



Integrated Encyclopedia *of the* Qur'ān

Muzaffar Iqbal

Raison d'être & Project Summary

Muzaffar Iqbal is Founder-President of the Center for Islam and Science (www.cis-ca.org) and General Editor of *The Integrated Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*. Email: Muzaffar@cis-ca.org.

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تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ
عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا

*Blessed be He Who has sent down this Criterion unto His servant,
that he might be for all the worlds a warner.*

(al-Furqān:1)



‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, may Allah be pleased with him,
said that the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, said:

“The best among you are those
who learn the Qur’ān and teach it.”

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī
kitāb faḍā’il al-Qur’ān
bāb khayrukum man ta‘allam al-Qur’ān wa ‘allamahu



Out of some 6.6 billion men, women, and children now living on earth, every fourth proclaims there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah. This testimony (*shahāda*) makes them Muslims—those who consciously and willingly submit to their Creator. Muslims believe the Qurʾān is the last revealed Book, sent by Allah to guide humanity to the Straight Path (*al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*), and the life of Prophet Muḥammad the best model to follow. The Qurʾān and the vast repository of texts dealing with the life of the Prophet (Sunna) are in classical Arabic, as are most of their respective commentaries. Only about 15 percent of all Muslims now speak Arabic as their mother tongue, and, even within this segment, knowledge of classical Arabic is rapidly deteriorating. Of the non-Arabic speaking majority, which is rapidly increasing due to population growth and conversions, only about 8 to 10 per cent have knowledge of classical Arabic. This means that, at best, only 20 percent of Muslims now understand the language of the primary sources of their religion.

This disconnect with the linguistic tradition of Islam is a recent phenomenon for Muslims. Until the middle of the twentieth century, a large percentage of literate Muslims had at least a working knowledge of Arabic, even though the process of erosion of this tradition had already started in the eighteenth century with the colonization of the Muslim world by European

powers. This cleavage with the tradition did not occur by itself but emerged through a number of fundamental shifts in the makeup of the Muslim world over the last three centuries. During that time, the educational system throughout most of the Muslim world was replaced by a new system based on Western education, often imposed by the European powers which occupied most Muslim lands for various lengths of time between the eighteenth and the twentieth century. The same period saw a rapid destruction of the traditional Islamic institutions of learning and the emergence of a new social, political, economic, cultural, and educational order through systematic and complex processes of social engineering at a scale seldom witnessed in human history.

These radical and disruptive changes—which have produced the contemporary Muslim world now in the grip of a widespread cultural schizophrenia—have exiled Muslims from their spiritual and intellectual tradition by severing their links to the language of revelation and traditional scholarship which explicates the primary sources of their beliefs and practices. This religious illiteracy, in turn, gave rise to confusion and chaos in matters of beliefs and practices, and contributed to the emergence of social and political instability as well as rampant violence in various regions of *Dār al-Islām*, the vast geographical area where Islam has been practiced for centuries.

The Qurʾān and Muslims

Despite the current widespread Qurʾān illiteracy among Muslims, the Qurʾān remains their supreme Book—the uncontested source of their beliefs and practices. The Qurʾān is a relatively small Book. According to the counts narrated by Abū ʿAmr al-Dānī (d. 444/1052) in his book *al-Bayān fī ʿadd al-āy al-Qurʾān*, there are 77,439 words (*kalim*) in the Qurʾān in 6,216 verses (*āyāt*) which make up its 114 chapters (*sūwar*, sing. *sūra*). The shortest chapter contains three verses; the longest, 286. Muslims believe the Qurʾān to be the actual Speech of Allah (*Kalām Allāh*), an untranslatable text, revealed at a certain place and time but transcending both geography and history. The Descent (*muzūl*) of the Qurʾān from the Well-Guarded Tablet (*al-lawḥ al-mahfūz*) was a solemn event that took place within the sacred time of revelation, not in the time of profane history marked by its incessant flow from one moment to the next. The Qurʾān is, therefore, a historical text only insofar as the Sacred entered history and changed it forever. Furthermore, Muslims believe that this entrance of the Qurʾān into human history—the Event of the Qurʾān—completes and culminates the cycle of revelation that began with the creation of the first human being.

