



AUGUST | SEPTEMBER 2006

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InDesign and World Languages, Part 3

InDesign ME speaks Arabic and Hebrew—fluently!



by **DIANE BURNS**

The Western world is more engaged than ever with the Middle East, and the need for publishing in the languages of that region is growing. In this third and final part of our series on world languages, we'll explore how InDesign works with the various languages of the Middle East, including Arabic, Persian (Farsi), and Hebrew, often collectively referred to as “ME” languages.

The composition requirements of Middle Eastern languages are quite different from those of European languages. Most notably, the majority of Middle Eastern languages run horizontally, like English, but are composed from right-to-left. Additionally, in the Arabic alphabet, the form of a letter changes depending on its position in a word, appearing differently at the beginning of a word than it does in the middle of a word, for example. The Arabic alphabet is widely used, since many languages other than Arabic require it for their



INDESIGN IN ISRAEL: This magazine layout was created in InDesign ME by SBC (www.sbc.co.il), one of Israel's largest publishing companies.

written version, including Persian (Iran), Urdu (Pakistan, parts of India), Dari and Pashto (Afghanistan), and some forms of Malay (Malaysia, Brunei).

Because of these radically different composition requirements, Middle Eastern languages can't be typeset in the English version of InDesign. They require InDesign ME. This version of InDesign, along with the ME versions of other Creative Suite 2 programs, such as Illustrator and Photoshop, are developed by Winsoft S.A., a company headquartered in France (www.winsoft.fr/). Winsoft has been part of the development of ME-localized software for more than 20 years, partnering with Aldus, the original developer of the venerable PageMaker, and with Apple Computer. Winsoft has been the official partner of Adobe for all ME versions of Adobe software since 1995.

InDesign ME is available in the United States and Europe, and you can set the user interface (for menus, dialog boxes, etc.) to display in English. This distinguishes it from Adobe's Chinese, Japanese, and Korean versions, which aren't readily available outside those geographic regions and don't offer the option of an English user interface. (For more detail on publishing CJK language, see the second article in this series in the *June | July 2006 issue*.)

Getting Started

You can input ME text, copy and paste it, or import it using the **File > Place** command. (I discussed these options in detail in the first article in this series, which is in the *April | May 2006 issue*.) To input ME text, as with other languages, you need to turn on the appropriate input method using the Languages tab of System Preferences in OS X or the Languages tab of the Regional and Language Options Control Panel in Windows XP. However, when

LIONS AND CERAMICS: Right, poster for *The Chronicles of Narnia* movie marketing campaign. Published by Ophir, specialized publishers and printers, based in Jordan.

Far right, poster for ceramic designer Samy D. (www.expoze.co.il/go/samyd), designed by Shlomit Heymann.



you use the English version of InDesign, you can input these characters, but they won't read right-to-left. If you have just a word or two of Hebrew, you could input the characters by typing the word backwards, but this isn't practical when much text is involved. And languages that use the Arabic alphabet can't be input this way at all because the characters change form depending on their position in the word. Since you can't compose the text right-to-left, the characters won't use the correct form.

If you have a Word or RTF document containing Hebrew or Arabic text, you can use the **File > Place** command to import it. The text will keep its right-to-left composition, but you can't do anything with the text, since the English version of InDesign isn't programmed to compose text this way. You can also use the English version to open a file that was created in the ME version, but again, you can't do anything with the text. For these reasons, among others, if you're going to work with text in ME languages, you need the ME version of InDesign.

ME Version Features

The ME version of InDesign has a long list of features specific to publishing Middle Eastern languages. You can download a fully functional 30-day demo version, which includes a document that details these features, from Winsoft's Web site at www.winsoft.fr/products/download/AdobeDownloads.html.

The key features include the following:

- **Bi-directional text flow:** The most critical composition requirement of ME languages is that they read from right-to-left. Like all languages that read right-to-left, documents

THE UNIVERSAL NEED

FOR SPEED: Special Arabic Open Type fonts and features are used to create this magazine layout from Dubai publishing house L'Officiel Hommes ME—An ITP Consumer.

The image shows a two-page magazine spread. The left page is filled with technical specifications for the Caymans car, written in Arabic. The right page features a large, high-quality photograph of a silver Caymans sports car parked in front of a brick wall. The headline on the right page reads 'سيارة مميزة ذات متانة خاصة' (Special Car with Special Durability). Below the headline, there is a sub-headline in Arabic: 'سيارة Caymans، الحصة تسليط برشاعة بن، سيارة Porsche Boxster الفاخرة وهورس 1511 لتظهر لخيرها بشكل أقوى، وغيرة، رياضي، مكنة، موفرة، موفرة، موفرة'. The Caymans logo is visible in the top right corner of the right page.



ONE YEAR THROUGH

THE BIBLE: Book jacket of title translated and published by Jordan-based Ophir, the Middle Eastern division of the Dutch publisher JONGBLOED.

are bound on the right side. You choose these binding options in InDesign ME's New Document dialog box or the Document Setup dialog box (**Figure 1**).

