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Three Libyan Poets of the 20th Century
A Study of Their Political Poetry

by

Sed M Abū Dīb

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts
in the University of Durham for the
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School of Oriental Studies,
Elvet Hill,
Durham.

1980

الاهـدء

الى اسـتى

عيسـر واتـهـال

To My Daughters

'Abīr and Ibtihāl

ABSTRACT

The present study consists of three parts, together with an anthology of Libyan political poetry. Its aim is to deal with the surviving political works of three well-known modern poets, Aḥmad al-Shārif, Aḥmad Rafīq and Aḥmad Qanābah. To be precise, it deals only with their political works which were composed during the Italian and British occupations from 1911 to 1951.

The first part provides biographical sketches of the above-mentioned poets, their career and circumstances. Chapter I deals with Aḥmad al-Shārif's life, the second with Aḥmad Rafīq's and the third with Aḥmad Qanābah's.

Because their lives spanned the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries, the second part gives a comprehensive picture of the environment in which the poets lived. Chapter I describes Libya under the second Ottoman period from 1835 to 1911, paying particular attention to certain historical events which helped in developing political life in Libya at the time. Chapter II and III deal with the Italian and British occupations from 1911 to 1951, laying great emphasis on the socio-economic, educational and political conditions as the main factors which formed their outlook and personality and affected their poetry.

In the light of these two parts, the third part studies the political trends in their poetry, Ottomanism and Islam, patriotism and Arabism successively. In Chapter I a general survey is made on the development of modern Libyan poetry. Chapter II examines the Ottoman and Islamic trend in their works. Chapter III deals with the patriotic trend. Chapter IV studies the trend of Arabism. Finally, Chapter V assesses the aesthetic value of their political poetry and its style.

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PREFACE

Mu'īn Besīso says, "when the world starts to know about us through the faces of our poets and artists, it will be the first step in our journey towards the world. At the same time it will be the beginning of the world's journey to us".¹ This is certainly true in the case of Libya.

Many, particularly the people of the West, knew Libya recently through its oil fields which changed its economic and social face in the sixties. But very few know the name of a poet or writer who took part, as the fighters did, in forming the political features of Libya during the first half of the twentieth century.

It is true that the Western world knew Libya in the beginning of the present century through some of its historical events. For instance, when she was invaded by Italian troops in 1911 and made a battleground by the fighting forces during the First World War, 1916-18. When 'Umar al-Mukhtār set up his Armed Resistance Movement against the Italians in Cyrenaica for about a decade, 1923-31 and when she was a theatre of war between the Allied and Axis forces during World War II, 1939-45.

But the Western world and even the Arab and Islamic world, with the exception of a very few intellectuals, did not know the voices of the Libyan poets and writers who were prominent in the literary field in Libya exactly as those who were famous in the theatre of struggle during the above-mentioned period

Among the many reasons for this, it could be, as Ma'īn Besīso says, the fact that "in several stages of history, the political events

1. Mu'īn, B., 'Itr al-ard wa al-nās fī al-sh'ūr al-Lībī al-mu'āşır, (Tripoli, 1967) p.5.

of this country or that one are greater than a poem, a play, a story or a painting "1

In fact, Libyan poetry is still unknown, not only in the West, but also in the Arab world. In addition to a very few scattered articles and essays on the subject, a handful of books have been written in the Arabic Language. These have been mostly written by Arab writers. Some comprehensive accounts of the lives and poetical works of a few Libyan poets appeared in books by 'Alī Muṣṭafā al-Miṣūrātī and Khalīfah al-Tellīsī, who are Libyan writers. But these books were briefly and often inadequately discussed in more general studies in Arabic. Therefore, much is still to be done in the study of modern Libyan poetry, rather than of the few poets themselves. There are still many poetical themes which have not yet received the attention of critics and scholars. If there are some studies on modern Libyan poetry, most of these are articles and essays.

So, the aim of the present study is to fill a part of that gap by dealing with a particular poetical theme, namely Libyan political poetry during the Italian and British occupations, from 1911 to 1951. It is an attempt to study the national struggle of Libya not only from historical books, but also from that effusive stream of political poetry by which the Libyan poets inflamed the spirit of patriotism, crystallised national feelings and directed national goals towards freedom and independence. It is an attempt to point out the political role played by the Libyan poets during the colonial period and their national contribution to the liberation of their country.

1. Ibid., p.4.

In fact, Libyan political poetry is not yet collected as a whole and, unfortunately, will not become available, because most of the political poems, particularly those composed during the Italian occupation, were lost. In the course of the thirty-two years of Italian domination, strenuous efforts were made by the Italian authorities to kill everything associated with the Arabic language and Islamic culture in Libya.

However, I have chosen the political works of three well-known Libyan modern poets notably Ahmad A al-Shārif, Ahmad Rafīq al-Mahdawī and Ahmad A Qanābah, in order to discuss with a certain degree of objectivity the political trends which were prevailing in the Arab Muslim world at the time.

In fact, these three Libyan poets, who are outstanding classical poets, have left a great many political poems which distinguished their poetry, in particular, and modern Libyan poetry, in general. I shall however deal only with their political poems, composed within the period from 1911 to 1951, to prove that they were a reflection of their lives and a result of their time.

Admittedly, forty years are a short period in the political history of a nation, but nevertheless it is long enough to permit a preliminary analysis of the trends of the political current in Libyan poetry through the voices of three well-known Libyan poets. In fact, some Arab and Libyan specialists have merely included a few pages on the subject, which I deal with, in their works on Libyan poetry in general. But the present study is the first in the English language to be based on the Arabic sources with the aid of some English books which are relevant only to modern Libyan history.

Because no attempt has, indeed, been made to study the above-mentioned political trends in Libyan poetry, in the English language in any details, it gives me a great pleasure to introduce to the Western world some examples of Libyan poets who rose in the face of colonisation, demanding superior values for man and life on Libyan soil

Finally, I am responsible for all opinions and interpretations laid down in this study. Furthermore, any mistakes are my own

TABLE OF TRANSLITERATIONS

Consonants

Hamzah,

not shown when initial, otherwise ,

ب	b	ط	t
ت	t	ظ	z
ث	th	ع	‘
ج	J	غ	gh
ح	h	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	ه	h
ش	sh	و	w
ص	s	ي	y
ض	d		

Diphthongs

اَو	=	aw
اَي	=	ay
اَيِي	=	yy
اَوو	=	uw

Long Vowels

اَوِي	=	ā
اَوو	=	ū
اَوِي	=	ī

Short Vowels

اَ	=	a
اُ	=	u
اِ	=	i

* I have followed the above system of transliterations except when I quoted other sources.

ABBREVIATIONS

Books

D Sh.

Dīwān Aḥmad A al-Shārif

D R

Dīwān Aḥmad Rafīq al-Mahdawī

D Q

Dīwān Aḥmad A Qanābah

- * When two dates are given thus (1310/1892), the first is the Hijrah date. When Christian era dates alone are given, nothing normally is added.

PART ONE

The Lives of Three Libyan Poets

INTRODUCTION

The three noted Libyan poets, Aḥmad al-Shārif, Ahmad Rafīq, and Aḥmad Qanābah, who enjoy great popularity in Libya, are generally regarded as the leaders of the neo-classical school in modern Libyan poetry

They were born at the close of the nineteenth century but they had, in fact, much in common besides being contemporaries. First, all of them derived their classical attitudes from the old Arabic poetry, as well as from their contemporaries among Arab writers and poets, particularly in Egypt and Iraq. Secondly, they were not poets of a double culture, although Rafīq and Qanābah learned two foreign languages during their early education. These they studied at the Turkish and Italian schools for a few years. They could not master both cultures, since they were educated with a thorough knowledge of Arabic literature. It is difficult to reveal any important effect on their poetry because it seems that these languages have no great share in their culture, with the exception of a number of Italian words in some of Rafīq's poems. It is clear, through their works, that they were not keen on European ways in literature and life. It is also possible because they were not prepared to accept them, or because the educational standard was not high and sufficient for Libyans during the Turkish and Italian period, or because they refused everything connected with the Italian occupation, especially its education and culture, or for all of these reasons.

Thirdly, the main themes they dealt with were patriotism and Arabism. Furthermore, they were much aware of their society's problems and were very sensitive to the political and national affairs of their



country. Besides, they drew greater attention to those Arab affairs which at that time were coming to light. Their reputation is based not only on passing fame but also on their works, which they contributed to the literary and intellectual life in Libya.

In 1911, Italy had declared Libya as one of her colonies, thus cutting her links with the Ottoman rule. Therefore, the national feelings in Libya were inflamed because the Libyans had considered themselves a part of the Ottoman Empire. At the end of the first World War, these feelings were increased because Libya suffered greatly from the war-time situation and her economic condition became damaged. But, during the years of peace-agreement (1917 - 1923) between the Italians and the Libyan fighters, one could notice a distinct phenomenon which indicated important intellectual and political changes. At that time, our poets began to take part in political and literary activities by writing several poems in support of the position of the Libyan Resistance Movement in its struggle against the Italian occupation. They turned their attention to the serious responsibilities of the nation and the people. As a matter of fact, the decisive efforts of our poets, who were much responsive to political poetry, were aimed at building the Libyan nation on the concrete foundation of freedom and sovereignty. Therefore, it was a painful sight to them to see the divisions and political strife between both leaders in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, the two great provinces in Libya. They wrote many poems on this point criticising their behaviour in the hope of solving it.

At the end of the Second World War, our poets, once again resumed their participation in political affairs, concerning their country. When the British Administration promised to restore the freedom of

Libya, the peace-talks were held after the war to fulfil that promise as a solution. But they appeared to be far away. Owing to these events, some Libyan political parties were established with nationwide support. At that time, our poets shared with these parties in their activities by producing a great many poems, which clearly reveal their political consciousness, particularly Rafīq and Qanābah. In their description of national feelings, they did not confine their poetry only to Libya. There is always at the back of their mind the glorious past of the Arabs which influenced their imagination and expression. They were interested in Arab union and Arabism, especially the Palestine problem, which deeply concerned them. They also dreamed of fulfilling their desire to see a stronger political, economic and cultural communication among the Arabs. In these roles they wrote several poems. In fact, they performed in the political field, excellent services to the cause of their country and to that of Arabism. Also, their works have the character of unity to a great extent, and mostly were written in a patriotic spirit. Besides, their outstanding merit is to have attempted an awakening of the national feelings of their people. They attacked the Italian occupation and British Administration, and strove to point out the true nature of their political attitudes. According to these facts, they were, in reality, the leading figures of patriotic and national poetry in Libya

Before leaving this introduction, I should like to draw attention to some differences between Rafīq on the one hand, and al-Shārif and Qanābah on the other hand. Rafīq was the only poet who suffered much due to his political views, and persisted in his stand-point against

the Italian occupation and British Administration. He was in contrast to al-Shārif and Qanābah, who changed their attitudes by following pacific means. He had paid a heavy price because of his responsive nature to the calls of duty. Al-Shārif and Qanābah have not suffered from exile and isolation like Rafīq, who eagerly continued composing his patriotic poetry during thirty years. It must here be pointed out that the poems composed by Rafīq fall into two categories. Most of them are on Libya's struggle for her independence, and some on the problems of Arab countries. However, nostalgia shapes, generally, all of the poetical works, he finished during his stay in exile in Turkey.

In spite of this, I could say that the situation of our poets was different from one to another in other aspects. According to recognised standards, Rafīq is more of a patriotic poet than, in particular, al-Shārif who eulogized some of the Italian leaders, as we shall see through their poetry. This, I attribute to the distinct courage of Rafīq and his self-reliance in earning a living, even when he was dismissed from his post. Secondly, Rafīq spent twenty seven years out of thirty three years during the Italian occupation of Libya, away from his country. Because of the emigration of his family to Turkey where Rafīq stayed for about twenty years, he could attack the Italian colonization and criticize its policy in Libya. Above all, the Italian government banned all ideas and views which did not agree with its policies inside Libya.

Apart from the revolution against classicism and conservatism which emerged in the 1920's, and had taken place in Iraq by Zahāwī. In fact, Rafīq was the only poet who adopted Zahāwī's views on rhyme as an obstacle in Arabic poetry. But al-Shārif and Qanābah did not

call for the emancipation of the Qaṣīdah from rhyme, while all of them were great admirers of Zahawī's poetry. In spite of the fact that Rafīq involved with Zahāwī's views but he was bound, like al-Shārif and Qanābāh, by the traditional Arabic poetry

Therefore, one can safely remark in the next chapters, by showing and analyzing the characteristics of these three well-known Libyan poets, that Rafīq was far more natural and original in his poetry. One also can observe that Rafīq, as a patriotic poet, devoted most of his poetry to his country, and his political attitude was generally antagonistic to all kinds of colonization.

However, when our great poets died, al-Shārif in 1959, Rafīq in 1961 and Qanābah in 1968, Libya mourned their loss and honoured them by naming after them streets and schools in Benghazi and Tripoli. Moreover, the Faculties of Arts and Education of the two Libyan Universities also decided to commemorate their names by establishing two literary societies bearing Rafīq and al-Shārif's names.

Therefore, the principal aim of the present work consists in a study of their political works, written during forty years (1911-1951), which have been collected in a few Dīwāns. Besides these Dīwāns, they wrote several articles and many essays for the press on a great variety of subjects, mainly on social reforms, political affairs, and literary issues. But I am concerned here only with their Ottoman, patriotic and national poetry. Before doing so, this study must contain, in the first place, a biographical sketch for each one. This is in order to portray our poets in their milieu and to serve as a background for this study. As a matter of fact it is a review of

their lives and works reflecting generally the comprehensive picture of the period (1911-1951). Therefore, I will try to bring out the more important effects on their lives, their various activities, and their views on political causes which are relevant to the future of their country. I also will explain the decisive role which they played in shaping the national feelings of their people, and how these feelings were based on a wide circle, including the rest of the Arab nation.

CHAPTER ONE

(الشاعر أحمد أحمد الشاريف)

The life of Ahmad Ahmad al-Shārif

(1872 - 1959)

His birth and family

Ahmad Ahmad al-Shārif was born at Zlīḡen, one of the districts of Tripoli and belonged to a Libyan family which was middle class, conservative and religious. There is no certainty about the year of his birth, but 'Afīfī,⁽¹⁾ an Egyptian author, estimates that al-Shārif was born in 1872. Later, in 1955, an interview with al-Shārif was made by 'Afīfī, who asked him about his birthday. He replied poetically

ما يريد من ظروف الارملة من عمره فوق الثمانين سنة

What does he want from life,
Whose age is over eighty years?

Whilst al-Miṣurātī⁽²⁾ stated that his birth was in 1864, that would have meant that al-Shārif was past ninety when this interview took place. If so, al-Shārif should have said

ما يريد من ظروف الارملة من عمره فوق التسعين سنة

Whose age is over ninety years?

It is clear that al-Miṣurātī's statement contradicts this line. Moreover, if his report is correct, al-Shārif would have been forty-four years old in 1908, the year in which he composed a poem about the Ottoman Constitution. Al-Miṣurātī commented that al-Shārif was still a youth at that time. Therefore, 'Afīfī's assumption is more firm than that of al-Miṣurātī if we considered al-Shārif a youth.

-
1. 'Afīfī, M S , al-Shi'r wa al-shua'ra' fī Lībyā, (Cairo, 1957) p.190.
 2. al-Miṣurātī, A.M., Ahmad Ahmad al-Shārif dirāsah wa dīwān, (Beirut, 1963) p.21.

In that year he was nearly thirty-six. In any case, al-Shārif was contemporary with the Ottoman period for about forty years.

His education

Al-Shārif lived in the Zlīṭen district, where he received his early education. But the only formal education, he had, was the traditional religious one. He went to the primary religious school, which was following the famous institute in Zlīṭen, called al-Asmar Institute. During a few years, he had learnt to write, read, memorize and recite the Holy Qur'ān. Having completed this, he was educated at al-Asmar Institute in the traditional Islamic sciences, and in the Arabic language under the supervision of the great scholars of Zlīṭen. But he specialized mainly in Shari'a's studies, particularly jurisprudence. In order to widen his knowledge, he subsequently attended a more complicated religious program for the young. He attended classes regularly and took lessons in jurisprudence in the Mālikī school of law.

The second educational element, that deeply affected him at his early age, was the Zawāyā. They were one of the prominent centres of Islamic culture in Libya in the second half of the nineteenth century. Al-Shārif pursued his later studies in some famous Zawāyā around Zlīṭen like Fatīs, al-Madanī, Lāghā and al-Qasiyah. In these Zawāyā, he studied jurisprudence, the Arabic language and other traditional Islamic sciences under students of the noted al-Shaikh (Alīsh) and the well-known scholar al-Shaikh (Kāmel Mustafā), who was regarded as al-Azhar al-ṣāghīr (a little Azhar) for his prolific knowledge in Islamic law. In fact, he was a disciple of those scholars for many years. At the same time, he

continued his own study and reading in Arabic literature, especially in poetry.

It was a habit of most educated Libyan families to place some of the Arabic classics on various subjects, particularly religion, in a small recess in the wall of a room. Al-Shārif, also had his own library at home, of which he studied by himself some books in Arabic literature, and read and memorized a great many of the old Arabic poets.

Among the books that he read was Kitāb al-ʿAghānī of Abū al-Faraj al-ʿAsfahānī (897-967), Kitāb al-bayān wa al-tabyīn by al-Jāhiz (775-868), Dīwān al-Mutanabbī (905-965), and Dīwān Ibn Zaidūn (1003-1070). Besides, when he was a student at al-Asmar Institute, he had already read some of the old Arabic texts such as the Alfiyyah by Ibn Mālik. There is no doubt that those books, Dīwāns and the like inspired him to make classical poetry among his early interests.

In addition to his conservative home background and his purely religious education at al-Asmar Institute and the Zawāyā, al-Shārif was influenced by Sufi orders which were widespread and well-known among his people in Zlīten.

His character

It is clear that all of the previous elements shaped al-Shārif's personality. He was a pious man and a traditional Muslim who used to read the Qurʾān, kept the religious rites faithfully, and studied Islamic jurisprudence widely. He was also a man who wore the turban and galabīa because they were the common dress of the ʿUlamāʾ and Qādīs, who wore this dress to give them an air of veneration and more

respect among their people. He knew no European language. He was described by al-Misurātī¹ as intelligent, hospitable, quick-witted, noted for his good manners and a well-read poet. Hence, his character, as a Qādī or poet, was the natural outcome of the above mentioned factors.

As a Qādī (Judge)

On his graduation, al-Shārif occupied various posts. After passing his final examination at al-Asmar Institute, he was immediately appointed a preacher and teacher at (Banī Muslim Mosque) in the town of Misallātah, near Tripoli. There he spent a few years in teaching its people.

During that time he had studied to be a Qādī all his life. He was fortunate that his ambition of becoming a member of the Sharia court helped him to fulfil his desire. He was afterwards appointed as a Qādī. From his teachers, ‘ulamā’, and several books, al-Shārif was fully aware that the Qādī, who is adequately trained, needs always "a wider knowledge of Islamic law, a profounder understanding of the language in which it was written and greater integrity".² In the meantime, he had realised that it was necessary for him to specialize in jurisprudence and this need was further emphasised by him. In the town of Khums he passed an examination and then he was appointed deputy to the judge in its Sharia court. Once more he

1 Al-Misurātī, p 10.

2 Mazyad, A.M.H., Ahmad Amin advocate of social and literary reform in Egypt, (Leiden, Brill, 1963) p.12.

passed another examination and afterwards was appointed a Qādī in Tāwūrghā, South of Mīsurātāh, in which he remained for a few years. Then he was transferred to the court of Qarahbūllī, near Tripoli, where he lived some years, during which time his country faced a great disaster in 1911. After that, he was sent to Tripoli to join the fighters. But he was captured, then released through the help of a friend. He left for the town of Gharyān, which was one of the fighters' forts at that time, and held a post as a clerk to its Muftī

After the agreement of Bin Yādīm¹ between the Libyan fighters and the Italian government in Tripoli in April 1919, al-Shārif was selected by the Italians as a Qādī for the town of Sirte. Later, he moved to Tripoli and was appointed to assist the consultative council in 1920.

In 1922, the Higher Religious Court was founded, and he was nominated one of its members. Having reached that position, he was qualified to become a head of the permanent staff of the Qādīs. By his wide knowledge of Islamic law and his experiences in this field, he soon held that high position in the supreme court in Tripoli. In 1943, he was appointed a chairman of that court, and remained so from then until 1948, when he retired.

His retirement

Towards the end of his life, al-Shārif was convinced that he could not work any more as a chairman of the High Religious Court. Al-Mīsurātī stated that al-Shārif had served as a Qādī for fifty-one

1. A district in Western Province, near Tripoli.

years in several towns and cities in Libya. After these years, he gave up his work in Qadā' (Sharia law). This left him with the time to be able to carry on his own work, mainly compiling his poems to publish them in a Dīwān. It was a few years before his death, when al-Shārif retired from his legal career to concentrate on his literary activities.

After his retirement in 1948, al-Shārif stayed at home for reasons of health. In addition, he found himself alone. It seems that his age was beginning to have its effect on him. He was of the age of eighty when he lost his eyesight. Besides this, his hearing became very weak. He also realized that his friends had abandoned him and left him alone with his thoughts. Therefore, he was destined to stay at home, spending the last days of his life, suffering from blindness and loneliness, like Abū al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī (973-1059)

Despite the differences of era and outlook, both al-Shārif and al-Ma'arrī were poets, lost their eyesight, stayed at home until their death, and died at the age of over eighty. From his poetry, it is clear that al-Shārif grieved about his losses of friends and eyesight. He described his sadness in some sad poems. But at the same time, he had the satisfaction of being offered several distinguished posts as a Qādī during a half of a century, and of contributing a great many comprehensive poems that reveal how widely his fame was as a poet. Al-Shārif died on Thursday 11 August 1959.

His political activities

Despite his judicial-religious position, he had hesitated to play a decisive part, whether in local affairs or in national

political problems. There is no evidence that al-Shārif was politically minded or that he took an active part in one of the political parties in Tripolitania. However, some of his poems reveal that al-Shārif had a political consciousness. It seems he was more interested in writing and in rousing his people than in political affairs. There are, in this connection, two poems¹ he composed during the first decade of the present century, celebrating the Ottoman Constitution, and greeting the members of Committee of Union and Progress. These poems do not show that he was involved in Anti-Ottoman revolutionary activities. Besides, one poem welcomes the Committee of Libya's Liberation when some of its members had visited his town Zlīten.² Therefore, we cannot consider al-Shārif as an adherent of those committees according to the above-mentioned poems. It is true that he once suffered from the Italian tyranny when he composed some patriotic poems, which led him later to prison. But his political attitude against the Italian occupation changed after the agreement of Bin Yādīm in 1919. After that year, he was appointed by the Italian government as a Qādī several times in different places. He did not, unfortunately, continue his attack upon the Italians as Rafīq had openly done or as Qanābah had expressed symbolically. It is possibly because he was afraid of going to prison once again, or of being sent into exile as the Fascists had done with Rafīq, or being dismissed from his post as a Qādī. It is likely that he had no courage to face these punishments which he might have had to suffer if he entered into political fields. To show that al-Shārif was afraid of such catastrophic results, when Italy had founded the Higher Islamic School for educational and political reasons, al-Shārif could bring himself to point out that this foundation was being

1. See D.Sh., pp. 106-107.

2. Ibid., p.97.

degraded by Italian government interference. Contrary to that, Rafīq, on this occasion, attacked its interference in the religious affairs of the Libyan people. He did that through a poem which was sent to its headmaster.¹

His travels

Al-Shārif did not travel outside Libya until the 1930's. Because of his eulogies of some Italian leaders, at the head of them Mussolini, who visited Libya in 1937, al-Shārif was given an opportunity to go to Italy, where he visited Rome and Naples. It was the first time he had visited a European country. He was chosen a member of an educated Libyan group, consisting of scholars 'ulamā', writers and journalists, for a visit to Italy. They were entertained by the Italian government which was very interested in their ideas about its rule. In fact, this journey was mainly to serve political purposes, and aimed to make some scholars into propagandists.

However, al-Shārif did not refuse. By his acceptance of such an invitation he achieved one of the Italians' aims. On his return, he wrote a poem, describing what had impressed him. When the great Egyptian poet, Ahmad Shawqī was named "The Prince of Poets" in 1927, al-Shārif hoped to visit Egypt to recite his poem on this occasion. But this was never fulfilled.²

His poetry

In spite of all this, al-Shārif stands in the front line of Libyan poets. In many aspects, his importance, one may say, is comparable to that of his contemporaries, Rafīq and Qanābah. He is undoubtedly one of the greatest poets in modern Libyan poetry. He was known in Libya as Shaikh al-Shu'arā', (the Chief of Poets)

1 See, Dīwān Shā'ir al-Waṭan al-Kabīr, Vol. I, (Benghazi, Libya, 1962) pp 58-61

2 al-Miṣurātī, pp 244-5

and was regarded by some as Shā'ir al-Qutrayn (the Poet of two regions i.e. Tripoli and Barqah) As a matter of fact, al-Shārif was a prolific poet but most of his poetry, unfortunately, was lost. He wrote social and political poetry, but the influence of his religious milieu and Islamic studies, which can be detected in some of his works, is very clear and remarkable. Generally speaking, his poetry reveals an increasing concern with religion, morals, wisdom, social problems, and patriotism. Besides, he gave attention to the Arab countries in some of his poems, which often express the feelings of the ancient glories of the Arabs. However, in the opinion of al-Miṣurātī¹, his surviving poems comprise several odes, representing his interests in patriotism and Arabism. But his political output, in the field of patriotism and Arabism, is indeed very small

Since his boyhood, by reason of his literary tendencies, al-Shārif was interested in the Sufi orders. Therefore, the first lines which he composed, were about one of them. It is clear that al-Shārif, as he himself explains, began his literary career with Sufi poetry. In the following of his first lines in which a spirit of sufism is found, he speaks about a Sufi lover

للقب لولا انهمال الدمع اكما* وليس فيه لما يحفيه إكما*
تحفى المحبة والاحوال تكشفها* وليس بعد الكشاف الحب إكفا*

Were it not bathed in tears, the heart has courage,
And there is no secrecy as to what it (heart) hides.
Love is hidden but circumstances show it,
And there is no concealment after the disclosure of love.

1 Al-Miṣurātī, p 50.

It is, therefore, no wonder that al-Shārīf devoted a part of his poetry to Sufism and wrote some mystical poems. It was a result of his early religious studies and his belonging to al-Sāʿīdyah Order, which was one of the most famous Sufi orders in North Africa at that time. Besides, he read widely in the Dīwāns of the Sufi poets, such as ʿUmar Ibn al-Fārīd (1181-1234), the greatest mystical poet in the history of Arabic literature, and Abduḥ Raḥīm al-Burʿī, a noted Sufi poet. Their influence was evident in his poetry. Furthermore, his contacts with several Sufi orders, which were known and widespread in his town Zlīten, were indeed deepened. At the head of them was the Order of Sīdī Abduḥ Salām al-Asmar, the great Sufi figure in Libya.

In fact, these are the more important factors, which might be considered the link between him and the Sufi poetry. But in the first decade of the present century, al-Shārīf was mature enough to publish his first work in a newspaper. It was written on the proclamation of Ottoman Constitution, under the title of ʿAudaḥ al-Dustūr (the Return of the Constitution). It seems that it was the earliest poem which he published in the newspaper al-Taraqī (Progress) in 1908. He followed it with Tashtīr (dividing a verse of poetry) in 1909, and then with a piece of poetry which was composed in memory of the Constitution in 1910.

These poems¹ are the first of what was found of his compositions after careful searching and investigation was undertaken by al-Mīsurātī. But al-Shārīf was renowned for his famous ode, Radīnā biḥatfī al-nufūs², "we are content with sacrifice".

1 See, D Sh , pp 106, 107, 185

2 Ibid , pp 83-4

He composed this ode, which received a particular appreciation from his contemporaries, during the holy-wars against the Italian occupation. He followed it with several great poems on patriotism, which brought him instant fame. But I have noticed that his patriotic poems, which he wrote in the first years of the Italian occupation, are different from those of later years. Due to his pacific disposition, they were written with remarkable reserve.

His Dīwān

I have previously said that al-Shārif composed a great many poems, but most of them were lost. His poetical works were posthumously edited with a preface by Alī Mustafā al-Miṣurātī in one volume in 1963. But it will be noticed that this volume does not contain his eulogies of some of the Italian leaders in the 1930s. They are as yet only to be found in the newspapers of that period.

Besides his Dīwān, al-Miṣurātī stated that al-Shārif's works included essays and articles on various themes which were published in some Libyan newspapers. But they have not been collected yet. Moreover, the remarkable thing about his literary contributions is that he did not write a book about Islamic jurisprudence incorporating his readings and experiences. In fact, he prepared no publication in this field, although he spent more than a half of a century in Sharia Law, starting as a deputy Qādī and ending as a chairman of the Higher Religious Court. It seems that he sat in the courts as a Qādī who had dealt mostly with cases of divorce and broken families.

CHAPTER TWO

(الشاعر أحمد رفیق المهدوی)

The life of Ahmad Rafīq al-Mahdawī

(1898 - 1961)

His birth

Aḥmad Rafīq al-Mahdawī was born in January 1898 in Fussāto, a little village near Tripoli, about which he wrote a few lines.

دهت بالصيت (سناطو) وان لم يدعها غيرها ان تستقل
مسقط الرأس لها في عنقي من أياديها وفي القلب محل
وطني عسدي عزيز كله وهو الروح صيب من أزل

Fussāto is famous,
Even if the others did not leave it to be independent.
It is a birth-place, having a place in my life,
And in my heart because of its power.
My country is, in my opinion, dear for me,
It is a spirit and part of eternity.

His family

Rafīq was fortunate in belonging to an educated Libyan family. His grandfather was the chief of the Benghazi municipality and his father, who was a learned man, occupied the post of Qā'im maqām (a district officer) of Fussāto during the second Ottoman period. Then, he transferred to the Qa'im maqāmiyat Nālūt, where he remained seven years and a few months.

His study

Rafīq was brought up by his father whose social and official position afforded him an excellent educational chance by sending him to the Turkish schools in his early years. Before that, his family gave him an opportunity to attend a Kuttāb (a primary religious school) in accordance with a venerable Islamic tradition in Libya at that time. After reading the Qur'ān in Nālūt, his

family moved to Mişurātah, where he received some lessons in French at a private school, and entered for the first time a Turkish school. Afterwards, he moved to al-Zāwīyah al-Gharbīyah (the Western Zawīa), near Tripoli, where he was educated at another Turkish school and obtained his first elementary certificate in the Turkish language. Because of Libya being an Ottoman Vilayet for some three and a half centuries (1551-1911), the education and official language were Turkish during that time. Therefore, he subsequently joined the only preparatory Turkish school in Tripoli City. But before taking up his lessons, Italy launched an attack on Libya in 1911.

Rafīq was about thirteen years old when his family emigrated, for the first time, to Egypt. In Alexandria's schools he pursued his studies and then obtained the elementary certificate in the Arabic language, and then the General Certificate of Education, al-Kafā'a. He was ready for the examination of Baccalaureate, al-Bakālōriyā, when he was forced to return with his family to Benghazi in 1920.

His Posts

There, Rafīq occupied a post as an Arab secretary in the Benghazi municipality and had a great chance to hold a high official position. However, on repeated occasions, he angered the Italian government with his sincere frankness in some of his poems. Therefore, the Fascists, who had seized power in Italy at that time, dismissed him. In the middle of the year 1925, he left for Turkey, where his father and eldest brother were living. During his stay in the town of Jīhān in Turkey, he resumed his literary activities and worked in business, from which he derived his income. But he had a difficult

time in earning his living by means of commerce, especially at the beginning of his settlement there. In fact, it was his first journey to this remote country

After ten years, in 1934, Rafīq once again went back to Benghazi, where he spent only two years before he was exiled by the Italian government. The main reason was again his poetry, in which he expressed the patriotic feelings of his people and their dislike of the Italian occupation. Besides, his attack was far too open for its imperialist interests. When he was given the choice of where he would prefer to go, he emigrated to Turkey in 1936 and chose Jīhān once more as a residential home. While in Turkey, which was the second time he had been there, Rafīq joined his father and eldest brother in business and remained there until the end of World War II.

After a short time in Turkey, he held a number of administrative posts. In 1938, he was appointed as an officer in the Sirkeci Customs Office in Istanbul. In 1940 he joined the Chrome Mining Office around Dursunby district. He subsequently occupied a post as civil officer in the Adana municipality in 1941. Finally he returned to Libya in 1946 where he remained without work for a few years. From then until 1951, Rafīq did not lead a quiet life, mainly criticising what was happening during the British Administration. He composed a great many poems expressing his condemnation far too openly, especially when the British authorities had not fulfilled their promise to transfer the responsibilities of government to the Libyans. In 1951, he was nominated a member of the first Libyan House of Senate, and remained from then until he died on Tuesday 6th, July, 1961 in Greece on his way to Turkey for a visit to his

brother Towards the end of his life, Rafīq had indeed been, for a long time, an active member of the Senate, because his literary interests did not detach him from politics. At the same time he could not give up his interest in poetry, but continued his literary activities Besides, he became more interested in a quiet and religious life as some of his last poems reveal. In a respectful way the Faculty of Arts in Benghazi specialised a lecture room to bear his name.

His Character

Rafīq suffered from a lot of hardships and faced severe blows during his life First, he failed in his love in Alexandria and was unable to marry his cousin. This was despite the fact that he had been engaged to her since their childhood in accordance with the customs of the older generation Secondly, in Turkey, he suffered from financial problems when his business failed. Thirdly, he was not successful in his marriage there.

But despite all of these, he was gay, jolly and liked joking with his friends through poetry. He was well-read in Arabic and Turkish literature, extremely sensitive and intelligent. Through his poetry, it is clear that he was very courageous to speak the truth, particularly when he gives his political thoughts on important matters, regarding his country. He had no respect for the opinions of selfish people or their interests, but sought the truth however much it might hurt them.

His Travels

For some thirty years, Rafīq lived away from his country. He spent these years mostly in Turkey to which he travelled twice while he stayed about nine years in Egypt (1911-1920). In Turkey he spent some twenty years; the first ten years was from 1925 to 1934 and the second one was from 1936 to 1946. Towards the end of his life, he visited Italy, West Germany, Spain and Greece

It is clear that Rafīq had lived only six years and a few months in Libya during the Italian occupation. He was allowed twice to return to Benghazi, where he stayed. The first one was in 1920 after his return from Egypt and the second was in 1934, coming from Turkey.

His Cultural Background

Through the previous pages, we have seen the whole picture of Rafīq's upbringing. Therefore, we can take a general view of his cultural background and its elements. First, in Libya, he received his early Arabic education, learnt the Turkish language and obtained his first elementary certificate. Secondly, during his stay in Egypt for about nine years he was educated at primary and later at secondary schools in Alexandria. At these schools, he studied the Arabic language and took lessons in the Tafsīr, Hadīth and rhetoric. There is no doubt that his stay in Egypt, from 1911 to 1920, was a fine chance for his cultural interests. He lived in Alexandria, most of those years, where he acquainted himself with the literary and intellectual environment in Egypt. Indeed, that environment afforded excellent scholarly opportunities to him through his contact

with well-known leading writers and poets in the first part of his life. Thirdly, his transfer from the Libyan environment to the Turkish environment proved an effective factor. While he was residing in Turkey for about twenty years, he perfected his Turkish and acquired a wide knowledge of Turkish literature, as some of his essays show e.g. his essay entitled, "Rhyme and Metre in Arabic Poetry".⁽¹⁾ At the same time, he maintained his interest in Arabic literature as al-Hājirī says⁽²⁾ by borrowing several books in the Arabic language from some Arab emigrants in Turkey. Besides, his journeys to other countries had served his intellectual interests. He felt greatly enriched, particularly during his stay in Egypt and Turkey. In addition to his knowledge of Turkish, there is some evidence in his poetry, that Rafīq knew the Italian language. Without doubt, he learnt it when he was staying in Benghazi during the six years, as we have already mentioned. Furthermore, his own readings in the Dīwāns of the great Arabic poets of the past and present and his memorising their best poetry, was in fact one of the most important elements of his cultural background.

His Political Activities

As a matter of fact, Rafīq participated in various political activities, whether living inside his country or outside it. He shared by his political poetry in the agitation of his people against

(1) See Dīwān Shā'ir al-Watan al-Kabīr, Vol III (Benghazi, Libya 1971) p.12-13 and Libyā al-Muṣawwārah, Vol.1, No. 10, July 1936, pp 25-26 .

(2) Al-Hājirī, Tāhā, al-Hayāt al-adābiyah fī Libyā, al-Sh'ūr, (Cairo, 1962) p.98.

the Italian occupation and British Administration for about thirty years (1920-1949). Between 1920-1925, Rafīq's political activities were an important factor in the loss of his post in the Benghazi municipality. In his poetry, which he composed during that time, Rafīq pointed out the interference of the Italian government in Libya. However, it seems that his poetry displeased its political circles. Therefore, the government decided that Rafīq was responsible for the agitation of the Libyan people who came out openly against it. It decided that his poems, in which he criticised its criminal acts, were an attack on its rule in Libya, and took the petty revenge of dismissing him. In his exile, in Turkey, Rafīq wrote his greatest poems, describing his feelings and emotions for his country. He became more interested in the social and political problems of his people. Therefore, he devoted his poetry to support the Libyan Resistance Movement for the recovery of the country and the gaining of its freedom. He had attacked with bitterness the imperialistic attitudes of the Italian government who misled his people for a long time.

On his final return to Libya, a few years before independence, Rafīq commented also on some of the internal political problems. For instance, when the leaders of Tripoli and Barqah created differences of opinions and coloured politics with their personal affairs, Rafīq censured them openly in several poems. He commented on the appearance of those troubles, that they were fighting among themselves rather than combatting the obvious dangers of British colonisation. Of course, he angered the leaders by his criticism of their behaviour, in which he also pointed out that they could get

rid of these problems by an agreement if they so wished. His poems had annoyed them with an angry reply. Besides, on repeated occasions, Rafīq again and again, with more bitterness, criticised the ambiguous attitudes of the British Administration and disapproved of its policy in Libya. Moreover, Rafīq took part in the 'Umar al-Mukhtār Group and contributed to their literary magazine. In July 1951, he himself participated in a demonstration and afterwards was one of many demonstrators who were sent to prison.

His Poetry

There is a predominance of social and political themes in his poetry, which generally deals with the suffering of his people during the Italian occupation. Besides his criticism of the British Administration in seizing power in Libya, and attacking some of the Libyan leaders who co-operated with the British authorities, Rafīq was referred to, for these reasons, as Shā'ir al-Waṭan (Poet of the Country) or Shā'ir al-Waṭanīyah (Poet of Patriotism).

In fact, Libya had not produced any poet comparable to such a figure as Rafīq during the first half of the present century. He served with his literary pen and poetical talent the intellectual and political life in Libya for about forty years. He also fed the Libyan Resistance Movement with his decisive poems for a quarter of a century, particularly while he was living in Turkey.

Rafīq composed his first acceptable verse as early as 1917-18, when he was only twenty years old, living in Egypt. On his return to Libya in 1920, he tried to write his poetry to the highest possible standard and to publish his patriotic poems in the newspapers

I am inclined to believe that the better part of his career as a poet, produced a considerable account of his greatest poems quantitatively and qualitatively while he was in Turkey. I have previously said that Rafīq left twice for Turkey where he lived for about twenty years. Within those years, Rafīq devoted his attention to expressing his feelings towards his country, although he did not regain his health and gradually became ill and depressed. During his stay there, Rafīq wrote his best poems in which he described his happy times with some of his close friends in the city of Benghazi. It is clear that Rafīq deliberately emphasised the theme of nostalgia and expressed always successfully a keen feeling for his native country. As a matter of fact, his stay in Jīhān fed his spirit patriotically and intellectually and had an effect on his composing what were considered his greatest patriotic poems.

