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A reading of the 'Theory of the Heavy Statement' in the translation of the Holy Quran by the thinker Taha Abdel Rahman

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Abstract:

Drawing on his firm grounding in the field of philosophical theory, evident throughout his works and writings, Taha Abdel Rahman attempts to apply this theoretical framework to the field of Qur'anic translation, elaborating on his new theory known as the 'Theory of the Weighty Utterance', which focuses on applying an authentic translation approach to the translation of the Qur'anic text by providing a set of criteria suited to the nature and characteristics of the Holy Qur'an, guided by the mechanisms of emotional and faith-based interaction and armed with authentic Qur'anic terminology and deeply rooted Greek terminology, in an attempt to achieve spiritual identification with the Qur'anic texts in order to arrive at the optimal method for Qur'anic translation. This is what we shall endeavour to elucidate and clarify at some length, with some analysis and commentary.

Keywords: Authentic translation; Translation of the Holy Qur'an; Al-Qawl al-Thaqil; Taha Abd al-Rahman.

Introduction:

Theoretical reflection on the process of translation has long been a part of human thought, as the emergence of translation was initially linked to sacred texts in Babylonian mythology or in the Septuagint translation of the Gospel. As for discussions concerning the translation of the Qur'an, these did not become a matter of significance until the last century, when the conflict



between Orientalists and the pioneers of the modern Arab Renaissance intensified, not to mention the very early attempts at translating the Qur'an, which were church-sponsored schemes and projects designed to distort Islam.

Since authentic theoretical discourse generally derives from the texts and is shaped by the environment and epistemological contexts that gave rise to it, the grounding of Qur'anic translation must necessarily stem from the data and requirements of the Qur'anic text itself. This is what we find in Taha Abdel Rahman's theory of 'the weighty utterance', the broad outlines of which he sets out in this brief research paper, in which we highlight the points of originality and distinctive features in a language that encompasses the arts of thought—rational, emotional and spiritual—in an attempt to align with the texts, following the outline below:

Introduction.

Section One: An Introduction to the Thinker and Philosopher Taha Abdel Rahman:

- His upbringing and academic career.
- Distinctive features of his approach.
- His works.

Section Two: Types of translation according to Taha Abdel Rahman:

- Translation as a means of acquisition.
- Communicative translation.
- Authentic translation.

Section Three: An analysis of the 'theory of the weighty statement' in the translation of the Holy Qur'an.

- The Basic Premise:
- The Holy Qur'an ... and the 'heavy' discourse.
- Translation ... the 'light' discourse.
- Between the 'Heavy Speech' and the 'Light Speech'.
- The foundations of the 'Heavy Speech' theory.

Conclusion.

References and footnotes.

Section One: An Introduction to the Thinker and Philosopher Taha Abdel Rahman:

1- His upbringing and academic career:

The history of Arabic philosophy has spanned a long period, from the era of Ibn Rushd to the phase of the Arab Renaissance—a lengthy period in the life of peoples and nations—which produced a number of original thinkers and philosophers who sought to revive the nation's intellectual heritage, foremost among them the Moroccan Arab philosopher Taha Abdel Rahman, who: « Taha Abdel Rahman was born in the city of Jadida in 1944, a Moroccan city [south of Rabat]. He received his early education from his father, who provided him with a primarily traditional upbringing in which he was introduced to the fundamentals of Islamic

studies, until he entered modern school, where he progressed through primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels."¹ His intellectual life began with the practice of poetry, which instilled in him this poetic spirit and endowed his pen with the linguistic ability to address intellectual subjects. Speaking of himself, he said: " My early intellectual life began with poetry from a young age, and I continued to practise it until I was twenty-two, writing poems that attracted attention and received positive reviews."²

