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What are the distinctives of the translation “The True Meaning of the Gospel of Christ” and “The Bold Proclamation of the Apostles of Christ” into the Arabic language?

There is a long history of translating the Bible into the Arabic language. Even though we do not know the true history of its beginning, we nevertheless have a number of documents containing translated Bible portions going back to the ninth century A.D., translations which are connected to the Arabic Islamic context. Afterwards there were a number of attempts to translate in eastern Christian contexts, and more importantly in western Christian contexts, which led to the publishing of the Propaganda version in Rome in the second half of the 17th Century, a translation that was the basis of all the well-known modern Arabic translations, the most important being the Bustani/Smith/Van Dyck translation and the Jesuit translation. This leads us to speak of translations that in general fall into one of two families: translations in an Arab Christian and Muslim context and translations in an Eastern and Western Christian multicultural context, the most important of these being the Byzantine and Latin cultures. There are only a few humble translations from the first family, but they are distinguished by being put into an Arabic form and flavor, in which some ecclesiastical and theological terms are crafted into a beautiful Arabic form; while the translations of the second family are great and numerous, but loaded with terms and expressions Arabized from their Greek or Latin ecclesiastical forms, and having the flavor of those two languages.

In our opinion, the translation “The True Meaning” is a new achievement in the field of translation of the Bible into the Arabic language. The translators began where the translators in Arab contexts left off and advanced the work greatly. This translation has appeared as a unique work of art written in an authentic Arabic style, comprising theological and ecclesiastical terms, proper names, and linguistic expressions and style. This translation can be considered to be a new initiative open to development through future revisions and editions. It is clear that we now have two lines of translation: The eastern Christian line, rooted in Syriac, Byzantine and Latin cultures, and the Christian-Muslim Arab line preserving authentic Arabic language structures and expressions, including the rules of derivation and Arabization.

We anticipate that this translation will be distributed widely among readers of authentic Arabic and Christian and Muslim lovers of the language. This translation will have a significant influence on Christian Arabs or Arabic-speaking Easterners, who might consider reworking Arab Christian terminology used by Arab translators in the period of the first Revival of Arabic literature.

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