His poetry, however, shows an interesting development in his social attitudes and political views of his country. Because of the political corruptions and lack of personal freedom, most of his poetry is poetry of protest against Italian colonisation. Therefore, he was exposed, as I have already said, to the anger of the Italians, who banished him by forcing him to live in exile more than once. He was often exiled on account of the political views in his poetry. Due to this, Rafīq was the only poet among his contemporaries who suffered from persecution by the Italians.

Furthermore, Rafīq presented a long narrative poem¹ (99 lines) with the title Ghaith al-Ṣaghīr (the Boy Ghaith), written in 1934, in which he exposed the story of Italian tyranny in Libya. In this

1. See, D.R., Vol. 1, pp. 9-16.

work he had given for the first time in modern Libyan poetry, in a long narrative poem and a full presentation, a new kind of poetry which had so far not been treated by Libyan poets.

But in his last years, it seems that Rafīq gave up poetry for reasons of health. His poetical output was very small, indeed almost nothing

Rafīq and Zahāwī

Through his readings in modern Arabic poetry, in particular Egyptian and Iraqi poets, Rafīq rebelled against some of the traditional background of poetry. He was indeed an enthusiastic admirer of Jamāl Sīdqī al-Zahāwī (1863-1936), and grateful to him for giving him a deeper insight into modern Arabic poetry. He had widely read al-Zahāwī, from whom he learnt some liberal ideas. He managed to absorb more of the spirit of his views, and therefore fell under his influence in his attitudes towards the rhyme of poems

There is no doubt that his acquaintance with Zahāwī's poetry brought him a first glimpse of this subject and developed his interest in liberal ideas and scientific attitudes. Because of his support for progressive poetical causes, calling for the liberation of poetry from rhyme, Rafīq composed a poem, and wrote two essays which reveal his thinking in this respect. In spite of the fact that Rafīq succeeded in digesting Zahāwī's views as his ode, which is entitled Amā ān līl Shā'r¹ "has not the time come for poetry?" shows he was an ambitious poet in his call to free "the form of Arabic poetry from the traditional shackles of elaborate

1 Dīwān Shā'ir al-Waṭan al-Kabīr, Vol II, (Benghazi, Libya, 1965) pp 80-81

versification"⁽¹⁾ But the majority of his poems, (about 190 poems and 13 fragments), were in the traditional monorhyme, and his contribution in this field was insignificant from a practical point of view. It is possible because he did not use his works to serve those views or because his contemporaries did not afford him any encouragement. Furthermore, the classical style of old Arabic poetry, which was imposed upon generations and was revived in the second half of the nineteenth century, remained as a brilliant form of Arabic poetry as to rhyme and metre.

His Dīwān

Rafīq is undoubtedly a great Libyan poet. We have seen through his literary career that Rafīq, whether he is living in Turkey or is staying in Libya, planned to continue composing a great many comprehensive poems about the political causes of his country. This explains why he had such a prolific output, more than any other Libyan poet during the first half of the twentieth century

From 1917-18 on, he wrote many of the best patriotic poems in modern Libyan poetry. He regularly contributed poems to some Libyan newspapers and periodicals, such as the weekly newspaper al-Waṭan (the Fatherland) in 1920s, then to the monthly literary magazine Libyā al-Muṣawwarah (Libya Illustrated) in 1930s, and to the daily newspaper Barqah al-Jadīdah (the New Barqah) in 1940s.

His first Dīwān was published in one volume in Cairo in 1959, collected by Muhammad al-Ṣādiq 'Afīfī, an Egyptian author. But a

1. Badawī, M.M. An Anthology of Modern Arabic Verse, (Oxford University Press, 1970), p. XXXVII.

more complete collection was posthumously published in three volumes between 1962-1971, the first of which appeared in 1962 and the second in 1965. For the purpose of collecting the poetical works of Rafīq, the Ministry of Social Affairs selected a committee to publish all of them. His Dīwān, in general, contains much political poetry of protest and bitter criticism of Italian tyranny and ambiguous British policy.

Besides his poetry, Rafīq contributed to Libyā al-Muṣawwarah by writing some literary essays during the years 1935-1938. He also wrote two articles of criticism which were published in al-Watan newspaper in 1947. These essays and articles were collected and published in the third volume of his Dīwān.

C H A P T E R T H R E E

(الساعر أحمد أحمد قنابنة)

The Life of Ahmad Ahmad Qanābah

(1898 - 1968)

His Birth

Aḥmad Aḥmad Qanābah was of Libyan origin. He was born in Zinder in West Africa about the year of 1898. He was well-born, descended from a noble and distinguished Libyan family in Waddān, one of the famous oases in Fezzan, the southern province of Libya.

His Family

His family, known as al-Sharīf Qanābah, was a branch of al-Ashrāf tribe, which belonged to the descendants of al-Sayyidah Fatimah, the Prophet's daughter. They were formerly established in Tripoli City, then his grandfather abandoned it and moved to the lands of Waddān, from which he had emigrated to Zinder. In the second half of the nineteenth century business was at its height between the people of the south of Libya and the surrounding tribes of neighbouring countries, particularly West and Central Africa. Owing to these circumstances his grandfather, who inherited the business from his family, had been a famous merchant at that time. From the city of Zinder, he married a woman who was chosen for him by its Prince, and he had three children by her. When his father, who was the second child in a family that experienced much in trade, grew up, he also set up trade in that area, especially with Kano in Nigeria. A few months after Qanābah's birthday, the town of Zinder was invaded by the French. Therefore, his family was forced under these difficult circumstances to move to Kano where they stayed for a few years. His eldest uncle returned to

Libya and settled in Tripoli City. Finally, his father left for Libya at the beginning of the twentieth century. Our poet was four or five years old when he was brought to Tripoli in which his father settled

His Study

After his coming, for the first time, to Tripoli, he remained without schooling for a while. Then his father sent him to study at the Turkish school named Maktab al-ʿIrfān al-Ahliyah (the School of National Office of Instruction). It was one of the famous Turkish schools in Tripoli during the second Ottoman period. He subsequently joined the school of the Turkish Military Office. He was educated at those schools but his schooling was, unfortunately interrupted. He had intended to complete his study in Turkey, but some difficult circumstances prevented him from fulfilling his desire. Anyhow, his father's stay in Tripoli was very short and he soon travelled to the South on business.

Therefore, our poet lived with one of his relatives, al-Hāj Ahmad al-Sayyīd, his cousin's father. He stayed with this man, who adopted him because he had no children, until 1911 when Italy invaded Libya. Because of his joining the fighters against the Italians, his relative was captured and sent to Italy with many captives. Thus, our poet moved to his eldest uncle's house where he resided for a few years. He was brought up by his uncle, who looked after him during the absence of his father and relative.

For completing his study, Qanābah was sent to a modern elementary school in Tripoli City. It was an Italian school named

(School of Rome) from which he obtained a certificate of fourth class in the Italian language. There, he learnt some modern subjects geography, history, arithmetic and some Arabic courses. During that time, his father came back from the South, accompanied by another wife and a son. He also entertained a desire to travel to Egypt in search of learning and to study in the famous al-Azhar Mosque. For this reason, he left his uncle's home and joined his father in the hope of being sent to al-Azhar. But this hope of travelling to Egypt was, unfortunately, never realised. Because of his father's intention to settle down in Libya, he, in principle, agreed with him about his wish. Our poet was promised that he would be sent to Egypt after his father's travels to the Sudan and Nigeria for a few months to wind up his commercial affairs there. His father, later, left by himself for the above mentioned countries where he stayed about seven years instead of a few months. Therefore, Qanābah remained unemployed for a while, then he engaged in business by the exchange of goods between him and his father. As a merchant and representative of his father's possessions in Tripoli, he worked successfully for some time. Qanābah was a teacher at the age of some twenty-five years, when he found himself responsible for providing for the sustenance of a family. Its situation had not encouraged him to remain in teaching, and soon he left. In the meantime, the desire to learn had now returned. So he had to go to some of Tripoli's mosques where he followed the traditional courses under the famous 'Ulamā' of Tripoli City, and received mainly the religious sciences.

His Posts

During the Italian occupation, the Libyan people were suffering from a lack of Arabic education, and were not content with the educational services of the Italian government. Therefore, the National Party of Reform had established an elementary school for pupils in the 1920's. It was in need of school-teachers. Qanābah successfully applied for it and started teaching the Arabic language. But the Italian government opposed its activities and attempted to throw obstacles in its way.

At the end of the year 1922, the Italian authorities closed it and refused to give their approval to carry on its educational and national role. With such a special school, they thought that their own schools, which were founded in many places of Libya, mostly on the coast and for the Italian children, would lose the most important aims of its foundation. They also considered it a place where national education prevailed and filled the minds and feelings of its pupils with patriotism. Therefore, our poet moved to another national school as a school-teacher of Arabic. He taught at Madrasat Maktab al-ʿIrfān al-Ahlīyah (the School of the National Office of Instruction) which was transformed into a governmental school by the Fascists in 1926. In that year, Qanābah gave up teaching and concentrated on the study of Islamic sciences. He entered for pursuing his religious education, the school of Othmān Pāshā, then Ahmad Pāshā College, from which he graduated with the diploma, al-Ijāzah al-ʿĀlāmīyah. This diploma was like those of the Great Mosque, al-Zaitūnah in Tunisia and of al-Azhar in Cairo, because the study was similar to the latter

Having obtained this, Qanābah had to earn his living as a merchant. He made again his return to trade in 1928. After a period of working in business he left to hold a post of broadcaster in 1938. He was chosen with an educated Libyan friend to be broadcasters in the Arabic section of Tripoli Radio, which was founded in the end of that year. He remained until January 1943, when the Italians blew it up during their evacuation of Libya. During the four years, working on radio, Qanābah took advantage of this opportunity to give some talks on various subjects. By these talks, he tried with some success to instill in the young generation a sense of freedom and the deep understanding of patriotism. The language he used in his talks was deliberately simple and sometimes colloquial.

After the Italian evacuation of Libya in 1943, Qanābah was appointed to a post as an editor in the Information Office, which was under the British Military Administration. In 1947, he was selected as a member of the Consultative Committee to Nazārat (Administration) of Education in Tripolitania region. Through his work he assisted in conceiving a plan for the foundation of an educational policy in Libya at that time. Due to the circumstances and the political currents through which Libya had passed before independence, Qanābah gave up his work in the Information Office and left in 1951 to have time for more of his own study. For a few years he was unemployed. In November 1954, he was given a post as librarian of the Waqf (Endowment) Library, which is one of the older public libraries in Tripoli City. He remained in his post until he died on Friday 12th January 1968, only a year and a

few months before the Revolution of 1 September 1969 that signified a new republican state for the Libyans

His Cultural Background

In fact, Qanābah, who read very widely in the Arabic and Islamic culture, was a self-educated man with deep knowledge, prolific genius, and great literary gifts. Like Rafīq, the only Western language, Qanābah knew, was the Italian language, besides the Turkish. Nevertheless, it seems that neither language had distinct effects on his poetry

However, I have previously said that Qanābah received the early part of his education in Tripoli City, first at the Turkish schools and later at an elementary Italian school. According to the cultural milieu of the first half of the twentieth century, he studied some traditional Islamic sciences by joining the famous religious schools in Tripoli like Othmān Pāshā School and Ahmad Pāshā College. At the same time, he was free to arrange his own study and to plan his educational future. Because of his father's leaving for the Sudan and Nigeria at the beginning of the 1920's Qanābah made every effort in the field of education, besides his working in business. He resumed his study which he had not finished when he left the Turkish and Italian schools. He was educated in the Islamic sciences and the Arabic language under several prominent scholars in some of Tripoli's mosques. There, he attended lessons in grammar, learnt a good deal about literature, and read general history. He also gave special attention to classical Arabic poetry and memorised a great many poems of noted poets, in particular,

al-Mutanabbī's poetry

During that period, Qanābah became acquainted with some educated men, who were undoubtedly influential figures on him. They encouraged him to improve his cultural and literary interests. Men like al-Shaikh Ibrāhīm Bākīr, al-Shaikh al-Fadl, al-Shaikh Ahmad al-‘Isāwī, al-Shaikh Mustafā al-Khāzmī, al-Shaikh Hussain al-‘Alīm, al-Shaikh Othmān al-Qājījī and al-Shaikh Abdul Rahmān al-Būsayrī. But, it seems that he was influenced in particular by the latter, who died in 1935, and whose death affected him deeply. He expressed his deep grief in a poem describing him as his spiritual teacher

Qanābah, like his contemporaries Rafīq and al-Shārif, was a great admirer of al-Zahāwī (The Iraqi Poet) and regarded him as one of his inspirational poets. He had read most of his poetical works. When al-Zahāwī died in 1936, his loss saddened him greatly, and in a poem he expressed his feelings of grief at his death. In spite of all this, I have not found any evidence of his adoption of Zahāwī's views on the emancipation of the Qaṣīdah from the trammels of rhyme in Arabic poetry, nor any poem showing his opposition to these views. He was also attracted by the Dīwāns of the Egyptian poets like, Ahmad Shawqī (1868-1932), Hāfiz Ibrāhīm (1871-1932) and ‘Alī al-Jārīm (1881-1949). He was greatly influenced by their works mainly through his reading. On several occasions, he himself commented that he had derived much profit from these poets and others. There was no surprise when he composed some poems about their death, with regard to the fact that they were noted poets of modern Arabic poetry, who had an impact on his literary career.

Furthermore, although he twice engaged in business for some years, he was never free from literary study. He continued his studies on his own and was widely read in Arabic literature. When he occupied the post of librarian of the Waqf Library for his last thirteen years, he had the chance to satisfy his appetite for reading classical Arabic literature, in particular poetry and general Islamic culture. These elements, indeed, supplemented his scholastic deficiencies and widened his intellectual horizon.

His Activities

During the Italian occupation, particularly in the years 1920-1947, Qanābah played an important role in the development and encouragement of political and intellectual movements in Libya. He held many official and unofficial posts in the fields of education, journalism, and politics.

His Journalistic Activities

The year 1920 was an important one in his life, not only because he was appointed as a schoolteacher at the school of his political party, but also because he made his entry into the world of journalism. Like many modern poets, Qanābah worked as a journalist for a few years. He took up writing and contributed essays and articles to some national newspapers.

At the peak of (the National Reform Party) Ḥizb al-Iṣlāh al-Waṭanī to which he belonged, Qanābah used to write political and social essays for its paper (the Tripolitanian Standard) al-Liwāḥ al-Ṭarābulusī¹ although it survived for only two years. Then he ceased his writing for newspapers to work in business. But at the

1. A weekly political newspaper, was established in 1919

beginning of the 1930's he made his return to journalism contributing to some newspapers frequently until 1936. He subsequently gave up again writing to become a broadcaster. In 1943 he was appointed one of a journalistic group for Jarīdat Jarābulus al-Gharb (Tripoli of the West Newspaper), which was founded to express the British Administration's views. He remained from then until 1951, during which time he filled many columns of this newspaper. But all these articles and essays, written over the years 1920 to 1922, 1932 to 1936 and 1943 to 1951 have not been reprinted yet in book form.

His Cultural Activities

His cultural activities were multiplied by his forming together with his friend Dr. Mustafā al-ʿAjīlī, a theatrical group of amateurs, who were students at the Islamic School of Arts and Crafts, in 1936. He played a leading role and effected a real pioneer service to the development of theater's arts by laying down the foundation of drama in Tripoli City.

During the forties he joined several societies, and took up some important duties in the literary, cultural and sporting clubs in Tripoli. He participated in the reformation of (the Literary Club) al-Nādī al-Adabī and gave some talks to its members. In the late part of the year 1945, he was proclaimed its president, in addition to his control over its cultural and theatrical activities. He also shared in the establishment of (the Cultural and Sporting Workers Club) Nādī al-ʿUmmāl, and subsequently controlled its various activities.

His Political Activities

In his youth, he actively took part in the process of the Libyan Resistance Movement which, indeed, started immediately after the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911. He was a member of Hizb al-Islāh al-Watani, which was established in Tripoli in 1919. At the beginning of the 1920's, Qanābah became a regular member in this national party. Therefore, he took part in some of its political activities by using his pen to promote the political causes of his country. He devoted particularly his poetry to reunite his countrymen in Tripoli and Barqah, who were divided into conflicting political groups at that time. With the end of World War II, he was destined to meet Bashīr Bey al-Sa'adāwī, the Tripolitanian leader of the National Congress Party, whose impact on his mind was to be profound in the political field. Because of the close relationship between him and some prominent Tripoli leaders, and his co-operation with them, Qanābah also was an active member in this party. He composed several poems and wrote some essays on political issues about the future of Libya. In fact, from 1946 to 1949, things came to a head when the British Military Administration declared that Libya would be a state of three provinces.

Qanābah strongly rejected this aim and wrote a poem expressing his views on the federal system. Having published this, it was widely circulated. Then Tripoli City became inflamed against the British authorities and the masses were very angry. On December 24th, 1951 the declaration of Independence was proclaimed in Libya, but as a federal state. Qanābah was saddened to see the failure of his hopes and lived in political and also literary isolation. As

a matter of fact, it was the milieu of political conditions which finally persuaded him to give up his decisive role as an active poet.

His Poetry

Qanābah, who is generally regarded as one of the chief figures in the neo-classic school in Libyan poetry, began writing poetry when he was twenty years old. The 1920's witnessed the publication of his first poem, and also saw his entry into the world of literature. From the beginning, Qanābah turned to the old Arabic heritage for the themes of his poetical verses, which were mostly pregnant with classical attitudes. At the same time, he took up themes of contemporary social and political importance. Because of the Italian occupation of Libya, Qanābah devoted his poetry to attack this new colonisation, and to feed the spirit of the Libyan Resistance Movement. In fact, his poetry proves that he was one of Libya's poets and intellectuals whose influence, over the years, was widely and profoundly to prepare the minds and to stir the feelings of the Libyan Resistance. In his earlier works, he directed his interests to social problems and the political affairs of his country.

Due to the dependence of Libyan poets and writers on publishing their works in the newspapers, I have noticed throughout Qanābah's career that his literary activities were interrupted several times. His first poems appeared in al-Liwā' al-Tarābulusī in 1921. Then his poetical output disappeared until the 1930's when he published some poems in al-Raqīb al-Atīd (the Venerable Guardian) newspaper. He subsequently gave up his publishing for a few years.

In addition to this, I have also noticed that all of his poems which earned him a distinguished place in modern Libyan poetry, appeared under several pseudonyms like, a patriot, the voice of a patriot, a Muslim, a truthful Muslim, a Tripolitanian youth. This is possibly because he became very cautious in expressing extreme political views in his poetry, or because he was fearful of publishing them for another reason. However, his later poetry represents an interesting development in his general attitudes to political life, especially to the unity of his country. But his patriotism is not limited to a narrow circle. It extends to include the political conditions of all Arab countries. There is much evidence pointing to the existence of increasing concern with Arab Union and Arabism. In fact, the latter themes, he treated are one of his poetry's elements

In his last few years, Qanābah remained silent, but he persisted in his political attitudes as a poet of unity. Due to his giving up composing poetry, he had not shared with his contemporaries in feeding modern Libyan poetry during the fifties and sixties. It is true that he sometimes took advantage of the opportunities of important events to compose a poem or two. For instance he used to compose a poem on the memory of establishment of the Arab League or of the Algerian Revolution. He also composed a poem, welcoming the reunion of Libya in 1963, as a realisation of his old dream. But nevertheless, what he left during the fifties and sixties, was only a few poems. As a matter of fact, he had great hopes of reforming many things and fulfilling several hopes for his country. But he was incapable of translating his thoughts into actions. With the end of World War II, he saw the beginning of five frustrating

years which must have seemed very long to a poet to realise his hopes. Some of them had clashed with reality, with the political environment in which he found himself, and finally with the difficulties that confronted Libya in the late forties.

However, although Qanābah left rather little poetry (about 75 poems), what he wrote was highly political. Above all, its classicism reveals a very predictable style. Besides, his poetry portrays the strong influence of the Egyptian poet, Hāfīz Ibrāhīm (The Poet of Nile), who devoted his poetry to his people.

His Dīwān

Qanābah is one of the most popular poets in Libya. Because of his interests in political matters of his country, particularly, the unity of his people, he came to be known as Shā'ir al-Wahdah (the Poet of Union). His collected poems were published posthumously in one volume in 1968 with a study about his life and poetry.¹ He also wrote a great many essays, written between 1920 and 1951 in discontinuous periods, mostly on social and political subjects. But they have not been collected yet.

¹ See, Abū Dīb, S., Ahmad Ahmad Qanābah, dīrāsah wa dīwān, (Beirut, 1968) pp 1-76

P A R T T W O

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1835 - 1911
1911 - 1943
1943 - 1951

CHAPTER ONE

Libya during the Second Ottoman Period
(1835 - 1911)

Introduction

Because of the present study concerning the political trends in Libyan poetry through the works of three Libyan poets, and in consideration of our poets' lives which go back a few years into the second half of the nineteenth century, a brief survey will be given, in this Chapter, on Libya during the Second Ottoman Period (1835 - 1911) socially, culturally and politically

A part of this Chapter will describe the construction of the Libyan educational system during the above-mentioned period to show its effects on the cultural background of the poets under this study. To understand the various political trends in our poets' works, it is important to know the political climate, particularly during and after the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution of 1908. Also, a glance at the Sanūsiyah Movement and the Libyan Press, as prominent elements during this period, is necessary here.

Historical Background

Due to the length of Libya's history under the Turkish rule which started in 1551, the background of this work is the nineteenth century and it touches only a part of it. We are just concerned with a period, exactly, from 1835 to 1911 during what is usually called the Second Ottoman Period, summing up the most important events. This helps us in defining the era in which the Libyan poets, with whom we are concerned, were born and lived for a few years.

The story of the history of Libya is, in brief, the story of an unending decisive battle between Libya and foreign powers.

Since ancient times, Libya was dominated by several foreign powers, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs, Spaniards, Knights of Malta, Turks, Italians and finally the British-French Military Administrations. They were, most of them, drawn by the importance of its geographic location on the Mediterranean Sea, its connections with Central Africa, its climate and the fertility of its soil.

Under these waves of military invasions, which lasted until 1951, the history of Libya was characterised by the continuous struggle of its people against the foreign powers. In addition to this, among these waves is the wave of Arabs which has moulded the whole of the cultural, social, political, religious form of Libyan society in the seventh century, (23/643)

After many centuries, the Arab domination of Libya ended in 1510 when Tripoli was overcome by a Spanish naval invasion. In 1530, it was transferred to the Knights of St. John,¹ when Charles V handed the city over to them.

From Tājūrā^c,² a national delegation went to Istanbul asking to collaborate with them by sending an army in order to help drive

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1. They are the Knights of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, one of the great military Orders of the Church. When they had lost their stronghold of Rhodes, they had moved to a new base at Malta.
 2. A coastal town about ten miles to the east of Tripoli City.

out the Knights of St John of Malta.¹ It was in the summer of 1551 when the Turks were invited to come to the aid of their fellow Muslims in Libya

After the failure of a Turkish attack on Malta, led by Sīnān Pāshā, "forces were joined for an expedition against the City (Tripoli) with the great Anatolian admiral Darghūt Pāshā".² Soon, negotiations were started between the Turks and the Knights, who allowed them to occupy the city on the 16th of August in 1551. In this year, the Turkish conquest of Libya made the country an Ottoman Vīlayet

In fact, the Turkish rule of Tripolitania began when Fezzan became its tributary province.³ After their capture of Tripoli City, the Turks assumed power over Benghazi, the capital of Cyrenaica. But they did not advance upon Cyrenaica, as a whole, until 1638, "when a military mission consisting of a few ships was blown by an ill wind into the inadequate harbour of Marsā Ibn Ghāzī".⁴

At times, the two provinces have not always had the same historical background. Each province was part of some foreign power. In addition to this, the population and agricultural areas of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica are separated by some two hundred

1 Al-Mīsurātī, 'Alī M , al-Ṣīlāt bainā Lībyā wa Turkiyā al-tārīkhīyah wa al-ijtimā'īyah (Tripoli, 1968) P.29.

2 Wright, John, Libya (London, 1969) P.91.

3 Ward, Philip, Touring Libya, the Southern Province (London, 1968), P 16

4 Bulugma, H , Benghazi through the Ages (Tripoli, Libya, 1968) P 43

miles of desert, which has resulted in varied economic, social and political interests ¹

However, in the second half of the sixteenth century the country, as a whole, came under Turkish domination and remained so until 1911, with an interruption of Qaramānī rule, (1711 - 1835).

It is known that the Arab countries had been in contact with Turks since the time of the Ottoman assault on Syria in 1516 and Egypt in 1517. Therefore, Libya, like so many of the other Arab countries, formed part of the Ottoman Empire for about four centuries. But, since the Turks came to power in Libya in 1551 and until the beginning of the 18th century, the domination of their governors was only strong inside the towns and weak, if not non-existent, in the internal parts of Libya.

In 1711, the Turkish rule was interrupted by the Qaramānīs, who took over the country. After the French occupation of Algeria in 1830, Tripoli started seeking direct Ottoman rule. Moreover, the Ottoman government in Istanbul concerned itself with the re-capturing of Tripoli.

During the reign of Sultan Mahmūd II, the Turks took advantage of the civil war, in addition to the continued disputes among members of the Qaramānī family, to re-establish direct authority over Tripoli without serious difficulty. When the Turkish Commander Najīb Pāshā re-captured Tripoli,¹ it no longer held again the rank

1. Bross, H , Grain Shortage Study (Tripoli, Libya, 1956) P.7.

2. Seton Dearden described, in detail, the whole story of the Turks return to Tripoli in comprehensive picture in his book, A Nest of Corsairs (London, 1976) pp. 309-10.

of an Ottoman province. By the Sultan's firman, a second Turkish government was installed in Libya, and the Qaramānli dynasty was brought to an end after one hundred and twenty-four years.

In fact, if the end of Qaramānli rule in 1835, closed another chapter in the history of Libya, it was also considered, second in importance perhaps only to the Libya episode of the early nineteenth century, a point from which modern Libyan history emerged.

However, the 19th century was characterised by great international competition for expansion in Africa or for the extension of European influence. This reason, and others, accelerated the re-occupation of Libya by the Turks. But by marking the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire, the internal history of Libya under the second Ottoman period (1835 - 1911), was distinguished by the waning power of the governors and their inability to do anything effective, as we shall see.

In the later part of the nineteenth century, the deep weakness of the Ottoman military, corruption and disorder in government, and a decline in standards with economic backwardness was clear. Turkish control was never strong in the internal parts of Libya, although the Turkish regime tried to make life in it a little more peaceful. Briefly, "the returning Turks relegated Tripolitania administratively to the status of a mere Ottoman Vilayet, and it was thus, as a back-water of the Turkish Empire, with a succession of Turkish governors and moderately discreet European consuls that it remained until 1911"¹ For these reasons, serious steps were

1 Ibid , P 315.

taken by the Western power (Italy) to assert her interests and protect her subjects and merchants

Following the Italy-Turkish war of 1911-12, the Treaty of Ouchy was signed by the two countries in October 1912. By this Treaty Turkish sovereignty over Libya was ended and was followed by Italian colonial rule.

So, the Ottoman Turks ruled Libya for about four centuries (from 1551 to 1911) with an interruption of Oaramānī Rule (from 1711 to 1835). But, the important period of the Turkish rule, which concerns us, is the second Ottoman period of 1835-1911. This period is, in my opinion, a turning point in the modern history of Libya owing to some decisive historical events. Among these events are the emergence of Sanūsīyah Order in 1840, the foundation of the Libyan Press in 1866 and Ottoman Constitution of 1908.

Political Life

Libyans, for centuries, were not involved themselves in political affairs. When they invited the Ottoman Sultan, in the middle of the 16th century, to extend his control to Tripoli, they were content to give their submission to the Turkish rule. The reason behind this is very clear and simple. It is due to the fact that "the Ottoman Sultans governed Libya as they governed other Arab lands, not as Turkish rulers but as Muslim caliphs, and their Islamic policy made their subjects, regardless of whether they were Turks or Arabs, feel at home under their rule".¹ When this policy was changed during the second Ottoman period by governing the people of Libya, not as Muslim caliphs but as Turkish rulers, they rebelled against their government. They rejected the Turkish policy, not the existence of the Turks as Muslims among them.

Therefore, when we speak of the political life during the years 1835-1911, we have to keep in mind the process of Turkification which has been going on for all this long period. This will lead us to a fact that the new administrative system, which the Turks established in Libya, resulted in the continuation of two national revolts. These revolts, which had been led by two Libyan leaders, Ghūmah Khalīfah²

1 Khaddūrī, M., Modern Libya, (Baltimore, 1963) p 7

2 Al-Shaikh Ghūmah bin Khalīfah of the powerful Mahāmīd tribe, the traditional ally of the Qaramānī, was ruling from the hill town of Yefrīn as uncrowned King of the Western Jabal. He led a serious uprising in the interior parts of the country. Until 1842, the Turkish governors failed to penetrate his mountain defences. But he was captured and imprisoned in 1842, and there was peace until 1854 when he escaped, returned to the mountains and renewed the revolt. He was killed in 1856. See, Wright, p 103 and Dearden, pp 305-6

and 'Abdul Jalīl Saif al-Nasir,¹ aimed at the sharing of Libyans in rule, not at getting rid of it. They reflected the rejection of the policy of Turkification and the centralisation of Turkish administration.

Furthermore, I am inclined to believe that these revolts played, in one form or another, a great role in the crystallisation of national feeling connected with religion among the Libyan people at that time and later on. For this reason, they may be considered a patriotic and national step but within the religious frame. On the other hand we cannot consider them an important factor in the rise of Arabism in Libya at the beginning of the present century because they were far from the concept of Arabism.

So it is true that, for more than five hundred years, as Thwaite states, "Libyans had had no voice in political affairs, except for the brief period in the nineteenth century when the Karamanlı family established a sort of oligarchy and then only within Tripoli and its immediate environs"² Certainly, early in the 18th century, the Qaramānlı family made Tripolitania virtually independent and later extended its control to Fezzan and Cyrenaica.³ But, what-

1 Al-Shaikh 'Abdul Jalīl Saif al-Nasir was a remarkable leader in Fezzan. He succeeded in uniting his powerful 'Aulād Sulaimān tribe, whose large land was the Sūknah area bordering on Fezzan, in a political union with other tribes in the area of Sirte. He led the revolt in Fezzan where he rests assured of his independence. During the period of Hasan Pasha (1837-8), he was allowed to govern Fezzan against certain payments. 'Alī 'Askar Pāshā (1838-42) succeeded in capturing and beheading 'Abdul Jalīl in 1842.

2 Thwaite, A., The Desert of Hesperides, an experience of Libya, (London, 1969) p 105

3 Khaddūrī, p 7

ever may be said about this brief period, (1711-1835) Libyans could not, peacefully, get their rights, whether they were under the last years of the Qaramānī rule or during the second Ottoman period

Since the Turkish rule of Libya in 1551, and for one hundred and sixty years, no serious attempt to put an end to the Turkish rule and get full independence from it, seems to have taken place until 1711, when the Qaramānī rule came. It was the first voice raised against the Turkish rule in Tripoli, but not a Libyan voice. In the beginning of the 1830s, some of the nomadic tribes in the interior parts of Libya "were frequently attacking the rulers who were less able to resist their attacks. These tribes took every opportunity to provoke trouble with Tripoli where the Turkish governors were installed "1

In fact, the Turks failed in creating the spirit of loyalty to the Ottoman state, not only in Libya but also in other Arab countries. Therefore, "it was not until their re-occupation of the country in 1835, that the Turks were able to re-impose a limited control along the coast, and to provide conditions under which government and settled farming could be carried on in any kind of safety "2. The reasons behind this are the general condition of poverty and subservience, the internal weakness and corruption of the administration. To these, one must add their reluctance to accept central administration and Turkification.

1 Dearden, p 305

2 Owen, Roger, Libya, a brief political and economic survey, (Oxford Univ. Press, 1961), p 1

Because of all these facts, the Libyan people were encouraged to revolt against the Turkish authorities. Therefore, it is no wonder that we find the rebellious leaders under the last two Qaramānīs persistent in their attitude under the first two Turkish Walīs.¹ Both of their revolts had occurred in the period of 'Alī Pāshā (1832-5), the last of the Qaramānīs and continued until 1856 when Ghūmah was killed.

Although these revolts did not produce decisive results in the political career of Libya during the nineteenth century, they were a mark of the rejection of the Turkish oppression. Anyhow, space does not permit, neither does the purpose of this section demand a full treatment of the various revolts to which Turkish rulers were exposed. In respect of political life in Libya during the Ottoman rule, one may say that there was a political vacuum until the beginning of the second half of the 19th century, or even during the second half.

In fact, the Libyans did not come to fill it completely although many opportunities arose. In the nineteenth century, a number of Muslim leaders had lost hope in the Ottoman Caliphate, and started looking for the liberating of the Muslim world through other means. It witnessed the appearance of the Islamic reforms preached by Jamāl al-Dīn al-'Afghānī and Muhammad 'Adduh in Egypt, the Mahdīyah movement in the Sudan, and the Sanūsīyah Order in Libya.² Concerning the latter movement, neither the Grand Sanūsī, the founder, nor his

1 Ziadeh, N., Sanūsīyah, (Netherlands, 1958) p 27.

2 See Khaddūrī, Political Trends in the Arab World (Baltimore, 1972) pp 3-4, and Peter Mansfield, The Ottoman Empire and its Successors, (London, 1973), pp 8-11

son, (al Mahdī), could actually lead in Libya an open revolt against the Ottoman Caliphate as the Wahhābī's¹ had done. Both of them realised the corruption of the Turkish governments, but they would not take definite and active steps towards putting an end to the Ottoman rule in Libya. In fact, the Sanūsīyah could not be a state within a state before the twentieth century, although it grew, as Zāideh says,² in a political and administrative vacuum. The reason behind this, was the Order's leaders hesitation in becoming involved in political attitudes. Many opportunities were, indeed, available but they kept themselves back. For instance, when the founder moved the headquarters of the Order to Jaqhbūb in 1856, his main purpose for doing so was as John Wright points out,³ to isolate the Order from political or religious interference by Turks or Europeans.

It would also be in the interest of this study to quote extensively from the political attitudes of the Sanūsīyah Order under the leadership of al-Mahdī (1859-1902), who followed his father's cautious steps and took a similar if not more reserved attitude, to give an example.⁴

First of all, in 1872 Prussia tried to establish relations with him, but al-Mahdī would not accept the offer. Although the Order

1 The Wahhābī Movement occurred in Arabia in the middle of the 18th century

2 Zāideh, p 121.

3 Wright, p 110.

4 Our main sources are some books which studied the Sanūsīyah Movement, for instance The Sanūsī of Cyrenaica by Evans Pritchard, p 23, Sanūsīyah by Zāideh, pp 52-7, al-Sanūsīyah dīn wa dawlah by M F Shūrī, pp 69-75, and Libya by John Wright, p 112

co-operated with the Turks in the administration of Cyrenaica, al-Mahdī resisted their demands to support them with soldiers for assistance in the 1876-7 war against the Russians. In 1881, the Italians sought to conclude an alliance with him against French advances in Tunisia, but he rejected their proposals. He also refused the aid asked by 'Arābī Pāshā, the Egyptian national leader and revolutionary, who sent a message to him in 1882 to help drive out the British, promising him a number of concessions. Again the Sudanese Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdī addressed one more letter appealing to the Order for help against the British, but the Sanūsī al-Mahdī did not reply.¹ Furthermore, his refusal implied Pan-Islamism. For the support of the Sanūsīyah Order to his plan, 'Abdul-Hamīd II (1876-1909) ordered Rashīd Pāshā, the Wālī of Cyrenaica, to invite al-Mahdī, on behalf of the Caliph, to visit Constantinople. In 1890, or thereabouts, Rashīd Pāshā visited al-Mahdī at Jaghbūb, extending to him the invitation. But it must have been politely refused because no instructions were sent to the Zawāyā, relating to Pan-Islamism.

However, the political attitude of the Sanūsīyah "was described as avoiding any direct contact with the Western world, and considered better for the followers to remain alone - aloof".² But whatever was said of its causes, to me this seems an escapist attitude even if it was not intended as such

1 For more details, see Shukrī, M F , al-Sanūsīyah dīn wa dawlah, (Cairo, 1948) pp 70-75

2 Ziadeh, p 93.

The year of 1899 witnessed the beginning of the military Franco-Libyan conflict. It was, indeed, the first time in which Libya was faced with a war and took arms against a Western power in the South. Al-Mahdī, like his father, wanted no war, but he had to abandon his defensive policy in that year, when the Sanūsī influence was threatened by the French advance from Lake Chad towards Waddai.

Under these conditions, it seems to me that the Sanūsīyah did not produce great political results. The important thing which the Sanūsīyah Order achieved in the political field during the second half of the 19th century, was the creation of a feeling of unity among Bedouin Tribes. This unity was based on "religious ties but eventually it expressed itself in political, military and nationalistic aspects" ¹

Evans Pritchard points out the kind of unity which was made by the Sanūsīyah. He says that "the Order made it possible for the different tribes to express themselves politically as a unit for the first time in their relations with the outside world".² About this point, Khaddūrī also remarks that the rise of Sanūsīyah Movement in Libya gave a sense of unity and supplied tribesmen with it³ For only this task, we can consider the Order as a limited political factor in the mid 19th century. But in the first half of the present century its political role was developed. Libya, under the Italians, the new conquest, went through a long series of political changes. Due to these facts, we cannot say that the political awareness was born, but it is possible to say that the essential steps of political awareness were occurred during the

1 Ibid , 127.

2 Pritchard, E., The Sanūsī of Cyrenaica, (Oxford University Press, 1949) p 91.

3 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 8

second half of the 19th century

It is clear through previous pages, that the political development in Libya during this period was not on a large scale, and was less progressive and constructive than in the other Arab countries, particularly in Egypt, which was already experiencing a call for an Islamic reform at the hands of al-'Afghānī and Muḥammad 'Abduh during the same period

Socio-Economic Life

A glance at the economic life in Libya during the second Ottoman period is proof of its state. Most of the books which have attempted to study the evolution of the Libyan economy and to concentrate on its development have confirmed that it is difficult to find a record of economic evolution in Libya at that time. But the opinions in these books are unanimous in stating that the Libyan economy was pitifully weak in the early years of this period. Generally, the economy of Libya was based on subsistence agriculture, which was carried on together with raising livestock and fishing, pastoral activity, trading with Europe and African countries, which was done in great part through caravans. These were supplemented by "the production of olive-oil from local olives and the exportation of Esparto grass"¹ and rough handicrafts as auxiliary resources. There were no natural resources to enable its people to live e.g. mineral resources were unknown or as good as non-existent.² Moreover the Libyan labour force was lacking the technical skills.³

Because agriculture was the chief means of livelihood of its people, Libya was a poor country during the second Ottoman period, like all countries whose economy relies mainly on agriculture, which depends on the brief and uncertain rainy season. In fact, the economy of Libya was in difficult conditions and a sad state,

1 Murābet, M , Tripolitania the Country and its People (Tripoli, Libya, No D.) P.21.

2 Libyan Oil 1954-1967, Ministry of Petroleum Affairs, (Tripoli, Libya, 1967) P.49

3 Ibid.

because it was handicapped by the lack of natural resources, water and the under-development of its land. Besides, the frequent widespread droughts, which made agriculture such a hazardous pursuit, contributed to the bad situation in the country. It was exposed to the spread of cholera as a result of which large numbers perished and many groups emigrated to Tunisia and Malta¹. The country was also exposed to famine, causing severe losses of livestock in the years 1870-71².