However, the Arab defeat at the hands of the Zionist entity in 1967, known at the time as 'the Naksa', prompted a period of soul-searching amongst Arabs. This was evident amongst many Arab intellectuals and thinkers, including Taha Abdel Rahman, who described the impact of the Naksa on himself, saying: ' 'In truth, this defeat struck me like a violent earthquake whilst I was still a university student ... and I was then gripped by a fateful question: "What kind of mind is this that has defeated us, a nation so numerous in number and so firmly rooted in its history?"'³ This period of his university life at Mohammed V University in Rabat, from which he obtained a Bachelor's degree (Licence) in Philosophy, marked a significant turning point in his interest in intellectual and rational inquiry, and a shift towards the study of logic: 'This was the primary reason for my move from poetry to philosophy... As I often say: today poetry, tomorrow philosophy... so I devoted myself primarily to the study of logic.'⁴ He then continued his studies at the Sorbonne, where he obtained a second Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and a third-cycle doctorate in 1972 with a thesis on language and philosophy entitled: *A Treatise on the Linguistic Structures of the Concept of Being*, followed by a State Doctorate in 1985 for his thesis entitled: *A Treatise on Argumentative and Natural Inference and its Models*⁵ . As for his academic contributions, he was: 'abundant in his contributions, moving beyond the influence of Western intellectual models; he enrolled at Mohammed V University in Rabat and taught there during turbulent years that witnessed a bitter conflict between the communist and liberal currents.'⁶ This spanned the period from 1970 until his retirement in 2005.

He is a member of the 'International Association for Rhetorical Studies' and its representative in Morocco, as well as a member of the 'European Centre for Rhetoric'; he is also the president of the Forum of Wisdom for Thinkers and Researchers in Morocco. He has twice received the Moroccan Book Award, followed by the ISESCO Prize for Islamic Thought and Philosophy in 2006, and was awarded the Mohammed VI Prize for Islamic Thought and Studies on 13 January 2014. In addition to his fluency in Arabic, French and English, Taha Abdul- -al-Rahman is also proficient in German, Latin and Ancient Greek, which has enabled him to read philosophical texts in their original languages⁷ .

3- Features of his approach:

His philosophical practice is characterised by a combination of 'logical analysis' and 'linguistic exegesis', drawing on the insights of Sufi experience [citation needed], within the framework of

presenting concepts related to the Islamic heritage and grounded in the most significant achievements of contemporary Western thought in the fields of 'discourse theory', 'argumentative logic' and 'philosophy of ethics'. This has led him to adopt an approach to philosophy characterised by a predominantly 'pragmatic' and 'ethical' orientation.⁸

4 – His works:

- The Logic of Philosophy.
- Language and Philosophy: A Treatise on the Linguistic Structures of the Study of Being (in French), 1979.
- A Treatise on the Logic of Argumentative and Natural Inference and its Models (in French), 1985
- Logic and Formal Grammar, 1985.
- On the Foundations of Dialogue and the Renewal of Theology, 1987.
- Religious Practice and the Renewal of Reason, 1989.
- The Renewal of the Method in the Evaluation of the Heritage, [1st ed., 1994], 2nd ed., 2001.
- The Jurisprudence of Philosophy. 1 – Philosophy and Translation, 1996.
- Language and Balance, or Intellectual Multiplicity, 1998.
- The Jurisprudence of Philosophy. 2 – The Philosophical Discourse: The Book of Concepts and Theorisation, 1999.
- The Question of Ethics: A Contribution to the Ethical Critique of Western Modernity, 2000.
- Dialogues for the Future, 2000.
- The Arab Right to Philosophical Dissent, 2002.
- The Islamic Right to Intellectual Dissent, 2005.
- The Spirit of Modernity: An Introduction to the Foundations of Islamic Modernity, 2006.
- Modernity and Resistance, 2007.
- The Question of Action: A Study of the Practical Foundations of Thought and Science, 2012.
- The Spirit of Religion: From the Narrowness of Secularism to the Broadness of Faith, 2012.
- Dialogue: A Horizon for Thought, 2013.
- The Misery of Eternity: A Faith-Based Critique of the Separation of Ethics from Religion, 2014.
- The Question of Methodology: Towards the Foundations of a New Intellectual Model, 2015.
- Post-Dahranian Drift: A Trust-Based Critique of the Departure from Ethics, 2016.
- From the Mutilated Human to the Abundant Human, 2016.

