



Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press's collection of translated works helps bridge cultural differences

Doha, Qatar: Since its launch in 2010, Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press) has released numerous translations of a variety of books as part of its efforts to expand the literary landscape of the region.

Publishing translations is an important part of the mandate at HBKU Press, which publishes a variety of Fiction, Non-Fiction, Children's and Academic titles, along with research articles, conference proceedings and journals. The purpose of translations is to help contribute to the cultural exchange of information and help to build cross-cultural communication and coexistence that enhance the transfer of thought and knowledge between Arabic and other languages.

Translated volumes allow readers to cross cultural thresholds and find the common humanity in all our stories, while simultaneously discovering different cultures. With that goal, HBKU Press focuses on featuring translated works alongside showcasing Arab talent in order to enrich the Arabic literary scene and enhance cross-cultural communication.

"Our mission is to select books to translate, whether they were published by us or other publishers, that focus on issues that concern Qatar, the Gulf region and the Arab World," explains Fakhri Saleh, Head of Arabic Publishing at Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press. "We choose books that are bestselling fiction works from around the world, award-winning books from different cultures, fiction works written by Arab women and men in different languages, etc. We focus on translating books that add to our knowledge, understanding of ourselves and of humanity.

"We see ourselves as cultural ambassadors showcasing our literary creativity and culture to other nations and while getting to know other nations' culture at the same time."

The most recently released translations by HBKU Press include the translation of one Spanish work titled, *Games of the Late Age*, and two translations from English, *Poor Economics* and *Science and Islam*.



Games of the Late Age, written by Spanish author Luis Landero and translated by Saleh Almani, follows an ordinary middle-aged clerk, Gregorio, whose youthful aspirations for an exciting and intellectual life have faded to nothing. Through his conversations with Gil, a modest, mature man exiled in the countryside, Gregorio, forges another personality for himself as Faroni, an attractive polyglot, engineer and poet, and great traveler. Gregorio is so thoroughly immersed in his own lies, however, that when Gil suddenly announces that he is finally coming to meet him, he panics completely.

In the Non-Fiction genre, *Poor Economics*, translated by Anwar Al-Shamy, highlights 15 years of research by authors Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo that takes a look at the behaviour of poor people around the world, their needs, and the way that aid or financial investment can affect their lives.

Science and Islam, also a work of Non-Fiction, written by Ehsan Masood and translated by Ayham Al-Sabbagh, tells the story of one of history's most misunderstood yet rich and fertile periods in science: the Islamic scientific revolution between 700 and 1400 CE. The stories, written in a compelling narrative, take the reader on a journey through the Islamic empires of the Middle Ages, and their contributions to science in Western Europe.

The titles present a diverse variety of stories and information that cross cultural, socio-economic, and political borders.

"As an avid reader, it's great to have such a variety of popular translated works available to me in Arabic," explains Mohamed Al Mahmeed, a local filmmaker. "It allows me a glimpse into how others live around the world and it also helps to break down stereotypes and generalities that make me realize that humans, no matter where they are from, are more alike than they perceive.

"HBKU Press's contribution to that global exchange of information is not only invaluable, it is laudable and very important."

To date, HBKU Press has published over 60 translated works to and from English, Spanish, German, Turkish into Arabic. Among these works is the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding award-winner *Ashar Nissa'* (Diez mujeres/ Ten Women) by Saleh Almani, who is also the translator of *Games of the Late Age*, and other notable HBKU Press translated titles. The best-selling book, *Wonder*, written in English by R. J. Palacio and translated into Arabic by HBKU Press in 2015, has also been made into major Hollywood motion picture to be released later this year.



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For further information and press inquiries, please contact Rima Ismail of HBKU Press at +974 55564198 or by email at rismail@hbku.edu.qa.

ABOUT HBKU PRESS

Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press), formerly known as Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing (BQFP), launched its program in 2010 as a world-class publishing house founded on international best practices, excellence and innovation. HBKU Press strives to be a cornerstone of Qatar's knowledge-based economy by providing a unique local and international platform for literature, literacy, scholarship, discovery and learning. Headquartered in Doha, Qatar, HBKU Press publishes peer reviewed journals, monographs, reference books, fiction and non-fiction titles for adults and for children. Aiming to promote the love of reading and writing, HBKU Press is helping to establish a vibrant scholarly and literary culture in Qatar and the Middle East.