During most years of the second Ottoman period, agriculture was much less intensive than that which prevailed in the ancient periods. No plans were prepared to develop the agricultural sector in spite of the bulk of exports which consisted of agricultural products at that time.

In fact the Turks took little interest in the interior of the country and its agricultural development. But even in this, their interest was not for public service and made late. In this connection, Allen concludes that "efforts were made to develop agriculture as a means of implementing the Ottoman land codes and raising the ability of the country to pay higher taxes"³. Realising the difficult situation of the economy of Libya "the Turks sought to meet the new conditions by the improvement of agriculture. Under Ibrāhīm Pāshā (1909-1911) plans were drafted, but they were not put into practice due to the Italian occupation"⁴.

1. Mahmūd, H.S., Libyā bainā al-Mādī wa al-Hādīr, (Cairo, 1961) P.195. See also, Cachia, A.J., Libya under the Second Ottoman Occupation 1835-1911, (Tripoli, 1945) P.37.

2. al-Zāwī, Tāhīr, Wulāt Tarābulus, (Beirut, 1970) P.250

3. Allen, J.A., Libya, Agriculture and Economic Development (London, 1973). P.45.

4. Report to the Government of Libya on Agriculture, No.21 (Rome, 1952), P.5.

In addition to these facts, there were almost no industries in Libya during the second Ottoman period. If they existed they were barely sufficient to meet the local demand. Handicrafts, which were distinguished by different methods, were principally confined to local industries like the weaving of cotton, wool and silk and particularly making of Jard¹ and of carpet.² Therefore, industry was not developed and remained at lesser importance. Trade was also no better than agriculture or industry at that time. Libya was famous for its caravan routes which linked Europe and Central Africa for many centuries. But, due to the abolishing of the slave trade during the second half of the 19th century, and because the caravan routes were not prosperous as in earlier days, commerce lost its importance. Hence, the economical conditions were very bad during the 19th century

Libya indeed suffered from neglect, the absence of indigenous economic and social development, combined with the disinterest of the majority of rulers, in addition to the financial difficulties which "were accentuated by government expenditure, since the taxes provided part of government revenue at that time".³

It is clear that these facts explain the under-development of Libya during the second Ottoman period, particularly its economy. However, this will lead us to speak about the Social Life in Libya

1 A woollen wrap.

2 For more details, See Cachia, pp 117-128.

3 Libyan Oil 1954-1967, P 49

If we aim at assessing aspects of Libyan society according to the geographical and economic facts, we will find that the natural conditions and geographical elements by which Libyans were surrounded shaped the people's type of life which was the tribal structure

The Bedouin tribes in Libya have abandoned the areas which have lesser rainfall and transformed them into sheep pastorage and cereal producing areas, as in the times of the ancient Libyans. Hence, in the course of time, the Libyans took on, particularly, the nomadic livelihood as a style of their life, which has been handed down for hundreds of years. Among the nomads exists the close tribal structure which characterised Libya. Consequently, we can say that the inhabitants of Libya were nomadic tribes and the basis of social life is the tribe. In fact, the tribal system in nature has always been the predominant social form of life of the indigenous rural population in Libya. But in the more prosperous and populous coastal areas, the tribe is giving way to a village and town society.

Briefly, the tribe is the first social form to confront the difficult circumstances of the natural environment. Because of this, it emerged as a society in Libya, and by its habits, customs, and spiritual influence, the tribe ensured its survival. Therefore the tribal structure was considered the essential social form of society in Libya. Furthermore, the nomadic life has determined social relations within the Libyan society itself. According to these facts, the people of Libya may be divided into two groups, each with an entirely different way of life from the other, the rural and urban types. The rural population, who are organised in

tribes, consists mainly of semi-nomadic tent dwellers, mostly inhabiting the coastal plateau, where they cultivate their crops and herd their animals. While most of the urban population are settled farmers, living in the coastal towns, principally engaged in handicrafts and small trade.

In Tripolitania, the population is Arab with a considerable admixture of Berbers, of whom some groups in the western part of the country have retained their distinction of community and their language. The tribal system continued only among the Arabs of the Sirts desert and the southern parts of the territory. In Cyrenaica, the population is pure Arab in origin. Outside the towns, the people are essentially nomadic and semi-nomadic. The majority of Fezzan is settled in villages. In general, "the indigenous population of Libya can be divided, from the stand point of stability and nomadism, into four categories, town dwellers (urban), settled population (rural), semi nomads and nomads".¹ Therefore, Libya may be considered as a society of peasants and small shopkeepers on the coast and Bedouins elsewhere.²

When Libya came under the Ottoman rule in the sixteenth century Turkish elements were confined to a small ruling class.³ In spite of it, the original basis of Libyan society had not fundamentally changed for some reasons. Firstly, the Turks have not tried to

1 Report to the Government of Libya on Agriculture, P 18.

2 Ibid

3 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 6.

change or develop the tribal structure that they found or even to modify it. The reason behind this is that they could not bring Bedouin tribes under the control of their governments. Secondly, there was particularly no provincial administration in the interior parts of Libya and the Turkish governors seldom had any power beyond the city boundary. Thirdly, they usually interfered with the life of the tribes only to settle conflicts and ensure the payment of taxes. Fourthly, there was no close relationship between Libyan Bedouins and the ruling class. Finally, the tribal structure of Libyan society had not been subjected to European development. The Libyans have not confronted or adapted to Western public life. There is substantial evidence that, despite the rapid growth of social development in some Arab countries, very little had changed for the living standard of Libyans, because Libya remained a Turkish Vilayet until 1911. This reason prevented her from contact with the process of the West.

Although the vast development of the 19th century and the changes of the first decades of twentieth century were far more radical, the social effects of all these changes were, in fact, more limited in Libya. For the changes in the social structure were very slow. Besides, Libyan society, indeed all Arab societies of the Turkish provinces, was effected only by the decline of the Ottoman Empire.

At the end of the last century, the finances and prosperity of the Ottoman Empire were heavily dependent on the profits of taxes.

From the point of view of the total income in an undeveloped country, the sum of very small incomes, the Libyan society was

low-income According to this fact, the social standard of the population was very low and the condition of life was very sad, although the natural work of the Libyan people and the general condition of poverty and subservices, "achieved a castless and classless levelling unique in the Arab world"¹ So we can divide Libyan society into a few classes The lower class was the majority, who were peasants, working in agriculture The native middle class of traders, who were Libyans, joined in business with West and Central Africa, and came from minorities. The ruling class was mainly Turks Besides, there were some foreign minorities in Libya during the Ottoman period The most important of them were the Italians who were skilled workers and artisans The Jewish minority was of ancient standing in Libya They were engaged principally in crafts and trade The smallest minorities were Maltese and Greeks, engaged in commerce and shipping.

All of these foreigners and small minorities in Libya were town-dwellers, living in cities or big towns and retaining their own language, religion, culture and educational schools.

Therefore, governors Wulāt, Turkish officers, leaders army, in addition to scholars 'Ulamā', merchants, and craftsmen, have formed the highest classes of Libyan society.²

1. Thwaite, p.105

2 Mahmūd, H S , P 217

Educational Life

It is necessary, after giving a brief survey on the socio-economic and political life of Libya, to turn attention to the educational system and its problems from 1835 up to 1911. Because this educational system, together with economic life and social conditions have had a profound impact on Libyan society as a whole and on the educated people of the country in particular

No doubt, education can play an important part in creating a core of educated people. If there is a good educational system, the people will have a good basic education. In addition, with education, "people become more receptive to new ideas, and improvements in all sectors of the economy are made possible".¹ Hence, a good system produces a large number of well-educated people, and prepares generations who can shoulder the responsibilities in future

If we attempt to examine the Second Ottoman Period about these facts, we will not find any As we know, economic and social development is founded upon education. This makes it necessary that the greatest possible number of the population should receive a general education. At the beginning of the 19th century, education in the Arab world was confined to a few primary schools because books were rare and expensive. Libya's national life was very similar to the predominant type of national life in the rest of the Ottoman's Vilayets In fact, there was not much difference in the educational system, with the exception of brief occasions during the second half of the 19th century, when the Sanūsīyah Order sent some of its educational rays to the depths of the Libyan mentality, as we shall

1 Educational Planning Mission, Libya, U N E.S C O (Paris, 1964) p.9

see However, the history of education in Libya followed the political and cultural history of the country. This is most clearly seen in the history of any country where education is affected by political, economic and social factors.

Under the Turkish rule, education facilities were non-existent in Libya. Education had been almost completely neglected with the exception of a short period. The percentage of the children, who had received education in schools, was very low. There were no modern schools, colleges or centres of higher learning in Libya until the last quarter of the 19th century, and it follows that the majority of Libyan people were illiterates.

For a long time, mosques served in Libya as religious centres, as schools, and as training grounds for the military defence of the Islamic religion.¹ In most of the cities of Libya, mosques and mosque schools were founded with its several college-places Hālagāt. Islamic and Arabic sciences with medicine and mathematics were taught at these mosque colleges. In addition, the mosque colleges engaged notable professors and scholars 'Ulamā', who contributed by their lessons and lectures to the advancement of learning. The educational programme at these Hālagāt included the teaching of jurisprudence Fiqh, Qur'anic Exegesis Tafsīr, the Hadīth, in addition to the Arab linguistic sciences (belles lettres, etymology, syntax, and rhetoric), and the other sciences, like arithmetic, astronomy, history, geography, and medicine.² For this reason, the

1 Farley, R , Planning for Development in Libya, (U.S A., 1971) pp 77-8

2 Religious Education in Libya, The Moslem University, Document No. 4 (Tripoli, 1966) p 5

mosque in Libya was considered an independent university, where students flocked to seek knowledge and an educational institution.¹

For centuries, there were also in Libya religious-military stations, known by the Arabic name Ribāṭ (Hospice), which were built next to the mosques. The Ribāṭs spread along the Libyan coast and in the south of Libya on the caravan routes. They were described as "defence stations, worshiphouses, religious schools and workshops, where some crafts and industries were taught"²

The Ribāṭs were, later on, replaced by Zawāyā which were established in many parts of Libya, and also transformed into religious institutions. The most famous Zawāyā were Zāwīyat al-Shaikh 'Abdussalām al-Asmar in Zlīten, and Zāwīyat al-Shaikh Ahmad al-Zarrūq in Miṣurātah.³ The Zāwīyah was described as "a house of learning, a reception hall for guests, a house of worship and a documentation centre, where old Arabic manuscripts were preserved"⁴ It is clear that there is no great difference between a Ribāṭ and a Zāwīyah in their function.

In addition to these religious centres, the Sanūsīyah Order established a number of Zawāyā. Zāwīyah means corner or religious place, and might be considered as a house of learning.⁵ The establishment of these Zawāyā, which aimed at educating adults religiously, socially, and vocationally, started by the middle of the 19th century

1 Ibid , p 3.

2 Ibid , p 4.

3 'Abdussalām al-Asmar and Ahmad al-Zarrūq are the founders of al-Asmar and Zarrūq Institutes, which have survived up to the present time

4. op cit , p 5

5 Ibid , p 4.

or generally speaking between 1843 and 1902. The first Zāwīyah¹ was established in al-Baydā, a town in Cyrenaica, and later on the number of Zawāyā were gradually increased. The children of the Zāwīyah's people and others, who often came from a considerable distance, were educated at its schools. They used to receive instruction in Islam and Arabic. In addition to teaching the principles of Islamic religion and Arabic sciences, the Zāwīyah endeavoured to get rid of mystic and superstitious thinking, which hindered social progress and development.² Its schools are often referred to as Kātātīb Qur'ānīyah (Qur'anic primary schools), which show the basic nature of the teaching done there³

It is clear that these Zawāyā were able to use the religious motivation as a means for getting adults interested in education and helping them participate in the development of the cultural, social and economic aspects of their communities.⁴ The only schools in the Bedouin districts were those of the Sanūsīyah's Zawāyā. Throughout these Zawāyā, there was direct educational movement, led by the Shaikhs of the Order. This kind of religious education continued in Libya as an important one, representing Islamic culture, without facing any trouble from the Turkish government. The reason was that the Turkish authorities found in it useful results for both the State and its subjects.

1 In Jaghbūb the Grand Sanūsī founded his next Zāwīyah in 1856. Many students continued their education under eminent teachers at its school, which became, later on, an Islamic university, third only in North Africa to al-Azhar and al-Zaitūnah. This school kept its educational activities until the Italians occupied Jaghbūb in 1926. See, Ziadeh, p 52

2 Education of Illiteracy and Adult Education, Document No 8, (Tripoli, 1966) p 4

3 Ziadeh, p 114.

4 Ibid

It helped, indeed, in strengthening the State's power among its subjects. It gave also the latter the opportunity to do their duty towards the Sultan and the Ottoman rule. In fact, the coming of the Sanūsīyah movement in Libya, which made religious education its main objective, resulted in a large number of mosque schools. That means religious education continued to be run by the Muslim community itself before it was transferred to governments. To a certain extent, the Zawāyā created a feeling of common interest among its students in Libya on the educational level and this was helped by other means.

However, with regard to the fact that religious education is a means of community development, Libya harvested the fruits of these religious schools and the Zāwīyah's work. During the Ottoman rule, the religious schools were attached to the mosques and the Zawāyā as well. Besides offering educational services, they gave their students free accommodation, food, clothing and books, free of charge. The religious schools in Libya, were of intermediate level at that time, the elementary level being represented by Katātīb, which were usually attached to the small mosque, and of the highest level representing the mosque colleges. There were hundreds of the Katātīb where the pupils were receiving the principles of Islam, memorising the Qur'ān and learning how to read and write the Arabic language. This simple education, which centered also in the Mosques, was undertaken by the private efforts of Libyans. For this reason, Farley concludes that, "education under the Turkish administration had degenerated into rote learning of simple traditional concepts, and the recitation of the Koran and into elementary training in reading and writing "1

1 Farley, p 78

Therefore, at that time, mosques had not lost their educational importance, but played the same role. The most noted mosques were the Mosque of Ahmad Pāshā,¹ the Mosque of al-Nāqah,² the Mosque of Darghūth Pāshā³ and the Institute of Ahmad Pāshā al-Qaramānī and the Institute of Othmān Pāshā.⁴ All these mosques, which are in Tripoli, carried their religious and educational message most satisfactorily.

The Ottoman educational reforms, which were introduced towards the end of the 19th century, brought about some very limited improvement. In the later years of the Turkish regime, a few remarkable educational developments took place. But I do not agree with Wright, who concludes that, "up to 1887, the only schools, apart from the Italian ones and the Sanūsī Zāwiyas, were the Katātīb, the traditional Koranic schools"⁵ While Ṭāhir al-Zāwī, who stands alone with his report, points out that Ahmad 'Izzat Pāshā founded al-Rushdiyyah schools⁶ during his second term⁷ (1879-80) and a first School of Industry in the same term.⁸ He commented that this was the first time he had heard of a governor who had founded modern schools for teaching of the Libyan children during the Turkish rule. Farley, like al-Zāwī,

1 It was built in 1737 by Ahmad Pāshā al-Qaramānī (1711-45).

2. It is one of the oldest mosques in Tripoli

3 It was built by Darghūth Pāshā (1553-1565).

4 It was founded by Othman Pāshā (1649-72) and it bears his name.

5 Wright, p 116.

6 Al-Zāwī, p 256

7 His first terms was from 1857 to 1860.

8 op cit, p 270 See also Cachia, p 45.

stands alone when he mentions that the Turks appointed the first Director of Education for Libya with a mandate to establish regular modern schools.¹ In the period of Ahmad Rāsım Pāshā (1881-1897) a military school was built at Bāb al-Bāhr, near the harbour of Tripoli, and started in 1888.² In addition to these, by 1890 seven mosque schools, teaching elementary subjects had been opened in Tripolitania³ Up to 1897, there was no vocational education, which began and continued in Libya "as apprenticeships in certain trades and in private workshops."⁴ In the year 1897 with encouragement of Nāmeq Pāshā (1897-1899), an Islamic school of Arts and Crafts was established by the contribution which the nation made from 1895.⁵ This school carried on with the responsibility for a long time,⁶ and from which many trained students have graduated in different trades and vocational specialisations. Farley adds that philanthropists set up a Teacher's Training Centre and primary schools were also opened up.⁷ It is very likely that he means the high school and some elementary schools which Rajab Pāshā founded in 1906.⁸

It is clear that besides the religious education, the Turks had provided another kind of education, but only in the coastal towns and

1. Farley, p 78

2 Wright, p 116 See also, Cachia, p.46

3 Ibid.

4. Report of the Libyan Delegation Technical and Vocational Education in Libya, Document No 5 (Tripoli, 1966) p 10

5 al-Mısurātī, Alı, al-Sılāt baina Libyā wa Turkīyā, p 169. See also Cachia, p 54.

6 It is still existing until today.

7 Farley, p 78.

8 al-Zāwī, p 282

during the last years of their rule in Libya. On a very modest scale, a few modern elementary schools were opened for Libyan pupils during Rajab Pāshā's term (1906-1909). Moreover, a very few Libyan students were sent to Constantinople to pursue their higher education.

However, official Libyan documents show that "these schools were far from solving the problems of the Libyan people or supporting their demand for their own national life. They were dominated by Turkish tendencies and served the promotion of the cause of the Turkish Army and the Turkish Administration of the country".¹ The reason behind this, as Farley says, was because the Turks, in effect, were more interested in domination than in Libyan human capital formation²

In addition to these facts, Libya, unfortunately, did not obtain anything from the superior culture of the West. She was prevented from contacting Western culture due to her link to the Ottoman Empire until 1911. While Egypt, for instance, has come more and more under European influence, since Napoleon showed the way by his expedition to it in 1798,³ as likewise in Syria and North Africa.⁴

A few observations may be added here to enable the reader to have a total picture of the educational and cultural situation in Libya under the Ottoman rule. Some educated Libyans went to the main centres of Arabic culture at that time, namely al-Azhar in Egypt and al-Zaitūnah in Tunisia.⁵ Apart from the religious and Turkish schools,

1. The Development of Education in Libya, Document No. 1, (Tripoli, 1965) p.5

2. Farley, p 79.

3. At that time, Libya was under the Qaramānī Dynasty (1711-1835)

4. Nicholson, R.A., A Literary History of the Arabs, (London, 1969) p 468.

5. Both of them are still in existence in Egypt and Tunisia as centres of learning.

the Italians and Jews had their own schools, but the number of Libyans who learned in the Italian schools was exceedingly small. Besides, they were few and had lived outside Libya and absorbed the Western culture. But most of them were unable to play their full role in changing the face of social life in Libya during the second Ottoman period.

It is true that we can hardly find a nation with a culture without finding books, written by its intellectual members. But, the spread of the printing press in Libya was started in the 1860s and confined to printing the proclamations of official Turkish circles and publishing newspapers.¹ In fact, there were no books written and published by Libyan intellectuals up to the present century, with the exception of two Libyan Dīwāns,² which were published in Cairo in 1892 and 1908. Furthermore, during the Ottoman period, libraries, generally in the Arab world and particularly in Libya, were neglected. Only a very few highly cultured people owned some books. Most of the literate people in Libya were religious men and if they owned private libraries, they contained little but religious books. Because of political, economic and social factors, in addition to the fact that the majority of Libyan society was illiterate, people cared little for books or for any intellectual movements.

With the spread of the Sanūsīyah Movement in Libya, a library was established in Jaghbūb. It was said that this library "contained

1. See The Press in Libya, in this Chapter, p.80.

2. They are Dīwān Muṣṭafā Ibn Zikrī, published in (1310/1892), and Dīwān Sulāimān al-Bārūnī, published in (1326/1908).

more than 40,000 books¹ and manuscripts of all kinds of subjects e g Koranic sciences, Hadiths, jurisprudence, belles lettres and history When the centre of the Senousis was transferred to Kufra (1895), the library was transferred as well" ² In 1893, the first public library was founded, called Maktabat al-Awqāf (the endowment library).

In fact, the real problem, which the Libyan people, particularly educated, had suffered during the Turkish rule, were educational and cultural The language of the government was Turkish, whereas the mother tongue of the Libyans is Arabic. For this reason, in addition to the social structure of Libyan society, most of the people were not exposed to the Turkish cultural influence or to the system of administration

However, when Mansfield says that "the Arab Ottoman provinces were culturally, socially and economically stagnant",³ this statement indeed applies to Libya as an Ottoman province. Briefly, although there were some educational developments, "but even there, cultural life was at a low ebb Instruction in the few schools that existed was narrowly religious. Books were rare, Arabic newspapers and magazines were unknown" ⁴

1. Pritchard and Ziadeh estimated the number at 8,000 volumes See, The Sanūsī of Cyrenaica, p 17, and Sanūsīyah, p 106 After occupying Kufrah, a large number of these books was torn, burnt, and stolen by the Italian soldiers. It was reduced to 17,000 volumes, which were confiscated by the Italian government During World War II, most of these books were completely burnt in an air raid Only the few ones were saved, and likely assessed by Pritchard and Ziadeh. See, Public and School Libraries in Libya, Document No 10, (Tripoli, 1966) p.5.

2. Public and School Libraries in Libya, p.5

3. Mansfield, pp. 17-8.

4. Ibid , p.18.

The Sanūsīyah Movement

1840 - 1911

Having outlined the historical background of the second Ottoman period, it is necessary now to speak, briefly, about other influences affecting the people of Libya during 1835-1911. In fact, this period witnessed a number of important historical events on the national level. Among these events which occurred within the above-mentioned period and left its marks in various ways, was the emergence of the Sanūsīyah Order that took place in 1840. Also, the most outstanding of these decisive events were, perhaps, the foundation of the Libyan Press in 1866 and the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution in 1908.

In the following pages, a summary history of the Sanūsīyah Order will be given. It is essential for an understanding of this most significant event.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, there arose a potent spiritual Order in Libya. It was the Sanūsīyah Order which was, originally, an Islamic revivalist movement, named after its founder,¹ and in some ways resembling the Wahhābī's movement.²

In Mecca, where the founder was living, he decided to return

1 He was a jurist, called Muhammad Ibn 'Alī al-Sanūsī, born in (1202/1787) in Mostaghānim in Algeria, and died in Jaghbūb in Libya in 1859. He founded this new sect, based essentially on Islam pure and simple and on return to true Islamic religion. Due to this, Khouri and Algar say that "the rise of the Sanūsī Order in North Africa later in the century marked another sign of revival from within Islam". See, Khouri and Algar in their introduction to An Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry, (U.S.A. 1974) p. 2.

2 Its founder is Mohammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhāb al-Tamīmī, who established the Wahhābī's movement in Arabia in the middle of the 18th century (the mid of 12th century A.H.).

to North Africa, in particular, to Libya. In 1840, he left the Hijāz for Cyrenaica where the first mother African Zāwīyah was built at al-Baydā', in al-Jabal al-Akhḍar (the Green Mountain) after three years. It is most unlikely that this Order had been founded in Libya in 1835, as Kanter states,¹ or in 1837,² when Philip Ward says that the Sanūsī founded his movement. He considered it as a cardinal event in Libyan history³ Both dates are incorrect because the founder was living in Mecca at that time, and remained there until 1840 when he moved to Cyrenaica, in which he settled and died.⁴

The year 1843 was considered the birthdate of Sanūsīyah in Libya. Soon, this Order was spread by al-'Ikhwān (the brothers) over most of Cyrenaica throughout its Zawāyā which were established among the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Libya, and attracted a large number of the people in the Oases. But I am inclined to believe that the Order had less influence in Tripolitania and Fezzan. Hence, Cyrenaica had a distinct history of its own during the greater part of the second Ottoman period. It was "administratively separated from the rest of the country, its social and political life came to bear the stamp of the Sanusiyya"⁵

1 Kanter, H., Libya a Geomedical Monograph, (Germany, 1967) p.108.

2 In this year the Grand Sanūsī founded his first mother Zāwīyah in the Hijāz, at Abū Qubays, near Mecca, before the Order came to be known as Sanūsīyah. See Shukrī, p 21, Ziadeh, p 45 and Pritchard, p 12

3 Ward, p 16

4 Shukrī, p. 21

5 Abū N-nasr, A History of the Maghrib, (Cambridge University Press, 1975) p 305

Because of the political vacuum in which Cyrenaica was living at that time, and because conditions were suitable for the development of a religious-political movement, the Order "gained considerable local political influence by offering unbiased mediation in tribal commercial, and religious disputes".¹ In fact, the conversion of the people of the tribal groups who were successful in adapting themselves to the Sanūsīyah Order, gave the sect a military and political power. But the evidence seems rather to indicate that, although the Order built its powerful organisation, its political effect on the population of Libya, in general, was very limited as we have mentioned in another place. They submitted to this religious Order more than to Turkish government itself. Contrary to that, they were exposed to the local Turkish authorities. In spite of this the Order ruled the people of the Libyan oases, particularly of Cyrenaica, in the Ottoman name. In addition the Order threatened even the Ottoman governors of Tripoli, who were content to leave the founder and his successor (al-Mahdī) to get control of the greater parts of Cyrenaica and some oases in the south of Libya, under Ottoman suzerainty with a degree of independence. For this reason, the Sanūsīyah and the Turks accepted one another.

However, throughout the Zawāyā and ‘Ikhwān, the Order was also useful for the tribes by administering justice, providing religious instruction to the children and making a decision in conflicts.

Due to these facts, "the tribes contributed lands and labour to build the Zawiyas and donated cultivable lands for their upkeep"²

1 Wright, p 111.

2 op cit , p 306

In a few years, teachings of the Order were spread among the people of various parts of Cyrenaica, and later on, reached some North African countries. Moreover, a number of Zawāyā¹ were founded in Egypt, Marmarica, Tripolitania, Fezzan, Southern Tunisia, Southern Algeria and the Sudan²

For some reason³ the headquarters of the Order were moved in 1856 to the Oasis of Jaghbūb, about 180 miles south of Tubruk, which became its centre and where an Islamic university was built and started, its educational and religious activity. In 1859, the founder died and was succeeded by his eldest son (al-Mahdī) who remained the head of the Order for 43 years (from 1859 till 1902) during which period the Order reached its peak in both the Zawāyā and influence. Under his leadership the Order "extended over the Central Sudan, from Lake Chad to Senegal, and from Waddai to the Mediterranean".⁴

In 1895, once again, the headquarters of the Order were transferred⁵ further south to the Oasis of al-Kufrah, midway between Cyrenaica and the Sudan. It is likely that this move, as it has been considered

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1. There were 22 Zāwīyah in the end of the founder's life. During the period of his son (al-Mahdī) about a hundred Zāwīyah were established. See, Shukrī, p.58.
 2. Ziadeh, p 46
 3. Ibid, p.52. See also, Shukrī, pp 62-5.
 4. See, Pritchard, pp 14-5, Wright, p.110, Shukrī, p.36, Ziadeh, p.48 and Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 8.
 5. For the causes of this transfer, see, Ziadeh pp. 58-60, Shukrī, pp. 81-5, and Races, A., A History of the Colonisation of Africa (London, 1930) pp. 236-7.

by Ziadeh, shows "a new development in the aims of the Sanūsīyah, namely the building of a theocratic state" ¹

Because of the length of the period, from 1840 to 1895, the Order exercised more real power "which helped to create an autonomous regime in Cyrenaica" ² In addition to this, its followers gave "the Order the force needed to lead the resistance against foreign domination. Gradually, the Order developed into the source of resistance against foreign control, and was transformed from a purely religious movement into a political force".³ Therefore, and as a result of the increasing influence of the Turks in the interior of Cyrenaica as well as the European power, the Order was threatened in the south of Libya by the French advance from Lake Chad towards Waddai.⁴ Between 1899-1902 the Order was involved for the first time, in a military war with the French to prevent their advance, but its efforts were fruitless.

By facing a new danger namely the advance of the French from Central Africa and other threats, the Order entered another stage. The reason is that the Order, since it was founded, "never waged an aggressive war, being content to pursue and, if necessary, to defend its religious activities" ⁵

However, (al-Mahdī) died in 1902, and the leadership of the Order passed to his nephew, Sayyīd Aḥmad al-Sharīf, who resisted the

1. Ziadeh, p.60.

2. Area Handbook for Libya, Strandford Research Institute, (Washington, 1969) p 27.

3. Ibid , p 28.

4. Wright, p.112.

5. Pelt, A , The United Kingdom of Libya from Colony to Independence State, (Bulletin, 1952) p.8.

French until 1911. In this year, Italy declared war on Turkey and launched an attack on Libya.

The Effects of the Sanūsīyah First of all, the Order marked the beginning of a new phase in the life of Libyan society. Secondly, it had devoted itself to the service of the Muslim cause all over the world and had concerned itself with the conditions of Muslims.

Like the Wahhābī movement, the Sanūsīyah Order was considered "an Islamic revival movement which aimed at¹ purifying Islam from accretions that had crept into it during the past few centuries"² and "at bringing Islam within the reach of people who had not known it"³

Among its valuable results, the following are the most significant

1. The changing of the tribes behaviour,
2. The spreading of Islamic culture among the Libyan tribes by teaching and expounding Islam,
3. The creating of a sense of unity,
4. Fostering in the tribesmen religious zeal,
5. Establishing many Zawāyā "in various parts of North Africa that had been occupied by foreign powers",⁴
6. The spreading of Islam in Central Africa, particularly in the Sahara and the Sudan, where the order won "for the faith a very large number of followers, who in turn became instrumental in the spread of Islam"⁵

1 Concerning the real aims of the Order, I must refer the reader to an interesting book the Sanūse of Cyrenaica by E. E. Pritchard.

2. Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 8

3. Ziadeh, p 100.

4. Ibid, p.91.

5. Ibid

The Press in Libya

1866 - 1911

The purpose of this section is to assess the impact of one of the important factors which played a decisive role in the development of political and cultural life in Libya during the second half of the nineteenth century

The establishment of the printing-press was, indeed, a turning point in the intellectual, political and social life of Libya. It was one of the important factors which helped in promoting the public opinion. The first printing-press, which was set up in Tripoli in (1281/1863-4)¹ was an Arabic and Turkish press, used by the government². It was brought to Tripoli to print, first, the proclamations of official Turkish circles in both Arabic and Turkish language. The second printing-press was founded and placed in Tripoli Castle in 1870³. Later in the year 1908, the printing-press was developed by founding al-Taraqī Press and the Eastern-Press⁴.

In spite of the spread of the printing-press from that time, no Arabic books were printed on it until the second decade of the present century. Besides, it did not lead to the establishment of libraries in Libya. Therefore, books were still owned by a few rich men only,

1 The first Muslim printing-press in the Arab world was that of Muhammad 'Alī in Egypt, established in 1822. See, Lewis, Bernard, The Arabs in History, (London, 1950) p 172.

2 Ziadeh, Nicola A, Muhādarāt fī tā'īkh Lībyā (Cairo, 1959) p.54

3 'Afīfī, M S., al-Ittījahāt al-Waṭanīyah fī al-Shūr al-Lībī al-Ḥadīth, (Beirut, 1969) p 131.

4 Ibid

and the poor learned people were not able to own them. However, the earliest published books, written by Libyan writers, were only two. They were published in Cairo. The first was Dīwān Muṣṭafā Ibn Zikrī, in (1310/1892) and the other was Dīwān Sulaimān al-Bārūnī, in (1326/1908). By order of the Ottoman Sultan 'Abdul 'Azīz, an official gazette, called Tarābulus al-Gharb (Tripoli of the West) was founded in 1866. It was confined to printing the official proclamations and home news. It continued in this way until 1912, when it was replaced by an official Italian gazette, called Itāliyā al-Jadīdah (the New Italy) ¹

After about thirty years, in Nāmiq Pāshā's time the first popular political newspaper, called al-Taraqī (the Progress), was established in June 26, 1897, by a Libyan editor al-Shaikh Muhammad al-Būsīrī ². No other newspapers were established after al-Taraqī has begun in Tripoli. At the time of the proclamation of the Turkish Constitution in 1908 the Libyan press was flourishing by the establishment of four new Libyan newspapers. The first of them was al-'Asr al-Jadīd (the New Era) by Muhammad 'Alī al-Bārūnī in March 1909, followed by al-Mirṣād (the Lookout) by Aḥmad al-Fussātwī in September 16, 1910, Abū Qashshah by al-Hāshimī al-Tūnisī in 1910, and al-Raqīb (the Observer) by Maḥmūd Nadīm bin Mūsā in March 1st, 1910. But this flourishing period was very short, because it was ended by the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911. However, from that time on, the Libyan press was exposed to political influences.

1 Tarāzī, Philip de, Tārīkh al-Ṣahhāfah al-'Arabīyah, Vol 4, (Beirut, 1933) p 246

2 Ibid, p 247.

and concerned itself with Libyan writers and poets by publishing their literary works

So, one can say that this glance at the history of the Libyan press during the second Ottoman period is proof of the following important fact. Although it is deeprooted, the press in Libya played its patriotic and national role only at the beginning of the twentieth century, strictly speaking after the proclamation of Turkish Constitution in 1908.

The Ottoman Constitution of 1908

It is not claimed that the first decade of the present century is a new stage in the political life of Libya. In the year 1908, the Young Turkish revolution took place in Turkey, and the Turkish Union and Progress Committee, which was the official party of the revolution, seized power. In the same year, the Committee issued the Ottoman Constitution. In the following year, it dismissed the Sultan 'Abdul Hamīd II and put Muḥammad V in his place.

In fact, "the success of the Young Turks' revolution raised high hopes throughout the Empire and beyond. It was greeted as the beginning of a new era of liberty and constitutional government and Turks and non-Turks in the Empire shared in the rejoicing".¹ About this momentous event, Khaddūrī states that Libyans welcomed the Turkish revolution of 1908 and the establishment of the parliamentary regime, in which Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were represented.² While Anthony Cachia has observed that the Young Turks' movement of 1908 was disliked in Libya because its new social and religious programme so scandalised a nation of conservative minds.³ But it seems that both views are not right except possibly in some way.

Evans Pritchard has, in fact, described the political situation only in Cyrenaica when the Turkish revolution took place at that time. He concluded that this revolution made little difference to it and the declaration of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Justice was coldly

1 Mansfield, p 24.

2 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 9

3 Cachia, p 56 See also Wright, p.116

received in Benghazi. He added that the attempt by a section of the Turkish officials to create in the town a local branch of the Committee, met with the strongest opposition. Furthermore, he and other writers,¹ have mentioned that the two Cyrenaican representatives to the Turkish parliament were almost opposed to the Young Turks' policy.² Although this revolution was received coldly by the Arab population of Benghazi, it was welcomed with enthusiasm in Tripoli³ and greeted by some poets and writers. Therefore, I am inclined to believe that this fact means, at least, some of the intelligentsia of Tripoli were attracted by the Young Turks' movement and its slogan. It is no wonder that the people of Tripoli provided adherents, if we consider their response to some influences. As we have mentioned, the first popular political newspaper in Libya was established in Tripoli in 1897 and called al-Taraqī. Secondly, it seems there was secretly a local branch of the Committee of Union and Progress in Tripoli City, possibly founded by its governor Rajab Pāshā (1906-9), who was a member of this Committee, recalled to Istanbul where he was appointed War Minister in⁴ 1909.

However, it is clear that the elections, following the new constitution, were held in Libya publicly for the first time. The people of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan, elected their representatives who were nine.⁵ They went to Istanbul to participate in the

1 See, Ziadeh, Sanūsīyah p.32 and Barqah, al-Dawlah al-'Arabīyah al-thāminah, (Beirut, 1950) pp. 76-77.

2 Pritchard, p 100.

3 Ziadeh, Sanūsīyah, p 32.

4 Chacra, p.56.

5 al-Misurati, 'Alī M , al-Şilāt baina Lībyā wa Turkīyā, pp. 148-9.

Young Turks' Parliament ¹ Owing to this fact, the Young Turkish Revolution of 1908 had its impact on Libya in the political and press aspects, particularly, during the following few years

¹ Pelt, p 5.

CHAPTER TWO

Libya during the Italian Occupation

1911 - 1943

Libya from 1911 to 1931

We have already seen that Libya experienced rule by the Ottoman Empire until 1911, when another wave of foreign invasions came and conquered the country. This was in the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, when Italy invaded Libya by landing troops at the main coastal towns

In fact, the recreation of the Roman Empire in North Africa was one of Italy's dreams at the end of the nineteenth century. She decided, first, to occupy Tunisia, but failed because of the French who took it over in 1881. One can therefore say that Italy, before her military action, thirty years earlier,¹ had been keeping an eye upon Tripolitania which was the last Ottoman Vilayet in North Africa. Since the French occupation of Tunisia, Italy planned to get a foothold in Libya, either by sending missionary groups or by opening schools in Tripoli City and Benghazi.

To avoid armed intervention, Italy hoped to occupy Libya through diplomatic activities and economic penetration during the last years of the nineteenth century.

Having failed to penetrate peacefully, Italy declared war on Turkey on 29 September 1911, and sent large expeditionary forces to occupy Libya. A few days later, on October 3rd, the bombardment of

1 Cooper says since 1838 Italy had been casting eyes at Libya. See, Cooper, O., The Making of Modern Africa, (London, 1968) p 106. This is not true with regard to the political condition in Italy at that time. The Italian united state was not formed until 1870. As a result, she had not exploited the early opportunities that Africa offered the other imperial powers. See, Habib, H P., Politics and Government of Revolution Libya, (Canada, 1975) p 64.

Tripoli began. On October 19th, the capitulation of Benghazi, the most important town in Cyrenaica and second only to Tripoli in the whole of Libya, to the Italian Navy, was the only possible solution to avoid the destruction of the city¹

In the same month, other Italian troops landed at Khums, Derna, and Tubruk, and seized them as three main coastal towns in the country. Because of the size of the available Turkish forces, which was small in both numbers and munitions, the Italians, accordingly, had some success in controlling the coastal belt.

Despite support and reinforcement from local tribesmen, the Turks found any defence of the coast impossible. Nevertheless, during 1911-12, the Turko-Libyan forces managed an armed resistance and succeeded in keeping the Italian control just in the main towns. However, the Italians were content to take over control of the coastal strip, while the Turkish garrisons, in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, withdrew towards the interior and remained with the Mujāhidīn until the following year.

Having completely withdrawn their forces according to the Treaty of Ouchy (or Lausanne), which was signed by Italy and Turkey on October 17, 1912, the Turks, with the exception of some officers, left the Libyan people fighting the Italians alone. Following the collapse of the Turkish regime, the Italian sovereignty over Libya was recognised by the Sultan, not by the Libyans themselves.

Italy did not succeed in establishing total rule over the whole of the country until some twenty years later. In fact, she failed to extend her control to the interior of Cyrenaica, where 'Umar al-Mukhtār

1 Būlugma, p 49

built up powerful resistance, until 1930s

After the Turkish withdrawal from Libya at the end of 1912, the situation was different. According to the Sultan's declaration, granting full autonomy to Libya,¹ Sayyīd Aḥmad al-Sharīf, as the leader of Cyrenaica, decided that the fight against the Italians would not stop.² It seems to me that Turkey agreed to withdraw from Libya to get, in return, the Duodecanese Islands which were occupied by Italy during the war. In addition, the Sultan's proclamation was made to avoid the agitation of the Islamic and Arab world and of the national feeling.

However, in spite of the widespread famine and the disastrous epidemics of the plague in 1913, the Libyans had not lost their will to resist. The fighting was continued for about three years without support from Turkey. But, on the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, Turkey resumed her supplies and support of the Mujāhidīn. Shortly, the Libyan resistance, with the assistance of some Turkish and German officers, played a decisive role in the withdrawal of all the Italian troops from their interior posts and their being confined to the occupation of the main coastal towns.

