

Arabic and Persian titles in the Leiden Library Catalogue

Manual for using the Leiden collections in Arabic and Persian languages

Arabic character	Transliteration (typing in)	Transliteration (shown)
ء	ignore	'
ب	b	b
ت	t	t
ث	t	ṭ
ج	g	ǧ
ح	h	ḥ
خ	k	ḳ
د	d	d
ذ	d	ḍ
ر	r	r
ز	z	z
س	s	s
ش	s	š
ص	s	ṣ
ض	d	ḍ
ط	t	ṭ
ظ	z	ẓ
ع	ignore	ˆ
غ	g	ǧ̣
ف	f	f
ق	q	q
ك	k	k
ل	l	l
م	m	m
ن	n	n
ه	h	h
و	w	w
ي	y	y
ة	See notes	See notes
Vowels		

Short	-a, -i, -u	-a, -i, -u
Long (ا ي و)	-a, -i, -u	-ā, -ī, -ū
Diphthongs		
ي (as in بيت <i>bayt</i>)	-ay	-ay
و (as in ضوء <i>daw'</i>)	-aw	-aw

Persian characters		
Persian character	Transliteration (Typing in)	Transliteration (shown)
پ	p	p
چ	c	č
ژ	z	ž
گ	g	g

Transliteration

Arabic and Persian titles in the Catalogue are not shown in their original form but in transliteration. Each Arabic or Persian character is represented by only one character in Latin script. To distinguish letters from one another sometimes diacritical marks are used, however you do not need to type these in, they only show in the results. To maximize your relevant results it is important to be well aware of the transliteration system and to use it consistently. The transliteration system that is explained here is not only valid for the Leiden Catalogue but can also be used for the NCC (Dutch central catalogue). Furthermore it is important to note that this transliteration system is only used for books in Arabic or Persian languages. Titles that contain Arabic or Persian words but are essentially other language titles maintain the transcription chosen by the author or translator of a book. For instance, if you are looking for an Arabic book on traditions from the prophet you have to type in: *hadit* (and this will be presented in your results as *ḥadīṭ*). If you are looking for an English book on the same subject you might find that the transliteration *hadith* is also commonly used to transliterate the Arabic term.

General rules for typing in search terms in the Catalogue

- Do not use diacritical marks, so type in *dimuqratiyya* instead of *dīmūqrāṭīyya*. Note that, when typing, some Latin characters might represent more than one Arabic letter, for example "s" might refer to ص س ش. In the results these letters will be distinguished from one another through the use of diacritical marks (see table).

General rules for the presentation of search results:

In the presentation of search results diacritical marks are used (see table above)

Complementary rules for Arabic publications

- The characters ء and ع are ignored when typing in a search term. So for example when looking for the word سعيد you have to type in *said* (in the presentation of the results this becomes *sa'īd*).

- Generally the *tā' marbūṭa* is not transliterated. An exception to this rule is when the first word of a status constructus ('iḏāfa') ends in *tā' marbūṭa* for example: مدينة السلام *madīnat al-salām*. So note that when you type in *madīna* you find different results from when you type in *madīnat*. Another exception to the general rule is that the *tā' marbūṭa* after *alif* is also transliterated: حياة *ḥayāt*. (Occasionally, especially when it concerns older publications, it can occur both in the Leiden Catalogue and the NCC that the *tā' marbūṭa* is transliterated with -h instead of -t).

- Generally the case of words is not transliterated

- This rule also applies to prepositions in the accusative case. This means that when searching for the word قبل you have to type in *qabl* (and not *qabla*) or when searching for بعد you type *bad* not *bada*.

- An exception to the general rule is words ending in *alif-tanwīn* which is transliterated as -an. For example: the word دائماً is typed in as *daiman* (and presented as *dā'iman*.)

- Verb endings are transliterated both in perfect and imperfect tense. (This also applies to the passive so note the modus of the verb). For example: قتل *qatala* يقتل *yaqtulu* يقتل *yaqtula*

-In case of *tašdīd* consonants are doubled in the transliteration. For example: مفكر *quwwa* قوة *mufakkir*

-A suffix is attached to the word it belongs to. For example: حياته *ḥayātuhu*, بيتها *baytihā*

- A *nisba*-ending (*kasra + yā'* with *tašdīd*) is transliterated as -ī. For example: عربي *arabī* (type: *arabī*). By analogy with this rule *ḍamma + wāw* with *tašdīd* becomes -ū: 'adu (type: *adu*).

- Prefixes : The article ال *al-*, the prefixes ل *li-* ك *ka-* and ب *bi-* and the conjunctions و *wa-* and ف *fa-* are hyphenated, also when typing. For example: الوقت و *wa-al-waqt*.

* Note that the term 'iḏāfa is used differently in Arabic and in Persian. Here it applies to the Arabic use.

-The article does not assimilate. For example: الشمس al-šams.

- In the case of an alif al-waṣl the -a is maintained. For example: الله li-allah

Additional remarks for publications in Persian

The transliteration system for Persian is oriented towards the phonology of Arabic. For this reason users of the Persian collection might not be well accustomed with this transliteration method especially because only the vowels –a, -i and –u are used. When looking for Persian publications generally the same rules apply as those specified for Arabic publications. Some additions are noted underneath:

- (Persian) Idāfa: This is represented with the postfix –i. For example: كتاب *kitāb-i* (type: *kitab-i*).

When a word ends with a vowel the postfix becomes –yi. For example: مثلهاي *maṭalhā-yi* (type: *matalha-yi*)

- Ya-ye nakere: The unstressed postfix –ī indicates that the case of the word is indefinite . The postfix is attached to the word it belongs to. When the word ends in a vowel then the postfix becomes –ī̄ . For example: مردی *mardī* (type: *mardi*).

- Contrary to the Arabic, in Persian the conjunction *wa* is not connected with the word following *wa*. Also the infix *u* is generally not connected to the words surrounding it. However in older text occasionally it is connected, this is due tot the classical Persian spelling as opposed to the modern spelling.

- In case of loan words from Arabic where *tā' marbūṭa* is replaced by the ta' (ت) in transliteration it is represented as a normal –t. So contrary to the Arabic when looking for Persian texts one has to type in *sunnat* (versus the Arabic *sunna*).

- Persian words starting with a vowel (إ) are transliterated without hamz. For example: Persian: *adab* versus Arabic : '*adab*. However since the ' hamz' is ignored when typing, the way of searching for these publications does not vary.

Suggestions

- Try using a minimum amount of title words as this limits the chance of making mistakes.

For example, when looking for the title *al-Yawm al-aḳīr li-Bayt Dimašqī : qīṣaṣ* of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn it is sufficient to type in *yawm* and *bayt*.

- Though it is possible to use hyphens it is advised not to use them as it increases the chance to make mistakes. (so rather search for layla than for al-layla) Generally it is advised to keep search terms simple and when possible avoid the more complicated constructions as mentioned above.
- When looking for Persian titles, occasionally it can be useful to select the code 'per' in the list of languages (advanced search). In this way it is possible to look for Persian titles with Arabic loanwords without finding the Arabic titles as well (The code 'ira' is used for other Iranian languages).