THE CONCEPTS OF TRANSLATION FUNCTION AND QUALITY: THE LATIN TRANSLATION OF THE QUR'ĀN

LOS CONCEPTOS DE FUNCIÓN Y CALIDAD EN LA TRADUCCIÓN: CONSIDERACIONES EN TORNO A LAS TRADUCCIONES LATINAS DEL CORÁN

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Abstract

The concepts of translation function (*skopos*, Reiss & Vermeer 1991: 95-104) and quality have been the subject of substantial discussion within the area of Translation Studies. They are, in our opinion, two closely bound concepts, to the extent that the quality of a translated text can only be fully assessed when the *skopos* for which it was created is known. In this respect, despite the frequent connection of translation with the purpose of making an original discourse (ST) available to speakers of a different language (TL), several authors over the centuries have acknowledged the concurrence of other equally common aims of translation. The main objective of this paper is to discuss some aspects of the different Latin versions of the Qur'ān prepared between the years 1143 and 1680, reviewing their intended function(s), how they circulated across Christian Europe and how their quality was perceived by their initiators, potential readers and scholars within the historical framework of Christian-Islamic confrontation.

Keywords: Translation Quality. Translation Function. Christian-Islamic Confrontation. Qur'ān.

Resumen

Los conceptos de función (*skopos*, Reiss & Vermeer 1991: 95-104) y calidad de la traducción han generado innumerables trabajos dentro del ámbito de los Estudios de la Traducción. Se trata en nuestra opinión de dos conceptos indisociables, en la medida en que solo podemos valorar la calidad de una traducción cuando conocemos la función con la que esta fue concebida. En este sentido, pese a la asociación habitual de la traducción con el deseo de dar a conocer a los hablantes de una lengua (LM) un discurso inicialmente generado en otra (LO), lo cierto es que numerosos autores a lo largo del tiempo han reconocido la existencia de otras funciones igualmente frecuentes de la traducción. Este trabajo pretende revisar algunos aspectos de las traducciones del Corán al latín realizadas entre 1143 y 1680, analizando su(s) función(es), su difusión y la percepción de su calidad dentro del marco histórico de las relaciones-enfrentamientos entre cristianismo e islam.

Palabras clave: Calidad de la traducción. Función de la traducción. Confrontación islámico-cristiana. Corán.

1. Introduction

The translation of religious texts has been addressed by several experts from different disciplines including Philology, History and Theology as well as Translation Studies. Well known within the latter are, among others, the studies by Nida on the translation of the Bible (1964, 1969) and Delisle and Woodsworth's analysis of the role of translators of religious texts (2012). Less known, although of equal interest, are other studies prior to the emergence of Translation Studies as an academic discipline, such as those carried out by some missionaries during the colonisation of America or Asia, for example, by Fray Andrés López in the seventeenth century (Sueiro 2002: 125-162).

Nida (1964) uses examples from Bible translation to illustrate the concept of dynamic equivalence, according to which content-based translation should prevail over formal correspondence. A recreation of the text in the target language is therefore encouraged, with a search for the closest natural equivalent that permits the readers to assimilate the content within their own culture. Fray Andrés López did the same in the 17th century, advocating a translation ad sensum of the sacred texts, as St. Jerome had done before:

> Comenzando pues por la difinicion de traducion digo que es conversión de las palabras de un ydioma en otro en quanto al sentido guardando la propiedad del ydioma en que se traduce. Esta definicion se saca del comun sentir de los sabios acerca de este punto y en especial de lo que dize San Geronimo en muchos lugares [...] y assi arrimado ala autoridad de tan gran Maestro digo que todo el negocio de traducir consiste en dos puntos. El uno es en que se traduzca el sentido y el otro el que se traduzca según la propiedad, modo y fras de la lengua en que se traduce. (fol. 124 v and rv-fol. 125v: paragraph 123, *apud* Sueiro 2002: 140)

This way of approaching the translation of Christian religious texts is similar to the approach adopted in the translation of texts of other faiths, such as Islam, which rejects literal translation due to the very essence of the source text. As Abdul-Raof (2005: 162) points out, there is a belief that the Qurʾān is an untranslatable text because its meaning is intrinsically linked to the language in which it was written. Similarly, Von Denffer (1983: 145) states that since the Qurʾān, as the Word of Allah, has been revealed in the Arabic language, any translation of it will not be "the word of Allah". Such arguments lead these authors to reject the literal translation of the Qurʾān and to promote "a pragmatic translation of the surface meanings of the Qurʾān and the provision of linguistic and rhetorical patterns suitable for the target language" (Abdul-Raof 2001: 2). The aim of this communicative translation would not be to replace the source text but to permit the target readers' access to a "crude approximation" of it. As such, it should not be called "a translation of the Qurʾān" but "a translation of the meanings of the Qurʾān" (Abdul-Raof 2001: 13).

Now, in the above examples, the starting point is an approach to translation that is based on the objective of spreading the message of the source text. And although one of the relevant purposes in translating a text is indeed to provide access to it to the greatest number of people who cannot read it in the source language, this does not seem to have been the motivation of the first translators of the Qurʾān into Latin, nor of their initiators (Nord 1988). Such a translation could not have been intended for the Christian people, because reading it, in the unlikely event that they had any knowledge of Latin, would have been poisonous for the soul. Therefore, the translators of the Qurʾān must have had other purposes in mind. Several authors (Daniel 1960; Martínez Gázquez 2003a; Burman 2007; Elmarsafy 2009) agree on two

main purposes: on the one hand, it seems evident that the translations were generally intended to provide Christian apologists with a tool with which to fight the spread of Islam in the West. For such purpose they included abundant notes and highlighted -sometimes a posteriori- those parts of the Islamic sacred text that were most likely to shock Christian readers (Burman 2007: 62). On the other hand, the existence of bilingual and multilingual editions, as well as the characteristics of some of them, also point to a possible philological interest.

In this context, this paper will review the different translations of the Qur'ān into Latin between 1143 and 1680, and analyse their functions within the historical framework of the relations and confrontations between Christianity and Islam. Moreover, it will examine different opinions regarding the quality of said translations, expressed both by their initiators and readers from the period in which the translations were created, and also by contemporary researchers. For this purpose, we will use the modern editions produced as part of the *Islamolatina* research project[1], as well as the abundant literature devoted to the study of Latin translations of the Qur'ān.

The study will begin with a brief overview of the period in which the translations were carried out, followed by a detailed review of what we know about the objectives with which they were made and the strategies applied by the different translators. Finally, based on this double review, we will discuss the possible connections between the quality of the translations, as perceived both by medieval and early modern readers and by contemporary researchers, and their circulation and reception throughout the review period. As a reference for interested readers, the paper will close with a brief appendix presenting the first lines of each of the reviewed translations.

2. General Overview

To understand the reasons behind the first translations of the Qur'ān into Latin, as well as the strategies used by their different translators, we must go

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1. The *Islamolatina* research project, led by prof. José Martínez Gázquez, of the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*, has widely contributed to the study and circulation of those translations, with the edition of the versions of Mark of Toledo, Egidio da Viberbo, Cyril Lúcaris, Germanus of Silesia and most recently, that of Robert of Ketton.

back to the beginning of the 12th century. First, we need to refer to the socio-linguistic context of the time. Latin had long disappeared as a living language among the people, following the differentiation of the various vernacular dialects that eventually led to the emergence of the Romance languages. However, Latin remained as a scientific language until the 19th century and as a religious language until well into the 20th century, which explains the abundance of Latin texts produced over these centuries. Nevertheless, while the Renaissance saw a revival of classical Latin, favoured by an emergence of interest in philosophical studies, the written Latin used in the Middle Ages was a variety adapted to enable the expression of the abstract and nuanced concepts of the philosophy of the time, known as scholastic or curial Latin.