In the years 1915-16, the Libyans in Cyrenaica were in a difficult position when the Turks led them into an attack on the British posts in Western Egypt in November 1915, which ended with a crushing defeat and the departure of Sayyīd Aḥmad al-Sharīf to Turkey.

1 Murābet, M, Facts about Libya, (Malta, 1964) p 62

2 According to the Sultan's Decree, appointing him as his representative in Libya, Sayyīd Aḥmad continued the struggle against the Italians. See, Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 14

When World War I ended in 1918, the military situation in Libya was temporarily dormant. Instead, there were political activities for a few years. But the early twenties witnessed some distinct events which changed completely the military and political situation in Libya.

Firstly, the Fascists came to power in Italy in October 1922 with the determination to conquer the country by force. Secondly, it was soon clear that the Tripolitanian resistance had come to an end. Thirdly, following the Tripolitanian recognition of Sayyid Idris as Amir of Libya, the latter suddenly escaped in December 1922 to Cairo and lived in exile for more than twenty years.

Anyhow, in the Spring of 1923, another round of war started. In March, the second Italo-Libyan war broke out and the armed resistance was resumed, but only in Cyrenaica where it was left to 'Umar al-Mukhtār who kept up the fighting until 1931. For about nine years, continuous military operations were conducted to pacify the country. During these nine years, the Libyan patriotic resistance strongly went on in Cyrenaica where the terrain was suitable for guerilla activity. In addition, the sense of religion and national consciousness had taken roots deeply inside the tribal structure by the Sanūsī Order.¹ Besides, it had depended on supplies from Egypt. All these factors, in fact, enabled the Mujāhidīn to continue to fight the Italian yoke for nearly a decade.

With the death of 'Umar al-Mukhtār on September 16, 1931, the

1 Pritchard, p 104

brief fighting, in the following year, made it clear that Italian sovereignty was established over the whole of Libya and had become fully effective

Libya from 1932 to 1943

When the fighting was over at the beginning of 1932, Libya faced an Italian colonial policy operated by the Fascist regime. In fact, it goes back to the end of 1922. After their coming to power, the Fascists decided to continue the reconquest of the country and to start an agricultural colonial policy in Tripolitania. Since 1922, it was planned to make Libya a province of the New Roman Empire¹. Moreover, the object of the Italian colonisation, after a dying resistance, was based on the view that Libya should be considered as Italy's fourth shore. The Fascist leaders often announced that Italy's policy in Libya was to be colonisation by metropolitan peasant settlement.² Subsequently, she was opened to mass emigration

Following the pacification of the whole of Libya in 1932, further steps were taken by the Italian government according to the Mussolini's Fascist orders. It confiscated all the useful lands that could be agriculturally developed for the colonists. Therefore, the Italian settlement was becoming more and more expensive. Particularly when the Italian rural and urban colonisation schemes were put into operation

By the Italian Royal Decree in 1934, the two separate Italian colonies, Tripolitania including Fezzan and Cyrenaica, were

1 Wright, p 153.

2 First, Ruth, Libya, the Elusive Revolution, (London, 1974) p 14.

administratively united and became an Italian colony. The reason was explained by the Fascist politicians who announced that the Italian colony "must be forced to reshape itself to our methods and own will" ¹

In the same years, Mussolini had declared that Italy was creating civilisation on the Fourth Shore to encourage his people to move to Libya. The result was that Libya, during the Fascist period, became a home for many thousands of Italy's surplus population.

It was during the governorship of Marshal Balbo when the colonisation programme, aimed at settling families of Italian farmers in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, reached its climax in 1938 with the arrival of some 20,000 colonists from Italy. Between 1936 and 1942 two-thirds of the Italian expenditure in Libya was spent on agricultural development and local reclamation. But little was done for the Libyans themselves. Evans Pritchard² indicated briefly the results of general lines of the Italian policy from 1932 to 1942. He pointed out that the Italians never felt entirely secure after 'Umar al-Mukhtār's death. In addition, they lost their prestige "in the eyes of the world for their failure to break the resistance of a few Bedouin within weeks and for their cruel conduct of the war".³

However, their subsequent political decisions showed that the Italians had miscalculated their future in Libya. For instance, in January 1939, a Royal Decree was declared, confirming that Libya

1. Wellard, James, Lost Worlds of Africa, (London, 1967) p.31.

2. Pritchard, Chapter VIII pp. 191-229.

3. Ibid., p.191

became an integral part of the Kingdom of Italy. By this Decree, the Italians thought that the dream of Italy's Fourth Shore had become a political fact. But, after less than two years, their dream with their colonial policy disappeared when they entered into the last war in June 1940.

Suffice it to say at this point that during the years 1940-42, most of the Italian colonists were evacuated even before the first British advance to Cyrenaica. At the beginning of 1943, the Italian occupation, which had lasted thirty-two years, was ended in Libya.

Political Life

The first half of the present century produced two outstanding events, one military, represented by the Libyan Patriotic Resistance, and the other political. The latter, which concerns us, occurred in two ways, which were relevant to political development in Libya during the Italian occupation in 1911-43, and the British Administration 1943-49 successively. The first one is the establishment of Al-Jumhūrīyah al-Tarābulsīyah (The Tripolitanian Republic) and the political activities of Libyan refugees in Egypt and Syria. The second is the appearance of political parties in Libya for the first time.

Both of these had, in fact, dramatically changed Libya's political conditions and took an important part in shaping the country's future. However, I will deal only with the first one, and leave the other until I deal with the British Administration.

After the Italian invasion, the Libyans were still fighting the Italians all over the country, when Turkey suddenly entered into negotiations with Italy in 1912, aiming at a peace. In October 1912, Turkey concluded the Treaty of Ouchy or Lausanne, by which Italy declared her sovereignty over Tripolitania, including Fezzan and Cyrenaica.

By this treaty, the situation in Libya, militarily and politically, was changed. As a result, the Libyan people, unintentionally, were encouraged to find their own way to recover their country. This treaty was described as an ambiguous settlement because it granted autonomy to the Libyan people and yet recognised

Italian sovereignty ¹

After the withdrawal of Turkey from Libya and the outbreak of World War I, political efforts were made by a notable figure, Sulaimān al-Bārūnī² and others. From his exile in Turkey, in 1915, al-Bārūnī had returned to fight the Italians, bearing the Sultan's title of Governor of Tripolitania ³. Shortly, leaders from all parts of Tripolitania met at 'Azīzzīyah, near Tripoli City, to discuss the new situation and how to reform a united resistance, supplied by Turkey, against the invaders. The meeting was led by al-Bārūnī. Also, several attempts were made later on by him in order to mend the differences between the Tripolitanian leaders and to discuss their action against the Italians. These attempts were ended by the establishment of the Tripolitanian Republic.

In November 1918, an independent republic called, Al-Jumhūrīyah Al-Tarābulsiyah, with its capital in Mīsurātah was declared by Sulaimān al-Bārūnī. From unlikely and uneasy chief tribes, its council was elected, consisted of al-Bārūnī of the Jabal tribes, Ramadān al-Shutaywī of Maşurātah, 'Abd al-Nabī Bīlkhayr, chief of the Warfella tribes, and Aḥmad al-Marayīḍ of Tarhūnah.⁴ While Abdul Rahmān 'Azzām⁵ was appointed as its secretary.

1. First, p.46.

2. Shukrī, p 227.

3. Al-Bārūnī had come from Cyrenaica and had been put ashore by the Austrian submarine that had brought him out of exile in Turkey. See, Wright, p.137.

4. Ibid

5. He was an Egyptian pan-Islamic agent, and later to become the first Secretary of the Arab League. See, Ibid., p.141.

During the same period 1915-18, the political conditions were different in Cyrenaica. It should be noted here that Sayyīd Idrīs started his political career by contacting the British authorities in Egypt when he was on his way to the pilgrimage in the end of 1915.

Following the unsuccessful attack on the British in Egypt (1915-16) and handing over the control of the Sanūsīyah forces, Sayyīd Idrīs, immediately, decided to make peace with the Italians and British. The latter exercised pressure through him to put an end to the hostilities. In the meantime, the British, who agreed to make peace, "exerted pressure on the Italian side to do the same" ¹

In fact, by opening peace talks with the British and later on with the Italians, the political life in Cyrenaica entered into a new stage. In 1917, a Truce was signed under which the Italian occupation in towns was recognised by Sayyīd Idrīs, while the Italians accepted the rule of the Order in the interior. In the same year, Sayyīd Idrīs became the religious head of the Order as well, when Sayyīd Aḥmad gave it up completely.

Therefore, we can say that, from the years 1916-17 on, the Sanūsīyah Movement opened a new page by the involvement of its leadership in political activities. During that period, Sayyīd Idrīs maintained a conciliatory disposition towards the British and Italians. For this reason, I entirely agree with Roger Owen when he says that

"The negotiations, he conducted with the British and Italians in 1916-17 and with the Italians between 1917 and 1922, confirmed the Sanūsī as a political as much as religious organisation" ²

1 Asad, M, The Road to Mecca, (London, 1974) p 318.

2 Owen, p 10

In July 1916, negotiations were opened at Zuetīnah (اتفاقية زويتينة) between Sayyīd Idrīs and the British and Italians to discuss terms of peace. But talks broke down until the spring of 1917 when all parties resumed the negotiations at 'Akromah, (اتفاقية عكرومة) near Tubruk. At Akromah, they agreed to stop fighting and to sign a truce. Sayyīd Idrīs was encouraged to do this by his political and religious position in Cyrenaica and by the absence of the Turkish influence. Because of his intention to make peace with them, Britain and Italy agreed between themselves to recognise Sayyīd Idrīs as the Head of the Sanūsīyah Order.

However, after a peace was made between both sides, the Italians, with the aid of Malta-based British aircraft, tried to prevent the Tripolitanian leaders from declaring the Tripolitanian Republic by the bombing of Mīsurātah¹. But a truce was announced and the Republic was proclaimed in November 1918.

It is apparent that during the years 1916-18, there were two contrary political powers in the country, one in Cyrenaica and the other in Tripolitania.

Owing to the withdrawal of the Italians from the interior parts of Tripolitania in 1915, a political vacuum appeared, but "several great rival chiefs attempted to fill it, and in doing so, they dragged the country into tribal warfare and chaos"²

By early 1916, war broke out between the Sanūsīs and Ramaḍān al-Shutaywī as the two main political powers in the country. In 1918, one of them, represented by Ramaḍān and the other tribal chiefs in

1 Wright, p 140.

2 Ibid., p 137

Tripolitania, was able to announce the Tripolitanian Republic, as we have already mentioned. While the second power, represented by Idrīs in Cyrenaica, was content with the results of negotiations of the Sanūsī Emirate in Cyrenaica.

A few months after the proclamation of the Republic, the two parties had been granted a form of constitution. This was in the beginning of 1919, when the Italian government agreed to begin negotiations with the Tripolitanian tribal leaders. The negotiations were started in April 1919 at a camp near Tripoli City, Ben Yādīm (صلح بيادم) to persuade the country to submit peacefully and to recognise the Republic and the people's rights.

The Tripolitanian side was represented by Ramadān al-Shutaywī, al-Bārūnī, Abdul Rahmān 'Azzām and others who determined to set up a guerrilla war if these negotiations broke down. Their condition to stop fighting was Italy's recognition of the Tripolitanian Republic, and obtaining their personal rights on the lines which were laid down by President Wilson after World War I.

The outcome of these negotiations was acceptable to the group of Tripolitanian leaders. Italy recognised the Republic and granted the country a sort of autonomy represented in the form of the Fundamental Law of June 1919. By granting Cyrenaica a separate statute on 31 October 1919, adopted to its social conditions, "each province had a separate parliament, a governmental council, and local councils, intended to help the Italian administration to govern

1. Ibid., p 141.

the country in accordance with local traditions and customs" ¹

For several reasons, the terms of the Fundamental Law of 1919 failed in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. On the Libyan side, there was a rejection of the Italian presence. The people of both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica believed that although this statute gave them considerable freedom, its terms compelled them to recognise Italian sovereignty. While many Italians were not satisfied with what they considered a humiliating agreement. In addition to this, the Libyan leaders were unfortunately disunited among themselves.

Under these circumstances events occurred, causing dangerous results in the early twenties, which were wisely avoided, later on, by the leaders in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. This was at the end of September 1920, when the Tripolitanian leaders had a meeting at 'Azīzzīyah, at which they decided to have a general assembly elsewhere, in order to take a positive action against the Italians. At the same month, a meeting was held at Ajedābīyah, in Cyrenaica, consisting of about one hundred Cyrenaican chiefs. It was decided that they would only tolerate the Italians as traders on the coast. ²

These efforts were not effective as one may expect, because they were directed into another direction. For ambiguous reasons, the Italians made the agreement of Al-Rajmah (اتعاقيّة الرحمة) with Sayyīd Idrīs, which was signed on 25 October 1920, replacing the unworkable terms of the 'Akromah Treaty. By this agreement, the

1 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 18

2 Wright, p 144.

Italians gave to Sayyīd Idrīs the hereditary title of Amīr and recognised him as the independent ruler of most of Cyrenaica. In return, attempts were made to disband and disarm the tribes, but the latter protested and refused to do so.¹ Following the agreement with the Italian government, the Cyrenaican parliament, composed of sixty members elected by the tribes, met in April 1921.²

Because of the clashes between the Tripolitanian leaders, efforts were made to put an end to their differences. On November 20 1921, leaders and chiefs from all over Tripolitania met at Gharyān, (مؤتمر عريان). In this conference, many internal problems were settled and a national government, consisting of fourteen members, was elected and was known as the Centre Reform Committee,³ (هيئة الإصلاح المركزية) Besides, the Conference rejected totally all ideas of Italian sovereignty of any kind, but it accepted to negotiate directly with the Italian government. Above all, the Tripolitanian leaders determined to resolve the question of one ruler for Libya by extending Sayyīd Idrīs's authority over all the country. They meant by this, not to accept Italy's decision of recognition of his authority only over Cyrenaica. By their agreement, the leaders aimed at frustrating what was formed by the Italian government. Acting contrary to the Italians, they recognised Sayyīd Idrīs as the Amīr of the whole of Libya.

1. See, Shukrī, pp 208-16.

2. Altogether it held five sessions until March 1923 when it was disbanded as a result of the rupture of relations with Sayyīd Idrīs. See, Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p.18.

3. Shukrī, p.255.

In fact, the offer of the leadership of Tripolitania to Sayyīd Idrīs was considered as a possible solution to the country's unity.¹ However, the decisions of this Conference were met with enthusiasm by the majority of the Tripolitanian nation, particularly educated men

Shortly afterwards, the declaration of the National Government was carried to Rome by a five-man delegation for recognition of a completely independent Tripolitanian principality.² But it was said that no agreement seems to have been reached. From Rome, the head of the delegation, Khālīd al-Qarqanī, went to Moscow to attend an Islamic Conference held in 1921.³ It seems that, while the delegation was in Rome, they heard about the mentioned conference. To take the opportunity of an Islamic gathering, it was decided that one of the members should go to get support from it.

Further steps were taken to put the Gharyān resolutions into effect. In April 1922, a meeting was held at Ajedābīah, between Tripolitanian and Sanūsī representatives, in which the former officially offered Sayyīd Idrīs the Amirate of all Libya. In addition, both sides agreed to unite the country under one leader who should be an elected Muslim with supreme religious and civil powers.⁴

A few months after, in December 1922, Sayyīd Idrīs left the country for Egypt, and then war broke out with the Italians in Cyrenaica in March 1923. His escape action was unexpected because

1. First, p.50.

2. Wright, p.143.

3. Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p.???. See also Wright, p.143 and First, p.48.

4. op. cit., p.149

he had played for time with the leadership of Tripolitania. He decided to go to Egypt on the pretext of medical treatment to avoid in my opinion, an embarrassing situation.

It looks as if he realised that by his acceptance of the leadership of Tripolitania he would certainly put an end to his relations with the Italians. At the same time, his refusal of that offer, which was an unpatriotic action, would have greatly offended the Tripolitanians. He was not ready to take one of these two attitudes.¹

However, with the outbreak of the second Italo-Libyan war, the Libyan efforts were concentrated on armed resistance until 1931. A few years before this patriotic resistance was ended, some political committees were established and took an active part in political activities, but outside the country.

In 1928, the Tripolitanian-Cyrenaican Defence Committee was founded in Damascus under the leadership of Bashīr al-Sa'adāwī and 'Umar Shīnīb. In 1930, the Committee opened its first branch in Tunisia with the assistance of the Libyan refugees there.² About their activities, Khaddūrī tells us that they were limited to occasional protests against the injustices of Italian occupation in Libya. He added that "the emigres co-operated with nationalists in other Arab countries and tried to influence Italy to modify her policy towards Libya. They carried on what was called a war of the pen whenever the press was permitted to agitate against Italy. Perhaps one of the most intensive campaigns was carried on by Bashīr

1. Ibid., p 146

2. Shukrī, pp. 373-4



al-Sa'adāwī in Syria, and by Amīr Shakīb Arslān,¹ in his paper (La Nation Arab) in Geneva. In 1931, Sa'adāwī went on a pilgrimage and made a speech to thousands of pilgrims in Makka against Italian injustices in Libya" ²

In Egypt, where most of the emigres decided to reside, many nationalist groups were formed in order to supply the Libyan resistance, from time to time, with food and arms

After 'Umar al-Mukhtār's death, the Libyan Patriotic Resistance Movement was forced to operate from outside Libya. Because of the effective control of the Italian government in the country, the Libyans were unable to carry out any activities

Ruth First makes a reasonable point about the political activities inside the country after the armed resistance was ended. I entirely agree with her when she says that

"In the rest of the Maghreb armed resistance was ended, but a tumultuous movement of strikes and demonstrations grew in its place, the masses began to take over political action from the tribes. In Libya, this did not happen in the same way" ³

It is true that nothing has been reported or indicated concerning something of that kind. The fact was that thousands of Libyan refugees went into exile in neighbouring countries, Egypt, Tunisia, the Sudan, and Chad. Others sought residence in other Arab countries like Syria and a few emigres went to settle in Turkey. Among those thousands, some political leaders regrouped for the renewal of the independence struggle and, later on, played an active part in the liberation of

1 He is a notable Syrian, joined the Mujāhidīn in Libya immediately after the Italian invasion

2 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 26. See also Shukrī, pp 374-5

3 First, p 15.

their country from the Italian yoke, particularly during World War II, from 1939-42

After the outbreak of the last war, the international situation was tense by the involvement of most of the European countries in it. Immediately, the Libyan exiles in Egypt began to think over the probability of Italy's entry to the war against the British. In October 1939, Tripolitanian and Cyrenaican leaders, representing Libyan exiles in Egypt, met in Alexandria to discuss the new circumstances and the action they should take.

When Italy entered into the war in June 1940 alongside Germany, a second meeting of exiles was held in Cairo in August 1940. The meeting was ended with a decision to support the British, in spite of the opposition of some Tripolitanian leaders who refused to join the British side without obtaining a written guarantee of independence for Libya. However, this decision and other resolutions were accepted and supported by the Tripolitanian-Cyrenaican Defence Committee in Damascus.¹

Following the meeting, Sayyīd Idrīs contacted the British authorities in Egypt and agreed to form a Libyan army from among the exiles, who took an active part in the last war alongside the British Eighth Army during the years 1940-42, as we shall see.

It is clear that Sayyīd Idrīs, as Amīr of Libya, achieved nothing during his stay in Egypt from 1923 to 1944, with the exception of two years 1939-40. No activities worth mentioning were made by him, particularly from 1931, the year of 'Umar al-Mukhtār's death,

¹ Shukrī, pp 379-80.

to 1939 when he called the leaders in exile for a meeting in his house at Victoria, in Alexandria, in order to co-operate militarily and politically with the British. For about 19 years, he did not take part in any political activity. But when he resumed these, he played the same role by contacting the British either during the war or after his return to Cyrenaica in 1944. As we have already said, his contacts and negotiations with the British and Italians in 1916 were the first step in his political activities in Cyrenaica, which ended with his flight to Egypt at the end of 1922. In fact, these six years, during which he held the leadership of Cyrenaica, were mostly distinguished by his negotiations with the Italians and resulted in peace treaties. Apart from that, nothing has been achieved by him in the political life of Libya during the Italian occupation.

Socio-Economic Life

Libya is a large country, most of it is a desert. Besides, its population, at the beginning of the Italian invasion, was estimated at about one million and a half which ranked it as one of the least populated countries in Africa.

Because of the war, which was prolonged and harsh, the population of Libya was reduced to a half or two-thirds. Furthermore, since 1911, there has been a significant migration of rural and nomadic elements into the neighbouring countries, Egypt, Tunisia, the Sudan and Chad.

In the meantime, the Italian community in Libya, which was estimated in mid 1911 at a few thousand, had increased many times its former size. The majority of them lived in the urban centres of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, mainly in Tripoli City and Benghazi, as traders, artisans, officials and professional and skilled workers. While the Italian community outside the towns was chiefly engaged in cultivation and had their own developed farms.

In fact, their immigration to Libya was increased, not only because of the Italian policy, but also because of the undeveloped society of the Libyans who were still, as Evans says, incapable of these functions on an adequate scale¹. The Italians, therefore, were the most important majority and the greatest economic asset in Libya during and even before the occupation.

1 Pritchard, p 209

Within thirty-two years of the Italian occupation, the Italians attempted to displace the traditional way of life of the inhabitants who adopted the Islamic faith and Arabic language. Furthermore, Fascism stressed many characteristics, but it failed to put some of its colonial purposes and spirit into effect within the Libyan society. The social structure, in fact, remained little affected by the new invasion because the social life of the Libyans, as we have already mentioned, was based on the tribe which has always been "the predominant pattern of existence in Libya".¹

After the pacification of the country, the Italian government attempted to replace the tribal structure by political and economic institutions.² During the last ten years of the Italian occupation, the Italian administrative policy was directed at abolishing the traditional way of life by keeping the Bedouin away from the fertile lands.

In fact, Fascist Italy, in her attempt to change the social tribal structure, used different ways. Firstly, by confiscating the richest arable lands of the Bedouin and the Sanūsīyah states to provide farms for Italian colonists or for other colonial purposes. From 1st January 1934,³ the Italian government took over all the suitable land for her scheme of demographic settlement.⁴

Within this scheme of settlement, and for political reasons the Italian government established what were called Arab colonisation centres. But it found difficulty in creating Arab

1 Ziadeh, al-Sanūsīyah, p 14

2 Pritchard, p 210.

3 This was during Balbo's governorship.

4 op cit, pp 194-5

colonies in spite of its claims that the Libyan Arabs had agricultural villages, schools, hospitals, battalions, Fascist organisations as well as the Italians

However, the result of these efforts was nothing because the confiscation of lands which was described as a cruel action created a kind of hatred and antagonism towards the Italians. Furthermore, the Bedouin showed no inclination to work under the Italian control as Arab colonists. Besides, these measures were only made for political propaganda. Therefore, the loss of their best lands could not, by itself, change the social life of the Libyan people.

Another attempt was made to destroy the social structure of the Bedouin. To undermine their influence, the tribal Shaikhs were appointed by the Italian government. This was done as an effective step in the direction of weakening the traditional structure of tribal authority.¹ By this colonial policy, the Italians hoped that the Bedouin tribal and kinship structure would be broken down and the social life would be reshaped on Fascist corporative lines.

Among the social changes, which were made during the last ten years of the colonial period 1932-42, the superior positions in the country, economically and politically, were occupied only by the Italian colonists. In every department of public life, power and authority were retained by the Italians. The result was that very few of the native population acquired experience of administration.² In fact, the participation of the Libyans in administrative posts

1 Wright, p 182.

2 Lindberg, J, A General Economic Appraisal of Libya, (U N 1951), p 16.

was very rare. They were employed in only minor posts and a very small number of them worked in the Civil Service. Moreover, Italian became the required language for any applicant for a position in the government. The reason was that one of the many Royal Decrees, which were issued during the last ten years of the Italian occupation, emphasised that, "in no case could a Libyan occupy posts or practice professions which would require an Italian to serve under him".¹

As a result of this, the Libyans were made a cheap labour power although they provided a backbone of manual labourers. According to the fixed wage scales, laid down by Balbo's administration, they were ill paid and mostly received less than the Italians doing the same work² particularly when they were working in the colonial farms.

However, the Italians did not make any decisive efforts to raise the social level of the Libyans by preventing them from working in public offices and duties. In contrast with that, colonial steps were taken to keep the natives at an extremely low level of life and "therefore incapable of performing the functions that an advancing economy and society required"³

Owing to this policy, one can see easily how much the Libyan people, socially, suffered from it. It should also be stated that the Italians disregarded the human rights of the native population. Apart from the period of 1919-22, during which the Libyans enjoyed equal civil rights with the Italians according to the Fundamental

1 Zarrūq, A , A Critical Study of Libyan Education, (Chicago, N D) p 5.

2 Wright, p 182.

3 Sāyigh, Y , The Economic of the Arab World, (London, 1978) p 421.

Law of 1919, they had no guarantees of personal liberty, elected rights, the right of petition, the rights of emigration, liberty of the press and the right of meeting. After the second Italo-Libyan war, all these privileges were cancelled by a Royal Decree, which, issued on June 26, 1927, classified the Libyan natives as second-class citizens.¹

It is clear that there were two categories of people in the country, that of the Italian settlers and officials, and that of the Italian subjects, namely the Libyan Arabs. Although the Italian community and the Arab community lived side by side, the contact between them was most slight and occasional particularly the Bedouin, who were, as Evans says, powerless to oppose the Italians, but as far as possible they ignored them and lived as though the other did not exist.²

In 1939, an attempt was made to fill the social gap between the two communities. For the first time, after the second Italo-Libyan war, Libyans were given the opportunity to apply for Special Italian Citizenship.

The result of this colonial policy was negative because the entire native population of the country resisted the Italian Citizenship. It met with some success only among a small urban class of educated Arab officials who were brought up in the Italo-Arab schools. Moreover, this effort was made late. For about sixteen years, 1923-39, the equal partnership and democratic home rule was reserved. Besides, it came when Italy found herself in

1 Ḥajjājī, S, The New Libya, (Tripoli, Libya, 1967) p 78.

2 Pritchard, p 208.

more too friendly a situation after the pacification of the country

Generally, the Italian colonial policy did not make any remarkable change in the Libyan society. It affected only a small number, mostly officials who lived in the towns. But the entire population showed a bitter antagonism against the Italians and their colonial policy, and regarded them as dictators, exploiters and tyrant colonists.¹

In the first half of the present century, Libya remained, for several reasons, one of the poorest countries in the world. To assess her economy during the Italian occupation, it should be noted that the physical and climatic conditions in Libya made exploitation very difficult. Such conditions imposed severe restrictions on all forms of economic activity. In addition, the vast majority of the population was, as we have already mentioned, dependent upon agriculture or the raising of livestock. Besides, Libya had no natural resources which could be developed in order to improve her economy. The little industry in Libya was still on a very small scale, chiefly confined to traditional handicrafts. Further, the essential industry was almost entirely managed by Italians and it was in their hands to a large extent.² Because of the ill-paid wages, the average income per person of the Libyan population was very low.

However, nothing we can add to the main resources of Libya's economy during the Italian occupation with the exception of the colonial agricultural policy of the Italian government. Agriculture, animal wealth, and a few local small industries comprised the back-

1 Zarrūq, p 6.

2 Owen, p 11.

bone of Libya's economy

Therefore, a swift glance at the colonial agricultural policy during the Italian occupation is necessary to assess the changes which have taken place in the economic structure

After the first Italo-Libyan war, the Italians, who were more ambitious than the Turks, made some efforts in the face of difficult conditions to develop the country's economy, but for its own benefits not for the natives. Besides, war and resistance, which were being worked out for several years, handicapped the economy of Libya. In fact, it remained weak during the first two decades of the Italian occupation.

Up to the beginning of the 1930s, nothing had changed in the economic life of the Libyans. The people were extremely poor, backward, illiterate and as yet unskilled. Besides, agriculture was still the main profession of the Libyans and the rearing of livestock was the second occupation in Libya. As a result, Libya had, at that time, one of the lowest income levels in the world because everything was planned for the prosperity of the Italian colonists. In addition, progress and reform in the agricultural sector started slow and depended entirely on Italy's supplies.¹ Even the wealth, which Fascist Italy poured into Libya, particularly in the years after 1932, was being spent primarily for the benefit of Italy's people. Moreover, the Italians claimed that they planned to make Libya flourish more than at the time of the Romans,² but they failed to do so

1 Italy was supplying two-thirds of Tripolitania's revenue and three-quarters of Cyrenaica's

2 Libya was grain storage during the Roman Empire's rule because agriculture was well developed by the Romans. See, Survey of Land Resources in Tripolitania, British Military Administration, (Tripoli, 1945) pp 66-8

In the beginning of the 1930s, some efforts were extensively made. When the war was ended in Cyrenaica in 1932, Italy had intended to create another grand settlement area for more colonists in the north of the country. Thousands of Italian workers and peasants moved into Libya and were settled by the Italian government with an aspiration to develop the colony on Italy's Fourth Shore.

In fact, the last ten years of Italian occupation had brought some changes in the agricultural sector. Among these changes was the widespread agricultural development in the coastal belt. Nevertheless, the mentioned conditions of the country's economy continued without any visible improvement until the end of Italian occupation in the 1940s. During this period, Italy planned to make Libya an Italian colony in the full sense by a mass settlement of Italian families. It was estimated that after the pacification of Libya and before the second World War there were over 100,000 Italian colonists settled in the country and these were encouraged and subsidised by their government.

The Italian policy in agricultural sector was based, during this period, on investment by establishing either organised agricultural settlements or private concessionary farms.¹ But, although the essential economy was characterised by a complete dependence on agriculture, nothing had changed in the economic life of the Libyans.

Most historians of the Italian period were agreed on the results of this policy which did not make any contribution to Italy's income

1 First, p 54

Contrary to that, Italy poured a lot of money into Libya to subsidise the latter's budget for several years because the agricultural schemes in Libya had so far failed to become even self-supporting. In the meantime, by this sort of agricultural scheme, Italian Colonialism had burdened the Libyan people for some three decades

However, the far-reaching plans and their results in agricultural sectors completely collapsed with the Italians' defeat in the second World War and by their evacuation from Libya in 1943. Furthermore, with the dust of war, the colonial dreams of Italy in Africa, in general, and in Libya, in particular, were evaporated for ever. But, the important result of the general Italian policy was, in my opinion, the creation of dislike, among the Libyans against the Italians, which deeply rooted in their hearts and minds. This therefore protected them from the "Italianisation", and prevented the fulfillment of the colonial purposes.

Education, Culture and the Press

Education*

With the invasion of the Italians in 1911, education, culture and the press in Libya suffered a great downfall and were exposed to a lengthy period of negligence. Their conditions were the same as those of the second Ottoman period, if not worse. According to the official census figures, given by the Italians, one can say that the illiteracy was very high because over 90 per cent of the Libyan population were illiterate.

So, it is worthwhile to show how education was during the Italian occupation, which lasted for about thirty-two years. And this, besides, the problems which handicapped its development in Libya.

Historians of the colonial period have agreed that education of the native population received little attention¹. In addition, there was no education system in Arabic but only in the Italian language. The main purpose of Italy's education policy in Libya "seems to have been to produce relatively large numbers of Italian speaking pupils instilled with respect and devotion for Italy"².

Although, Italy had started building many Italian schools even before her occupation of Libya, she failed to fulfill her colonial education policy among the Libyan pupils. Because the aim of establishing these schools was, in fact, to kill the Arabic language and Islamic culture. But the response of the Libyan families to this policy was passive, and less use was made of the Italian schools.

1 Libya, a brief political and economic survey, The Information Department, R I I A, (Oxford University Press, 1957) p 26

2 Wright, p 183

In fact, education during the Italian occupation was only provided for a limited group. John Wright tells us that "by 1911, there were almost 3000 Libyan and European children at Italian schools in Tripoli, Homs, Benghazi and Derna, but in the country as a whole, very few children even received any formal education" ¹

However, it is necessary to refer to the Italian education policy to understand why illiteracy was very high in Libya at the time of the Italian period.

Since 1911, direct attempts were made to suppress Arabic and Islamic education. Under the educational ordinance of 1914, all teaching in schools was conducted in Italian, except of the Arabic language itself and the Qur'ān. In 1915 all mosque schools became subject to Italian inspection and censorship.² In addition to the official circles, the Italian language became compulsory for all. It was the only officially recognised language of Libya, while the Italians retained their own language, religion and culture during the Ottoman rule. But, when they occupied Libya, they prevented the Libyans from learning their own language. This was made to keep the natives at an extremely low level of education.

It is true that the Italians gave considerable attention to educational matters from the earliest days of their occupation. Their interest was not, indeed, to provide education for the Libyan people, but rather to deprive them from it and to keep them under-

1 Ibid, p 116.

2 Farley, p 80

developed. Furthermore, they channelled whatever education they provided to serve their colonial purposes. The main purpose of the new Italian facilities in education "was not the broadening of education for Libyans, but rather the teaching of the Italian language and culture, so as to plant Italian principles and ideas and kill Libyan nationalism"¹ The teaching system was primarily Italian-oriented and there were only two hours in a day devoted to Arabic in which the Libyan boys learned how to read and write about the Italian culture in Arabic.

Also, to encourage Libyan pupils to learn the Italian language, and second, to kill gradually the Arabic language and culture, the Italian government imposed regulations by which a pupil could pass to the next class if he failed in the Arabic class and succeeded in the Italian class, but not vice versa.

For this reason, Italian colonisation did not aim to create an elite group who might fight them, but intended to create an elite group who would be able to identify themselves with the Italians' interests. Moreover, they aimed at giving the administration effective control over the schools and that consequently education could be sufficiently directed to political ends. Therefore, their educational policy in Libya was designed to meet their programme of colonisation.

In addition to these facts, Libyan children were practically excluded from admission to secondary schools and forbidden to pursue their study abroad. The Italian government, in fact, neglected

¹ See, Ḥajjājī, pp 82-3

secondary and higher education. Although many schools were built for Libyans, there were only three secondary schools in the whole of Libya. Two of them were in Tripolitania, the Arts and Crafts Islamic School and the Higher Islamic School. In Cyrenaica, there was only the Benghazi Arts and Crafts School, while there were seven secondary schools for Italian children. Besides, a very few Libyans, who were educated in the Italian schools, were awarded scholarships for study in Italy.¹ The Italians imposed severe conditions if a Libyan pupil wanted to continue his higher education beyond elementary school. For instance, he was deprived of higher education unless he obtained Italian Citizenship. Hence, very few climbed up the scholastic scale.

Technical education was also very limited during the Italian occupation. It was continued in Libya only throughout the Arts and Crafts Islamic School which carried out its responsibility with effective activity inside Tripolitania. Another technical school was established in Benghazi in 1919, and developed later into a technical secondary school.²

It was clear that the whole policy of Fascist colonisation, which was described as discriminatory and biased,³ was to deny the Libyan people educational opportunities. Therefore, the Libyans were very prejudiced against the Italians, especially when the latter dealt with the Arabic language and Islamic culture. They were opposed

1 Wright, p 183.

2 See, Technical and Vocational Education in Libya, p 3.

3 Zarrūq, p 6.

to sending their children to the Italian schools, fearing that they might lose their Islamic faith and Arabic

In fact, there is no reference available to reveal any interests in the field of Arabic education during the colonial period. For this reason, some private Arabic schools were opened beside Katātīb (Qur'anic Schools). Despite the difficulties made by the Italians, some educated Libyans decided to open private schools, teaching the Arabic language, as a reaction to that colonial policy in education. Sustained efforts and the necessity of challenge, however, made it possible for them to achieve some of their aims.

Within the means available to the Libyan people, the educated exerted their best efforts to open elementary Arabic schools as a primary stage of education. Besides, some courses, related to the various needs of educating Libyan children, were given in the mosques.

But unfortunately these private Arabic schools did not persist very long. They were often closed down by the Italian government on the pretext that they were considered as centres of intellectual power for the people who were fighting them.

Anyhow, the Italian occupation of Libya meant again new elements of foreign educational implantation. Nevertheless, there was a possibility under the new political situation for a national educational system to emerge, but mostly to a limited extent, and sometimes secretly.

However, under the colonial period, religious education was also continued within Katātīb, Zawāyā, and a few religious institutes, but it faced some problems from the Italian authorities.

After World War I, the first step was taken when Fascist Italy began to make brutal efforts to obliterate all Sanūsīyah educational

influence by throwing out the first educational ordinance

Because of its educational activities, which were one of the Sanūsīyah functions among the Bedouin, the Italians put some obstacles in the way of the Zawāyā. Most of them were closed and taken over. During the years of the second Italo-Libyan war, the Italian troops destroyed the Sanūsīyah's Zawāyā by gun fire or by letting them fall into ruin through neglect. Some of them were used as military posts by the Italian soldiers, and some converted into stables. Besides, their Shaikhs "had been scattered by the years of war and in 1930 had been rounded up and exiled, at the same time as the properties of the Order had been confiscated" ¹

Therefore, these Zawāyā were prevented from continuing their educational functions. Jaghbūb University was shut down and its invaluable library set on fire and damaged. Moreover, their destruction may be considered as one of the Italian acts in the extirpation of religious education in the country.

However, the results of these brutal efforts were passive because they did not impress the Libyan people. There is evidence to show that the Libyan people were well aware of the Italian action against religious education in Libya. In 1935, the colonial authorities established the Higher Islamic School in Tripoli as a religious training college with a strictly religious curriculum. But the Libyans realised that it was founded to prevent their children from seeking higher education abroad and going to Al-Azhar in Egypt or Al-Zaitūnah in Tunisia, which were considered places

1. Pritchard, p 192.

where Libyan students might be subject to anti-Italian propaganda¹
So, they did not send their children to it

Culture

It is clear that the Italian government did not provide educational facilities for Libyan children in spite of the extreme importance of education to the life of a nation. For political goals the Italians also neglected Libyan culture, traditions and customs. They kept every intellectual activity under their control for about three decades of their occupation.

As a result of this, Libyan culture was influenced by the colonial education policy, but not very deeply. No doubt Italian cultural influences could slightly leave some marks on the life of the Libyan people. This was because some of them studied the Italian language, at least how to speak it. Besides, the Italian fashion of dress was used by some natives in the big cities and urban areas. Italian food was also one of the used kind.² Many Italian names for certain things appeared "in the daily conversation of the common people, especially in dealing with names of goods"³. But its marks on some cultural aspects were not deeply rooted in the Libyan soil because most of the thirty-two years of the Italian occupation were passed in fighting. Besides, Italians enjoyed peace in Libya only for nine years, which are not enough to implant Italian culture.

In fact, several factors helped in protecting Arabic and Islamic

1 Ibid, p 203

2 Zarrūq, p 10.

3 Hajjājī, pp 90-91.

culture in Libya in spite of the educational standard of the Libyans which was at the primary level, while it was at the primary and secondary levels for the children of minorities. Firstly, a few thousand of the population who attended the Italian public schools in Libya. But a large number of the Libyan children went to Katātīb, although teaching in these was limited to Qur'anic scriptive and elementary Arabic. Within these Katātīb, the religious and Arabic education continued in Libya.

In addition to this, the mosques carried on its educational functions in the colonial period, and worked for the spread of Arabic and Islamic culture. They were used as Islamic institutes. Apart from some survival of Sanūsīyah Zawāyā and a few Islamic institutes, the influence of Islamic and Arabic culture also appeared through some Libyan scholars who visited frequently the ancient Islamic Universities, Al-Azhar in Egypt and Al-Zaitūnah in Tunisia.

