

‘Pickthall’s translation of the Qur’an: an analysis of some selected verses on women’

Pickthall’s translation of the Quran is regarded as one of the most widely used translations in the Western world, specifically in the UK. Since its publication in 1930, it has been reprinted many times. Notably in this context, Pickthall was one of a few Quran translators who combined both Muslim and Christian backgrounds. Nevertheless, there has been no major study of this translation to explain its main features. This study is an attempt to explore/investigate his translation through an analysis of his views on some of the verses related to women, To achieve this, I will select a number of verses that are perceived to set out the general Islamic rules regarding the matters in question and look at Pickthall’s choice of words in the translation of those verses. I will compare Pickthall’s work with similarly popular translations such as Asad and Yusuf Ali, in order to determine which cultural and theological positions this choice of words reveals and “what that language is used for”. I will also look at how, through translation, he expressed certain religious and cultural convictions. In doing so, I hope to place Pickthall’s translation more accurately in its context as a possible product of both Christian and Muslim influences.

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