

Consistency of linguistic domain of the Quran of Quds with Dehei dialect in central plateau of Iran

Ali Akbar Nargesian

Natanz branch, Islamic Azad University, Natanz, Iran

Abstract: Translation of Quds Quran is of special value from the perspective of Persian language history. This valuable work has also allocated a special position to itself from the view of translating Quran to Persian language, since some existing documents indicate that the creation of this valuable work belongs to the time of language separation between Middle Persian and New Persian. The history of Persian language during the early centuries after Islam is an aura of mystery. And the Persian written inheritance in Arabic script which has remained from the language separation era or silence period is very little. Dr. Ravaghi, the hardworking editor and introducer of Quds Quran says: "Quds Quran is worth of profound historical social research ; and as a historical document of Persian language, it must be studied and researched by Persian language researchers and linguists." In this paper, the author has analyzed Quds Quran by studying the language domain of translation of Quds Quran and its similarities with Dehei dialect (Boreh and Bashe).

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1. Introduction

In the Sassanid era, education and knowledge was devoted to certain classes of the society and it was impossible for all to pick clusters of the knowledge harvest. Moreover, "it was unjust to teach people reading and writing." (Tamimday, 2009 : 98) Therefore at that time, most people were familiar with their own native language just through conversation in society or in family and ordinary people didn't know how to read and write. But after the emergence of Islam in Iran and its acceptance by Iranian scientists specially people of Transoxiana (Big Khorasan), they used Quranic or Arabic script and this way they opened the doors of learning and education to public and ended the domination of Pahlavi written language. This event led to the gradual training of scientists and scholars in first century who had good command of both oral and written Persian language. Then they began to spread theological and Quranic science in Persian language and on the other hand they published Persian culture and sciences in Arabic language in Islamic countries among which Persian translations of Quran such as translation of the Quds Quran, Arabic books such as Tabari History in Arabic and its translation in Persian entitled Tabari Interpretation, Bal'ami history, science evolution (Ehya'ol Oloom) by Imam Mohammad Ghazali and its translation in Persian by the same author entitled Prosperity Chemical (kimiya-ye Sa'adat) can be referred to (Mahootian Shahrzad, (1997).

1.1. Quran of Quds

The precious Quran in manuscript translated by "Quds translator" is an ancient translation by an unknown translator which is maintained in the library

of Astan-E Quds-E Razavi as number 54. The date of its compilation is unknown, but Quranic and literary researchers consider it as one of the most precious and ancient and perfect translations of Quran in Persian language. Respected researcher Dr. Ali Ravaghi after several years of doing research and attempting hard published this translation in 1985 and introduced it to Quranic society and Persian literature and from then it became known as "Quds Quran" or "Quran of Quds translator". "Quran of Quds" is both an example of an accurate, perfect and conscious translation of Quran and an indicator of people's need and their attention to translating Quran to Persian language." (Mahootian Shahrzad, (1997).). The manuscript translation contains 205 large pages bigger than that of Vaziri with external size of (29*30) cm. Each line is as long as 24cm. Its pages are fawn-colored and thick but they are Vera damaged in edge. There is no date of its writing or its translation or the name of writer or translator in text or in the margin of the book. The existing manuscript lacks any ornament or illumination like what exists today, but in the margin of some pages there are several spiral, concentric, radial bearing circles or semicircles which have made it really attractive. Arabic writing of the book goes back to the time when Quranic verses and suras were not numbered yet. Each surah begins with "In the name of God" (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ) in one bold line except the "surah of repentance" and after the name of each prophet the expression "peace be upon her" is used. Arabic and Persian texts lack any punctuations, symbols or letter signs or any division to smaller sections (verse, chapter, unit, part). There are no Quranic signs such as / æ / (َ), / e / (ِ), / o / (ُ), or /an/ (َ), /en/ (ِ)