However, in spite of the Italian control, the historic period of religious education has left in Libya a number of religious institutes, Zawāyā, Qur'anic schools and endowments. Effectively, these institutes and schools carried "the torch of the light of culture throughout the country, and produced religious leaders, poets, authors and historians of great fame" ¹

For these reasons, I believe that the Italian educational and cultural influences could not make deeply its appearance in Libya, and failed in preventing Arabic and Islamic culture from progress and spreading among the Libyans. I also believe that in spite of

¹ Religious Education in Libya, pp 4-5.

the fact that chances of continuing study were very rare and the conditions of life were so stationary in relation to intellectual environment Besides, adults were busy fighting for independence and self-government On the other hand, the small Libyan intellectual class was, as Wright says, either in exile or voiceless.¹ In spite of all these facts, the Libyans refused to accept Italian culture

In fact, we can not find the spirit of the Italian education and culture, for instance, represented in modern Libyan literature or their influence, appearing throughout literary works of the Libyan poets and writers except a few Italian words which had occurred in some poets' poems There was no constant result of such an approach, or a consequence of the Italian invasion in the literary field

Besides the reasons, which have been given and induced the Libyans to refuse Italian culture, I entirely agree with Evans when he says that

"Cultural assimilation was also unlikely because both Italians and Arabs were civilised peoples with a long cultural history behind them, and it was most improbable that the Arabs would give up their religion, law and language No other solution seemed feasible, therefore, than that advocated by Balbo, the policy of parallel development in cultural matters. The Arabs were to remain Arabs in speech, religion, personal law, customs and manners "²

However, the Italian expedition to Libya may be considered, at the same time, as an essential factor which encouraged, in one way or another, Libyan poets and writers to contribute to the literary

1 Wright, p 182.

2 Pritchard, p 209.

life in Libya It served as an introduction to a new rise of Arabic literature, poetry, in particular. Also, during the Italian occupation, Libyan poetry entered a new period because it was strongly coloured by the patriotic and national trends as we shall see.

The Press

We have already mentioned that the flourishing period of Libyan press was very short during the second Ottoman rule Having started so actively in its last years, namely the first decade of this century, the Libyan press was handicapped by the Italian invasion in 1911

It is only natural to ask why the Libyan press did not continue to flourish and to develop further during the thirty-two years of the Italian occupation. In fact, the Italian invasion, this momentous event, tried to kill everything belonging to the intellectual heritage of Libya It is, therefore, not surprising that the Libyan press suffered from censorship during the colonial period, and the Italian government placed, often, an obstacle in its way.

Up to 1919, there were no newspapers except an official gazette called Itālīā al-Jadīdah, (the New Italy), published in both Arabic and the Italian language, and it replaced Jarīdat Tarābulus al-Gharb, (Tripoli of the West) newspaper.

According to the Fundamental Law of June 1919, two Arabic newspapers were established, Al-Liwā' al-Tarābulusī (the Tripolitanian Standard) and Al-Waqt (the Time), by two Libyan editors For only two years Al-Liwā' newspaper, reflecting the opinion of the National

Reform Party remained as a representative of the national press. As any national newspaper, expressing the rights and freedom of the majority under unacceptable occupation, Al-Liwā' was published, struggling under handicaps of press control and inadequate funds. In addition, the Italian government was banning, from time to time, leading articles which were written by Libyan writers or editors who disagreed with its policy. Also, thoughts and essays had to be submitted to the Italian censorship before the Arabic newspapers published them.

There is no doubt that the Libyan national newspapers, published during the period from 1919 to 1923¹ played a role in awaking the national spirit among the Libyans. Most of these newspapers, edited by some Libyan journalists, discussed, in general, liberal ideas and the concrete problems of the country at that time. The main subjects of their discussion were the real problems of Libya, education, reform, religion, patriotism, literature etc., and the effects of these on life.

In addition to this, from these national newspapers, there emerged a group of young men who were to create a new intellectual and political climate in Libya. Also, through them, were heard, for the first time, the voices of men who were later to become famous in one way or another.

When the war between the Libyans and Italians broke out once more in March, the Libyan press lost these privileges, at the head of them, liberty of the press. All the national newspapers were

1. See, Ṭarāzī, p.248.

immediately, banned and the Fundamental Law of 1919 was replaced by the Royal Decree of 26 June 1927, which did not mention the liberty of the press ¹

Therefore, the flourishing period of the Libyan press was, once again, very short. It was only four years, 1919-1922, during which the Libyan newspapers enjoyed guarantees of liberty of the press to a certain extent. Moreover, within this period, one can find the national opinion, expressed by a few newspapers which dealt openly with political views and recorded some national events, at the head of these, the Newspaper Al-Liwā'

However, the period between 1923 and 1943 witnessed a literary movement within some newspapers and a literary magazine, whose editors collaborated with the Italian authorities in one way or another. Such as 'Umar al-Mihīshī, the editor of Libyā al-Muṣawwarah (Libya Illustrated), and Mahmūd Nadīm bin Mūsā, the editor of Al-Raqīb (the Observer). Through their position, both of them could contribute to the literary movement by publishing some remarkable works of well-known poets and writers. It can also be said that their contribution extended to the resistance movement, during 1923-31, by publishing in Arabic the Italian plans, threats and decisions.

1 Pritchard, p 214

The Libyan Patriotic Resistance

In the beginning of this century, Libya had captured the attention of the world by her courageous struggle against the Italian occupation

After the landing of the Italian troops on the main coastal towns in October 1911, the fierce resistance of the Libyan people immediately began and continued with only a brief truce, (1917-1922), for about two decades, during which it won the Arab and Islamic world's sympathy and respect.

Apart from the fight against the French troops in the south of Libya,¹ the resistance of the Libyan people was the first struggle against colonialism in the present century. Their organised movement of resistance was led successfully by experienced men of war.

However, we can divide the Armed Resistance Movement against the Italians in Libya into two stages. The first was led by Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharīf in Cyrenaica, and by the Tripolitanian leaders in Tripolitania, from 1911 to 1917. The second was waged under the leadership of 'Umar al-Mukhtār in Cyrenaica only, from 1923 until 1931.

When Italy invaded Libya in 1911, the Libyan people put up a stiff resistance to defend their country against colonial interests. In this year, Libya, as a whole, became a battlefield against the Italian occupation which was considered as a Christian invasion.

1. For about fourteen years 1899-1913 the Libyan people fought the French troops in the South of Libya under the leadership of Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharīf (1902-1913). Among the fighters was 'Umar al-Mukhtār. See, Shukrī, p.98.

The war between the Libyans and Italians was regarded in the eyes of all Arabs and Muslims as a religious war ¹

Therefore, I strongly believe that the important result of the Italian invasion was firing the spirit of national and religious resistance ²

It should be noted here that the details of the military operations, which were dealt with elsewhere, are outside the scope of this study. But, it would be in the reader's interest to quote, as examples, some of the most severe battles, in which the Italian forces suffered heavy losses and the Libyan poets proudly composed some poems. In my speaking about the Libyan Resistance Movement during its first stage, I will confine to some patriotic fights of which the Mujāhidīn entered in the early years of the Italian occupation.

On 19 October 1911, a few days after the invasion, the people of Benghazi launched an attack on the town and brought the Italians to a decisive engagement at Jolyānah, (معركة حلياسة) in which the latter lost hundreds of men dead.

In Tripoli, the fighting, which took place on the edges of the Italian defences at al-Menshīyah, (معركة المشية) one of its suburbs was a harsh counter-attack against the Italians who were proud of their occupation of Tripoli City.

On 23 October 1911, a mass attack, which was prepared by the Turks and Arabs, took place at Shār' al-Shaṭṭ, (معركة شارع الشط)

1 Būlugma , p 50.

2 Cooper, p.12

The Italian troops were taken by surprise in this battle, which raged all day and resulted in heavy losses for the Italian side. Three days later, a second Turkish-Arab attack took place at Sīdī al-Masrī, (معركة سيدى الصرى) near Tripoli City. On 26 November 1911, the Turks and Arabs led a big general attack on the Italian troops at al-Hānī, (معركة الهانى) one of Tripoli City's suburbs. It was a severe fight, and cost the Italians heavy losses. They left thousands of rifles and ammunition on the battlefield. Two days later, on 28 November, an Italian column advanced on the suburbs of the Benghazi zone, but it was defeated and retreated.

For a year, further fights, more in the nature of skirmishes than battles, as Evans Pritchard says,¹ took place, from time to time, as the Italians tried to occupy various strong-points to protect the towns. "Finding the terrain too difficult for an offensive, the Italians remained in the towns."² The result of this was that the Italian troops still only had superiority in and around the main coastal towns. Until the end of 1912, their occupation was confined to the range of their naval guns.

After the Treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish forces withdrew from Libya, with the exception of a few army officers. Following this, guerrilla warfare sprang up in Cyrenaica, under the leadership of Sayyīd Ahmad with the assistance of some Turkish officers, who had been in Turkish garrisons. Also, the Tripolitanian leaders carried on the fight in various places.

1. Pritchard, p.113.

2. Ibid., p.112.

As a result, during 1913-14, the Italians decided to occupy Cyrenaica at all costs. Because of his inability to set up an organised resistance, Sayyid Ahmad and his men started guerrilla warfare. In several engagements, which gave the Italians no respite, the Cyrenaican forces attacked in surprise many Italian posts. The Italian troops were defeated and suffered heavy losses in most of these engagements.

It was clear that although the peace treaty between Italy and the Ottoman Porte put an end to the hostilities between both countries, it did not end the Italian war with the Libyans. As we have mentioned, the Libyan people offered a stiff resistance and made the Italian occupation uneasy and so long.¹

When World War I broke out in 1914 and Italy entered into it in 1915, the Italians also suffered heavy losses at the hands of the Mujāhidīn. They were defeated and retreated to a narrow strip of the coast in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. They held only their main towns, like Tripoli, Khums, Benghazi, Derna and Tubruk.

During the first World War, the military situation in Tripolitania was strengthened by a successful attack, led by Ramaḍān al-Shutaywī, Chief of Miṣūrātah, at al-Qurdābiyah, (معركة القرصاينة) in 1915, against the Italian troops.

The results of this battle, which was recorded by the Libyan poets, were unexpected from both sides, the Libyans and Italians.

1. Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p.13.

It was a shameful defeat, as it was admitted by the Italians themselves because it "harmed the Italian cause for more than the loss of men and equipment".¹

However, after this battle a general withdrawal to the coast was ordered, but garrisons were massacred during their breakout to the sea. When Tripolitania collapsed, the Italian troops were also ordered to withdraw from Cyrenaica towards the sea, and part of them was transferred to the European front.² Besides, some coastal towns were also evacuated by thousands of Italians.

But, unfortunately, after Ramadān's victory, the tribal feuding started between some Tripolitanian leaders and their opposition to Sanūsī leadership in Cyrenaica occurred.

Owing to this fact, which resulted in the lack of effective native leadership, and to the flatness of Tripolitania, the Resistance Movement was weakened. Besides, this situation encouraged the new Governor of Tripolitania, Guiseppe Volpi, to invite the Tripolitanian leaders to co-operate with him. Upon their refusal, however, he began to re-occupy the country.³ Before the coming of the Fascist regime in Italy in October 1922, Tripolitania, including Fezzan, was brought under the Italian domination.

With the outbreak of the Italo-Libyan war, once again, in March 1923, the second stage of the Libyan Resistance Movement began. For

1 Wright, p 136.

2 Ibid

3 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 22

about nine years of this stage, a national war, which was led by a remarkable man, 'Umar al-Mukhtār,¹ lasted until 1931 and prevented the Italians from occupying the interior parts of Cyrenaica

In the beginning, it seemed that resistance was impossible because the active stage in Tripolitania was ended before the twenties

No doubt, the opposition in Tripolitania was weaker than in Cyrenaica, when 'Umar al-Mukhtār started his guerrilla warfare. But, the collapse of Tripolitania's resistance to Governor Volpi's forces was not the only factor which helped in creating his resistance movement. Several factors, in fact, created it in Cyrenaica

Firstly, the departure of Sayyīd Idrīs from Cyrenaica, in December 1922, which "gave the false impression that Libyan resistance to Italian occupation had, at least, been broken",² had the result that the command of the Sanūsī forces was turned over to 'Umar al-Mukhtār. In Cairo, he decided to return to Cyrenaica and lead the Resistance Movement against Italy.³

Secondly, the geography of Cyrenaica enabled him to operate a type of guerrilla warfare and made the Italian troops' movement very difficult. Finally, there was the real support of the mass of people, who pressed him to take the leadership of the struggle. For instance, the Bedouin flocked to the Adwār, (Bands) which were formed by him

1 For his life, see Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 24, Wright, p 155, Pritchard, p.167 and Asad, pp 320-24

2 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 23

3 Ibid, p 24.

All these circumstances combined to make 'Umar al-Mukhtār able to hold the responsibility of the fighting against the Italians in Cyrenaica

However, he stationed himself in the desert and the mountainous area of the Jabal al-Akhdar where the war against the Italians was bitterly raging. Also, from Egypt, a line of supplies and arms was organised to his fighting forces, by which he was able to hold out successfully in the mountains for nearly a decade. Besides, the assistance was found through many of the Shaikhs and Brothers of the Sanūsī Order, and even among "the Bedouin who joined the Italians as irregulars, police, labourers and camelmen".¹

In spite of a small but mobile force, 'Umar al-Mukhtār forced the Italian troops to retreat to the coast several times. For some years they could not occupy the interior of Cyrenaica, but the situation was different, owing to shortages of arms and supplies at the end of the 1920s

When they found themselves fighting not an army but a people, the Italians determined to reconquer Cyrenaica at any cost. Therefore, military activity was increased and a barbed wire was extended along the Egyptian frontier which resulted in the cutting off of supplies from Egypt and the Sudan. Punitive measures were also taken with those natives who tried to offer their assistance to the patriots.² Moreover, after nearly a decade of resistance and fighting, the Italians learned how to master the situation. Considering the size

1. First, p.51.

2. Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p.25

of the Italian forces and their resources, the Libyan Resistance Movement had a serious shortage in men, arms, and supplies in the beginning of 1930

Eventually, it ended in 1931 by losing its great leader, 'Umar al-Mukhtār. In September 1931, he was captured by the Italian soldiers in the Jabal al-Akhdar area, after a battle in which he and his men fought desperately. A few days after, he was tried at Benghazi by a military tribunal and executed by hanging at Solūq before thousands of people on September 16th ¹

By his capture and execution, Fascist Italy had put down the Libyan armed resistance, but 'Umar al-Mukhtār's death and his heroism and martyrdom have been a powerful inspiration for the Libyans. Besides, under his leadership, the war between the Italians and the people of Cyrenaica had played "an important part in shaping the history of both Cyrenaica and Libya as a whole" ²

In fact, his effective resistance proved that Italy could not gain proper control of Libya, particularly Cyrenaica, until some 20 years after her invasion in 1911. In addition, it shattered the Italian dreams of conquering the country within a few days, particularly when they were encouraged by certain initial success. The Italians did not expect a long war or an armed resistance which was continued in Cyrenaica until 1931

However, the national twenty years struggle for liberation and independence in Libya cemented the feeling of identity among the

1. Murābet, Facts about Libya, p.63.

2. Būlugma , p.50.

Islamic and Arab nations, even those who were themselves still under foreign domination. In addition to this, the patriotic resistance of 1923-31 in Cyrenaica, was clear evidence for Libyans that they fought, continuously, to recover their freedom in the eyes of the world.

The First and Second World Wars

Among the important events in the modern history of Libya, which occurred during the Italian occupation from 1911 to 1943, were the First and Second World Wars. Both wars brought a change into the political situation of the Arab countries, in general, and of Libya, in particular. Therefore, it is worthwhile to show the results of these two World Wars and their effects on the political life of Libya.

The First World War, 1914-18

Libya was an Italian colony when World War I began in July 1914. The country was already engaged in a life and death struggle with Italy. Also, the Italians had achieved military control only over the coastal zone.

But, by the outbreak of the First World War, the situation in Libya was complicated. The Italians began to face difficulties when they found themselves in an embarrassing situation in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, even before their entry into the European war. In addition to this, rebellion was started among the tribes in Fezzan and Sirtica against the Italians who faced it with military force.¹

On the Libyan side, the difficulties increased when the Egyptian route to Libya was nearly closed. Its results were that internal conditions in Cyrenaica were greatly worsened by the continued fighting, the spread of plagues and other diseases,^{the} shortage of food and supplies, the reduction in population and droughts which brought famine all over

1 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p.13

the country ¹

In November 1914, Turkey entered into the European War on the side of Germany after she had declared war on Britain. In May 1915, Italy joined the Allies. In consequence of this situation, in which Turkey fought with Germany and Austria against Italy and Britain, Libya found itself in continuing battlefield. But through the renewal of fighting between the Italians and Turks, a change was brought into the war scene in Libya. Having entered the war, the Turks no longer had supplied Sayyīd Ahmad and the Tripolitanian leaders with arms and munitions, transported by their German ally's submarines ². Once again, the Turkish Commanders found their way to Libya in the summer of 1915. They landed with some German officers from submarines on Marmarica coast, ³ hoping to see a Sanūsī attack on the British in Egypt.

Following Italy's entry into the war, decisive efforts were made by the Ottoman Porte, trying to urge Sayyīd Ahmad and his men to respond to the call of Jihād which was already proclaimed from Istanbul ⁴.

Sayyīd Ahmad and his followers found themselves in confusing situation because they became more than ever dependent on Turkey in arms and other supplies. ⁵ Moreover, they were not in the position

1 Ibid., p 14.

2. Pritchard p 121.

3. Ibid , p 125.

4. Sir Cumming, "Libya in the First World War", (an article), p 386.

5. op. cit., p.121.

to refuse the Sultan's call, as Caliph of Islam, for Jihād, and the assistance of the Turks as brothers in Islam

On the other hand, they were afraid of closing the Egyptian route of supplies to Libya if they were involved in a war which was not theirs. However, under this pressure, in addition to urgent orders from Istanbul to Nūrī Pāshā,¹ the Libyan forces, under the leadership of Sayyīd Ahmad with the assistance of some Turkish commanders, attacked the British posts in the Egyptian frontier in November 1915, and made some advance as far as Sallūm. In January 1916, the British forces counter-attacked and defeated the Libyan forces which retreated and withdrew from Egypt.²

It is apparent that the outbreak of World War I opened another door of fighting in Libya. She had been at war for three years against the Italians when the war began.

Because of the Ottoman Porte's involvement in it, Libya was drawn into a war with another Great Power. On behalf of Turkey, Libya launched an attack on the British, which caused her much trouble when her forces were defeated.³

1 He was one of the Turkish officers who was sent to Libya, when World War I broke out, to exert a pressure on Sayyīd Ahmad to take military action against the British in Egypt.

2. Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 15

3. Sayyīd Ahmad's fulfillment of the Sultan's request has caused much discussion between the historians who have studied that period, resulting in different opinions. See, Pritchard, pp. 121-33, Asad, pp. 316-7, and Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p.15.

By this defeat, the leadership of Sayyīd Ahmad did not survive. His religious and political phase was ended in 1917, and his military control in Cyrenaica was handed over to his cousin, Sayyīd Idrīs.

Finally, when World War I ended in November 1918, Italy found that it was difficult to refuse Tripolitania and Cyrenaica's demands to grant them political autonomy and parliamentary concessions. Shortly after, agreements were made in 1919, recognised their autonomy which lasted about four years.

The Second World War, 1939-45

World War II was not much different from the first one in its results on Libya and Italy as well, in one way or another. As we have seen, Italy was involved in the first World War, from 1915-1918, on the side of Britain against Germany. While she engaged in the last war, from 1940 to 1945, on the side of Germany against Britain.

In fact, no part of the world was, of course, unaffected either by the first war or by the second one. As far as Libya was concerned, the last war changed her future when she co-operated with the British army against the Axis.

In 1939, World War II broke out when the Nazi invasion began. On 10th June 1940, Fascist Italy, under Benito Mussolini's command, entered into the war by joining the forces of Germany against the Allies. Again, the eyes of the world focused on Libya when its coast became a battleground, between the British and Germans who were helped by their ally, the Italians, during the war.

A few months after Italy's entry, a Libyan army was formed from among the Libyan exiles in Egypt. The army fought courageously for

Libya's independence on the side of the British Eighth Army and took an active part in the North African Campaign from 1940 to 1942. In addition to this, it should be mentioned the valuable contributions made by the inhabitants of Cyrenaica who, "at the risk of their own lives, provided shelter, food, water and guide services to organised and unorganised allied troops"¹. These contributions were considered by the British authorities as a decisive factor in the Allied victory in the North African Campaign.

For about three years, the country, mostly Cyrenaica, was the stage for advances and retreats of the conflicting forces, the Allies and Axis. In 1940, the Italian troops, under Graziani's leadership, were defeated by the British who occupied Cyrenaica. Shortly after, in the same year, Marshal Rommel recaptured it. In 1942, the British re-occupied Cyrenaica which was defeated soon after. With his great victory at al-Alamein, Marshal Montgomery finally put an end to the unsteadiness of the situation.

Within the years 1940-42, some of the most severe battles were fought in the Libyan Desert, like the battles of Tūbruk and al-Alamein which were the most critical engagements of the last war in the North African Campaign. Besides, the names of Marshals Rommel and Montgomery became well-known for their famous battles there.

Early in 1943, the Axis armies were defeated and retreated into Tunisia. As a result, the Fascist occupation in Libya ended, once and for all, by a complete evacuation of the Italian troops. It was

¹ Murābet, Facts about Libya, p 65. See also, Pritchard, p 227

on the morning of 23 January 1943 when the Italian Governor of Tripoli signed the formal surrender of the city¹ Simultaneously, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica came under British Administration and Fezzan under the French

However, Italy's unfortunate entry into World War II on the side of Germany against the Allies in the summer of 1940, proved to be Italy's undoing² It took away all that the Italians had achieved in Libya, particularly their colonial agricultural policy³ which was, in fact, ended by the outbreak of the war. Also, the immediate result of her defeat was an almost total evacuation of Libya which means, at the same time, that the hope of colonisation was wrecked in Africa, in general For this reason Wright says that "the loss of the Empire was one of the prices Italy paid for participation in the Second World War"⁴

In addition, it had given the Libyans an opportunity to see the Italians defeating and withdrawing from Libya and to pay off the old scores against the colonists.

During the war, the country suffered a very considerable destruction, which occurred in the cities and elsewhere It was falling into ruin because much of the transport and communication facilities and public buildings, built up by the Italians during their thirty years occupation, were destroyed Besides, most public schools were closed and two years of schooling, therefore, completely lost⁵

1 Wright, p 187.

2 Būlugma , p 60.

3 It has proved that the Italians failed to realise Libya as an agricultural developed colony for their own benefit and under their colonial schemes

4 Wright, p 185

5. Ibid , p 188.

Furthermore, the economic life of the Libyans was disrupted and economic problems were increased, because "agriculture suffered heavily as it fell mainly in the northern littoral of the country, which witnessed virtually all the fighting".¹

The other result of the war was that the Italian occupation was replaced by the British and French Military Administrations

However, the most significant result of the last war was the liberation of Libya from Italian domination. Secondly, following the Italian evacuation, six years after, the Libyan nation gained its freedom. By giving her formal independence, Libya was the first African country to win it after the last war

1 Sāyigh, p 420

CHAPTER THREE

Libya under the British
Military Administration
1943-1951

A General View

It was quite clear that the possibility of Libya's liberation from Fascist Italy was non-existent during the thirties. It was not until the beginning of the last war in 1939, when its clouds brought with them the probability of Italy's involvement in a conflict with other European powers.

We have already said that in June 1940 Italy declared war on Britain and France and entered the Great War on the side of Germany. By using her colony's bases, Italy planned to push deep into Egypt in the course of the war. At the same time, "Britain and France raced one another for possession of Libya's parts".¹ For about three years Libya, therefore, and Cyrenaica in particular, became a battleground between the mentioned conflicting powers.

In the course of the war Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were occupied by the British Eighth Army, while General Leclerc's Free French Brigade entered into Fezzan from the south.

Concerning the Libyan co-operation with the British army in the Libyan Desert, the British Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, gave Sayyid Idris and his followers some sort of official public obligation. In the House of Commons, he stated² that ". . . the Sanusis in Cyrenaica will, in no circumstances, again fall under Italian domination".³ But the Libyans complained about the Eden statement, which was given

1 First, p 56.

2. The Eden statement was a reply to a question about Libya operations, asked by Mr Emrys-Evans, on 8 January 1942. See, House of Commons Deb Vol. 377, column 77, (London, 1942).

3. Ibid, Column 78.

in January 1942, because it "did not even hold out the promise of independence for Cyrenaica, and failed to mention Tripolitania" ¹

It had been, indeed, taken as a sign of intended domination by Britain. With the exception of Sayyid Idrīs, who was apparently satisfied with private verbal assurances from the British, most of the Libyan exiles in Egypt, particularly the Tripolitanian leaders, were not content. They put a pressure on him by threatening to withdraw from their active collaboration with the British.

In fact, the British did not want to give written guarantees of independence for Libya. It was not because, as Dr. Majīd Khaddūrī says, ² the British might not have been able to fulfil their written pledges, but because they intended to administer the country after its occupation, as was the case with the Middle East settlement after the First World War.

After their occupation of Tripoli City on 23 January 1943, the British did show no determination to transfer the responsibilities of the country's control to the Libyans. This was the surest evidence of their intention to administer the country. During the war, the question of the conquered territories remained without any certain decision.

Therefore, when the dust of World War II had finally settled in September 1945, Libya had already been under three military administrations. ³ Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were administered by the British, and Fezzan by the French. By this military and colonial caretaker occupation, Libya fell, once again, under foreign control.

1 Wright, p 190

2 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 36

3 The three provinces were formally united by the Italian Royal Decree, issued in 1934

and remained so until 1949

For seven years, 1943-49, Libya was under the two occupying powers and administered on a care and maintenance basis according to the terms of the Hague Convention of 1906 ¹ During these years, the British started delaying the transference of power to the Libyans and refused to give them their independence. The only thing the British had done was to permit Sayyid Idris to return to Cyrenaica in 1944. Soon, they recognised him as Amir of Cyrenaica. Besides, in 1945, the British succeeded in getting a legal hold over the country at the Allied powers meeting in London, in which they pledged their support to Sayyid Idris in order to satisfy him and his followers ²

By the end of the war, the Italian African colonies were still under discussion between Britain and the United States. But in 1947, a peace conference was held in Paris, which resulted in the Italian Peace Treaty, ratified in September, 1947. In this treaty, Italy renounced all rights to her former colonies, and succeeded in getting trusteeship over Tripolitania with the support of the British and Americans ³. In addition, it was agreed that Britain, France, Russia and the United States were the only four great powers who could decide the future of all former Italian colonies.

Shortly after, in 1948, these four great powers were unable to agree over the question of how to settle the future of the former Italian colonies in Africa. Consequently, their disagreement

1 Owen, p 3

2 Press Release, Libyan Embassy, (London, No D) p 2

3 Ibid

brought the future of Libya, as a former Italian colony, onto the international stage

Having failed to find a formula, the Foreign Ministers of the four great powers referred the whole question to the United Nations, and agreed to accept the recommendations of the General Assembly by giving effect to them¹

In May 1949, the Libyan issue was debated, for the first time, in the United Nations. After six months, on 21 November 1949, the General Assembly was crowned with success when it resolved that the three provinces should be constituted as an independent country not later than 1 January 1952. In 1951, Libya became an independent state

The Political Development from 1943 to 1949

Between the evacuation of the Italians on 23 January 1943 and the resolution of the General Assembly on 21 November 1949, the Libyan people pursued, politically, their struggle for independence and later on widened their activities to include the diplomatic arena

It is a fact that Libya had been liberated from the Italians in January 1943, by the British and French forces, and had the chance of regaining her freedom when the issue was referred to the United Nations. But, this does not mean that, as Ruth First says, "the country and subdued population passed precipitately from colonisation to independence with sovereignty installed by the results of international and United Nations diplomacy",² only

1 Libya, The Road to Independence, (New York, 1952) p 1.

2 First, p 15.

In fact, her statement ignores the Libyan patriotic struggle since 1911 up to 1931 and the contribution of the Libyan exiles in Egypt during the second World War by their fighting on the side of Allies against the Italians. It also neglects their political activities, which took place outside Libya in Syria, Tunisia and Egypt from 1928 to 1940. Besides, the young Libyan people took over political action, as we shall see, during the seven years of the British Administration by protesting and demonstrating against its military rule, aiming at transferring the responsibilities of control to their hands, particularly after the establishment of some political parties.

The Establishment of the Libyan Political Parties

Up to the end of the second decade of the present century, both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica had never known political parties. Indeed, we can say that there were no political parties inside Libya until the end of the last war with the exception of the National Reform Party, which led the independence movement in Tripolitania after the first World War. Its important task was ruling the country on the behalf of the Tripolitanian Republic¹, and the establishment of the national newspaper Al-Liwā' al-Tarābulusī, in Tripoli City.

To assess the political contribution of the young Libyan people during the seven years of the British Administration, we have to go a few months back. Following the third and final British

¹ The Republic was inspired by Abdul Rahmān 'Azzām's thoughts of Arab nationalism. See, Wright, p.142.

occupation of Cyrenaica during the last war, General Montgomery, on 11 November 1942, declared that his military government would not involve itself in questions relating to the political affairs of the country's future ¹

After the British occupation of Tripolitania in the beginning of 1943 the military administration rejected the outright demand for independence of Libya, and was content with its oral promises. Not long afterwards, national movements and organised political groups started forming themselves and appeared throughout Libya. As a result, "a growing Libyan nationalism, demanding freedom and independence, made itself strongly felt both to the administering powers and to the outside world" ²

However, several political parties were established, for the first time, in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. Between 1943 and 1949, there were nine political parties in the whole of Libya. The most important, famous and influential one was the National Congress Party, (حزب المؤتمر الوطني) led by Bashīr Bay al-Sa'adāwī

Following the end of the last war's hostilities, the first Libyan political party, called the National Party, (الحزب الوطني) was established in Tripoli in (1364/1945), led by its president, Alī al-Faqīh Hassan. In April 1946, it was formally recognised by the British Administration.

From this party, its president and his brother withdrew and founded the Free National Bloc Party (حزب الكتلة الوطنية الحرة) in May 1946. In the same month, another party was established from

1 Wright, p 190.

2 Murābet, Facts about Libya, p 67

among the members of the National Party. It was known as the United National Front Party, (حرب الحبهة الوطنية المتحدة) led by Sālem al-Muntasir.

After the withdrawal of the Bloc Party from the United National Front Party, the latter was known as the Independence Party, (حرب الاستقلال) In addition, there were three political parties of lesser importance. The first of them was the Egypto-Tripolitanian Union Party, (حرب الاتحاد المصري الليطاني) founded in December 1946 and led by 'Alī Rajab and Yūsuf al-Mesharqī. It was derived from the Bloc Party. The two others were the Labour Party, (حرب العمال) which was established in September 1947, and the Liberal Party, (حرب الاحرار) in 1948.

Having combined their political demands in 1948, the first three parties formed, at that time, what was considered the largest and most influential political group in Tripolitania. All these political parties, indeed, have taken an active part in the political life of Tripolitania since they were established.

In Cyrenaica, a political group was formed in April 1943 and sprung from the 'Umar al-Mukhtār Club, which was originally formed as a sporting, social and cultural club. Therefore, it was known as the 'Umar al-Mukhtār's group,¹ (جماعة عمر المختار) led by Muṣṭafā Ibn 'Aāmīr. It was entirely consisted from the younger elements amongst the urban population, and became progressively more active in politics. It took its name from the patriotic hero of the Libyan

1. Annual Report of the United Nations Commissioner in Libya, (New York, 1950) p 8.

Resistance to the Italians, 'Umar al-Mukhtār

Because of its political trends and national goals, the 'Umar al-Mukhtār's Group was exposed to varying pressures and forced to change its name to the National Association (الجمعية الوطنية) within the towns of Cyrenaica, this association had several branches supporting the unity of Libya, and opposed to its partition.

From the new association, which was not different from the former group, the National Youth League (رابطة الشباب الوطني) was established. The unity and independence of all Libya under a constitutional monarchy were their most political demands. The League strongly adopted nationalist opinions which spread out from Egypt, Syria and Lebanon.

In December 1947, all political groups and organisations in Cyrenaica were dissolved in consequence of Idrīs's decision. In the following month, he himself had formed another political organisation in order "to assemble representatives of all shades of political opinion and all elements of the population".¹

In January 1948, the General National Congress of Cyrenaica (المؤتمر الوطني العام) was formed, containing seventy-one members who represented the tribes and the people of Cyrenaica, and supported the politics of the Government. It remained the only political body in Cyrenaica until it was dissolved by Idrīs in March 1950.

By the end of 1949, the 'Umar al-Mukhtār's Club re-opened after receiving permission to return for social, cultural and sporting

1 Ibid

purposes. Again it widened its activities by having "more the characteristics of a political party than a sporting club, directing its appeal to the nationalist aspirations of the educated young men and town dwellers" ¹

However, it is clear that after the end of the last war, several political parties and groups were established in Libya and took an active part towards the liberation of the country by criticising the British Military Administration and exerting a pressure on it to fulfil the promises, it had given. In addition, they were chiefly concerned with safeguarding the rights of the country and its people. They were inclined to reflect, to some extent, the general opinion of the Libyan nation. Besides, they had always been opposed to any political formula, concerning the future of Libya, which ignored the people's will. They refused to accept the partition of the country under foreign trusteeship, when Britain and Italy drew up the Beevin-Saforza plan, which was a compromise, satisfying the interests of both countries in Libya, while it gave France trusteeship over Fezzan.

Owing to the failure of the Great Powers to agree on the future of the three provinces, and realising the political purpose behind the British recognition of Sayyīd Idrīs as Amīr of the Cyrenaica Government on 1 June 1949, the Libyan political parties played an effective role to direct the United Nations' decision towards the national demands. They dealt with the United Nations Commissioner who was appointed to organise the transfer of power from the British and French Administrations to the Libyan people.

1 Ibid

Furthermore, the leaders of the political parties, who made themselves felt, strongly rejected a federal government, which the United Nations recommended to be set up in Libya. They considered themselves the spokesmen for Libya when they delivered petitions, on behalf of the Libyan people, to the Commissioner, based on their rights to choose their constitutional and political system.

Also, they made themselves felt when independence was finally decided upon. They opposed a constitution which was promulgated at the end of 1949 and based on a federal state with a hereditary monarchy and a representative system of government that gave the three provinces a separate local power¹. Their opposition to this constitution was expressed in passionate and even violent demonstrations. Besides, their demands were concentrated on the unification of the three Libyan provinces in one state, as they were emphasised by the poets, as we shall see.

1 Carpenter, B, "Libya a United Nations Experiment", (an article) p 1.

PART THREE

The Political Poetry of Three Libyan Poets
between 1911 - 1951

CHAPTER ONE

The Modern Poetical Movement in Libya

1835 - 1969

The Political and Literary Revival Movements
In Modern Arabic History

In the present part, we intend to study the political trends of Libyan poetry during the first half of the present century by showing them as they are expressed in the works of the three Libyan poets, al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah

Before doing so, we have to give first a brief review of the political factors in the Arab world in the nineteenth century, particularly, its second half and in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century in order that our treatment of their political views may have its proper background and complement

In fact, no one who wants to study the political poetry of any Arab country, and to assess the effective factors which helped in its emergence, can ignore the revival movements, political or literary, that occurred in the Arab world within that period

Apart from the independence movements of Ḥasan Ibn 'Alī Turkī in Tunisia in 1705, and of Aḥmad al-Qaramānī in Libya in 1711, the movement, which was led by 'Alī Sa'ūd in Arabia at the beginning of the twelfth century A H (the end of the eighteenth century), was considered the first attempt made by the Arabs after the fall of 'Abbāsīd State to establish an independent Arab state.¹

Although the Ottoman Empire remained, politically, the ruler of the Arab Muslim world and its capital, Istanbul was the centre of power over all Muslims and of the Caliphate, some protests, which

1 Sa'ūd, Amīn, al-Dawlah al-Arabīyah al-Mutaḥīdah, Vol. 1 (Cairo, 1936) p 6

were distinguished by major reform, took place in some parts of the Islamic world against the Turkish decline. The Wahhābī movement of the eighteenth century, which was founded in Arabia, was one of the earliest and most important of these reform movements.¹

There is no need to record the domestic and international circumstances by which the Arab world started to withdraw from the Ottoman Empire's grip in the nineteenth century. Nor is it necessary to narrate the reasons which prompted the Arabs to call for the establishing of their own states, particularly during the first World War.

Suffice it to say that the Arabs had a certain determination in doing that during the nineteenth century which witnessed the emergence of the national movements. At the beginning of the last century, we find the movement of Muḥammad 'Alī, (1805-1849) in Egypt, who, like the leaders of the above mentioned movements, governed the country "under a merely nominal Turkish suzerainty after attaining a position of great power and independence for himself and his descendants"²

Since this movement and until the end of the nineteenth century, it is hard to find in the Arab Muslim world a serious movement, aiming at independence from the Ottoman Empire in spite of the latter's corruption and inefficiency.³ Nevertheless, the nineteenth century

1 Khourī, M A , Poetry and the Making of Modern Egypt, (Leiden, 1971) p 7

2 Ibid , p 8

3 See, al-Maqdisī, Anīs, al-Ittijāhāt al-Adabīyah fī al-'ālam al-'Arabī, (Beirut, 1967) p 15

witnessed the reforms of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839-1897) and Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905) in Egypt, the Sanūsīyah movement, led by its founder Muhammad Ibn 'Alī al-Sanūsī, in Libya and the Mahdīyah movement in the Sudan

As the Wahhābī movement had done before, all these movements, as has been previously mentioned, aimed at the rebuilding of Islamic society and the correcting of its ills and problems by a return to the main principles of Islam in the light of the Qur'ān and the Hadīth. The Muslim world was, at that time, in great need of such reform movements, particularly after its political, military, social, economical and intellectual contact with the West. This direct contact resulted in the occupation of some Arab countries by the European powers throughout the nineteenth century

Because these revival movements were, up to the end of the last century, unsettled and hesitant to a certain degree, one could not find any great change in the social, economical and political life of the Arab world. I, therefore, entirely agree with Khourī when he says

"None of these movements, however, despite their significance and the great influence that some of them, especially Wahhabism, had on later Islamic movements, were able to solve the problems of internal disintegration and of foreign threat or domination that were confronting Islam at that time."¹

As a result of such an approach between East and West, the growing impact of the latter began to be felt in several parts of the Arab Muslim World at the close of the nineteenth century and

1. Khourī, p.7.

the beginning of the present century In addition to this fact, a new generation of some Arab countries in the East, particularly the Christian communities in Syria and Lebanon, who have been in contact with Europe since the 16th century,¹ were deeply attracted by Western civilisation, and influenced by its political thoughts especially nationalism, and widely adapted its cultural trends

Besides this current, no doubt, the faithful reforms, led by al-Afghānī and 'Abduh during the second half of the last century, may be considered an important factor, justifying the cultural and intellectual activities which emerged, in particular, at the hands of Egyptian scholars at the beginning of the present century Moreover, these reforms were followed by a momentous event, the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution in 1908 which may be considered another decisive factor, paving the way to the increase of these cultural and intellectual activities.

