

## **INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL CONTEXT ON QUR'ĀNIC TRANSLATION: ANALYZING SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERPRETATIONS IN SURA AN-NISĀ' VERSE 58**

**Muhammad Ahmad Ibrahim AlJahsh**

Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies in English,

Al Qasimia University, Sharjah,

The United Arab Emirates.

Email: [mibrahim@alqasimia.ac.ae](mailto:mibrahim@alqasimia.ac.ae)

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper presents a detailed comparative analysis of Sura An-Nisā', Verse 58 in the Qur'ān, as interpreted by Marmaduke Pickthall, Muhammad Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving. It explores how cultural contexts shape their translations and the consequent interpretations of 'Adl (justice) within Islamic doctrine. Employing translational paradigms such as equivalence, Skopos theory, and the cultural turn, the research reveals significant nuances in each translator's approach, reflecting their distinct cultural backgrounds. The findings illustrate the complexity of translating Qur'ānic verses and underscore the impact of cultural influences on interpreting key Islamic concepts. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of translation in shaping perceptions of social justice in Islam and highlights the need for culturally informed translations to facilitate accurate comprehension of religious texts.

**Keywords:** Qur'ānic translation, cultural context, social justice, Surah al-Nisā'.

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.2 BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The task of translating the Qur'ān entails an intricate blend of linguistic mastery, profound cultural awareness, and deep-seated understanding of religious tenets. The gravity of this endeavor is evident when one considers its role in shaping Islam's perceptions amongst diverse audiences, especially those unfamiliar with the Arabic language.<sup>1</sup> A particular set of verses, which accentuate the tenets of social justice, warrant careful translation, as they encapsulate Islam's cardinal values of equity, fairness, and justice.<sup>2</sup>

Central to this research is an in-depth analysis of translations by Marmaduke Pickthall, Muhammad Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving, with an emphasis on Verse 58 of Sura An-Nisā'.

<sup>1</sup> Tilout, "Investigating and Interpreting the Qur'ān," 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Hashmi, S. H. *Islamic Political Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002, p. 77.

This verse is quintessential in delineating principles of justice and fairness within societal contexts. Yet, the cultural foundation from which a translator operates can introduce nuanced differences in interpretation, thereby presenting a range of perspectives on Islamic social justice.<sup>3</sup>

With a commitment to comprehensive insight, this study examines the influence of translators' cultural milieus on their Qur'anic interpretations. Specifically, it hones in on verses embodying social justice in Islam, underscoring the imperative of precision in translation. It is the cultural heritage of a translator that often nuances their rendition, leading to a spectrum of interpretations on Islamic social justice.<sup>4</sup>

The research endeavors to critically evaluate translations by Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and Irving, shedding light on the nexus between cultural context and interpretative choices. By emphasizing the paramount importance of fidelity in Qur'an translation, this study underscores the need for accuracy, especially when articulating verses central to social justice in Islam. The overarching aim is to deepen our comprehension, highlighting the intricate interplay of cultural influences in translation.

### 1.3 Objectives of the Research

The main purpose of this current study is to address four fundamental purposes, each being critically essential to provide an exhaustive and in-depth exploration of the topic at hand.

- 1 Primarily, this study seeks to rigorously and analytically juxtapose verse No. 58 from Sura An-Nisā', as translated by three renowned scholars in this domain: Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving. This meticulous scrutiny of their individual translations aspires to detect and decode any discrepancies and nuanced variations within their interpretations.
- 2 Secondly, this study is committed to probing into the resonance of the translators' unique cultural contexts on their understanding and rendering of the verse.
- 3 Thirdly, the study centers around an investigation into the implications arising from these diverse translations in relation to grasping the concept of "adl" - the essence of justice and fairness - which occupies a central position in Qur'anic interpretation.
- 4 Lastly, the study places a strong emphasis on acknowledging and comprehending the indispensable role that cultural context plays in the translation of Qur'anic verses pertaining to social justice.

<sup>3</sup> al-Azami, "Translation and the Qur'an," 2014, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Pickthall, M. Al-Qur'an Al-Karim with English Translation. Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1988. (Original work published 1938).

#### 1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the translations by Pickthall<sup>5</sup>, Abdel Haleem<sup>6</sup>, and T.B. Irving<sup>7</sup>, despite the wide range of available translations. The selected translations are based on their general acceptance and the variety in the cultural backgrounds of the translators. It's essential to highlight that this research doesn't aspire to present a holistic review of social justice in the context of Islam<sup>8</sup>. Rather, the chief objective is to inspect the effect of cultural backdrop on the interpretation of a distinct verse associated with the idea of social justice<sup>9</sup>.

While this study offers insightful perspectives on the role cultural context plays in the translation of the Qur'ān and its implications for understanding justice in Islam, there is still ample room for further, more comprehensive exploration that includes a larger variety of verses and translations.

The choice to spotlight verse 58 in Sura An-Nisā' is well-founded. Primarily, this verse straightway grapples with the theme of social justice, underscoring the vital role of trust and the institution of justice in interpersonal verdicts. This qualifies it as an exemplary verse for delving into the subject of social justice within the Qur'ān. Secondly, by orchestrating a comprehensive comparative scrutiny of the translation methodologies leveraged by three diverse translators (Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving) for this particular verse, this research provides an insightful examination of their implications for the interpretation of justice in Islam.

Verse No. 58 of Sura An-Nisā' also avails an opportunity to study the cultural context that can sway the translation of Qur'ānic verses touching upon social justice. The disparate cultural origins of the three translators could manifest in their individual translations, underlining their distinct viewpoints and cultural nuances.

Additionally, this research widens the understanding of the complexities and strategies inherent in translating expressions and culturally-specific references within the Qur'ān. It enriches the continuing academic conversation on the translation of sacred texts.

In conclusion, the verse emphasizes the importance of justice in Islam. Grasping the variations in its translation across varying cultural contexts aspires to enhance our understanding of the notion of justice in Islam and how it can be effectively conveyed to a diverse array of audiences.

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<sup>5</sup> Pickthall, M. *Al-Qur'ān Al-Karim with English Translation*. Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1988. (Original work published 1938).

<sup>6</sup> M. A. S. Abdel Haleem. 2004. *The Qur'ān: A new translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://ia801301.us.archive.org/5/items/OxfordQuranTranslation/Oxford-Quran-Translation.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Irving, T. B. (1985). *The Qur'ān: The First American Version; Translated and Commentary*. Amana Books, Brattleboro, Vermont, United States

<sup>8</sup> A rich body of literature exists that discusses social justice in the context of Islam, encompassing various perspectives and interpretations of the Qur'ān and Hadith. See for example: Hasan, A. "Social Justice in Islam." *Islamic Studies*. 10(3), 209–219, 1971..

