BOOK REVIEWS


There are a number of concordances of the Qur'an in Arabic and Professor Rudi Paret has prepared an excellent concordance in German. But, so far, the English bound reader has had to content himself with lists of words and incomplete topical arrangements. The book in review is a systematic, comprehensive, and, in a way, a unique, concordance of the Qur'an which will prove most useful to any person who desires to learn what the Qur'an might have to say about any given subject-matter.

The system adopted by Dr. Kassis is quite logical. Having based his concordance on the translation of the late Professor A.J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted, Dr. Kassis provides an alphabetical index of all the words occurring in that translation save, of course, prepositions, conjunctions, articles and the like (pp. 1351-1441). The Arabic word or words together with their roots are given below the (English) word by which they have been rendered into English by Arberry. Other Qur'anic words having a similar meaning have also been listed.

In the main part of the book (pp. 1-1350), all the verses in which a given Arabic word has been used have been listed under that word and Arberry's translation of the verses, or self-contained clauses thereof, are given together with the Chapter (Surah) and Verse numbers. (Verse numbers have been given according to both the 1337 A.H. Cairo edition and the Fluegel edition.) All (Arabic) words stemming from a given root have been listed under the given root, in its transliterated form. The system of transliteration adopted in this book is that of the Library of (U.S.) Congress as outlined in its Bulletin of September 1970, except that Dr. Kassis prefers to have "iy" instead of "i" (for iyy) and places a dot between d/s/t and h when both d/s/t and h are to have their distinct consonantal values. The roots, as thus transliterated, have been given in the alphabetical order, the order being that of the English alphabets, with hamzah and 'ayn placed after A in that order, and the alphabets bearing diacritical marks, Ā, Ī, Ī, D, H, Š, ȫ, T, and Z, listed after the corresponding alphabets, A, I, U, D, H, S, T, and Z. Under each root are given the words actually used in the Qur'an together with their meanings and grammatical form. The same word, if it has been used in different senses in the Qur'an, has been repeated and verses have been listed separately for each of those meanings.

Since the book aims at those who are interested in studying the Qur'an but have no or little knowledge of Arabic, Dr. Kassis provides a concise and lucid introduction to the Qur'an, explains the significance of roots for Arabic words, and furnishes very useful information on Arabic grammar, and thus enables a person to more fully appreciate the significance of the verses of the Qur'an, since in the concordance the grammatical form of the words has also been mentioned. In a separate section, Chapters of the Qur'an have been listed serially, their Arabic and English titles as well as their chronological positions according to Noeldeke and the Cairo Edition having also been given.
So far as I have been able to check upon, the Concordance is complete both in respect of the words used in the Qur'an and the verses in which the various words occur. The citations are those of self-contained clauses, so that one is readily able to learn what the Qur'an has had to say about various things concerning life in this world and the hereafter.

For any person interested in studying the Qur'an through the medium of English, it is not, I dare say, a useful work — it is really an indispensable work. Even those who know Arabic and can use concordances such as those of Muhammad Fāris Barakat (Al-Marshid ilā Āyāt al-Qur'ān al-Karīm wa Kalimatih) and Muhammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Baqi (Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li- Āl fāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm) will find this book useful in that it lists all the Arabic words rendered into English by a given word together so that given any Arabic word one learns what other words having a similar meaning have been used in the Qur'an.


Confronted with such phraseologies as “Islamic Economics” and “Islamisation of knowledge”, one cannot help being shocked at such outrage against all canons of reason and grammar. Can any piece of knowledge, or a science that endeavours to amass knowledge, be non-Islamic?! Our amazement grows manifold when we learn that these terminological legerdemains are being performed not by politicians but by academicians themselves.

However, we have been long used to “Islamic history” and “Islamic philosophy” which we have come to regard as acceptable substitutes for “Muslim history” and “Muslim philosophy” meaning thereby the political history of the Muslims and the history of the books and essays written by Arab/Muslim scholars touching upon philosophical issues. We have even got used to such expressions as “Islamic democracy” and “Islamic socialism”, believing them, I presume, to be innocuous though bizarre and elliptical way of referring respectively to the democratic and socialistic elements in the Islamic socio-political system and Muslim politico-economic institutions and practice.

Let us therefore try to see what is meant by Islamic Economics by those who use the expression. According to Mr. M.A Chowdhury, “the general methodology of Islamic economics is in some way different from that of strictly secular approach to the study of economic analysis and theory”. ("Foundations of Islamic Economics", Criterion (Karachi), January 1974, pp. 17—25 ; see, p. 17). He further says that “in Islamic economics the predominant note is that to God alone belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth and that he has made the good things for the service of man.” In other words, insofar as Economics is a normative science, Islamic Economics is distinguishable from the secular Economics in that there is, in the words of Prof. Khurshid Ahmad, “the writer's commitment to Islam, its original sources of the Qur'an and Sunnah as the real guide and point of reference.” Insofar as Economics is a scientific study—a systematic collection, sifting, classification and analysis of economic data, and, formula-