

RULES OF TRANSLITERATION.

His Excellency the High Commissioner has directed that the following notice be published in English in the Palestine Government Gazette.

His Excellency desires that the principles set forth therein for transliterating Arabic into English should as far as is possible be followed in Government and Official correspondence in Palestine. It will be observed that conventional and familiar spellings which have been consecrated by usage, are not affected by these instructions.

The use of the diacritical mark over long vowels (a horizontal bar or a circumflex) is essential, and the dots underneath certain consonants should be employed if this is practicable.

NOTICE REGARDING TRANSLITERATION IN ENGLISH OF ARABIC NAMES.

The Arabic names in the Administrative Divisions Proclamation, 1940, and other Arabic names in Palestine are transliterated from Arabic into Latin characters in accordance with the principles described below.

These principles are based upon the system known as the R.G.S. II System which has been accepted as authoritative by the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use.

The aim of the system is to ensure that names transliterated in accordance with it, will, as far as possible, be understood by any ordinary *educated* local inhabitant, to whom they may be read, but the Committee "recognises that in Arabic, the necessity for letter-for-letter transliteration often renders impossible a close approximation to the local pronunciation".

The principal rules of the System are :

- (a) that vowels should be pronounced as in Italian and consonants as in English, and
- (b) that every letter is pronounced and no redundant letters are used.

2. In 1931 the Government of Palestine published a Booklet entitled :

"Transliteration from Arabic and Hebrew into English with transliteration Lists",

at the beginning of which there was an instruction that the system formulated therein was to be followed in all official correspondence.

As a result of discussion between the Palestine Government and the Colonial Office, and in order to take recognition of certain spellings which had taken a firm root, it has been found necessary slightly to modify the instructions set forth in that Booklet, which was itself mainly based upon the R.G.S. II System.

The most important amendment required is to ensure that conventional or familiar spellings consecrated by usage could be retained; this actually is in accordance with one of the principles of the R.G.S. System; the remaining modifications are merely to state a preference for one or other of alternatives allowed by the R.G.S. System. The following description of the rules sets forth the system as modified :

3.—(a) The following English Consonants are used with the values they have in English :

b	(representing Arabic ba	ب
d	(representing Arabic dāl	د
f	(representing Arabic fa	ف
h	(representing Arabic ha	هـ
j	(representing Arabic jīm	ج
k	(representing Arabic kaf	ك
l	(representing Arabic lam	ل
m	(representing Arabic mīm	م
n	(representing Arabic nūn	ن

r	(representing Arabic ra	ر
s	(representing Arabic sīn	س
t	(representing Arabic ta	ت
z	(representing Arabic zai	ز

(b) The following will be used in the transliteration of the Arabic consonants which have not a counterpart in English :

sh	(as in shop) to represent Arabic shīn	ش
th	(as in froth) to represent Arabic tha	ث
kh	(as in Scots loch) to represent Arabic kha	خ
dh	(like the 'th' in them) to represent Arabic dhāl	ذ and دھا
gh	(guttural) to represent Arabic ghein	غ

(c) ḥ (a pectoral aspirated) to represent ha (ح)
 ṣ to represent Arabic ṣad (ص)
 ḍ to represent Arabic ḍad (ض)
 ṭ to represent Arabic ṭa (ط)

(A dot may be placed under these four letters to distinguish them from the transliteration of the Arabic letters ha, sīr, ḍāl and ta).

q represents qaf (ق) a guttural k; it differs from the English q in that it is not followed by a u as in queen, quorum, squat.

An inverted comma represents the guttural Arabic 'ein (ع)

(d) The Arabic letters wāw (و) and yā (ي) when consonants are represented by w and y as in Wādi and Yāsin.

Shadda (ّ) over a letter indicates that it is to be doubled and sukūn (◌ْ) indicates that it has no vowel.

(e) *The Vowels and Diphthongs.*

The vowels and diphthongs will be rendered as in the following list:—

..... (fat-ha=a (except in diphthong fat-ha-ya). kasra=i.
..... (fat-ha-alif)=ā. kasra-yā sukūn=ī.
..... damma=u. fat-ha-yā sukūn=ei.
..... damma-wāu=ū. fat-ha-wāu sukūn=au.

(f) The long sign ā, ū, and ī should always be inserted if there is any chance of confusion as in Rāshid (رَاشِد) and Rashīd (رَشِيد)

(A circumflex will serve the same purpose: Rāshid, Rashid).