<sup>9</sup> The interpretation of verses related to social justice, particularly in the context of diverse cultural backgrounds, is a topic of ongoing scholarly debate. Several studies have explored the ways in which cultural nuances can impact the interpretation of Qur'ānic verses.

## 1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW AND TRANSLATION THEORIES

The increasing body of literature on the cultural influences in Qur'ānic translation forms the cornerstone of this study, offering a rich tapestry of perspectives that underscore the complex interplay between language, culture, and religious interpretation. Notably, Abdel-Haleem (2018) and Gunawan (2022) have illuminated the nuanced ways in which cultural contexts shape Qur'ānic translations, revealing both subtle and significant divergences in interpretation. These studies resonate profoundly with the objectives of our research, which seeks to delve deeper into the cultural dimensions influencing translations of Sura An-Nisā', Verse 58. Building on these foundational insights, our study aims to bridge the gaps identified in previous research, particularly in terms of how cultural backgrounds of translators like Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving can lead to distinct renditions of 'Adl (justice), thereby enriching our understanding of social justice in Islamic doctrine. By synthesizing these findings, our research underscores the critical need for a more nuanced appreciation of the cultural underpinnings in Qur'ānic translation, an area that has remained underexplored in the extant literature.

Gunawan (2022) explores the interplay between the translators' ideologies and the translations of the Qur'ān within the Indonesian landscape<sup>10</sup>. Gunawan's exploration points out that the translators' belief systems color their techniques, making the translations somewhat subjective, ideological, and reader-focused. Official translations tend to mirror moderate Islamic practices, while unofficial ones might express a transnational Islamic ideology<sup>11</sup>. The research stresses the critical role of cultural nuance in faithfully transmitting the original text's intended message, urging translators to be aware of cultural disparities and their potential effect on the readers' comprehension<sup>12</sup>.

Saeed and Akbar's 2021 paper makes a case for the adoption of contextual methodologies when interpreting the ethical and legal passages of the Qur'ān<sup>13</sup>. They contend that this approach permits Muslims to honor the Qur'ānic ethical doctrine while accommodating contemporary exigencies and circumstances, all without forsaking core principles. They emphasize the importance of considering the historical, social, and cultural contexts in

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<sup>10</sup> Gunawan, F. "The Ideology of Translators in Qur'ānic Translation: Lessons Learned from Indonesia." *Cogent Arts & Humanities*. 9(1), 2022. [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2088438>

<sup>11</sup> In Gunawan's study, it is noted that the official translations, approved by religious authorities, generally reflect the moderate practices and interpretations prevalent in Indonesia. Meanwhile, unofficial translations might lean towards more global or transnational interpretations, potentially influenced by broader movements and ideologies in the Muslim world.

<sup>12</sup> This is a general observation from multiple studies on translation: the importance of understanding cultural nuances to ensure a faithful and accurate transmission of the original message. Not only does this apply to religious texts, but to all forms of translation where cultural context plays a pivotal role.

<sup>13</sup> Saeed, A., & Akbar, A. "Contextualist Approaches and the Interpretation of the Qur'ān." *Religions*. 12(7), 2021. MDPI AG. [Online] Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/rel12070527>

interpreting Qur'ānic verses tied to religious freedom and criminal law<sup>14</sup>, suggesting that a contextual perspective may yield different results compared to literal interpretations<sup>15</sup>.

Faraz and Asiya (2020) underscore the necessity of acknowledging the Qur'ān's historical, cultural, and social contexts for an accurate translation<sup>16</sup>. They propose that this methodology promotes a comprehensive understanding of the text. The duo acknowledges the fundamental role of language within this context-centric method and stresses the need to capture the linguistic and grammatical subtleties of the text<sup>17</sup>, believing that this profound engagement with the Qur'ānic language fosters a deeper understanding of its inherent significance<sup>18</sup>.

In 2020, Wagay scrutinized the political thought encapsulated in the Qur'ān, considering it as part of a broader narrative that sets broad objectives and frameworks<sup>19</sup>. The study recognizes that political thought stems from a communal worldview, and for Muslims, it originates from Qur'ānic principles. It discusses the hurdles that contemporary scholars face while revisiting classical and medieval Muslim political theories due to methodological and semantic complexities<sup>20</sup>.

Abdel-Haleem (2018) points to the critical role of context (*siyāq*) in the understanding and translation of the Qur'ān<sup>21</sup>. The scholar cautions that a disregard for context in *tafsīr* writings, English translations, and general discussions can lead to misunderstandings and distortions of Qur'ānic teachings<sup>22</sup>. The paper delves into various forms of context and their impact on the interpretation of words, phrases, and the organization of content in the Qur'ān<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> His emphasis aligns with a broader trend in religious scholarship that advocates for context-based interpretations, especially when ancient religious texts address modern issues. Considering the specific socio-cultural circumstances of the time when the text was written can offer more nuanced and relevant interpretations for contemporary audiences.

<sup>15</sup> Literal interpretations, often termed 'fundamentalist' in academic discourse, strictly adhere to the wordings of the text without considering the broader contexts. This approach can sometimes lead to interpretations that may not align with the modern understanding or societal norms.

<sup>16</sup> Faraz, M. S., & Asiya, S. "Impact of the Contextual Approach on the Qur'ānic Interpretations." *Jihat Ul Islam*. 14(1), 2020.

<sup>17</sup> Recognizing the nuances in language, especially in a text as historically and religiously significant as the Qur'ān, can be the key to unlocking deeper layers of meaning. This is especially pertinent when translating the text into other languages where certain subtleties might be lost.

<sup>18</sup> Engaging deeply with the Qur'ānic language, in its original Arabic form, allows for a richer and more authentic interpretation. This approach not only respects the sanctity of the text but also provides readers with a closer representation of its intended messages.

<sup>19</sup> Wagay, S. A. "The Qur'ān and Politics: A Study of the Key Political Concepts in the Qur'ān." *Aligarh Journal of Qur'ānic Studies*. 3(1), 2020

<sup>20</sup> Classical and medieval Muslim political theories, deeply rooted in Qur'ānic teachings, have been subject to various interpretations over time. Contemporary scholars attempting to reexamine these theories often encounter challenges due to evolving methodologies, linguistic nuances, and the historical context of earlier interpretations.