),/on/ (َ) like what exists today, but on stressed letter the sign of stress (َ) is seen. Some punctuations related to the first century which were invented by Abolvasad Dueli (death : 69 solar year) are seen on letters such as hollow or full circles, not as bold as the background color, which are used as vowels /æ /, / e /, / o /, above, below, or in front of letters. Also Tanvin (diphthongs) are places as two vertical dots above, below, and in front of words respectively. Most similar letters with or without dots and letters with tooth are written like the past style, that is without dots or tooth both some similar letters in one word are distinguished by placing dots such as /d/ (د) and /z/ (ذ) and /b/ (ب), /t/ (ت), /θ/ (ث) and /s/ (س), /š/ (ش), and /j/ (ج), /h/ (ح), /x/ (خ). Arabic text is written in changed legible Kufic script – in comparison to old Kufic script- and with black ink. Persian text is written in middle Naskh which is not very ancient. This balanced translation is considered as one of the rich sources of studying and knowing Persian language and local-regional dialects. “Although the historical social value of most ancient translations overweigh their linguistic value, this precious translation is important not only from the view of the history of translation to Persian language but also from the perspective of the history of language and is considered as one of the most precious and unique literary works.” (Lazard, Gilbert, 1971). Translation of Quran began since the beginning of Islam with the efforts of Salman Farsi and has continued until today (Windfuhr, Gernot. 2009). Lots of essays and books have been written about the history of translation and translations of Quran. Translation of the Quran of Quds is a literal -- word-for-word – translation written between lines. The translator has tried to write Persian words one by one under the Quranic terms. This method is as old as one thousand years and many of independent translations or the translations of predecessors’ interpretations, like the translation of Cambridge copy, translation of pure Quran, and translation of some part of ancient interpretation, Tabari interpretation, and Surabadi interpretation are of this kind. For example in translating (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ) it has come, In the name of the God of Kindness, merciful along. Also in translating verses 4, 5, and 12 of Safat Surah it has come:

(إِنَّ إِلَهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ)

Your God is one.

(رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَبَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشَارِقِ)

The God of heavens and the Earth and that of between them and the God of the East.

(وَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا لَا يَذَكَّرُونَ)

They were given advice by us, **they** won't accept any advice. Translation style of Quds Quran is an

expressive one like ancient translations, and the translator has tried to make a translation which on one hand expresses Quranic meanings and on the other hand will be a tool for knowing and understanding Quran. Therefore it seems that less attention is paid to the structure of sentences. Translation is in the form of simple and fluent prose without any rhyme and for ordinary people in an area with special language and is free from any technical verbal, scientific or artistic expressions. Moreover, there is no explanation about the contents in the text or in the margins. It seems that the translator has mainly tried to offer a perfect pure translation without any extra information and in this style he has translated the words and expressions very carefully and cautiously by finding proper equivalence and or making equivalence and by using borrowed words from Arabic language or local terms. In examining translation, many cases are found in which the translator himself has created new terms through combination and derivation by means of prefixes, infixes, and suffixes such as

(تنها کان = *Tanhakan*)

(راست کرگرفتن = *rast kargereftan*)

(وراوروزند = *vera varvarzand*)

(ستم کناران = *setamkenaran*)

(ترساکان = *Tarsnakan*)

(در گرفتار = *dar gereftar*)

(پدیده آمداران = *padideh umdaran*)

(نیکبختشداران = *Nikbakhshadaran*)

(نیشتاوانیدید = *nishtavanidid*) and etc.

Deriving local-regional terms is another feature of this style which is found a lot in the text such as:

گرسنه: *gorse* : *gorosneh*) = hungry

گیوه گان: *givekan* : *Bive gan*) = widows

عنکبوت *کنک*: *kang* : *ankaboot*) = spider

دجک: *dojak* : *gereh, oghde*) = knot

چراغ دان *کلونک*: *kolunak* : *cheraghdan*) = light stick

Another feature of this translation is using a few Arabic terms with little changes in Persian text:

In verses 66 and 73 of Surah Ya Sin:

(وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَطَمَسْنَا عَلَىٰ أَعْيُنِهِمْ...)

ار خواهیم مها کنیم ور چشمها ایشان...