The Qurʾān declares that God Himself chose clear Arabic (*ʿarabiyyun mubīn*) as the language of His final revelation to humanity. Revealed in a language spoken by human beings, the Qurʾān bowed neither to the

conventions of Arabic prosody (*nazm*) nor to the rhymed prose (*sajʿ*) of the pre-Islamic Arab poets, whose idiom had set the standards for eloquence; rather, it came with its own characteristic style, in the process imparting to Arabic a quintessential sublimity.

The Qurʾān conferred upon things their essential reality according to Divine Knowledge, their objective existence in creation, and their legal value among human beings. This consecration of the language, together with the remarkable stability of the root forms of Arabic, ruled out any corruption of the text of the Qurʾān caused by the natural changes that take place in languages over time. Thus stabilized, the etymology of every Arabic word can be immediately traced to one of the fifteen verbal forms—even when it occurs in its most derivative state—making it possible to connect with the living source of the fundamental meanings of its consonantal root.

Neither poetry nor prose, the Qurʾān made full use of the resources of the Arabic language but was not confined to them. Its eloquence, its grandeur, and its sublime beauty inspire awe and reverence of an order unmatched by any other book. Receptive hearts are nourished by it. On any given page of the Qurʾān can be found vivid imagery, powerful oaths, parables, and arguments employing both dialectical (*jadaliyya*) and syllogistic (*burhāniyya*) processes—all contributing to its inimitability (*ʿiʿjāz*). Its terse prose and rhymed passages, its ellipses, its parallelisms, its characteristic way of presenting two propositions of striking contrast—all impose upon the intelligence the irresistible imperative to discover Truth, while simultaneously making it impossible to be rendered into any other language.

Even though a very large percentage of Muslims do not know classical Arabic, the Qurʾān remains central to their lives. It is recited at all solemn events of one's passage through life. Millions of believers recite it or hear it recited in its entirety in countless mosques and homes, especially during the month of Ramaḍān—the month wherein is the blessed *laylatul-qadr*, a night better than one thousand months in which the Qurʾān was first brought down from the Well-Guarded Tablet to be gradually revealed to the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace. Thus, the Qurʾān occupies a supreme place in Muslim life whether they know the language of their Scripture or not.

Linguistic inabilities notwithstanding, all Muslims have a general understanding of the essential message of the Qurʾān. They know that they have been created by an Omnipotent, Powerful, Wise, and Merciful Creator; they have been allotted a certain time on earth during which they are asked to remember Him and live a life of piety and high morals; they know that at death, all their deeds will be summed up; there will come a day when the entire order of creation will be abolished; following this awesome event, there will come Resurrection—the rebirth and gathering together of all humanity, the

Day when all deeds will be weighed, and Allah Most High will pass Judgment which will lead to the everlasting life in Paradise (*Janna*) or Hell (*Jahannam*).

However, this knowledge of the essential teachings of the Qurʾān does not suffice, for Muslims also need to know specific rules (*ahkām*) for the various acts, obligations, and responsibilities pertaining to the different situations they encounter in life, the lawful (*ḥalāl*) and the unlawful (*ḥarām*), the times and methods of performing obligatory rites, and numerous other details which are derived from the Qurʾān and the Sunna of the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace. Most literate Muslims attempt to read the Qurʾān at some stage in their lives in order to understand it. Without the knowledge of Qurʾānic Arabic they resort to translations, even though they know that the Book itself is not translatable. While reading a translation of the Qurʾān can provide a general idea of the meanings of the verses of the Qurʾān, such reading is fraught with intellectual and spiritual problems because the reader is, in fact, reading a text produced by another human mind conditioned by the time, place, and spiritual and intellectual station of the translator. Even the most conscious reader cannot avoid the numerous pitfalls of the translated text.