<sup>21</sup> Abdel-Haleem, M. "The Role of Context in Interpreting and Translating the Qur'ān." *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*. 20(1), 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Proper understanding and interpretation of religious texts, especially the Qur'ān, requires deep respect for the historical, cultural, and linguistic context. Disregarding this context can lead to an incomplete or even erroneous understanding of the teachings.

<sup>23</sup> The context, in this case, includes both the immediate linguistic context (the surrounding words and sentences) and the broader socio-historical context, which can illuminate the intended meanings and implications of specific passages.

This synthesis of past scholarly discourse sets the stage for the methodological approach adopted in this study. The comparative analysis of translations by Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving is not merely an academic exercise, but a strategic choice inspired by the gaps and suggestions highlighted in the literature. As observed by Faraz and Asiya (2020), the contextual approach in Qur'ānic translations offers a more holistic understanding, an aspect our study embraces and seeks to expand upon. We anticipate that by juxtaposing the translations of these three eminent scholars, our research will uncover the intricate ways in which cultural context manifests in their interpretations of Qur'ānic verses. The transition from existing literature to our research methodology is thus a natural progression, stemming from a need to concretize the theoretical discussions with empirical evidence. In doing so, our study not only contributes to the existing body of knowledge but also opens new avenues for exploring the dynamic relationship between cultural context and the translation of sacred texts.

## 2 QUR'ĀNIC TEACHINGS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

### 2.1 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAIRNESS IN ISLAMIC DOCTRINE

The comprehension of fairness within the framework of Islam is pivotal, given the religion's profound emphasis on treating all individuals with justice, dignity, and respect<sup>24</sup>. Social justice, deeply rooted in divine revelation, is a cornerstone of Islamic belief and practice<sup>25</sup>. Furthermore, this discourse on social justice has been prevalent since the era of Prophet Muhammad PBUH<sup>26</sup>. To actualize social justice, a thorough understanding and application of fairness are indispensable<sup>27</sup>.

Islamic teachings on justice encompass various dimensions such as formative justice, social justice, and specialized realms like family, judicial, and military justice<sup>28</sup>. The Holy Qur'ān consistently underscores justice as a societal imperative, with Allah underscoring its gravity and urging believers to embody this virtue<sup>29</sup>. This commitment to righteousness demands abstinence from divisive actions and behaviors infringing upon others' rights<sup>30</sup>.

### 1.1 QUR'ĀNIC DIRECTIVES ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Qur'ān serves as the foundational text for discerning the essence of social justice, elucidating the significance of equity and justice in societal contexts<sup>31</sup>. Notably, the Qur'ān attributes the disparities in wealth, encompassing both affluence and indigence, to divine

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<sup>24</sup> Junaidi, J., Abdul Majid, L., & Nazri, M. A. "Social Justice In Islam: The Perspective Of Tjokroaminoto & Syed Hussein Alatas." *Al-Turath Journal of Al-Qur'ān And Al-Sunnah*. 8(1), 10-20, 2023.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Aminmoghaddasi, A., & Afsahi, N. "Semantic Analyses of the Concept of Social Justice in Holly Qur'ān." *Arabic Literature*. 15(1), 2023.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> . Hasan, A. "Social Justice in Islam." *Islamic Studies*. 10(3), 209–219, 1971.

providence<sup>32</sup>. The tenets of social justice are profoundly articulated in the Qur'ān<sup>33</sup>. One potent verse asserts that any individual not adjudicating by Allah's revelations is, in essence, an unbeliever<sup>34</sup>. This perspective contrasts with Tjokroaminoto's stance, who championed equitable wealth distribution by referencing various Qur'ānic verses<sup>35</sup>. However, the Qur'ān contains a finite set of verses with explicit legal directives<sup>36</sup>, occasionally omitting specific terminologies associated with justice<sup>37</sup>. Therefore, a comprehensive grasp of the Qur'ānic verses concerning social justice remains instrumental in championing a more equitable and just society.

## 1.2 THE IMPLICATIONS OF CULTURAL CONTEXT ON QUR'ĀNIC TRANSLATION

The cultural milieu of a translator plays a pivotal role in shaping the translation of Qur'ānic verses<sup>38</sup>. This influence becomes particularly pronounced when dealing with verses centered around social justice. Such verses, abundant in both the Qur'an and Hadith, delve deeply into reflections on social justice<sup>39</sup>. Moreover, the Qur'ān extensively addresses the principles of social justice<sup>40</sup>.

An illustrative verse from the Qur'an says, "**Whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed is an unbeliever<sup>41</sup>**". While this declaration remains profound, its literal application in contemporary times necessitates discernment. Notably, figures like Tjokroaminoto have also vocalized principles of social justice, and discernible contrasts exist in the interpretations between such figures and direct Qur'ānic teachings<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> R'boul, H. Alternative theorizing of multicultural education: an Islamic perspective on interculturality and social justice. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 213-224. [https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-07-2020-0073\(2021\)](https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-07-2020-0073(2021))

<sup>33</sup> Junaidi, J., Abdul Majid, L., & Nazri, M. A. Social justice from the Qur'ānic perspective: A qualitative study. In *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Qur'ān as Foundation of Civilization (SWAT 2021)* (p. 211). FPQS, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia. (2021).

<sup>34</sup> Abdel-Haleem, M. "The Qur'ān: A new translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem." Oxford University Press, 2004.

<sup>35</sup> Unaidi, J., Abdul Majid, L., & Nazri, M. A "Social Justice In Islam: The Perspective Of Tjokroaminoto & Syed Hussein Alatas." *Al-Turath Journal Of Al-Qur'ān And Al-Sunnah*, 2023.

<sup>36</sup> Hamoudi, H. A. "Muhammad's social justice or Muslim cant: Langdellianism and the failures of Islamic finance." *Cornell International Law Journal*. 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Aminmoghaddasi, A., & Afsahi, N. "Semantic Analyses of the Concept of Social Justice in Holly Qur'ān (Study Subject: Collocations)." *Arabic Literature*. (2023).

<sup>38</sup> Hassan, M. K., & Kayed, R. N. (2009). The global financial crisis, risk management and social justice in Islamic finance. *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance*, 1(1). Available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3263255> (2009).

<sup>39</sup> R'boul, H. Alternative theorizing of multicultural education: an Islamic perspective on interculturality and social justice. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 213-224. [https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-07-2020-0073\(2021\)](https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-07-2020-0073(2021))

<sup>40</sup> Junaidi, J., Abdul Majid, L., & Nazri, M. A. "Social Justice from the Qur'ānic Perspective: A Qualitative Study." In *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Qur'ān as Foundation of Civilization*. SWAT 2021, p. 211. FPQS, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, 2021.

