interpretation since he does not specify who is released from the bond of marriage. Accordingly, Pickthall, Hilālī and Abdel Haleem follow an explanatory approach in this instance while Ali's translation emerges as the most literal.

The following verse (2: 230) teaches husbands to value their wives and not to take divorce lightly. It is not because they can go back on their divorce twice that they may break the sacred bond between them and their wives any time they want. This is because Allah has ordained that if a husband divorces his wife for a third time, he can never reunite with her until after she has consummated her marriage with another man and he has divorced her (‘Ālim 155). Her new marriage must be a real one, not planned to reunite with her former husband. Only if the new husband divorces her can she and her husband consider remarrying if they think they can make a marital life as Allah ordained it should be. A translation of verse (2: 230) that embodies this regulation varies between translators. For example, Pickthall, Ali and Hilālī opt for a literal translation: “And if he has divorced her (the third time)”--with only Ali's change of “the third time” to “irrevocably.” On the other hand, Abdel Haleem offers an interpretation that is less elliptical: “if a husband re-divorces his wife after the second divorce.” This trend is more general in Abdel Haleem's translation than in other translations. However, in the part of the verse where it says “she is not lawful unto him thereafter until . . .” (Hilālī 2: 230), the three translators start with little variation with the pronoun “she” except for Ali who says: “He cannot, after that, re-marry her until after. . .” In this part he becomes pro-women perhaps because he may have wanted to emphasize the deprivation that a husband must

undergo if he divorces a wife he wants three times and because men usually are the ones who proclaim the right of divorce.

Moreover, the Qur'ān warns husbands against returning their wives after divorce to harm or oppress them, instructing husbands who believe in Allah and the Day of Judgment and stressing that if they no longer want to live with their wives according to fairness and kindness, it would be better to do as Allah ordained. Hence verses (2: 231) and (2: 232) show that “after the waiting period [*idda* or the days of a woman’s menstruation] either reconcile with good intentions or grant separation allowing re-marriage” (Draz 312). Translators differ in rendering “do not take them back to hurt them” (4: 231) as Hilālī writes in his rather conservative translation. Having such an intention is so serious that, though Jaṣṣāṣ says his right of return is lawful (II: 67), Ibn al-‘Arabi sees that, if such an intention was obvious, his right of return loses validity (I: 242). In this light, Pickthall gives an even more conservative translation: “Retain them not to their hurt so that ye transgress (the limits).” By adding “so that” readers may understand that husbands are allowed to hurt their wives, but not as to “transgress the limits,” especially as the original stops at *lita’tadu* translated as “hurt” or “oppress” (Mīqātī et al 670). Though generally literal and cautious with words, Pickthall’s translation does sometimes have a patriarchal resonance. Unlike Pickthall, both Ali and Abdel Haleem respectively elaborate on explaining the verb mentioned in the original by adding “but do not take them back to injure them, ‘(or) to take undue advantage” and “Do not hold on to them with intent to harm them and commit aggression.” Their translations in this sense are more pro-women than the other two.

Focusing on the different aspects of divorce, verse (2: 231) urges men to deal with women with kindness, fairness, and respect. Allah conditions that if a man reconsiders the decisions of divorce and decides to remain married, he should do so “on reasonable terms” (Hilālī), which in Arabic is *bilma‘rūf* meaning “amicably/ peacefully/ honestly” (Enani 21). As explained before, exegetical references have two kinds of meaning for the word: either it comes from *‘urf*, or what is known to be fair, or it is another word for kindness, fairness or mercy with knowing the ability to implement Islamic matrimonial rights as Ibn al-‘Arabi says (I: 241). In this light, Ali’s translation adds another meaning referring to it as “equitable terms,” which is that of impartiality; this gives his translation a pro-women resonance (“Equitable”). Hilālī opts for a rather general expression, “reasonable basis,” which though has the meaning of “a sound, fair or sensible judgment,” offers a relatively subjective perspective of what could be defined as a reasonable basis (“Reasonable”). This is why Hilālī’s translation opens the door for patriarchal interpretations more than the others. Pickthall chooses the equivalent “kindness” to translate, *bilma‘rūf* while Abdel Haleem translates it as “in a fair manner.” Legally, since one of these basic rights is financial maintenance, Ibn al-‘Arabi judges that if a husband cannot provide for his wife, this contradicts the meaning of *ma‘rūf* then he can at least release her in kindness (I: 242). Against this opinion is that of Jaṣṣāṣ who sees in the verse “God puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. God will grant after hardship, ease” (Hillali 65:7) that poverty is not a reason for separation (Jaṣṣāṣ V: 361). In all these cases, the verse gives husbands two choices according to the most conservative of the four translations: “take them back on reasonable terms or set them free on reasonable terms.”

In verse (65: 1), Allah commands the Prophet (and all the believers) to “calculate” (Abdel Haleem) or “count accurately” (Ali and Hilālī), or “reckon” (Pickthall) the waiting period. All the three verbs entail precision in order to give the husband a certain deadline for reuniting the family, after which the woman may be free to remarry or go on with her life as she sees fit. Therefore, Draz quotes this verse as an example of “accommodation and fair treatment, when in the hope of reconciliation” (311). It is interesting that whereas the three translators use “when you divorce women” (Ali and Hilālī) or “when you intend to divorce women” (Abdel Haleem), Pickthall opts for “When ye (men) put away women” (65:1) which is a strange rendering of the Arabic word *ṭallaqtum*, from the root, *ṭallaqa*, which is, “to divorce” since it indicates in modern informal language “confine someone in a prison or psychiatric hospital” (“Put away”). This contradicts the task of a translator who should “endeavor to convey the communicative value of the referential gap by any means, and not use problematic paraphrase and literal translation” (Farghal and al-Masri 38). Equally uncommon is his use of “Expel them not from their houses nor let them go forth” (*la tukhrijuhunna min biyutihunna wa la yakhrujnna*). Other translations are: “turn them not out of their houses, nor shall they (themselves) leave” (Ali); “turn them not out of their (husband’s) homes, nor shall they (themselves) leave” (Hilālī); or “Do not drive them out of their homes—nor should they themselves leave” (Abdel Haleem). The word “expel,” meaning “force (someone) to leave a place” is not only unnecessarily strong here, but by saying, “nor let them go forth” he made the verse sound as if wives would be held by force in their homes while, even in a more conservative translation as Hilālī’s or Ali’s, it means that women would not by any means be driven to leave “their” homes (“Expel”). Ibn al-‘Arabi

explains the difference between the scholars in this respect as some of them say that such a right as housing should neither be given up by the woman nor withheld by the man, while others like Ḍahāk say that she may leave if she wants (Ḍahāk qtd. in Jaṣṣāṣ IV: 268). The Prophet Muhammad is known to have given his aunt permission to go out of her home to take over her business (Ibn al-‘Arabi IV: 268-9). Moreover, if she fears the house is unsafe or that she may be deprived of her needs if she stays, she may leave to a safer place (Ibn al-‘Arabi IV: 270) since a basic aim of Islamic law is guarding oneself, one’s property, one’s mentality, one’s honour, and one’s religion. Hence, anybody could take the necessary precautions to guard those basic rights. Pickthall’s translation offers a different reading because it not only ignores these rights, but his use of “let” shifts the prohibition to one imposed by the husband or ex-husband rather than a command from Allah to women.

In the translation of the end of the verse, Hilālī brings a new aspect that is not in accordance with the rest and is heavily conservative. Inserting the parenthetical quotes, which Dickens et al define as exegetical elements (12), in “You (the one who divorces his wife) know not it may be that Allah will afterward bring some new thing to pass (i.e. to return her back to you if that was the first or second divorce)” (65:1) directs the verse to address only the husband “who divorces his wife” and suggests what seems like a one-way solution to the “new thing” that Allah may bring. The other translators leave “a new thing” open to a number of suggestions other than “to return her back to you if that was the first or second divorce,” which Allah did not specify. What makes Hilālī’s parenthetical comments heavily conservative is that he offers the interpretation in a way that ignores other possibilities awaiting divorced women as well as men.

