



Methodological Rules in al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ in Its Fifth Edition

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Abstract

The dictionary is a vessel for preserving language from loss and a fundamental reference to which students and learners return to clarify obscure words, thereby contributing to the understanding of religious and literary texts, enriching their linguistic repertoire, and improving their level. Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ, issued by the Academy of the Arabic Language in Cairo, is regarded as a modern dictionary. It has acquired a distinguished scholarly status and is widely disseminated in Arabic libraries. It has five editions, the most recent of which was published in 2021, nearly 15 years after the fourth edition. This is a distinctive edition in which the Dictionary Compilation Committee attempted to keep pace with the rapid development of knowledge and the sciences. This led us to pose the following question: What changes have occurred in the fifth edition of al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ? To answer this question, we deemed it appropriate to examine the fifth edition of al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ, which we obtained from the Library of the Academy of the Arabic Language in Cairo. It is printed in two parts: the first begins with hamzah and ends with ḍād, and the second begins with tā’ and ends with yā’. We also returned to the fourth edition to substantiate the additions and amendments with suitable examples.

Keywords: methodological rules; words; scientific terms; al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ; lexicographical definition; illustrative images.

Introduction

The Academy of the Arabic Language in Cairo is considered one of the earliest Arab academies to have made great efforts to preserve and develop the Arabic language. The Academy adopted numerous and varied means to achieve the purposes for which it was established, namely, serving



and developing the Arabic language and enabling it to keep pace with the requirements of the modern age, which is witnessing rapid development in the various fields of life.

The compilation of dictionaries of words is one of the principal means of preserving the Arabic language. The Academy has issued three dictionaries: al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr, al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ, and al-Mu‘jam al-Wajīz. The material in these dictionaries differs quantitatively and qualitatively according to the authors' aims, which are primarily determined by the receiving public.

Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ is a reference for students and educated readers. A committee composed of professors devoted itself to issuing it, attending to the methodological, linguistic, and encyclopedic aspects while attempting to encompass what was new in the world.

Four editions of al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ appeared. In each edition, the Dictionary Committee sought to remedy what had been missed by taking into account the scholarly, linguistic, and methodological opinions of critical scholars. The fourth edition was the same as the third edition, distinguished by its publication in a single volume and in a new format with colored entries.

The innovations of the fifth edition of al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ are the focus of our study in this article. Before addressing them, we identify the dictionary as follows:

1. Definition of the Dictionary

1.1. Linguistically

Al-Khalīl al-Farāhīdī said, “al-‘ajam is the opposite of the Arabs. An a‘jamī man is one who is not Arab. Peoples are ‘ajam and Arabs. Al-a‘jam is one who does not speak clearly. A woman is ‘ajmā’ when her foreignness is evident. Al-‘ajmā’ is every animal or beast (...). Al-a‘jam is every speech that is not in the Arabic language when no attribution is intended by it. (...) Al-mu‘jam is the separated letters of the alphabet because they are a‘jamiyyah. Ta‘jīm al-kitāb means dotting the writing so that its obscurity becomes clear and it is correct.”¹

¹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad, Kitāb al-‘Ayn, edited by Maḥdī al-Makhzūmī and Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarrā’ī, Series of Indexes and Dictionaries, vol. 1, 237–238.



Ibn Jinnī says, “Know that ‘-j-m occurs in the speech of the Arabs only for ambiguity and concealment and as the opposite of clarity and explicitness. Among this is their saying: a man is a ‘jam and a woman is ‘ajmā’ when they do not speak clearly and do not make their speech plain.”² ‘Ujmah, in its etymological meaning, is the opposite of exposition and clarity. From it are derived ‘ajamī, ‘ajmā’, and a ‘jamiyyah, and a ‘jamī is the opposite of Arab.’

1.2. Technically

Technically, the dictionary is defined as follows: “It is a book that contains the largest possible number of the vocabulary items of a language, accompanied by explanation and interpretation of their meanings, provided that the materials are arranged in a particular order, either according to the letters of the alphabet or by subject. The complete dictionary is the one that includes every word in the language accompanied by an explanation of its meaning, derivation, pronunciation, and citations that show the contexts of its use.”³

The word “dictionary” is often applied to linguistic books that treat and delimit the linguistic field of a given word. We may say that the dictionary is “the reference book that includes the words of a language and records their spelling, pronunciation, meaning, use, synonyms, derivation, or at least one of these aspects”.⁴ From the foregoing, we conclude that a dictionary is a book comprising two basic elements: the entries, represented by linguistic units, whether simple or compound, and their semantic explanations. These entries are then arranged according to a particular order chosen by the author of the dictionary, which may be phonetic or alphabetical.

