30. ARABIA: A LETTER FROM ABDALLAH ḤIṢĀNĪ TO ʿABDALLAH BĀṢĀ (1855)

Jérôme Lentin

A letter from the šayḥ ʿAbdallah Ḥiṣānī to ʿAbdallah Bāṣā, dated 18 Rabīʿ al-ʾawwal 1272 h (28 November 1855); from the facsimile in ʾAgūlū (2002, 170), since the edition (81–82) is faulty.

Transcription

 تعالى

الحمد لله وحده

الي حضرت 1 قدوة الاكابر وعين الأعيان المحروس بينين الملك الديان افندينا عبد الله

باشه حضه الله امين

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد جانا 2 جوابك العزيز وفهمنا مضمونه ويو 3 جانا

جوابك واردة 4 جواب

سابق من امير مكة الشريف عبد المطلب ومن عند اهل مكة العما 5 والمفاتي ويذكرون

ان النصار طبو 6

مكه بيت الله الحرام وهذ العلم لا يرضاه لا الله ولا رسوله ولا السلطان 7 ولا من يقول

لا الله الا الله محمد رسول

ل الله وبعد بلغنا الامر هذا صاية 8 المسلمين غيره دون دين محمد صلى الله عليه

وعلى عينه وامام ودون دينهم

وجبه 9 تقوم الفبالب وطلبنا منهم بين 10 نبلغكم ونبلع الباشة ونشوف 11 تحقيق الأمور فان

كان وكد 12 عند

نا على ما ذكر الشريف وهل 13 مكه على ان النصارا هندكو حرمة بيت الله فتحنا 13 ما

عندنا طاعة 14 لنصار ولا لمن

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Praise be to God alone, exalted be He

(1) To his Lordship, model of the grandees and prominent among the leaders, protected by the eye of the Retributing Sovereign, our Sir (ʾAfandīnā) ʿAbdallah Bāšā—may God prompt him [to godly works]. Amen. (2) Greetings to you and the mercy of God and His blessings be upon you. — I have received your esteemed letter and I have perfectly understood the contents. The [very] day it arrived, we had [just] received a letter (3) from the ʿamīr of Mecca the Sharif ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and from the people of Mecca, ʿulamāʾ, and muftis. They were reporting that the Christians entered (4) Mecca, the Sacred House of God. Such news satisfies neither God, nor His Prophet, nor the Sultan, nor those who say that there is no deity except God and that Muhammad is His (5) messenger. When we heard that, the Muslims felt full of ar-dour [to fight] for the religion of Muḥammad (God bless him and
grant him salvation) and for their religion. (6) The tribes wanted to rise up. We asked them [to wait] until we inform you and the Pasha and until things are confirmed. If it proves true (7) that the Christians disgraced the sanctity of the House of God, as the Sha-
 rif and the people of Mecca said, we will yield neither to the Christians nor to those who (8) support them and we will rise against them in zeal for the religion and we will seek the help of God, of His Prophet, and of the proclamation of His unicity. As God—praised and exalted be He—said: (9) “O you who believe! The Associationists are nothing but impure, so let them not ap-
proach the Inviolable Mosque.” You and I have concluded a pact [making a commitment] to do what satisfies God and His Prophet (10) and what is right in the land of the two sanctuaries. From the day we made this pact until today, I have never failed to serve you and the Sublime Porte. (11) We serve without taking any ad-
vantage from you or from the Sublime Porte, doing all this [only] for the sake of my love for our Sire and for you. This is because you are (12) truthful with me. I have informed His Grace, our Sir, in a letter and I am waiting for his answer. I am waiting as well for an answer from you. I am doing my best (13) to hold back the tribes until I receive the answer of our Sir and yours. This is what I needed to tell you. Greetings. This was written the day of al-
wafāʾ (14) of Rabīʿ al-ʿawwal 1272 by your servant the šayḥ ʿAbdallah Ḥişānī [seal]
Commentary

1 حضرت. Tāʾ ṭawīla for tāʾ marbūṭa (and vice versa, see note to ln. 7) is common in MA texts. Cf. ln. 2 رحمت, ln. 8 غيرت, ln. 10 سعادت 12 خدمت.

2 جا للā ‘to come’ is common in MA (see text ‘Syria 1’, note to ln. 19). Cf. the imperfect يجين in ln. 13.

3 هو يو is most probably an apocopated form of يوم ‘when’.

4 واردنا. Notice the perfective aspectual value of the active participle.

5 العما is probably to be read العلما. 알لما is either an unusual plural of muftī (Classical muftūn), or—less likely—the plural of مفتى ‘counsel’ (see Piamenta 1990–1991, II:366).

6 طبو tabb ‘to enter’ (colloquial). The spelling without ʾalif al-wiqāya is consistent in this text (as in others) for the perfect هتكو (ln. 7) and the imperfect يقروبو (ln. 9).

7 الصلاطان al-ṣultan ( < al-sultan).

8 صابة = صابت (cf. Classical أصبات). On the writing ی for، see note to ln. 1.

9 بقهة تقوم القبابل بغة. The (colloquial) modal auxiliary (3fs) bağat (on the writing ی for، see note to ln. 1) is constructed asyndetically, as is generally the case in MA texts.

10 لين. Colloquial lēn ‘until’ (for a further example see note to ln. 13).

11 نشوف. This colloquial verb (šāf ‘to see’) appears frequently in MA texts, even in the less colloquialising ones.

12 أهل مكه = هل مكه

13 حننا. Colloquial personal pronoun (for further examples see notes to lns 11 and 12 [2x]).
Colloquial negative construction (= Classical لا طاعة لنا).

For the frozen sound masculine plural form in -īn see text II.9, n. 13 and text ‘Syria 2’, n. 10. Further examples of the same in this ln. 8 and ln. 12 مقتبسين من.

في الدين فدين.

Qurʾān 9 (Al-Tawba), 28. The canonical text reads: ‘O you who believe! The Associationists are nothing but impure, so let them not approach the Inviolable Mosque [after this year of theirs].’

صار = سار.

يرضي = يرضي.


Colloquial prepositional phrase ًفي ‘for, for the sake of’.

‘owner’, hence ‘provided with’ (colloquial = Classical ذو صاحب); cf. de Landberg (1920–1942, II:1321).

ِرَجَاب ‘to wait for’ (colloquial).

هذ من. Short form of the colloquial demonstrative ِهِدَاء.

ما لزم عرفناك. Notice the asyndetic construction of لزم, and the perfect form of the auxiliary verb.

من is crossed out in the manuscript.

يوم الوفاة. 77th (or 78th) day of the lunar year, 18 Rabīʿ al-ʿawwal.