For this reason, the Ottoman current was manifest in the various aspects of life in the Arab countries. It was prevailing among intellectuals, politicians, writers, poets, religious men and others. All of them insisted on the Caliphate and its religious influence on Muslims and viewed the Ottoman power as the representative of the glory of the East and Islam.²

It was not until the First World War that the Arab countries, which had been occupied by the British and the French,³ could revolt

1. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Micropaedia, Vol. (U.S.A., 1974), p.469

2. See, al-Maqdisī, p.16.

3. The France took Algeria in 1830 and Tunisia in 1881. While Egypt was occupied by Britain in 1882.

against the Ottoman Empire because, as Mansfield says, "any movement for independence and revolt was naturally directed against them rather than the Porte" ¹

In addition, after the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 by Mustafā Kamāl Atātürk, the Ottoman current began to disappear in some Arab countries of the East, and was replaced by nationalist trends

So, there were, in brief, two main currents of thought to be distinguished during that period. The first aimed at the revival of Islam and the rebuilding of Islamic society on the basis of its true principles. The second was connected with nationalism and the liberal ideology of Western inspiration. ²

However, through the new generation and the Christian communities, the Arab countries knew "a 19th century movement aimed at the creation of a modern Arabic literature inspired by contacts with the West and a renewed interest in the great classical literature". ³ Besides, on the basis of the two above mentioned currents of thought a great deal of poetry was composed and left by the Arab poets of the period under study

In dealing with modern Libyan poetry through its political trends, no one can ignore the important role of modern Arabic poetry, particularly during the first half of the present century. It is entirely connected in its development with the general development

1. Mansfield, p.17.

2. Khourī, p 9.

3. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, p.469.

of Arabic literature in modern times as we shall see

It is necessary, therefore, to give briefly a general idea about the development of modern Arabic poetry and the features of this development at the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. By doing this, we give evidence of the existence of the literary connection between Libyan poetry and the modern poetical movement in other Arab countries

Indeed, the first step of progress and the very beginning of the intellectual awareness were started in the Arab world during the second half of the last century. Also, the term "modern Arabic literature", namely the literary Renaissance (in Arabic *al-Nahḍah al-Adabīyah*), was used during that period for the literary works which combined the emergence of the revival movements that have been previously mentioned, together with the intellectual currents of the West

Due to these facts, modern Arabic poetry, which emerged in some Arab countries, was based on the two following principle elements. The first was the revival of a traditional literary heritage. The second was the influence exerted by the social, political and intellectual life of the West, both in methods of thought and behaviour.

It should be noted, however, that they varied in different Arab countries, being stronger in some and weaker in others

It is in the light of these two above mentioned elements that the rebirth of modern Arabic poetry was achieved by its leader Mahmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (1839-1904) in Egypt and by other poets in some other Arab countries. But it is possible to say that al-Bārūdī was the only poet who laid down the basis of a neo-classical school

of modern Arabic poetry, in Egypt, in particular, and in the Arab world in general. His contribution was considered as "a magnificent advancement in modern Arabic poetry as a result of the thorough contact between East and West" ¹

Then came the younger generation of poets, like Shawqī and Hāfīz in Egypt, al-Zahāwī and al-Ruṣāfī in Iraq and al-Khourī in Lebanon, who followed the same pattern of action taken by their master al-Bārūdī. Although they practiced the great tradition of classical Arabic poetry to a high degree of perfection, it can be said that they added to their poetry the political as well as the social poem.² They gave a great attention to public themes and treated in a great many poems the political trends which were prevailing at the time, especially the Ottoman trend

After the appearance of this school and the spread of its poetry all over the Arab world, it began to face criticism from the modernists, particularly the Dīwān poets, like al-'Aqqād and al-Māzinī, who were inspired by English literature.

At the hands of 'Abdul Raḥmān Shukrī, 'Abbās Mahmūd al-'Aqqād, and Ibrāhīm Abdul Qādir al-Māzinī, the Dīwān Group was formed and a call for the unity of the poem was one of its main aims. In addition, they "advocated a poetry of emotion. At the same time, they insisted on the purity of the language" ³ Nevertheless, their poetry was

1. Edham, I A., Abū Shādy the Poet, a critical study, (Leipzig, 1936) p VII

2. Badawī, p. XII.

3. Nijland, C., Mikhā'il Nu'aymah, (Belgium, 1975), p.8.

fettered by mono rhyme and "remained within the limits of traditional Arabic metres" ¹

It should be noted here however that the poet Khalīl Muṭrān, (1872-1949) who was influenced by French literature, had already called for the unit of poem before. For he stands as a permanent figure among the poets of the modernising school by the freshness of his poetry ²

In America, Shua'ra' al-Mahjar, (the emigrant poets) had promoted modern Arabic poetry during the first two decades of the present century by their practising of new poetic forms devoid of the traditional concept of poetry in either its subjects or its style. Although their poetry was emotional, some of them composed in what is called al-Sh'ir al-Manthūr (Blank Verse). While others like Mīkhā'il Nu'aymah "wrote stanzaic poetry using multiple rhymes" ³

Further steps were taken in developing modern Arabic poetry by the Apollo Group whose poetry was based upon the imagination, passion and going beyond this world. It was influenced by the characteristics of romanticism, which is distinguished by a "conscious pre-occupation with the subjective and imaginative aspects of nature and life" ⁴

Another wave came to develop in Arabic poetry after the Second World War, represented in the younger poets of Egypt, Iraq, Syria

1 Ibid

2 al-Tellīsī, Kh, Rafīq Shā'ir al-Watan, (Tripoli, Libya, 1965), p 21

3 Nijland, p 10

4. Little, W, and others, The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, p.1751

and Lebanon It entered upon a progressive phase at their hands by producing a new kind of poetry which is the so-called al-Sh'ir al-Hurr (Free Verse) different in its themes and trends, in its style and the way of versification from what was produced by the pre-schools. They allowed themselves complete freedom from the rules of the traditional Arabic poetry which were appreciated by the classicists and had dominated for many centuries Their poetry was considered as a movement inspiring revolt against the traditional poetry as a whole

The Modern Poetical Movement in Libya

Libyan literature, in general, has a long history, but scholars have not done a great deal of work on its subjects, nor have they, by any means, had their last words

Also, any discussion about the modern literary movement in Libya would be, so long and many sided, that space does not permit it, nor does the purpose of this study justify following up the story of its development

Because I am dealing with a particular kind of Libyan poetry, namely political poetry, it is worthwhile here to give a brief survey of the history of the modern poetical movement in Libya and its development. Although Libyan poetry has a history, only a few works have been written on the subject by some Libyan and Arab writers. Furthermore, even if there are some studies on Libyan poetry, most of them are articles and essays, mainly dealing with the lives of some Libyan poets rather than with their works

In addition to this, Libyan poetry is still unknown in the Western world. In the small anthology of modern Arabic poetry and the collection of poems, composed by Arab writers during the years 1920-50, Arberry admitted into this collection a poem composed by Ibrāhīm al-Ustā 'Umar, as an example of Libyan poetry, entitled "To the Sanūsī"¹. This was in 1950. After more than twenty years, Haywood wrote, very briefly, about modern Libyan poetry, relying only on 'Afīfī's book, al-Ittijāhāt al-Waṭanīyyah fī al-Shi'r al-Lībī

1 Arberry, A J , Modern Arabic Poetry, (London, 1950) p 52

al-Ḥadīth, which was published in 1957'' He says

"Libya too has its poets. A book of 250 pages about them has been written by Muhammad Sādiq 'Afīfī with samples from about 40 poets. The country does not yet appear to have caught with the recent movements already described. Thus al-Ḥādī Maḥmūd Andāisha (b. 1908) apparently approves of blank verse, at least theoretically. A gifted younger poet, 'Alī Muhammad al-Raqī', writes like a mahjar poet."¹

With the exception of Arberry and Haywood, it is difficult to find any kind of literary study dealing with Libyan literature in general, or with modern Libyan poetry in particular.

However, we have already pointed out that the establishment of the Libyan press, which played a decisive role in developing literary life in Libya, was in 1866. Besides, the Sanūsīyāh Order,² which was founded in Libya in 1840, left its effects on the cultural movement, particularly in Cyrenaica, during the second half of the last century. Moreover, the first Libyan Dīwān, which was a collection of Mustafā Ibn Zikrī's poetry, was published in Cairo in 1310/1892. In addition to these facts, it is known that modern Arabic poetry, along with other forms of Arabic literature, began to revive in the nineteenth century, particularly the second half, at the hands of Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (1839-1904), who was considered the founder of the neo-classical school of modern Arabic Poetry in Egypt, indeed, in the Arab world.

1 Haywood, John A., Modern Arabic Literature 1800-1970, (London, 1971) p. 187.

2 Al-Ḥājirī considers the emergence of the Sanūsīyah in Libya the beginning of its modern history and also of its modern literary life. See, al-Ḥājirī, p. 7.

On these bases, one may say that modern Libyan poetry began during the second Ottoman period (1835-1911). To be precise, it was born, as a published collection, with the appearance of the first edition of Ibn Zikrī's Dīwān in 1892. It is true that up to 1892, there was no published collection of Libyan poetry. But a great many poems have been left, particularly, by the poets of the Sanūsīyah in Cyrenaica and by some Tripolitanian poets. By establishing the first public Libyan newspaper, al-Taraqī, in 1897 onwards, many poems appeared in it and in other newspapers and magazines, founded later on. In 1326/1908 the second compilation of Libyan poetry, which was Sulaiman al Bārūnī's Dīwān, was also published in Cairo.

Since that time and until the beginning of the fifties, the Libyan press was the only way through which a poet could publish his poetical output. Therefore, much can be deduced from the press of this period. Moreover, in the last twenty years some poets have published their works and several compilations appeared, representing the various stages of modern Libyan poetry.

According to the successive foreign waves which had passed through Libya in modern history, historians of modern Libyan literature are agreed upon the division of the movement of Libyan poetry into the following three stages:

- 1 The period of Ottoman rule, (1551-1911)
- 2 The period of the Italian occupation, (1911-43)
- 3 The period of Independence, (1951----

In fact, we can not accept this division as it stands for several reasons. Firstly, the period of Ottoman rule lasted for about four

centuries with a break of the Qaramānī rule (1711-1835), which was distinguished by its cultural characteristics, while little is known of the history of Libyan poetry, prior to the nineteenth century.

Secondly, the period between the Italian occupation and independence (1943-49) was not considered a separate period, but was added implicitly to the period of independence¹ Thirdly, this division was set before the outbreak of the Revolution of September 1969 which signified a new stage for Libyan literature.

Consequently, the movement of modern Libyan poetry may be divided here into four stages as follows

- 1 The period of Ottoman rule (1835-1911)
- 2 The period of the Italian and British occupations (1911-51)
- 3 The period of Independence (1951-1969)
- 4 The period of the Revolution (1969-)

This is not by any means to say that there is a clear-cut division between each period. What is meant, however, is that each period has a degree of relationship with the following one. It should be noted here that because no more than ten years have passed of the last period, which does not allow one to give a judgement, we will, therefore, outline the features of the first three periods of modern Libyan poetry

1 See, al-Ḥājirī, p 7 and al-Tellīsī, p 35

The Period of the Ottoman Rule
(1835-1911)

The summarised outline of historical, economical, social, educational and political aspects of Libya, given in Part Two, Chapter I, reveals the framework of the decisive struggle of a people who have been the subjects of the Ottoman Empire for about four centuries. It also reflects the condition of literature, particularly poetry, in Libya during the period which historians of Arabic literature call the Ottoman period.

By the eighteenth century "the decline of the Ottoman Empire brought general mis-rule, corruption, anarchy and stagnation"¹ Moreover, this decline and weakness extended to Arabic literature, even though the beginning of the process of decay in Arabic literature was, in fact, early in the sixteenth century, after the Ottoman conquest of Syria in 1516 and Egypt in 1517.

However, during the four centuries, following this conquest, the Ottoman period, in general, "was remarked by a general lack of vitality and imagination, a growing feeling of complacency, and self-sufficiency and an apparent unwillingness or inability to explore new horizons".²

As we have already mentioned, Libya came in 1551 under the Ottoman regime, which was interrupted by the Qaramānī takeover in the eighteenth century (1711). In 1835, the Turkish rule returned once more to Libya and the new regime remained until 1911. The

1 Lewis, p 16?

2 Badawī, p VII.

historians of the last period point to a distinct picture of increasing corruption and inefficiency in the Turkish rule until its last days

Therefore, literature and poetry in Libya during the Ottoman period was no better off than it was in other Arab countries, like Egypt and Syria, if not worse. To prove this fact, I would like to point out that in the course of the nineteenth century, Libya was keen on the preservation of traditions in various aspects, particularly in culture and literature without any attempt at invention or improvement

Moreover, Libya was still a part of the declining Ottoman Empire until 1911 when she was invaded by the Italians. This means that the Turkish decline was continued in Libya until the beginning of the second decade of the present century. In addition, it means that Libya was isolated from modern intellectual movements which emerged either in the West or in some Arab countries

Although the recovery of Arabic literature proceeded in the nineteenth century, particularly in its second half, and although "the movement, generally known as al-Nahḍa and sometimes al-Inbi'ath or the rebirth, began to be felt first in the Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, from where it spread, gradually, and in varying degrees to the rest of the Arab World",¹ literary life in Libya remained without adaptation to the new movement in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, it obtained nothing directly from the superior culture of the West at that time. In addition to this, the poems available are those which

1 Ibid, p VII.

can be found in the press of the period between 1897 and 1911, apart from the two published Dīwāns which have been previously mentioned.

No wonder then, for these reasons, that Arabic literature in Libya was devoid of the spirit of poetry, distinctive concepts and lively imagination. Indeed, until the beginning of the present century, Libyan literature was still suffering from "a confusion in meanings, a decline in literary style, a degeneration in ideas, and a disturbance in logical balancing".¹

Consequently, Libyan poetry, during this period which extends from 1835 to 1911, is distinguished by the same characteristics of general Arabic poetry in the Ottoman period. It remained a photocopy of Arabic poetry in the Age of depression because it was "artificial and imitative, lacking originality. It was rhetorical in style and exaggerated in sentiment".² In addition, its poetical themes were limited and confined to those kinds, 'Aghrād, known in the Ottoman period, such as artificial love-poetry, Ghazal, appealing for the help of the Prophet, peace be upon him, Madā'ih Nabawīyah, elegiac poetry, Rithā' and panegyrical poems, Madīh.

With the beginning of the present century, some young educated men, who had started publishing their literary works in the Libyan newspapers, could not remain protected from the impact of the development of modern Arabic literature like Ahmad al-Shārif (1872-1959). Their contact with this development was through the literary

1 Edham, p 2.

2 Haywood, pp 26-27

output of some noted modern Arabic writers and poets, at the head of whom was Ahmad Shawqī (1868-1932) and Hāfız Ibrāhīm (1871-1932) in Egypt and Jamāl Sıdqī al-Zahāwī (1863-1936) and Ma'rūf al-Ruṣāfī (1875-1945) in Iraq

It seems to me a natural result that the response of Libyan poetry to the modern Arabic poetry was not great and came late. Firstly, because of the fact that modern Arabic poetry is "a gradual product of the confrontation between the traditional medieval values, which reigned supreme until the end of the eighteenth century, and the modern cultural values of the West."¹

Secondly, it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that Arabic poetry responded gradually to "the stimulus of internal reform and the challenge of Western influence"²

The Libyan poetry, which was composed and has survived up to the present times, was the product of a combination of other factors, mainly internal. During the period we have been considering three significant changes which took place in Libya. The first of these was the establishment of the Sanūsīyah Order in 1840. The second was the foundation of the first newspaper in 1866. The third change was the Ottoman Constitution of 1908, which resulted in political freedom and the flourishing of the Libyan press

Each change had, indeed, an effect on Libyan life, socially, politically and culturally. Not only were the effects of all these

1 Badawī, p VII.

2 Khourī & Algar, p 1

changes, as is clear, late, but also they were, at times, more limited than one would expect

For instance, although the Sanūsīyah Order had a great impact on the religious aspect, in addition, it had an educational effect through its Zawāyā, but there is no doubt that it was opposed to all Western culture and European influence. Because of its cultural ideals and political attitudes which reflect a complete lack of interest in the West, it was considered by some scholars as "a revivalist movement but conservative if not reactionary" ¹

However, what the Sanūsīyah poets had left in the literary field particularly their poetical output is most acceptable as we shall see. But in spite of this, most of the Sanūsīyah's intellectuals, who came largely from the Ikhwān (Brothers) of the Zawāyā in Cyrenaica, were unable to play their full role in developing the political, social and literary aspects. This means that this group of educated people, either teachers of the Order or its students, were not affected immensely by the various changes to which their era was witness. No wonder! When we know that they took the same attitude toward the West which was regarded by the Order itself as hostile. Therefore, they remained removed from the literary currents of the West.

Nevertheless, if one casts a glance at the style of the poetry left by those who were brought up in the Sanūsīyah Zawāyā, one can easily observe that it has more originality than that composed in the towns by those who were educated in modern schools ². The former's

1 Ziadeh, N, Sanūsīyah, p 4.

2 Al-Hājirī, p 49

poetry is traditional but mediocre These lines, which were composed by one of the Sanūsīyah poets, 'Abdul Rahīm al-Maghbūb elegising the founder of the Order, are a fine specimen of their poetry and its style

ود معها لا يزال اليوم يهمل	ما نال عينك لا باليوم تتحلل
من العصا شواط كان يشتعمل	كأنما صممت بالسول أو كحللت
فاحصل الارض منها صيب هطل	تحالها مسرة قد لاح نارقها
والقلب في شرك الاحزان محتمل	والوجه أسع والاعضاء ماحلة
كان الوطاء له السعدان والأسل	والحب ان تدعه يوما لمصطح

Why is it that your eye finds no sleep,
And its tears are still flowing today?
It is as if it was gouged by a thorn or was darkened,
By a variety of eupharbia or was aflame
It appeared to you a cloud and its glimpse had emerged,
The earth, therefore, was moistened by a heavy rain
The face is dark-brown and the organs of the body are skinny,
And the heart is confused in a web of sadness.
And if you call up the side some day for bed,
The rush will be its low ground

On the other hand the poetry of those who were educated in the towns, is evidence of that kind of poetry which is rich with metaphors, the symmetry of clauses and sentences, verbal jugglery, and lavish use of paranomasia and conformity.

As proof for this, I give the following quotation of Ahmad al-Faqīh Hassan, died in 1304/1887. In one of his poems, he describes an European dancer by saying

طابت حسن شمائل أحواتها	رومية بهرت بلعياتها
رشقاتها، والسحرى لحظاتها	السكرى رشقاتها، والموتى

رومية بهرت بتلعبساتها فاقت بحسن شمائل أحواتها
المكرى رشقاتها ، والموتى رشقاتها ، والسحرى لحطاتها
والدعرى حظراتها ، والويلى لغقاتها ، والرحمى عمراتها
فتاة ، فتاة ، فتاة ، فتاة لكس تعيد الروح من عطفاتها
طدارت شدرا اليك نعيها فأحدر طعان الهدى من كمراتها
قامت تختركي ترسا لعة لم تدر ان الموت فى حركاتها

....

الله لأكر ، ما أتم حالها قد كل وصى عن حميد صفاتها
الله يعلم ما الأقى فى الحما لما توارت فى مقاصيراتها 1

A Greek woman showed off her charms,
And excelled, with fine qualities, her companions
Drunkenness is in her sips, death is,
In her elegance, and beauty is in her looks
And panic is in her swinging gaits, distress is,
In her turnings, and shame is in her winks
(She is) fascinating, murderous and lethal,
Nevertheless she brings back the breath of life by her feeling.
If she looks obliquely at you with her eyes,
Be cautious of the defeats of the eyelashes' attacks.
She stood up prancing to show us her play,
But she did not know that death is in her movements

God is great, how much more perfect her beauty is',
My description of her good characteristics was not crowned
with success
God knows how much I suffer inside,
When she disappeared into her compartment

Also their poetical subjects "consisted largely of empty panegyrics
addressed to local rulers and officials, commemorations of social

1. al-Ḥājirī, pp. 74-75.

events in poems ending in chronograms or trivial social occasions, mutual congratulations and greetings couched in grossly exaggerated, inflated and high-falutin terms. The Arabic is stilted and the style generally turgid and devoid of feeling. The imagery is conventional and utterly lacking in original perfection".¹

Moreover, among what they left was a collection of poems which belongs to the so-called didactic poetry. In addition to this, they left a great deal of al-Tashtīrāt (التشطيرات) and al-Takhamīsāt (التحميسات)

This kind of poetry seems to have been appreciated by the Libyan poets of this period, at the head of whom was Mustafā Ibn Zīkrī whose examples of political poetry will be mentioned later on. In one of his poems, in which he praises Zakī Pāshā for his restoration of a mosque, Ibn Zīkrī says

شاهدتم فعل الرمان بمسجد برل الحراب به وقر العابد
يشكو تصدع قلبه من حجره ويقول ما للها حزين تناعدوا
2. فأحتمسوه وقد حبرتم قلبه ودعا كثيرا فلكم فسراهدوا

You have witnessed the action of time on a mosque,
Which fell into ruin and (from which) the servant of God escaped.
It complains of the breaking of its heart because of its neglect,
And it says why did the emigrants go away?
You replied to it when you treated its heart with kindness,
While, before you it called many who refused to do anything

1 Badawī, p X

2 Dīwān Muṣṭafā Ibn Zīkrī, (Cairo, 1310/1892) p 12

However, like others of their generation, the Libyan poets wrote their poetry responding to the traditional concept and form which predominated for about four centuries of the Ottoman period

The Period of the Italian and British Occupations

(1911-1951)

Libyan poetry had, indeed, developed during the period of the Italian occupation and British Administration which extended from 1911 to 1951

In an attempt to assess the cultural tendencies in Libya in the light of the Italian occupation's effect, 'Abdul Qādir Abū Harūs¹ divides these tendencies into three kinds. The first one was represented by older poets and writers, whose lives span the time of the second Ottoman period and that of the Italian occupation. These poets and writers had drunk only from the springs of the old classical Arabic literature and did not show any tendency to accept the Italian culture. Their intellectual background goes back only to the Arabic language and Islamic culture. Among these poets are al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah

The second, which was described as a current of the middle, was distinguished by its eastern and western orientation. Its representatives have combined the good qualities of both the Arabic and western culture, but they were few

The final one was the modern tendency, represented by a very few writers whose education was mainly in Italian. Their culture, in fact, belongs to the West, because they were given the chance to pursue their higher education in Europe, particularly Italy

1 Majallat Hunā Tarābulus al-Gharb, Vol 2, No 27, June 1955, pp 30-31
See also al-Hājiri, pp 69-70

It is clear that the predominant tendency is that of the old poets and writers whose intellectual background was confined to the Arabic language and Islamic culture

For about thirty years, brutal efforts were made, as we have already mentioned, by the Italians to kill Arabic and Islamic culture in Libya. They disbanded any Arabic publication to be sold or circulated among educated men. Many were sentenced for the crime of holding or keeping an Arabic magazine, smuggled from the Arab countries, particularly Egypt. Many were also arrested on the charge of having or reading any Arabic book. Severe measures were taken to prevent Arabic newspapers and magazines from circulation ¹

In spite of these efforts to break up the relationship, which is very firm and close, between Libyan literature and modern Arabic literature in other Arab countries, there was always an interrelationship between them. The latter's effects on literary movement in Libya, particularly the poetry, was obvious during the first half of the present century, which is under discussion. A continuous influence of each stage of modern Arabic poetry on the Libyan poets of this period was manifest

In his analysis of poetical trends in Libya, al-Tellīsī² pointed out the role of modern schools of Arabic poetry in developing modern Libyan poetry and indicated its effects on Libyan poets, and on the general literary movement in Libya

1 See, al-Tellīsī, p 38, al-Hājūrī, p 89, al-Sanūsī, Rāsūd al-Zubair, al Intifādāt al 'Arabīyah fī al-Sha'ir al Lībī, (Tripoli, Libya, 1968) p.5, and 'Afīfī, Muhammad al-Sādiq, al Ittijāhāt al Waṭaniyah fī Sha'ir al Lībī al-Hadīth, p. 120

2 See al-Tellīsī, pp 33-42.

He said that Libyan poetry was developed at the hands of the poets of the Italian period like al-Shārīf and Rafīq. They produced a kind of poetry which does not contain the diction and the rhetorics of the earlier period. Moreover, they took up themes of contemporary social, political and scientific significance which are dealt with by the neo-classical poets, like Shawqī and Ḥāfīz.¹

As an example, we find in their poetry many poems which provide a direct or indirect commentary on political or social problems of the time instead of the poetry of panegyric or self-praise, as we shall see.

The poets of this period, indeed, experienced the movement of rebirth, which started in some Arab countries in the second half of the nineteenth century. They understood that the development of Libyan poetry could only be realised by getting rid of the form which was devoid of the spirit of poetry and was prevailing in the Ottoman period. This could not be made except by referring to the old Arabic poetry in its original form.

The influence of the neo-classical school of modern Arabic poetry can be easily seen in the first generation of Libyan poets, (we can call them al-Shu'arā' as-Shuyūkh, the elder poets), who followed extensively the tendencies of the above-mentioned school. It may be observed when you read the varieties of their verse, either the form of versification or the themes that they dealt with.

1 Ibid , p 37.

In fact, the glorious past of Arabic literature, particularly the poetry, played an important part in their intellectual background and, consequently, in shaping their poetical orientation. But it may be mentioned, in addition, that in spite of their adaptation of the ideas and style of the neo-classical school, the Libyan poets were less perfectionist than the masters of this school in Egypt

However, like most of their contemporaries in the Arab countries, al-Shārif, Rafīq, Qanābah and others, who represent the first generation of modern Libyan poetry, found their ideal form in the classical Arabic poetic tradition, namely the monorhyme ode (Qaṣīdah)

Regarding its subjects, the poetical production of Libyan poets during this period overflows with the spirit of patriotism and was distinguished by sincerity and realism. It glorified the heroes of Libya who fought for her freedom, and shaped her struggle against colonisation. It shed a light on one of the brilliant pages of Arabic heroism in Libya

It may be, therefore, considered one of the effective elements in Libya's awaking and its political development. It may be regarded as a brilliant piece of modern Libyan history and consequently of the general history of the Arabs in modern times. As a result, one can confidently say that Libyan poetry, in this period, witnessed a distinct change compared to what was current in the nineteenth century.

Because of their admiration of the neo-classical poets of Egypt and Iraq, the Libyan poets of this period were not less traditional than them. Furthermore, they were not affected by other schools of modern Arabic poetry, like the Dīwān's school, Apollo Group and

al-Mahjar school which introduced several innovations into modern Arabic poetry. Consequently, it is not strange that they rejected the so-called Free Verse

In addition to this fact, and in spite of the direct contact with the West for about forty years through the Italian occupation and British Administration, the results of this contact on Libyan literature in general and the poetry in particular was, to a considerable extent, passive. This is not surprising if we keep in our mind that the Italian attitude towards Arabic literature and Islamic culture was hostile. This prevented the Libyan poets from adapting Western culture, and created, indeed, a reaction against it. Besides, most of the Libyan people, particularly the young men, were busy with a fight which lasted a quarter of a century

But these facts do not mean that literature and poetry in Libya were suffering from a lack of the literary currents of the West. Libyan poetry, for instance, was affected by these currents through the schools of modern Arabic poetry which emerged in Egypt, the Lebanon and America. The effect was also made through the Libyan student who, as we have previously mentioned, pursued their higher education in the famous cultural centres either in al-Azhar in Egypt or in al-Zaitūnah in Tunisia. While some of them went to Syria and settled there for some years and others chose Istanbul to continue their education

It was made through the Egyptian literary magazines, especially al-Thaqāfah (the Culture) and al-Risālah (the Message), which were smuggled into Libya and secretly circulated among the young educated

It should be noted here that for fear of the Italian authorities, most of the Libyan poetry of this period remained either in the hearts of the poets or in their memories, or written on small pieces of paper and hidden in secret places. As a result of this, a great deal of this poetry was lost and a mere handful of poems of each Libyan poet has survived, a little being published in some Libyan newspapers and magazines during the Italian occupation

Although the Italians set up their own printing-press with Arabic founts, no literary Arabic books came from it. Its output was restricted mainly to a few formal publications. Apart from these, the Italians issued nothing of interest for the literary life of Libya

However, the end of this period witnessed the emergence of another generation of Libyan poets who were born and brought up during the Italian occupation. They were educated, poetically, at the hands of the first generation, al-Shu'arā' as-Shuyūkh and through the literary magazines and books which were smuggled from Egypt.¹ But their contribution to the poetical movement in Libya was made during the forties

Among this generation, was the poet Ibrāhīm al-Uṣṭā 'Umar (1907-1950) whose poetic genius was presented by his remarkable poem, entitled al-Bulbul wa al-Waker (the Nightingale and Nest) by which he means himself and his country. It was composed during the second World War and after his joining the Libyan army which was formed from

1 See, al-Hājirī, p 139.

among the Libyan exiles in Egypt in 1940 to fight alongside the British against the Italians

In it he says

أطرق الليل في صمت عميق ورأيت الدمع في عييه حال
قلت لا تيأس في الحوسروى لامعات وعموم في الشمال
طدا ما أرعدت فهي حريق يسعر الأعداء في تلك التلال
والى أوطاننا نأب عود ان يشاء الله في وقت مسر
قال أستودعك الله المحيد والى ان يلتقى أحرى ، ومسر 1

The nightingale bowed its head in deep silence,
And I saw its eyes filled with tears.
I said do not give up all hope because there were lustrous
lightenings in the sky,
And clouds in the North
If they (clouds) trembled, it was but a fire,
Burning our enemies in those hills
Then, we will once again go back to our country,
In a happy time, if God wills
The nightingale said great God be with you,
Until we meet each other again
Then, it flew away.

The Period of Independence

(1951-1969)

The poetry of this period is considered a progressive stage, made by the third generation of Libyan poets (we can call them al-Shu'arā' as-Shabāb, the younger poets), who came after the second World War

On the whole, they formed another step in the development of modern Arabic poetry in Libya for the following reasons. In their culture, they entirely belonged to modern Arabic literature. They could revolutionise their poetry as their contemporary Arab poets had done. They adopted the new style of Arabic poetry, the so-called al-Sh 'ir al-Hurr (Free Verse) and produced poems totally devoid of classical connotations and traditional style¹

Their poetical works derived all of their valuation from their readings of the works of the Apollo Group and of the Free Verse poets. Their skill in composing poems of this kind of poetry was, indeed, due to the example set by al-Bayyātī, Ṣalāh 'Abdul Ṣabūr, Nizār Qabbānī and others

Also, they admired the Maḥjar poets such as Ilīyā Abū Mādī, 'Umar Abū Rīshah, Abū Shabakah and the Apollo Group such as Dr. Ibrāhīm Nājī, Dr Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shadī and 'Alī Maḥmūd Taha. The younger Libyan poets could not remain immune from these literary influences which occurred during the first half of the present century.

There is, in fact, a complete break between the poets of this period and the poets of neo-classical school, such as al-Shārīf,

1. Al-Tellīsī, p.40.

Rafīq and Qanābah in their intellectual background and their literary output. The former's poetry is distinguished by a freshness in its themes and style. The result was that a new form of poetry was presented, for the first time, in modern Libyan poetry. By their readings of the romantics' poetry, they were opened to wider horizons of themes and language itself than the neo-classical poets were offering. Of course, their connection with the Apollo Group, the Mahjar poets, and the Free Verse poets rather than with neo-classicists, must have given them a new understanding of poetry. One of the consequences of the growth of this understanding among the younger poets was that they were confronted with different kinds of subjects.

Here is the poet 'Alī Sadqī Abdul Qādir (1924-.) who left a great many poems which are typical of the Free Verse. In the following poem, he is clearly influenced by this type of poetry which is devoid of mono-rhyme and a single metre

على صدر أمي عفوت طويلا
وفي راحتي لعة لي جديدة
أتاني بها والدي .
ومد لها بي حريدة
بأسيبة غسلها المطر ..
ودقت شآبيبها العاطفة
بدي رتيب ..
كوشوشة العدلي

1.

On the breast of my mother I slumbered long,
A new toy in my hand.
My father brought it to me,

1. Abdul Qādir, A.S., Dīwān Ahlām wa thawrah, (Cairo, 1957) p 10

And he had wrapped it up in a newspaper,
On an evening, washed by rain
Its showers hit the window,
With a monotonous beat,
Like the whisper of the nightingale

In addition to the new form, they extended the subjects with which they deal to include human problems, like poverty, ignorance, sickness and so forth. This, eventually, led to the result that a poet became the spokesman of lower class people.¹ Apart from their new subjects, they produced their own language. They were for a short time ready to accept the new forms which they found in the above mentioned poets

This can be observed in the works of 'Alī Muhammad al-Riqā'ī (1934-1966) who enriched modern Libyan poetry in the fifties and sixties with many poems, using multiple rhyme and different metres in the various parts of the poem, instead of the usual mono-rhyme and single metre poems

From a fine descriptive poem entitled, Ashwāq Ṣaghīrah (Youthful Longings), composed by al-Riqā'ī, who is the best example of the poets of this period, I give the following lines

يا حدوة الحب العميق ..
لا تطغي ، فلكم يعدنا الحبيس
لك في قراسا الحصر .. في يوم انتصار
وجه صاف كوجه أبي يدندن للسهار
حيث المساطات المعيدة والقفار .

1 See, Badawī, p IX.

يا حدوة الحب العميق .
شبي بأصلاحي على يوم انتصار
ما رلت أشده ..
ويا حصار سارعنا القريب
فلتستعنى أنتاه ، ولتعلن بصوتك الحنون
1
ميلاد أفراح الصغار

Oh, firebrand of deep love
Do not die down,
How much does longing afflict us
You have in our green villages,
On the day of victory,
A pure face like my father's face
Crooning to the day time
Where the long distances and deserts
Oh, firebrand of deep love
Blaze up in my chest because,
I have a day of victory
I am still looking for it
Oh, baker of our nearer street,
Wake up, oh father,
And announce, by your loving song,
The birth of youngers' happiness

This attempt and the others created, in fact, a favourable atmosphere for this kind of poetry. Besides, these successful norms have attracted some contemporary poets who resented the restrictions of the traditional poetry, and were prepared to adopt the new ideas and forms of the Free Verse.

But in spite of these attempts and their success, this kind of poetry is still struggling for its future in Libya. The reason is

1. Al-Riqā'ī, A.M., Dīwān Ashwāq Ṣaghīrah, (Tripoli, 1966) p 17

that, as Nijland says, "to effect a change requires more than a disposition. The circumstances must favour the change and creative personality is needed to translate all this into action" ¹

This remains as an important fact concerning the future of this kind of poetry in Libya

1 Nijland, p 2.

Political Poetry
Its Historical Background

The following Chapters present a collection of poems which were composed by three well-known Libyan poets during the Italian and British occupations of Libya. They assess the contribution of al-Shārif, Rafīq, and Qanābah, as leading poets within that period, to modern Libyan poetry, in general and to the national struggle, which is a distinct phase in modern Libyan history, and to the political movement in particular. This collection of poems will display the various political currents that affected the Libyan poets at that time.

But, before proceeding to the topic of these chapters and tracing the features of Libyan political poetry's development, it is worthwhile to explain, briefly, the meaning of political poetry and its historical background in Arabic poetry in general.

Like anyone, the poet has, no doubt, an attitude towards the events of his time and what is happening around him, particularly the political life, either by living on the periphery of this life, not paying any attention to its condition if it is good or bad, quiet or disturbed, or by living in its overflow and responding to its currents.

As a result, his political poetry is those poems which are composed for the purpose of describing his political views towards political life. In other words, it is the means by which the poet analyses the political activities and the conditions of power in order to express his ideas and his response to particular events. Because of his living in the battleground of political life, the poet always finds himself in the position of responding to the political

currents which are prevailing in his time

On these bases, political poetry deals with the matters of public affairs and the conditions of power relating to the people and the country. In brief, "political poetry may be defined as poetry that deals with public themes or public figures, with events that extend beyond the concerns of the individual self" ¹

However, political poetry is a very old theme in Arabic literature. It has been written in various historical periods. During the Jāhīlīyah (the pre-Islamic period), it took the form of al-Hijā' (satire) when the poet attacks the enemies of his tribe or clan, and of al-Madh wa al-Rithā'a (praise and elegy) when he defends his people, recounts their merits and eulogises their dead in the theatres of war, and of al-Hamāsah (zeal) when he describes their glories in the struggle and records their battles against their enemies

But, the term was introduced about the second half of the first century of al-Hijra (Eighth century) to describe the political trends that were created by the political parties during the Umayyad Dynasty, (41-132/661-750). It occurred as a new theme and a new type of poetry and reached its peak when the adherent poets of conflicting political parties took an active part after the transfer of Caliphate to the Umayyad dynasty.² This poetry, which is so-called al-Naqā'id (the polemic poems), reflects the political conflict on the question of al-Khilāfah (Caliphate) between the Umayyads and their opponents

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1. Preminger A., and others, Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, (U.K, 1975) p 970
 2. See, Gibb, H.A.R., Arabic Literature (Oxford University Press, 1962), p.42.

For the productive period of political poetry was the Umayyad period

In spite of the weakness of party spirit and tribal fanaticism during the 'Abbāsīd Dynasty, this kind of poetry emerged only among the poets who adopted the movement, of the so-called al-Shu' ūbiyah, which refused to recognise the privileged position of the Arabs

Al-Andalus also knew political poetry in its various periods, represented, particularly, in those poems in which the Arab poets mourned for the cities of al-Andalus and its Kings after its conquest by the Spanish. Most of this poetry was inspired by a religious colouring¹

In modern times, when the East contacted the West and the latter's influence increased in the Arab countries during the nineteenth century, the new political circumstances and social conditions resulted in the emergence of social and political poetry. At the close of the last century, political poetry appeared once again at the hands of the greatest Egyptian poet, Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī, the first to present a political poem in modern Arabic literature

Much poetry was written by the younger generation of neo-classical poets, like Ahmad Shawqī and Hāfiẓ Ibrāhīm who gave increased attention to public themes. They added, as we have already said, the political as well as the social poem. It is obvious that political poetry through the ages was a weapon, used by the tribes, parties, governments, states and nations to protect their threatened rights or to struggle against invaders or to fulfil hostile aims against their enemies

1. Mas'ūd, Jubrān, al-Muḥīt fī adab al-bakālūriyā, Vol.2, (Beirut, 1959), p.447.

Libyan Political Poetry

The history of Libyan political poetry is a relatively long one. To find this genre of poetry in modern Libyan literature, one can go back to the second half of the nineteenth century, but not much further than the 1890s

In fact, most of the Libyan poetry, composed during the Ottoman period has been lost for several reasons. Firstly, the printing-press was set up only in 1863 and the first newspaper was established in 1866 in Libya. Nevertheless, no Libyan poetry was published until 1897 when the first Libyan public newspaper was established. Secondly most of the Libyan poets did not take care of their poetry or show interest in publishing it with the exception of Mustafā Ibn Zikrī and Sulaimān al-Bārūnī, as we have previously mentioned. Thirdly, the difficult circumstances which prevailed in Libya during the Italian occupation, like war, immigration and colonial attitudes towards anything belonging to literature or culture in general.

However, among what has been left of the poetry of this period, we find several items of political poetry. The first poem we meet is that composed by Muṣṭafā Ibn Zikrī, but not included in his published Dīwān, entitled (the Tripolitanian Congratulations on the great Victories). It was published in al-Taraqī newspaper on 3rd July 1897, on the occasion of the Turkish victory in the war with the Greeks in that year

Besides this, we find a poem composed by Muḥammad 'Abdallāh al-Sunnī between 1895-1899

Up to the year 1911, some political poems appeared in the Libyan newspapers, particularly after the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution in 1908. They were left by al-Bārūnī, al-Shārīf and others as we shall see. Although these poems were very few, they reflected the political

trends of a time

The period, extending from 1911 to 1951, witnessed a vital contribution to political poetry in Libya, made by several poets at the head of them, Aḥmad al-Shārif, Ahmad Rafīq and Aḥmad Qanābah.