In his translation of verse (65: 6), Hilālī writes: “Lodge them (the divorced women) where you dwell, according to your means.” Despite the strong connotations of the word “lodge,” which is commonly used for objects, it is not the only word with which we may have reservations: “the divorced” may be misread to mean that the divorce is final, while the verse may also apply to those divorced for the first or second time (“Lodge”). Hence, Abdel Haleem, whose mode is more explanatory than literal, writes: “House the wives you are divorcing according to your means, in the same way you house yourselves.” Hence, the difference between the adjective used by Hilālī and the translation of Abdel Haleem may produce a different interpretation of the verse’s meaning. Ali and Pickthall, whose modes are cautiously literal, avoid this dilemma and respectively write: “Let the women live (in *‘idda*) in the same style as you live according to your means” and “Lodge them where ye dwell, according to your wealth.” It is notable here that only Hilālī and Pickthall refer to the interpretation that a divorced woman can live with her husband in the same house without him being allowed to ask her to leave because of their use of the word “where” instead of “in the same style” or “in the same way” used by Ali and Abdel Haleem, respectively. The legal rights of women here show that a divorced woman with or without a chance of return has the right to a house; if pregnant, her ex-husband should provide for her as well (Ibn al-‘Arabi IV: 280). According to Ḥanafī law, even without a chance of return, a divorced wife has a right to both housing and maintenance (Jaṣṣāṣ V: 356). It is noteworthy that the four Imams’ interpretations come from their understanding of the Qur’ān and their collection of the Prophet’s Traditions. Ali’s and Abdel Haleem’s translations, on the other hand, do not

show this aspect but rather focus on the necessity of the economic welfare of women for whom the husbands are obliged to provide, each according to his means.

The discussion of the translations shows that the translators' interpretations may differ according to their own understanding of the verses, which may be a result of their respective backgrounds or modes of translation. This relates to Tinsley's statement: "the writer/speaker is communicating from his or her experience while the words are interpreted by the reader/listener from a different experience" (211). However, it should also be noted that this is a general judgment that may have exceptions. In other words, Hilālī, noted to be the most conservative, sometimes gives a literal translation as in verse (65: 1), which deals with setting the waiting period and the housing of a divorced woman, whereas Pickthall, noted to be literal in mode, offers a more conservative translation of this verse. Hence, though a general trend can be traced, the four translators depart from their prevalent modes in exceptional cases. Whereas conservative or patriarchal interpretations tend to reinforce the stereotypical image of women and can influence readers' understanding of the verses, literal translations of the meaning or pro-women translations tend to be subversive of these stereotypes. Contrary to assumptions about the representation of women in the Qur'ān, the chapter offers enough evidence that fairness and kindness are the basis for the treatment and rights of women.

Chapter 4: Modes of Translation of the Qur'ān and Gender Equality

Equality is a basic concept when women's rights are discussed in Islam. There are many assumptions that view the position of women as inferior to that of men. Some verses do not show much difference in translation to invite comparative analysis such as "For men and women who are devoted to God—believing men and women, obedient men and women, truthful men and women, steadfast men and women, humble men and women, charitable men and women, fasting men and women, chaste men and women, men and women who remember God often—God has prepared forgiveness and a rich reward" (Abdel Haleem 33: 35). This verse shows complete equality between men and women in addressing ten different aspects of worship. Hence, it establishes spiritual equality between the two partners, which should be the basis for all the other rights. Another issue that the translations reflects in this chapter is that of inheritance, which also raises some doubts regarding the concept of equality because of the view that women obtain half the share of men in inheritance. However, establishing such a right to inheritance was a revolutionary step towards the recognition of women's right to ownership, which is an essential parameter in any legal system. In fact, it was a big step from the early pre-Islamic tradition where women were part of the inheritance in the sense that they could not sometimes marry according to their own will and establish the "sacred and venerated bonds" in a married life (Draz 309). This agrees with Izutsu's reference to how "Islam represents undoubtedly one of the most radical social reforms that have appeared in the East" (*The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran* 1). Moreover, Jaṣṣāṣ mentions instances when a male heir could in pre-Islamic times throw his gown (*'abāya*) on the

deceased's wife to secure her as his inheritance so that, if he wanted he could marry her without giving her a second dowry or marry her to another and take her dowry for himself (III: 46; Ibn al-'Arabi I: 397). The discrepancies between the translations and their influence on the reading of the verses are highlighted in this chapter.

Verse (4: 1) emphasizes that men and women were created equals. Pickthall's, Ali's and Abdel Haleem's translations are the first to emphasize equality between men and women through creation because of their interpretation of *zawjahā* as "mate," while the same word is translated as "his wife" in Hilālī's translation. The word "*zawj*," mate, and "*nafs*," soul/self, are gender-neutral; Hilālī's translation, which is conservative, applies them directly to the story of Adam's creation, thus specifying the male pronoun "him" for the word *minha* and "wife" to *zawj*. Similarly, Abdel Haleem's use of "pair," according to the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, means persons who are related or similar ("Pair"). Hence, his translation stresses similarity more than Pickthall's and Ali's use of "twain" which is archaic for "two" ("Twain"). It is noteworthy that many Islamic scholars, especially those questioning the boundaries and intersections between Islam and feminism, take "this spiritual equality," which is clearly emphasized in the Qur'ān, as a premise to empower women in other social, cultural and legal arenas (Seedat 405).

Women and men stand on an equal footing as shown in verse (4: 32) which entails not only the equality between men and women in front of God, but also the right of ownership to women, of which they were deprived in pre-Islamic times (Ibn al-'Arabi I: 397). The verse could be read as the basis for all the other financial rights women started to have with respect to dowries, money after divorce, and inheritance as it hits both the issue of acquiring property and the ownership of property. To elaborate, part of

allowing men alone to inherit was because they could work, participate in wars, and defend the tribal property (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 2). Hence, this verse establishes two important principles: equality of men and women before God, and the right of women to own, whether through work or through inheritance. The difference in translation especially between Hilālī and Abdel Haleem appears mainly in the translation of *naṣīb*, meaning “fortune of every kind” in *Al-Mu‘jam Al-wajīz*. Whereas Hilālī translates it as “For men there is reward for what they have earned, (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned,” Abdel Haleem puts it as “men have the portion they have earned; and women the portion they have earned.” The difference in their translations comes from Hilālī adding the concept of equality between men and women before Allah in their good deeds; hence, he uses the word “reward,” whereas Abdel Haleem’s translation could be understood as worldly gains such as work and inheritance. Thus he uses “portion,” which only means “destiny” in its archaic use, which Abdel Haleem could not have intended (“Portion”). The reason for this discrepancy can be explained by the reasons of revelation since some of the companions of the Prophet wondered whether women had half the reward of men before Allah as is the case with siblings in inheritance. Therefore, this verse was revealed to establish equality and that both men and women should ask Allah for more of his bountiful blessings. Hence, the verse reflects a difference in reading and the understanding of translators more than conservative or pro-women modes. As for Pickthall and Ali, they stand midway, with Pickthall being the more literal in terms of using the present perfect “have earned” to follow the Arabic past tense, while Ali uses the present “earn.” Pickthall also uses the grammar structure “Unto men a fortune from that which they have earned” instead of Ali’s more simple and modern rendering, “To men is

allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn.” It is noteworthy that Pickthall is eclectic in using the explanatory mode towards the end of the verse adding “(Envy not one another) but ask Allah of His bounty” because the verse does not include this part about envy, which other translators further prove starting with “you should rather ask God for some of His bounty” (Abdel Haleem); “But ask Allah of His bounty” (Ali); and ask God of His Bounty” (Hilālī). The reason why Pickthall may have added this parenthetical insertion is because he refers to the fact that neither men nor women should envy each other for what Allah has given to each, but that they both should direct their aspirations for more to their Creator.

