

**ELEMENTARY
ARABIC,
A GRAMMAR**

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Elementary Arabic, a grammar by Frederic Du Pre Thornton

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PART I.

ORTHOGRAPHY AND ORTHOËPY.

1. Arabic is written from right to left in twenty-eight letters, all consonants; three of which, however, are also used as vowels. Ranged in alphabetical order they are as follows, each with the equivalent employed by Wright's *Arabic Grammar*; and the second equivalent (if any) will be found in *Elementary Arabic: First Reading Book*, as being easier for beginners, though less fit than Wright's for international use in transliteration.

NAME.	EQUIVALENT.	SEPARATE.	CONNECTED.		
			INITIAL.	MEDIAL.	FINAL.
أَلِفٌ		ا		ا	ا
بَاءٌ	b	ب	ب	ب	ب
تَاءٌ	t	ت	ت	ت	ت
ثَاءٌ	t, th	ث	ث	ث	ث
جِيمٌ	g, j	ج	ج	ج	ج
حَاءٌ	h	ح	ح	ح	ح
خَاءٌ	h, kh	خ	خ	خ	خ
دَالٌ	d	د	د	د	د
ذَالٌ	d, dh	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ
رَاءٌ	r	ر	ر	ر	ر

NAME.	EQUIVALENT.	SEPARATE.	CONNECTED.		
			INITIAL.	MEDIAL.	FINAL.
زَايٍ	z	ز		ز	ز
سِينٌ	s	س	س	س	س
شِينٌ	š, sh	ش	ش	ش	ش
صَادٌ	s, ç	ص	ص	ص	ص
ضَادٌ	d	ض	ض	ض	ض
طَاءٌ	t	ط	ط	ط	ط
ظَاءٌ	z	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ
عَيْنٌ	'	ع	ع	ع	ع
غَيْنٌ	g, gh	غ	غ	غ	غ
فَاءٌ	f	ف	ف	ف	ف
قَافٌ	k, q	ق	ق	ق	ق
كَافٌ	k	ك	ك	ك	ك
لَامٌ	l	ل	ل	ل	ل
مِيمٌ	m	م	م	م	م
نُونٌ	n	ن	ن	ن	ن
هَاءٌ	h	ه	ه	ه	ه
وَاوٌ	w	و	و	و	و
يَاءٌ	y	ي	ي	ي	ي

REM. a. ۱ following ۱ forms ۱ lâm 'alif which is sometimes reckoned as a letter.

REM. e. ا, و, ي, are called weak letters.

2. The pronunciation of Arabic consonants is most easily acquired by learning from a Moslem to read the Corân aloud, for with exception of minute and insignificant divergencies this Corânic pronunciation is in theory identical everywhere, though in India, and probably in countries still more remote from Arabia, its distinctness has fallen off, and the sound of some letters is lost, notably ع and ح. Further, the Corân's vowelling is beyond dispute; and this is of more advantage to beginners than they are at first capable of recognizing. Only slight indications as to pronunciation can here be given, together with an explanation of the system of transliteration employed.

b	}	are pronounced as in English, but r must be trilled and h distinctly uttered, however placed: thus مَهْدِيّ mahdiy, <i>one divinely led</i> , almost mahîdiy, and وَجْه wajh, <i>face</i> , like wajhî.
r		
f		
l		
m		
h	}	

t	}	sharper than in English, and with the tongue's tip, to distinguish them from
d		

t	}	pronounced with broad of tongue, the tip being held against the lower teeth.
d		

- th as in thorn, thump ; th as in goatherd, lighthouse.
- j is (i) at al-Azhar (the famous Cairo University) as in John, Jim, Jack, but (ii) at the mosques of Damascus, Tunis, and Algiers as s in usual, measure, vision, or z in azure, or j in adjoin, adjacent, bijou, or g in lodge, prestige. Taking j to represent the former sound, which is transcribed by the French with dj and by Germans with dsch, and doubling ج thus سجادة *a prayer-carpet*, we find it easy to say sajjádañ or sajjádañ, but not sajjádañ : the French j of bijou is therefore more convenient. Turks pronounce this letter as j, and (iii) most Egyptians colloquially as the g of go, which last is the sound given in Hebrew.
- h can only be learned by ear : beginners must use h until they catch the sound.
- kh has long been used by Anglo-Indians for the final sound, harshly said, of loch, lough ; ch being wanted in Persian, etc., for the consonant of church, and gh for غَيْن *ghain* : kh as in blockhead.
- dh is as th in though, thee, this ; being as δ of modern Greece : dh as in bedhangings, adhesion.
- z is strictly th said far back : but usually as z pronounced with the tongue's tip pressed against the lower teeth ; then

- z must be sounded sharply to make a distinction.
- s has the sound as in hiss, kiss, being said with the tongue's tip ; in contrast to
- ç which must be pronounced further back, and with broad of tongue.
- sh as in shore, wash ; sh as in mishap. The French use ch and Germans sch, which last in Dutch is *سخ skh*.
- ' must be learnt by ear. The arrangement of throat is the same as that required for h, but without aspirate. To mimic baby camels is best of all ; otherwise one must repeat words in which عَيْن 'ain occurs between two vowels, as فَعَلَّ فَعَلَّ fa'ala, *he did*, فَعَلَّتْ فَعَلَّتْ فَعَلَّتْ فَعَلَّتْ, etc. (see § 369 Table I).
- gh is the sound made in gargling ; gh as in foghorn with the Persian گ *gâf*.
- q in Arabia is commonly pronounced as g in go, and so may be said at first ; but the student will learn to harden g in the direction of k, and must sound
- k very sharply in contrast. No one who can recite the Corân like Moslems will confuse ك and ق as do uninstructed Europeans.
- n as in English, نَكْ nk being as in sank, sink ; but نَبْ nb sounds mb, as *منبر*, a *pulpit*, called *mimbar*.