According to the historical circumstances and the political conditions, which prevailed in Libya during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the present century, we can say that Libyan political poetry is mainly the product of its own environmental factors and external causes. It is a result of the events of the nineteenth century which the Arab Muslim world witnessed. It is also the logical consequence of half a century of fighting for freedom and independence against the Italian occupation and British obstinacy in not giving the Libyan people their full liberation. The influence of modern Arabic literature, particularly poetry, and its tendencies, must be considered as one of the external factors which directed political poetry in Libya.

In the light of these factors and causes, I will deal with the various trends of political poetry of the above-mentioned three Libyan poets, which was composed mainly during the period of the Italian and British occupations, assessing its value and importance as a historical source for political trends in Libya.

According to the political currents which were prevailing in the Arab Muslim world during the above mentioned period, their political poetry can be classified into three trends. In the second chapter of this part I will deal with the Ottoman and Islamic trend. The patriotic and Arab nationalist trends will be dealt with in the third and fourth chapters respectively.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to two points. The first one is that although historians divided the period from 1911 to 1951 into two stages, the Italian and British, because each stage is distinguished by its own historical features, nevertheless, I am inclined to ignore this division in my dealing with the political poetry of this period and to consider both stages as one period. Both are characterised by the same political features, namely colonisation, which the Libyan poets dealt with. The second point is that the quotations regarding the above-mentioned aspect will be confined as far as possible to the poetry of the three leading Libyan poets, al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah.

Its aspects

Because we are attempting to analyse the aspects of political poetry of the above-mentioned three Libyan poets, and to assess the characteristics of each aspect and its motives, it is also worthwhile to make a few expository remarks on these aspects in general with the intention of laying down a useful definition of what patriotism, nationalism and Ottomanism, which is an Islamic trend, meant to them?

Although scholars speak of the meaning of patriotism in different ways, they agree upon a meaning such as love of or zealous devotion to one's country.¹ Patriotism, as one's love of country, is an old meaning which has existed from time immemorial. But it has recently taken a political form which gets mixed up with other terms like nationality, individualism and regionalism. It was also separated from religion because, as some claim, there is no relationship between them.²

It is not, therefore, surprising to find some regarding if not contradicting each other, patriotism as a vice, and consequently condemning it only for its dark side. All their arguments are directed against its misuse. As a reverse position to this, some regarded it as the virtue of one's love for his country and of exerting himself to defend its freedom and rights. At the same time his love of country does not contrast with the love of other nations. For, it was said love of country is part of faith, because religion is a source of this love and its motive. Among those who understood patriotism on the basis of religion during the period which concerns

1 Little, W , and others, p 1529.

2 See, Shikho, Lewis, al-Sharq (The East) Magazine, (Beirut, 1898) p 20

us were al-'Afghānī, Muḥammad 'Abduh and 'Abdul Rahmān al-Kawākibī

In other words "patriotism is a distinct virtue when it means self-sacrifice for the sake of community, but it is quickly transformed into a vice when it oversteps its reasonable limits and becomes a sort of massive individualism and egoism" ¹

During the second half of the nineteenth century, contact with the West increased and resulted in sowing the seeds of Arab nationalism which was based upon the concept of nationhood regardless of religion. A number of Arab writers, blinded by the impact of European nationalism on the course of world politics during the 19th and 20th centuries, have introduced it through their writings

Therefore, it is not surprising when Bernard Lewis observed that "nationalism was strongest among the Christians, least affected by the Muslim ideal of unity".² The reason behind this was that nationalism, as a political philosophy, was defined as "an ideology and sentiment that involves the commitment of an individual's secular loyalty to the nation-state".³ Secondly, when Arab nationalism was born it was of mixed origin. Lewis added to the elements of this mixed origin of "the old Arab dislike of Turks and the urgent mistrust of the encroaching and alien West the European idea of nationality and a revival of the Arabic language and culture".⁴

In fact, the Ottoman spirit remained strong among most Arab subjects of the Empire. In addition, "the strength of pan-Islamic

1 Edham, p 21.

2. Lewis, p 173.

3. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, p 219.

4 op cit., p 173

feeling was increasing as a reaction to the nineteenth century invasion of the world of Islam by Christian Europe" ¹ In the later part of the second half of the nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth centuries, Ottomanism meant something different from Arab nationalism. During this period it was a distinct political trend, extended to Arabic literature. It was linked with Caliphate and proclaimed by al-'Afghānī and 'Abduh

Because of the weakness of the Ottoman Empire, the political influence of Europe extended to some of its provinces, but resulted in a growing of the feeling of the Islamic tie and of the sense of danger which threatened the Islamic world as a whole. These facts urged the Muslims, particularly the Arabs, to come together around Constantinople as the centre of the Islamic Caliphate. Moreover, "they all seemed to maintain that Turkey was the only outside force which could protect their country from being absorbed into" ² the European powers

Therefore, when the Sultan 'Abdul Hamīd II (1876-1909), in the name of religion and the Caliphate, called for pan-Islamism which was engendered by the preaching of al-'Afghānī, his call had grown immensely and gained great influence among leaders, poets and writers. It was in the powerful spirit of pan-Islamism that the press in most of the Arab countries supported the Sultan's call. In addition, some prominent Arab leaders, like the Egyptian nationalist leader Muṣṭafā Kāmīl ³ and Sayyīd Ahmad al-Sharīf, ⁴ the leader of the Sanūsīyah Order in Libya, supported this call as well. Besides, many Arab poets took

1 Mansfield, P., the Arabs, (London, 1978) p 163

2 Khourī, p 103

3 See, al-Maqḍīsī, p 19

4 See, Pritchard, p 92

the view that Turkey was the only Muslim power capable of protecting the interests of the Islamic world

It is this political current which emerged in modern Arabic poetry at the hands of Shawqī, Ḥāfiẓ and Aḥmad Muḥarram who were advocating it in spite of Ottoman misrule

In Libya, educated men, poets, writers, religious men and so forth, responded to this Ottoman trend and in their writings called for the need of the Muslim people to unite themselves to face the common threat of European expansion. About this Khaddurī observed that

"Under the impact of Islamic reform preached by Jamāl al-Dīn al-'Afghānī and Muhammad 'Abduh on the one hand, and the nationalism advocated by Mustafā Kāmil, leader of the Egyptian National Party, and the Egyptian press on the other, Libyans remained attached to Ottoman unity, but like other loyal subjects of the Empire, they keenly felt the need for reform and the improvement of government administration. They, therefore welcomed the Turkish Revolution of 1908 and the establishment of the parliamentary regime in which Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were represented, and opposed those elements who sought to secede from Ottoman unity"¹

On the basis of these political currents which were prevailing in the Arab countries during the period under study, we will show the development of Libyan political poetry

1 Khaddūrī, Modern Libya, p 9.

CHAPTER TWO

The Ottoman and Islamic Trend in
their Poetry

There is no need to emphasise the fact that Islam is deeply rooted in the Libyan soil, when we know that Islam entered Libya in the seventh century (23/643). In the sixteenth century, Libya, like so many of the other Arab countries, formed a part of the Ottoman Empire, and remained under its control for about four centuries, (1551-1911). In addition, Libya was the last Ottoman Vilayet in North Africa. Nevertheless, the Islamic current remained very strong because the Ottoman Caliphate was, indeed, the representative of the Muslim world during these four centuries.

It is true that the general survey of the history of Ottoman rule in Libya shows that the political circumstances and educational conditions combined to ensure that an Ottoman trend appeared in various aspects of life, particularly during the second Ottoman period. It was based on the idea of al-Khilāfah (Caliphate) and, therefore, was considered an Islamic trend. For several reasons, the Ottoman trend was strengthened in the Arab countries at the end of the last century and the first quarter of the present century. Libya was one of these Arab countries which adopted, politically and literally, the Ottoman trend. Her writers, poets, religious men and the like were ardent supporters of pan-Ottomanism.

There is no wonder that they did so because, as we have already said, the educational conditions and political circumstances combined to promote the Ottoman trend. To prove this, I would like to draw attention to the fact that during the second Ottoman period, which lasted for about seventy-six years (1835-1911), there was an educational system and a religious movement in Libya. Both of them

deepened the religious education in the Libyan people ¹

In addition, modern educational efforts were made by the Turks during the last years of their rule in Libya. Whatever the aims of these educational efforts² and its results, it must be admitted here that the two kinds of education were the main bases on which some Libyan poets, who were born during that period, established themselves. They were the important education that the two poets, under this study, had received. Generally, the first generation of poets in Libya was the product of this religious education.

Regarding the political factor which helped in establishing the Ottoman trend in Libya, we can say that it was the prevailing opinion of the Islamic world, as a whole, towards the Ottoman Caliphate. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the Ottoman Empire was viewed by Muslims as the defender of Islam in spite of the events of the nineteenth century, which proved the weakness of its power in confronting the expansion of European influence in some Ottoman Vilayets in North Africa.

It was incapable of doing anything in the Greek war of independence in 1821. In 1830 the French occupied Algeria. Their occupation was extended to Tunisia which was proclaimed by them a French protectorate in 1881. In the following year, 1882 the British occupied Egypt. In spite all of this, the Muslims in all Islamic

1. See, Chapter I, Part Two, pp. 64 - 79 of this thesis

2. These efforts were made not to create a good citizen because they were not connected with the conditions of the country or with its needs and capacity. Besides, they came considerably late. Therefore, these efforts did not bear fruits on the national level.

countries considered themselves a part of the Ottoman Empire. They owed their loyalty and obedience to the Caliph of Islam who was regarded as the man of the secular and spiritual power and, therefore, should be obeyed and the revolt against him meant refusing one of the religious fundamentals

This explains the reasons why the Ottoman Empire had been the hope of many leaders, writers, poets and the like in some Arab countries such as Egypt, Libya, Syria, Lebanon until the first two decades of the present century. This was obvious after the Turkish victory over the Greeks in the war of 1897. Also, the events of the Turco-Italian war in 1911-12 and of the wars of Balkans in 1912 were recorded by several poets of the above-mentioned countries.

However, in the light of the educational and political atmosphere, previously given, we will show the contribution of the poets under consideration to the Islamic trend which emerged as a reaction against the increasing influence of the West, in some Arab countries, particularly in Egypt. It is appropriate here to give some masterpieces of the Islamic trend in Libyan poetry, composed in the late years of the nineteenth century, to show how it was and what its themes were

We have already mentioned in a previous chapter that the Turks, who were themselves Muslims, were generally well received by the Libyans, particularly the people of the coastal towns and cities. The desert dwellers also tolerated them, though they resisted them and refused, practically, their rule in many occasions.¹ The Libyans

1 Their refusal was presented, for instance, in Ghumah's revolt the interior Western Jabal and in 'Abdul Jalil's revolt in Fezzan in the South of Libya. See, Chapter I, Part Two pp 56-57

however were tied, politically, to the Ottoman Empire until the beginning of the second decade of the present century

Also, literature in Libya confirmed that fact and reflected the Ottoman spirit which prevailed in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the present century. During this period, the Ottoman spirit strongly dominated modern Arabic poetry as well as Libyan poetry

The Libyan poets regarded some political events of the Ottoman Empire during the later years of the nineteenth century. They praised the Ottoman Caliph and greeted Turkey's victories in the wars against her enemies. They welcomed the proclamation of Ottoman Constitution of 1908

Here is the earliest contribution of Libyan poetry inspired by the Ottoman spirit. When the Turks gained a decisive victory over the Greeks in the year 1897, the Libyan poet, Muṣṭafā Ibn Zikrī (1853-1917) composed a poem of one hundred lines entitled al-Thano'āt al-Ṭarābulusīyah 'alā al-muḏffariyāt al-sannīyah (The Tripolitanian congratulations on the great victories). It was published in al-Taraqī Newspaper in July 3, 1897 and was added, by al-Misurātī, to his Dīwān in its second edition¹ which was in 1972. In it he says

يا سعد سر مرمما شائر الصر الميين
ودع الطيبة طاويا بحر السفين على السفين
وأعبر عاب الدردس بل وحي حتى الاكرمين
وأعطى على دار الحلا فه باليسار واليمين
.....

1 The first edition was in 1310/1892

وإذا مررت (يبلدر) وسعدت بالملك المكي
تأخ الحلافة ، سهقة الـ ديا ، وعبر المسلمين
"عد الحميد" وناصر الـ ين الحيفى المي
فأهتف هائل بالدى تدوى وتعلم من حيس
وقل السلام عليك ألبـ سفا ، يا أمير المؤمنين
أيدت بالفتح الميـ س دعائم الدين العتيـ

.....

آيات نصر لم تزل تتلى على مر السنين
وحد الحديث مصلا يسيل بالحسر اليقين
رح الحفاء وحلى بالـ يولان كيدهم الكمين
"Oh, Sa'd, march chanting,

The goodness of an evident victory
And let ships rush through the sea
And cross Dardanelle's waves,
And greet the dwellers of the most honorable land
Then, incline towards the House of Caliphate,
From every direction (lit from right and left)

If you have passed by Yildiz,
And you were happy with the strong rule
The crown of the Caliphate,
Delight of this world and glory of the Muslims
Is 'Abdul Hamid,
Who is protector of the true religion
There, call out with what,
You already know of my nostalgia
And say peace upon you, a thousand times,
Oh, Commandar of the faithful
You supported the strong pillars of religion,
By that evident victory

The signs of victory are still,
Remarked on for many years
Take this report in detail,
For, it will inform you of the obvious news
The secrecy has departed,
And the Greeks' own hidden conspiracy has destroyed themselves."

During the same period, Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Sunnī (1860-1929), composed an ode, possibly between 1895 during which the headquarters of the Sanūsīyah Order were moved from Jaghbūb to Kufrah by the removal of its leader al-Sayyīd al-Mahdī, and in 1899 when the Franco-Sanūsī war began. In this ode he says

رويدكم أهل الحميم فاتمه سيدو لكم منه الذي كان من قبل
يمسى فرسيسا نفوس أسسه ويحرر كفرا بالحرائر قد حلوا
فتظهر أرض طالما قد تحسنت بأفعالهم سيل الدماء لها غسل . ١

"Do not be in a rush, O, people of Hell,
It will be evident for you what he (al-Mahdī
al-Sanūsī) had achieved before
He will make the French forget their intimacy in Tunisia,
And he will slaughter the infidel who settled in Algeria
Then the land, often defiled by their (the French)
actions, will be purified,
For, bloodshed is to be cleaned "

It is natural to see one of the Sanūsīyah Order's poets composing a poem in which he threatens the French. The reasons behind this are, firstly, the French occupation of Algeria in 1830 had certainly, in some way, left its marks on the Muslim world. In 1881, French occupation also spread to Tunisia when France proclaimed it a French protectorate. Secondly, with the beginning of the 1890s, the advance of the French influence towards West and Central Africa especially Kānem and Wāddāi where Islam was already spread by the Order, was considered a new danger threatening the region of Islam in these areas

1. al-Ashhab, M., Ṭayyīb, al-Mahdī al-Sanūsī, (Tripoli, Libya, 1952) p. 117.

Due to the concept of al-Khilāfah (Caliphate), the Caliph was considered the representative of the Muslim world and the leader of the Muslims anywhere. Therefore, when he fights, he defends Islam against its enemies and when he makes decisions they are the advancement of the Muslims. In addition, provocation of him means friendship of his enemies.

As a result, the Libyan poets of the second Ottoman period (1835-1911), supported the Caliphate and set great hopes on Turkey. They praised the Caliph for his great achievements, particularly al-Bārūnī who expressed increasingly his loyalty to the Caliph of Turkey, the Sultan 'Abdul Hamīd II.¹ It is no wonder that they did so because this was a distinctive concept of the poets of that period.

On the famous occasion of the proclamation of Ottoman Constitution in 1908, we find more than one poem greeting it. Sulaimān al-Bārūnī (1870-1940), in one of his odes says

” عند الحميد ” مسحت اليوم أمتنا فحرا عظيما به الدنيا تهيبنا
مسحتنا بعمدة الدستور فاشترحت ما الصدور وقد صحت أماينا
مسحت عدلا وصلا أمة فقدت رقيها فأتى الدستور يحيينا ؟

” ‘Abdul Hamīd, today, you have granted our nation,
A great pride on which the world congratulates us
You have granted us the grace of the Constitution,
Therefore, we have become very glad, and
our hopes have been realised
You have awarded justice and merit to a nation
which had lost its pride,
The Constitution has come to revive us ”

1 See, Dīwān Sulaimān al-Bārūnī, (Cairo, 1326/1908) pp 3-39

2 Ibid , p 25

Ahmad al-Shārif (1872-1959) also welcomed the Ottoman Constitution of 1908, in one of his earliest poems, entitled (the Return of the Constitution) he says

أعيد لنا الدستور والعود أحمد فمن حقه يبي عليه ويحمد
شفا علة ما ودنا على شفا ولما الاسبى كانت سما تتوقد
ولاحت شمس الحق بعد حفاها وضا له فى حندر الليل فرقد
وماسحه " عبد الحميد " لامة يحو له الذكر الحميل المخلد

...

فهدى رجال (الاتحاد) وهده رجال (الترقى) بالعلاتتقلد
فمن ربح الدستور أرحت محرها أعيد لنا الدستور والعود أحمد 1

"The Constitution is restored and the restoration
is more praiseworthy,
It is only right that it is extolled and praised
It cured a disease in us and we were in an edge,
And the fire of grief was burning within us
The suns of the truth have appeared after their sunset,
And a star has lighted us in the darkness of the night
This Constitution was given by 'Abdul Hamid to a nation,
He deserves perpetual graceful remembrance

These are men of Union, and these are men of Progress,
They adorn themselves with sublimity
From their loyalty to the Constitution, I recorded their pride,
the Constitution is restored and the returning
is more laudable "

In 1910, al-Shārif composed a poem on the memory of the Constitution In it he says

لم أرل أمدح (مشروطية) مع آتى لسم أبل منها نصيبا
لذكرتنسى حالتى ما قلبها فعدا على من الذكرى كئيبا 2

1 D Sh , pp 106-7

2 Ibid , p 107

"I still praise Mashrūṭīyyah (Constitution),
Although I have not taken a share of it.
My state reminded me of what was before it,
In remembrance (of the Constitution), my heart became grieved "

However, by these quotations, I aim at showing how some Libyan poets recorded the distinct political events during the second Ottoman period. At the same time, these quotations provide a fine example of Libyan poetry, which is concerned with politics, under the Turkish rule.

In spite of the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911 and the Turkish withdrawal from Libya in 1912, the Libyan people supported politically and literally Turkey which was the centre of the Islamic Caliphate. From the beginning and immediately after Italy's declaration of war on Turkey on 29 September 1911, the majority of the Libyan people had joined the Turks in common resistance against the Italians who "had counted on aid from the Arabs in throwing off" the Turks.¹

When the Treaty of Ochy (Lausanne) was signed between Italy and Turkey in October 1912, it was followed by the Turkish withdrawal from Libya. Also, autonomy for Tripolitania and Cyrenaica was granted by a firman, issued by the Sultan who entrusted the protection of Ottoman interests to his representative in Libya. The withdrawal of Turkey did not, in fact, create a hostile reaction in Libya against the Turks. On the contrary, Sayyīd Ahmed al-Sharīf declared that he

1 Murābet, M, Tripolitania, p 26. See also Pritchard, pp 101-2

was going to continue the war as the Sultan's representative ¹
Secondly, the relationship between the Turks and the Libyan people remained as strong as it was before because of the spiritual feeling, tying the Muslims in Libya to Turkey

During the first World War, positive assistance was offered by the Libyan people in Cyrenaica to their Turkish brothers in Islam in their fight against the British in Egypt. Following Turkey's entry into the war, the Turkish strategy was "to make the most of the religious ties between the Sultan and his Arab dependencies, and to create opposition for Britain among the Muslims, generally, not least in Egypt and India. . The Turkish command hoped to see a Sanusi attack on Egypt to coincide with a Turkish attack on the Suez Canal from Palestine. Consequently, the Jihād was proclaimed from Istanbul" ²

No wonder, therefore, that the Libyan forces, under Sayyīd Ahmed and the Turkish commanders, attacked the British posts in the Western Egyptian frontier in November 1915. The events of the British-Libyan war in 1915-16 reflect, indeed, the strong influence of the religious tie between the Muslims regardless of their nationality. For this reason and others, Sayyīd Ahmed responded ³ to the Ottoman Sultan, as

1 Khaddūrī, p 14.

2 Sir Comming, pp 385-6.

3 In spite of certain acceptable reasons behind Sayyīd Ahmed's action, the important one is the religious ties between the Sultan and the Muslim world, his fulfillment of the Ottoman Sultan's request has, in fact, caused much discussion between the historians, who have studied the events of the British-Libyan war in 1915-16, resulting in different opinions. Evans Pritchard and Muhammad 'Asad disapproved of the effective help of Sayyīd Ahmed to his co-religionists

Evans, who is a British writer, said that Sayyīd Ahmed, with quixotic abandon, attacked Great Britain in Egypt, a handful

the Caliph of Islam, when the latter called upon him to help the Turks by launching an attack on the British in the Western part of Egypt

However, the Libyan poets of the Italian period composed many poems on several occasions, concerning mainly the Turkish victories over their enemies. They strongly responded to that Ottoman spirit which was profound in the poetry of their contemporary Arab poets, particularly Egyptian poets. This spirit was the main stream of that Islamic trend which emerged, as a reaction against the West, in some Arab countries, particularly in Egypt

Here Khourī talks about this trend in the poetry of Egypt as a strong current. He says

"Throughout the occupation period, a strong Islamic current, fed by the great majority of the contemporary Egyptian poets, was running along and flowing into the national current. This Islamic current was charged with religious zeal, national feeling, and a fierce spirit of resistance to encroachments of Europe on the Muslim world."¹

In the light of these facts, we will show aspects of the modern history of Turkey which were recorded in the works of al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah. Among these aspects is Mustafā Kamāl's victory over the Greeks in 1921. His victory was celebrated by the whole Muslim world as a glorious festival

Note 3 continued from previous page

=of Bedouin against a European power. While he was convinced that Sayyīd Ahmed was not in the position to refuse the help of Turkey. 'Asad, like Evans, said that Sayyīd Ahmed made the wrong decision by his acceptance to enter the war on the side of Turkey, and by "his quixotic sense of chivalry toward the Caliph of Islam." See, Pritchard, p 127 and 'Asad, p 317

1 Khourī, p 103

On this occasion, Rafīq, in one of his earlier songs, says

صَلُّوا يَا أَهْلَ الْكَمَالِ عَلَى السِّبْطِ الْهَامِ الْكَمَالِ
وَأَسْأَلُوا الْمَوْلَى تَعَالَى يَبْصُرُ الْعَارِيَّ " كَمَالًا " 1

"O, people of maturity,
Ask God to bless the beautiful Prophet
And ask God, the Most High,
To let the warrior, Kamāl triumph

It seems that these two lines are the only ones which are left from a long ode . On the same occasion, al-Shārif composed also a poem, entitled Saūt al-Kamālīyyin (the Voice of Kamāls). In it he says

حياة على الصيم ثمن الحياة وعم الممات اذا لم يفر
لقد قام فيما (كمال) الصمات بأوفر حظ وأكمل عتر
فتى أدرك الأمر قبل الفوات ومهما بدت فرصة يتمهر
حريص على الشرف المتقى نادرا ما كان مستصعبا
وقد أوصل الصم أن يحدثا ولكن أناه بكل الأنا
تَكَادُ (الاصول) قبل المغير تساق الى الدرر الأشعبل
وحاف " الكمالى " سوء العصير فأجده كل مستسبل
ليدر الأنام وكل حبير أنا على السدا الأول
فكل يهيم بوادى النقا ويطحاء مكة و يثربنا
وذييس مصاله يبرقا لأحمد حير الورى مصبا 2

"Life by injustice, what a miserable life'
And what a wonderful death, though we achieved nothing
(Kamāl), who has the necessary qualities, stood among us,
With more fortunate and more perfect power
He is a young man who realised the situation
before it was too late,
And he took advantage of every opportunity whenever it comes

1 D R , Vol 1, p 2

2 D Sh ,pp 102-3

He is covetous for the selected glory,
By attaining what was difficult
Though injustice was about to encircle him,
he strongly insisted on refusing it

Al-'Anāḍūl (Analolia) was almost descending,
to the lowest level, before the general call to arms
And (Kamāl) was afraid of a bad result,
Therefore, he was supported by every brave man
Let all the people and every experienced man know that,
We are still based on the fundamental concept
Every one is in love with Wādī al-Naqa,
the valley of Mecca and Yathrib¹.
And a religion of which we raised the standard,
And we set up a place for Ahmed (the Prophet
Muhammad) who is the best of all men

Another poet, Ahmed Qanābah expressed also his feeling towards
Kamāl's victory over the Greeks In a poem published in al-Liwā'
al-Tarābulusī in October 1921, he proudly wrote

ولست أحال ليثا رام حريسا	بها الهيلات من لهمب الصلا*
و (أنورهم) له حق مصى*	صيا* الشمس في كبد السماء
وهذا (مصطفى) فيهم (كمال)	مدا* المسلمين من العدا*
بهم دار السعادة سوف تحطى	وترفل في حلى عصر الهيا*
ويصح من يلوك بهم عريسا	بعر* لا يؤول الى اتها*
يا أبا* (أقرة) المعالى	لقد حرتم به شرف النسا*
محرركم لسلطنة أهيت	كأنكم خلقتم للسقا*
محصت الاناطح من دماكم	بظلم الظالمين بلا مرا* 2.

1 It is the original name of Medina

2 D Q , p 100.

And I do not think the lion wished for war,
In which disasters pour from the blaze of the fire
And their ('Anwar)¹ had a clear right,
Like the sunlight in the centre of the sky
And this (Muṣṭafā Kamāl) is among them,
He is the ransom of the Muslims in their trouble
By them, Dār As-sa'ādah (Constantinople) will gain,
And strut in the ornaments of good times
And he, who seeks shelter with them, becomes powerful,
Because of glory which is unending
O, noble sons of 'Anqarah (Ankara),
You gained the honor of praise through him
Therefore, be resolute about the Sultanate which was treated
with contempt,
As if you were created for watering
And no doubt, the plains were stained with your blood,
Because of the injustice of tyrants

It is clear that these poems reveal the strong influence of the Ottoman spirit which emerged, generally, in modern Arabic poetry. They reflect also the political concept, prevailing at that period, considering Turkey as the only outside force which could protect the Arab countries from being absorbed by the West.² This was before the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 at the hands of Mustafā Kamāl himself

Therefore, when the Caliphate was abolished, we find Rafīq, like many other Arab poets in Egypt such as Shawqī, Hāfīz Ibrāhīm, Aḥmed Muharram, raising his voice, describing the reaction of the Muslims in Libya to that historical event. He said in a poem beginning

1 He is 'Anwar Pāshā, one of the Turkish officers who took part in the Italian-Turkish war in Libya

2 See, Khourī, p 103

لربك الأمر من ملك وسلطان وما سواه فشيء رائيل فان
لو دام ملك لاسان لدام لمن تملك الأمر بين الاس والحسان 1

To your Lord belongs command of both power and domination,
Except for Him, everything is short-lived
If power remained to a man, it remained to him who
(King Sulaimān) had power among the men and جنن

It was said² that the above-mentioned poem was long but lost.
In it, Rafīq depicted the glorious days of Caliphate and its strong
power during many centuries Al-Shārif, as well, dedicated a few
lines to the abolition of Caliphate in a poem which described his
feeling for his people and the political situation of the Arab
countries at that time. He referred to that historical event as
a lesson from history by saying

وقصية الاتزال في حافسها تصف الرمان بهول مقلباته
قد أوقدوا نار الوعي فتأححت في محد أسرته ومحد سراته
يا أمة الحرمين هل من بهمة وحمية تحمي الحي وحماته؟
قلتم كما قالوا رمان تمدن والقول مصروف الى غاياته
والدين دين الحق ليس لأهله الآ التدر في شؤون حياته
أحبهتمو، وأظنكم لم تحبهلوا ماذا حي الاسلام من ثمراته؟ 3

"The case of the Turks and their monarch,
Shows time with all the horror of its upheavals.
They ('Atātürk and his group) have set the fire of tumult,
Which flamed with the glory of its Royal family and of its nobles
O, nation of the two Holy Places⁴ (the Arabs) is there any awaking,
And zeal which will defend the sanctuary and its protectors
You have said, as they (the people of the West) said,

1 See, the Introduction to D.R , Vol. 1, p ح

2 Ibid p ح

3 D Sh , pp 75-6.

4 Mecca and Medina

This is the time of modernisation,
But the words are being applied to their aims
Religion is but the truth and its people have only,
To direct the affairs of life by it
Were you ignorant, I think you were not,
How much did Islam harvest of the fruits of that statement?"

However, this is how the Libyan poets felt towards the Turks, the Caliphate and Constantinople which was regarded as the capital of that Caliphate. This is how our poets expressed their feelings towards the Turks' victories over their enemies, regarding them as glorious festivals. While they described the sad events of the modern history of Turkey as "great tragedies inflicted upon the whole Muslim world" ¹

The previous quotations, concerning one of the aspects of political poetry in Libya during the first quarter of the present century, stress the fact that the Libyan poets were not less interested in Ottoman subjects than their contemporary poets of the Arab countries particularly the Egyptian poets, like Shawqī, Hāfīz and others

We have previously said that the Ottoman trend disappeared at the end of the twenties but this does not mean that the Islamic current stopped in Libyan poetry. In fact, it appeared in many poems composed by our poets on several occasions. The influence of religion strongly remained in their poetry and Islam was continuously expressed by them in one way or another. It is not surprising, therefore, if we find that our poets laid great emphasis on the importance of attachment of their people to Islam. Here is Qanābah

1 Khourī, p 103.

وا رحمتاه لراعيت عن دينه نحو التدهور كيف صار ليبيدا
يرضى التددت بالتدهور مسحطا رب السماء ولا يحاف ويعيدا

•••

لا حير في تلك الصائركلهمسا ما لم تكن مملوءة توحيدا 1

Oh, mercy upon him, who dislikes his religion,
(preferring to bend his steps toward decline)
(Look) how he became sluggish
He is satisfied with the wavering of decline,
Displeasing to God nor is he afraid of threats

There is nothing good in all those hearts,
If they are not full of belief in the unity of God.

As one of the characteristics of Islam, they were concerned with the Arabic language which is the language of the Qur'ān and the religious language of all Muslims. Here is al-Shārif, in one of his odes, says

لا عرو أن يدعى الليبي أن له مسا للحروية من محد ومن حسب
لديه من لغة القرآن معصرة تلوح كالدر والياقوت والذهب 2.

No wonder if the Libyan claims that,
He has what Arabism has of glory and noble descent
He has, owing to the language of the Qur'ān, a miracle,
Which sparkles like pearls, rubies and gold

In another poem he also wrote

فلا زال دين الله يربط بيسا روابط لا يقوى على صمها الدهر
لما لغة لا ينكر الناس فصلها تناس في تدوينها العظم والمثر 3

Islam still binds us all,
With ties which will never be broken
We have a language whose merit is acknowledge by the people,
Both poetry and prose in competition in its writing down

1 D Q , p 91.

2 D Sh , p 90.

3 Ibid , p 92.

Also Rafīq says

أرى الدين الحنيف قد احتواها مهدة فأودعها كتابا
هو العرفان فرق شمل جهل كثر الشمس مرقب الصبا 1

I see the true religion having it (the language),
Perfected and religion put it down in a Book
It is the Qur'ān which divides ignorance,
As the sunlight fragments the clouds

In addition to this, they recited the glorious past of Islam and repeatedly mentioned their pride in their descendants who had adopted the faith of Islam and the Arabic language As example, Qanābah says

وي المؤمنيين الأولى أمموا أحوة دين ترى سرمدنا
وإنا نسوهم لنا بحوة تعادى الرمان ادا غابدا 2

Among the earlier believers, who were faithful,
Are brothers of religion who believe that (their religion)
is eternal
And we are their sons, having a sense of honour,
Which attacks time if it resists too stubbornly

In another poem, he also says

ألسنا من بني الاسلام لما كسونا العار قوما معتدينا ؟
ألسنا من بني قوم كرام تدرتنا الوبي حينا فحينا ؟ 3

Are we not from among the sons of Islam?
When we covered aggressive people with shame,
Are we not from among noble people?
Tested by war from time to time?

Another poet, Ahmed al-Shārif stressed on this subject He wrote

1 D R , Vol 2, p 61

2 D Q , p 97

3 Ibid, p 118.

أمة عادت الى معدنها كرم الأصل وعرو الألب
1 أن يكن قوم فصل محروا فلما العجر بديلا السى

A nation went back to its origin,
(Which is) noble descent and deep-rooted graces.
If people are proud of any superiority,
We have pride in this Prophet.

Their pride in being Muslims is very clear in many poems No wonder, since the Qur'ān spoke openly about the people who adopt Islam as being the best to God. Here is Qanābah expressing this by saying

وأما فى البرية خير قوم تأحت فى الاحاطة للسدا
واعتقد الفضا اذا أنتلينا وحيرو الناس معتقد القضا
وحفظ حرمة الاسان فينا وبرعى حقه بعد الفضا

.....

أحيوا يا سى وطنى فانتم سوا الاسلام من عدن السحا
2 فليس لكل مكرمه محيب سوى الاحيار مستمعى البدا

We are, among the creatures, the best people,
Fraternised between reply and call
We believe in fate when we are afflicted
And the best people are the ones who believe in fate.
We protect the sanctity of man among us,
And we take care of his right after death.

Answer, O, my people, that you are,
The sons of Islam, from the generous Arabs of 'Aden³.
There is no response for every noble deed,
But only the best of people who always listen for the call

He also says in another poem

1 D Sh , p 66

2. D Q , pp 99-101

3. City of Southern Arabia

وما نحن الا حيرة الحلوى صفوة وما نحن الا كرام أحسنه
1 بدليل كل الصعب بالصر والتقى ومدح قول المعسدين بحسه

We are but the best of creation and bosom friends,
We are great and noble
We overcome all difficulties by patience and devoutness,
And we disprove the argument of evil people with evidence

In one of his poems, Rafīq directs his words to his people calling them the best people because of their noble descent He says

أستم حير من يرحى لحيير وأكرم من الى كرم أحاسا؟
أستم حير فرع من أصول إليها يشمخ المحدثات ساسا؟
2 سلوا التاريخ عنهم كيف كانوا هم العمران اد كات حواسا

Are you not the best of whom good is hoped for?
And the most generous of those who respond
to a call for generosity
Aren't you the best branch growing from the roots,
To which glory proudly belongs?
Ask history about them, how they were?
They are the prosperity (of a country) if it is in ruin

In fact, the influence of religion extends to mentioning the Qur'ān and the Bible, the prophets particularly Muhammad and Jesus and the three religions, Islam, Christianity and Judaism Pointing out the bases of Arab unity, Qanābah says

عسوان شعب من ناسه معروى فى وحدة دستورها القرآن
3 أين اس وحدتها فى أحدا ده حد النسي ((محمد)) عدنان؟

It (Arab unity) is the title of a nation (which is) from the land of Kinanah,

1 D Q , p 102

2 D R , Vol 2, p 61.

3 D Q , p 84.

In an union, its constitution is the Qur'ān
Where is the son of the right man for it,
Among his forefathers is 'Adnān, the grandfather of the Prophet
Muhammad

We can also add to this, the following lines¹ from various poems

لو لم يكن بالحق يهوى باطل لم يزل الاصيل والعرقان

If falsehood is not destroyed by the right,
Then, the Bible and the Qur'ān were not revealed

من طرأ ان الترو للشرا ما يهاص عيسى والبي محمد

The one who thinks that the East is a place of evil,
is only opposing Jesus and the Prophet Muhammad

هت من الشرق أرواح تاحيط روح الرسول وعيسى والسيب

Spirits rose from the East, addressing to us,
The spirits of the Messenger (Muhammad), Jesus and the Prophets

ط ان العفو شيمة كل حر أحب محمدا والمرسلينا

Forgiveness is in the character of every freeman,
Who loves Muhammad and the Messengers

من كان يعلم دين رب محمد لا يحهل التصير والتمويدا

The one, who knows the religion of Islam,
Does not ignore Christianity and Judaism

Similarly al-Shārif says in a poem

تسا عن طمأ وفيها المسهل وحى السوة والكتاب المرسل

•••

وسعادة الاسلام في الدين الذي للحلق لعه السى المرسل

آياته في الحلق واسعة المدى وسوره نور الهدى يتهمل

1 D Q , pp 85, 124, 126, 117, 91.

2 D Sh , pp 71-74.

We spent the night thirsty although we have a watering place,
(Which is) the revelation of prophethood (the Sunnah) and
the revealed book (the Qur'ān)

The success of Islam is in the religion which,
Was conveyed to the people by the Prophet, the Messenger
Its marks upon the people are far-reaching,
And by its luminosity, the light of right guidance shines

Discussion about the influence of Islam on their poetry would take me too long. But, I would like to draw attention to the fact that al-Shārif and Qanābah¹, in particular, have left considerable poems on Sufism. Their sufistic poetry is quite clear throughout many lines which were contained in their Dīwāns, particularly al-Shārif's. They derived its elements from the religious traditions and some of the religious orders which they had contacted in their towns. It is needless to quote here specimens of this kind of poetry because it is out of the scope of my study which is only concerned with Libyan political poetry.