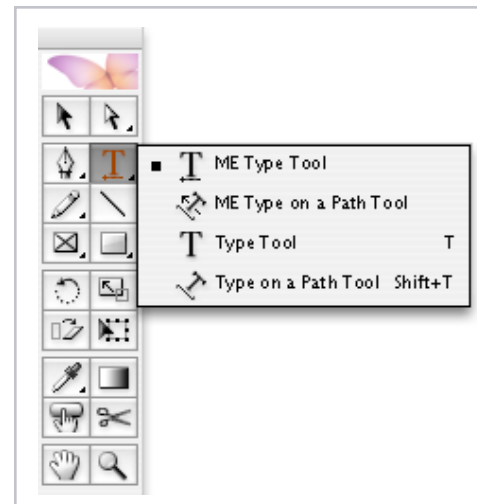
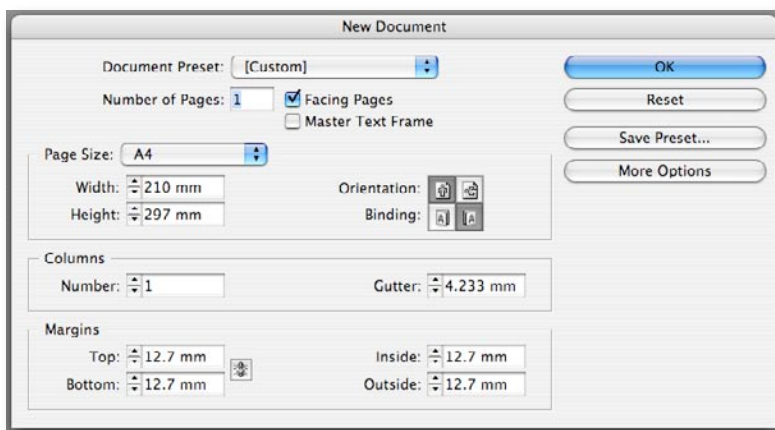
In addition, when ME text contains words in English or other languages that flow from left-to-right, those words must read from left-to-right. To provide this capability, InDesign ME actually allows for bi-directional text flow, where text can flow in either direction, all within the same sentence!

This bi-directional composition capability is in three different levels: Character, Paragraph, and Story. When you draw a text frame, you can use special ME text tools to draw a right-to-left frame (**Figure 2**). When drawn with the ME text tool, the text frame has the correct paragraph and story direction automatically. You can change the direction of a paragraph using icons on the Paragraph palette and the Control palette (**Figure 3**).

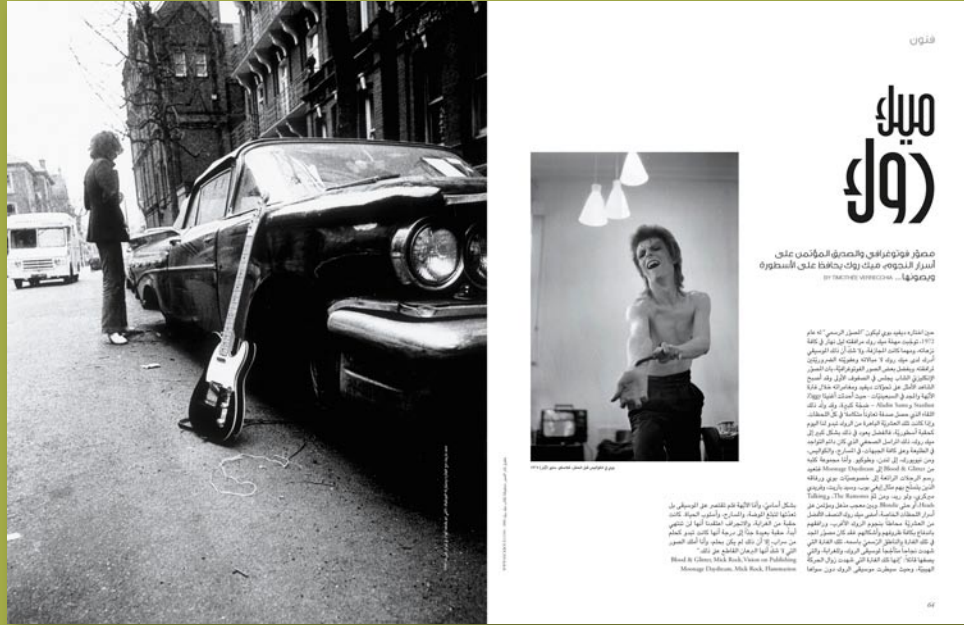
When you draw a text frame with the ME tool, you can see the right-to-left

FIGURE 1 (BELOW): InDesign ME version provides controls for the right-edge binding requirement of ME languages, by setting that option in the New Document dialog box.

FIGURE 2 (BELOW RIGHT): Special text tools that allow for right-to-left composition are found under the Text tool in the Tools palette



SEX, DRUGS AND ROCK & ROLL: Special Arabic Open Type fonts and features are used to create this magazine layout from Dubai publishing house L'Officiel Hommes ME—An ITP Consumer.



story direction by the position of the in port and out port on the frame.

