

# Transliteration of Arabic Words

In this book I have adopted the most recent rules of transliteration recognized by Western Orientalists, with very slight variation, as explained below, but no transliteration can exactly express the vocalic differences of two languages, and the Roman characters in which Arabic words and phrases have been spelt give the sound of the original only approximately. Besides the inability of the characters of one language to represent the exact pronunciation of the words of another, there is this additional difficulty in romanizing Arabic words that in certain combinations the pronunciation does not follow the written characters; for example, *al-Raḥmān* is pronounced *ar-Raḥmān*, the sound of *l* merging in that of the next following letter, *r*. To this category belong all the letters which are known by the name of *al-ḥurūf al-Shamsiyyah* (lit., *solar letters*), and they are as follows: *tā*, *thā*, *dāl*, *dhāl*, *rā*, *zā*, *sīn*, *shīn*, *ṣād*, *dād*, *ḫā*, *ẓā*, *lām*, *nūn* (dentals, sibilants, and liquids). Whenever a word beginning with one of these letters has the prefix *al* (representing the article *the*), the *lām* is passed over in pronunciation and assimilated to the following consonant; in the case of all other letters, *al* is pronounced fully. This merging of one letter in another occurs also in certain other cases, for which a grammar of the Arabic language should be referred to.

I have represented the *tā* added either at the end of a noun for *ta'nīth* — to make a noun feminine or to attach to it the sign of the feminine gender — as in *Makkat* or *Makkah* or *Madīnat* or *Madīnah*, or at the end of a verb to make it a *maṣdar* or infinitive noun, as in *raḥmat* or *raḥmah*, either by *t* or by *h*, the latter being the proper way of sounding it when there is a *waqf* or a stop.

The system adopted is as follows:

## Consonants

<i>Arabic Letter</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>Represented by</i>
hamzah . . . . .	(sounds like <i>h</i> in <i>hour</i> — a sort of catch in the voice) . . . . .	'
bā . . . . .	(same as <i>b</i> ) . . . . .	b
tā . . . . .	(the Italian dental, softer than <i>t</i> ) . . . . .	t
thā . . . . .	(between <i>th</i> in <i>thing</i> and <i>s</i> ) . . . . .	th
jīm . . . . .	(like <i>g</i> in <i>gem</i> ) . . . . .	j
ḥā . . . . .	(very sharp but smooth guttural aspirate) . . . . .	ḥ
khā . . . . .	(like <i>ch</i> in the Scotch word <i>loch</i> ) . . . . .	kh
dāl . . . . .	(Italian dental, softer than <i>d</i> ) . . . . .	d
dhāl . . . . .	(sounds between <i>z</i> and <i>th</i> in <i>that</i> ) . . . . .	dh
rā . . . . .	(same as <i>r</i> ) . . . . .	r
zā . . . . .	(same as <i>z</i> ) . . . . .	z

sīn . . . . .	(same as <i>s</i> ) . . . . .	s
shīn . . . . .	(same as <i>sh</i> in <i>she</i> ) . . . . .	sh
ṣād . . . . .	(strongly articulated <i>s</i> , like <i>ss</i> in <i>hiss</i> ) . . . . .	ṣ
ḍād . . . . .	(aspirated <i>d</i> , between <i>d</i> and <i>z</i> ) . . . . .	ḍ
ṭā . . . . .	(strongly articulated palatal <i>t</i> ) . . . . .	ṭ
ẓā . . . . .	(strongly articulated palatal <i>z</i> ) . . . . .	ẓ
‘ain . . . . .	(somewhat like a strong guttural <i>hamzah</i> , not a mere vowel) . . . . .	‘
ghain . . . . .	(guttural <i>g</i> , but soft) . . . . .	gh
fā . . . . .	(same as <i>f</i> ) . . . . .	f
qāf . . . . .	(strongly articulated guttural <i>k</i> ) . . . . .	q
kāf . . . . .	(same as <i>k</i> ) . . . . .	k
lām . . . . .	(same as <i>l</i> ) . . . . .	l
mīm . . . . .	(same as <i>m</i> ) . . . . .	m
nūn . . . . .	(same as <i>n</i> ) . . . . .	n
hā . . . . .	(same as <i>h</i> ) . . . . .	h
wāw . . . . .	(same as <i>w</i> ) . . . . .	w
yā . . . . .	(same as <i>y</i> ) . . . . .	y

### Vowels

The vowels are represented as follows:

Short vowels:

ʾ	fathah, as <i>u</i> in <i>tub</i> . . . . .	a
،	kasrah, as <i>i</i> in <i>pin</i> . . . . .	i

Long vowels:

ā	long fathah, as <i>a</i> in <i>father</i> . . . . .	ā
ī	long kasrah, as <i>ee</i> in <i>deep</i> . . . . .	ī
ū	long ḍammah, as <i>oo</i> in <i>moot</i> . . . . .	ū
au	fathah before wāw . . . . .	au
ai	fathah before yā . . . . .	ai

*Tanwīn* " " ‘ ’ is represented by *an*, *in*, *un*, respectively. The short and long vowels at the end of a word are shown as parts of the words, as *qāla* where the final *a* stands for the *fathah* on *lām*, but the *tanwīn* is shown as a separate syllable, as *Muḥammad-in*.

### Proper Names

Biblical proper names are not transliterated, but their Biblical form is adopted; other names are transliterated according to the rules of transliteration. Hence the reader will notice a change in such names as *Mecca* which should be written as *Makkah*, *Medina* which should be written as *Madīnah*, *Yemen* which should be written as *Yaman*, and so on.

The following list shows the Biblical names and their Arabic equivalents:

<i>Biblical Names</i>	<i>Arabic Form</i>	<i>Biblical Names</i>	<i>Arabic Form</i>
Aaron . . . . .	Hārūn	Jew . . . . .	Yahūdī
Abraham . . . . .	Ibrāhīm	Job . . . . .	Ayyūb
Adam . . . . .	Ādam	John . . . . .	Yaḥyā
Amran . . . . .	‘Imrān	Jonah . . . . .	Yūnus
Babel . . . . .	Bābil	Korah . . . . .	Qārūn
David . . . . .	Dāwūd	Lot . . . . .	Lūṭ
Egypt . . . . .	Miṣr	Magog . . . . .	Ma’jūj
Elias . . . . .	Ilyās	Mary . . . . .	Maryam
Ezra . . . . .	‘Uzair	Michael . . . . .	Mikāl
Elisha . . . . .	Al-Yash‘a	Moses . . . . .	Mūsā
Gabriel . . . . .	Jibrīl	Noah . . . . .	Nūḥ
Gog . . . . .	Ya’jūj	Pharaoh . . . . .	Fir‘aun
Goliath . . . . .	Jālūt	Saul . . . . .	Ṭālūt
Gospel . . . . .	Injil	Sheba . . . . .	Saba’
Isaac . . . . .	Ishāq	Solomon . . . . .	Sulaimān
Ishmael . . . . .	Ismā‘il	Torah . . . . .	Taurāt
Jacob . . . . .	Ya‘qūb	Zacharias . . . . .	Zakariyyā
Jesus . . . . .	‘Īsā		