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**Elsaid M. Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem:**
> *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage*
> Leiden: Brill, 2008, HC, 1070 pp, ISBN: 978 90 04 14948 9

This eighty-fifth volume in Brill's Handbook of Oriental Studies Series attempts to fulfill the long-standing need for an Arabic-English dictionary of Qurʾānic usage. Adding an important resource for the study of the Qurʾān, the *Dictionary* is distinguished by many features: It brings to English-speaking readership contextualized interpretations of the Qurʾānic vocabulary through the works of classical scholars; it follows the Arabic root system, devoting one section to each of the 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet; roots are alphabetically arranged with special attention given to the classification of roots with geminated second and third radicals, which are classified unlike the tradition followed by by Western lexicographers such as Lane and Wehr (thus the root *s-b-b* appears after the root *s-b-ʿ* and not after it); cross references provide easy access to roots of certain foreign words which could be thought of as arising from more than one possible combination (e.g. *ā-z-r* and *ā-z-r*); an inventory of the basic concepts covered by the root provides a broad framework of what it encompasses; it recognizes that abstract derivatives in Arabic are derived from concrete ones, rather than the other way around (*jamāl*, beauty, comes from *jamal*, camel, not the other way around); and it presents all morphological derivatives of a given root which are found in the Qurʾān, along with their frequency.

By necessity, such a work has to base itself on existing source material. The authors chose the *al-Muʿjam al-mufahras li afāẓ al-Qurʾān al-Karīm*, the well-known concordance of Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿabd al-Bāqī, both for their dictionary entries as well as for the frequency count. The glosses are based on Abdel Haleem's *The Qurʾān—A New Translation* with necessary changes. Other translations mentioned in the bibliography (under "English Sources") are *The Holy Qurʾan: Arabic Text, English Translation and Commentary* by Maulana Muhammad Ali, a follower of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadyān, who is considered an imposter by majority of Muslims; *The Message of the Qurān* by Muhammad Asad, whose rationalistic interpretations of the supra-rational of the Qurʾān led him, among other things, to deny such fundamental tenets of Islam as the role played by angels and jinn and whose translation often chooses the far-fetched rather than familiar meanings of certain words; and the equally problematic *An English*

*Interpretation of the Holy Qurʾan* by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, who reduced the Qurʾānic concept of Jihād to striving against one's inner evil and imposed imagery of Romantic poets onto Qurʾānic vocabulary. These are clearly inappropriate choices for the English translations of the Qurʾān to be used in a work which claims to be "based upon the interpretations by classical Qurʾānic commentators of the contextualized occurrences of the finite vocabulary items used in the Qurʾānic text" (xvi). The *Dictionary* has, however, managed to avoid some of the doctrinal problems which the choice of the aforementioned modernist translations of the Qurʾān would have brought to it. There is, for instance, no trace of the Lahori Aḥmadī creed in its gloss on Prophet Īsā ﷺ, no mention of his alleged death in Kashmir and the transference of the role of the messiah to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. In some cases, however, the reliance on these translations becomes apparent—for instance, the *Dictionary* takes the more obscure meaning of *ibil* (clouds) used by Muhammad Asad in his translation of Q. 88:17 as compared to the more generally held view that the Qurʾān refers to camels.

It took the authors seven years to complete this work. In the course of their project they had to make certain difficult decisions, such as whether or not to include the so-called scientific interpretations in their work. Such decisions and the editorial parameters have been indicated in the "Introduction". The Arabic text used in the *Dictionary* is clear though not elegant; due consideration has been given to properly transliterate words; and the work has received proper editorial care. Notwithstanding the reservations mentioned above, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qurʾanic Usage* is an important contribution to Qurʾānic scholarship and will provide an important resource for researchers and English-language scholars.

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**George Saliba**: *Islamic Science and the Making of the European Renaissance*
   Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007, HC, 315 pp, ISBN: 978-0-262-19557-7

When, where, and how did the Islamic scientific tradition begin? When, where and how did it reach its zenith? What did it accomplish? And when did its decline begin? These are the basic questions that have puzzled historians of science for over a quarter century as they reconsider the "classical narrative" formulated by earlier grand Orientalists such as Goldziher and his successors. George Saliba's new book, which he calls