2. Types of Lexical Units

The lexical units constituting the dictionary are divided into general units and specialized units.⁵

² Abū al-Faṭḥ ‘Uthmān ibn Jinnī, *Sirr ṣinā‘at al-i‘rāb*, study and verification by Ḥasan Hindāwī, Dār al-Qalam, Damascus, Syria, vol. 1, 36.

³ Ismā‘īl ibn Ḥammād al-Jawharī, *Tāj al-lughah wa-ṣiḥāḥ al-‘arabiyyah*, edited by Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ghaffār ‘Aṭṭār, Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Malāyīn, vol. 1, 38.

⁴ Maḥmūd Fahmī Ḥijāzī, “Modern Trends in Arabic Lexicography,” *Majallat Majma‘ al-Lughah al-‘Arabiyyah*, no. 40, 1 November 1977, 86.

⁵ Lexical units are also divided into complete and incomplete units. Complete units include all nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, while incomplete units generally consist of grammatical particles represented by “letters” of various kinds, pronouns, demonstratives, relative nouns, and defective verbs. Ibrāhīm ibn Murād, *Masā‘il fī al-mu‘jam*, Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1997, 31.



General units are every general linguistic expression belonging to general speech and are capable of acquiring particular features, such as connotative meaning, polysemy, and literary function.

Specialized units comprise every term of their two kinds: the scientific term, which is used in the pure sciences, and the technical term, which is used in the humanities.⁶

Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ is among the modern dictionaries in which the authors sought renewal and modernization across five editions. In each edition, they attempted to refine scientific definitions and ensure clarity of expression and soundness of style. Before addressing the changes that affected the fifth edition, we define the dictionary as follows:

3. The Idea of Compiling al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ

Muḥammad ‘Alī ‘Allūbah, Minister of Education, proposed to the Academy in its third session that the Academy provide the Arab world with a dictionary in the most modern contemporary form, from which students of knowledge might benefit and before which they would find an illustrated dictionary, easy to consult, facilitating their acquisition of the language. The Academy therefore issued the following resolution: “In view of the need of secondary-school students and those at their level, and of the educated public among the people of the Arabic language, for a medium-sized linguistic dictionary that is easy to consult, readily arranged, and illustrated, and that includes among correct scientific terms those connected with the causes current among people, the Academy resolves to begin taking the necessary measures to undertake this work and to entrust a committee with commencing its realization.”⁷

The dictionary was divided into twenty-eight chapters, each corresponding to the number of letters in the alphabet. Its fifth edition appeared in two parts: the first begins with the chapter of hamzah and ends with the chapter of ḍād, while the second begins with the chapter of ṭā’ and ends with the chapter of yā’.

Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ takes into account the root letters of the word. Thus, the researcher looking for the word sabbūrah finds it under s-b-r, knowing that the chapter of sīn gathers words that begin with sīn, the chapter of kāf gathers words that begin with the letter kāf, and so forth.

⁶ Ibrāhīm ibn Murād, *Masā’il fī al-mu‘jam*, 31.

⁷ Ḥusayn Naṣṣār, *Al-Mu‘jam al-‘Arabī: nash’atuhu wa-taṭawwuruh*, 4th ed., Dār Miṣr lil-Ṭibā‘ah, Egypt, 1988, 593.



