

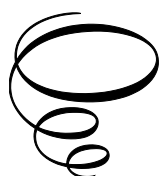
The Semitic Heritage of Northwest Syria

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By

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—To Mahmoud Jilani, who gave me the courage to write this book.





Image 0.1 Aleppo Citadel ~

Photograph by Mahmoud Jilani

Aleppo, Syria*

~ Image slightly altered to mask triggering symbols

* Syria is currently unsafe for tourism.

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Abbreviations

1s	First person, singular
1p	First person, plural
2fd	Second person, feminine, dual
2fp	Second person, feminine, plural
2fs	Second person, feminine, singular
2md	Second person, masculine, dual
2mp	Second person, masculine, plural
2ms	Second person, masculine, singular
3fd	Third person, feminine, dual
3fp	Third person, feminine, plural
3fs	Third person, feminine, singular
3md	Third person, masculine, dual
3mp	Third person, masculine, plural
3ms	Third person, masculine, singular
AArb	Aleppo Arabic
AArm	Aleppo Aramaic
Akk	Akkadian
Amor	Amorite
Ass	Assyrian
ANE	Assyrian Neo-Aramaic
BPs	Branching Points
CA	Classical Arabic
Can	Canaanite
CArb	Cairene Arabic
Cha	Chaldean

Cop	Coptic
CSyr	Classical Syriac
CyA	Cypriot Arabic
DArb	Damascus Arabic
DArm	Damascus Aramaic
Diag.	Diagram
EA	East Aramaic
EA-B	Early Arabic-learner from Bakhaa
EA-J	Early Arabic-learner from Jubaadin
EAm	Early Amorite
ErArb	Early Arabic
EArm	Early Aramaic
EAArb	Early Aleppo Arabic
EAArm	Early Aleppo Aramaic
ECEArb	Early Cairene Egyptian Arabic
EEbl	Early Eblaite
EDArb	Early Damascus Arabic
EEArb	Early Egyptian Arabic
ELA	Eastern Levantine Arabic
ENA	Eastern Neo-Aramaic
EO	East Orontic
ES	East Semitic
ESEA	Early Syro-Egyptian Arabic
ET	Ebla Tablets
Eup	Euphratic
Fig	Figure
HD	Hanna Dyab Account

Heb	Hebrew
HmA	Hamwi Arabic
HrA	Haurani Arabic
HS	Huwa Semitic
HsA	Homsī Arabic
HWA	High Western Aramaic
HWA-Q	High Western Aramaic in the Qalamoun
IdA	Idlibi Arabic
IR	Ibn Raad Account
ISEA	Interdental Syro-Egyptian Arabic
JA	Jewish Aramaic
JArb	Jordanian Arabic
JAA	Jewish Aleppine Arabic
JBA	Jewish Babylonian Aramaic
JDA	Jewish Damascene Arabic
JPA	Jewish Palestinian Aramaic
LA	Late Aramaic
LAm	Late Amorite
Lebl	Late Eblaite
LevA	Levantine Arabic
LWA	Late West Aramaic
MA	Middle Aramaic
ManA	Manbeji Arabic
Mar	Marioite
MarA	Maronite Arabic
Mebl	Middle Eblaite
Melk	Melkite Aramaic

MesA	Mesopotamian Arabic
MIH	Modern Israeli Hebrew
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
MSoA	Modern South Arabian
NA	Nerab Aramaic
Nab	Nabatean
NENA	North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic
NES	Northeast Syria
NLA	Northern Levantine Arabic
NSEA	Non-interdental Syro-Egyptian Arabic
NWS	Northwest Syria
OA	Old Aramaic
OArb	Old Arabic
Oro	Orontic
OSA	Old South Arabian
OT	Ottoman Turkish
PA	Peninsular Arabic
Palm	Palmyrene
PArb	Proto-Arabic
PArm	Proto-Aramaic
PEbl	Proto-Eblaite
Pho	Phoenician
PS	Proto-Semitic
PSS	Proto-South Semitic
QA	Qumran Aramaic
RAA	Rural Aleppine Arabic
RHA	Rural Homs Arabic

