

The Landscape of Translation Movement in the Arab World: From the 7th Century until the Beginning of the 21st Century

Fadi Jaber

School of Translation and Interpretation

Faculty of Arts

University of Ottawa, Canada

Abstract

According to the 3rd Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) (2003), contemporary translation movement in the Arab world is “weak and chaotic”. However, the Arab history witnessed astonishing eras of translation activities, productions, programs, and projects. This paper aims to trace translation movement in the Arab world and to investigate different aspects of this movement from the rise of Islam in the 7th century until the beginning of the 21st century. This study is divided into four main sections. First, it tackles the Arabic translation movement during the golden era and modern history. Second, it explores national and foreign translation programs and projects. Third, it investigates contemporary Arabic translation movement and current challenges. Finally, it looks at the Arabic machine translation (MT) systems and audiovisual translation. This paper closes with proposing general recommendations to enhance contemporary translation movement and translation activities in the Arab world for a knowledgeable Arab society in the globalized 21st century. The findings provide a better understanding of the changes that took place to the Arabic translation movement throughout different historical stages. As well, the findings uncover current shortcomings and challenges that encounter contemporary translation movement in the Arab world.

Keywords: Arabic translation movement, audiovisual translation, machine translation, translation programs, translation projects