4. Features of the Fifth Edition

In the foreword to the fifth edition, the president of the Academy of the Arabic Language pointed to the distinction of this edition from the four preceding editions in terms of modernity and renewal, saying, “However, it is not merely an ordinary edition like its four sisters that preceded it; rather, it is updated, developed, renewed, and revised, according to a method established by the Academy for updating its dictionaries and publications, so that they may become more capable of meeting the requirements of writers and speakers of Arabic, Arabs and others and of keeping pace with contemporary developments and scientific, technical, and social advances.”⁸ Among the reasons for the appearance of the fifth edition was the change that the world had witnessed in all fields of life, especially since the period that had elapsed since the fourth edition was nearly fifteen years, “during which there occurred what may be called a comprehensive revolution throughout the world and in all fields of knowledge. New words and new concepts appeared in every aspect of life, as did new cultural manifestations in food, drink, housing, means of communication, the arts, the various sciences, and their technologies.”⁹

Changes also affected “the form and material of dictionaries: collection, classification, editing, and publication, making them closer to being a comprehensive and concise linguistic encyclopaedia of the knowledge of the age in all fields of life”.¹⁰

5. Committees for Updating al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ

A higher committee was formed from the following members of the Academy: Fārūq Shūshah, may God have mercy on him, as rapporteur; Muṣṭafā Ḥijāzī, may God have mercy on him, as member; ‘Abd al-Ḥāfiẓ Ḥilmī Muḥammad, may God have mercy on him, as member; and Muḥammad Ḥasan ‘Abd al-‘Azīz as member. Its purpose was to coordinate the work of five committees—the Linguistic Review and Formulation Committee and the Academy Resolutions

⁸ Academy of the Arabic Language in Cairo, *Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ*, 5th ed., Academy of the Arabic Language, 2021, vol. 1, Foreword to the Fifth Edition, p. A.

⁹ .Ibid., p. C.

¹⁰ Ibid.



Committee—which derived its material from the committees on the principles of language, words, styles, and the styles of civilization and from the Scientific Terminology Committee¹¹.

“Sha‘bān ‘Īsā Abū al-‘Ulā, expert of the Scientific Terminology Committee, recorded the committee’s decisions concerning addition, deletion, or modification of formulation successively until the editing of the master copy was completed. He was joined in this by Iqbāl Zakī Sulaymān, the linguistic expert, and Mujāwir Sayyid Muḥāwir, the general editor.”¹²

We therefore deemed it appropriate to examine the renewal present in this edition.

6. The Most Important Methodological Rules Observed by the Higher Committee in Its Work

The higher committee established seventeen methodological rules. We address some of them by extracting examples from the dictionary, which we mention below.

6.1. Introducing new words not accommodated by previous editions of the dictionary and adding new meanings to the words already included in the dictionary

Every new edition of the dictionary seeks to add words imposed by actual usage. Among the words added in the fifth edition are the following: al-qawqa‘iyyāt, epistemology, Apollo, and al-jism al-zujājī, which was defined as follows: “A transparent gelatinous substance that fills the inner cavity of the eyeball behind its lens; it is what is what gives the eye its full consistency and preserves its spherical shape, while allowing light to pass through it toward the retina, which is sensitive to it.” The definition was accompanied by an image of the eye, showing the position of the vitreous body.¹³

6.2. Scientific and technical terms suitable for general use are included from what is new in usage, and reformulating terms from the previous edition and what is new in their concepts.

¹¹ Ibid., p. D.

¹² Ibid., p. H.

¹³ Ibid., vol. 1, 625.



The Committee of al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ added scientific terms, such as computer, pituitary gland, enamel, al-fūf, thulium, and sella turcica. These are accompanied by images. The definitions of some of them are as follows:

*Al-fūf: In biology, “the plasma membrane that envelops the cell and regulates the passage of food and gases from and into it”.¹⁴

*Thulium: a hard radioactive metal of the lanthanide group, atomic number 69, density 9.32 g/cm³, melting at 1545 degrees Celsius. It is used as a source of X-rays. Its chemical symbol is Tm.¹⁵

*Sella turcica: in anatomy: the part at the base of the skull in which the pituitary gland rests.¹⁶

The definition of terms was also reformulated. Among them is the term *ijtihād*, whose definition was changed from one focusing on the state of the mujtahid in the fourth edition to a more detailed definition in the fifth edition, describing the mujtahid’s method in relying on the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, and analogy. This appears in the presentation of the two definitions in the two editions as follows:

“The jurist’s exertion of effort so that he may obtain probable knowledge of a legal ruling.”¹⁷

“*Ijtihād* in jurisprudence: expending effort to derive appropriate legal rulings based on fixed principles from the Qur’ān and Sunnah, or measured by analogy against comparable and similar previously established rulings.”¹⁸

6.3. Adding the Latin equivalents of scientific terms by which they have become internationally known and by which they have come to be known exclusively, whenever the need calls for it

We examined the dictionary in search of the scientific terms to which Latin equivalents had been added and found two types. Some are accompanied by a Latin equivalent, as is the case with the following terms:

¹⁴ Academy of the Arabic Language in Cairo, *Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ*, vol. 2, 1110–1111.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 162.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 682.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 222.