If we want to cover their eyes

وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ وَمَشَارِبٌ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ

وايشان را در آنجا منفعت هايی و شميدن جای هايی ای شکر نمی گزارند

And there are benefits and drinks for them there, but they do not thank.

Another characteristic is applying words which are derived from Arabic text without making

any changes in them. Although these borrowed terms are not a lot in comparison to those of 6th and 7th solar centuries translations (12th and 13th C), whenever the translator has not been able to find a Persian equivalence for a word, or to make an equivalence himself, he has exactly entered some Arabic terms in Persian language which is somehow remarkable. Some examples are as follows:

(دُحُوراً وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ وَاصِبٌ) (صافات/9):

به دور کردن و ایشان را عذابى دائم بهد

Avoid them and for them there is an everlasting punishment (Safat: 9)

(وَ يَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ...) (سبا/6):

گینند ایشان کداده شدند علم...

And they see those who were given knowledge (Saba: 6)

(كُلًّا نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَتِ الْمَوْتِ...) (انبيا/35):

هر نفس چشیدار مرگی است...

Each soul will taste death (Prophets: 35)

(وَ إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُوراً)

(احزاب/12) که می گفتند منافقان و ایشان کدر دلها ایشان بیماری وعده نکرد ایما را خدای و پیغامبر اوی بی فریب.

And when he says to hypocrites and those who have unhealthy hearts, they would not accept the promise of God and his prophet but proudly.

The Quran of Quds has been translated by an unknown translator. There is no sign of the translator in this book. The date of its writing is unknown and it can't be surely said when or where or in what language domain it has been formed. But some guesses have been made by researchers based on the linguistic evidences and witnesses. Dr. Ravaghi, the respected editor of holy Quran of Quds considers this translation as the most ancient translation to Persian believes that it is closer to middle Persian due to the morphological and the conjugation forms and the words used in it. He argues that this Quran belongs to the second half of third solar century or the first half of fourth century. (Ravaghi, 1985: 10). Considering the time of writing the Quran of Quds, Professor Gilbert Lazar believes that with regard to the use of verb making prefix "mi-" instead of "hami-" and the preposition "dar" instead of "andar" in translated text, this translation is not older than the fifth solar century in spite of all its ancient signs and preferably belongs to the second half of 5th century. (Lazar, 2005: 158). Another researcher has stated about the time of translation that: "This ancient precious work has been written in old Kufic script and its writing seems to belong to the late first solar century which is

equivalent to 8th or 9th century A.D." (Rypka, Jan. 1968). Various guesses made about the writing time of the text could be studied based on the script and the linguistic signs used in the text but considering the script of Quran which is developed Kufic script and the black ink which is used and the translation which is written in elementary Naskh script and under the lines, it seems that both Quran and its translation had been written in the same time due to the similar color of the ink used in them as in translator's manuscripts it is assumed that both the original text and its translation belong to the same period of time. Based on this assumption there are some script signs which can direct us toward the estimated time of its writing. Quran's manuscripts attributed to the companions of the prophet (PBUH) or Imams (AS) which have been written after the death of the holy prophet (PBUH) lack any punctuation or writing signs or shapes and similar letters are free from dots. The script used by Arabs in early periods of Islam for showing the sounds of vowels or voiceless sounds and recognizing similar letters was very simple and elementary and free from symbols or signs of today's scripts. At first Arabs were reading Quran loudly and accurately without any mistakes due to their own intelligence and their interest and with the help of their strong memory and there were rarely mistakes in their readings. But after the expansion of geographical territory of the Moslems to other Arab and non-Arab lands and linguistic exchanges of words and accents and dialects, arrangements of changes in accents and eloquent language were provided. Arab scholars set out the writing rules and grammar to modify eloquent accent for reading and memorizing Quran. In the book of the history of holy Quran it is said:

First, simple and complete grammar was made for Arabic language in first half of first century under the command of Amir Al-Mo'menin Imam Ali (PBUH) and with the attempts of Abolasvad Dueli. He began to punctuate and use phonetic symbols for vowels in Quranic letters and words for the first time. (Hojati, 456 : 1985).