The inability to directly access the multi-layered linguistic richness of the original is further compounded by a lack of sufficient training to read the Qurʾān—a Book which does not conform to the patterns most familiar to those tutored through a Western-style educational system that imposes certain strictures on the mind such as an ultra-rationalism. This “cultural loss in translation” creates a number of barriers to reading a text that operates at the supra-rational plane and requires the simultaneous participation of inner resources and faculties including the heart, the intellect guided by revelation, and the mind.

Reading the Qurʾān is no ordinary event. A first-time reader or listener of the Qurʾān—whether a believer in its Divine origin or not—is awestruck by this unearthly text. Untrained minds falter at the intensity of the encounter. One might find oneself reading the story of a past Prophet and suddenly, interrupting this narrative, comes a reminder of Allah’s unchanging custom of annihilating nations that transgress, and soon thereafter is a mention of His unbounded Mercy and Compassion. The Qurʾān seizes its readers in the midst of their everyday lives and makes demands on their spiritual and intellectual resources in a manner that no other book does. The sheer force of its narrative, its evocative imagery, its powerful oaths, its historical sweep, its insistent reproaches and its gentle invitations to discover and dwell in the sublime and tranquil realm of God-consciousness—all combine to produce in receptive readers a flowering of the heart, leading to an unquenchable thirst for further discovery of this extraordinary Book that has remained the most revered source of guidance for countless generations.

With all its complexity and demands upon the reader, the Qurʾān is not an easy Book to access by those Muslims whose mental habits have been shaped by modernity. Serious seekers look to different translations, exegeses, dictionaries, digital media and various books claiming to help understand the Qurʾān. In recent decades, numerous new translations of classical texts on the Qurʾān are being published in languages spoken in all major languages of the world. This translated classical material helps to a certain extent, but one cannot benefit from the wealth of classical Islamic scholarship on the Qurʾān without proper training in reading it, for when one encounters a dozen different—and at times mutually contradictory—opinions in *al-Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*, al-Ṭabarī's (d. 310/923) monumental *tafsīr*, or when one finds seven different sayings of the Prophet in reference to one verse in Ibn Kathīr's (d. 774/1373) *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm*, one needs to have the requisite training in *tafsīr* and ḥadīth methodology and scholarship to avoid being confused by this wealth of material.

The Qurʾān and Non-Muslims

If the paths to the Qurʾān have become hard to access for Muslims due to the lack of training and linguistic handicaps, they are almost completely blocked for a vast majority of non-Muslims. This is a great calamity not only for those who have never really come into contact with the Words of their Creator preserved in this Book for all time to come, but also for the entire human race because it creates an unbridgeable divide between the fourth of humanity that believes in this Book and the rest who do not. This contemporary situation is unlike the past when different faith communities lived relatively apart from each other. The rapid shrinking of the globe in so many realms of human existence has created a global neighborhood in which it is impossible for any community to live in isolation and hence we all now live in close proximity in many dimensions of space and time. This proximity of faith communities has generated a great deal of interest in the Qurʾān on the part of non-Muslims—an interest that has gradually broadened since the early 1970s, when the Muslim world started to gain a new degree of importance for the West due to oil—and it saw a rapid growth after September 2001.

The number of Western non-Muslims who have actually opened one of the many available translations of the Qurʾān has increased exponentially in recent years. However, a sincere non-Muslim Western reader often experiences an overall sense of alienation out of his or her first encounter with the Qurʾān. After reading the first few pages, a majority of such readers find it impossible to continue for they encounter a text unlike any they have ever read; from their specific point of view, they find neither coherence nor the logical connections in the text so essential for the contemporary Western mind. In addition, even

in the best of translations, the imagery of the Qurʾān remains foreign to them, not to speak of its *totum simul*—the simultaneous totality—which recreates the whole in every part: every element that makes up the message of the Qurʾān is somehow present in any given passage. The result can be incomprehension and confusion. This has led some Western readers to pass irreverent remarks about the Qurʾān while others have found its unfathomable depths deeply stirring.