- * al-samar (*Acacia tortilis*)
- * Shawkiyyāt al-jild (*Echinodermata*)
- * al-munkharibāt (*Foraminifera*)

Other terms were accompanied by their chemical symbols after their definitions, without a Latin equivalent, as is the case with the following chemical terms:

- *Iridium (Ir)
- *Berkelium (Bk)
- *Bismuth (Bi)

6.4. Illustrative images for what the reader of the dictionary needs in explaining certain words, especially living organisms, machines, and geometric figures, should be added, and other images that are no longer appropriate should be excluded.

Unlike previous editions, the fifth edition of al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ featured a distinctive use of clear, colored images that helped the reader understand the meanings of the defined words, ranging from depictions of living organisms, including plants and animals, to organs of the human body, machines, and geometric figures.

Among the added images are those of al-muḥawwā, the microscope, the shell, the spinal cord, the new moon, television, and the telephone, including the mobile telephone, with their definitions changing. The following presents definitions of the illustrated words.

*Television: a device for receiving images and sounds broadcast by electromagnetic waves and displaying them. It is said that the ceremony and the like were televised, meaning they were transmitted on television screens.¹⁹

*Facial paralysis is a disease affecting the face, from which the corner of the mouth becomes twisted owing to inflammation of the seventh nerve.²⁰

What is new in this definition is the addition of the cause of this disease.

This edition excluded the image of al-muṭar, meaning an ear of maize; plural: amṭā’.²¹

¹⁹ Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ, vol. 1, 134.

²⁰ Ibid., vol. 2, 1313.

²¹ Ibid., vol. 2, 1374.



It also excluded the image of al-naḥr, which indicates the upper part of the chest.²²

6.5. Unifying the formula for defining letter entries according to the achievements of modern phonetics and the names of months according to their different calendars: Hijrī, Gregorian, and Syriac

In the fifth edition, the Dictionary Committee adopted a unified formula for defining letter entries that takes modern phonetics into account. It began its definition of the letter by mentioning its rank in the alphabet, specifying its place of articulation and manner of articulation. We selected three random examples of definitions of letters, as follows:

*Dāl: the eighth letter of the alphabet. It is a consonantal sound, dental-alveolar, plosive, voiced, and nonemphatic.²³

* Kāf: the twenty-second letter of the alphabet. It is a velar sound from the velum and the back of the tongue, voiceless, consonantal, fricative, and nonemphatic.²⁴

This edition also unified the names of the Hijrī, Gregorian, and Syriac months. It began by defining each month by its rank in the Hijrī, Gregorian, or Syriac calendar, then the month that precedes it and the month that follows it, and what corresponds to it in the other calendar. Examples are as follows:

*Sha‘bān: the eighth month of the Hijrī year, after Rajab and before Ramaḍān. Sha‘bān is diptote.²⁵

*April: the fourth month of the Gregorian year, preceded by March and followed by May; it corresponds to Nīsān among the Syriac months.²⁶

*Tammūz: one of the months of the Syriac year, preceded by Ḥazīrān and followed by Āb; it corresponds to July among the months of the Gregorian year.²⁷

²² Ibid., vol. 2, 1422.

²³ Ibid., vol. 1, 423.

²⁴ Ibid., vol. 2, 1215.

²⁵ Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ, vol. 1, 770.

²⁶ Ibid., vol. 1, 3.

²⁷ Ibid., vol. 1, 138.



6.6. Reducing, as far as possible, poetic citations, especially those requiring explanation, as well as proverbs, and exemplifying, as far as possible, by what occurs in the Qur’ān and is related to the selected entries so that the example is clear and brief, helping the reader understand the word in a context of its most eloquent uses and making Qur’ānic usage an example to be memorized and recalled when determining the structure or meaning of the word

Some entries appeared without poetic citations, while others retained this type of citation. The following are examples of the two cases.