On the other hand, although the Arabs had begun to enter Europe, mainly the Iberian Peninsula across the Mediterranean, in the 8th century, knowledge of the Arabic language was scarce, which prevented access to Islamic religion at its source in search of arguments for its refutation. This was an important issue, because the religious conflict was escalating in Christian Europe, particularly in Muslim Spain, which had been occupied by the Arabs for many centuries. It is undeniable that there was a mutually-beneficial transfer of knowledge in both directions. There was an impetus in the study of Arabic sciences that brought new knowledge; even Islamic texts hitherto despised by the Christians were studied. However, the advance of the Islamic faith among Christians was to be rooted out and this required a war-like effort.

It is within this context that Peter the Venerable (1092-1156, Cluny), Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of Cluny, argues that "sicut contra alias haereses, ita et contra hanc pestem Christianum armarium habere deceret" (Bibliander 1543). It was indeed with that purpose in mind that the abbot conceived the idea of compiling a corpus of texts, some translated from Arabic into Latin and some written directly in Latin, aimed at refuting Islam and providing Christians with dialectic weapons with which to defeat the Muslim enemy. One of these texts was a Latin translation of the Qur'ān. The abbot himself wrote two small pamphlets, *Summa totius heresis Saracenorum* and *Liber contra sectam siue heresim Sara-cenorum*, the titles of which leave no doubt as to their anti-Semitic orientation.

The entire corpus sponsored by Peter the Venerable is known as *Collectio Toletana* or *Corpus Toletanum*, although it is also referred to as *Corpus Islamolatinum*, as it was not compiled in Toledo but in Tarazona (Martínez Gázquez 2011). The oldest manuscript of the anthology is a codex from the mid-12th century, preserved in the National Library of France (MS Arsenal 1162). Bishko (1956) notes that the translation of the Qur'ān was entrusted to a group of scholars following their travel to the Iberian Peninsula in 1142, and that most of the translation was conducted by Robert of Ketton, an English priest, astronomer and translator of scientific works who spent most of his professional life in the Iberian Peninsula, specifically in Pamplona and Tudela, (Martínez Gázquez 2015a). However, although the translation is officially attributed to Robert of Ketton, the group of scholars included other translators such as Peter of Toledo and Peter of Poitiers, and there are references to a Muslim with knowledge of the Qur'ān and the Arabic language who might have helped him as well. Peter the Venerable also commissioned Robert of Ketton to write a *Chronica mendosa et ridiculosa Saracenorum, de uita Machumetis et succesorum eius*, a title which was clear as to the function that the work should have.

This first translation of the Qur'ān into Latin was completed in July 1143, and relatively soon thereafter, in 1210, a second translation was available. It is attributed to Mark of Toledo and its circulation was not as wide as that of Robert of Ketton. More than two centuries had to pass before John of Segovia, in the middle of the 15th century, undertook the task of producing his own version, of which only the preface has survived (Martínez Gázquez 2003a: 501-502). The work of Flavius Mithridates (1480) is also incomplete although, in this case, researchers claim that the translation was probably never completed. By the 16th century, in 1518, a new version was created, initiated by Cardinal Egidio da Viterbo and attributed to Ioannes Gabriel Terrolensis. As we shall discuss in detail below, these last three works are characterised by their philological interest, which points to a possible change of direction in the objectives sought by the initiators of the translations. With regard to this possible change, it should be remembered that although the three translations were written at a time when the territorial reconquest was practically (the first two) or completely (the last one) over, the Christian crusade against Islam would still be active for centuries.

In 1543, the translation produced four centuries earlier by Robert of Ketton, which until then had been copied and compiled in several manuscripts, was published in print for the first time. This publication lent the translation a sense of officiality that contributed to its wider circulation. The text of Robert of Ketton was included as part of a two-volume corpus compiled in Basel by the Swiss orientalist Theodore Bibliander, and although the Qur'ān occupies a large part of the corpus, it is preceded and followed by a good number of works, which permits us to argue that Bibliander's purpose was not just publishing a Latin translation of the Qur'ān, but that it was part of a new anti-Islamic weapon, along with many other studies and works. It is not known exactly which manuscript the publisher used, although it might have been one copied by Cardinal John of Ragusa, now lost (Alverny 1948: 86). There is one manuscript that has been little studied to date and that is of interest to know the context in which the compilation was published. It is the Basel manuscript (Universitätsbibliothek A XIII 25), dated 1542, from the library of Johannes Oporinus, which is a sort of printing template for several of the works compiled in volumes I and II of the corpus. Based on this manuscript, we know that the works in the first volume, in addition to the translation of Robert of Ketton and his *Chronica mendosa et ridiculosa*, included among others an *apologia* by Bibliander himself (*Apologia pro editione Alcorani, ad Reuerendissimos patres ac dominos Episcopos & doctores Ecclesiarum Christi, Theodoro Bibliandro authore*) and two texts by Martin Luther (*D. MARTINI Lutheri ad Alcorani lectorem Praemonitio* and *Martini Luteri doctoris theologiae et ecclesiastis ecclesiae Vuittenbergensis, in Alcoranum praefatio*).

In his first work, Luther mainly focuses on the evils of the Islamic faith, which he compares with the biblical plagues of Egypt, although at the end he introduces this paragraph: "Ecclesia iam multis seculis partim Mahometica peste, partim idolatria pontificis Romani uastata et attenuata est" (Luther, in Bibliander 1493). In the second, the author refers to the importance of having access to the contents of the Qur'ān:

> Quare doctis prodest legere scripta hostium, ut acrius ea refutare, concutere et evertere, ut sanare aliquos, aut certe nostros firmioribus argumentis communiter possint. (Luther, in Bibliander 1493)

It should be noted that both of Luther's works were suppressed from a second edition of the Bibliander corpus that was published only a few years later, in 1550. It is not known what criterion the publisher followed in suppressing them since, although Luther had been excommunicated many years before the first edition, he himself had been the architect and a collaborator of this compilation of texts. While his reference to the *idolatria pontificis Romani* is sufficiently explicit to merit censure, the argument that this may have been the cause of the suppression does not seem very solid, since Luther's works were replaced in the second edition by a *Philippi Melanchthonis praemonitio ad lectorem*, and Cardinal Melanchthon shared Luther's ideas against the Pope.

In 1544, between the two editions of the Bibliander compilation, Guillaume Postel began a Qur'ān translation that he did not complete, although parts of it have survived. In fact, the Bibliander editions include Postel's version of the Azoara prima after Robert of Ketton's own translation and that of a third unidentified translator. Postel's work was followed by the version attributed to Cyril Lúcaris, started in 1572 and completed at an unknown date, although before 1638, the year of Lúcaris' death. In the second half of the 17th century, in 1670, Germanus of Silesia had finished his translation and only ten years later, in 1680, Ludovico Marracci completed his. Marracci's translation closes the series of translations of the Qur'ān into Latin, which had begun in the Iberian Peninsula but ended with translators of Italian origin or residence as, although Germanus of Silesia wrote his translation in El Escorial, he had spent most of his life in Italy.

Before addressing each of the different versions in the following sections, it is worth outlining the arguments of de la Cruz (2003) regarding the translatability of the work under study, as it may help us understand the strategies adopted by most of the translators, as well as the criticisms against Robert of Ketton's translation despite its wide circulation:

> El Corán, revelado en lengua árabe, es intraducible. El estilo mismo del Corán, inimitable, es una prueba del acto de la revelación. Cualquier traducción a otra lengua, es considerada un comentario, y no el texto mismo de la revelación. La primera traducción del Corán, que en absoluto cuenta con estas premisas como criterio de trabajo, convirtió al Corán en una abrupta fuente de argumentos que había que refutar. (de la Cruz 2003: 21)

In a similar line, Abdul-Raof (2005: 162) argues that the Latin translations of the Qur'ān could never be considered a replacement of the original Qur'ān as they are, according to Muslim intellectuals, what Bassnett (1988: 25) calls "a betrayal, an inferior copy of a prioritised original".