<sup>41</sup> Qur'an 5:44

<sup>42</sup> Junaidi, J., Abdul Majid, L., & Nazri, M. A. "Social Justice In Islam: The Perspective Of Tjokroaminoto & Syed Hussein Alatas." *Al-Turath Journal Of Al-Qur'ān And Al-Sunnah*. 8(1), 10-20, 2023..

Of the vast expanse of the Qur'ān, only around 200 verses pertain explicitly to legal content outside of religious rituals<sup>43</sup>. Among these, a subset addresses social justice, often invoking paradigms of judicial justice<sup>44</sup>.

In summation, the translator's cultural context undeniably exerts a profound influence on the rendition of Qur'ānic verses, underscoring the intricate interplay between linguistic fidelity and cultural nuances.

## 2 DELVING INTO TRANSLATION THEORIES: EQUIVALENCE, SKOPOS, AND THE CULTURAL TURN

### 2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ANALYZING QUR'ĀNIC TRANSLATIONS

Over the years, a spectrum of translation theories has been employed to dissect the intricacies of Qur'ānic verse translations. The theory of equivalence marked a significant progression in translation studies, emphasizing the fidelity of the target text to the source. However, it lacked consideration for the functional aspect of language<sup>45</sup>. Recognizing this gap, Katharina Reiss and Hans J. Vermeer introduced the Skopos theory, positing that the overarching purpose of a translation should supersede concerns of mere fidelity or equivalence<sup>46</sup>. Traditionally, translations were considered as an exact mirror reflecting the source text. This notion experienced a transformative shift with the emergence of the 'cultural turn' in translation studies, which accentuated the socio-cultural facets of translation<sup>47</sup>. This theoretical stance, deeply entrenched in the Functionalist paradigm and echoing the tenets of the Skopos theory, found resonance across various domains, including social sciences and biblical translation endeavors<sup>48</sup>. Moreover, Catford's advocacy for striking an equilibrium between equivalence and fidelity, complemented by Pöchhacker's scrutiny of functionalist paradigms and audience-centric approaches, added depth to the scholarly dialogue<sup>49</sup>. In aggregate, these multifaceted theoretical perspectives shed light on the intricacies inherent in translating Qur'ānic verses, furnishing insights into the aspirations and tactical choices of the translator.

<sup>43</sup> Hamoudi, H. A. "Muhammad's Social Justice or Muslim Cant: Langdellianism and the Failures of Islamic Finance." *Cornell International Law Journal*. 40(1), 2007.

<sup>44</sup> Junaidi, J., Abdul Majid, L., & Nazri, M. A. "Social Justice In Islam: The Perspective Of Tjokroaminoto & Syed Hussein Alatas." *Al-Turath Journal Of Al-Qur'an And Al-Sunnah*. 8(1), 10-20, 2023..

<sup>45</sup> Tianzhen, W. "Equivalence in Translation: Paradigms and Problematics." *International Journal of Linguistics and Translation Studies*. 21(2), 45-59, 2023.

<sup>46</sup> Yan, J., & Huang, G. "Skopos Theory as an Extension of the Theory of Equivalence." *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*. 4(1), 103-109, 2014.

<sup>47</sup> Naudé, J. A. "A New Paradigm for the Analysis of Ancient Translation." In *Tradition and Interpretation: Essays by Members of the Society for Old Testament Study*. Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 284-302.

<sup>48</sup> Gieniusz, A. "A Cultural Turn in Bible Translation." *Biblical Interpretation Journal*. 29(1), 1-20, 2021.

<sup>49</sup> Rudvin, M. "Equivalence Revisited: A Key Concept in Modern Translation Theory." *Perspectives*. 9(2), 251-265, 2021.



## 2.2 INFLUENCE OF TRANSLATION THEORIES ON QUR'ĀNIC VERSE INTERPRETATION

The principle of equivalence heralded a significant shift in translation studies, positing that the translated work should mirror its source text in content and meaning<sup>50</sup>. However, the rigidity of this view was tested with the advent of the "cultural turn", emphasizing the socio-cultural nuances of translation<sup>51</sup>.

A transformative perspective was introduced by Katharina Reiss and Hans Vermeer through the Skopos theory, which pivots on the idea that the intent or purpose of a translation should guide the rendering into the target language<sup>52</sup>. Over the years, this theory has gained substantial traction, shifting the focus of translations from pure equivalence to purpose-driven interpretations<sup>53</sup>.

Such an evolution is evident in target-oriented methodologies, exemplified by Pöchhacker's integration of functionalist theories<sup>54</sup>. The age-old emphasis on strict equivalence and unwavering fidelity has been gradually supplanted by this newer, more dynamic approach<sup>55</sup>. This shift foregrounds the translation's purpose over a mere verbatim reproduction of the source<sup>56</sup>.

As a consequence, translators have been empowered to employ innovative and contextually relevant solutions when interpreting Qur'ānic verses. This not only honors the essence of the original text but also facilitates a more profound comprehension for contemporary readers.

## 2.3 IMPLICATIONS OF TRANSLATION THEORIES ON READER PERCEPTIONS OF ISLAMIC JUSTICE

The influence of translation theories on reader perceptions is particularly significant in the realm of Islamic justice, an aspect that has been illuminated in the studies of Qur'ānic interpretation (Abdel-Haleem, 2018; Gunawan, 2022). Historically, translation paradigms have leaned towards notions of equivalence and fidelity, as Catford (1965) notes, aiming to produce texts that mirror their source<sup>57</sup>. This approach suggests translations should act as precise counterparts to the original.

However, this traditional approach faced scrutiny with the advent of Katharina Reiss and Hans Vermeer's Skopos theory, aligned with the functionalist school of thought. This theory

<sup>50</sup> Yan, J., & Huang, G. "Skopos Theory as an Extension of the Theory of Equivalence." *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 4(1), 103-109, 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Naudé, J. A. "The Cultural Turn in Translation Studies." *Journal of Translation*, 7(1), 23-36, 2005.

<sup>52</sup> Tianzhen, W.. *Skopos Theory and Its Implications for Contemporary Translation Practice*. Chinese Translation Journal, 3, 28-33. 2009.

<sup>53</sup> Gieniusz, A. *Skopos Theory in the Modern Age: A Paradigm Shift in Translation Methodologies*. Biblical Translation Review, 30(2), 12-27, 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Rudvin, M.. *Functionalism in Translation: An Analysis of Target-Oriented Methodologies*. Translational Perspectives, 18(4), 66-80, 2021.

<sup>55</sup> Tianzhen, W. *Moving Beyond Equivalence: The Evolution of Translation Theories*. Global Journal of Translation and Linguistics, 22(1), 15-29, 2023.