Furthermore, in a two-column text frame, for example, the story will begin in the right column and flow to the left (Figure 4).

- **Context analysis of letterforms:** The letters of the Arabic alphabet are cursive, or linked, and most letters have four conditional alternate forms for their glyphs, depending on whether they fall at the beginning, middle, or end of a word, or if they

FIGURE 3 (RIGHT): The Paragraph palette includes icons to change the direction of a paragraph.

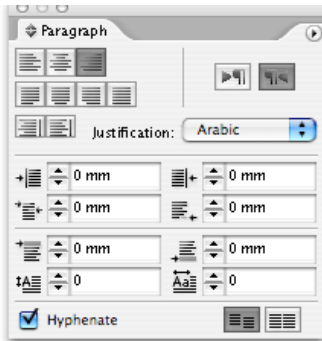


FIGURE 4 (FAR RIGHT): When a story is set to run right-to-left, text is threaded from the right side of a frame to the left side, and the in port and out port icons are in the reverse position of English, or left-to-right, text frames.



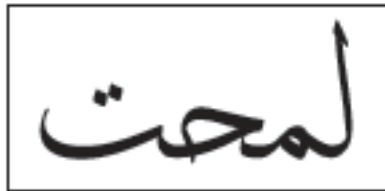


FIGURE 5 (ABOVE): Most Arabic characters can have up to 4 different forms, depending on its position in a word. Here, the character is shown in its isolated form (left) and its other three forms (right).

FIGURE 6 (ABOVE RIGHT): Arabic characters without Ligatures (left) and with the Ligatures option turned on (right).

stand isolated (Figure 5). The application must be able to render the correct form of the glyph, depending on its location, as the characters are being typed or imported. Characters are initially displayed in their isolated form, and the application then infers the correct glyph by the character's position and the characters that join it. Additionally, Arabic consonants can form ligatures, which merge into a new glyph with its own four-position forms (**Figure 6**).

- **Special ME characters:** There are several other features available, including special characters specific to ME languages. These include special numbers—Arabic, Hindi, or Farsi—that can be used for page numbering, number lists, and footnotes. InDesign ME can also include Kashidas, for Arabic justification and the ability to control diacritic positioning. For Hebrew, special characters include the Geresh and Gershayim, for indicating numbers, and the Maqaf, the Hebrew hyphen character.

When you install the ME version, several ME fonts are installed as well. These include Winsoft Pro, containing glyphs for Arabic and Hebrew in four styles (Medium, Italic, Bold and Bold Italic), as well as Adobe Arabic and Adobe Hebrew.

About Other Languages

There are several important language groups I haven't talked about in this series of articles, such as the languages of India, including Hindi and Bengali, and those of Southeast Asia, such as Thai and Cambodian. Each of these languages have their own special requirements, including characters that change form depending on their position, or require special ligature forms. Other than its support of Unicode, InDesign doesn't provide special

Where to Purchase InDesign Middle Eastern (ME) Version

The CJK versions of InDesign are difficult to come by outside regions where those are the main languages spoken. Fortunately, InDesign ME version is easy to purchase in the United States and Europe.

In the United States, it's sold by Fontworld, at www.adobe2me.com/, or contact INFO@fontworld.com.

In Europe, there are various resellers for InDesign ME. To find out the contact for your region, visit www.winsoft.fr/Shopping/Shopping.html.

You can download a fully functional 30-day trial version at www.winsoft.fr/products/download/AdobeDownloads.html.



لقاء الإعلام بالتصميم القيسوني

نصفي العملاق لمن القيسوني سبائك طوبئة في، للنبي الامانة مرامنة

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ملحق للنهار

الصحافيون الشباب

عدد 12 - جريدة 1 أيار 2006

العدد الثاني - ملحق الصحافيون الشباب - ديسمبر 2005 من مركز الفكر العربي والبيروت

عنايب الإنترنت
تدخل البيوت
بلا استئذان 3

محاسبة الطالب بعلمة
وبعولة الأستاذ
دائماً على حق 4

المصارعة الديمقراطية
في مؤسسات
المتجمع المدني 6

سفير الشمال
بكرة السنة 7

2 C

ART AND STYLE (ABOVE): Arabic Open Type fonts and features are used to create these advertisements and magazines from Dubai publishing house L'Officiel Hommes ME—An ITP Consumer.

IN THE NEWS (LEFT): Cover page from *An-Nahar*, one of the leading newspapers published in Beirut, Lebanon.

features that enable typesetting these languages. Special fonts can fulfill some of the needs; in other cases, InDesign can be used only with difficulty.

Despite these limitations, InDesign can contribute to the worthwhile cause of better communication—worldwide.

DIANE BURNS is a pioneer in electronic publishing, founding *TechArt International* in 1984 as one of the first Macintosh-based design firms in the country. Today TechArt is a leader in print and Web design, specializing in projects in East Asian languages. She has authored several books on graphics software, including QuarkXPress and Illustrator.