3. Early Translations: The Qur'ān as a weapon against Islam

3.1. *Machumetis Saracenorum Principis, Eiusque Successorum Vitae Ac Doctrina, Ipseque Alcoran, by Robert of Ketton*

> **The Lives and Teachings of Muhammed, prince of the Saracens, and his successors, and the Qur'ān** by which the Hagarenes, the Turks and other peoples who oppose Christ are governed as an authentic codex of divine laws, of which the Lord Abbot Peter of Cluny commissioned the translation from the Arabic language into Latin by some very learned men for the defence of the Christian faith and of the Holy Mother Church [our translation]. (Bibliander 1543, 1550)

This is the title under which the first printed edition of Robert of Ketton's Latin edition of the Qur'ān was published. It is important to note that this is what could be more appropriately called an annotated paraphrase of the Arabic text, rather than a literal translation[2]. Robert of Ketton reworks the text, paraphrasing it where he considers necessary, and relying on the *tafsīr*, the exegetics used by the Arabs for the explanation and interpretation of the Qur'ān. The distinguishing feature of Robert of Ketton's translation when compared to later versions is that the translator did not include elements that permitted the reader to differentiate between the Qur'ānic text and that which had been taken from exegetical sources. Subsequently, readers tended to regard the entirety of the document as a direct translation of the sacred work (Burman 2002: 64).

Although not an uncommon practice in medieval times (Copeland 1991: 174-77), this resulted in the translation being viewed as an incorrect version of the source text, manipulated to fulfil the wish of its initiator to use it as a tool to highlight the heresies of the Islamic religion. In fact, several

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2. As can be seen in the Annex, the beginning of the Qur'ān in the discussed editions is *In nomine Dei miseratoris, misericordis*, except in the version by Postel, who includes a *pii*, while Robert of Ketton's translation differs considerably from all of them.

later translators of the work into Latin criticised Robert of Ketton's work in this respect. John of Segovia, for instance, attacks this first translation very harshly and thus justifies the need for his own version, which would be more reliable, more scientific and more in line with the Arabic text (Martínez Gázquez 2003b). Egidio da Viterbo (1518), the initiator of another of the subsequent versions, also justifies his commission on the grounds that he does not find in Robert of Ketton's translation a single line that conforms to the text. Germanus of Silesia claims, as we shall discuss in a later section, that others (without specifying who) have "done it wrong". Finally, Ludovico Marracci, the author of the last Latin translation of the Qur'ān, says that he considers Robert of Ketton's translation to be an unfaithful paraphrase.

The translation has also been the subject of contemporary criticism. Martínez Gázquez (2003a) states the following, with respect to how the translation fits better to a reading from a Christian perspective:

> La traducción latina de Robert de Ketton presenta discrepancias en puntos controvertidos de la doctrina islámica y adopta diversas soluciones que se apartan del contenido y la forma original del Corán. La división de las suras en el texto latino no se corresponde con la división aceptada en el texto original y les da títulos diferentes, las más de las veces sesgados, sacados de los prejuicios ante la doctrina y las costumbres islámicas, y quiere finalmente la descalificación de Mahoma y su doctrina. La acompaña un corpus importante de glosas que aclaran y ayudan al lector para una mejor y más ajustada lectura del Corán desde un punto de vista cristiano. (Martínez Gázquez 2003a: 493)[3]

De la Cruz (2003) is even more critical, when examining the reasons for the success of Robert of Ketton's version over later translations:

> Si bien es cierto que los conocimientos sobre el "otro" fueron profundizándose con el tiempo, el éxito de la traducción de Ketton, que contiene tantos prejuicios contra el Islam, demuestra que el discurso antimusulmán se fundamentaba en muchas ocasiones en una información elaborada, cuanto menos, sin rigor, por no decir en una información destinada a la destrucción del enemigo musulmán. (de la Cruz 2003: 27)

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3. The glosses were edited by Martínez Gázquez in 2015.

However, not all contemporary assessments of the quality of Robert of Ketton's translation are negative. While acknowledging the presence of errors in passages that the translator has misunderstood and mistranslated, Burman (1998: 703-732) finds that the translator's paraphrases were largely based on the *tafsīr*, so that his Latin Qur'ān would not be "just a translation of that holy book but, to a substantial degree, a translation of that book as it was understood by Muslim commentators" (Burman 1998: 711).

Burman adds that even John of Segovia, despite his hostility towards Robert of Ketton's translation, eventually conceded that "one cannot find anything in the text that he invented or anything substantial in the Arabic original that he left out" (Burman 1998: 725). From the point of view of contemporary Translation Studies, Burman states:

> [...] it would be considerable injustice to Robert and his Latin Qur'ān to conclude that merely because his *Lex Mahumet* is a paraphrase, it is therefore a poor translation. Scholars of the theory and practice of translation would challenge such a conclusion simply because the assumption upon which it is based—that a literal translation is always a better translation—has long been known to be questionable. A paraphrase in some cases may be the only way to get across many of the essential meanings of a given text. In the case of Robert of Ketton's Latin Qur'ān, such a judgment is particularly unwarranted because his paraphrase is so heavily informed by standard Muslim interpretations of the Qur'ān. (Burman 1998: 731)

Tolan (1998: 354) is equally positive, stating that "Robert has gone to great lengths to provide an accurate and comprehensive Latin version of the Qur'ān". However, the author also points out that the accuracy or faithfulness to the content of this translation contrasts with the abundant notes in the manuscript preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, which induce the reader to a negative reading of the text with comments such as "insanity", "ridiculousness", "stupidity", "blasphemy". The manuscript also includes rubrics at the opening of many surahs such as: 'A stupid, vain and impious Sura', 'Sura of stupidity and lies, like the previous ones', 'Diabolical sura, like the previous ones' (Tolan 1998: 355). The translation was even accompanied by drawings depicting Muhammad in various ridiculous forms, such as a monstrous man-fish (Burman 2007: 61). All these elements, the authorship of which is unclear, although they seem to have been the work

of at least two people (Tolan 1998: 355), demonstrate the polemical intent of the translation. Indeed, they were intended to guide the reading process by pointing out the parts that would seem particularly shocking to the Christian reader, for example Muhammad's sexuality or the pleasures promised to the faithful in paradise. As such, they reinforced the aim with which Peter the Venerable had commissioned the translation. Tolan (2005: 79) refers to it using the words of Robert of Ketton who, in his preface in the form of a letter to Peter the Venerable, states that the translation may "make fertile the sterile swamp of the Saracen sect".

Leaving aside the different opinions on the quality of Robert of Ketton's translation, to which we will return later in the discussion, it is fair to acknowledge his merit in being the first to translate the complete text of the Qur'ān, and in doing so directly from Arabic, a language unknown to Westerners and with nuances that easily escaped them. There was also the attached difficulty of the changes the language had undergone since the source text had been written centuries earlier. All this added to the bias imposed by the combative spirit of the task, which sometimes led the translator to stray from the allegedly "correct" path of translation. And, above all, we should bear in mind that, despite the criticism, it was the most widely read translation and came alive, 400 years later, as the first to be printed, with references to it being recorded as an authoritative source until the 17th century (de la Cruz 2003).

3.2. *Alchoranus Latinus Quem Transtulit Marcus Canonicus Toletanus*

As already discussed in Section 2, the second translation of the Qur'ān into Latin was completed by Mark of Toledo in 1210, only a few years after Robert of Ketton's translation. Like the previous translation, it was not the result of isolated work. In this case there were two initiators and sponsors of a new corpus of translations with anti-Islamist intent: Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, Archbishop of Toledo, who, in his book *Historia Arabum*, had already openly manifested these attitudes and his desire to achieve a reconquest by dialectical methods and not with arms; and his archdeacon, Mauricius, who became Bishop of Burgos in 1213.