Another key verse that establishes equality between men and women in this life and in the afterlife is (16: 97); however, it also reflects a discrepancy between translators. Initially, Abdel Haleem takes license with changing the structure of the Arabic text by bringing “male or female” before “does good deeds and has faith,” which is different from the other three translators who follow the Arabic text literally. Here the example of Pickthall is given: “Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female.” This stresses Abdel Haleem’s pro-women stance by bringing the subject before the verb, which adds emphasis to the subject. However, the discrepancy takes a significant turn in meaning because, whereas Pickthall refers to the reward in this world in “we shall quicken with good life,” using “quicken” to substitute the *fa* letter in Arabic added to reflect speed in action or reward, Ali refers his readers to what seems like a reward in the afterlife: “We give a new Life” (Ali). Abdel Haleem is eclectic here in departing from his explanatory mode and following the Arabic literally except that he ignores the *fa*: “We shall give a good life.” On the other hand, Hilālī typically influences the text by inserting his

parenthetical interpretation: “We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision),” specifying the kind of goodness Allah bestows on his slaves’ lives. As emphasized, in addition to being a key verse in establishing equality regarding women, it further emphasizes the mode each translator uses.

One of the basic arguments against the equality of women in Islam is that of inheritance. There is a view that in Islam a woman always inherits half the share of a man. According to Chaudhry, such view is inaccurate because it shows the dividing of shares as misogynistic and gender discriminatory (516). The following translations show that this view is completely fallible because all of them reflect a case where women and men—in the case of verse (4: 11) they are the parents of the deceased—are equal in shares (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 12). All the three translators follow this legal aspect of the verse quite literally except for Abdel Haleem who does not depart from his explanatory mode. To elaborate, Pickthall, Ali, and Hilālī adopt the nominal structure though it lends itself to Arabic more than to English. For example, Pickthall writes: “And to each of his parents a sixth of the inheritance.” Two more aspects are noted here: Pickthall ignores the Arabic *’abawayh*, or parents, used in the beginning by, for example, Ali: “For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each.” This shows Pickthall’s copying the Arabic structure most literally. Secondly, the influence of Ali’s translation on Hilālī is very evident in this verse since their translations are identical: “For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each.” As for Abdel Haleem, he resorts to a very concise verbal structure that lends itself more to English: “Parents inherit a sixth each.” He further shows a translation that does not follow the classical register of the Qur’ānic text. Though some readers may appreciate the simplifying structure with which Abdel Haleem approaches the Qur’ān, other readers

may feel he affects the original register of the Qur'ānic language, which takes from the grandeur of the text. For the purpose of this study, the difference in modes between translators is the primary focus. As for the legal side of the translated verses, they reflect the right of women as full individuals with a right to ownership. The cases of inheritance mentioned in the translated verses depend not on gender but on the closeness of a relative to the deceased and the responsibility he or she bears. For example, younger generations may inherit more than older ones because the young ones are still to bear more worldly responsibilities and they are obliged to look after older ones. This criterion as Chaudhry argues is based on two major Islamic principles: “the concept of the intent of the law (*maqasid*) and the theory of effective causes of the law (*ta' lil*)” (516).

The four translations reflect the case sensitive issue because the beginning of (4: 11) discusses the sibling case, where a male inherits twice the share of a female. However, the verse also shows another example of Abdel Haleem's radical changes. Whereas Pickthall, Ali and, Hilālī conform to the literal structure that classifies *'wladukum*, literally your sons and daughters whether children or adults, into males and females, Abdel Haleem classifies the Arabic word, which has no “complete” equivalent in English into “sons” and “daughters.” To elaborate, Abdel Haleem translates: “Concerning your children, God commands you that a son should have the equivalent share of two daughters.” The other translators refer to “children” as “males” and “females.” To understand the system of inheritance in Islam, a researcher must build on the financial responsibilities a man, in this case a son, is charged with upon marriage towards his wife and children regardless of the richness of his wife, which Chapters 2 and 3 discuss. Equally, a daughter is not obliged to earn her living nor expected to provide for

her family. Rather, she adds what her father spends on her and her share of inheritance, if the parents die, to her dowry if she marries (Chaudhury 541). Hence, the explanation of this particular case where a son is given twice the share of a daughter (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 8) should be clarified against the background of the responsibilities of each. Abdel Haleem's awareness of the misconception and generalization this case triggers with respect to the image of women in Islam must have directed his choices in his translation, which explains his divergence from other translators. On the other hand, the other translators prefer to follow the Arabic text literally in "males" and "females" regardless of the inaccuracy of their translations of the first part of the verse: "children," which does not mean *'wlādukum* except in the archaic use of English as in "the children of Abraham" ("Child").

Even between a sister and a brother, equality in inheritance is sometimes established according to the case as shown in verse (4: 12) (Chaudhry 534). To elaborate, all the four translators are eclectic here as all of them employ an explanatory mode to suggest a definition of *kalāla* meaning in *Al-Mu'jam Al-wajīz* "a person who dies leaving no offspring (*walad*) nor ascendants (*wālid*)." In fact, Abdel Haleem uses minimal interpretation referring to "If a man or a woman dies leaving no children or parents, but a single brother or sister, he or she should take one-sixth of the inheritance" but adding in a footnote that it is but one definition of *kalāla* which means that a deceased has neither ascendants nor descendants (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 17). His translation offers quite a different reading if compared to Pickthall's explanatory translation: "And if a man or a woman have a distant heir (having left neither her parent nor child), and he (or she) have a brother or a sister (only on the mother's side) then to each of them twain (the brother and the sister)

the sixth.” The Arabic text says nothing about “distant heir” or “only on the mother’s side” but it is Pickthall who uses, perhaps because of the classical language of the Arabic and the existence of particular interpretations (Jaṣṣāṣ III: 20), this particular interpretation of the text. As for Hilālī, he follows Ali identically in this part of the verse: “If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question,” hence, both add “in question” which does not exist in the Arabic. As shown, because of the controversial definition of the word *kalāla*, each translator offers a different reading of the verse, with all of them leaning towards the explanatory mode. Generally, it should be noted that Islam establishes such a sophisticated system of inheritance that its rules and cases do not become instantly clear without a deep and analytical reading of the verses even to Arabic-speaking Muslim readers, who may need to refer to exegetical references to interpret the compact language and elliptical structure of Qur’ānic Arabic.

It is noteworthy that Chaudhury mentions in her article that “the female distributee inherits equally with a male distributee of the same class in two out of the four basic classes of relatives. These four groups of people represent the primary familial relationships of the deceased, and they are the relatives most likely to be his or her survivors” (537). Of these many cases, the study mentions one case, which is the beginning of verse (4: 12) stating that if a wife dies leaving children, for example, a daughter or daughters, the daughter, the younger generation, receives half of the inheritance, while the husband of the deceased receives a quarter. Hence, there is more to determine the share of inheritance depending on the case and the status that is “not inherently gender-discriminatory” (Chaudhry 516).

As for the translations, they copy the original in stating this case, but reflect differences in modes. Pickthall adheres to his trend of being the most literal: “if they have no child; but if they have a child.” Abdel Haleem follows Pickthall with the exception of changing *walad* used in Arabic for child or children into the plural form (Ibn al-‘Arabi I: 399): “if they have no children; if they have children.” As for Ali and Hilālī, they may have chosen to emphasize that the child, or children, is living at the time of the distribution of the inheritance; thus Ali replaces “have” with “if they leave no child; but if they leave a child” while Hilālī alternates between both meanings: “if they have no child; but if they leave a child.” This is one of the rare occurrences of his departure from the literal wording of the Arabic. In addition, the translations of both Ali and Hilālī reflect a slight change in the reading of the verse.

