

# Arabic names

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Questions regarding the indexing of Arabic names come up repeatedly on indexer discussion lists. Issues include whether to invert the first and second name, what to do with the definite article, how to handle compound names, what to do with names that apparently have the Arabic word for 'father' or 'son' in them, and what to do with titles. The combination of a different culture and a different writing system for Arabic compounds the problem. Using this article as a guide, however, the indexer who does not know Arabic should be able to index texts with Arabic names without unusual difficulty.

The article first addresses the issue of romanization or transliteration of Arabic, partly just as background but also to answer questions on when to use double-posting or cross-references for variant spellings. The second part of this article covers the various issues involved with the sorting of Arabic names.

Although names in the Arabic language are the focus of this article, much of the information can be applied to names in other languages that use the Arabic script, such as Farsi, Urdu, and the languages of Afghanistan, including Dari and Pashto. These other languages may have additional sorting issues for their personal names which this article does not cover.

## Romanization and transliterations of Arabic

Before addressing the issue of sorting Arabic names, we need to consider the romanization or transliteration of Arabic. Romanization refers to any rendering of words in non-Latin writing systems into languages using the Latin alphabet. Transliteration refers more specifically to a precise system of mapping one writing system to another, often letter by letter, so that there is no question to the trained reader of the transliterated word what the spelling was in the original language. There are numerous ways to both romanize and transliterate Arabic, and although transliteration standards exist, they are not applied consistently. There are several factors explaining the divergent methods of romanization and transliteration from Arabic. Variations depend upon:

- when and how a name was first romanized
- the Arabic dialect from which the name is romanized
- the degree of precise transliteration use of diacritics desired.

### *When and how a name was first romanized*

Arabic names romanized into English prior to the adoption of later transliteration standards tend to keep their original spellings. This is particularly the case with place names. An

example is the city of Mecca, which should more correctly be transliterated as Makkah. While a few books might choose the latter, most publications, including scholarly works, will tend toward the more commonly used spelling. Terms pertaining to the Islamic faith, however, may have changed their spellings over time, out of respect to the religion's followers. For example, the historical spelling of Moslem has been changed to Muslim. While some trade books might still spell the sacred book as Koran, it is more common to see Qur'an (with or without the apostrophe).

Personal names that were first introduced into English through the press, rather than through books, tend to assume a more popular romanization. This would include major political leaders in Arab countries. Examples include the names of Egyptian presidents: Gamal Abdel Nasser, rather than the more 'correct' Gamal Abd al-Nasir; Anwar Sadat, rather than Anwar al-Sadat; and Hosni Mubarak, rather than Husni Mubarak. Whether the historically popular romanization or a more accurate transliteration standard is used depends on the book's style and its audience. While a trade book is likely to use the same spelling of a name as used in the press, a scholarly book may use a more precise transliteration.

Arabic names may also be romanized into languages other than English, such as French. They would then retain the French spelling in English publications. This is most often the case for North African names, where the French colonial legacy has left its impact on romanized spellings. For example, the former Algerian president's name is spelled Chadli Ben Jadid, never Shadli. The French spellings are also sometimes found in Lebanese names, but less consistently than in North African ones. Thus, you will come across both Bachir Gemayel and Bashir Gemayel and sometimes also Bashir Jumayyil. A double-post or use of a *See* reference is thus often desirable for such inconsistently spelled Lebanese or Syrian names, but is not needed for North African names.

### *Arabic dialects and romanization*

Arabic is spoken in a vast geographic area from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf, from the border of Turkey to the Sudan, encompassing approximately 250 million people and a majority population in 20 countries. Although the written form is the same in all countries, significant spoken dialectal variations exist. Different English spellings of the same name will arise, depending on whether the Arabic transliteration or the local pronunciation is used as the source of the romanized version.