Although this was the second Latin translation of the Qur'ān, its printed edition is the penultimate in time, as it was published in 2016 (Petrus Pons 2016). Until then, only a translation of the first four surahs had been published (Petrus Pons 2004) which, together with an edition of the prologue by Alverny & Vajda (1951) and a reprint of the same with some fragments of the text (Cecini 2012), was all that was available of this Latin version of the Qur'ān.

Biographical information on Mark of Toledo is scarce, almost all of it provided by Alverny & Vajda (1951). According to the title of his translation, he was a canon of Toledo Cathedral at that time, but he appears indistinctly as *Marcus diaconus canonicus* and *Marcus presbyter canonicus* in several documents, which leads us to suppose that he followed the *cursus honorum* within the cathedral. Alverny & Vajda suggest that, given his possible place of origin, Huecas, near Toledo, it is probable that the translator was not a Mozarab, but rather that he was born and raised in Toledo and spoke both Arabic and Castilian since childhood (Petrus Pons 2016: XXIX). This would have made him familiar with the source language, which could have helped him in translating. In fact, he translated not only the Qur'ān but also medical texts from Arabic into Latin, as he himself notes in the prologue to his Latin version of Galen's *De tactu pulsus*:

> Querite et inuenietis, pulsate et aperietur uobis, in armariis Arabm studiose querens alium quem tranferrem librum inueni Galieni de pulsu ac de pulsus utilitate atque motibus membrorum liquidis uno volumine contentos, pulsauitque animus ut hos in Latinorum deducerem notitiam. (Toledo 1212; *apud* Martínez Gázquez 2007: 56)

He also translated theological works, of which we will mention only the *Libellus Habentometi* because in his prologue he refers to his translation of the Qur'ān, making it clear that it was created at the request of Rodrigo and Mauricius.

In his prologue to the translation of the Qur'ān, Mark of Toledo clarifies his purposes in translating the sacred text. The prologue can be divided into three parts: the first part describes the life of Muhammad; the second part lists the precepts of the Muslims; and the third part is dedicated to the initiators of the translation and the concerns of Christians about Muslim domination. Tolan (2005: 83) refers to a purpose closely linked to the ideology

of reconquest, in which the Latin Qur'ān becomes a tool with which "los clérigos [...] podrán confundir la ley de Mahoma y los musulmanes estarán obligados a reconocer su error y venir hasta la iglesia".

Petrus Pons (2016) claims that the circulation of Mark's work was narrower than that of Robert of Ketton's translation. She bases her claim on the preface edited by Alverny & Vajda (1951) and on the scarcity of manuscripts, which are mainly preserved in France and northern Italy, except for one located in Vienna.

With regards to the quality of the translation, Mark of Toledo made a literal version of the Qur'ānic text, which has led some authors, such as Alverny (1948), to consider it a faithful translation of the source text. However, some contemporary authors point out that it has problems both in its form and linguistic style and also in its content. Concerning its form, it retains the number and title of the surahs, but misnumbers the chapters by numbering them up to 112 when in fact there are two more. In addition, glosses are few and some of them are not incorporated in all the surviving manuscripts (Martínez Gázquez 2015a). Regarding the content, Burman (1998: 731) argues that the translation cannot be concluded to be inherently better than that of Robert of Ketton, and adds that "his failure to consult the Arabic exegetical tradition also often undermined his translation". Daniel (1960: 44-45) is of the same opinion. He acknowledges that the literalism of Mark of Toledo's text permits him to render the form of the Qur'ān better, but points out that his effort to produce a word-for-word translation sometimes leads him to misrepresent the sacred text.

4. Bilingual and multilingual translations from the 15th century onwards: a more philological approach

Elmarsafy (2009: 3) considers the 15th century as a turning point in the translation of the Qur'ān, due to the production of the first bilingual editions, which involved a shift of perspective in the way of addressing the Arabic sacred text. Although the anti-Islamic intent still remains in the multilingual versions, editions including the original text present a parallel philological function, where literalism is a key element.

4.1. The first multilingual versions

Although they will not be discussed in depth, as they have not survived to our time, it is worth briefly mentioning two versions dated to the 15th century, one by John of Segovia (1453) and the other by Flavius Mithridates (1480). These were the first versions where translators resorted to the tri-lingual or multilingual format, which points to the philological function referred to in Section 2.

The translation by Cardinal John of Segovia was conceived as an instru-ment to facilitate peaceful relations with the Muslims. The Cardinal was opposed to the Crusades and rejected war-based confrontation with the Arabs. He was convinced that it was possible to establish communication between Christians and Muslims based on mutual knowledge of each oth-er's religion and that such communication would result in the conversion of Muslims to Christianity (Roth 2014: 555). His translation was therefore ultimately intended to serve an intellectual relationship of mutual exchange, a function for which the earlier translations were not useful, because of their disrespectful treatment of the Islamic work (Martínez Gázquez 2015a: 672).

Although no manuscript of the translation has survived, we know from its preface that it was an Arabic, Spanish and Latin text and that the Latin version followed the grammatical structure of the source text as closely as possible, in order to preserve its literalism even at the expense of formal correctness in the target language (Roth 2014: 568). The manuscript was organised in two columns, with the vocalised Arabic text in the first column and the Spanish and Latin versions in the second. The Spanish translation was carried out by the Arabic intellectual Yça Gidelli, and was used by John of Segovia as the basis for his Latin translation. The trilingual presentation of the work and its literalism were intended to permit a direct and complete comparison of the different versions, which Roth (2014: 557) considers to be evidence of a second aim of the work undertaken by John of Segovia, that of serving as a source of information for future studies.

The second of these translations, the work of the Jewish convert to Christianity Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada, known as Flavius Mithridates, is a version of surahs 21 and 22. Although Elmarsafy (2009: 3) notes that the "translation left much to be desired", he argues that it had a relevant impact

on later versions, such as the one commissioned by Egidio da Viterbo. This view is shared by Grévin (2020: 491), who argues that Egidio was familiar with some of Mithridates' works.

In his writings, Mithridates declares himself opposed to Muhammad, whom he presents as an impious and impure man. However, Martínez Gázquez (2015a: 674) points out that the notes and clarifications on the translation "parecen dejar de lado la polémica [...] Parece que preocupaba al traductor, más que el sentido de fidelidad al texto, el dar a comprender los matices y aspectos filológicos del texto árabe difíciles de dar en la traducción".

When referring to Mithridates' translation, it should be made clear that we are actually dealing with two translations collected in two different manuscripts and that there are important differences between them. The best-known version is the translation of surahs 21 and 22 included in a manuscript of elegant calligraphy dedicated to the Duke of Urbino and dated around 1482, which is preserved in the Vatican Library. It is a translation into "a Latin that tries to mimic classicism" and which is "quite distanced from the Qur'ānic text" (Grévin 2020: 485). It includes a preface announcing a project for a quadrilingual edition (Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic and Latin) which does not seem to have been completed. Dated in the 1480s, the second work consists of a series of interlinear Latin notes on a version of the Qur'ān written in Hebrew characters. Equally preserved in the Vatican Library, this manuscript also includes Latin translations of Arabic exegesis in the margins. Despite the short interval between the two translations, there are relevant differences in the translation decisions made by Mithridates, to the extent that Grévin (2020: 490) considers it probable that he had assistance when working on the Hebrew manuscript. The author also questions the translation strategies applied in the version commissioned by the Duke of Urbino, for which Mithridates may have used the version of Mark of Toledo as an auxiliary tool (Grévin 2020: 506).