Those who attempt to understand it by reading books about the Qurʾān may find helpful hints, but this process does not open direct paths to the Qurʾān. Most books about the Qurʾān written by Western scholars are replete with an Orientalism that seeks to establish its own canon rather than explicate the text. The burgeoning field of contemporary Qurʾānic studies in academia has further obscured paths to the message of the Qurʾān through its mode of surgical dissection, which for the most part, has only served to camouflage what was obvious in Orientalism.

Most Muslim scholarship on the Qurʾān, on the other hand, remains inaccessible to non-Muslims as well as Westernized Muslims for reasons of style, basic premises, linguistic issues, format, and content. There are, no doubt, individuals in the West who have overcome these difficulties. Some of these exceptional men and women have left behind testaments of their spiritual journeys and their encounters with the Qurʾān which are useful starting points for those sincerely attempting to understand its message.

The Qurʾān and the Academic World

Non-Muslim scholars in the academy face yet another dilemma when approaching the Qurʾān. They cannot, by definition, commit themselves to any position about the Divine origin of the Qurʾān; their professional obligation is to maintain an objective detachment from their object of study, yet, in this case, the object—the Qurʾān—itself makes it impossible to maintain neutrality for it insists and demands that one must settle the fundamental issue of its authorship before any further engagement can occur. This means accepting or rejecting the Qurʾānic claim to be the actual direct Word of God Himself. A corollary of whatever choice they make is their position regarding the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace. If they accept the Qurʾān to be the Word of God, then it automatically confirms their belief in the veracity of the Prophethood of Muḥammad the son of ʿAbd Allāh, upon him blessings and peace. If they reject the Qurʾānic claim, they simultaneously reject the Prophethood of the Prophet of Islam and thereby find themselves in the punitive position of questioning his honesty and truthfulness—something that polemical writers have done for centuries and that was at the root of the polemical works during the Middle Ages and European Renaissance.

This dilemma has been recognized by a number of academic scholars

in the West along with the admission that no solutions are available for this intractable situation. In the absence of any resolution, the best option for academic scholars is to present arguments from both the perspective of believers and that of non-believers—a difficult task akin to wearing two hats at the same time. In addition, non-Muslim academic scholars are prisoners of their own tradition: as much as they may claim objectivity, they cannot escape the impact and influence of the work of their predecessors. This lineage, inherent in the very structure of academic scholarship, not only includes centuries of accumulated and often detailed scrutiny of source material, valuable manuscripts, and insights of keen minds, but also brings to bear the framework, premises, and biases of previous generations. In the case of the Qurʾān, this genealogy reaches back to the polemical works of pre-modern Christian writers—a tradition that firmly underlies Orientalist scholarship on the Qurʾān. Current academic scholarship may not wish to admit residual traces of the past missionary works, but it proudly claims credit in the putative ground-breaking work of the nineteenth-century Orientalists, who had merely refined the veneer of the polemical tradition without rejecting its basic premise and who shared with that older tradition its core claim that the text of the Qurʾān is man-made. As such, Orientalist as well as neo-Orientalist scholarship remains unacceptable to Muslims.

The Integrated Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān

Against this historical background, a group of Muslim scholars has initiated an international project to produce *The Integrated Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān (IEQ)*—a unique reference work in seven volumes that encapsulates fourteen hundred years of Islamic scholarship on the Qurʾān and shares with its sources the premise that the Qurʾān is a revealed text while maintaining scholarly norms of the highest order.