While geographic names, such as Giza in Egypt, not Jiza, are almost always romanized as locally pronounced, there is greater variety among personal names. The degree to which a name is used only locally or is commonly found throughout

the Arabic-speaking world is a factor in determining its romanization. While it is typical to stick with standard transliterations for common given Arabic names, such as Muhammad, other given names popular only within a certain region and surnames might be romanized as locally pronounced. If the individual becomes regionally or internationally known, however, divergent spellings can arise. A good example is the surname of the president of Libya. The name begins with the Arabic letter that is transliterated as a Q to spell Qaddafi, but this letter is pronounced as a G in the Libyan dialect, leading to the spelling of Gaddafi. Thus, both spellings (among other variants) have become common.

Meanwhile, in the Egyptian dialect, the Arabic letter for J is pronounced as a hard G (as in 'go'). Due to the predominance of Egypt in the Arabic-speaking world both in size and international influence, the Egyptian dialectal pronunciation is consistently retained in the romanization of Egyptian names, such as Gamal Abdel Nasser.

The romanization of Arabic names of individuals in non-Arabic speaking countries, such as Iran or Afghanistan, also differs from names of Arabs. For example, the Arabic name Muhammad is usually spelled as Mohammad for Iranians.

#### *Degrees of transliteration preciseness and diacritics*

There are several internationally recognized transliteration systems for Arabic, in addition to any local country standards. These include ISO 233 (International Standards Organization, of 1984), DIN-31635 (Deutsches Institut für Normung, of 1982), BS 4280 (British Standards Institute, of 1986), UNGEGN (United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, of 1972), ALA-LC (American Library Association – Library of Congress, of 1997), and the transliteration systems of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES) published by Cambridge University Press and the *Encyclopedia of Islam* published by Brill Academic Publishers.

These standards vary in their degree of precision and consequent use of diacritics. There are several Arabic consonants that have no equivalent in the Latin alphabet. For these Arabic consonants, Latin letters with diacritics (dots, lines, circumflexes and other marks) may be used. The more precise standards, such as DIN and ISO, use a single diacritical character for each Arabic letter that has no equivalent. This results in over 15–17 diacritical characters, or about half of the Arabic alphabet. Other standards, such as ALA-LC, IJMES, and the *Encyclopedia of Islam* avoid such an extensive list of diacritics by using pairs of Latin letters to designate a single Arabic consonant in the cases of th, kh, dh, sh, and gh. Using two letters to designate a single sound, however, is considered a less precise method.

Thus a publisher must weigh the benefits of a precise transliteration using a high degree of diacritics versus the simplicity of editorial production using minimal diacritics. The decision also depends on what the readers will understand and expect. The newspapers and magazines of the popular press use no diacritics for romanization. The trade press also avoids transliteration diacritics, although it tends to indicate the Arabic letter *hamza* (a glottal stop) with an

apostrophe or closing single quote ( ' ) and the consonant 'ayn with an inverted apostrophe or opening single quote ( ' ) or more precisely with a superscript c ( <sup>c</sup> ). If a word begins with a *hamza*, this is not indicated in transliteration, but if a word begins with an 'ayn, the inverted apostrophe or superscript c may or may not be written, such as 'Ali or Ali for the male name. Scholarly books that merely mention an Arabic name or two, but are outside the field of Middle East or Islamic studies, also tend to avoid the diacritics, other than indicating the *hamza* and 'ayn, since their readers are not likely to be familiar with additional diacritics. Scholarly books within the field of Middle Eastern or Islamic studies usually follow the ALA-LC, IJMES, or *Encyclopedia of Islam* standards of transliteration (which vary from each other by only one or two characters). The fuller ISO or DIN transliterations are rarely used for transliterating names in books on Middle Eastern or Islamic studies, tending to be reserved for the field of language and linguistics or other specialized documents. The British Standard is not widely used since it is copyrighted and thus not freely distributed. Thus, despite the existence of various standards, scholarly books written in English in all countries are quite consistent in their transliteration system of Arabic names.

The transliteration of Farsi (Persian) is also included in the various standards. Farsi has some additional letters, such as p and v, not found in Arabic. If the ALA-LC, IJMES, and the *Encyclopedia of Islam* standards are used, there are no additional diacritics in Farsi that are not already in Arabic.