- o The Religion of Modesty. From Consensus Jurisprudence to Trust-Based Jurisprudence. 1. The Foundations of Trust-Based Reasoning, Arab Foundation for Thought and Creativity, 2017.
- o The Religion of Modesty: From Delegated Jurisprudence to Trust-Based Jurisprudence. 2. The Ethical Challenges of the Media and Communications Revolution, Arab Foundation for Thought and Creativity, 2017.
- o The Religion of Modesty: From Participatory Jurisprudence to Trust-Based Jurisprudence. 3 – The Spirit of the Hijab, Arab Foundation for Thought and Creativity, 2017.
- o The Question of Violence: Between Trust and Dialogue, 2017⁹

Section Two: Types of Translation According to Taha Abdel Rahman:

Taha Abdel Rahman's engagement with philosophy led him to distinguish more profoundly between philosophical texts and other types of texts; consequently, his theory of types of translation stemmed from this conception of the '—the distinctive nature of the philosophical text. Thus, when asked about his classificatory distinction between types of translation, he attempts to attribute this to philosophy: 'The first classification, then ['acquisitive', 'conveying' and 'grounded' translation] is a division of the 'methods of philosophising' employed in the translation of philosophical texts, whilst the second division [literal translation and free translation] is a division of the 'methods of communication' employed in texts in general."¹⁰, which Taha Abdel Rahman refers to, in a synthesis of philosophy and translation, as 'translational methods of philosophising'.

1- Analytical translation:

is characterised by three features, namely: 1

- **Total contradiction**: This contradiction arises from the loss of the texts' abstract, general meanings during translation, due to a failure to take into account the differences between the text's various contexts and contents (intellectual, doctrinal, cultural, etc.etc.) and the particulars and specificities of the narrow field of usage. Consequently, the recipient fails to distinguish between the abstract 'general human' and cultural, doctrinal or other specificities. This type of transmission (translation): 'causes the recipient's mind to be torn between two conflicting types of rhetorical imperatives: the first being the constraints of the translational reality, which involve particularisation and restriction; and the second being the demands of the philosophical imperative [doctrinal and practical in the context of Qur'anic translation], which involve generalisation and absoluteness.'¹¹.

2. Total reproduction: The literal translator reproduces everything verbatim – as the saying goes – and does not intervene in the translated text to remove anything that conflicts with the recipient's intrinsic and specific characteristics (epistemological, cultural, doctrinal, etc.etc.) of the recipient. This blind reproduction stifles critical thinking and hinders expressive potential, so that:

'The literal translator pays no heed to this disparity in expression and thought; he may attribute its causes to incidental linguistic phenomena, or, if he attributes it to philosophical shortcomings [epistemological, cultural, doctrinal...etc.] in the source language; a deficiency which, in his view, can only be remedied by ensuring that the requirements of the target language are fully met.'¹²

3. The linguistic approach: This refers to the academic translator's tendency towards textual literalism, which leads them to: 'be strict in preserving [the characteristics of verbal phrasing and syntactic structure].'¹³ of the source text at the expense of the target text (the objective); however, the translator may deviate from this literalism for fear of being labelled as deficient or incompetent, and thus attempt to adopt methods of free translation. Yet this does not add anything of significance to the translation that would be of benefit to the recipient. These three characteristics – according to Taha Abd al-Rahman – are possessed by the seeker of knowledge who aims to acquire science and knowledge; therefore, he described those who adopt this approach to translation as 'the acquisitive translator'.

2- Communicative translation:

Taha Abdel Rahman sought to distinguish communicative translation, like its predecessor, by three characteristics, namely:

1. Partial inconsistency: This manifests in the organisation of the text into sections¹⁴ : its comprehensiveness (overarching frameworks), its meaning (epistemological content), its breadth (intellectual approaches), and its interconnectedness (its connection to the other thought from which it is translated). The less these parts are extracted and evoked (omitted), the further the translation strays from authenticity; and the more these parts are realised and present, the closer the translation comes to accuracy and literalism. Taha Abdel Rahman has arranged these descriptive parts of the text as follows: 'The first of these paradigmatic characteristics is comprehensiveness, followed by purposefulness (meaning), then expansiveness (reason), and finally connectivity (subordination).'¹⁵ These elements, in their association with these descriptions, relate specifically to the philosophical text, and they vary according to the nature of each text.