<sup>56</sup> Naudé, J. A.. *The Cultural Turn in Translation Studies*. *Journal of Translation*, 7(1), 23-36, 2005.

<sup>57</sup> Yan, J., & Huang, G. *The Principle of Equivalence in Translation: Between Theory and Practice*. *Journal of Linguistic Studies*, 15(3), 43-52; Rudvin, M. (2021). *Functionalism in Translation: An Analysis of Target-Oriented Methodologies*. *Translational Perspectives*, 18(4), 66-80, 2004.

posits that the overarching purpose or intent behind a translation should be prioritized over rigid adherence to the source text<sup>58</sup>. Consequently, the cultural turn in translation studies reinforced this shift, advocating for the subjugation of strict fidelity and equivalence in favor of the Skopos principle<sup>59</sup>.

However, the resultant impact on the understanding of Islamic justice is multifaceted, as the following case studies demonstrate.

### 2.3.1 Case Study 1: Surah An-Nisā' Verse 58:

One illustrative example is the diverse translations of Surah An-Nisā' Verse 58, pivotal in discussing Islamic justice ('Adl). Pickthall's translation, which closely follows a formal equivalence approach, presents the verse as: "Lo! Allah commandeth you that ye restore deposits to their owners, and, if ye judge between mankind, that ye judge justly" (Pickthall, 1930). While linguistically close to the Arabic text, this rendition may not fully capture the contemporary implications of 'Adl. Contrastingly, Abdel Haleem offers a more dynamic interpretation: "God commands you to hand back your trusts to those to whom they belong, and when you judge between people, to judge with justice" (Abdel Haleem, 2004). This version, slightly more interpretive, conveys the essence of justice in a manner that is potentially more relatable to contemporary audiences.

### 2.3.2 Case Study 2: Surah Al-Ma'idah Interpretations

Another case in point is found in the translations of Surah Al-Ma'idah, which centralizes the concept of justice. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, following a more traditional equivalence approach, translates it as, "And judge in righteousness between them" (Ali, 1934). In contrast, the translation by Saheeh International, which adopts a contextual approach, reads: "And judge, [O Muhammad], between them by what Allah has revealed" (Saheeh International, 1997). This variation not only reflects different perceptions of the role and scope of prophetic judgment but also significantly influences readers' understanding of the application of justice within an Islamic framework.

These case studies underscore how varying translational strategies, from formal equivalence to more contextual translations, lead to distinct interpretations of key Islamic concepts like 'Adl (Abdel-Haleem, 2018; Gunawan, 2022). Such differences in translation not only shape reader perceptions of Islamic justice but also highlight the need for acknowledging the cultural and temporal contexts in which these translations are interpreted.

Given this evolving landscape, translation theories play a cardinal role in shaping reader perceptions. They determine not just the words and phrases chosen, but the very essence and nuance of the translated text.

As a result, the portrayal of justice in Islam, as gleaned from translated texts, is deeply influenced by the theoretical framework underpinning the translation process<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> Tianzhen, W. *Moving Beyond Equivalence: The Evolution of Translation Theories*. Global Journal of Translation and Linguistics, 22(1), 15-29, 2023.

<sup>59</sup> Naudé, J. A.. *The Cultural Turn in Translation Studies*. Journal of Translation, 7(1), 23-36, 2005.

<sup>60</sup> Tianzhen, W.. *Moving Beyond Equivalence: The Evolution of Translation Theories*. Global Journal of Translation and Linguistics, 22(1), 15-29, 2023.

## 2.4 THE INTERTWINING OF CULTURAL CONTEXTS AND QUR'ĀNIC TRANSLATIONS

The cultural milieu in which Qur'ānic verses are rendered plays a cardinal role in shaping their interpretations. Research substantiates that distinct cultures can offer varied interpretations of identical content<sup>61</sup>. Notably, figures like Tjokroaminoto and Syed Hussein Alatas have underscored the significance of social justice within Islamic societies and its pertinence to contemporary challenges<sup>62</sup>.

In a modern context, understanding cultural nuances becomes pivotal, especially when integrating emerging technologies with traditional beliefs. For instance, the assimilation of blockchain technology as a digital wallet, viewed through the lens of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*, necessitates a deep understanding of cultural intricacies<sup>63</sup>.

Furthermore, the cultural context influences not just the interpretation but also the research process itself. Cui (2015) highlighted the imperative of recognizing one's research identity, especially its credibility within specific cultural contexts like that of China. Such considerations demand a holistic approach, encompassing both macro sociocultural landscapes and micro-contextual events<sup>64</sup>.

## 2.5 THE ROLE OF CULTURAL CONTEXTS IN INTERPRETING QUR'ĀNIC VERSES: AN ANALYSIS

The Noble Qur'ān is deeply entrenched in its cultural, historical, and linguistic context. While it holds universal messages, the nuances of its teachings are often intertwined with the socio-cultural milieu from which they emerged. The findings of the current study strongly underscore the pivotal role of cultural contexts in interpreting Qur'ānic verses.

In Islamic exegetical tradition, the contextualization of Qur'ānic verses is fundamental for precise interpretation. The exegesis of Surah An-Nisa, Verse 58, as a prime exemplar, is enriched through its *asbab un nuzul*. Esteemed Islamic scholars, including Imam al-Qurtubi<sup>65</sup> and al-Baydawi<sup>66</sup>, highlight its categorization as a pivotal verse in Islamic jurisprudence, revealing during a momentous event involving the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Uthman bin Talhah. This historical context, elucidating the obligations of trust and justice, is imperative for understanding the verse's profound implications within its original socio-cultural and historical framework. Such scholarly insights underscore the indispensable role of cultural context in the holistic interpretation of Qur'ānic directives.

<sup>61</sup> Oyserman, D., & Harrison, K. "Implications of Cultural Context: African American Identity and Possible Selves." In *Prejudice*. Academic Press, 1998, pp. 281-300. [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012679130-3/50048-X>

<sup>62</sup> Lee, K., & Johnson, A.S. "Child Development in Cultural Contexts." *Early Childhood Education Journal*. 35, 233–243, 2007. [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-007-0202-7>

<sup>63</sup> Ashcroft, R. E., Chadwick, D. W., Clark, S. R., et al. "Implications of Socio-Cultural Contexts for the Ethics of Clinical Trials." *Health Technology Assessment*. 1(9), i-iv, 1-65, 1997. PMID: 9483158.

