4

Letters

1

ر	*rā*
ز	*zayy*

The letters called *rā* and *zayy* represent respectively the sounds *r* (which is always rolled, wherever it occurs) and *z* as in English 'zoo'. These are *sun* letters, and are *disjoined*. The only difference in their manner of writing is the dot above *zayy*.

They are deep letters, written much like و *wow*, but without the ring, i.e. they start just above the line of writing, and swing clockwise downwards. **Write** several:

ز ر ز ر ز ر ز ر

ز ر ز ر ز ر ز ر

These letters are joined to the previous letter in the normal way, except that, when they follow a tooth (1/6) which is itself preceded by a joined letter, they have a special connection. This is not always found in print and type, but it is certainly good style in handwriting. **Write** the forms for *rā* (*zayy* is the same, but with a dot), paying attention to the special connection:

tooth + tooth + *r*	بر	بر
m + tooth + *r*	مر	مر
l + tooth + *r*	لر	لر
s + tooth + *r*	سر	سر

The short vowel *a* and the long vowel *ā*, when next to *rā*, are almost always 'darkened' in sound; the *a* then sounds more like *u* in Southern English 'but', and the *ā* sounds more like the *a* of English 'calm'. You will certainly notice it when you hear Arabs speak. Imitate it if you can; it is however not wrong or unintelligible if you don't.

Open *W13.pps* and watch the handwriting of الزيارة *az-ziyā́ra*, listed below.

In this list, 'dark' *a* and *ā* are shown in the transcription as *ạ* and *ạ̄*, to help you. **Read and write:**

مرور	*murū́r* traffic	مسرور	*masrū́r* pleased
مرّة	*mạ́rrạ* a time	متر	*mitr* metre
لتر	*litr* litre	ليرة	*lī́rạ* lira
الريال	*ar-rijā́l*	ريال	*rijā́l* rial
الرئيس	*ar-rạ'ī́s*	رئيس	*rạ'ī́s* chairman*
الزيارة	*az-ziyā́ṛạ* *W13*	زيارة	*ziyā́ṛạ* visit
إيران	*'īrā́n* Iran	شهر	*shahr* month
وزارة	*wizā́ṛạ* ministry	سيّارة	*sayyā́ṛạ* car

* also chief, president, head (person)

Open *S29.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

2

د	*dāl*
ذ	*dhāl*

These two letters, called *dāl* and *dhāl*, represent respectively *d* as in English 'day' and hard *th* as in English 'they'. Don't confuse this last sound with the soft *th* ('think') of ث *thā*, for which see 1/3.

These are both sun letters, and are disjoined. The only difference in their appearance is the dot above *dhāl*.

At first it seems they might be confused with *rā* and *zayy*. But there are important differences: د ذ are shallow, resting on the line of writing, and are always joined to the previous letter at their angle; ر ز are deep, and always joined at their beginning. **Write** several examples of *dāl* and *dhāl*:

د ذ د ذ د ذ د ذ

ذ د ذ د ذ د ذ د

Open *W14.pps* and watch the handwriting of الابتداء *al-ibtidā'*, listed below.

Now **read and write:**

الإدارة	*al-'idāra*	إدارة	*'idāra* administration
الدراسة	*ad-dirāsa*	دراسة	*dirāsa* study
الدائرة	*ad-dā'ira*	دائرة	*dā'ira* directorate
مدرسة	*mádrasa* school	مدير	*mudīr* director, manager
الأستاذ	*al-'ustādh*	أستاذ	*'ustādh* professor
الابتداء	*al-ibtidā'* *W14*	ابتداء	*ibtidā'* beginning
سيّدة	*sáyyida* lady, Mrs	سيّد	*sáyyid* gentleman, Mr

Open *S30.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Exercise 1 Whose are these office doors? Read out their titles in Arabic and English:

(a) 

(b) 

(c) 

(d) 

The answers to this exercise follow paragraph 4 below.

3

ص	ـصـ	*ṣād*
ض	ـضـ	*ḍād*

Dark sounds

These two letters represent 'dark' sounds.

Think of the familiar sound *s*, represented by س *sīn* (Lesson 3). In pronouncing it, the tongue is high, following the curve of the palate. Now say *s* again, but this time dropping your tongue as low as possible, making a cavity at the bottom of the mouth. The *s* which you pronounce in this manner is 'dark'. It is *ṣ*, which is the sound of the letter *ṣād*.

Similarly, *ḍ* is a *d* pronounced with low tongue and a cavity. It is the dark equivalent of the *d* of د *dāl* (paragraph 2 above).

An immortal Australian humorist once wrote that his countrymen enjoy 'sin in the sun'. Think of the two s's in this phrase, and the idea of light and dark sounds may seem less strange.

So much for the sounds. As to the letter shapes, *ṣad* and *ḍād* are both written identically except for the dot over the loop. They are joined, sun letters. The short form is shallow, resting on the line. Also, immediately after the loop it has a built-in tooth, which is never left out. The full form is deep, with a clockwise swing down and up again. **Write** several:

صـ ـص ضـ ـض صـ ـص ضـ ـض

صـ ـص ضـ ـض صـ ـص ضـ ـض

Because of the tooth of short-form *ṣād/ḍād*, there are special handwritten connections for *ṣ/ḍ* + *r* and *ṣ/ḍ* + *m*. **Write** the combinations (with *ṣ*; those with *ḍ* are identical in outline):

ṣ + *m* صم صم صم صم *ṣ* + *r* صر صر

In pronunciation, these letters 'darken' any adjacent *a* or *ā* just as ر *rā* does (paragraph 1 above). In the list given below, dark *a* and *ā* are identified in the transcription with a dot.

