Writing an IEQ Entry

IEQ consists of 518 alphabetically arranged entries in five categories:

- 44 Special (Sp) = over 10,000 words
- 172 Major (Mj) = 7,500--8,000 words
- 168 Medium (Md) = 6,000--7,000 words
- 101 Minor (Mi) = 3,000--4,000 words, and
- 33 Short (Sh) = 1,000--1,500 words

Each category has certain distinct features; there are also features common to all entries. All entries

- begin by defining the title: "Definitions and Usage"

- mention cited sources chronologically;

- use abbreviations (see <u>Abbreviations of Commonly Cited Works</u>);

- provide birth/death dates in Hijri/CE format for all persons cited;

- include cross-references to other entries; and

- integrate source material in a fully-referenced academic text that retains the spiritual elevation of the sources used for generating the text.

Writing a short Entry

Writing a short entry (1-2 pages) is far easier than a special entry.

Beginning the entry

- **STEP 1**

Define, in the most precisely manner, what the entry is about. For example, the entry "Bābil" begins as: An ancient Mesopotamian city in present-day Iraq, where some Israelites learned sorcery, mentioned once in the Qurʾān (Q 2:102).

- **STEP 2**

Explain what the word/term means etymologically; this applies to all words used in the Qurʾān for the entry. In this case, there is only one word, Bābil:

Etymology

Bābil is considered to be a derivative of *balbala*, infinitive noun of *balbal*, meaning confusion (Farāhīdī, *ʿAyn*). The city was thus named because here the tongues were confounded when the tower built by Nimrūd was destroyed (Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr, sub* Q 2:102). Abū ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Barr (368-463/978-1070) held that the best account regarding the confounding of languages is the narration from Ibn ʿAbbās (3BH-68/619-688), that when Nūḥ, upon him peace, landed at the bottom of Mount Jūdiyy (see <u>Ark</u>; <u>Mountains</u>), he founded the city and gave it eighty names. One day their language was confounded into eighty languages, Arabic being one of them; some of them could no longer understand one another (Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr, sub* Q 2:102)

Note: Farāhīdī is the earliest source; many later scholars repeat what he said. IEQ attempts to use the earliest possible sources. The next three sections (<u>Contexts, Identification and Bibliography</u>) provide other relevant information about this place name.

- See list of <u>Frequently Cited Works</u> and a helpful <u>list</u> of most frequently cited scholars, with full names and dates of birth/death. Please see <u>sample entries</u>.

A Few Notes on Text and Sources

o Full names are cited at first occurrence along with dates of birth/death in Hijri/CE format;
o IEQ uses Qurʾān proper names for all persons, places, and things mentioned in the Qurʾān without corresponding Biblical names for persons, but English names for places are provided;
o Following Islamic spiritual etiquettes, salutations and honorifics are used every time a Prophet or a Companion is mentioned;
o Sources:

- *IEQ* is firmly anchored in traditional Islamic scholarship and belongs to the emerging body of Muslim works on the Qurʾān originally composed in Western languages, we hope that it will also contribute to broader academic discourse on Islam as it brings to the forefront new source material, rare bibliographic references, and resources for further research.

- Instead of polemically engaging the centuries-old biases and missionary or colonial heritage of non-Muslim works, *IEQ* seeks to offer a positive contribution for a future discourse between the two distinct traditions of Qurʾānic studies—a discourse that may help bring some light to a world suffering from spiritual darkness of an unprecedented order.

- Given their fundamental premise that the Qurʾān is not a Divine text (or at least we cannot confirm it to be), IEQ does not employ non-Muslim sources.