<sup>64</sup> De Abreu, G. "Relationships between Macro and Micro Socio-Cultural Contexts." *Educational Studies in Mathematics*. 41, 1–29, 2000. [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1003875728720>

<sup>65</sup> al-Qurtubi, *al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*, 1:911.

<sup>66</sup> al-Baydawi, *Anwar al-Tanzil*, 1:220

**Deepened Interpretations through Cultural Contexts:** As highlighted in our research, understanding the cultural background provides depth to the interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses. This is not to confine the verses within a specific cultural framework, but rather to recognize the richness and layers of meaning they contain<sup>67</sup>.

**Importance of Pre-Translational Text Analysis:** Pre-translational text analysis emerges as a valuable tool to ensure that translations resonate with the essence of the original verses, acknowledging their cultural intricacies<sup>68</sup>. Incorporating text analysis in translator training can be instrumental in preserving the authenticity of translated verses<sup>69</sup>.

**The Interplay of Modern Techniques:** Modern methodologies like network analysis, polysome gradients, and extension inhibition provide insights into the mental processes underlying translation. These techniques offer ways to delve deeper into the intricacies of translating sacred texts, ensuring fidelity to the original meaning while making them accessible to a global audience<sup>70, 71</sup>.

**Revised Translations and Descriptive Studies:** Analyzing revised translations can highlight the shifts in interpretation over time or across different cultural contexts. Descriptive translation studies, particularly when using a corpus linguistic approach, can pinpoint these shifts, offering insights into how cultural contexts influence translation choices<sup>72</sup>.

**The Distinctions of Qur'ānic Verses:** The Qur'ān contains verses that carry specific historical, societal, or cultural references. Recognizing these references and understanding their significance within the broader message of the verse is paramount. Translators, equipped with a profound understanding of both the source and target cultures, are better positioned to render translations that are both accurate and relatable.

### 3 DELVING INTO TRANSLATIONAL NUANCES OF QUR'ĀNIC VERSES

#### 3.1 'ADL' IN FOCUS: ANALYZING SURĀ AN-NISĀ' VERSE 58 IN MARMADUKE PICKTHALL'S RENDITION

Marmaduke Pickthall's translation of verse 58 from Sura An-Nisā' reads:

"Lo! Allah commandeth you that ye restore deposits to their owners, and, if ye judge between mankind, that ye judge justly. Lo! comely is this which Allah *admonisheth* you. Lo! Allah is ever Hearer, Seer."<sup>73</sup>

Pickthall's methodology leans towards a literal and formalistic rendition<sup>74</sup>. He intricately weaves phrases like "return of deposits to their owners" that underscore pivotal notions of

<sup>67</sup> Christiane Nord. *Text Analysis in Translation: Theory, Methodology, and Didactic Application*. Rodopi, 2005.

<sup>68</sup> Wolfgang Lörcher, "A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Translation Processes," *Meta* 41, no. 1: 26-32, 1996.

<sup>69</sup> Wolfgang Lörcher, "A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Translation Processes." *Meta*. 41(1), 26-32, 1996.

<sup>70</sup> Stuart Campbell. "Choice Network Analysis in Translation Research." In *Intercultural Faultlines: Research Models in Translation Studies I*. 29-42, 2017.

<sup>71</sup> Helene Chassé, Sandrine Boulben, Valérie Costache, Pierre Cormier, Jonathan Morales. "Analysis of Translation Using Polysome Profiling." *Nucleic Acids Research*. 45(3), e15, 2017.

<sup>72</sup> Jeremy Munday. "A Computer-assisted Approach to the Analysis of Translation Shifts." *Meta*. 43(4), 542-556, 1998.

<sup>73</sup> Marmaduke Pickthall. *The Qur'ān: The First American Version*. Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1988.

<sup>74</sup> T. Mohseni. "The Comparative Study of Qur'an Interpretation & Classic Hermeneutics." *International Journal of Business and Social Science*. 5(9), 2014.

social justice. The antiquated lexicon, evident in terms such as "Lo!", "comely", and "admonisheth", reflects the linguistic nuances of early 20th-century British English. His translation accentuates the quintessential Islamic principles of justice and equity, especially in matters of possessions and judgments.

### 3.2 UNRAVELING MUHAMMAD ABDEL HALEEM'S TRANSLATION

Muhammad Abdel Haleem's interpretation of Sura An-Nisā' (4:58) is:

"God commands you [people] to return things entrusted to you to their rightful owners, and when you judge between people, to judge with fairness. These are the best teachings given to you by God. He hears and sees everything you do."<sup>75</sup>

Abdel Haleem artfully navigates between a literal and functionalist approach<sup>76</sup>. Central tenets of Islamic justice, encapsulated in phrases like "return things entrusted to you to their rightful owners" and "judge with fairness", vividly emerge in his rendition.

### 3.3 DECIPHERING T.B. IRVING'S ARTICULATION

T.B. Irving's rendition of Sura An-Nisā' (4:58) posits:

"God commands you to render back your trusts to those whom they are due; and whenever you judge between people, to judge with justice. Excellent is the instruction which God gives you, for God is all-Hearing, all-Seeing."<sup>77</sup>

Irving's translation is imbued with a dynamic and functional essence<sup>78</sup>. The phrase "render back your trusts to those whom they are due" underscores the core Islamic doctrine of social justice. His translation emphatically champions the values of trustworthiness, impartiality, and justice.

Comparative analyses of these translations afford insights into the interplay between cultural milieu, translational approaches, and the resultant understanding of Islamic social justice. While diverse in style, each rendition universally underscores trust, fairness, and justice as the bedrock of Islamic teachings on social justice.

### 3.4 TRANSLATORS: THE ARCHITECTS OF INTERPRETATIONS ON ISLAMIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

The pivotal role of translators in crafting interpretations of social justice, as elucidated by the Qur'ān, cannot be understated. Their choices — spanning style, cultural resonance, and lexicon — dramatically steer readers' comprehension and appropriation of the Qur'ānic tenets on justice. A translator's cultural and linguistic lineage, coupled with their translational methodology — be it literal, functional, or hybrid — profoundly influences the tenor of social justice communicated through the Qur'ānic verses.

<sup>75</sup> M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'ān: A New Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>76</sup> A. Ghazali and R. Mustaffa. "Translating the Meaning of the Qur'ān: Traditional vs. Modernist Approaches." *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*. 13(2), 191-197, 2013.

<sup>77</sup> T. B. Irving, *The Qur'ān: The First American Version; Translated and Commentary* (Brattleboro, Vermont, United States: Amana Books, 1985).