4.2. The Latin translation of the Qur'ān (1518-1621) commissioned by Egidio da Viterbo

The work we review below is chronologically the fifth translation of the Qur'ān into Latin, subsequent to those of John of Segovia and Flavius Mithridates. However, it is the third of those for which an unabridged printed edition is available, made from the two surviving manuscripts (one of which is incomplete), and which was first presented as a doctoral thesis and recently published by Harrassowitz Verlag (Starczewska 2012, 2018).

It is a translation commissioned in 1518 by Cardinal Egidio da Viterbo and attributed to Iohannes Gabriel, an Aragonese Muslim convert to Christianity previously known as Ali Alayzar. Seven years later, the text was corrected by means of interlinear notes by another convert of Hispanic origin, Leo Africanus, born a Muslim of the name al-Ḥasan al-Wāzzan, kidnapped in 1518 by a Sicilian pirate and presented to Pope Leo X as a gift in 1520. Almost 100 years later, in 1621, the translation was re-annotated by David Colville, copyist of one of the two surviving manuscripts, the Milan manuscript, preserved in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan. From the long note appended by Colville to the Milan manuscript, we know that the original manuscript of the translation, now lost, was laid out in four parallel columns containing the Arabic text in the first column, its transliteration in Roman characters in the second, the Latin translation in the third, and some explanatory notes on the Qur'anic content in the fourth.

However, none of the two surviving manuscripts include the original four-column layout in its entirety. Colville only copied the Arabic text and the translation in facing columns, leaving the transliteration entirely out. As for the translator's notes, he copied a large sampling of them on loose sheets of paper which he placed between the pages of the manuscript. The other manuscript, preserved in the Cambridge University Library, of an earlier origin although discovered later, is incomplete, as it only includes parts of the first forty-nine surahs. In addition to the interlinear corrections by Leo Africanus, it also includes notes by a second reviser, recently identified as Isaac Casaubon (Grafton & Weinber 2011: 306), which are limited to a part of surah 2. Although the layout seems to suggest that the copyist intended to maintain the original four-column design, eventually he must have given up

his idea, since in the first fifty folios only the first and third columns contain text, with the second and fourth remaining blank. From there to folio 226, the manuscript only has text in the translation column, while in the last fifty folios, all four columns are used for the translation (Burman 2002: 337-46).

Burman (2007: 148) argues that, although Egidio da Viterbo's motivations in commissioning the translation are not clear, the final product turns out to be a work of remarkable philological value. Its layout in four columns, the verse numbering system, the perpetuation of the surah names and divisions, among other elements, are clear evidences of it. Apparently, according to Burman (2007: 173) neither Egidio da Viterbo, nor his two early readers, Leo Africanus (1525), whose notes are preserved in both manuscripts, and Isaac Casaubon (1602-1604), seem to have had a great interest in the anti-Islamic polemic, despite the fact that Bibliander's printed editions of Robert of Ketton's version, still accompanied by his harsh anti-Islamic notes, as well as other translations which will be discussed in the following sections, demonstrate that this was still a relevant issue at the time. However, some details in the selective use of the sources in the notes of the fourth column rescued by Colville (1621) do suggest the underlying presence, behind the philological interest, of an anti-Islamic intent focused on pointing out those areas in which the Qur'ān conflicts with Christian sacred texts (Burman 2007: 177).

Beyond its great usefulness from a philological point of view, neither Starczewska (2012, 2018) nor other contemporary researchers are clear about the quality of the translation. Based on the two surviving manuscripts, however, we know (Burman 2007: 165-173) that the interlinear notes by Leo Africanus and Isaac Casaubon contain a vast number of corrections of Ioannes Gabriel's initial translation, as well as clarifications for a better understanding of the source text, or suggestions for a more literal translation, especially in the case of Casaubon. These were intended to enable a closer approximation to the Arabic text, which would be consistent with the philological aim of the version.

In addition, Colville, in his introductory preface to the Milan manuscript, although he considers that it is not for him as a copyist to judge the quality of the translation, claims the following:

I was obliged to transcribe the Latin translation of the third column together with all the corrections in the same way that I found them, and I have also retained these pseudographies as I found them, so that those into whose hands such ridiculous things fall may give their opinion. On this noble translation: I never saw anything so ridiculous, to the extent that I could hardly contain my laughter at first. They both translated in such an erroneous manner; undoubtedly John Leo changes what was correctly said by Gabriel into nonsense, and then Gabriel transforms into equal nonsense what was said by the former. This leads me to the conclusion that neither one knew either of the two languages. Of the Latin language it is quite true; regarding the Arabic language I believe that Gabriel knew it better than Leon because in writing he surpasses him by far, as it is possible to see Leon's hand in many places in the margins and especially at the end of the first volume where he tries to correct both the language and writing of Gabriel, and the writing is very poor; I consider it much worse than mine, even though I acquired all my knowledge of this language on my own and without a teacher [our translation]. (Colville 1621, in Starczewska 2012: XXI)

4.3. *The Alcorani seu legis Mahometi et euangelistarum concordiae liber,* by Guillaume Postel (1543)

The sixth translation to be discussed is included in the second book of the work by the French linguist and orientalist Guillaume Postel, *De orbis terrae concordia*, where he advocates the idea of a universal religion. As already mentioned in Section 2, in his edition of Robert of Ketton's Qur'ān, Bibliander had already included a previous translation by Postel of the first surah, in this case from his *Grammatica Arabica* (de la Cruz 2013: 171).

Postel considered that, once it had been shown that all religions had a common basis and that the Christian religion was the one that best represented this basis, all Jews, Arabs and pagans could convert to Christianity. To this end, in the second book of *De orbis terrae concordia*, Postel used a translation of his own, which, however, he did not publish in full because he lacked an Arabic-Latin lexicon on which to base his work.[4] De la Cruz & Planas (2015: 521-22) estimate that *De orbis* includes approximately 30% of

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4. *...ea uero iam sunt a me arabica uersa, sed ideo non eddam quod desit adhuc nobis lexicon Arabicolatinum* (Postel, *De orbis terrae concordia* 136, *apud* de la Cruz 2013: 174).

the Qur'ān, specifically those verses that permitted a comparison between the Islamic and Christian faiths. There is also an autograph manuscript by Postel that contains a later translation of surah 1 and surah 2 up to verse 140, accompanied by marginal and interlinear notes by the translator himself.

Postel's translations are much more literal than Robert of Ketton's translation. De la Cruz (2013: 175) argues that they follow a very up-to-date philological method when compared to the work of previous translators, as evidenced by features such as the inclusion of transcriptions from the Arabic, brackets in which they include words implied from the original, and glosses and explanatory notes on the original. In the case of the autograph manuscript, de la Cruz & Planas (2015: 523) argue that the quality of the translation is superior to that published in *De orbis*, and that this demonstrates a desire for correctness and greater precision than the former.

4.4. *The Latin translation of the Qur'ān attributed to the patriarch of Constantinople Cyril Lúcaris (1572-1638)*

The translation attributed to Cyril Lúcaris is the seventh, chronologically speaking. We say "attributed" because, as the author of the modern edition (de la Cruz 2006) explains in his introduction, there is no solid evidence that confirms its authorship by Lúcaris. The strongest argument in favour is the dedication included in one of the surviving manuscripts:

> Yo, Carolo Marino de Geinziz, Consejero de su Magestad de Suecia y su Residente en los Esquiereros, dedico este Alcorano traduzido por l`obra del Reverendissimo Patriarca de Constantinopoli Cyrilo <,> a la muy illustre libraria de Zurigo l'anno MDCXLIII.

However, it should be noted that "por la obra de" could also mean that he commissioned or paid for the translation or simply the copying of the manuscript. There are indications that Cyril had some knowledge of Arabic, but not enough to produce a translation. Nor is it possible to give an exact date for its completion, so we can only date it sometime before the author's death in 1638.

