

## BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE JAPANESE TRANSLATIONS OF THE NAMES "RAHMAN" AND "RAHIM"

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**Abstract:** In translation, carefully selecting the right words and conveying their meanings accurately is a very complex and attentive task. This is especially true in the religious domain. When translating various words and terms unique to different religions and cultures into another language, additional explanations are certainly necessary to reveal the hidden meanings. In this article, we will examine and analyze the translations of Allah's names "Rahman" and "Rahim" into Japanese.

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**Key words:** "Rahman," "Rahim," mercy, compassion, love, Nabi, basmala

**Ключевые слова:** "Рахман," "Рахим," милосердие, доброта, любовь, Пророк, басмала

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According to Japanese Islamic scholar Mizutani Makoto, the relationship between Japan and Islam has only existed for a little over 100 years. Of course, this is a very short period, and perhaps Islam reached Japan even earlier. However, research and studies on Islam have been conducted during this time. Initially, there were many mistakes and shortcomings in the process of studying Islam. We can see this in the early translations and research works into Japanese, as well as in the translations of words and terms. For example, during this time, the word 「予言者」 (yogensha) used to express "prophet" was changed to 「預言者」 (yogensha). The kanji in the previously written 「予言者」 (yogensha) meant "fortune-teller," implying the meanings of "to foretell" or "to warn." The subsequently written word 「預言者」 (yogensha) meant receiving revelation from God and the task of protecting it. Rather than saying that the person who wrote 「予言者」 (yogensha), meaning fortune-teller, incorrectly translated the term that was originally the word "Nabi," it can be said that he made a very big mistake by misinterpreting this word from the beginning.

By carefully selecting words and using them correctly, we can express their true meaning. It is natural for different cultures to have unique words and terms specific to them. Even when translating these into another language, the challenge of finding suitable translations and conveying them as accurately as in the original is a constant issue. Such problems should be continuously studied and solutions found. This is especially important in religious contexts. If one word is used incorrectly, the remaining meanings and concepts will also be incorrect, leading people to misinterpret. The work to be done in this regard is worth the effort. In this article, we will examine the Japanese translation of "Bismillahir rohmanir rohim," which is the



beginning of every work. This phrase is originally Arabic and is usually translated into Uzbek in many sources as "In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate." However, every Muslim says it only in its original form: "Bismillahir rohmanir rohim." In Japanese, words borrowed from foreign languages are written in katakana, preserving the sound of the word. The phrase "Bismillahir rohmanir rohim" can be written in katakana as follows:

「ビスミッラーヒ・ロフマーニ・ロヒーム」

This form simply represents the pronunciation in katakana. However, in dictionaries and scientific articles, it is given as 「バスマラ」- basmala, and since its pronunciation came from English, it is written as follows:

「ビ・スミ・ッラーヒ・ツ=ラフマーニ・ツ=ラヒーム」

In the Japanese translation of the Quran, the translation of the basmala is written as follows:

「慈悲あまねく慈愛深きアッラーの御名において」

If we look at the Uzbek descriptions of Rahman and Rahim, the attribute "Rahman" belongs only to Allah and means merciful and beneficent to everyone - both non-believers and believers. The attribute of Rahman cannot be used for anyone except Allah the Almighty.

The attribute "Rahim" is more specific, meaning the one who shows mercy only to believers on the Day of Judgment, and it is also used for others besides Allah, including the Prophet (peace be upon him).

The first word of the above-mentioned basmala, translated into Japanese, is 「慈悲あまねく」 (jiai amanuku) - "Rahman," 「慈愛深き」 (jiai fukaki) - "Rahim."

「慈悲」 (jihi) - giving the meaning of mercy, in the religious context expresses God's mercy, which bestows joy with love to all living beings and eases their suffering.

「あまねく」 (amaneku) means broad, general, complete, comprehensive, detailed, everywhere, in all places. Based on this, one can understand the meaning 「慈悲あまねく」 as compassion for all. This is close to its original meaning in Arabic.

In Aisha Stacey's Japanese article "Islamic Beliefs: About God," it is stated as follows:

「神の慈悲とは優しさ、敬愛、思いやり、慈愛、赦しを包括する霊妙な性質です。」

That is, God's mercy is a miraculous quality that encompasses kindness, love and respect, consideration, affection, and forgiveness. In the article, she explained Allah's name "Rahman" in Japanese with these attributes.

「慈愛」 (jiai) - meaning affection and love, is defined in the "生活用語辞典" (Everyday Terminology Dictionary) as follows:

The word "mehr" signifies a feeling of love, similar to a person's love for their child. In everyday life, it represents the love and affection parents have for their child,

In addition to expressing deep love, it is also frequently used in Japan as part of the names of institutions such as medical corporations, social security corporations, orphanages, and kindergartens.

「深き」 (fukaki) is an old-language version of the modern word 「深い」 (fukai), where "deep" denotes an adjective. 「慈愛深き」 (jiai fukaki) means "deeply loving" or "extremely affectionate." However, the true meaning cannot be fully understood from this alone. The explanation of these names in the Basmala is briefly detailed in an article titled 「慈悲あまねくと慈愛深きの意味」 (The meaning of all-encompassing mercy and deep mercy) on the Islamic information website 「イスラーム情報サービス: Islam.ne.jp」. However, as can be seen from the title of the article, the names "Rahman" and "Rahim" are both translated as 「慈悲」 (jihi) -



"mercy."

In conclusion, it is impossible to fully understand the difference between the names "Rahman" and "Rahim" based solely on their Japanese translations. To understand their true qualities and meanings, one should consult explanatory dictionaries and Islamic scholars' interpretations on this matter. Nevertheless, when translating words, it is necessary to attempt to find appropriate translations and continuously study these issues.

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