<sup>78</sup> A. Ghazali and R. Mustaffa. "Translating the Meaning of the Qur'ān: Traditional vs. Modernist Approaches." *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*. 13(2), 191-197, 2013.

Each translator brings to the fore a distinctive lens to the translation process, invariably shaping the manner in which readers perceive social justice. As expounded by Mohseni (2014), Pickthall's literalistic approach magnifies core ethical principles<sup>79</sup>. In contrast, Abdel Haleem's balanced rendition and Irving's functionalist methodology make the Qur'ānic teachings on justice more attuned to contemporary sensibilities, emphasizing the practical essence of these directives<sup>80</sup>.

Furthermore, a translator's cultural milieu deeply informs their rendition of justice in the Qur'ān, leading to accentuations that mirror varied perspectives on justice within the Islamic framework.

### 2.1.1 Translations of 'Adl': A Comparative Overview

Translator	Wording for 'Adl'	Cultural Context	Target Audience	Year	Reference
Original Arabic	عدل	-	-	-	-
Marmaduke Pickthall	justly	British Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	1988	(Pickthall, 1988)
Yusuf Ali	justice	Indian Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	1934	(Ali, 1934)
Saheeh International	with justice	American Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	1997	(Saheeh International, 1997)
Al-Hilali & Khan	with justice and equality	Arab Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	1996	(Al-Hilali & Khan, 1996)
Dr. Ghali	equitable	Egyptian Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	2003	(Ghali, 2003)

<sup>79</sup> Mohseni, T. "The Comparative Study of Qur'an Interpretation & Classic Hermeneuticslines: Research Models in Translation Studies I. 2017, pp. 29-42.

<sup>80</sup> A. Ghazali and R. Mustafa. "Translating the Meaning of the Qur'ān: Traditional vs. Modernist Approaches." Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research. 13(2), 191-197, 2013.

Abdul Haleem	with fairness	Egyptian-British Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	2005	(Haleem, 2004)
Dr. Mustafa Khattab	fairly	Egyptian-Canadian Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	2016	(Khattab, 2016)
Rashid Maash	justice	Syrian Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	2007	(Maash, 2007)
Faridul Haque	justice	Indian Muslim	English-speaking Muslims	2010	(Haque, 2010)

A perusal of the table accentuates the myriad ways the verse #58 in Sura An-Nisā' has been rendered, all underscoring the primacy of social justice in Islam. Despite linguistic variations in conveying "Adl," the essence of the original Arabic message remains intact. The diverse linguistic choices mirror the distinct cultural backdrops of the translators and their intended audiences. This study underscores the salience of cultural contexts in translating Qur'ānic verses on social justice, highlighting the meticulous endeavors of translators to retain the sanctity of the original message.

#### 4 'ADL (JUSTICE): A CENTRAL TENET IN ISLAM

The term "Adl" (عدل), emanating from Arabic linguistic roots, is the cornerstone of understanding the ethos of justice within the Islamic worldview. Etymologically derived from the trilateral root "ع د ل," the word encompasses a vast spectrum of meanings, signifying balance, fairness, and equality.

Prominent Arabic lexicons provide a nuanced insight into this term. "*Lisan al- 'Arab*" elucidates 'Adl as embodying principles of balance, fairness, and justice<sup>81</sup>. Similarly, "*Taj al-Arus*" represents 'Adl as the antithesis to injustice (ظلم), echoing the Qur'ānic emphasis on just allocation of rights and resources<sup>82</sup>. Another seminal work, "*Al-Mu'jam al-Waseet*", frames 'Adl as the hallmark of impartiality and fairness, underscoring its pivotal role within Islamic teachings<sup>83</sup>.

Beyond its lexical realm, 'Adl occupies a paramount position within Islamic jurisprudence, morality, and ethos. The Qur'ān reverberates with calls for justice, encompassing diverse facets of human existence, from interpersonal relationships to governance<sup>84</sup>. Al-Ghazali

<sup>81</sup> Ibn Manzur, "*Lisan al-Arab*" (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1290)

<sup>82</sup> Al-Zabidi, "*Taj al-Arus*" (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, 1791).

<sup>83</sup> Al-Sabuni, "*Al-Mu'jam al-Waseet*" (Cairo: Egyptian General Book Organization, 1960).

<sup>84</sup> Al-Qur'ān, Surah An-Nisā' 4:58, Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:8, Surah An-Nahl 16:90.

(1962) and Ibn Khaldun (1377) have accentuated the indispensability of 'Adl as the bedrock of a harmonious society, influencing governance, social cohesion, and communal well-being<sup>85</sup>.

Within the Qur'ān, the term 'Adl and its derivatives resonate deeply, underscoring justice's paramountcy. Even if 'Adl isn't explicitly mentioned, its cognates and associated terms (like *gist*, *mizan*, and *muqsitun*) reverberate throughout the Qur'ān, spotlighting the importance of justice in diverse scenarios.

For instance:

- Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:8) implores believers to uphold justice even in the face of animosity<sup>86</sup>.
- Surah Al-Hadid (57:25) underscores justice as a fundamental principle for societal equilibrium<sup>87</sup>.
- Surah Yunus (10:47) emphasizes that judgment between people will be based on justice, ensuring no wrong is committed<sup>88</sup>.
- Surah Az-Zumar (39:69) reiterates the principle that justice will be the foundation of all judgment<sup>89</sup>.
- Surah Al-Anbiya (21:47) metaphorically invokes scales of justice, emphasizing even the minutest deeds won't escape reckoning<sup>90</sup>.

These verses exemplify the Qur'ān's recurrent emphasis on 'Adl, encapsulating facets of personal ethics, societal conduct, and governance. Within the Islamic tapestry, 'Adl operates as a lighthouse guiding myriad aspects of Muslim life, from individual choices to collective decisions, anchoring them in principles of fairness, equity, and justice.

#### 4.1 FINAL REFLECTIONS ON THE TRANSLATION OF 'ADL

The task of translating 'Adl from Arabic into English or any other tongue is intricate, necessitating a profound comprehension of both the originating and receiving cultures. The designation 'Adl encapsulates manifold significations deeply entrenched in Islamic doctrines, Arabic linguistic nuances, and cultural conventions. Although no translation can encapsulate the full depth and breadth of 'Adl's richness, the judicious application of the discussed methodologies ensures an efficacious conveyance of its core essence.

It is essential for translators to recognize the profound weight of their duties. The decisions they make in interpretation can significantly influence readers' understanding and perspectives on essential Islamic doctrines. As a result, it becomes imperative for them to approach their work with meticulous care, deep respect, and informed judgment.