De la Cruz's critical edition is based on the two known manuscripts, K and Z, Z being a direct copy of K. They appear to be working instruments and contain commentaries on the Qur'ān. The work is incomplete, as only

surahs 1-30(8) in full (except for surah 4) and some fragments of surahs 94-114 (except for surah 100) have been transmitted, which raises the question of whether the entire work was actually translated. Although no author has given an affirmative or negative answer to this question, one argument in favour could be the fact that it would not make sense to get to the end of the work leaving part of it untranslated.

Although the biography of the alleged translator might give us some indication of the reasons that led him to undertake a new version of the sacred text, de la Cruz argues that his motivations are not entirely clear. As for the quality of the translation, de la Cruz claims that it contains some errors due to a misreading of the Arabic text, but that, in general, the version is excellent:

> En todo caso, la traducción (fragmentaria) del Corán que ofrecen estos testimonios es excelente, muy literal con el original árabe. Los recursos que empleaba el traductor responden a criterios científicos modernos, que pretenden una objetividad de la que carecían las primeras traducciones latinas del Corán. En este sentido es destacable el uso de los paréntesis que hace el traductor para restituir el sentido completo del texto, cuando en árabe se hacía difícil por causa de las braquilogías que lo caracterizan. (de la Cruz 2006: XLVII)

Martínez Gázquez (2015a: 679) agrees with this assessment, stating that it is a translation of great philological interest that in some cases elaborates and restores the text to better convey the meaning of the Qurʾānic text.

4.5. *The Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis (1670)* by Dominicus Germanus of Silesia

The eighth translation of the Qurʾān into Latin was carried out by the Franciscan friar Germanus of Silesia. The available biographical information on the translator is provided by Wadding (1588-1657), a biographer of the Franciscan order, as well as by Devic (1883), Richard (1984) and, more recently, García Masegosa (2017). Further details are found in several references contained in Germanus' books and manuscripts, in documents or letters of the period, and in the *praefatio* of the Qurʾān translation (García Masegosa 2005, 2017).

Germanus of Silesia was born in 1588 in Schurgast, now Skorogoszcz, Poland, and died in the monastery of El Escorial on 28 September 1670 while he was correcting the last manuscript of his translation. It is important to note that he devoted his life to study and not to spread the truth of Christianity throughout the world: he failed as a missionary on his two journeys to the East, and on the second he spent his time in Isfahan, holding the symbolic title of Apostolic Prefect of the Mission to Grand Tartary, a title which he was proud of, as he almost always mentions it at the beginning of his works. These journeys helped him to perfect his knowledge of Arabic, Persian and Turkish, knowledge that he had begun to acquire early, as in 1630 he had already received lessons from Thomas Obicini at the San Pietro Monastery in Montorio. In 1636, after his first journey to the East, he began teaching Arabic, possibly replacing Obicini, who had died in 1632. He wrote several works, some of the titles of which clearly show his interest in studying Arabic and the Qur'ān: *Fabrica overo Dittionario della lingua volgare arabica et italiana, Selectiores sententiae ex Arabum libris collectae, Prognosis interpretationis litteralis Alcorani, Impugnatio Alcorani.*

From what has been established above we can conclude that Germanus had the required knowledge and skills to create a good translation of the Qur'ān. He knew the Arabic language, he was familiar with other translations prior to his own, and he completed the translation at the end of his life in the peaceful environment of El Escorial. We could also conclude that he carried out his translation without the pressure other translators must have felt from their initiators, Peter the Venerable, Rodriguez de Rada or Egidio da Viterbo, among others, by whom they were probably paid for their work (Kritzeck 1964: 212) and whose first objective was the struggle against Islam, rather than fidelity to the original.

Contrary to the first of these assumptions, however, we have the opinion of at least two authoritative sources. Casiri (1760: 543) claims that Germanus of Silesia was a distinguished theologian but that his knowledge of the Arabic language was not so remarkable[5]. Richard (1984: 96) has a similar opinion, stating that "le P. Germanus a été jugé meilleur théologien qu'il ne fut

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5. *Theologus sane insignis, sed Arabica eruditione non adeo excultus.*

philologue ou grammairien", although his opinion might have been based on Casiri, and not on the direct reading of Germanus' work.

Germanus would not have shared these opinions about his knowledge of the Arabic language, since he was convinced, and expressly says, that he possessed more than mediocre knowledge not only of the Arabic language but also of Turkish and Persian[6]. In one of his manuscripts, the translator argues that his conscience does not reproach him regarding changing or omitting anything from the pure Arabic truth[7]. Likewise, in the *Praefatio* he claims to be an innovator, that among many prestigious scholars, none has been able to clarify the message of the Qur'ān because of their lack of knowledge or intelligence or because of the complexity of the Arabic language[8]. He also states, towards the end, that he will expound the sentences and opinions in a plain, simple and faithful manner[9].

Devic (1883: 400) agrees with Germanus and claims that his translation of the Qur'ān is "généralement assez fidèle et littérale". And let us not forget the title of the translation, *Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis*, with all that the adjective "literal" implies, at least as regards to the translator's intention.

However, Germanus' work is not just a translation of the Qur'ān into Latin. As the editor points out,

> Las traducciones al uso pretendían ofrecer a los teólogos un material necesario para que estos pudieran fundamentar sus teorías de rechazo a la doctrina islamista. Esta obra contiene ambos trabajos, por un lado, el texto coránico traducido al latín, una lengua comprensible para los occidentales, y por otro el comentario teológico, por lo que podríamos afirmar que

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6. *Ego de me ipso fateor non obstante commoditate tam diuersarum expositionum et non immediocri etiam praxi linguae Arabicae nisi quoque Persici ac Turcici.* Germanus of Silesia, Praefatio, in García Masegosa 2005: 128)

7. *Et nequaquam de pura arabica ueritate quidquam mutasse aut omisisse conscientia me reprehendit.* (Germanus of Silesia, Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis. "Ad lectorem". Manuscript Escorial L. I. 3. Fol.334v)

8. *quod iam per mille et ultra annos (Deo, aiunt, sic disponente) tum per timiditatem, tum vero ob carentiam litterarum rationisque inopiam ac linguae impedimentum: inter tot doctores, de quibus vane gloriamur, non sit ausus quispiam soluere linguam, multo minus calamum in Alcoranum, librum caelitus datum.* (Germanus of Silesia, Praefacio, in García Masegosa 2005: 129)

9. *Vniuersorum autem uerba et sententias, simpliciter pure ac fideliter exponam.* (Germanus of Silesia, Praefacio, in García Masegosa 2005: 130)

> Germán no solo ofrece un material para los teólogos, sino que también lo
> utiliza él mismo como tal y hace ya la refutación. (García Masegosa 2009:
> 17)

In fact, as Germanus claimed, his intention was to provide a translation
that was not only literal but also based on the opinions and clarifications of
Muhammad himself and of the disciples closest to the Qur'ān. With this aim
in mind, he structured his work in such a way that a *textus* containing the
translation is always followed, at the end of each surah, by a *scholium* with
a theological commentary on the previously translated text. These *scholia*
are separated from the Qur'anic text, i.e. the complete surah of the Qur'ān
is first translated and then the exegesis-based commentaries follow. This
differs from the overlapping or disordered layout of other translations, such
as those of Robert of Ketton or Marracci.

It does not seem likely that Germanus' work was widely circulated since
five of the six manuscripts used for its critical edition, not all of them includ-
ing the complete work, have always remained in El Escorial and two of them
were copied by the translator himself. Only one manuscript has been found
outside Spain, at the school of medicine in Montpelier, where it arrived from
the Albani Library in Italy.

