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**“Constructing Muslims through Imperial Scholarship:
The British Orientalists and the Translation of the Qur’an”**

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This paper is a comparative study of the translations of Surah Maryam by five British Orientalists. It examines how the scholars who worked within the Empire constructed the Muslim subjects and their beliefs through the translation of the Qur’an. Surah Maryam is chosen as a case study because it contains theological issues that are of central importance to both Christian and Muslim beliefs, yet the Qur’anic account of these issues differs from the Biblical one. As such, it provides an interesting case to gauge the influence of the translators’ personal beliefs and biases on the translations they produced. This paper focuses on the translations by George Sale, J. M. Rodwell, E. H. Palmer, Richard Bell, and A. J. Arberry and compares the British translations with those produced by Muslims, and identifies both the translators’ understanding of this Surah and their errors in translation. The translators made mistakes on both theologically and non-theologically significant verses. The mistakes are attributed to two general reasons: religious prejudice toward Qur’anic text, and the lack of mastery of the Arabic language. These errors include omissions, inaccuracies, adhering to literal meaning, writing the pronouns referring to God in lower-case letters, mistranslations, factual confusions, and Biblical additions. Although Sale made the most mistakes, both Rodwell and Palmer made numerous errors. On the other hand, Bell was found to be more moderate, while Arberry made the least number of mistakes.