RIA	Rural Idlibi Arabic
QArb	Qalamouni Arabic
SA	Sefire Aramaic
SaA	Saidi Arabic
SiA	Sinaic Arabic
Sml	Samalian
Smr	Samaritan Aramaic
SEA	Syro-Egyptian Arabic
SFL	Syrian Farewell Letter
SLA	Southern Levantine Arabic
SoA	Southern Arabian
SoL	Southern Levantine
SoS	South Semitic
SyA	Syrian Arabic
SIA	Syrian Inland Arabic
SCA	Syrian Coastal Arabic
Syr	Syriac
Tab	Table
Ug	Ugaritic
WA	West Aramaic
WNA	Western Neo-Aramaic
WNA-B	Western Neo-Aramaic – Bakhaa
WNA-J	Western Neo-Aramaic – Jubaadin
WNA-M	Western Neo-Aramaic – Maaloula
WO	West Orontic
WS	West Semitic
YA	Yemeni Arabic
Yam	Yamhadic

Phonetic Symbols

ħ	ħ	/ħ/	ع	h	h	/h/	ھ
ʾ	ʾ	/ʾ/	ء	ħ	ħ	/ħ /	ح
ə		/ə/	ء	h		/h~x/	خ
a		/a/	آ	j		/ʒ/ or /dʒ/	ج
ā	ʾ	/a/	ا	dʒ		/dʒ/	ج
ɒ		/ɒ/	ا	ʒ		/ʒ/	ج
ε		/ε/	ا	tʒ		/tʒ/	ج
e		/e/	ء	k	k	/k/	ك
ē		/e/	ي	l	l	/l/	ل
o		/ɔ/	ؤ	l		/lʾ/	ل
ō		/ɔ/	و	m	m	/m/	م
ö		/o/	و	mʿ		/mʿ/	م
u		/u/	ؤ	n	n	/n/	ن
ū		/u/	و	nʿ		/nʿ/	ن
i		/i/	ء	p	p	/p/	پ
ī		/i/	ي	p		/pʰ/	پ
b	b	/b/	ب	pʿ		/pʿ/	پ
ḃ		/bʿ/	ب	q	q	/q/	ق
č		/tʃ/	چ	r	r	/r/	ر
d	d	/d/	د	s	s	/s/	س
ḏ		/dʿ/	ض	ş	ş	/sʿ/	ص
ḍ	d	/ð/	ذ	ś		/t/	س/س
z		/ðʿ/	ظ	š	š	/ʃ/	ش
f		/f/	ف	t	t	/t/	ت
g	g	/g/	ق	ṭ	ṭ	/tʿ /	ط
ğ		/ɣ/	غ	ṯ	t	/θ/	ث

ṭ		/θˤ/	ث
w	w	/w/	و
x	x	/x/	خ
y	y	/j/	ي
z	z	/z/	ز
ẓ		/ðˤ/	ظ
ẓ		/zˤ/	ز



Image 0.2 Aleppo Citadel Sideview

Photograph by Mahmoud Jilani

Aleppo, Syria*

* Syria is currently unsafe for tourism.

A Syrian Farewell Letter ¹

Throughout this book, we will be referring back to the parts of this letter shown in red as the standard text to compare the various languages and dialects discussed. This letter was found in the pocket of a Syrian refugee who drowned in the Mediterranean Sea. He was aboard a ship carrying hundreds of Syrians, fleeing death and persecution by the Assad regime, and hoping to reach the European shores. As the weather conditions got more turbulent, it became clear to the author of the letter that they wouldn't survive. He used the last few minutes of his life to write this letter. He wrote the letter in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

April 23rd, 2015

Original Text (in MSA)

"أنا أسف يا أمي لأن السفينة غرقت بنا ولم أستطع الوصول إلى هناك (أوروبا)، كما لن أتمكن من إرسال المبالغ التي استدنتها لكي أدفع أجر الرحلة.

لا تحزني يا أمي إن لم يجدوا جثتي، فماذا ستفعل الآن إلا تكاليف نقل وشحن ودفن وعزاء.

أنا أسف يا أمي لأن الحرب حلت، وكان لا بد لي أن أسافر كغيري من البشر، مع العلم أن أحلامي لم تكن كبيرة كالآخرين، كما تعلمين كل أحلامي كانت بحجم علبة دواء للكولون لك، وثمان تصليح أسنانك.

بالمناسبة لون أسناني الآن أخضر بسبب الطحالب العالقة فيه، ومع ذلك هي أجمل من أسنان الديكتاتور (بشار الأسد).

أنا أسف يا حبيبتي لأنني بنيت لك بيتاً من الوهم، كوخاً خشبياً جميلاً كما كنا نشاهده في الأفلام، كوخاً فقيراً بعيداً عن البراميل المتفجرة وبعيداً عن الطائفية والانتماءات العرقية وشائعات الجيران عنا.

أنا أسف يا أخي لأنني لن أستطيع إرسال الخمسين يورو التي وعدتك بإرسالها لك شهرياً لترفيه عن نفسك قبل التخرج.