2. Major Transmission: Communicative transmission is characterised by selectivity that is suited to the nature of the recipient, lest it: 'undermine their most firmly established doctrinal principles and most general linguistic rules.'¹⁶ However, this selectivity may not apply to all foundational principles and all branches, which results in distorted and patchwork representations; this is borne out by philosophy, according to Taha Abdel Rahman. Consequently: 'The majority-based transmission adopted by interpretive translation may yield some benefit when accompanied by the least possible contradictions between philosophy and translation.'¹⁷ . The relationship here is directly proportional.

3. The epistemological approach: The interpretative translator's approach to the text differs from that of the accumulative translator in that the former attempts to access the text's meanings and knowledge without conflicting with the recipient's discursive sphere; but such a translator is unable to distinguish between established, correct knowledge and mere opinions and conjectures; in other words, between definitive truths and ambiguous aspects of the other's knowledge. This leads them to believe: 'that comprehensive knowledge transfer serves the purpose of scientific acquisition ... [and that] this clash [between such transfer and the recipient's knowledge within their communicative context] results from the presence of some form of potential deficiency in this original knowledge.'¹⁸ This leads him to adopt a certain literalism in transmission; yet this does not enable him to resolve the conflict entirely, and to the extent of this literalism, he imitates the other's way of thinking and certain aspects of their knowledge that have not yet matured, accepting them as unquestionable axioms.

It is these characteristics that led Taha Abdel Rahman to liken the translator to a narrator who reveals certain aspects of a story whilst concealing others; he is a conveyor in accordance with the principle of transmission. For this reason, he termed such a translator the 'transmissive translator'.

3- Adaptive translation:

Taha Abdel Rahman prefers this type of translation to the two previous ones because it takes the recipient's discursive context into account in a sensitive, precise and comprehensive manner, enabling the self to benefit from the other without compromising its own thought, beliefs and culture...Etc. It is characterised by selecting what the recipient needs with complete and careful discretion: 'extracting from it the problematic passages and the inferential mechanisms therein.'¹⁹ without breaching the rules of Arab-Islamic discourse, and it is characterised by the following three features:

1. Total harmony: Total harmony between the translation and the text cannot be achieved unless the translator believes that their language is more capable and more entitled than any other to grasp the text's scholarly, epistemological content (the spirit of the text); indeed, language is knowledge itself, clothed in linguistic form to convey purposes and meanings: 'It may even be said that the verbal nature of translation and the intentional nature of philosophy [knowledge] are two aspects of a single reality, namely 'the linguistic reality of humankind'.'²⁰ Consequently, the authentic translator must exercise as much creative licence as they wish in pursuit of autonomy and the realisation of creative visions, by forming an 'opinion' and acquiring a 'vision', and by immersing these authentic translated texts at the very heart of discursive usage, so that they may live through it and be brought to life by it. Moreover, authentic translation grants its texts a passport to the knowledge and content of the Arab-Islamic discursive sphere, so that they bear fruit alongside others, standing tall in their originality and self-sufficiency²¹.

2. Minimal

Transference: The authentic translator almost obliterates the features of the source text; indeed, they must do so. This is achieved through two mechanisms: the mechanism of adaptation, whereby: 'they seek to adapt it in accordance with the circumstances of the recipient.'²² and the mechanism of coverage, whereby they work to: 'cover the descriptions of the text... with pragmatic descriptions that prompt the recipient to act...'.²³ Through research and diligence, the interpretive translator avoids anything that might lead to substitution, repetition, (unnecessary) verbosity, or the suppression of what is required in the target language. This applies to both the fundamentals and the details, for: ' Since the authentic translator employs in his rendering all the mechanisms of interpretation and adaptation—such as omission, substitution, addition and parallelism—he retains from the original text... of the original text except for the indispensable parts, because the aim is not to know everything in the original text, but rather how to philosophise [knowledge / action] starting from the text.'²⁴ Thus, the interpretive translator, whilst taking into account the requirements of discourse, conveys only that which can fulfil them to a degree that does justice to the essential content of the text, thereby working to stimulate thought and cultivate knowledge in the mind and consciousness of the recipient.