#### *Arabic transliterations in the index*

As the indexer, you enter Arabic names and terms into the index with the same spelling and transliteration used in the text. You need to distinguish carefully between the *hamza* and the 'ayn, especially if the text merely uses an opening single quote, and not a superscript c to indicate the 'ayn. If further diacritics are used for names and terms in the text, such as the ALA-LC standard, these must be indicated in the index. These diacritics are supported in Unicode fonts, but the indexer is usually not expected to use the same font as the final typeset book. Therefore, unless the publisher provides the font to the indexer, the indexer should use some conversion scheme to designate the diacritics, either a table provided by the publisher or a code scheme devised by the indexer with the publisher's agreement. Table 1 gives an example of conversion codes to submit to the publisher and suggested typing shortcuts that you might enter into your index for ALA-LC diacritics. (Upper case equivalents will also need to be added to this list.)

If using a table of conversion codes, it is important to distinguish between the apostrophe used for the *hamza* and a real apostrophe. You might have real apostrophes in your index which you do not want to get automatically converted to the Arabic *hamza*. The example in the table, therefore, suggests using another form of punctuation, such as period, between brackets for the *hamza*.

Depending on the indexing software you use, you may be able to use a translation table or macro feature to create a shortcut and save keystrokes. A simple single bracket following the letter in question should suffice. With the

**Table 1** Example of diacritic conversion codes used for publishing

Diacritic	Conversion Code	Shortcut	Letter Name
ʾ	[.]	.]	hamza
ʿ	[']	']	ʿayn
ḥ	[h.]	h]	ḥā
ṣ	[s.]	s]	ṣād
ḍ	[d.]	d]	ḍād
ṭ	[t.]	t]	ṭā
ẓ	[z.]	z]	ẓā
ā	[a-]	a]	long a - alif
á	[a']	a']	alif maqsurah (only at the end of a word)
ū	[u-]	u]	long u
ī	[i-]	i]	long i

exception of the *alif maqsurah*, which is rare enough for you not to encounter it at all, there is just one Latin letter per diacritical transliteration in the ALA-LC Arabic system. If a book also covers other romanized languages, you will need to expand your transliteration table accordingly. (For the ALA-LC system, additional diacritics are used for Turkish, but no additional diacritics are required in Farsi. For the full Turkish alphabet see the Note to the article on Turkish names in this issue of *The Indexer*.) For a shortcut, a character following the letter is preferred to a character preceding the letter, since the impact of a special character on sorting, such as a bracket, will be lessened.

Diacritics, and especially the letter *ʿayn*, can occur at the start of a word or name. It is correct style for sorting purposes to disregard any diacritics based on Arabic transliterations. But when you type in a special character such as a bracket, to indicate a diacritic this could affect an automatic sort even if it comes in the middle of a word. Therefore, you will need to specify in your indexing software that the character for the diacritic be ignored in the sorting.

#### Double-posting and cross-references

If divergent spellings involve the first letter of an index entry, double-posting or the use of a *See* reference might be appropriate. This will depend, however, on the audience and the nature of the name. For scholarly books, where the audience is already familiar with the preferred spellings, double-posts or *See* references for transliteration differences are generally not needed and thus should be avoided. For trade books aimed at the general public, dual entries in the index are desirable. This is especially the case when an Arabic, Middle Eastern, or Islamic topic is only part of the subject of the book. For example, in a trade book you will probably double-post Koran and Quʿran.

Double-posts or *See* references are a good idea when the divergent spelling of a name is particularly widespread. This might be due to dialect of origin, as with the name of the president of Libya, or to inconsistent application of the language (English or French) of transliteration in certain Lebanese names.

