

# Addendum 1

## Letter of Condolence on the Death of Ilyās Fakhr

The collection of letters includes a condolence letter addressed to Mūsā by Khalīl Šabbāgh for the death of Ilyās Fakhr, which occurred in 1758. The possible author of the current letter is Yūsuf Mark, who, through his proximity, might have sent a letter to his friend for a reason that prevented him from attending the funerals, or simply anticipated his participation in them. In different letters, Yūsuf designates Mūsā as a brother (*ukhūwatukum*, Letters 42–43), even after he became a priest. We exclude Sophronios because we believe he would have addressed him only as a spiritual son. We do not rule out other friends like Dīmītrī Šabbāgh who also addresses Mūsā as a brother (*ukhūwatukum*, Letter 31). Dīmītrī was in Izmir in 1747.

Greek Orthodox Diocese of Homs MS 37, f. 17v-18r

المنهى لعلم أخوتكم المكرمة، أنني بينما أنا ملتئ بالأدعية //18r// الصالحة، الناطق بها كل عضو وجارحة، وأكابد أليم الفراق والأشواق، وأعلل القلب بالأمني والتلاق، وفد إليّ كتابكم الكريم المستوجب التفخيم، وبعدما فضضته اغتممت جداً لأنه أولاً أخبرني بانحراف مزاجكم عن الاعتدال، فأنحرفت معه حينئذ أفكاري إليكم، واعتدل لساني بالدعاء لكم، وبقي خاطري عندكم، أسأل الله تعالى أن يشفيكم ويعافيك، ولا يسئونا فيكم، ويلحظكم بعين عنايته ويقيكم/ وثانياً أنبأني بفقد نادرة الزمان، وأعجوبة الأوان، الذي فاق بفصاحته(ه) سبحانه<sup>1</sup> بالانشاء والبلاغة والبيان، أعني الخال المقدسي أبو فخر الفاضل العالم العامل، طراز المجالس والمحافل، فخر الأعراق والأصايل، حقاً لقد أظلمت الدنيا لفقده، وخلت ربوع الفضائل من بعده،  
فكل معدوم سواه مشبه ولكل مفقود سواه نظير

To inform your honorable brotherhood,

While I was deeply engaged in offering righteous prayers—performed with every limb and faculty of my body—and enduring the pain of separation and longing, comforting my heart with hopes of reunion, your noble letter, most worthy of respect, reached me.

After unsealing it, I was deeply distressed because it first informed me of the imbalance in your health. As soon as I read this, my thoughts immediately turned to you, my tongue was moved to pray for you, and my heart remained with you. I pray to God Almighty to heal you, grant you well-being, spare us from sorrow about you, and watch over you with His divine care.

1 He is Ṣaḥbān Wā'il ibn Zafar, an eloquent Arab and an orator whose eloquence and rhetoric are proverbial.

Secondly, your letter brought the heartbreaking news of the loss of a rare gem of his time, a marvel of his age, whose eloquence surpassed Suhbān in rhetoric, mastery of composition, and clarity of expression – I mean the esteemed uncle Abū Fakhr al-Maqdisī, a virtuous, scholarly, and dedicated man, the ornament of gatherings and assemblies, the pride of noble lineages and ancestral heritage.

Truly, the world has darkened with his passing, and the realms of virtue are left desolate in his absence.

Everything that is lost has a counterpart, but he alone has no equal.<sup>2</sup>

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2 Slightly paraphrased verse from al-Mutanabbī's poem: غاضت أنامله وهن بحور.