

# COHERENCE IN THE TRANSLATION OF AL-GHAZĀLĪ'S

## *AL-MUNQIDH MIN AD-ḌALĀL*

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### ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses translators' sensitivity towards argumentative classical texts. One major assumption this research intends to question is the ongoing debate of 'translation as a cohesive string of words' vs. 'translation as coherent whole texts' as presented in the rendered arguments of the Sufi master al-Ghazālī. This broaches the second assumption, which questions the overlap between the oral and the literal in al-Ghazālī's arguments. Moreover, this also raises the issue of the competency of native and non-native translators in transferring a sound argument across languages. The thesis at hand posits that translation is a delicate process and thus, 'discourse awareness' and 'text-type awareness' are considered essential in relaying a coherent text. Furthermore, al-Ghazālī's argumentation style cannot be said to be fixed as either 'oral' or 'literal', it is a blend of both. A non-native translator might be bilingual, but is not necessarily bicultural and hence, is often incapable of depicting how different languages handle rebuttal differently. In order to examine whether these argumentative texts shed their orality after being translated into a literal language, a translation quality assessment is carried out. The data examined consists of six excerpts from al-Ghazālī's book, *al-Munqidh min ad-Ḍalāl* "The Deliverance from Error", translated by two native English speakers, McCarthy and Watt, and one non-native speaker, Abulaylah. It is concluded that languages and cultures represent different mindsets which double the responsibility of translators. Knowledge of language is not enough, cultural, social, religious and ethical considerations need to be taken into account.

## A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

ArabicEnglish		ArabicEnglish	
أ	<i>a</i>	ض	<i>ḍ</i>
ب	<i>b</i>	ط	<i>ṭ</i>
ت	<i>t</i>	ظ	<i>ẓ</i>
ث	<i>th</i>	ع	<i>‘</i>
ج	<i>j</i>	غ	<i>gh</i>
ح	<i>ḥ</i>	ف	<i>f</i>
خ	<i>kh</i>	ق	<i>q</i>
د	<i>d</i>	ك	<i>k</i>
ذ	<i>dh</i>	ل	<i>l</i>
ر	<i>r</i>	م	<i>m</i>
ز	<i>z</i>	ن	<i>n</i>
س	<i>s</i>	ه	<i>h</i>
ش	<i>sh</i>	و	<i>w</i>
ص	<i>ṣ</i>	ي	<i>y</i>

ع is denoted by ' when not at the beginning of a word.

ث is denoted by *a*, except in *idāfa* constructions where it will be denoted by *t*.

**Short Vowels :**

ا is denoted by *a*

ي is denoted by *i*

و is denoted by *u*

**Long Vowels:**

أ / آ are denoted by *ā*

إ is denoted by *ī*

ؤ is denoted by *ū*

**Diphthongs:**

أَي is denoted by *ay*

أَوْ is denoted by *aw*

وْ is denoted by the doubling of the letter.

The divine name (*lafz al-jalāla*) will be transliterated as 'Allāh' in all cases.

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