In general, if the text uses a popular spelling, there is no

need to research and add the precise transliterated spelling to the index. However, if the text spells a name with a less commonly used transliteration and you are familiar with the name, then you should probably add the popular spelling (assuming it begins with a different letter) as a double-post or cross-reference. For reference, examples of names with variant spellings of the first letter include: Qassim/Kassim, Qutb/Kutb, Usama/Osama, Uday/Oday, and Ubaidah/Obaidah. The indexer is not expected to anticipate variant spellings, though. Although not necessary to research, web sites of lists of Arabic names that may be of interest include the following:

<http://sudairy.com/arabic/masc.html>  
<http://sudairy.com/arabic/fem.html>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Arabic\\_names](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Arabic_names)  
<http://www.sca.org/heraldry/laurel/names/arabic-naming2.htm>

### Sorting of Arabic names

The most common standard for sorting Arabic names is to sort on the part of the name by which an individual is best known. This standard, followed by the Library of Congress, contrasts with an older standard of sorting on the first element of a name, which is the traditional practice in many Arabic-speaking countries and also the standard of Carl Brocklemann's *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur* (1898, 1937, 1943–9, 1996). The indexer can determine how a person is best known by repeated references to the name in the text or by querying the author or publisher when uncertain.

Standards for sorting, such as those of the Library of Congress and publications of academic institutions of repute, deal also with treatment of the definite article, hyphen and diacritics. As summarized by Behn and Greig (1974), the initial definite article should be ignored in sorting and is the only word element thus ignored, diacritics and Arabic letters indicated by an apostrophe or similar character are disregarded in sorting, and a hyphen is considered to divide a word for word-by-word sorting. It does not make sense to refer to sorting practices in the Arabic language, due to the fact that a very different alphabet is used, and different practices of sorting exist in different Arab countries. The sorting methods explained below are based on the predominant practice in English-language indexes.

#### Modern vs. medieval names and surnames

The adoption of surnames among Arabs has been inconsistent. Some Arabic names that are indexed as surnames (requiring a name to be inverted in an index) have been used as family names for centuries, whereas other Arabs even today, in rural areas and overall in Iraq, still use their father's first name as a second or last name instead of any surname. Given names, thus, may be used as last names and sorted upon. Certain surnames, on the other hand, are distinct as surnames, and the reader familiar with Arabic names will not confuse them with given names. These are

names that begin with a definite article and end with an 'i' or 'y,' such as al-Hamdani.

In general, though, the adoption of surnames among Arabs did not become widespread until the early twentieth century. Thus, it is safe to assume that Arabic names of individuals prominent enough to appear in books since the start of the twentieth century follow the Western pattern of given name – middle name(s) – surname, and thus should be inverted to begin with the last name in the index. Even if the last name of an individual is really only his father's or grandfather's first name, it is still correct to invert modern names. For example, in the case of Saddam Hussein, the second element, Hussein, was really his father's first name. Yet, as a modern name, it is inverted and sorted under the second name. The main exceptions for modern names are for royalty, which are not inverted and are sorted by first name (see under Royalty below), but this is common practice for royalty of any country.

Names from the medieval or pre-modern period tend not to have surnames and thus are usually not inverted, but rather sorted on the first name. However, there are also many exceptions to this. Some pre-modern personalities are better known by their second (father's) name or by their city of origin, tribe, occupation, or nickname. Repeated references to a name in the text are the usual indicator of the desired sortable component of the name. If a pre-modern name comprising more than one element is not mentioned a second time in the text with only one of the names, though, it is advisable to query the author or publisher to determine under which element to sort.

The greatest uncertainty over inverting names lies with names of the nineteenth century. The names in the index for any book on this period should have a relatively liberal use of double-posting or cross-references.

#### *Initial definite article (al-)*

Many Arabic names of people, places, and organizations include the definite article al- as part of the name. According to the *Chicago manual of style* the definite article is written in lower case (unless it comes at the start of a sentence) and is joined to the following word by a hyphen. You may encounter other styles and spellings in a text to be indexed, such as El in Egyptian surnames and place names El-Alamein and El Arish, or possibly a spelling that reflects pronunciation, such as an-Nafud. (The letter 'l' assimilates to the consonant sound that follows it in the cases of d, n, r, s, sh, t, and z, but most standards require transliteration as al- in all cases.)

No matter the spelling, as long as the initial definite article appears separated by a space or a hyphen, it should be ignored in the sorting. While indexes in the past may have required separating the article and placing it at the end of the name in order for the name to sort properly, modern indexing software can hide specified characters from the sort, so that the definite article may remain in its original place at the front of the name yet be ignored in sorting. This has become the preferred style. An example is as follows:

*Hasan al-Turabi* is entered as: *al-Turabi, Hasan* (sorted under Turabi).