3 – The philosophical [epistemological / practical] approach: The interpretive translator must balance their expertise in translation (a thorough command of both languages) with their expertise in the academic discipline (a deep understanding of the subject matter, both in its fundamentals and branches), so that they may simplify the complex and make the difficult concepts of the source language accessible before they are conveyed into the recipient's language within their specific field of discourse—a context which the interpretive translator must keep firmly in mind at all times, in every detail and circumstance. and this translator may resort to the literal-accurate method or the communicative method for specific purpose-oriented needs which he aims to fulfil for the recipient, such as using it to clarify his difference from others, or to broaden the horizons of thought and methods of work; this is what Taha Abdel Rahman termed ' 'controlled clash': 'It is introduced by the translator intentionally, and the recipient receives it whilst being aware of this intention.'²⁵

Therefore, the interpretive translator proceeds in accordance with the recipient's needs, on the one hand, having gained an understanding of the recipient, their requirements, and their capacity and potential to engage with (philosophising) and working; on the other hand, this translator's approach is guided by the requirements of Arab-Islamic discourse, so as to achieve an 'independent and well-established cultural presence' through which they recognise their own distinctiveness—which must possess a robust immunity against the coloured and subjugated assaults of the other. Only then can they descend into the realm of literal translation, and thus: ' the authentic translator is able to completely resolve the contradiction between translation and philosophy.... [for] he takes the stance of one who seeks to present such a text, both in terms of its content and its impact.'²⁶ Consequently, this translation is better able than its counterparts to

lay the foundations for knowledge, action and philosophy, which is why Taha Abdel Rahman chooses to call it 'the foundational translation'.

Section Three: A reading of the 'theory of the weighty statement' in the translation of the Holy Qur'an.

1- The Basic Premise: Taha Abdel Rahman attempts to establish this theory by examining the purpose and usefulness of translation in general, stating: 'I have based this argument on a fundamental premise, namely: that translation without a defined aim is nothing but futility.'²⁷ Accordingly, Taha Abdel Rahman points out that whilst the translation of a philosophical text seeks to equip the recipient with the capacity for philosophical reflection, the translation of a religious text is an attempt to equip the recipient with the capacity for religious devotion. Here, Taha Abdel Rahman pauses to pose a question with which he opens his theory of the 'weighty discourse', stating:- What degree of faith does the translation of the Qur'an require in order to enable the recipient to practise religion? He also seeks to point out that the translation of the Qur'an is based on a fundamental paradox, namely that: the translation of discourse is a scientific practice ≠ Qur'anic discourse is practical speech; it is not theoretical or scientific discourse.

2- The Holy Qur'an ... and the 'Weighty Word': Allah, the Exalted, says: 'We shall cast upon you a weighty word.'²⁸ Allah, the Exalted, has described His Qur'an as a 'weighty word', and here Taha Abdel Rahman pauses to ask us about the nature of this 'weight' in this supreme utterance, dividing it according to the three pillars of speech: A. The Speaker: 'It is a sacred essence that speaks from beyond the senses; and although it is beyond the senses, it addresses sentient beings and creates sensory speech within these sentient beings.'²⁹ Thus, the Speaker in this utterance is characterised by transcendence.

b. The spoken: which is 'speech that is inexhaustible, innumerable, imperishable, unceasing, and unshakeable in its place; it ceaselessly acts and creates wherever it is spoken, for it is of the nature of "Be, and it is."³⁰ Thus, it is characterised by the attribute of infinity.

C. The Addressee: This is 'the sum total of all possible worlds, represented in the person of the Messenger, peace be upon him...' and as such, it is characterised by universality.

We therefore say that the Holy Qur'an is a weighty utterance because, in terms of the Speaker (the One who utters it), He is transcendent; in terms of the Utterance (that which is uttered), it is infinite; and in terms of the Addressee (the One to whom it is addressed), it is universal.

3- The translation ... the 'light' utterance: As for the opposite extreme—namely, the translation, whose speaker is 'not transcendent, whose content is finite, and whose recipient is not universal'—when these attributes are contrasted with those of the 'weighty' utterance, they can only constitute a 'light' utterance.