4.6. *The Alcorani Textus Universus ex Correctionibus Arabum Exemplaribus Summa Fide[10]… (1698)* by Ludovico Marracci

The title of this last translation of the Qur'ān into Latin gives the reader an
accurate idea of what to expect from it. The translator makes it clear that,
unlike other versions, this is the *textus universus*, i.e. a translation of the
complete Qur'ānic text. He has used the most reliable Arabic manuscripts
(*correctioribus Arabum exemplaribus summa fide*) as his source texts, and also
the most beautiful fonts in the edition. He goes on to say that with equal

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10. *…atque pulcherrimis characteribus descriptus, Eademque fide, ac pari diligentia ex
    Arabico idiomate in Latinum translatus, Appositis unicuique capiti notis, atque refu-
    tatione: His omnibus praemissus est PRODROMUS Totum priorem tomum implens, In
    quo contenta indicantur pagina secuenti, auctore Ludovico Marraccio e Congregatione
    Clericorum Regularium Matris Dei. Innocentii XI Gloriosissimae memoriae olim con-
    fessario.* Patavii, M.DCXCVIII.

fidelity and diligence he has translated the text from Arabic into Latin and added notes and refutations to each of the chapters. This is indeed the content of the second volume, which contains the translation, but there is a first volume which he calls *Prodromus* in which the author, Ludovico Marracci, is mentioned before the reference to Pope Innocent XI, of whom he was the confessor, and the place and date of the edition: Padua, 1698.

There is little biographical information about Ludovico Marracci. He was born in Torcigliano, Republic of Lucca, on 6 October 1612 and belonged to the Clerics Regular of the Mother of God from an early age. In addition to Syriac, Greek and Hebrew, he studied Arabic, a language he taught at the Sapienza University of Rome, and in 1665 he was part of the group that debunked the lead tablets of Granada (Bevilaqua 2013). He declined to be appointed to the rank of Cardinal of the Catholic Church and died in 1700 at the age of 88.

In 2012, a collection of his manuscripts of nearly 10,000 pages was discovered at the Order of Clerics Regular of the Mother of God in Rome, including his working material, notes and significant information on his approach to translating the Qurʾān, as well as different versions of the translation. Based on the study of these manuscripts, Reinhold & Tottoli (2016) published a new examination of his life, influence and methods.

Marracci created the last translation of the Qurʾān into Latin at a time when the need to refute the doctrine of Islam still prevailed, but was coupled by struggles against the Protestant Reformation and the writings of Luther. In his manuscripts (Martínez Gázquez 2015a: 681-82) he argues that all the work up to that point, from Robert of Ketton to Germanus of Silesia, is only the beginning, the preliminary study, and that he is to complete the definitive work. His edition is usually singled out as the initiator of modern Qurʾanic study in the West (Burman 2002: 150) to the extent that its creation may have marked the onset of a new period where Robert of Ketton's work was abandoned as a source of authority. Other studies and translations have been based on Marracci's work, such as that of G. Sale printed in London in 1734, of which there have been many reprints.

As already mentioned, the work comprises a first part divided into four sections, each with its own introduction and a resetting of page numbering. Its long title (*Prodromus ad refutationem Alcorani in quo Mahumetis vita,*

ac res gestae ex probatissimis apud Arabes scriptoribus collectae referetur…)
gives the reader a clear idea of the translator's approach to the task and of
his motivations. The *prodromus* deals with the name, author, language and
style of the Qur'ān, a work highly revered by Muhammadans. It also deals
with other similar things that refer to the intimate and absolute knowledge
of the Qur'ān. Finally, by means of four notes on the true religion, the falsity
of the Muhammadan sect and the truth of the Christian religion are shown.

As for the Qur'ānic translation as such, it is necessary to point out that
this is not a standard translation, i.e. with the whole text in its original order.
On the contrary, each section begins with the title *Refutationes in suram*
(number), and includes the Arabic text, arguments, notes, a section called
Refutata, a *textus Alcorani* and also a translation, which gives the reader the
impression that it is not the most important part of the work, but rather a
means to the end of refuting the sacred text.

Like his predecessors, Marracci used the writings of Muslim exegetes
and historians; researchers (Burman 2007; Martínez Gázquez 2015a) agree
that it is accurate, faithful and duly annotated. Borrmans (2002) points out
that while the refutation remains imbued with the spirit of controversy
that the dangers of the time seem to justify, the translation heralds the new
times of a scientific orientalism eager to obtain information from Arabic and
Islamic sources, from an objective perspective, but without renouncing the
demands of healthy criticism.

The translator, in his *conclusio totius operis* on page 124 of the *Prodomus*
states the following:

> Hitherto I have fought the Qur'ān with the Qur'ān and have tried to cut
> Muhammad's throat with his own sword for my manhood; however, neither
> have I defeated the former nor the latter have I beheaded. I have done my
> best. But one victory or another will no longer depend on the Qur'ān nor
> on Muhammad but on their followers [our translation]. (Marracci 1698)[11]

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11. *Hactenus Alcorano contra Alcoranum pugnavi; et Mahumetum gladio suo jugulare pro
mea virili conatus sum. At enim neque illum expugnavi neque hunc jugulavi. Per me
non stetit. Sed utraque victoria non ex Alcorano, vel Mahumeto, verum ex iis, qui illos
sequuntur, dependet.*

The translator deems that he has completed his work. Marracci's work, as already indicated, closed the series of Latin translations of the Qur'ān, a text that has continued to be translated into modern languages up to the present time (Arias Torres 1998; Haleem 2016).

5. Discussion

The preceding review of the translations of the Qur'ān into Latin between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries provides a good starting point to discuss the relevance of *skopos* in the manner in which the translators approached their task. It seems clear, on the one hand, that the translations were motivated by a desire to know the religious enemies before combating them. The fact that Latin was used as the target language is a clear indicator of this intent, since translations could not have been targeted to the general public, who at that time had no knowledge of Latin. They were mainly targeted towards the clergy, who had the cultural level required to understand the translations and the authority to interpret them. Indeed, they were also conducted by people who belonged to the clergy. Their initiators, in many cases, were third parties who almost certainly paid the translators a salary for their work. This permitted them to influence the way in which the task of translation was approached.

None of the texts reviewed are standard translations as we understand them today. Most of them, with the exception of the translation by Robert of Ketton, were editions that accompanied the target text with interlinear or marginal notes of varying nature. This is, to a certain extent, consistent with the assertions of the Arab authors reviewed in our introduction, according to whom a true translation of the Qur'ān is not possible because of the intrinsic relationship of its content with the language in which it was revealed. The analysed translations, with their notes, could therefore be considered an attempt to deviate from the actual content of the source text, given the motivation with which they were made. However, they could also be understood as a means of approaching the true meaning of the text, motivated by the desire to know the basics of the Islamic religion in some depth, in order to better combat it.

One may wonder why it was Robert of Ketton's version that achieved the widest circulation over the centuries. It is difficult to draw a definitive conclusion on this point. There is no doubt that its being the first Latin translation of the Qur'ān gave it a certain advantage over later versions, as did the fact that Bibliander chose it for his printed edition. On the other hand, despite the various criticisms of his lack of fidelity, we have seen that several authors today award Robert of Ketton the merit that neither his contemporaries nor many scholars over the centuries had granted him: that of favouring a transfer focused not on the form but on the meaning of the source text, and basing his translation decisions on an extensive and solid documentation work that could perfectly fit into the current context of Translation Studies. In doing so, one could say that Robert of Ketton went beyond the originally stated function of adapting his interpretation of the sacred text to the expectations of those who wished to discredit the Islamic religion. We could argue that the apologists of the time might not have been fully aware of the fidelity of the translation to the meaning of the Arabic text as interpreted by Muslims themselves. Maybe they thought that such a diverging paraphrase of the source text must include changes in the content that favoured the anti-Islamic function. Moreover, despite Robert's reformulations based on the tafsīr, the translation made clear references to the heresies of which Christians accused the Arabic religion. The many denigrative comments and notes in the manuscript preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, whether or not included by Robert, undoubtedly may have contributed to this perception. We should not forget that Robert had himself stressed the need to convert the Saracen sect in the dedication to his translation.