Verse (4: 19) is another key verse in showing the difference between the context of pre-Islamic Arab society where women were themselves part of the inheritance, either married by the deceased’s brother (or the next eligible heir) or given in marriage to another without any financial rights. The beginning of verse (4: 19) forbids this practice and the end of it states how husbands should deal with wives whether they loved them or not. Hence, this particular verse is a linkage point between the topic of inheritance, which entails women’s right to ownership, and that of marriage. It is notable that Abdel Haleem, using his liberal mode, is the only translator of the four who changes the absent pronoun in the Arabic word and gives it the name it refers to: wives. To clarify this, the verse is rendered by, for example, Pickthall as: “O ye who believe! It is not lawful for you forcibly to inherit the women (of your deceased kinsmen), nor (that) ye should put constraint upon them that ye may take away a part of that which ye have given them,

unless they be guilty of flagrant lewdness. But consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good” (Pickthall 4:19). Initially, quoted in full length, this verse subverts the stereotypical image of women since it sets “free and mutual consent” as a rule in Islam, which respects the rights of women as members in the society who are on an equitable basis as regards their rights and duties (Draz 309). They should neither be treated as part of the inheritance nor be forced to give the least bit of the money Allah has obligated for them as a bridal dowry (‘Ālim 351). The first mention of the pronoun “them” is associated with the transfer of address from eligible heirs who used to forcibly inherit women in pre-Islamic times to husbands and how they should treat their wives fairly and kindly. All three translators, Ali, Pickthall and Hilālī, keep the literal translation of *ta’dilūhunna*, meaning to prevent or constrain a woman from remarrying, especially when prevention is unjust or treating a wife unkindly so that she has to ask for divorce (*khul’*) by giving her dowry back to her husband (Mīqātī et al 697). It is only Abdel Haleem who departs from the Arabic translation showing the object of the verb attached to the absent feminine pronoun, wives, perhaps to make the change of address recognizable to non-Arabic readers, especially as the verse’s focus is women’s rights. However, Abdel Haleem appears in the same verse to be the most literal of all the four translators when he does not specify the kind of outrageous act that the verse states can allow a husband to consider taking back part of the dowry; for *fahisha* means any act or say that exceeds its normal limits in a bad way (Mīqātī et al 783). Further, all translators refer to one transgression: Pickthall translates it as “unless they be guilty of flagrant lewdness”; Ali as “guilty of open lewdness”; and Hilālī as “unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse.” It is only Abdel Haleem

who translates it as “something clearly outrageous.” Regardless of *the* correct interpretation, the translations do cause a discrepancy in the meaning of the verse.

From the discussion above, it has been shown that whether married or unmarried, as far as social and legal laws are concerned, Islam recognizes women’s rights in inheritance, or ownership of financial rights. Izutsu discussing Al-Hufi writes that in the *Jāhiliyya* tradition especially in such surviving material as the “Book of Songs,” “*Jāhiliyya* women generally tended to be niggards [sic], or at least they had to show themselves more niggardly [sic] than men because of their particular position in society and in the home” (*Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān* 81). He discussed, for example, such traits as generosity, which was counted foolishness on women’s part (*Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān* 81). Allowing women the right to own through the means of inheritance or dowries among others changed this view of women as spendthrifts squandering men’s money and allowed the society to see them as independent persons with a complete free will to run their affairs (*Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān* 81). Moreover, as for spiritual aspects, women and men stand on an equal footing with regards to reward and punishment in this world and afterwards. Though the four translators exert considerable efforts to clearly transfer these meanings, a difference in interpretation exists from the changes of modes between translators who vary between being conservative, literal or liberal depending on their respective understanding of the verses. However, this chapter also shows the occasional eclecticism of each translator.

Conclusion

The purpose of my thesis is to show how translation can be subjective and interpretive. Though Hermans views translation as a rewriting (139), what the translators do here is influence the text with their own understanding and background so that factors such as their worldviews color their translations. The translation of such holy and doctrinal texts as the Qur'ān is a weighty task, which could influence how non-Arabic readers view the text. However, Arberry, one of the non-Muslim translators who produced a translation of the Qur'ān whose poetic style is very different from the selected translations, had yet another view on the translation of the Qur'ān: "Koran is untranslatable . . . the rhetoric and rhythm of the Arabic Koran so characteristic, so powerful, so highly emotive, that any version whatsoever is bound in the nature to be a poor copy of the glittering splendor of the original" (24). This statement highlights the fact that translations, however devout or scholarly, can only capture part of the text, "the core" as Bassnett calls it, but they differ in relation to the "variables" of the text (33).

Though conceptions of women in Islam are stereotypical and negative based on the misinterpretations of the concept of *qawāma*, these views do not take the historical context into consideration and how Islam liberated women from their inferior pre-Islamic conditions. Allowing women to be financially independent through such means as a dowry and inheritance among others changed the view of women and allowed them to be seen as independent individuals. It has been shown that in contrast to the treatment of women as inferior in *Jāhiliyya* society, the Qur'ān changed their perception through the concept of men and women being partners in society. In the selected translations, the

verses reflected equality in creation (4: 1), men are to see women as their mates, in addition to being urged repeatedly to consult with them and treat them in accordance with what is fair and kind (*bilma 'rūf*). This emphasizes that the relation between a man and a woman is one which is characterized by protection, care, and mercy. Through the translations and in contrast to the stereotypes of a Muslim woman, her role is respected and given place in the Qur'ān; whether she is a free woman, a slave, a mother, a sister, a wife, a foreign woman, divorced, married, single or widowed, all are given concern.

An examination of the translations of the verses that describe marriage shows that Pickthall's translation is literal and borders on the conservative camp. This appears, for example, in his translation of verse (4: 34), where he is the only translator who interprets the concept of *qawāma* as "in charge." If read by a non-Arabic speaking reader, such a translation could reinforce the stereotype of women because the concept of *qawāma* defines the responsibility of a man or husband (depending on the translators' interpretations) to provide for women or wives. Despite his belonging to the same camp, Hilālī proves the inaccuracy of Pickthall's interpretation by upholding the linguistically and legally accurate meaning of *qawāma*, which has men or husbands as the protectors and maintainers of women.

However, the study also finds that some of Abdel Haleem's translations of verses on marriage are problematic, especially with respect to polygamy in verse (4: 3), which allows men, who fear that if they marry orphan girls they may not offer them the treatment to which they are entitled, to marry other women of their choice. Differing from the other three translators, Abdel Haleem's use of the idea of "equity" instead of "justice" seems to contradict the verse (4: 129) that establishes the impossibility of equity

in polygamy; for Islamic teachings do not overlook the difficulty of impartiality in emotional aspects. Hence, the use of the words *qist* and *'adl* in the Arabic text is nearer to the more realistic concept of “justice” than “equity.” This aspect of inaccuracy may be the result of his tendency to write his interpretation of the text and show representations that privilege women. All translations show that polygamy has not only been allowed for certain reasons, but its practice is also limited to certain conditions.

Another difference in meaning between the translators is in verse (4: 19) which prohibits the husband from taking back what he has given his wife in good will except if she committed *fāhisha*. Whereas Pickthall, Ali, and Hilālī express such an action in terms of sexual infidelity, it is only Abdel Haleem who translates it literally as “an outrageous” action. This reflects the inconsistency that sometimes appears in the mode each translator follows: Abdel Haleem here chooses to be literal and adheres to the Arabic text that does not explicitly refer to any sexual action, while the other three translators choose the explanatory mode. The difference in translations with respect to this verse on the rights of men and women in marriage could produce a legal discrepancy in terms of laws. At least, the Qur’ānic message to a non-Arabic reader is delivered differently according to the translation in his or her hands.

In his translation of verses on divorce, particularly verse (2: 228) on the waiting period for divorced women, Pickthall is too literal to the extent of becoming ambiguous to the reader especially if compared to Abdel Haleem who adopts a liberal approach and supplies the ellipses in the Arabic text. Hence, a reader of Abdel Haleem would not have to look at *tafsīr* for this verse. This difference, though it does not affect the doctrine, could be due to Pickthall’s foreignness and, on the other hand, shows that more than the

other three translators, Abdel Haleem has the tendency to complete the ellipses that is a characteristic of the Arabic text. The verse emphasizes women's empowerment and role in preserving family stability.

Similarly, but more revolutionary, Abdel Haleem changes the structure of the same verse towards its end when he places the emphasis on women's piety when they do not withhold knowledge of a pregnancy upon a divorce. This reflects his understanding of the empowerment of women in the verse contrary to the other translators who, by closely following the literal structure, miss such an emphasis. On the other hand, in this same verse, Ali's translation appears to be very patriarchal in addressing the rights of men "against" those of women, because he contrasts one against the other instead of highlighting both as in the Arabic text. Hence, instances that show Ali's conservatism may have allowed for the reprinting of his translation in Saudi Arabia in 1990 (Khatib 190).