The policy of ignoring the definite article applies to the article in the initial position only. In uninverted historical names and in compound names (discussed below) where a definite article falls in the middle of a name as entered, it is treated as a word and not ignored. While this might seem inconsistent, it is practical for the indexer not to have to worry about designating elements within a term to be ignored for sorting purposes.

A definite article sometimes become part of a name of an individual who has settled in the West and chosen to romanize his or her name in such a way as to attach the article to the surname with no space or hyphen and with capitalization only at the start of the article. For example the surname appearing as Elmarsafy is sorted under E.

In rare cases a given name may include a definite article. An example is the Saudi prince Al-Waleed bin Talal. Since this name of royalty is not inverted, but sorted on the first name, it is sorted under W.

The use of the definite article in some names, and especially in place names, may be inconsistent. Some names that have the definite article in Arabic may drop the definite article upon romanization. If you find inconsistent use of a definite article for the same name within the text to be indexed, you should query the author or publisher.

By the way, the name of the ruling family of Qatar, when romanized but not accurately transliterated, appears to begin with a definite article when in fact it is really a word (meaning 'clan') with a long A. Hence it is capitalized as Al and would appear as Āl if using diacritics. The name of Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar, should be sorted by the given name Hamad, though, because as a name of royalty it is indexed by first name. (Sheikh is a title.) An index entry for Al Thani dynasty or another such clan should be sorted under Al.

In addition to personal names, many other proper nouns, such as place names, organizations and names of publications, also have the definite article, which should similarly be ignored at the beginning of a word in its sorting but not ignored when in the middle of a multi-word term.

#### *Abd- and other compound names*

There is a class of Arabic compound given names beginning with Abd (or more precisely 'Abd) and followed by the word for God (as in Abdullah) or followed by the definite article and then a word that is a descriptive 'name' for God. Sometimes it is all written as a single-word name, while at other times it could appear with spaces and/or hyphens in between. These are usually first names, but could be middle or last names. Examples of the varieties of romanization spellings of the name meaning 'servant of the Merciful' include: Abd al-Rahman, Abdul Rahman, Abdulrahman, Abd ar-Rahman and Abdel-Rahman

What is important to keep in mind, though, is that even if there are spaces between the parts of the name, you should avoid separating/inverting the name components beginning with Abd. While this is not such an issue for first names, there could be confusion over how to enter a name with Abd- as the last name.

*Ali Abd al-Raziq* is entered as: *Abd al-Raziq, Ali*.

There are exceptions, where splitting up such a name is acceptable. This would be the case for an individual who has become well known in the West by the final component of the compound name. The best example is the former Egyptian president.

*Gamal Abel Nasser* is entered as: *Nasser, Gamal Abdel* (or *Abdul*), not as *Abdel Nasser, Gamal*.

Other compound names, which should not be broken up if appearing as last names, are names based on the phrase with *al-Din*, meaning 'of religion.' Examples include *Nur al-Din* (the light of religion), *Khair al Din* (the good of religion), and *Ala' al-Din* (excellence of religion). Another compound name is *Zayn al-Abidin* (the beauty of the worshippers).

The other issue regarding these compound names is that, although they contain a definite article, the definite article is *not* ignored in the sort. Only the initial definite articles are ignored. Definite articles that appear in the middle of a name or term receive no special treatment.

#### *Ibn, bin, or ben in names*

It is the Arabic custom to use a patronymic, that is, to follow one's given name with one's father's given name. The word *ibn*, also spelled as *bin* and as *ben* in North African names, means 'son' in Arabic and may or may not be used in front of the individual's father's given name. (For women, the word 'bint' is used to mean daughter of.) In some literature the abbreviation *b.* is used. Arabs use their father's first name as their second/middle name even when the word *ibn/bin/ben* is not part of the name. The actual use of the word of *ibn/bin* was more common in historic names, but it continues to be used today in Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. A second *ibn/bin* and a name can be added to refer to an individual's grandfather. Although a long chain of ancestry may be written this way, only enough names (two or three) to distinguish an individual are needed. Thus, it is possible for a name in the text to have a longer string of names than is needed for the name in the index.