IEQ is for both Muslim and non-Muslim readers, whether they are serious seekers of in-depth knowledge of any aspect of the Qurʾān or academic specialists working in the field of Qurʾānic studies. A general reader will find in it articles which explain fundamental themes and concepts of the Qurʾān in accessible language. Academic scholars whose work focuses on the Qurʾān will discover a much-needed and, to date, unavailable reference work that taps into the vast corpus of Muslim scholarship produced over the last millennium and a half. For those who work in the general field of Islamic studies, *IEQ* will become a helpful source, presenting references to hundreds of classical works that are otherwise scattered over a vast body of inaccessible texts. *IEQ* will also serve as a useful starting point for new research on the Qurʾān both in the Muslim world as well as in the West, as it will bring to the academic world integrated and well-referenced articles covering all concepts, persons, places,

and things mentioned in the Qurʾān. Researchers in disciplines other than Qurʾānic studies, especially those without the linguistic skills to directly access the formidable corpus of classical sources on the Qurʾān, will also find *IEQ* an essential source that fulfills a long-standing need.



Key Features of *IEQ*

- *The Integrated Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān* assumes serious reader engagement, but no prior knowledge of Arabic or of the Qurʾān. It employs English-language lemmata and its intensive cross-referencing makes article location easy.
- *IEQ* draws its entries from the thematic structure of the Qurʾān itself. The editors have striven to cover all themes of the Qurʾān and have assigned proportionate space to articles in relation to their relative importance in the Qurʾān. This feature of *IEQ* will become apparent from the “Thematic Index of Articles” (to be included in Volume 7), which will present all articles under Qurʾānic themes such as Faith (*al-īmān*) and its various dimensions; Deeds (*al-aʿmāl*); Calling to Allah (*al-daʿwa ilā Allāh*); Jihad (*al-jihād*); Chronicles and History (*al-qaṣaṣ wal-tārīkh*) and the like.
- The internal thematic unity of the Qurʾān, often overlooked in works produced by non-Muslim scholars, would be readily apparent from the coherent schema and cross-references of *IEQ*; this facilitates a broader understanding of the message of the Qurʾān.
- *IEQ* integrates a large body of classical scholarship on the Qurʾān and makes it available to contemporary readers. This integration takes place at several levels—from the conception of the overall framework to the individual entries—and results in a scholarly work that is simultaneously contemporary and classical.
- The editors have drawn up about 600 entries and several hundred cross-references covering all concepts, places, persons, and things mentioned in the Qurʾān. Each entry is treated with an article ranging from 500 to 10,000 words. Each of its seven projected volumes will be approximately 550-600 pages.
- *IEQ* brings to English readership a breadth of knowledge on the Qurʾān seldom found in any single work in a Western language. It draws its scholarly acumen from fourteen centuries of Qurʾānic scholarship present in the mainstream Islamic exegetical literature.

- Potential readership of *IEQ* includes academic specialists in the field of Qurʾānic studies, faculty in religious studies departments, researchers engaged in any aspect of Islam, graduate students, Muslims interested in an in-depth study of the Qurʾān, and non-Muslims seeking veritable understanding of the Qurʾānic message through a clear and scholarly exposition of its themes, concepts, and worldview.
- *IEQ* provides a much-needed alternative to works on the Qurʾān by Orientalists and the majority of contemporary academic scholars.
- *IEQ* is an international project—the first of its kind undertaken by Muslims in a Western language.

Translations of *IEQ*

IEQ will initially be published in English. There are plans to publish translations in various languages including German, French, Spanish, and Italian as well as languages spoken in the Muslim world such as Arabic, Urdu, Turkish, Persian, Malay, and Bahasa Indonesian. *IEQ* will also be launched as an online work.

Editorial and Organizational Structure

IEQ has a two-tiered editorial structure: (i) an International Advisory Board, consisting of senior scholars who are consulted and relied upon for general guidance and expertise; and (ii) an editorial board consisting of a General Editor, Associate Editors, Assistant Editors, and a Language Editor. (Please see the project website for biographical notes.)

Originally conceived as a project of the Center for Islam and Science (CIS), Canada, *IEQ* now enjoys the support of many universities, academic centers and research institutions around the world. This growing support is indicative of a broadly felt need for such a work. Please see the worldwide list of supporting institutions on the project website.