Hilālī also shows his conservative orientation when he distinguishes between the types of rights and duties of wives and husbands, or women and men as he literally translates it in the same verse. Though such a specification of rights and duties does not appear in the Arabic text, his parenthetical insertions reflect his conservative tendencies when he defines the rights women have over their husbands and those of men over women. In this way, his translation affects both the image of women with regards to their role in marriage and offers a particular interpretation of doctrine that classifies husbands' and wives' rights and duties. This interpretation is clearly influenced by his understanding of the text and the Salafi interpretations that are widespread in his society.

In discussing the translations of the number of times divorce is allowed (2: 229), Ali's translation is more accurate than Pickthall's because Ali may have had in mind the right of women to stipulate in the contract that she has the right to divorce herself. Hence, his translation of the same verse does not follow the other three translators who saw that women should be held or released according to what is fair. The reason for the differences among the translators may be that their understanding of the verses, interpretations, and backgrounds influence their translations resulting in trends as well as exceptions (Munday 11).

Compared to Pickthall's and Hilālī's conservative translations, the study has shown that Ali and Abdel Haleem are often more moderate. This is evident in verses on the rights of women in divorce. This only becomes clear when contrasted with Pickthall's odd translation which may offer the interpretation that husbands are allowed to hurt their wives but not as to "transgress the limits" (2: 231). This is a strange rendering especially as the Arabic text leaves it open to imply that any kind of harm is forbidden. Moreover, the prevalence of the conservative tone in Pickthall's translation can be seen in his use of obscure or unnecessarily forceful verbs in the context of the rights of women in divorce (65: 1). The meaning he offers differs from that of, for example, Abdel Haleem, with respect to whether the command is addressed to the women asking them not to leave their homes as Abdel Haleem translates it or whether the command is directed to the husbands asking them not to let their wives leave. This discrepancy creates a slight, though significant, difference in meaning; the former is pro-women, the latter is conservative. The study does not aim to reinforce one interpretation over the other especially when

different religious interpretations may exist, but rather to emphasize how different translations can transmit different messages to the reader.

The study also shows that in the instances where translators choose to conform more to the literal meaning of the verse rather than translating its idiomatic expressions and cultural references or depending on patriarchal interpretations, their translations of verses on women tend to be moderate and pro-women as Islamic teachings advocate. Therefore, when Abdel Haleem produces a literal translation of a verse on men's and women's equality before God (4: 1), his translation stresses this more than Pickthall's and Ali's, and definitely more than Hilālī's. Throughout the verse the words do not specify gender but emphasize that men and women are created from the same spiritual essence.

Pertaining to the topic of equality is women's eligibility to have financial rights through inheritance, a bridal dowry or work. An examination of the translations has confirmed the previous findings with regards to the respective mode each translator employs. Verse (4: 11), for example, on the shares allocated to each sibling shows Abdel Haleem's liberal mode, where he prefers to depart from the Arabic lexical translations of "females" and "males," which other translators use in order to render a more accurate definition, "sons" and "daughters, where complete English equivalents do not exist. This choice is made to avoid generalizations about inheritance that minimize the credit the Qur'ān gives to women.

Though the study has attempted to examine four translations of important verses related to women, the possibilities of further research are numerous. Translation studies as a relatively new interdisciplinary field offers plenty of space to investigate and apply the semantic, stylistic, and interpretive approaches. Other Arabic texts, especially

religious ones, could constitute a new field for translation studies. This field, in particular, needs serious investigation because of its importance in inter-religious discourse, which bridges the gap in understanding the other and helps to challenge wrong assumptions such as the ones surrounding the issue of women in Islam.

A minor objective of this study has been to show through this selection of verses the rights to which women are entitled in the Qur'ān. Translations might show these rights, especially if the translator is sympathetic to women, or minimize them if he offers a patriarchal understanding of the verses. Therefore, comparing and contrasting the translations have shown that the Qur'ān gives many rights to women at a very early stage before even the word feminism was formulated. Revolutionary to its society as well as other societies, Islam's perspective allows women to be respected, treated fairly and kindly, protected and taken care of. The legal significance of the Qur'ān's translations appears because, for example, Azam points out that "the German courts have essentially been engaging in the work of Islamic legal production" which highlights the fairness and privileged rank Islamic laws give to women (472). Consequently, the study refers to the implications of biased translations and the differences among conservative, literal, and pro-women ones since this may result in a difference in legislation. The reason for the discrepancy between the patriarchal interpretation of the verses, especially in Islamic societies, and what the verses seem to imply springs from the fact that the legal rights Islam gives to women exceed the rights given to her by culture and tradition. However, Heba Ezzat discusses how culture and tradition cannot be ignored altogether for the significance they have, especially in matrimonial issues (99). The translators often conflate cultural practices demeaning women with the teachings of Islam on women.

Ijtihād, or innovation in extracting new legal rules based on Islamic thought is also a field which shows the need for more research on the developing role of women in society, as Abū Zayd discusses in his article emphasizing the urge to reread basic concepts like *qawāma* and its connection with the historical context in which it is discussed, especially in relation to some families where wives earn money while husbands do not work (“Women's Question” 47). However, whether such a family situation is the exception or an alternative for who could be the provider for the family according to Islamic law is problematic in *tāfsīr*. Scholars such as Abū Zayd insist on limiting verses related to *qawāma* to such a historical context, in which men or husbands are the breadwinners, while other scholars standardize the verse without denying women’s right to work and earn money. Likewise, Serag mentioned in a personal communication (Cairo May 21, 2014) that Shaltūt sees women’s testimonies in (2: 282) as equal to that of men because the verse calls on people to invite as many witnesses as possible when recording a debt in order to preserve rights. However, if after recording the debt, the issue was raised to courts, the judge could approve the testimony of a man, a women or even a child, according to the evidence presented to the court. Such views call for a different understanding of the text. Solving such issues or at least enriching them with new investigations open the door to new translation studies research that compares the changing meanings of such crucial concepts. In any case, as *shari‘a* recognizes the rights of women as full individuals, it would be shameful if the same source, or its translation, would be used in some conservative societies to inflict any kind of violence against women (Halper 103) or to unjustly distort the image of Islam.

Appendix: Juxtaposed Translations

The appendix includes only the verses that are closely analyzed and comparatively contrasted. It follows the order of the *suras* in the Qur'ān.

2. *Surat al-Baqara*

وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنُنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ
عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (228)

“Women who are divorced shall wait, keeping themselves apart, three (monthly) courses. And it is not lawful for them that they should conceal that which Allah hath created in their wombs if they are believers in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands would do better to take them back in that case if they desire a reconciliation. And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in kindness, and men are a degree above them. Allah is Mighty, Wise” (Pickthall 2: 228).

“Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three monthly periods. Nor is it lawful for them to hide what Allah Hath created in their wombs, if they have faith in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them. And Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise” (Ali 2: 228).

“And divorced women shall wait (as regards their marriage) for three menstrual periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what God has created in their wombs, if they believe in God and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses, etc.) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect, etc.) to what is reasonable, but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them. And God is All-Mighty, All-Wise” (Hilālī 2: 228).

“Divorced women must wait for three monthly periods before remarrying, and, if they really believe in God and the Last Day, it is not lawful for them to conceal what God has created in their wombs: their husbands would do better to take them back during this period, provided they wish to put things right. Wives have [rights] similar to their [obligations], according to what is recognized to be fair, and husbands have a degree [of right] over them: [both should remember that] God is almighty and wise” (Abdel Haleem 2: 228).

الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ فَإِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِإِحْسَانٍ وَلَا يَجِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا
حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (229)

“Divorce must be pronounced twice and then (a woman) must be retained in honour or released in kindness. And it is not lawful for you that ye take from women ought of that which ye have given them; except (in the case) when both fear that they may not be able to keep within the limits (imposed by) Allah. And if ye fear that they may not be able to keep the limits of Allah, in that case it is no sin for either of them if the woman ransom herself. These are the limits (imposed by) Allah. Transgress them not. For whoso transgresseth Allah's limits: such are wrong-doers” (Pickthall 2: 229).