Many prominent people from medieval times are best known by their fathers' first names, that is, names beginning with *Ibn*, which will be capitalized in the text. These include *Ibn Abbas*, *Ibn Khaldun*, *Ibn al-Arabi*, and *Ibn Taymiyyah*. Their given names may or may not be provided. Although it may seem counter-intuitive, these names are actually sorted by the first component *Ibn*.

*Ibn Khaldun* is entered as: *Ibn Khaldun*.

This is standard practice, and readers will look up the name under *Ibn*, so double-posting is not necessary. If, however, the book is not about Middle Eastern studies, and there are just one or two *Ibn* names, then double-posting for the name following *Ibn* might be helpful. In addition, a few medieval Arabs/Muslims who have been known for centuries in the West have unusual historic romanized forms of their names.

Examples include *Ibn Sina*, who is also known as *Avicenna*, and *Ibn Rushd*, who is also known as *Averroes*. These names should be double-posted or have cross-references.

A modern name beginning with *Ibn* was *Ibn Saud*, King of Saudi Arabia. This name is also sorted under *Ibn*. His royal title may be added to the name as the index style dictates. (A double-post or cross-reference with *Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud* may also be added.)

In some cases, *bin* or *ben* and its following name are actually a compound surname and thus are sorted under *B*.

Modern surnames do not begin with *ibn*, but might begin with *bin* or *ben*. They can be identified as surnames in the text if the word *Bin* or *Ben* is capitalized, there is only a single name following (rather than both a father's first name and a surname), and subsequent references to the name begin with this word. The following examples are of modern surnames.

*Osama Bin Laden* is entered as: *Bin Laden, Osama*.

*Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali*, Tunisian president, is entered as: *Ben Ali, Zine el-Abidine*.

Cross-references or double-posts for surnames beginning with *Bin* or *Ben* are not needed in scholarly texts, where the reader knows how to look up the name, but are recommended for trade books.

When *ibn* or *bin* are in lower case and always following a given name in repeated references in the text, then you know that it is not part of a surname. Occasionally *ibn* or *bin* will appear in upper case when it is merely designating 'son of'. So repeated references to the name in the text should also be examined. For pre-modern names or modern royalty, the full name is simply entered in the order it appears, as in the following examples.

*Isa bin Sulman* is entered as: *Isa bin Sulman*.

*Talal ibn Abdel Aziz* is entered as: *Talal ibn Abdel Aziz* (The title of prince may or may not be added.)

#### *Abu in names*

In addition to the use of the patronymic, it is also an Arabic custom to use the reverse, the name of a son rather than father, to designate the individual. (This type of name is referred to as one's *kunya* in Arabic.) The word 'abu' means father, and the name that follows would traditionally be that of the man's oldest son. (For women, the word 'umm' is used to mean mother of.) 'Abu' is romanized in upper case, since, unlike *ibn* or *bin* which might fall between a pair of names, it always starts a name. A name with *Abu* in it is a kind of nickname. Its popularity in use has varied over time and by region within the Arab-speaking world. Sometimes a name or word following *Abu* is not in fact the individual's son, but some characteristic of the person used for a nickname.

Like the names that start with *Ibn*, many prominent people from medieval times are best known by names beginning with *Abu*. The most famous of these was *Abu Bakr*, companion of the Prophet Muhammad and his first successor, or caliph. As with names beginning with *Ibn*, names beginning with *Abu* are sorted by the first component, *Abu*, under *A*. Enter *Abu*,

always beginning in upper-case, along with the following name together, separated by a space (never a hyphen) as an uninverted two-word name, as in the following example:

*Abu Bakr* is entered as: *Abu Bakr*.

This is standard practice, so double-posting is not necessary.