For the first case, we cite the following entries:

Tasannā, where the dictionary dispensed with a verse of poetry by al-Akḥṭal.²⁸

The definition of the word al-shazaf was free of verse by the poet Ibn al-Riqā’.²⁹

The citation of a verse by Zuhayr ibn Abī Sulmā in the definition of the particle lākin was deleted³⁰, and the poetic verse by the poet Aws in the definition of the word marīd was deleted.³¹

For the second case, we exemplify it with the word al-muzāwajah, in which a saying by al-Buḥturī was cited.³²

Arabic proverbs were reduced in several entries of the fifth edition. We mention what appeared in the following two entries:

Šāb: the Arabic proverb “šābat biqurr”, meaning that the calamity descended upon its place of settlement, was dispelled. It is used when hardship descends.³³

Al-ghamrah: The Arabic proverb “ghamarātun thumma yanjalīn” was deleted. It is used for patience in enduring hardships in the hope of their relief.³⁴

The dictionary retained one Arabic proverb and dispensed it with another in an entry that used two proverbs; this concerns the word al-dhi’b. It abandoned the proverb “the wolf, when alone, is a lion”, which is used of everyone isolated in his opinion, and retained the Arabic proverb “whoever

²⁸ Al-Mu’jam al-Wasīṭ, vol. 1, 728.

²⁹ Ibid., vol. 1, 769.

³⁰ Al-Mu’jam al-Wasīṭ, vol. 2, 1315.

³¹ Ibid, vol. 2, 1355

³² Ibid., vol. 1, 652.

³³ Ibid., vol. 1, 838.

³⁴ Ibid., vol. 2, 1042.



appoints the wolf as shepherd has acted unjustly”, which is used of one who appoints the untrustworthy.³⁵

Among the examples of proverbs that remained in the fifth edition are those mentioned in the entries:

*Al-rijl: the proverb included therein is “Do not walk with the foot of one who refuses”: do not seek assistance in your affair from one who is not concerned with it.³⁶

*Al-rā'id: the proverb is “The scout does not lie to his people”, that is, one who does not lie when he speaks.³⁷

Among the entries in which the Dictionary Committee used citations from Qur'ānic verses, which were not in the fourth edition, is al-bāri', one of the Most Beautiful Names of God, meaning the Creator. In the Noble Qur'ān: “He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor, the Fashioner.”

Likewise, in the word al-burj: fortress. In the Noble Qur'ān: “Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you are in lofty towers.”

Al-rūḥ: that by which the soul has life; it may be masculine or feminine. In the Noble Qur'ān: “And they ask you about the spirit. Say: the spirit is of the command of my Lord.”

6.7. Excluding the symbols that had indicated that a word was borrowed, academical, modern, Arabized, or postclassical, namely, (d), (maj), (modern), (ma'), and (mu), after such words had become numerous and common in use, entered the Arabic language without restriction and were accepted at the scholarly and practical levels.

We present examples of borrowed, academic, modern, Arabized, and postclassical words from which the symbols were excluded.

Borrowed words (d):

Before presenting examples, we recall the definition of the borrowed word: it is “every word introduced into the speech of the Arabs that is not originally from it”. Examples of borrowed words free of symbols include the following:³⁸

³⁵ Ibid., vol. 1, 494.

³⁶ Ibid., vol. 1, 535.

³⁷ Ibid., vol. 1, 612.

³⁸ Al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ, vol. 1, 437.



*Al-tirfãs: a wild genus of fungi applied to most kinds of truffle.³⁹

*Chalk: a fine-grained organic sedimentary rock composed of pure calcium carbonate. Among its properties is that it leaves a white trace on objects when it comes into contact with them, and it is used for writing on the blackboard.⁴⁰

Academy-approved words (maj):

This means “the word approved by the Academy of the Arabic Language”. Examples include:⁴¹

*Culture: Everything that enlightens the mind, refines taste, and develops the faculty of criticism and judgment in the individual and society.⁴²

*Rehearsal proof: the preliminary trial that precedes the presentation of any work in its final form. Among them are proofs of artistic works and printing proofs.⁴³

Modern words (modern):

This is applied to a word used by moderns in the modern age and common in the language of public life.⁴⁴

Examples include the following:

*Solidarity: the commitment of the strong or the rich to assist the weak or the poor.⁴⁵

*Balloon: a device of fabric in the shape of a pear filled with hydrogen or helium gas and flying in the sky while carrying beneath it a large basket used for riding and the like.⁴⁶

Arabized words (maʿ):

Definition of the Arabized word: It is the foreign word that the Arabs changed by deletion, addition, or transposition.⁴⁷

³⁹ Ibid., vol. 1, 129.