Established in 2000, the Center for Islam and Science (CIS) is an independent research center dedicated to the promotion of research and diffusion of knowledge on all aspects of Islam. CIS operates under an international advisory board and a local executive committee. It is a registered not-for-profit organization in the province of Alberta and a registered charity with Revenue Canada (Charity no. 86447 2899 RR0001). For more details on the work of the Center, please visit <www.cis-ca.org>.

In 2008, the Society for Qurʾānic Studies (SQS), Pakistan, was especially formed to collaborate with CIS on this project. It was registered under the Societies Act XXI of 1860 (Registration no. KAR-0277 of 2008-09), and it functions as an independent research organization with its own board of trustees.

Funding and Donations

As a project entirely funded by private donors, *IEQ* relies on the commitment of individuals, businesses, and institutions to support Islamic scholarship in the grand tradition that has existed in Islamic civilization for centuries. Donations can be sent directly to CIS (Canada) or to SQS (Pakistan). You will receive an official receipt which can be used in Canada as a tax-deductible donation. Accounts for CIS and SQS are audited by independent auditors annually as per the relevant laws of Canada and Pakistan respectively.

Publication Schedule, inshallah

IEQ's first volume is scheduled for publication in Ramadan 1432/August 2011. For further information and to check current publication status, please visit the Project website.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the format of *IEQ*?

IEQ consists of approximately 600 alphabetically arranged entries spread over six volumes of approximately 550-600 pages each. The seventh volume will consist of indices. *IEQ* uses English-language lemmata, or entry words, for its articles which cover all concepts, themes, names and places mentioned in the Qurʾān.

What is the criterion for *IEQ*'s entry words?

Carefully chosen entry words are drawn from the Qurʾān itself. In selecting the lemmata, the editors have relied on the internal thematic structure of the Qurʾān. Extensive cross-referencing links articles to other entries. In order to maintain focus on the Qurʾān, the editors have not included allied concepts and themes in *IEQ*, even though they form an integral aspect of the sciences and arts originating from the Qurʾān. As an example, *IEQ*'s article on the Qurʾān covers its writing, but there is no separate article on "Calligraphy." "Pen and Writing," likewise, originating from the second verse of Surat Nūn (*By the pen and what it writes*), is a lemma, but writing implements in Islamic civilization and their role in the spread of knowledge are an ancillary field, not a direct Qurʾānic theme, and hence it has no entry of its own.

Will there be an online edition?

Yes, *IEQ* will be available both in print and an online version. Buyers will have the option to purchase both or either version.

Will *IEQ* represent all legal schools in Islam?

IEQ is a *madhhab*-comparative reference work produced by scholars of the four Sunni Schools and scholars belonging to the Jāfarī school. The aim of the project is to provide a holistic understanding of the Qurʾān based on established Islamic exegetical literature.

Will the encyclopedia be available in other languages?

It is our intention to make *IEQ* available in all major languages. In particular, we hope to publish its French, German, Spanish, and Italian editions from amongst the languages spoken in the Western world as well as translations in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Turkish, Malay, and Bahasa Indonesia inshallah.

Who is writing entries for *IEQ*?

IEQ is an international effort. Scholars writing articles for *IEQ* live throughout

the world. For a list of entries and scholars, please visit the project website.

Who are the target readers of *IEQ*?

IEQ will cater to a wide range of readers including academic scholars, graduate and post-graduate students and the educated general public. It will serve as a fundamental reference work. We expect it to become a major source for numerous other works on Islam and the Qurʾān.

How will this work serve Muslims?

Currently, eighty percent of all Muslims do not have direct access to the Qurʾān. *IEQ* will present reliable, integrated, and authentic scholarship to these Muslims, using the vast repository of classical Islamic exegetical texts. It will be in a language and format that is accessible to contemporary readers.