“A divorce is only permissible twice: after that, the parties should either hold Together on equitable terms, or separate with kindness. It is not lawful for you, (Men), to take back any of your gifts (from your wives), except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah. If ye (judges) do indeed fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah, there is no blame on either of them if she give something for her freedom. These are the limits ordained by Allah. so do not transgress them if any do transgress the limits ordained by Allah, such persons wrong (Themselves as well as others)” (Ali 2: 229).

“The divorce is twice, after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness. And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of your *Mahr* (bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) which you have given them, except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by God (e.g. to deal with each other on a fair basis). Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by God, then there is no sin on either of them if she gives back (the *Mahr* or a part of it) for her *Al-Khul'* (divorce). These are the limits ordained by God, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by God, then such are the *Zālimûn* (wrong-doers, etc.)” (Hilālī 2: 229).

“Divorce can happen twice, and [each time] wives either be kept on in an acceptable manner or released in a good way. It is not lawful for you to take back anything that you have given [your wives], except where both fear that they cannot maintain [the marriage] within the bounds set by God: if you [arbiters] suspect that the couple may not be able to do this, then there will be no blame on either of them if the woman opts to give something for her release. These are the bounds set by God: do not overstep them. It is those who overstep God's bounds who are doing wrong” (Abdel Haleem 2: 229).

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ
وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (230)

“And if he hath divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she hath wedded another husband. Then if he (the other husband) divorce her it is no sin for both of them that they come together again if they consider that they are able to observe the limits of Allah. These are the limits of Allah. He manifesteth them for people who have knowledge” (Pickthall 2: 230).

“So if a husband divorces his wife (irrevocably), He cannot, after that, re-marry her until after she has married another husband and He has divorced her. In that case there is no blame on either of them if they re-unite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah. Such are the limits ordained by Allah, which He makes plain to those who understand” (Ali 2: 230).

“And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she has married another husband. Then, if the other husband divorces her, it is no sin on both of them that they reunite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by God. These are the limits of God, which He makes plain for the people who have knowledge” (Hilālī 2: 230).

“If a husband re-divorces his wife after the second divorce, she will not be lawful for him until she has taken another husband; if that one divorces her, there will be no blame if she and the first husband return to one another, provided they feel that they can keep within the bounds set by God. These are God’s bounds, which He makes clear for those who know” (Abdel Haleem 2: 230).

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لَتَعْتَدُوا وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ
 ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوعًا وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ بِعَضُوكُمْ بِهِ
 وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (231)

“When ye have divorced women, and they have reached their term, then retain them in kindness or release them in kindness. Retain them not to their hurt so that ye transgress (the limits). He who doeth that hath wronged his soul. Make not the revelations of Allah a laughing-stock (by your behaviour), but remember Allah's grace upon you and that which He hath revealed unto you of the Scripture and of wisdom, whereby He doth exhort you. Observe your duty to Allah and know that Allah is Aware of all things” (Pickthall 2: 231).

“When ye divorce women, and they fulfill the term of their ('Iddat), either take them back on equitable terms or set them free on equitable terms; but do not take them back to injure them, (or) to take undue advantage; if any one does that; He wrongs his own soul. Do not treat Allah's Signs as a jest, but solemnly rehearse Allah's favours on you, and the fact that He sent down to you the Book and Wisdom, for your instruction. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is well acquainted with all things” (Ali: 2: 231).

“And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, either take them back on reasonable basis or set them free on reasonable basis. But do not take them back to hurt them, and whoever does that, then he has wronged himself. And treat not the Verses (Laws) of God as a jest, but remember God's Favours on you (i.e. Islâm), and that which He has sent down to you of the Book (i.e. the Qur'ân) and *Al-Hikma* (the Prophet's *Sunna* - legal ways -- Islâmic jurisprudence, etc.) whereby He instructs you. And fear God, and know that God is All-Aware of everything” (Hilâlî 2: 231).

“When you divorce women and they have reached their set time, then either keep or release them in a fair manner. Do not hold on to them with intent to harm them and commit aggression: anyone who does this wrongs himself. Do not make a mockery of God's revelations; remember the favour He blessed you with, and the Scripture and wisdom He sent to teach you. Be mindful of God and know that He has full knowledge of everything” (Abdel Haleem: 2: 231).

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضُوا بَيْنَهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ذَلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَمْ أَزْكَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (232)

“And when ye have divorced women and they reach their term, place not difficulties in the way of their marrying their husbands if it is agreed between them in kindness. This is an admonition for him among you who believeth in Allah and the Last Day. That is more virtuous for you, and cleaner. Allah knoweth; ye know not” (Pickthall 2: 232).

“When ye divorce women, and they fulfill the term of their ('Iddat), do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands, if they mutually agree on equitable terms. This instruction is for all amongst you, who believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is (the course Making for) most virtue and purity amongst you and Allah knows, and ye know not” (Ali 2: 232).

“And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands, if they mutually agree on reasonable basis. This (instruction) is an admonition for him among you who believes in God and the Last Day. That is more virtuous and purer for you. God knows and you know not” (Hilālī 2: 232).

“When you divorce women and they have reached their set time, do not prevent them from remarrying their husbands if they both agree to do so in a fair manner. Let those of you who believe in God and the Last Day take this to heart: that is more wholesome and purer for you. God knows and you do not” (Abdel Haleem 2: 232).

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُبَيِّمَ الرِّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا نُضَارُّ بِالذِّبَةِ بَوْلِدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ (233)

“Mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years; (that is) for those who wish to complete the suckling. The duty of feeding and clothing nursing mothers in a seemly manner is upon the father of the child. No-one should be charged beyond his capacity. A mother should not be made to suffer because of her child, nor should he to whom the child is born (be made to suffer) because of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they desire to wean the child by mutual consent and (after) consultation, it is no sin for them; and if ye wish to give your children out to nurse, it is no sin for you, provide that ye pay what is due from you in kindness. Observe your duty to Allah, and know that Allah is Seer of what ye do” (Pickthall 2: 233).

“The mothers shall give such to their offspring for two whole years, if the father desires to complete the term. But he shall bear the cost of their food and clothing on equitable terms. No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear. No mother shall be Treated unfairly on account of her child. Nor father on account of his child, an heir shall be chargeable in the same way. If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no blame on them. If ye decide on a foster-mother for your offspring, there is no blame on you, provided ye pay (the mother) what ye offered, on equitable terms. But fear Allah and know that Allah sees well what ye do” (Ali: 233).

“The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them. And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on reasonable basis. And fear God and know that God is All-Seer of what you do” (Hilālī 2: 233).

“Mothers suckle their children for two whole years, if they wish to complete the term, and clothing and maintenance must be borne by the father in a fair manner. No one should be burdened with more than they can bear: no mother shall be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor any father on account of his. The same duty is incumbent on the father's heir. If, by mutual consent and consultation, the couple wish to wean [the child], they will not be blamed, nor will there be any blame if you wish to

engage a wet nurse, provided you pay as agreed in a fair manner. Be mindful of God, knowing that He sees everything you do” (Abdel Haleem 2: 233).

4. Surat al-Nisā'

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا (1)

“O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women. Be careful of your duty toward Allah in Whom ye claim (your rights) of one another, and toward the wombs (that bare you). Lo! Allah hath been a watcher over you” (Pickthall 4: 1).

“O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (That bore you): for Allah ever watches over you” (Ali 4: 1).

“O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear God through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship) . Surely, God is Ever an All-Watcher over you” (Hilālī 4:1).

“People, be mindful of your Lord, who created you from a single soul, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them spread countless men and women far and wide; be mindful of God, in whose name you make requests of one another. Beware of severing the ties of kinship: God is always watching over you” (Abdel Haleem 4: 1).

وَأِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا (3)

“And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hands possess. Thus it is more likely that ye will not do injustice” (Pickthall 4: 3).

“If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, Two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess, that will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice” (Ali 4: 3).

“And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the captives and the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice” (Hilālī: 3).

“If you fear that you will not deal fairly with orphan girls, you may marry whichever [other] women seem good to you, two, three, or four. If you fear that you cannot be equitable [to them], then marry only one, or your slave(s): that is more likely to make you avoid bias” (Abdel Haleem 4: 3).

وَأْتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِن طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَن شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا (4)

“And give unto the women (whom ye marry) free gift of their marriage portions; but if they of their own accord remit unto you a part thereof, then ye are welcome to absorb it (in your wealth)” (Pickthall 4: 4).

“And give the women (on marriage) their dower as a free gift; but if, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, Take it and enjoy it with right good cheer” (Ali 4: 4).

“And give to the women (whom you marry) their *Mahr* (obligatory bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) with a good heart, but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm (as God has made it lawful)” (Hilālī: 4).

“Give women their bridal gift upon marriage, though if they are happy to give up some of it for you, you may enjoy it with a clear conscience” (Abdel Haleem 4: 4).

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفَعًا فَرِيضَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا (11)

“Allah chargeth you concerning (the provision for) your children: to the male the equivalent of the portion of two females, and if there be women more than two, then theirs is two-thirds of the inheritance, and if there be one (only) then the half. And to each of his parents a sixth of the inheritance, if he have a son; and if he have no son and his parents are his heirs, then to his mother appertaineth the third; and if he have brethren, then to his mother appertaineth the sixth, after any legacy he may have bequeathed, or debt (hath been paid). Your parents and your children: Ye know not which of them is nearer unto you in usefulness. It is an injunction from Allah. Lo! Allah is Knower, Wise” (Pickthall 4: 11).

“Allah (thus) directs you as regards your Children's (Inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females: if only daughters, two or more, their share is two-thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is a half. For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each, if the deceased left children; if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased Left brothers (or sisters) the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases ('s) after the payment of legacies and debts. Ye know not whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit. These are settled portions ordained by Allah. and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise” (Ali 4: 11).

“God commands you as regards your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females; if (there are) only daughters, two or more, their share is two thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is half. For parents, a sixth share of inheritance to each if the deceased left children; if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers or (sisters), the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies he may have bequeathed or debts. You know not which of them, whether your parents or your children, are nearest to you in benefit, (these fixed shares) are ordained by God. And God is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise” (Hilālī 4: 11).

“Concerning your children, God commands you that a son should have the equivalent share of two daughters. If there are only daughters, two or more should share two-thirds of the inheritance, if one, she should have half. Parents inherit a sixth each if the deceased leaves children; if he leaves no children and his parents are his sole heirs, his mother has a third, unless he has brothers, in which case she has a sixth. [In all cases, the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts. You cannot know which of your parents or your children is more beneficial to you: this is a law from God, and He is all knowing, all wise” (Abdel Haleem 4: 11).

وَأَنْتُمْ نَصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِيَنَّ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَالَةً أَوْ امْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ فَإِنْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرِ مُضَارٍّ وَصِيَّةً مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ (12)

“And unto you belongeth a half of that which your wives leave, if they have no child; but if they have a child then unto you the fourth of that which they leave, after any legacy they may have bequeathed, or debt (they may have contracted, hath been paid). And unto them belongeth the fourth of that which ye leave if ye have no child, but if ye have a child then the eighth of that which ye leave, after any legacy ye may have bequeathed, or debt (ye may have contracted, hath been paid). And if a man or a woman have a distant heir (having left neither her parent nor child), and he (or she) have a brother or a sister (only on the mother's side) then to each of them twain (the brother and the sister) the sixth, and if they be more than two, then they shall be sharers in the third, after any legacy that may have been bequeathed or debt (contracted) not injuring (the heirs by willing away more than a third of the heritage) hath been” (Pickthall 4: 12).

“In what your wives leave, your share is a half, if they leave no child; but if they leave a child, ye get a fourth; after payment of legacies and debts. In what ye leave, their share is a fourth, if ye leave no child; but if ye leave a child, they get an eighth; after payment of legacies and debts. If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question, has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third; after payment of legacies and debts; so that no loss is caused (to any one). Thus is it ordained by Allah and Allah is All-knowing, Most Forbearing” (Ali 4: 12).

“In that which your wives leave, your share is a half if they have no child; but if they leave a child, you get a fourth of that which they leave after payment of legacies that they may have bequeathed or debts. In that which you leave, their (your wives) share is a fourth if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they get an eighth of that which you leave after payment of legacies that you may have bequeathed or debts. If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third; after payment of lagacies he (or she) may have bequeathed or debts, so that no loss is caused (to anyone). This is a Commandment from God; and God is Ever All-Knowing, Most-Forbearing” (Hilālī 4: 12).

“You inherit half of what your wives leave, if they have no children; if they have children, you inherit a quarter. [In all cases, the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts. If you have no children, your wives' share is a quarter; if you have children, your wives get an eighth. [In all cases, the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts. If a man or a woman dies leaving no children or parents, but a single brother or sister, he or she should take one-sixth of the inheritance; if there are

more siblings, they share one-third between them. [In all cases, the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts, with no harm done to anyone: this is a commandment from God: God is all knowing and benign to all” (Abdel Haleem 4: 12).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَجِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبِينَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا (19)

“O ye who believe! It is not lawful for you forcibly to inherit the women (of your deceased kinsmen), nor (that) ye should put constraint upon them that ye may take away a part of that which ye have given them, unless they be guilty of flagrant lewdness. But consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good” (Pickthall 4: 19).

“O ye who believe! Ye are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should ye treat them with harshness, that ye may take away part of the dower ye have given them, except where they have been guilty of open lewdness; on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If ye take a dislike to them it may be that ye dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good” (Ali 4: 19).

“O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the *Mahr* you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse. And live with them honourably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and God brings through it a great deal of good” (Hilālī: 19).

“You who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will, nor should you treat your wives harshly, hoping to take back some of the bride-gift you gave them, unless they are guilty of something clearly outrageous. Live with them in accordance with what is fair and kind: if you dislike them, it may well be that you dislike something in which God has put much good” (Abdel Haleem 4: 19).

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا (20)

“And if ye wish to exchange one wife for another and ye have given unto one of them a sum of money (however great), take nothing from it. Would ye take it by the way of calumny and open wrong?” (Pickthall 4: 20).

“But if ye decide to take one wife in place of another, even if ye had given the latter a whole treasure for dower, Take not the least bit of it back: Would ye take it by slander and manifest wrong?” (Ali 4: 20).

“But if you intend to replace a wife by another and you have given one of them a *Cantar* (of gold i.e. a great amount) as *Mahr*, take not the least bit of it back; would you take it wrongfully without a right and (with) a manifest sin?” (Hilālī 4: 20).

“If you wish to replace one wife with another, do not take any of her bride-gift back, even if you have given her a great amount of gold. How could you take it when this is unjust and a blatant sin?” (Abdel Haleem 4: 20).

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا (21)

“How can ye take it (back) after one of you hath gone in unto the other, and they have taken a strong pledge from you?” (Pickthall 4: 21).

“And how could ye take it when ye have gone in unto each other, and they have taken from you a solemn covenant?” (Ali 4: 21).

“And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other, and they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant?” (Hilālī: 21).

“How could you take it when you have lain with each other and they have taken a solemn pledge from you?” (Abdel Haleem 4: 21).

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنَ فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِيهِنَّ وَأَتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ فَإِذَا أُحْصِنَ فَإِنَّهُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (25)

“And whoso is not able to afford to marry free, believing women, let them marry from the believing maids whom your right hands possess. Allah knoweth best (concerning) your faith. Ye (proceed) one from another; so wed them by permission of their folk, and give unto them their portions in kindness, they being honest, not debauched nor of loose conduct. And if when they are honourably married they commit lewdness they shall incur the half of the punishment (prescribed) for free women (in that case). This is for him among you who feareth to commit sin. But to have patience would be better for you. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful” (Pickthall 4: 25).

“If any of you have not the means wherewith to wed free believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hands possess: And Allah hath full knowledge about your faith. Ye are one from another: Wed them with the leave of their owners, and give them their dowers, according to what is reasonable: They should be chaste, not lustful, nor taking paramours: when they are taken in wedlock, if they fall into shame, their punishment is half that for free women. This (permission) is for those among you who fear sin; but it is better for you that ye practise self-restraint. And Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful” (Ali 4: 25).