The signs made by Abolasvad, were very simple and elementary like these:

01. /æ/ (above) : a hollow circle on the letter

02. /e / (under) : a hollow circle under the letter

03. /o/ (next to) : a hollow circle in front of the letter

This signs are used in the Quran of Quds instead of forms, signs and symbols of vowels.

From this viewpoint, the book has been written earlier than 4th or 5th centuries (10th and 11th centuries. A.D.).

From linguistic viewpoint, the ancient language of translation and using very rare or obsolete words are remarkable:

خیش (khish) : mud
 کنک (kank): spider
 بارخواری (barkhari): ignorance and unawareness
 ستادی (setadi): shelter
 کینوا (kinva) :trunk
 از (azan): mate
 برموگیرید (bar mou girid) : wait
 بارخواری کردم (barkhari kardam) : I exceeded
 دجک بستید (dajak bastid): you promised
 راست کر گرفت (rast kar gereft) : he believed
 دندان سپید کرد (dandan sepid kard): smiled, laughed
 Also some linguistic signs of Middle Persian are used
 such as «و» (va) instead of «گو» (gu) and
 گورده (gurde) = ورده (varde) = برده (borde) : has taken
 گوافته (Guofte) = وافته (vafte) = بافته (bafte)
 گوه (guh) = ووه (vah) wow

The beginning «ب» /b/ of Middle Persian in this translation is used as «گ» /g/ :

گتر (gatar) = بتر (batar): better
 گیوه (give) = بیوه (bive): widow
 گهشت (gehesht) = بهشت (behesht): put
 گیند (ginad) = بیند (binad): will see

Second person pronoun is used as

تو (toa)(you) and first person as ایما (Ima)(we) ... and using the word "ابی" from Middle Persian as "بی" and with the same meanings لا (ala)(Ay) ، الی (ela) (to), لکن (laken) (but) and special script of certain terms such as ان آن (aan) (that), خورشید: خورشید (Khorshid) (Sun), همتان: همتایان (Jahan)(world), جهان (hamtayan) (the same), ماه (Mah) : مایگان (mayegan) (Moon) and making plural nouns by suffixes "آن" (aan) and "ها" (ha), in spite of other translated Qurans, not using Arabic irregular plural form in the translated text and using initiating "ا" (æ) such as یاد (ayad)= یاد

یاد (ayad):memory, اشتر (Oshtor)= شتر (shotor):camel,
 اشکم (eshkam)= شکم (shekam): belly

Are some other features of this style of translation?

2.1. Language domain of the Quran of Quds with Dehey dialect in central plateau of Iran

A number of words of the Quran of Quds have certain similarities with the dictionary of "Mohazabol-Asma" (purified names) "The History of Sistan" and "Masaderologhat"(word infinitive), and certainly all three books have been written in Sistan. This similarity of the terms of the Quran of Quds with these texts indicates that the translator of Quran must be probably from Sistan –Kerman. (Ravaghi, 1985:35). This is the first claim about the region of writing the Persian text of Quds Quran. In order to know the geographical region of this translation, Dr.Ravaghi has studied common words in ancient

texts. And with referring to lexical and structural characteristics, he finally proposed this theory in terms of geographical terms of the translation which belongs to Sistan.

Professor Lazar, believes that this work is close to ancient Persian-Jews while showing some dialect features and based on the presence of some obsolete and archaic words in the Quran of Quds, and he guesses that it was written in an area near the south east of Iran, that is Baloochestan. (Lazar, 2005: 159-162).