How will this work be of academic benefit?

IEQ brings to the academic world a unique reference work, sharing with its sources the premise that the Qurʾān is a revealed text while simultaneously maintaining scholarly norms and standards. It provides a window for academia into traditional Islamic approaches and scholarship on the Qurʾān. Academic scholars will, therefore, welcome a reference work on the Qurʾān that presents, in concise form, established mainstream Islamic scholarship.

Who is funding *IEQ*?

IEQ is being funded by individuals and businesses interested in scholarly projects. Any individual, business, or corporation may contribute financially to the *IEQ* Project, which strictly requires that funds be drawn from lawful sources.

How are the finances being monitored?

All donations to the *IEQ* Project go either to the account of the Center for Islam and Science or that of the Society for Qurʾānic Studies. Both organizations are legal entities, registered in their respective countries with relevant governmental agencies, which monitor their financial transactions through their laws and well-recognized auditing systems. Please see the project website for more details.

What are publishing and marketing plans for *IEQ*?

We have three clear publishing and marketing objectives: (i) integrity of the text; (ii) affordable access to *IEQ* around the world; and (iii) cost-effective and professional distribution and marketing, especially for institutional subscribers and academic readership in the West. *IEQ* is based on the non-negotiable

premise that the Qurʾān is a revealed text, revealed to Prophet Muḥammad, upon him blessings and peace, at a certain time and place, but transcending both history and geography—a Book that is for all humanity and for all times. For all Muslims, this is an irreducible, non-negotiable aspect of the Qurʾān. Thus, *IEQ* is a reference work that excludes references to those sources which do not believe in the Divine authorship of the Qurʾān and this gives *IEQ* its uniqueness—as well as its perceived “limitations” as far as certain Western scholars and publishers are concerned. We are working with Muslim publishers around the world to draw a comprehensive marketing and distribution plan which will ensure its easy and affordable availability throughout the world.

Are there works similar to *IEQ*?

There is no reference work on the Qurʾān in English language that takes, as its foundational premise, the Muslim belief that the Qurʾān is a revealed text. The two extant encyclopedias (Brill’s six volume *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān* [2001-2005] and the single volume, 772-page work published by Routledge, *The Qurʾān: an Encyclopedia* [2005]) have been rejected by Muslim scholars as works steeped in neo-Orientalism. Please visit <<http://www.iequran.com/faq.html>> for reviews.

What will be the retail price of *IEQ*?

The actual retail price of the first edition of *IEQ* will be determined once the first volume is ready. Students will be offered a discount. We are making arrangements for local editions in various parts of the world so that *IEQ* is available at local, rather than international/Western prices. We will be cooperating with local publishers for distribution. This is a not-for-profit project. Please check the project website for details.





The Unromantic Orient

Muhammad Asad

Translated from the German by

Elma Ruth Harder

Includes 32 pages of original photographs
taken in 1922

Paperback 192 pages, ISBN 9839154613

Price: US \$20.00

Buy Online: www.al-qalam.org

On a hazy morning early in 1922, Leopold Weiss stood on the planks of a ship on his way to the East where he would experience his first Arab encounters, as if they were a presentiment of what the future held in store for him. After several months of travel in the Middle East, Leopold Weiss returned to Germany and published his journal entries as *Unromantisches Morgenland, aus dem Tagebuch einer Reise*. This first English translation of a long forgotten work recaptures his initial experiences in an unknown and intriguing land where he found a new home and a new sense of belonging.

The *Unromantic Orient* is not only an impressionistic journal of a young man in search of certitude, it also provides insights into the spiritual transformation of Leopold Weiss who would soon convert to Islam and spend the rest of his life in studying and writing about it. The travelogue starts on March 14, 1922 at the Jerusalem train station and takes us through Cairo, Amman, parts of the Transjordan, Palestine, Damascus and Istanbul. The book includes 32 pages of Muhammad Asad's original photos taken in 1922.



Al-Qalam Publishing

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