
The new edition of The Encyclopaedia of Islam (henceforth EI) has been recognized as the unsurpassed work in size, authority and erudition by many scholars specializing in Islam. It offers the latest scholarship and an invaluable reference tool. It sets out to present a wide range of subjects about Islam and Muslims, from history to politics and from culture to crafts. It embraces articles on distinguished Muslims of every age and land, on tribes and dynasties, on crafts and sciences, on political and religious institutions, on the geography, flora and fauna of the various countries and on the history, topography and monuments of the major towns and cities. Its geographical and historical scope encompasses the old Arabo-Islamic empire, the Islamic countries of Iran, Central Asia, the Indian Sub-continent and Indonesia, the Ottoman Empire and all modern Islamic states.

This monumental work is now available in electronic form. The Encyclopaedia of Islam CD-ROM Edition (henceforth EI-CD) has everything that the print version has, and more. EI-CD comes with fast and effective research facilities. The entire text of volumes 1 to 9 of the printed edition of the EI can now be a companion of scholars as they work on their computers. Additional search facilities, enhanced by the inclusion of all three original indices (Index of Proper Names, Index of Subjects and Glossary and Index of Terms) enable the user to efficiently search and combine data from a vast corpus of more than 10,000 printed pages within seconds.

What is of fundamental importance in this conversion from print to electronic form is the care taken in details: what we have is the familiar print characteristics that we have become used to. Thanks to a special font that has been developed for the display and searching, the electronic version of the EI comes with full transliterations.

The EI-CD includes the printed versions from Volumes I-IX, an addenda and corrigenda to Volumes I-IX included on the CD-ROM as an appendix to the Online Help. (To access this information, click Help/Help Topics and select Appendix: Addenda & Corrigenda from the Table of Contents that pops up). It also includes the Glossary and Index of Terms (English), updated up to Volume IX. Entries of this index marked in bold refer to articles in the Encyclopaedia. The entry appears where possible under the singular form of the word, with the plurals following in parentheses, unless the plural form has a separate meaning altogether, or the singular was not specified in the Encyclopaedia. Where the plural of a term is significant in its own right, a
cross-reference to the singular, where it is defined, is given. All cross-references to entries within the glossary are given in small capitals. Compounds making up a technical term, e.g. *abl al-‘ahd* , are generally listed in the entry of the first element; thus, *abl al-‘ahd* , is found under *abl*. The same is true for adjectives, plurals, etc. formed from the same word, e.g. ‘*askarî* (under ‘*askar*), ‘*aqliyyàt* (under ‘*aql*); when an exception is made, a cross-reference is included.

Made available within the promised time, the *EI-CD* does not have an integrated version of the Glossary and Index of Terms up to volume IX (published December 1999); hence the printed edition of the Index of Terms differs from the CD version which has a preliminary and uncorrected version of this Index. This has the advantage of inclusion of the Index which weighed more heavily than incidental errors and lacunae found in this CD-ROM version. The electronic version contains the index of Proper Names (English and French), updated up to Volume IX , the latest volume published of the *EI²* , which appeared in November 1997. Small Roman numerals denote the English version, and large roman numerals the French one. Bold type indicates the main article. References to the English edition are hyperlinked for use in combination with the CD-ROM. References to the French edition are not hyperlinked, but can be used together with the printed French version of *EI²* .

This edition of the *EI-CD* indexes the Subjects Indexes from Volumes I through IX. References in regular typeface are to Encyclopaedia articles; those printed in boldface type indicate the main article. Entries in capitals and following an arrow refer to lemmata in the Index of Subjects itself.

The *EI-CD* does not include the three supplements that appeared in the years 1980, 1981, and 1982, [up to the lemma AL-‘IRAKÍ. On the completion of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, a definitive supplement volume will be published containing the supplements to all volumes. The Publisher has chosen not to integrate the three current supplements into this CD-ROM.

Upon loading the *EI-CD*, a workplace is presented which helps to navigate through the Encyclopaedia. The *EI-CD* offers a choice between four different views, each containing its own type of information: Full Text, Glossary and Index of Terms, Index of Proper Names and Index of Subjects. One can navigate one’s way through the Views by pressing Tab, or by clicking the Tabs that are located immediately below each View’s Title Bar.

There are four ways of searching, each with its own characteristic features: Find, Advanced Find, Search and Refined Search allow the user to customize the search. Find command is the quickest way of searching information because it can be accessed directly from the workplace by using the Find Toolbar. But it limits the search to Title or Text.

“Advanced Find” can use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT, all in upper case) and hence refine the search. For example, using Prophet AND
NOT MUHammad will find all occurrences of the word Prophet without Muḥammad, within a range of 20 words. “Search” command, on the other hand, offers options which can restrict search to a certain part of the EI-CD, for example, all word, entry word, summary words, bibliography, contributors or description. “Refined Search”, likewise, can be used to further refine search by limiting it to specific occurrence of a certain word.

Another important feature of the EI-CD is its transliterated variants which can be used to specify search. Thanks to a special font developed for the purpose, one can choose to search variants by using the “character picker” which allows the user to pick translated characters.

With all its advanced features, and the possibility of easy updates, EI-CD is a real user-friendly product, which can be used by almost all scholars, even by those who do not like learning new programmes. And the future holds more promise; we can look forward to a system of continuously updated entries and perhaps a major revised version of the earlier volumes in which many entries have become dated.

Muzaffar Iqbal

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This work appeared some twenty-five years ago in its original French version. Later it was translated into English and in a short time earned a wide readership of enthusiastic admirers. It was also very soon translated into several other mainly Muslim languages including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay and some other languages of the east and the west. The writer is a well-known medical practitioner of Paris. During the last days of his life, the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia (d. 1395/1975) was under his treatment and for that purpose he was frequently invited to stay in Saudi Arabia for long periods. The present reviewer had the chance to meet the author in September 1980 in Algiers in an International Seminar on Islamic Thought.

The background in which Dr Maurice Bucaille was prompted to write this book predates his contact with the Saudi Monarch. Prior to that he happened to visit Cairo in connection with an official task assigned to him and