“And whoever of you have not the means wherewith to wed free, believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those (captives and slaves) whom your right hands possess, and God has full knowledge about your Faith, you are one from another. Wed them with the permission of their own folk (guardians, *Auliyâ'* or masters) and give them their *Mahr* according to what is reasonable; they (the above said captive and slave-girls) should be chaste, not adulterous, nor taking boy-friends. And after they have been taken in wedlock, if they commit illegal sexual intercourse, their punishment is half that for free (unmarried) women. This is for him among you who is afraid of being harmed in his religion or in his body; but it is better for you that you practise self-restraint, and God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (Hilālī 4: 25).

“If any of you does not have the means to marry a believing free woman, then marry a believing slave— God knows best [the depth of] your faith: you are [all] part of the same family – so marry them with their people’s consent and their proper bride-gifts. [Make them] married women, not adulteresses or lovers. If they commit adultery when they are married, their punishment will be half that of free women. This is for those of you who fear that you will sin; it is better for you to practise self-restraint. God is most forgiving and merciful” (Abdel Haleem 4: 25).

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَا لَهُ وَاللِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَا لَهُنَّ مِمَّا كَسَبْنَ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا (32)

“And covet not the thing in which Allah hath made some of you excel others. Unto men a fortune from that which they have earned, and unto women a fortune from that which they have earned. (Envy not one another) but ask Allah of His bounty. Lo! Allah is ever Knower of all things” (Pickthall 4: 32).

“And in no wise covet those things in which Allah Hath bestowed His gifts More freely on some of you than on others: To men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn: But ask Allah of His bounty. For Allah hath full knowledge of all things” (Ali 4: 32).

“And wish not for the things in which God has made some of you to excel others. For men there is reward for what they have earned, (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned, and ask God of His Bounty. Surely, God is Ever All-Knower of everything” (Hilālī 4: 32).

“Do not covet what God has given to some of you more than others– men have the portion they have earned; and women the portion they have earned– you should rather ask God for some of His bounty: He has full knowledge of everything” (Abdel Haleem 4: 32).

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ فَإِنِ اطَّعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا(34)

“Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Lo! Allah is ever High, Exalted, Great” (Pickthall 4: 34).

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all)” (Ali 4: 34).

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because God has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to God and to their husbands), and guard in the husband's absence what God orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property, etc.). As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful), but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance). Surely, God is Ever Most High, Most Great” (Hilālī 4: 34).

“Husbands should take good care of their wives, with [the bounties] God has given to some more than others and with what they spend out of their own money. Righteous wives are devout and guard what God would have them guard in their husbands' absence. If you fear high-handedness from your wives, remind them [of the teachings of God], then ignore them when you go to bed, then hit them. If they obey you, you have no right to act against them: God is most high and great” (Abdel Haleem 4: 34).

وَإِنِ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِن بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَن يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ وَأُحْضِرَتِ
الْأَنفُسُ الشُّحَّ وَإِن تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا (128)

“If a woman feareth ill treatment from her husband, or desertion, it is no sin for them twain if they make terms of peace between themselves. Peace is better. But greed hath been made present in the minds (of men). If ye do good and keep from evil, lo! Allah is ever Informed of what ye do” (Pickthall 4: 128).

“If a wife fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves; and such settlement is best; even though men's souls are swayed by greed. But if ye do good and practise self-restraint, Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do” (Ali 4: 128).

“And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves; and making peace is better. And human inner-selves are swayed by greed. But if you do good and keep away from evil, verily, God is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do” (Hilālī 4: 128).

“If a wife fears high-handedness or alienation from her husband, neither of them will be blamed if they come to a peaceful settlement, for peace is best. Although human souls are prone to selfishness, if you do good and are mindful of God, He is well aware of all that you do” (Abdel Haleem 4: 128).

16. *al-Nahl*

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (97)

“Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female, and is a believer, him verily we shall quicken with good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do” (Pickthall 16: 97).

“Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new Life, a life that is good and pure and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions” (Ali 16: 97).

“Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islâmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter)” (Hillali 16:97).

“To whoever, male or female, does good deeds and has faith, We shall give a good life and reward them according to the best of their actions” (Abdel Haleem 16: 97).

65. *Surat al-Ṭalāq*

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنْ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ لَا تَدْرِي لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ أَمْرًا (1)

“O Prophet! When ye (men) put away women, put them away for their (legal) period and reckon the period, and keep your duty to Allah, your Lord. Expel them not from their houses nor let them go forth unless they commit open immorality. Such are the limits (imposed by) Allah; and whoso transgresseth Allah's limits, he verily wrongeth his soul. Thou knowest not: it may be that Allah will afterward bring some new thing to pass” (Pickthall 65: 1).

“O Prophet! When ye do divorce women, divorce them at their prescribed periods, and count (accurately), their prescribed periods: And fear Allah your Lord: and turn them not out of their houses, nor shall they (themselves) leave, except in case they are guilty of some open lewdness, those are limits set by Allah. and any who transgresses the limits of Allah, does verily wrong his (own) soul: thou knowest not if perchance Allah will bring about thereafter some new situation” (Ali 65: 1).

“O Prophet! When you divorce women, divorce them at their *'Idda* (prescribed periods), and count (accurately) their *'Idda* (periods). And fear God your Lord (O Muslims), and turn them not out of their (husband's) homes, nor shall they (themselves) leave, except in case they are guilty of some open illegal sexual intercourse. And those are the set limits of God. And whosoever transgresses the set limits of God, then indeed he has wronged himself. You (the one who divorces his wife) know not, it may be that God will afterward bring some new thing to pass (i.e. to return her back to you if that was the first or second divorce)” (Hilālī 65: 1).

“Prophet, when any of you intend to divorce women, do so at a time when their prescribed waiting period can properly start, and calculate the period carefully: be mindful of God, your Lord. Do not drive them out of their homes—nor should they themselves leave—unless they commit a flagrant indecency. These are the limits set by God—whoever oversteps God's limits wrongs his own soul—for you cannot know what new situation God may perhaps bring about” (Abdel Haleem 65: 1).

أَسْكُنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنْتُمْ مِنْ وُجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَارُّوهُنَّ لِضَيِّقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ وَإِنْ كُنَّ أُولَاتٍ حَمْلٍ فَأَنْفِقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَضَعْنَ
حَمْلَهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَأُتْمِرُوا بَيْنَكُمْ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَإِنْ تَعَاَسَرْتُمُ فَاُضْعِ لَهَا أُخْرَىٰ (6)

“Lodge them (the divorced women) where you dwell them where ye dwell, according to your wealth, and harass them not so as to straiten life for them. And if they are with child, then spend for them till they bring forth their burden. Then, if they give suck for you, give them their due payment and consult together in kindness; but if ye make difficulties for one another, then let some other woman give suck for him (the father of the child)” (Pickthall 65: 6).

“Lodge Let the women live (in 'iddat) in the same style as ye live, according to your means: Annoy them not, so as to restrict them. And if they carry (life in their wombs), then spend (your substance) on them until they deliver their burden: and if they suckle your (offspring), give them their recompense: and take mutual counsel together, according to what is just and reasonable. And if ye find yourselves in difficulties, let another woman suckle (the child) on the (father's) behalf” (Ali 65: 6).

“Lodge them (the divorced women) where you dwell, according to your means, and do not treat them in such a harmful way that they be obliged to leave. And if they are pregnant, then spend on them till they deliver. Then if they give suck to the children for you, give them their due payment, and let each of you accept the advice of the other in a just way. But if you make difficulties for one another, then some other woman may give suck for him (the father of the child)” (Hilālī 65: 6).

“House the wives you are divorcing according to your means, wherever you house yourselves, and do not harass them so as to make their lives difficult. If they are pregnant, maintain them until they are delivered of their burdens; if they suckle your infants, pay them for it. Consult together in a good way– if you make difficulties for one another, another woman may suckle the child for the father” (Abdel Haleem 65: 6).

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