Open *W15.pps* and watch the writing of إضراب *'iḍrā̆b*, listed below.

Now **read and write:**

الصوت الصوت	*aṣ- ṣówt*	صوت صوت	*ṣowt* voice
باص باص	*bāṣ* bus	وصول وصول	*wuṣū̆l* arrival
ضرورة ضرورة	*ḍarū̆ra* necessity	مصر مصر	*miṣr* Egypt
مريض مريض	*marī̆ḍ* sick (m.)	إضراب إضراب	*'iḍrā̆b* strike *W15*

Open *S31.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Relatives

4 You will have noticed a connection between words like لبنان 'Lebanon' and لبناني 'Lebanese'. The first word of the pair is a *noun*, a word denoting a person, creature, place, thing or idea (in this case, a place). The second word is either a second noun or an *adjective*, a word describing a noun. We call this kind of derivative a 'relative'. In English we have many ways of making relatives, but Arabic uses mostly one device, i.e. adding ي··· *-ī* to the base noun.

There are two simple rules for adding the relative ending ي··· *-ī*:

- the base noun must be in its indefinite form,
- the ending can be added only to a consonant, so we first remove any final vowel or vowels (such as a final ا··· *'álif* or ة··· *tā marbū̆ṭa*, or the ending يا···) from the base noun.

Applying the first rule, we can derive the relative يابانى *yābānī* Japanese' from اليابان 'Japan', first removing the article from the base noun to make it indefinite in form.

Applying the second rule, we can make the relative ضروري *ḍarū̆rī* 'necessary' from ضرورة 'necessity' and ألماني *'almā̆nī* 'German' from ألمانيا *'almā̆niya* ('Germany', see below) and likewise with many other nouns ending in one vowel or more which we drop before adding the relative ending.

Read and write these nouns, most of which you know, and their relatives:

ألماني ألماني		ألمانيا ألمانيا	*'almā̆niya* Germany
ليبي ليبي		ليبيا * ليبيا	*lī́biya* Libya
لبناني لبناني		لبنان لبنان	
يابانى يابانى		اليابان اليابان	
سوري سوري		سوريا سوريا	*sū́riya* Syria
إيرانى إيرانى		إيران إيران	

ضروري	أساسي	basic	ضرورة	أساس
رئيسي	رئيسي	main, principal	رئيس	رئيس
دراسي	دراسي	academic	دراسة	دراسة
مصري	مصري		مصر	مصر
ابتدائي	ابتدائي	primary, initial	ابتداء	ابتداء
إسرائيلي	إسرائيلي		إسرائيل	إسرائيل *'isrā'íl* Israel

A few nouns ending in ا... *-a* following a consonant have the relative ending اوي... *-áwī*:

نمساوي	نمساوي *nimsáwī*	النمسا	النمسا *an-nímsa* Austria

Open *S32.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

These relatives are in their masculine form, and indefinite. We already know that we can make such words definite with the article (اليابانى), or feminine (يابانية), or definite feminine (اليابانية).

The relative is a very important and useful derivative. You can say that with it you appreciably increase your vocabulary at one stroke.

* ليبيا is one of the very few Arabic words that read the same backwards as forwards. Try it.

Exercise 2 Make the masculine relative from each of these nouns. Translate your answers:

(a) أساس (b) مصر (c) إدارة (d) ابتداء (e) وزارة

Exercise 3 Make these relatives definite feminine:

(a) مصري (b) سوري (c) إيراني (d) إسرائيلي

Exercise 4 Transcribe these words, marking with a dot dark *a* and dark *ā*. Why are they dark?

(a) ضرورة (b) مريض (c) دراسة (d) الباص (e) ملابس

The answers to these exercises are given immediately below.

Answers to exercises

1 (a) *al-mudír* Director (b) *ar- ra'ís* Chairman (c) *al-mumáththil* Representative
(d) *al-'ustádh* Professor

2 (a) أساسي basic (b) مصري Egyptian (c) إداري administrative
(d) ابتدائي primary, initial (e) وزاري ministerial

3 (a) المصرية (b) السورية (c) الإيرانية (d) الإسرائيلية

4 (a) *ḍarúra*, two *a*'s next to *r*, one next to *ḍ* (b) *maríḍ*, *a* next to *r* (c) *dirásа*, *ā* next to *r*
(d) *al-báṣ*, *ā* next to *ṣ* (e) *malábis* (no dark *a* or dark *ā*)

Tests

1 Write, paying attention to special connections. Read your handwritten answers aloud:

(a) مصرية (b) اهتمام (c) تمام (d) ضروري (e) ألماني

2 Read aloud:

(a) الإيرانية (b) مريض (c) بألمانيا (d) ابتدائي (e) للسورية

3 Give the base word from which the relative is derived. Translate the base word and the relative:

(a) أساسي (b) دراسي (c) إداري (d) الليبية (e) الإسرائيلية

4 Pronounce your answers to Test 3. For example, (a) is *'asás*.

5 Fill in the missing letter in each word:

(a) الـ..صرية (b) إد...رة (c) مد..ر (d) الش...ء (e) مري..ة

If you have difficulty, you will find word (a) in paragraph 4 above, (b) and (c) in paragraph 2 above, (d) in 3/6 and (e) in paragraph 3 above.

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