

The Discourse on the Praxis and Pragmatics of the Qur'an Retranslations in Turkish

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Abstract

Retranslations of the Qur'an constitute an intriguing site of research with particular premises governing their production, dissemination and/or reception in Turkey. Its inherently religion-oriented context is accompanied by discussions on the sacred status of the source text, arguments on its untranslatability, translatorial human agency vis-à-vis the Holy creator, acknowledged Arabicity of the source text, etc. In this regard, each new translation of the Qur'an in Turkish is released with a motivation to justify its necessity amid abundant retranslations available in the target repertoire. Various approaches towards the conceptualization and instrumentalization of these Qur'anic translations create a meta-narrative on its own right. This study aims at exploring this particular discourse on the retranslations of the Qur'an with a bi-faceted study design composed of quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative analysis focuses on the numeric changes of Qur'anic retranslations in respective decades, whereas the qualitative analysis concentrates on the statements of the translatorial agents on the motives behind their translational production. By shedding light on the discursive narrative postulated upon these retranslations, it is claimed that social, political, cultural and financial concerns have prevalently governed the reproductions of this canonical work in Turkey.

Keywords: Qur'an translation, religious-text translation, retranslation, discourse analysis.