(g) A hyphen should be used when h (ه) or ḥ (ح) is preceded by a, d, t, th, kh, dh, s, sg, gh, or k, as in ad-ham, ash-hab, fat-ha:

(أَهْم) (أَهَب) (أَهَبَة)

4. The definite article (ال) should preferably be transliterated el although al may also be used. The l must be assimilated before a solar letter and retained before a lunar letter.

The solar letters are:—

ta	ت
tha	ث
ḍāl	د
dhāl	ذ
ra	ر

The lunar letters are:—

ba	ب
jīm	ج
ḥa	ح
kha	خ
'ein	ع

solar letters :

zai	ز
sin	س
shin	ش
sād	ص
dād	ض
ta	ط
dba	ظ
lam	ل
nūn	ن

lunar letters :

ghein	غ
fa	ف
qaf	ق
kaf	ك
mim	م
ha	هـ
wāu	و
yā	ي
also alif	أ when carrying the hamza.

Examples :	(الشَّيْخُ مَوْسَى)	Esh Sheikh Muwannis,
	(عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ)	'Abd er Rahman,
but	(دَيْرُ الْبَلَحِ)	Deir el Balah.

5. The letters (و) wāu and (ي) yā are used both as consonants and as vowels.

- (a) Wāu (و) . If this is a consonant it carries a vowel-mark (fat-ha, kasra, or damma) as in Zawata (زَوَاتَا), Zāwiya (زَاوِيَةِ) Wūheib (وَهَيْبِ), Qāwūqa (قَاوُوقَهَ) .

If it is a vowel, it is preceded by damma, and carries no vowel at all, as in Mahmūd (مَحْمُودٌ), if it is preceded by fat-ha, and is carrying a sukūn, it is the diphthong au, as in Jaudat (جَوَدَاتِ), Fauqa (فَوْقَا) .

- (b) Ya (ي) . If a consonant, it carries a vowel-mark, (fat-ha, kasra, damma), as in Yahya (يَحْيَى), Yibna (يَبْنَهَ) .

If it is a vowel, it carries no vowel-mark and is preceded by kasra, and is transliterated as ī, as in Yāsīn (يَاسِينَ), Ni'līn (نَيْلِينَ) .

If it is preceded by fat-ha and is carrying a sukūn, it is the diphthong and should be transliterated as ei, as in Beit (بَيْتِ), Rujeib (رُجَيْبِ), Quweiq (قُوَيْقِ) .

- (c) The doubling of the consonant yā (ي) preceded by kasra is to be indicated by lengthening the i (e.g. Nāsiriya (نَاصِرِيَهَ), but if the doubled yā is preceded by fat-ha, then the first yā is represented by i (without a long sign) as in Turmus 'Aiya (طُرْمُسُ عِيَهَ), Taiyiba (طَيِّبَهَ) .

The undotted yā at the end of a word is called the alif maqṣūra, and is transliterated like alif as in Mustafa (مُصْطَفَى), Leila (لَيْلَى) .

6. The ta marbūta which is the ending of a class of feminine names, is always preceded by fat-ha, which should preferably be rendered by a, as in mas-ha (مَسْحَهَ) Manāra (مَنَارَهَ), Birwa (بَرْوَهَ), Fāri'a (فَارِعَهَ) . In colloquial dialects in Palestine, the pronunciation of the fat-ha before the ta marbūta frequently becomes neutral and indeterminate. There is no need, as is sometimes done, to render this by e; for instance (عَابَهَ) should preferably be ghābā and not ghābe; (جَرِيْشَهَ) should be Jarīsha and not Jarīshe. The ta marbūta is to be carefully distinguished from a final ه as (عَبْدُ اللهِ) 'Abdallah, (طَهَ) Taha, (نَبِيَهَ) Nabīh.

The "ta marbuta" is pronounced t when it occurs at the end of the first of two words in the "construct state" (as in (غَابَةِ مِسْكَةَ) Ghābat Miska, (خِرْبَةِ قَاقُونَ) Khirbat Qāqūn).

7. The hamza is not represented in transliteration $\text{fat-ha-hamza-kasra}=\text{ai}$. $\text{fat-ha-alif-hamza-kasra}=\text{āi}$, as in Nāil. In other words, if it is on a sukūn, it is omitted in transliteration and if it carries a vowel, only the vowel is transliterated.

It may be carried on an alif as in Amīn (أَمِين) and Umm (أُم), on a wāu as in Fuād (فُوَاد), and on a yā as in Nāil (نَائِل).