

Book Introduction
The holy Qur'an.

Translated by O. V. Mir Ahmad Ali;

with special notes from Ayatullah Agha Haji Mirza Mahdi
Pooya Yazdi. New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 1988.

By: Sedighe Shakeri *

Abstract:

This is an excellent and easy to understand English Translation of the Quran that is a must for any person trying to learn about Islam. The best part of this translation compared to most others is the commentary and notes that accompany the text. The commentary is a great source of information and a huge help when trying to understand the environment at the time of the verses were revealed and so forth.

This book is accurate and very exceptional, especially for Shia Muslims.

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Structure of the book

The book includes the holy Qur'an with English translation of the Arabic text and a commentary in accordance with the sayings of the Ahlul Bayt . It also has special notes from Ayatullah Agha Haji Mirza Mahdi Pooya Yazdi on the philosophic aspects of some of the verses. The book has been translated by S.V.Mir Ahmad Ali who is a lecturer in Arabic and Persian.

The first edition of the present book was published in 1988 by Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc. Several other editions have also been printed. One edition was printed in Iran. The Fifth US Edition came out in 2005.

Because of the difficulty of adopting the English script for Arabic letters the general rule for transliteration couldn't be followed and new rules have been adopted. In some places, the translator has followed the phonetic method in spelling Arabic words to facilitate easy pronunciation.

The book starts with a prayer to be said before reciting the Qur'an narrated from Imam al-Sadiq (p.b.u.h.), in which he says: "O God, I bear witness that this is your scripture, revealed by you to your apostle, Mohammad ibn Abdullah, may God bless him and his household, that it is your speech, pronounced on the tongue of your Prophet..."

The book is divided into several chapters. Each chapter includes a Surah and some information about it. This is a unique feature which is scarcely found in similar books. The chapters and their sections are detailed in the "index".

Each chapter includes a Surah with related comprehensive details like:

- The name of the Surah with English equivalence
- A brief explanation of the Surah, the number of the verses it has, the place revealed at (Mecca or Medina or both)
- The verses on the right side of the Page are in Arabic and exactly on the opposite side of the Arabic pronunciation of each verse is the English translation
- A brief introductory note about the Surah
- Commentary on some of the verses

The book ends with the prayer narrated from the first holy Imam Amir Al-Mo'menin Ali (p.b.u.h.) to be recited after the completion of the recital of the holy Qur'an. The prayer starts like this:

"Enlighten my sight with Qur'an, liberate my tongue by Qur'an and ...

Some noticeable points about the book:

- This translation of the Quran has one of the best commentaries.
- Many of the verses in this translation have been explained in the footnotes.
- References are given for most of the footnotes/explanations to show that the explanation given is not the translator's own opinion.
- A footnote/side note is added whenever the translator thinks that a word in Arabic needs further clarification or can have more than one meaning.
- Wherever possible, the time and location when a given verse was revealed is also mentioned which helps the reader learn Quran better.

- The verses have been explained using the sayings of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and the sayings of the twelve Imams (peace be upon them).
- Some Sunni sources have also been mentioned, although that is done primarily to strengthen a particular point that has been mentioned in the translator's footnotes.

Explanation about cover page:

This picture illustrates the holy shrine of Shia's four infallible Imams (Imam al-Hasan, Imam al-Sajjad, Imam al-Baqir, Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon them all) located in al-Baqi, Medina, before its destruction on 8th of Shavval, 1344 A.H.)