⁴⁰ Ibid., vol. 2, 871.

⁴¹ Al-Muʿjam al-Wasīṭ, Introduction to the First Edition, 31.

⁴² Al-Muʿjam al-Wasīṭ, vol. 1, 154.

⁴³ Ibid., vol. 1, 83.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 4th ed., 31.

⁴⁵ Ibid., vol. 1, 864.

⁴⁶ Ibid., vol. 2, 901.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 4th ed., 31.



Examples include the following:

*Chemistry: among modern chemists, the science that studies the properties of elements and compounds and the laws governing their reactions, especially when some combine with others (“composition”) or when some are separated from others (“analysis”).⁴⁸

Postclassical words (mu):

Define the postclassical word as the Arabic expression used by people after the age of transmission.⁴⁹

*Gauze: a thin cotton fabric with which wounds and the like are dressed. It is also used as a turban wrap.⁵⁰

*Committee: a group entrusted with examining a matter or accomplishing a task.⁵¹

6.8. Writing the imperfect verb after vocalizing its middle radical, where necessary, to facilitate matters for the reader and avoid ambiguity

The dictionary does not lack this method, which we exemplify with the following verbs:

(lamaḥa) al-baṣaru _a lamḥan.

(nafala) fulānun _u naflan.

(ḥawā) al-shay’ a _i ḥiwāyatan.

6.9. Cross-reference, which may be to what is mentioned in the verb and not only to preceding nominal entries

These cross-references were found in the fourth edition, as the following examples prove:

* al-mudīriyyah: see dūr.

*al-qaswarah: see qasara.

*al-dīсах: see dāsa.

⁴⁸ Ibid., vol. 2, 1272.

⁴⁹ Ibid., vol. 2, 1644.

⁵⁰ Ibid., vol. 1, 747.

⁵¹ Ibid., vol. 2, 1285.



6.10. Adding the surahs of the Noble Qur'ān and defining them briefly

We traced the Qur'ānic surahs in the dictionary and defined them in the same way: the definitions begin by mentioning the surah's rank in the muṣḥaf, indicating whether it is Meccan or Medinan, and then give the number of its verses. We shall cite three surahs as follows:

*Sūrat al-Mā'idah: the name of the fifth surah of the Noble Qur'ān in the order of the muṣḥaf. It is Medinan, and its verses are one hundred and twenty.⁵²

*Sūrat Yūnus: the name of the tenth surah of the Noble Qur'ān in the order of the muṣḥaf. It is Meccan, and its verses are one hundred and nine.⁵³

*Sūrat al-Qiyāmah: the name of the seventy-fifth surah of the Noble Qur'ān in the order of the muṣḥaf. It is Meccan, and its verses are forty.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The fifth edition of al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ appeared in an attractive form, keeping pace with developments in printing in terms of paper quality, typeface, and the clarity of the colored images representing various living organisms, which play an essential educational role in clarifying the intended meaning for the reader and facilitating its understanding.

The various higher committees of the dictionary worked to introduce fundamental changes to this edition to keep pace with the times and serve the Arab reader. We have confirmed these changes with examples from the dictionary. They included the introduction of new words and meanings, scientific and technical terms, the addition of their Latin equivalents and chemical symbols, the addition of illustrative images, the unification of the formula for defining letter entries and the names of months, the reduction of poetic citations and proverbs, the citation of what occurs in the Noble Qur'ān, and the addition of the names of the surahs of the Noble Qur'ān with brief definitions.

The dictionary also excluded the symbols with which words had been marked, such as “borrowed” and “Arabized”.

⁵² Ibid., vol. 2, 1400.

⁵³ Ibid., vol. 2, 1661.

⁵⁴ Ibid., vol. 2, 1210.



The Academy's efforts continue toward a modern dictionary in which the Arab reader finds what he seeks.

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