Although Dr Ravaghi believes that the translation of this Quran belongs to Sistan, he has also posed this question that : since every text including the translations of Quran has been created in response to social needs, have been people who were familiar with the language of this translation living in other places except Sistan, too? (Ravaghi, 1985:71). In response to this main question it should be noted that "in villages and small towns in central part of Iran and in the rural areas scattered along the deserts there are still numerous dialects including the dialects in areas between Kashan and Isfahan, dialects of Natanz and Naeen" (Clawson, Patrick. 2005). In relation to the dialects of central part of Iran which are generally called Raji, Madi dialects, some research has been done. Geokovski, Aranski, La Cook, and Yar Shater have done some valuable research in this area and have raised some arguments. Some of these linguists have classified all the dialects of this area under a series of signs in a general framework. Among the central dialects of the deserts of Kashan and Naeen, is Dehei dialect (Boreh and Basheh) in central plateau of Iran which is a part of the town of Natanz and is similar to the ancient dialect of this town which is known as Raji dialect. As mentioned before, dialect of Dehei is now very common in some districts and villages of Natanz. With an area of about 3400 km² and population of 50,000 people, Natanz is one of the 20 towns of Isfahan province which is located in an area between the central mountains of Iran (Karkas mountain) and the desert plain. This town includes a central part and a shrine. Shrine in desert area includes two small towns Badrood, Khaledabad, and several villages, among which Arisman that is 7 km far from Badrood is an ancient historical village. In 1966, archeologists have estimated that ancient Arisman is as old as third or fourth millennium B.C. Aryanpur, Manoochehr, believes that: "Arismani-Badroodi dialect or Dehei dialect is the ancient heritage of our ancestors and it is believed that this dialect has been originated from Ancient Farsi and Pahlavi" (Aryanpur, Manoochehr. 1973).

Zan (jen): woman, tondo tiz (Teij) : fast, Abriz (catchment) which is used as (?Owrij). (Dehghanian, 2007:22).

In the Quran of Quds the expression لامسئمة النساء (p.51) is translated as: bemajidid women. Majididan means to touch. Today in Arismani –Badroodi dialect, infinitives (vamojidan) and (bamojidan) mean to suck.

gadbakht(unlucky), Quds, p.195 : (vadbaxt)

sharestan(town), Quds, p. 191 : (šārestun)

shooyan(husbands), Quds, p. 3 : (šuy and šu)

VI niaz(rich), Quds, p. 412: (veniyāz)

Prefixes vi- and va- are still used in Raji-Arismani dialect: *va che (poor), va kho(for nothing) va Andaze (infinite)*

*Noon (then), Quds, p. 412 : Noon vaght : then
var godar (at the passage), Quds, p. 410 : godār
:neck*

var(next), Quds, p. 410 : (var)

vazgard(return), Quds, p. 411 : vāgel

Prefix va- is used a lot such as: *vāšte : must, vāke:*

open, vāxord(stopped), vāgašt:returned

Bazhdar(flame), Quds, p. 400: (baraxš)

Another common feature of Dehei dialect (Arismani-Badroodi) and the language of Quds Quran is that none of them has used utterances (mar), (mar ... ra), (hami) and (andar). They have both used beginning spellings (abi) and (bi).

4. Discussions

Since the translation style of the Quran of Quds is expressive, word-by-word, and under the lines, therefore the translator has used some new words and some words made by him and the words derived from Arabic language and from the region's geographical domain. Careful and cautious use of Persian equivalences has made the translation particularly valid but the main point is the structural compatibility and lexical similarity of the Quran of Quds and the ancient dialect of Dehei(Arismani - Badroodi). By studying and doing research on different dialects in several geographical regions the researcher included that in central plateau of Iran and in the deserts there were people who had the same dialect as that of geographical region of the Quran of

Quds, and some of their common words and expressions were referred to. Considering such common words it could be inferred that during the lifetime of the translator of the Quran of Quds, at least 70 to 80 percent of the language used in central plateau of Iran has been probably similar to the language of geographical domain of the Quran of Quds in the structure of applied words. Linguistic and structural features of translation of the Quran of Quds with the ancient dialect of Dehei (Arismani-Badroodi) which is itself a combination of several languages support this opinion and approves of it.

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Corresponding Author:

Ali Akbar Nargesian

Natanz branch, Islamic Azad University,Natanz, Iran
nargesian@gmail.com

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