And since a translation, like human texts, is considered a secondary version: 'However high its quality and fidelity, it does not rise to the rank of the original it conveys, nor can it replace it.' Thus, it is a lighter utterance than the original: 'What, then, if the original is an explicit divine

utterance—that is, an utterance of which nothing is heavier—in which case the translation is lighter than anything that is light.’ This paradox, which Taha Abdel Rahman constructs on the basis of the Qur’anic terminology, serves to affirm the miraculous nature of the Qur’an’s translation, whilst clarifying the status of both the divine and the human.

4- Between the weighty utterance and the light utterance: in a line of questioning that seeks to bring together the contrasting opposites between the human and the divine, Taha Abdel Rahman clarifies this through a key question which states:

- How can a human utterance in a foreign (non-Arabic) language—which is lighter than anything light—convey a divine Arabic utterance that is heavier than anything heavy?

Taha Abd al-Rahman distinguishes between two types of transmission: A. The Gabrielic transmission (Gabriel, peace be upon him): This is ‘the transmission in which the transfer takes place from the divine source—which may be a discourse, a tablet or a book—to a human language by special divine permission.’ B. Promethean Recitation (): ‘This is the recitation in which the transmission from the divine source to a human language takes place without specific divine permission; and to transmit without permission constitutes an act of appropriation or misappropriation, as it involves a violation of the sanctity of the source.’ Here, Taha Abd al-Rahman distinguishes between the inspired Gabrielic rendering and the uninspired Promethean rendering, drawing the following conclusion from this distinction: ‘The lighter foreign expression cannot, by its very nature, be a Gabrielic rendering of the heavier Arabic expression; at most, it can be a Promethean rendering.’ Taha Abdel Rahman then dismisses any attempt to translate the Qur’an as a Brumitian rendering, fraught with errors arising from misappropriation—which he terms ‘the darkness of distance’. Here, he pauses to question the foundations of translating the ‘heavy’ text, asking:

- If it is true that every translation of ‘heavy speech’ is a Promethean translation,
- how can translators confront the act of misappropriation and emerge from the ‘darkness of distance’?

5- The foundations of the theory of ‘heavy discourse’: Taha Abdel Rahman acknowledges that an authentic translation of ‘heavy discourse’ protects its author from the ‘darkness of distance’, and proceeds to outline the foundational elements of authentic ‘heavy discourse’ as the basis for his theory.

1. The first foundation: overturning the traditional conception of the nature of the original and its transmission; we must invert the relationship between them due to the specific nature of the ‘heavy saying’. It was widely believed that the original text conveyed by the translator represents the ‘other’ (the other – the foreign), whilst its translation represents the ‘self’ (the self – the familiar). Thus, the disagreement amongst translation theorists centred on which is more deserving of preservation: do we preserve the self from the original, or do we preserve the other?

However, according to Taha Abdel Rahman, this conception does not hold true in the relationship between the 'heavy utterance' and the 'Promethean utterance'; indeed, the opposite is true: 'The heavy utterance is that which takes the place of the self, not that of the Other.' This is because God is your mediator between you and yourself, and I cannot know my self except through the heavy utterance, whilst the Promethean utterance is...

Two important consequences follow from this new conception. The first is a change in the concept of 'authentic translation', whereby it becomes a process of transporting the recipient's own self to a level that fulfils the requirements of the original text. The second is the principle of translation, which states that the aim of any translation is to render the original text superfluous to the reader; this principle is rendered null and void, and its opposite becomes the guiding principle. Thus, authentic translation creates in the reader the impetus and motivation to return to the original text.