Moreover, the fact that it was a less literal translation would have made it easier to read, which might have favoured its circulation over other versions that were more respectful of the letter of the source text, but also more difficult to read. Also contributing to this easier reading was the way in which the text was laid out, subdivided into easily readable segments, and the fact that the interpretations drawn from the *tafsīr* were incorporated into the final text, rather than in interlinear, marginal or independent notes as in many of the later versions.

It is also interesting to note that the translations which are usually considered to be of higher quality because they are more literal and therefore more faithful to the original, such as those of Mark of Toledo, Guillaume Postel, or Germanus of Silesia, would not conform to the translation quality criteria that are currently favoured in the field of Translation Studies, such as the full transfer of meaning or the adaptation to the target culture. However, it is clear that the perception of the quality of these translations changes if we evaluate them from a philological perspective. On the one hand, we must bear in mind that the presence of the text in the edition made a qualitative difference for the readers, since it permitted them to evaluate the content of the translation first-hand, provided they had sufficient knowledge to do so. For this reason, the translator's freedom to manipulate the text would be limited. We must therefore understand the inclusion of the source text as a declaration of principles on the part of the initiators and translators. This does not necessarily mean that they were without anti-Islamist intent, but perhaps they considered that the faithful interpretation of the source text was sufficient to permit the recipients to perceive its alleged evils, without it being necessary to embellish them to make them more reprehensible. On the other hand, we can interpret these new bilingual and multilingual versions as evidence of evolution in the purposes of the translations, oriented towards a philological knowledge of the work and even of the source language. Thus, although these works were much less widely circulated than previous translations, their form would make them worthy of the attention of future scholars, especially that of Marracci which, as mentioned above, is considered the initiator of modern Qurʾānic study.

Finally, the narrower circulation of the last two complete translations, despite their acknowledged quality, could be connected to the fact that the problem of religious confrontation had diminished. However, in this regard, it is worth noting that the origin of the translations would not support this hypothesis. Although the first translations originated in the Iberian Peninsula, which is consistent with the coexistence of European and Arab cultures in that territory, and the widespread perception of the threat posed by the latter, once the reconquest of the Peninsula was completed, the activity of translation partially shifted to Italy, the seat of the political and religious power of Christianity. This is an indication that, despite the disappearance

of the need to promote ideological debate as a parallel weapon to the physical struggles for territory, the Christian religious establishment continued to perceive the spread of Islam as a threat. In view of the current state of affairs, only three centuries since the last of the reviewed translations was completed, it is worth asking whether the historical events of the past three hundred years, the industrial revolution, the cultural revolution or more recently, globalisation, have contributed to dispelling this perception. A comparative analysis of contemporary translations of the Qur'ān into different Western languages might be relevant in order to determine how the function of translation has evolved since Robert of Ketton was commissioned to make the first Latin version of the Qur'ān back in the 12th century.

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Annex: Transcription of the translations of the first seven verses of the *Qurʾān*

Arab Qurʾān	بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ٢ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ مَـٰلِكِ يَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ٤ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ٱهْدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَٰطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ ٱلْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ
English Translation by Ali	–/1 In the name of God, Most gracious, Mostmerciful. 1/2 Praise be to God, the Cheriser and Sustainer of the Worlds. 2/3 Most gracious, Most merciful. 3/4 Master of the Day of Judgment. 4/5 Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek. 5/6 Show us the straight way, 6/7 The way of those on whom Thou has bestowed Thy Grace, 7/– Those whose is not wrath, and who got not astray.
Bibliander's editions	*Robert of Ketton* Misericordi pioque Deo, universitatis creatori, cuius postrema dies expectat, uoto supplici nos humiliemus, adorantes ipsum: suaeque manus suffragium, semitaeque donum & dogma, quos nos ad se beneuolos, nequaquam hostes & erroneos adduxit, iugiter sentiamus. *Vel secundum alium translatorem.* In nomine Dei misericordis, miseratoris, Gratias Deo domino uniuersitatis misericordi, miseratori, iudicii diei iudicii. Te oramus, In te confidimus: Mitte nos in uiam rectam, uiam eorum quos elegisti, non eorum quibus iratus es, nec infidelium. *Gulielmus Postellus ita vertit* In nomine Dei misericordis, pii. Laus Deo, regi saeculorum misericordi et pio, regi diei iudicii, O uos omnes illi seruiamus certe adiuuabimur. Dirige nos, Domine, in punctum rectum, in punctum inquam illorum, in quos tibi complacitum est, sine ira aduersus eos, et non errabimus.
Marcus Canonicus Toletanus	1 In nomine Dei, misericordis, miseratoris. 2 Gloria Deo, creatori gencium. 3 Misericordi, miseratori, 4 qui regnat in die legis. 5 Te quidem adoramus per te iuuamur. 6 Dirige nobis uiam rectam, 7 quam eis erogasti, non eorum contra quos iratus es neque dampnatorum.

Egidio da Viterbo	–/1 In nomine Dei Misericordis et clementis. 1/2 Laudetur Deus, Dominus generationum. 2/3 misericors, Clemens, 3/4 dominus diei iudicii. 4/5 Te adoramus et per te adiuuabimur. 5/6 Dirige nos in uiam beatorum, et illorum qui a te gratias acceperunt, 7/– et non per uiam maledictorum neque errantium.
Guillaume Postel	Manuscrito de Paris (BnF) 1 In nomine Dei misericordis propitii. 2 Laus Deo regi seculorum, 3 misericordi propitio, 4 regi diei iudicii. 5 Heus uos, seruiamus ei, certe adiuuabimur. 6 Dirige nos in punctum rectum, 7 punctum illorum quibus benefecisti, sine ira duersus eos et non errabimus. *De orbis terrae concordia* 1 In nomine Dei, misericordis, propitii. 2 Laus Deo, domino seculorum, 3 id est misericordi propitio *secundo*, 4 regi diei iudicii *tertio*. 5 Heus seruiamus et heus adiuuabimur *quarto*. 6 Dirige nos (in) punctum rectum *quinto (magna pausa)*, 7 punctum eorum, in quibus tibi bene complacitum est *sexto*, sine ira aduersus eos et non errabunt *séptimo*.
Cyril Lúcaris	In nomine Dei, Miseratoris Misericordis 1 Laus Deo, Domino creaturarum, 2 miseratori, misericordi, 3 regi diei iudici. 4 Tibi seruiemus, tuamque opem implorabimus. 5 Dirige nos in uia recta, 6 uia eorum quibus tu gratiosus fuisti, 7 absque ira iis, non autem improbis.
Dominicus Germanus	–(1) In nomine Dei Miseratoris, Misericordis. 1(2) Laus Deo, Domino saeculorum, 2(3) Miseratori, Misericordi, 3(4) Dominatori diei iudicii. 4(5) Te colimus et imploramus opem tuam. 5(6) Dirige nos in uiam rectam, 6(7) uiam illorum, quos tua gratia cumulasti, 7(–) non eorum, super quos ira tua requiescit, neque illorum, qui errorem sequuntur
Ludovicus Marracius	1 In nomine Dei Miseratoris, Misericordis. 2. Laus Deo Domino mundorum, 3 Miseratori, Misericordi, 4 regnanti diei judicii. 5 te colimus et te in judicium imploramus. 6 Dirige nos in viam rectam, 7 viam illorum erga quos beneficus fuisti: non actum iracunde contra eos: et non errantium.

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