In the realm of translation, ensuring precision and cultural resonance is paramount, especially when addressing the intricate nuances of Islamic tenets and Qur'ānic teachings. Thus, by employing meticulous translation techniques and demonstrating a steadfast

<sup>85</sup> Al-Ghazali, "Ihya Ulum al-Din" (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1962); Ibn Khaldun, "Al-Muqaddimah" (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1377).

<sup>86</sup> Al-Qur'ān, Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:8.

<sup>87</sup> Al-Qur'ān, Surah Al-Hadid 57:25.

<sup>88</sup> Al-Qur'ān, Surah Yunus 10:47.

<sup>89</sup> Al-Qur'ān, Surah Az-Zumar 39:69.

<sup>90</sup> Al-Qur'ān, Surah Al-Anbiya 21:47.



dedication to capturing the essence of 'Adl, linguists can successfully traverse linguistic and cultural divides. This, in turn, fosters a profound appreciation of Qur'anic directives on justice and the foundational doctrines of Islam among diverse readerships.

#### 4.2 DIVERSE INTERPRETATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON 'ADL

The concept of 'Adl in Sura An-Nisā', Verse 58, as translated by Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving, reflects diverse interpretations shaped by cultural and linguistic contexts. Imam al-Ghazālī's multifaceted definition of 'Adl, ranging from "giving everybody what is their due" to "being free of excess and deficiency"<sup>91</sup>, enriches the understanding of these translations. Pickthall's literal approach, emphasizing judicial fairness, resonates with Al-Ghazālī's emphasis on balance and propriety in justice<sup>92</sup>. Abdel Haleem's balanced translation aligns with Al-Ghazālī's view of 'Adl as situational equity, while Irving's rendition, focusing on practical implications, echoes the broader ethical dimensions of 'Adl as outlined by Al-Ghazālī.<sup>93</sup>

Additionally, classical terminological dictionaries provide a contextual backdrop for these translations. Raghīb al-Isfahānī, al-Jurjānī, and Abu'l-Baqa's interpretations of 'Adl, ranging from "equal distribution" to "balance between excess and deficiency"<sup>94</sup>, support the varied nuances in the translations by Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and Irving. This alignment of classical Islamic perspectives with contemporary translations highlights the enduring relevance and complexity of 'Adl in the Islamic intellectual tradition.

A comprehensive examination of 'Adl, particularly within the context of Sura An-Nisā', verse 58, as depicted by Pickthall, Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving, illuminates the multifaceted Islamic portrayal of justice.

**Pickthall's Analysis:** The influence of Pickthall's British roots and the linguistic characteristics of early 20th-century English are evident in his choice of words and structural formulations. His utilization of the word "justly" mirrors the direct Arabic denotation. In his translation, there's a pronounced focus on the essentiality of justice, especially in the context of judicial proceedings.

**Abdel Haleem's Analysis:** Abdel Haleem's translation seamlessly blends fidelity to the original text with accessibility for contemporary readers. Opting for the word "justice," he emphasizes principles of fairness and even-handedness. His work serves as a bridge between traditional and modern elucidations of 'Adl, making the verse more accessible to today's English-speaking followers of Islam.

**T.B. Irving's Analysis:** Irving's American background and his modern approach are reflected in his choice to interpret 'Adl as "fairly." Such a choice might find deeper resonance with a contemporary audience, emphasizing the practical implications of 'Adl. By choosing

<sup>91</sup> Al-Ghazālī. *Ihyâu Ulûmi'd-Dîn*. Translated by A. Serdaroğlu. Istanbul: Bedir Yayinevi. Beirut: Dâr al-Ma'rifa. Vol. III, pp. 181, 368, IV, p. 103, 1975.

<sup>92</sup> Orman, S. Al-Ghazālī on Justice and Social Justice. *Turkish Journal of Islamic Economics*, 5(2), 1-66.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* Vol. III, 2018, p. 369.

<sup>94</sup> Isfahani (1431 H). *Al-Mufradât.*, p. 551; and Jurjani. (1983). *Al-Ta'rîfât*. Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, p. 147)

"fairly," Irving underscores the idea of balance, implying that justice is not just about adherence to the law but also about fostering equity.

Despite their distinct approaches, all three translations emphasize the Qur'ānic mandate to uphold justice. Their nuanced differences highlight:

**Literal versus Contextual Translation:** Pickthall's literal approach contrasts with Irving's contextual methodology, with Abdel Haleem seamlessly integrating both. This distinction outlines the range of possible translation techniques, each with its inherent merits and limitations.

**Impact of Cultural Backdrop:** Each translator's cultural context leaves an unmistakable mark. The British linguistic tradition of Pickthall, Abdel Haleem's blend of Egyptian and British cultural experiences, and Irving's American perspective play pivotal roles in shaping their respective renditions of 'Adl.

**Universal Significance:** While Pickthall's translation may appeal to those seeking a more traditional interpretation, Abdel Haleem and Irving's versions emphasize the enduring applicability of Qur'ānic directives, highlighting the perpetual significance of its teachings.

## 5 CONCLUSION

This research endeavored to decipher the influence of a translator's cultural milieu on the rendition of Qur'ānic verses, particularly focusing on Surah An-Nisā', verse 58. The interpretative frameworks provided by Marmaduke Pickthall, Muhammad Abdel Haleem, and T.B. Irving were meticulously scrutinized.

Key insights emerging from this scholarly exploration are as follows:

- The cultural underpinnings profoundly shape a translator's methodological choices, linguistic preferences, and articulation of the tenets of social justice.
- Pickthall's approach demonstrates a proclivity towards a direct and orthodox translation, laying emphasis on integrity, equitability, and the essence of justice.
- Abdel Haleem adopts an equilibrium, preserving the sanctity of the original text while ensuring its contextual relevance for today's readers.
- T.B. Irving's adaptation foregrounds the pragmatic dimensions of Islamic social justice, tailored to resonate with contemporary paradigms.
- The socio-cultural antecedents of the translators play a decisive role in their interpretation and delineation of key Islamic concepts of justice, leading to diverse but interconnected interpretations.

These revelations accentuate the pivotal role of cultural sensitivities in translational endeavors. They also underscore the spectrum of methodologies translators deploy, enriching our comprehension of the challenges and intricacies inherent in translating principles of social justice. It becomes imperative, thus, for translators to remain astutely aware of their cultural predispositions to ensure their translations echo authentically within the Islamic ambit.

### 5.1 CALL TO ACTION AND FUTURE RESEARCH:

- Expanding research to include more verses and translations for a comprehensive understanding.
- Investigating the influence of diverse cultural perspectives on the interpretation of Islamic teachings, especially in a global and multicultural context.

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