2. The second foundation: replacing plagiarism with quotation. It is ironic that the more the translator strives for communicative accuracy, the closer they come to plagiarism and the more it manifests in the text; this is because authorisation for such a translation is lacking on two counts: the outward and the inward. As for the outward aspect, it is impossible for the 'light' statement (the translation) to be a Qur'an suitable for worship, legislation and obedience; as for the inward aspect, the 'light' statement does not convey the authentic secrets of the Qur'an. It is therefore necessary to move from a state of plagiarism to a state of quotation, and this can be achieved in two ways: Firstly, one must be certain not to translate the 'heavy' text; rather, one translates 'from' the 'heavy' text by surrendering oneself to the original text in a state of complete absorption, so that an understanding of the text is imprinted upon one's heart as a spiritual and emotional reaction that conveys a sense of the majesty of the Source. The second is for the translator to realise that, unlike other utterances, the 'weighty words' are characterised by the inseparable union of knowledge and action; thus, one must not extract from the Qur'an the abstract intellectual meaning without also conveying the reasons for and signs of action.

3. The third foundation: obtaining permission to translate. For one who is knowledgeable in both the Arabic and foreign languages is not qualified to translate the 'weighty saying' until they acquire the ability to rise from the rank of transmitter to that of the comprehender, indeed to the rank of the practitioner; for meaning has no value unless accompanied by action, and specific authorisation for translation is obtained when one moves from discerning the profound message with one's intellect to receiving it with one's living heart; for this there are two signs: the first is that one is imbued with faith, so as to attain the privilege of 'descent'—which is the renewed reception of the meanings of the message that was revealed in its words to the first recipient

(the Prophet, peace be upon him); as for the second, it is that his soul is joined by a second soul of a different nature, for it is inconceivable that his animal soul could receive the Holy Qur'an.

4- **The fourth foundation:** Dispelling the darknesses of distance. These are of two kinds: the darknesses of estrangement; we summarise them briefly as follows: – Disrespecting the weighty words; – Being deluded by offering similar examples; – Engaging in substitution and distortion. As for the darkness of alienation, this is: – That the Truth, Glorified and Exalted be He, ‘does not hear you’, ‘does not speak to you’ and ‘does not look upon you’

Conclusion:

It becomes clear to us, in the end, that Taha Abdel Rahman has upheld the requirements of Arab and Islamic discourse in dealing with the Holy Qur’an; not only that, but he has also worked to establish a systematic framework of guidelines and principles for the act of translation, ensuring it has an effective and fruitful presence within the human psyche, by identifying the points of translational difficulty in the Holy Qur’an, He also integrated the authenticity of Arab-Islamic thought into its sacred spirituality, heartfelt sentiments and intellectual particularities, which enabled him to ground Qur’anic translation in a harmonious balance and a selectivity suited to the nature of the Qur’anic discourse, We can now outline some points that highlight the merits of this theory on the one hand, whilst also illustrating the extent to which translation theory has evolved in response to the requirements of Arabic-Islamic usage:

- The Holy Qur’an is a unique and exceptional case, which Taha Abd al-Rahman characterised as ‘weighty discourse’, describing it with three attributes: transcendence, infinity and universality.
- The necessity of fulfilling the conditions required by these attributes.
- Authentic translation of the Qur’an does not mean rendering the ‘heavy speech’ into ‘light speech’, but rather means establishing one’s self within the ‘heavy speech’.
- Authorisation is considered a given; it is, therefore, the translator’s complete identification with the Qur’an through their faith, supported by the Holy Spirit.
- The translator must be mindful of the pitfalls that hinder the translation of profound discourse, namely: not overstepping the bounds of the Holy Qur’an; not being misled into producing something similar to it; and not altering or distorting it according to one’s own whims.
- The translator must seek, through the transmission of the ‘weighty words’, reward and recompense, balancing words with deeds.

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- ¹¹ – *Ibid.*, p. 303.
- ¹² – Taha Abdel Rahman: *The Jurisprudence of Philosophy (1) – Philosophy and Translation*, p. 304.
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- ¹⁹ – *Ibid.*, p. 354.
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²⁷ – A video lecture by Dr Taha Abdul Rahman entitled: ‘The Weighty Word and Authentic Translation: Horizons and Limits’. Downloaded from the internet on 10 August 2018 at 10.22 am from the website: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l66haGW_1wo.

²⁸ – Verse: [Al-Muzzammil: 5]

²⁹ – A video lecture by Dr Taha Abdul Rahman entitled: ‘The Weighty Word and Authentic Translation: Horizons and Limits’

³⁰ – Same source as above.