In modern times, Abu nicknames are most popular among Palestinians and Jordanians, and have been especially used among leaders of the PLO or as a nom de guerre among militants. For example, Yasir Arafat was always referred to among Palestinians as Abu Ammar. The Abu name tends to be used by itself without any surname. For example:

*Abu Nidal* is entered as: *Abu Nidal*.

Again, double-posting is not needed, except in trade books whose readers might look up under Nidal in error.

In the rare case where an Abu name is followed by what appears as a surname, then the name is inverted and sorted under the last name. For example:

*Abu Musab al-Zarqawi* is entered as: *al-Zarqawi, Abu Musab* (sorted under Z).

As with Bin and Ben names, occasionally an Abu name might be a surname. If Abu appears between two other names, then you can assume the first name is the given name, and that Abu and the name following together comprise the surname. For example:

*Ali Abu Ragheb* is entered as: *Abu Ragheb, Ali*

#### Titles in names

There are various Arabic titles which might be found at the start of names. While they should not be confused with first names, they would probably not affect the sort anyway. Check with the author or publisher to determine whether titles should be included with names in the index. Some of the more common titles include the following:

- *Ayatollah*: a religious leader among Shi'ite Muslims.
- *Hajj*: a traditional title of respect for someone who has performed the Hajj pilgrimage. It is not used much in modern naming.
- *Imam*: religious leader/clergy title. Islam has no 'ordained' clergy or clerical hierarchy, so the term may be used for the prayer leader of a small mosque or the head religious authority in a country.
- *Mullah*: religious scholar.
- *Qadi*: judge or medieval title of nobility.
- *Sayyid*: translated as Mister or Sir, this is a title of respect, used especially for government officials.
- *Sheikh/Sheykh/Shaiikh/Shayk/Sheik*: a title of high respect, often used for a traditional leader, chief, etc.
- *Pasha/Basha*: a high ranking official title in the Ottoman Empire (including Egypt). This title is typically written following the given name, so it should not be confused

with a surname. Do not sort on this component of a name.

The following may be titles or, in fact, first names, so caution is needed.

- *Amir/Emir*: prince. More often Emir (with the E) is used only as title and not as a name. Amir is usually a name.
- *Malik*: king. It is rare as a name.
- *Sultan*: a royal or imperial ruler. In modern times it is used as a title only for the heads of Oman and Brunei.

There are also a number of honorific titles used in Persian society prior to the twentieth century. These include Mirza and Khan, which added to the end of names and thus should not be confused for surnames.

#### Royalty

The countries of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco and Bahrain are ruled by kings. Bahrain until 2002, Kuwait, Qatar and each of the United Arab Emirates are ruled by what is called an Emir (literally 'prince'). Oman is ruled by a sultan. The name of the sovereign is usually entered into the index by the first name followed by the title and no additional names. Other members of the royal family are also entered into the index by first name, but then a second name (typically the father's first name following bin or ibn) is also included for clarification, since there could be more than one prince with the same name. Examples include:

Hussein, King of Jordan  
Talal bin Abdul-Aziz, Prince

The exact style of entering royal titles, such as whether to include the country name, may vary.

## Conclusions

The names that present the greatest difficulties in sorting in Arabic are the same kinds of names that present problems in other languages. These are names from pre-modern times before the established use of surnames, names of royalty, and names of individuals who go by nicknames. Knowing Arabic is of no great advantage in answering such questions, and the best solution is usually to query the author or publisher. Repeated references to a name in the text can be used to determine the desired method of sorting the name. Sources to assist in indexing Arabic names are the same as those for names in any language, such as the Library of Congress Name Authority Headings <http://authorities.loc.gov>. While knowing Arabic can help in predicting variant spellings and hence possible double-posts or cross-references, having enough additional knowledge or spending the time to research in order to create multiple entries for names goes beyond the usual responsibilities of an indexer. The use of double-posting or cross-references for names should be greater for trade books than for scholarly books, since

untrained readers will look up names inconsistently. Scholarly books in the field of Middle Eastern or Islamic studies tend to spell names in a more standard, consistent manner than a trade book, so indexers unfamiliar with Arabic should not be afraid to index books in Middle Eastern or Islamic studies. They may, in fact, find these books very interesting.

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