1 See, D Sh , pp 260-277 and Abū Dīb, pp. 49-73.

CHAPTER THREE

The Patriotic Trend in their Poetry

If we cast a glance at the meaning of patriotism in Libya as it has been recorded by its modern history and within Libyan poetry, we will find it far from those concepts of regionalism and individualism which occurred clearly in the writing and poetry of some Egyptians and Lebanese in 1930s¹ The latter devoted their poetry only to their country, worshipping it as if it were the greatest in the world For "in that case since only one country can be the greatest, only the people of that country are rational patriots"² Moreover, they challenged, by this kind of patriotism, Arabism and Islam, refusing anything relating to them either in language, religion, history or literary heritage

The concept of patriotism adopted by the Libyan poets, as we shall see, was not in fact as was the case with some Arab countries where a call for separation from Arabism and Islam, was active The Libyan poets considered patriotism as a characteristic of a patriot, marked by his devotion to the interests of his country and upholding it as the most honourable creed. At the same time, they rejected the concept of being only Libyan. Their political ideal did not centre in a part of the world, namely Libya, but it extended widely to comprise the Arab countries and the Islamic world³ They believed in patriotism as the national feelings of the patriot but they did

1 Husain, Dr. M M , al-Ittijāhāt al-Waṭaniyah fī al-adab al-Mu'āṣir, Vol 1, (Cairo, 1954), p 132

2 The Times Weekly Edition, No 1,826, London, December 1911, p 1051

3 See, al-Tellīsī, pp 101-105

not regard it as some Egyptian and Lebanese poets understood it

However, it is the period from 1911 to 1951 which is considered the productive period of Libyan patriotic poetry, because the hopes of the Libyan people were obviously established during this period. For Libyan poetry turned its attention to that decisive struggle which emerged between the Libyans and colonisation, represented by the Italian and British occupations

Their Patriotic Poetry during the Italian Occupation

From the beginning, Libyan poetry was devoted by all the poets of the Italian period to patriotic aims and was used as a weapon in the national struggle against the Italian occupation. When the Italians invaded Libya in 1911 and occupied the coastal towns by force, we find that national feeling was aroused, armed resistance was set up and a strong determination was expressed to resist the colonists

At the same time we find that Libyan poetry played an active part in inflaming national feeling and in condemning the aggression. Immediately after the Italian invasion, the Libyan poets supplied the National Resistance Movement with a great many patriotic poems in which they urged every single man to defend his beloved country and to fight for freedom. Their patriotic zeal and strong emotion clearly coloured these poems

Among the earliest poems which reflect the rejection of the Libyan poets and their revolt against the Italian occupation, is Ahmed al-Shārif's ode, entitled Radīnā biḥatfī al-Nufūs (we were content with sacrifice). Shortly after the landing of the Italian troops in the coastal towns in October 1911, where they remained and

suffered heavy losses in some battles, al-Shārif composed his first and famous ode, which was widely circulated among his people and outside Libya and was memorised by many. It was considered a starting point of Libyan patriotic poetry¹ In it, al-Shārif described the decisive struggle of his people and their effective resistance for freedom and dignity after the outbreak of the war between the Italians and the Arabs and Turks. He opened his ode by saying

رصيدا بحتف المعوس رصييدا ولم يورس أن يعرف الصيم فييدا
ولم يورس بالعيش الا عرييرا ولا تقفى الشر بل يتقييدا
فما الحرّ الا الذى مات حرا ولم يورس بالعيش الا امييدا²

We were content with sacrifice,
And we did not accept to be distinguished by injustice
We did not accept life but honourable,
We do not fear evil but it fears us
The Freeman is only he who dies free,
And he does not accept life but in security

Then, referring to his brave people and their heroism and courage in the theatre of war like descendants, he says

ادا قامت الحرب كيدا رحالا الى الحرب ارسح من طور سيدا
ترانا عليها شاوى كائنا شربنا بها حمرة الأندرسيدا
لنا ونسات بها ونسات فصحا بها ثورة الثائرسيدا
ولا عجب فى الوعى ان أتيدا شيمة آنائنا الا أوليسيدا
ادا لم يعننا على الحطب رأى جعلنا السالة فرسا معييدا
سيوف قصبا عليها أكفا وفيها ترانا من المرسييدا³

When the war broke out, we were brave men,
Dedicated to it, more firmly than Mount Sinai
You see us intoxicated with it as if,

1 See, al-Tellis, p 112.

2 Ibid , pp 83-84

3 Ibid , p 84.

We drank in it the rarest drink,
We had in it attacks and firmness,
By which we revealed the confusion of the rebels (the Italians).
No wonder that we achieved in the war,
The character of our forefathers
If we are not helped by an opinion against misadventure,
We make intrepidity an individual duty
We took hold of our swords with the palms of our hands,
In it (intrepidity) you see us as extremists

At the end of this ode, al-Shārif directs his words to the invaders who were still occupying only the coastal towns when this ode was composed, reminding them that all of the Libyan people would protect their country and were not afraid of death

أيا من يحرون أسطولهم الينا بالآفهم واليبينا
فما صرنا ان حلتتم شطوطنا ادا شط ما كتتم قاصدينا
فكم في (طرابلس العرب) ليت يصون السلاذ ويحيى العربينا
وما راد صرح المدافع الآ رئيسرا لاشالها الصائرينا 1

Oh, you who bring in their fleet,
To us in their thousands and hundreds
It does no harm to us if you stay on the coasts,
While what you intended goes too far
How many a lion is there in Tripoli of the West,
To defend the country and protect the den,
The screaming of guns only increased,
The roaring of her starving lion-cubs

Al-Shārif followed this ode with other poems by which he inflamed the national spirit of the Mujāhidīn. During the first stage of the Libyan struggle (1911-1917) he played an active part

1 Ibid

in urging the youth to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their country His rallying songs and poems on national battles and the successful armed resistance against the Italians were fluently repeated by many. In one of his poems, he wrote

في سبيل المحد في رفع الهمم قم بأمر السيف لا أمر القلم
عادر اللذات ان رمت العلا وأصبح الحطب ان الحطب ألسم 1

For the sake of glory and having far-reaching aims,
Do the duty of the sword and not the pen
Leave enjoyments, if you seek the heights,
And suffer misadventure if it takes place

Also in another poem, he says

ان تسلموا فرت سلامسة رحعت عواقبها الى الآلام
أمن الشهامة ان يبعث دينكم أن تقنعوا بتنعم الاحسان ؟
أمن السعادة أن تهاون حياتكم وتداس تحت مواطىء الاقدام ؟
دل ، وخذلان ، ورقة حاب وهو ان عيش ، وانشاك مقام 2

If you accept peace, one day,
Many a peace has resulted in pains'
Is it decent when your religion is disturbed,
That you accept an easy life?
Is it happiness when your life is humiliated,
And trampled underfoot?
Humiliation, disappointment, weakness,
A miserable life, and abuse

Although most of his patriotic poems, composed between 1911-1917, were unfortunately lost, what was remaining reflected the lively interest, exercised by him over a long period of years, in the aspect of patriotic poetry as we shall see through some quotations

1 Ibid , p 87

2 Ibid , pp 82-3

of his poetry on several occasions and events

As far as Qanābah and Rafīq are concerned, both of them were about 13 years old when Libya was invaded by the Italians. No resistance poetry was, therefore, left by them until the beginning of the twenties

In spite of the Italian censorship in Tripoli City, Qanābah composed several poems by which he tried to influence his people not to submit to the Italians. In these poems, he emphasised the fact that the Libyans preferred to die rather than live under foreign domination

Within the year 1921, Ahmad Qanābah published eight poems, maybe more because there is no complete edition of al-Liwā' al-Tarābulusī Newspaper to which he used to send his poetical output at that time. These poems, indeed, represent a new kind of patriotic poetry, by which Qanābah attempted to participate in the Resistance Movement as well as in the literary life during the Italian period.¹

Because of the Italian censorship and difficult circumstances, Qanābah composed his poems in symbolic form. But its symbolism was of word rather than of subject. Moreover, all of these poems were signed with several pseudonyms, like the voice of a believer, a truthful Tripolitanian, a zealous patriot, a patriot, a truthful Muslim and the voice of a patriot

I give here the two following quotations as a specimen of this kind of poem. In the first one, published in April 1921 and signed

1 D Q , p 95

with the pseudonym "a zealous patriot" Qanābah says

ألا فتصعبينا يا ليالى وألا ستعبدك بالعوال
فأنا اللاحثون بكل سأس الى اقماع شرمة الصلال
وأنا الكاشعون لكل حطب وأنا البادلون لكل عال 1

Oh, nights, be fair with us,
Otherwise we will constrain you by force
We are seeking, with all our might,
To suppress the gang of destruction (the Italians).
We are revealers of every misadventure,
And we are spenders of everything costly

Then he says

فلا معرض المدلثة وهي عيب ونحن عن الأرادل في اعتزال
ولا مرضى الحصوع لدى عيوب وحافظنا المهيمس دوالحلل
وصارمنا يؤمنا المايسا ويوعد من عصا بالوبال 2

We do not accept the humiliation which is shame,
And we are far from all depravities
We do not accept submission to the masters of blemishes,
While our powerful protector is Mighty.
Our sword protects us from misfortunes,
And it threatens him who revolts against us
With evil consequences

He also goes on by saying

فلا وأبيل لا مرضى حياة يكدر صعوها أهل الصلال
وحمل الحق مشدود بعمرم وحمل الظالمين الى انحلال
ويطوى الكشح في حب المعالي طس يرتاح الآ بالوصال
فماذا يتعنى منا سواسا اذا كنا تنون الى المعالي 3

1 Ibid , p 104.

2 Ibid

3 Ibid , p 105.

No, by your father, we do not accept a life,
Whose purity is disturbed by the heathen¹
The rope of the truth is tightened by determination,
And the rope of the tyrants will be loosened
In the desire for the heights we tighten our belts,
And we will not be happy until we attain them
What does somebody else want from us?
If we are longing for the heights

His second earliest patriotic poem was published in July 1921,
entitled Rithā' Aḥad Abṭāl al-Jihād (an elegy on one of the heroes
of the struggle), signed with the pseudonym (the voice of a patriot)
In it he says

حك الاوطان امر واحب مكمل الايمان بالرهان آد
كل قول لم يكن من مصف بهرح بالعقل في كل اعتقاد
هنا حديثي في المعالي عمرة فأحطب العليا ان صت البلاد
دلة الاحرار في اوطانهم ربة لا تتحى حتى المعاد²

Your love of country is a duty,
Perfected by faith and supported by proof
Every statement, not uttered by a just-man,
Is counterfeit of mind in every creed
Here is my advice about the heights,
Seek the heights if you would protect the country
The lowliness of free-men in their own country is,
A shame never to disappear until the Hereafter

Then, Qanābah directs the following lines to the fighting
leaders, reminding them of the bitter ten years which have passed
since the Italians came to Libya

فأظفروا ما صمركم في سعركم ان كفتكم تلكم العشر شداد
في عريس الاسد موت أحمر من رئيس الليب للطراى آد³

1 He means the Italians

2 Ibid, p 158

3 Ibid, p 159

Consider what was happening to your people,
If those harsh ten (years) are enough for you
In the den of the lion is violent death,
Overwhelming the nocturnal visitors
by the roaring of the lion

When efforts were made by the Tripolitanian leaders to unify their struggle against the Italians at Gharyān's Conference in November 1921, Qanābah took this chance to remind those leaders of the glorious days of the Libyan Armed Resistance at the beginning of the Italian invasion. In a poem, composed on this occasion, he says, glorifying the victories that were achieved by al-Mujāhidīn in several battles

عس (ورشعاسة) حدثنا بلا حرج يا يوم (عريان) لاتصعب ولا تطل
ما (ورشعاسة) الآ حصن دولتنا مهد الصافيد عند الحادب الحلل
ماص محيد لنا (الهابي) يسجله و (شارع الشط) في أيامه الأول ١

O, Gharyān's day! tell us about Warshifānah
nothing impedes your way,
Do not speak at great length or exaggerate
Warshifānah is the fortification of our state,
And cradle of braves in an important event
Her (Libya's) glorious past was regarded by
al-Hānī and Shāri' al-Shaṭṭ during its first days

Turning now to the patriotic poetry of Ahmad Rafīq, we find that while he was living in Egypt (1911-1921), he attempted, as was said in the preface to the third volume of his Dīwān,² to compose a national song for his country in about 1918. In this national song, which reveals his early interest in patriotic poetry, Rafīq says

1. Ibid, p.110.

2. D.R., Vol. 3, pp ١ - ٢

نحن أحرار فلا نرضى امتها انما نرضى به نفس الحسان
نحن للمستقبل الراهي صمان فاذا لم نحيه نحن، فمن؟
= = =

وطن بالروح منا يقتدي به ومن السموات والدل بقيسه
قد سعدنا بعميم العيش فيه أفلا نحريه احملاصا حسن؟ 1

We are free-men and do not accept humiliation,
But only the nature of the coward accepts it
We are the security of the flourishing future,
If we do not revive it, who will?

* *

We ransom the country with ourselves,
And we protect it from shame and misery
We had the good fortune of sharing
the happy life in it
Truly, we should reward it with sincere devotion

After his return to Libya in 1921, Rafīq contributed to the resistance poetry but his contribution was relatively small. Among the poems, composed during his stay in Benghazi, from 1921 to 1925, there are two odes relating to our study. The first one was written about the Constitutional Party² and the second was about the Cyrenaica Post Newspaper³

Because of their collaboration with the Italian government, Rafīq attacked the party and the newspaper in the poems. In the first one, he wrote

1 Ibid, p ٢

2 After the issue of the Fundamental Law of Cyrenaica in October 1919, two political parties were established in 1920. Both the Democratic party and Constitutional Party involved in politics in the line of the Italian policy. See, Diwān Ahmad Rafīq, Vol 3, p 83

3 It was published in 1922, supported by the Italian government. Its editor was Muhammad al-Maḥīshī

الحسب الدستوري العربي يسوع الناطل والكذب
قد لعن أحقر سادمة ما يقصمهم غير الدسب
قالوا آتوا قوم حننا لدافع عن مجد العرب
كذب، كذب، كذب، كذب متأت من سوء الادب
ما أنتم للطليان سوى نقر للخدمة لا الحلب 1

The Arab Constitutional Party is,
A spring of falsehood and lies.
It has joined with the lower gang,
They are not in want of anything but a tail
They said we are a group, come,
To defend the glory of the Arabs
Lies, lies, lies, lies,
You should be punished for your ill-manners
You are only, to the Italians,
Cows for service, but not for milking

In the second poem, entitled al-Barīd (the Post), Rafīq bitterly attacked the newspaper which held that name, and its editor who was one of his relatives by marriage. He says

ألم يلعن ما قال البريد؟ هراء لا يصر ولا يعيد
مسيلمة الحرائد ما تسأ وراذ فديسه كفر حديد
تعلن كي ينال رضاء قوم مما رضى الاله ولا الحديد
مما ربحت تحارته فتبلا ولا هو في مساعيه حميد
.....
أيبع عندكم ورو وحسر وما بيع الرصاص ولا الحديد؟
ستدم عن ملامسة الافاعى اذا انقلبت عصانا يا بليد
اذا حن القريب دويه جهرا برك كيف يأمنه البعيد 2

Haven't you heard what the Post said?
It is idle talk, neither harm nor help
Whatever does Musālamah³ of Newspapers (he means

1 D R , Vol 3,

2 Ibid , pp 84-5

3 He is Musālamah al-Kadhhdhāb, from Banī Hanīfah tribe, who claimed prophecy during the Prophet's life. It is said "a greater liar than Musālamah" (proverbially of a liar)

the editor) forecast and add more,
His religion is a new infidelity
He flattered in order to gain the approval of people,
But neither God nor people were satisfied
His business was totally unprofitable,
And he is not commendable in his efforts

Are paper and ink, in your opinion, useful,
When bullets and iron were useless?
You will repent of touching the vipers,
When they become angry, oh, stupid one.
If one betrays publicly his own relatives,
How, by your Lord, can the stranger feel safe?

Because of his rejection of Italian policy in Libya, Rafīq was exiled. At the close of 1925, he left Benghazi with tears in his eyes. He preferred to go to Turkey where his family was still living but he suffered too much from his living away. Like any poet, Rafīq expressed his love for his people and his native country which he regarded as a symbol of Paradise and worshipped its nature and beauty in a great many of his poems ¹

From Jihān, in Turkey, Rafīq addressed in February 1926, a long poem (76 lines) to one of his friends in Benghazi. In it he says

قيدتموه بأسباب وثيقــات	طارقتكم وفؤادى ما يطارقكم
أسباب تعدى قلبى واشتياقاتى	أهل الوداد وحتى للبلاد هما
مما تحرعت من همٍّ وويلات	تركت موطن آنائى على مصص
لولم يعصه حكم الظالم العاتى	والله ما ناختيارى ان أطارقه
مدامعى فوى حدى مستهلات	ابى لأذكر يوم البياد هملت

.....

صيم الاعادى وأرباب الحبهالات	لم ترص عرّة نفسى بالمقام على
ودعت حلاً ولا أدركت ناراتى	حرحه من وطنى مثل الطريد فما
2 ربيع عيشى قد ولّى ولداتى	يا لهف نفسى على تلك الربوع بها

1 See, al-Tellīsī, p 143

2 D R , Vol 1, pp 1-2

I left you but not my heart,
You fettered it with firm ties
The People of friendship and my love for the country are,
The reasons of my heart's suffering and my longings
I left unwillingly the land of my forefathers,
So that I have endured distress and misfortunes
By God, it was not my choice to leave it,
Had it not been disturbed by the occupation of
the arrogant tyrant
I still remember the day of separation when,
My eyes shed tears onto my cheeks at the beginning

My self-respect did not accept to stay among,
The injustices of the enemy, the masters of stupidity
I left my country as an exile,
For I neither said farewell to any friend
nor took my revenge
Oh, how sorry I feel about that land in which
The spring of my life and joy has disappeared

Broadly speaking, the mass of Rafīq's patriotic poetry belongs to his stay outside Libya, mainly in Turkey. There, he composed a great deal of nostalgic poems which are radiant with the powerful spirit of patriotism as we shall see later on

A year after his residence in Jīhān, Rafīq wrote a poem in which he pointed out that Turkey was never regarded by him even as a second country. Because of the character of Jīhān's people, he could not make friends or share their lives. This doubled his suffering as an exile. The following lines, which are from a poem composed in 1926, entitled Ba'ad 'Ām (after a year), describe his condition in that country and reveals the most refined feelings

تركت بلادى اد سعرت بأسى سألقى صحارا مه يأنف وحداي
وسرت لأرض غير أرض مؤملا لعرفنا في العصابة سيمان

.....

فقدت ملادي وهي عدى عريرة ولم ألق ما أملت في بلد ناسي
كأبي عراب اليبس صبيح مشيه ولم يكتسب مشي الحمام باتقان
حيلا وشوقا يا ملادي فاسي وان طال عنك العهد لست بحوان
فما كان عدى عنك الا ترفعنا عن الصيم لا عصا ولا قصد هجران
وابي لأني في الحواح لوعنة لحك يوربها على المعد تحماسي
ادا حفف الدمع الأسي فمدامعي لها وقدة رادت أساي وأشحابي

1

I left my country because I felt that
I would suffer discomforts which my emotional
life would reject
And I went to a land, which is not mine, hoping
for a glory, but they (my country and this land),
Are both the same in disaster

I lost my country which is an honorable one to me,
Nor did I find what I had hoped for in another one.
It is as if I were a crow who lost his manner of walking,
And did not practise the pigeon's gait
Oh, my country, I feel longing and yearning for you,
I am not disloyal even if it is for a long time
My keeping away from you is but a disdain
Of injustice, not of hate or of intending separation
I do hide in my heart your lovesickness,
Which is kept secret, far off, by my loyalty
If tears soothe the pain, my eyes,
Have a blaze which has increased my grief and distress

Beside describing their love for their country and expressing
their feeling towards the invaders and showing the determination of
their people to live as free-men in their own lands, there is
another aspect dealt with by the poets, namely the glorious past of
their country

1 Ibid , pp 7-8.

Like many others, our poets felt at the time that they were in need of using the strong power of their honorable past. Because of having a glorious history, a true religion and a great heritage, they aimed at using these elements as a weapon in the struggle against the enemy. They realised that it was necessary for them to awaken their people during the colonial period by reminding them that they had a glorious past and that they should have a hopeful future.

No doubt everyone admires the glorious past of his country. Regarding this fact, we find that our poets strongly emphasised the glorious past of their country which is a part of the Arab and Islamic history.

In his famous ode, al-Shārif stressed this point. In the following lines, he says

وحس عروج ركت من أصول فحس ما أتربا ما حبيبا
لتاريخ عصرنا في السورى حديث علمى صفحات الميما
وفي حاتم العر كاس المايا وحدنا بها لذة للشاريبا¹

We are branches, grown from roots,
We celebrate our glorious deeds for ever
The history of our origin has, among men,
A record on the pages of time.
By the side of glory there is the fate of death,
In which we found enjoyment for drinkers

Qanābah also proudly wrote in 1921 about the glorious past of his country which goes back to the Islamic period, using it as a motive in encouraging his people to live freely

¹ D Sh , p 83.

وي المؤمنس الأولى آمنوا أحوة ديس ترى سرمددا
وآنا سوهم لنا حووة تعادى الرمان ادا عابدا
وآنا لسهوى السدى يرتدى حنوم وحلم لكى يمحدا
ترى برهة النفس اسعادها وما همها العيش ان يرعدا
وي بصره الدهر لا يرتضى هواها فكيف ادا استعصدا
ولم يرض من كان فى عقله يهدد بالرعب ان أرعدا
مهلا سير على سيرهم وان أنت النفس لى تحمددا ؟
فلا يهمل الحرفى عيشه ادا لم يكن عره موطندا

Among the earlier believers, who were faithful,
Are brothers of religion who believe that (their religion) is eternal
And we are their sons having a sense of honour,
Which attacks time if it resists too stubbornly, -
And we aspire to him who was clothed,
In determination and sagacity to be glorified
They (brothers of religion) believe that
the pleasure of the soul is in its happiness,
And they do not mind if the life becomes easy
During the fullness of life, we do not accept,
Disgrace, and how then when it was enslaved
And we do not accept him who all of a sudden,
Threatens by fright when he menaces
Why do we not follow their behaviour,
Even if the soul refuses to go to great lengths
The Free-man will never be safe in this life,
If his power is not firm

It seems that this subject, namely the glorious past of the country, was appreciated by most of the Libyan poets of the period under study. It was dealt with even in the late forties as is obvious in their poetry. Here is Rafiq in one of his odes

نحن لبيسون من سبل العرب
نحن نعتد بنفس وسب
قد بينا الملك من أرواحينا
واستقلينا وأدركنا الأرب
نحن بالأرواح بقدي وطينا
بالدم العالى حطناه لنا
ولاخفاد بينا مسكنا
ليعيشوا سادة في عرّة
في حنى الاسلام في مجد العرب ١

We are Libyans, descended from the Arabs.
We have self-confidence and roots
We have built up power by our sacrifices,
And we are independent and we reached our aim
We ransom the country with ourselves.
We made it by much valuable blood ours.
We have built a home for our grandsons,
That they might live in power as masters,
In the protection of Islam, and in the glory of the Arabs.

Repeatedly Rafīq emphasised this point, aiming at reviving the glorious past of his country which took a deeper place in the hearts of his people, as a spiritual factor, in order to encourage their feeling and to urge them to continue their struggle for freedom and independence

Also, during the period of 1911-1923 which is the first stage of the Libyan Armed Resistance, we find the poets opposing the Italians and condemning their occupation by trying to bring to light their colonial aims in Libya and to sow the seeds of resentment in the hearts of their people. Here is al-Shārif, in his famous ode

أتمتد فينا مطامع قوم لقد ملأوا الارض افكاً ميساً؟
وحايت صحائفهم ناديات تريد الورى كل يوم طيباً
وقالوا وما عرفنا قولهم أسي ان يكون التوحش ميساً

Do the ambitions of people extend to us?
They have filled the earth with an obvious lie
And their newspapers appeared untruthful,
Increasing mankind with a buzzing everyday.
They said that savagery refused to be
Among them, but their saying did not deceive us

Similar to this meaning, Qanābah wrote

أترحو بالدهاء قياد أمري واسبى فيك منته وراء
وأبى من عرورك في امتعاص اذا ما حدث عن سزل السواء
فقد حملتني في الأمر أمرا محسك صادعا دائي العياء
علام بروع منك وابت حلس دليل عن مقاومة السلاء

.....

فان قد هصمت حقوق قوم أناة الصيم من حدر الشقاء
اذا حصوا المعامع أسد غاب تحال البار محتجح الدماء

Do you (the West) hope to direct my affairs by slyness?
And I am wakeful and observant of you.
And I am upset because of your deception,
If you turned away from the right path.
You have burdened me with responsibility
concerning the matter (the occupation),
But that is enough to come out into the open it is my disease
Why we are frightened by you and you are but a creation,
Powerless to resist misfortune?

1 D Sh , p 84.

2 D Q , pp 99-100.

You have treated with injustice the rights of the people,
Who are reluctant to bear injustice cautious of misery
When they rush into battle, they are lions of the forest,
And you imagine the fire as a gathering place of blood

In several poems, Rafīq pointed out the nature of the colonial policy of the Italians in his country. In one of his earliest patriotic poems, he says

يسرهم آتلا مثل المهائم أو أقل مرتمة ، مثل الحمادات
أهم أسلحة المستعمرين اذا سادوا على أمة شر الحبالات
وبعد تعريق دات اللين يتبعه قهر ، وفساد أخلاق و عادات 1

It gives them (the Italians) pleasure that we are
like animals or,
Even less, like inanimate beings
The most important weapon of the colonists,
If they predominate over a nation, is
the spreading of ignorance
And after spreading disunity, there follows,
Subjugation, ill-manners, and bad habits

In addition to this subject, concerning the conditions of their country in the light of colonial policy, the poets dealt with another aspect which reflects also their patriotic poetry, their political awareness. On several occasions, they urged the youth to join the struggle against the Italians. Here is Ahmad al-Shārif

وشبابك الوئاس أول راحف يوم الكريهة كي يكون فداك
فله الشهادة ان يمت شرط وان كسب الحياة فلا يريد سواك 2

Your ebullient youth is the first advance,
In day of misfortune (the war) to be your ransom

1 D R , Vol 2, p 5

2 D Sh , p 87.

For him is martyrdom if he died honorably,
And if he lived, he does not want anything but you.

Also, Ahmad Qanābah wrote

لله من متى اذا احتدم الوعى	شق المحاربها وحاب اليبدا
تأبى الشهامة فيه ان يرصى الوعى	والله صد عره تصيدا
قولوا لمن حاف المية راحيا	طول الحياة الا دكرت "لبدا" 1

2

How capable is the spirit of youth! when the war breaks out,
By which he crosses the seas and penetrates the deserts.
His decency refuses to accept weakness,
Because God ordained his power.
Ask him who is afraid of death, hoping for a long life
Do you, indeed, remember "Labīd"

While Rafīq says, in one of his songs

وطن اساره بحس طان	لم ين سادته بحس ، فمس ؟
بحس بحيه وبقديه نما	عز من ارواحنا مهي نمس
ان من يرصى بعيش في حى	غيره فهو حقير ممتهمس
ليس للاحرار في الدنيا سوى	حلح بير الدل اولس الكفس 3

We are the sons of the country,
If we are not its masters, who then are we?
We protect and ransom it by the things,
Which are dear to us. They are the price
He, who is contented to live under the protection,

1 He is Labīd b. Rabī'ah, of the Banū 'Āmir. Born in the second half of the sixth century. He is one of the Seven Poets of the Mu'allaqāt. He accepted Islam and emigrated to al-Kūfah in Iraq and remained until he died at the end of the Caliphate of Mu'āwiyah. He lived to a great age and is said to have been a hundred and forty-five years old when he died. See, Jurjī Zaidān, Tārīkh 'Ādāb al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah, Vol 1, (Cairo, 1936) p 102

2 D Q , pp 91-2.

3. D R , Vol 2, p 7.

Of others, is wretched and humiliated
There is nothing for free-men to do in the world but,
Get rid of the yoke of humiliation or lie in the coffin.

With the outbreak of the Italo-Libyan war in March 1923, the second stage of the Libyan Armed Resistance Movement began. Once again, we find the poets played a decisive role in inflaming the feelings of their people against the Italians.

For about nine years, from 1923 to 1931, of this stage, the national struggle was led by a remarkable man, 'Umar al-Mukhtār in Cyrenaica. In the beginning it seemed that armed resistance was impossible because the active stage in Tripolitania was ended before the twenties. Besides, the people of Tripolitania and Fezzan were completely under Italian domination when this war broke out.

However, during this period, the poets continued their contribution in the same way as has been described in the previous pages

Considering the size of the Italian forces and their resources, the Armed Resistance was, at the beginning of 1930, at a serious disadvantage in men and arms. By losing its great leader in September 1931, the Resistance Movement ended in Libya as a whole. It was, then, controlled politically from outside Libya. In addition to this, the Libyan poets carried on what was called a war of the pen, whenever the press was permitted to agitate against the Italians

It is true that the Italians had put down the Libyan Armed Resistance by the capture of its great leader 'Umar al-Mukhtār and

his execution. But his death and heroism have been a powerful inspiration for both the Libyans and the Arab poets.¹ I give here a quotation from a poem, composed by Rafīq, in which he says

سذكر ما حييا من نارنا له في طيِّ أصلعنا أوار
سذكر حداث النطل المعدي "أبي المختار" ما طلع النهار
وواحد ناره حتما معمار يعيش وشيحا دمه حمار
2 شهيد الحق مدونه جهاد بايعان وداك لنا شعار

We will remember, as long as we live, your avenging,
For which there is a constant flame in our breasts
We will remember the event of the beloved hero,
Abū al-Mukhtār as long as the sun rises.
We will, indeed, avenge him for it is a shame,
To live while our Shaikh's blood is shed
He is the martyr of the right. His aim is,
Struggle with strong belief, and that is our slogan

During the period from the death of 'Umar al-Mukhtār in 1931 to the Italian evacuation in 1943, the patriotic poetry of our three Libyan poets varies in its subjects, emotion, and sincerity. While it remained pure and emotional in Rafīq's poetry, it fluctuated in Qanābah's poetry between those kind of poems which were composed by him at the beginning of the twenties and those in which he responded to Italian pressure. As far as al-Shārif is concerned, his poetry during this period became less and turned either towards praising the Italians, their leaders, and their policy in Libya or to other themes like love-poetry

1 See, al-Bārūnī, Abū Qāsim, al-Muntakhabāt al-Shi'rīyah fī al-ḥarb al-Ṭarābulsiyah, (Cairo, 1946)

2 D R , Vol 2, p 212.

To give an example of each case, I start with Rafīq who returned to Libya in 1934 in order to do greater service to his country than he could by his stay abroad. Owing to his responsive nature to the call of duty, he went back to his native country Benghazi after an absence of about ten years with considerable experience and a well-known patriotic reputation

After his return, Rafīq felt sad at the crimes of Italian government and he loudly protested against it as strongly expressed in a lyrical narrative poem. During the year 1934, Rafīq produced a narrative poem, entitled Ghaith al-Ṣaghīr (Gaith the Young) in which he described the tyranny of the Italians and their crimes, committed against innocent people

In this poem, he tells us a story of a young boy called (Ghaith) and what happened to him and to his family at the hands of the Italians. In ardent lines and with exciting events, Rafīq describes the character of the boy when he met him in the orphanage¹ set up by the Italian government for children whose parents were killed either in war or by extermination. In its beginning, he says

هو بي الملحأ¹ من دون اليتامى دائم الصمت وقارا واحتشاما
واصح الحد قليلا ما يبرى صاحكا الا اذا استجيا اتساما
2 لاهد اللحظ تراه باطرا بطرة الاحدل يرتاد الحماما

In the orphanage, he (Ghaith) is, apart from the orphans, in state of constant silence, venerably and modestly. He is obviously serious, rarely was he seen, laughing unless he felt embarrassed and then he smiled. He has a penetrating look you might see him glancing, with the glance of the hawk searching for pigeons

1 It is the orphanage of al-Maqrūn, a small village far away from Benghazi by 75 kilometres

2 D R , Vol 2, p 9.

Then, Rafīq tells us what passed in his conversation with the boy and what happened to the latter's family which was exterminated. As an example of his lyrical narrative form, I quote here the following chapter which describes the story of the extermination of his family

بينما الحيّ رقود اد عقلت صرحة تسدر بالشرّ بيا ماما
نارت الاطفال من مضجعتها تملأ الرح صياحا ورحاما
رحت الارض صهيلا مفرعا ورعا ، وساحا ، وحماما
لمسوا ثوب الدحي ايدى سا يحطون البيد فى الترابهرا ماما
تركوا الانتقال والمال وما حقا حملا والمطايا والحياما

...

ورأى الاطفال ان الموت لا شك فيه فتلقوه رؤاما
قيدوا ارحلهم صبرا فما حلها غير الرصاص يترامى
حلها من ريقة العار ومن عيشة الدل فقد ماتوا كراما
هون الحطب عليهم موتهم فى دفاع كان للحق انتقاما
ملكوا فى كل شعب هربا يستحيرون من الظلم الطلاما¹

While the tribe was sleeping, suddenly a scream,
Went out, warning the sleeping people of disaster
The children were aroused from their beds,
Filling the void with crying and confusion
The earth was shaken by a terrible neighing,
Braying, barking and dispute
They wore the garment of darkness and were scattered
to the four winds like the people of Sheba,
They were striking against the deserts in the open
country in disorganised flight
They left their burdens, money and what was
Light of weight, riding animals and tents

The brave-men saw that death was beyond any doubt,
So they received it reluctantly
They bound their feet patiently,
And nothing untied them but bullets scattering

1 Ibid , p 12

They (the legs) were released from the noose of shame,
And the life of humiliation, because they died honorably.
Their death in a defense which,
Was an avenging of the right, did not get us excited.
They followed every path in order to escape,
They were seeking protection from black injustice.

Rafīq continues this story with another chapter in which he portrays his dislike and hatred of the Italian occupation. In this chapter he says

بينما رحت أهدى روعه وادا بالقوم يبدون اهتماما
قيل هذا دولة الوالي أتسى ليرى في ملحق النظام
حرح الاطفال واصطفوا له للتحيات هتافا وسلاما

.....

عرف الوالي لسعيث همّة ورأى حودا له يحكى العماما
راده رعبا وهل غير دوى ال فصل يرعى لدوى الفصل داما ١
قال : حد يا عيث هدى مائة لك لا تسرف وكن فيها قواما

.....

قال : ما تصبح يا عيث بها قل لى الحق ولا تحشى ملاما
قال عيث : وبدا الحد على وجهه يشبه لينا أوقظامما
ان لى بأرا ادا أد ركسه لا أنالى بعد ان دقت حماما
لو تحصلت على مال ، به أشترى عدة حرب وحماما
أدرك الثارات ممن قتلوا والدى ، انى أريد انتقاما
هو مشدى من الدنيا التى لى ساءت مستقرا ومقاما ١

While I sought to calm him down,
Suddenly, the people were showing attention
It was said, this is the Governor come,
To see the system of regulations in the orphanage of kindness.²
The children came out and lined up for him,
For salutation, cheerfully and welcoming

1 Ibid , pp 14-5.

2 He means the orphanage of al-Maqrūn

The Governor acknowledged a high-mindedness in Ghaith,
And he saw in him a generosity which is like rain clouds
He paid more attention to him and do not,
The people of kindness recognise their like
He said O, Ghaith, take, this is one hundred (Lira),
For yourself and do not waste it and be moderate with it.

He said O, Ghaith, what are you going to do with it?
Tell me the truth and do not be afraid of blame
Ghaith said, and seriousness appeared on his face,
Resembling a lion or a hawk.
I will have revenge. If I take it,
After that I would not pay any attention to my death
If I get the money, I will buy weapons of war
and a sword with it
I take the revenge against whoever killed my father,
I want to take my revenge.
It is my pursued aim in this world which,
Has become a worse place for me

Eventually, Rafīq ends this narrative poem by informing us in emotional lines that the boy, Ghaith, was killed by poisoned food for his frankness before the Governor.

However, Rafīq composed, since his return to Libya from Turkey, several poems, chief amongst which may be mentioned his narrative poem (Ghaith the Younger). It is clear that he composed it defying the Italian authorities without care of the consequences which could have led to the fiercest opposition from them

When the Italian government established the Higher Islamic School in 1936,¹ it was considered by most of the people as a colonial

1 It was founded by (Italo Balbo) who organised wide propaganda throughout the radio and newspapers inducing the people to send their children to it instead of to al-Azhar in Egypt or al-Zaitūnah in Tunisia See, al-Hājjājī, p 88

institution In a poem, Rafīq attacked this educational step by which the Italians aimed at weakening the power of the people He pointed out that

وليس ، لمن حواه الخط ، فحسب
نمار الحدّ أهلاً من نمار
فلا تقنع بمدح جاه عفووا
وكالخطأ ، الصيغ يحيى كرها
أدا الاعمال بالنيات كانت
وماوى الحير مأحور عليه
كمن بلغ الذى يرحو غلاها
تحيى نصحة صدق رطبا
ولا تقبل بلا عمل ثوابا
فلا حمدا يثيب ولا عفاها
على النيات بعتمه الحصانا
كفاعله الذى اقتحم الصعانا¹

He, who was favoured by luck, has not the pride,
Of him who reached what he hoped for victory
The fruits of earnestness are more delicious than fruits,
Which come by happy chance as a gift
So, do not be satisfied with a glory which comes spontaneously,

And do not accept a reward without work
For, like the mistake, action comes unwillingly,
It rewards with neither praise nor punishment
If actions were made with intentions,
We rely on the intentions in our judgement
He, who intends good, will be rewarded for it,
Exactly as its doer who surmounts hardships

In the year 1936 Rafīq, once again, was exiled due to his anti-Italian policy and to his poetry in which he exposed the Italian actions in Libya

After the pacification of the country in the early 1930s, the Italians attempted, from the beginning, to contact those of the better educated section of the Libyan population Efforts were made to bring this section more closely in line with Italian interests

1 D R , Vol 2, p 58.

But they affected only the Arabs of the towns and even in the towns only a few persons, mostly officials, who actively collaborated with them ¹

Apart from the administrative Libyan officials who had a record of close and active collaboration with the Italians, very few poets showed any inclination to use their poetry for the service of the Italians in Libya. For example, among the efforts aimed at Italian propaganda and which met with some success, were journeys to Italy arranged by the government for some prominent figures. On one of these journeys, Aḥmad al-Shārif went to Naples where he was attracted by the beauty of its girls. In a poem entitled Ghawānī Nābulī (The Pretty girls of Naples), he wrote

عوايبى (نابولى) نعم العوايبى مبرلة الربيع من الصرمان
2 من الحس اللطيف أرى حسنا فهى الحور فى عرف الحسان

The pretty girls of Naples, how wonderful they are!
Occupying the same position as the spring
among the other seasons.
They are the most pretty of the fair sex,
They are hours in the pavilions of paradise

Regarding the character of al-Shārif, Taha al-Ḥājirī says that al-Shārif was a peaceful and mild-tempered man. Because of this, it seems that he preferred to secure his life and means of living. Hence, he found himself compelled to become reconciled with the Italians who controlled the reins of power in Libya, particularly

1. See, Pritchard, p 212

2 Al-Ḥājirī, p 125

after the pacification of Cyrenaica in 1931

Since that time, al-Shārif, like some of his contemporaries, took a softer attitude towards the Italians, either by saying nothing which might displease them or by writing artificial poetry about their leaders, like his eulogy for Mussolini when the latter visited Libya for the first time in March 1937.

In fact, thousands of Libyans were brought in to welcome Mussolini and were forced to celebrate this occasion. About his visit to Tripoli, Wright tells us that

"The Muslims of Tripoli reportedly greeted him as the greatest man of the century and the sincere friend of Islam, an eulogy that hardly tallied with his image in the Islamic world. It was during his 1937 visit to Tripoli when Libyan notables went through the farce of presenting him with the Sword of Islam, that Mussolini started seriously to play the curious role of Protector of Islam, the great leader who would defend the rights of Muslims both in Libya and beyond its frontiers"¹

Among the poets that welcomed Mussolini was Ahmad al-Shārif who greeted him with a poem entitled Tahīyat al-Sha'ir li'izza'im (the Offering Poetry to the Leader). In it he says

بالحرم أصح (موسوليني) مالكا	ثقة البلاد فأصحت تهواه
الواصل العرص الععيد وصاله	والقاطع السوط الععيد مداه
يتحشم الاحظار لا متهيبا	فيال في عقباتهن مساه
ومهمة الاقدام قد تركت له	أثرا يطيب مدى الرمان شده
ما زال يأخذ في النمو شابه	حتى حمى الوطن الميع حماه 2

1 Wright, pp 179-180.

2 Majallat Libya al-Musanwarah, Vol 2, No 7, April 1937, p 15

By determination, Mussolini came to have,
The trust of the country which became fond of him.
He reaches the distant aim,
And he makes far-reaching progress.
He undergoes hardships fearlessly,
Therefore, immediately after they are over, he gains his wish
The duty of daring has left for him,
An effect may its aroma be pleasant for ever'
Young (in power) he is still growing,
Until the powerful country shall protect his sanctuary.

We come now to Qanābah's poetry during the period from 1931 to 1943, which is coloured by indirect attacks against the Italians and at the same time by softness towards their policy. In this connection, it is interesting to quote the following lines from a poem entitled Tahīyat al-Shabāb (the Greeting of Youth) and composed in 1936 on the occasion of the return of a group of Libyan youths, representing the coastal towns of Tripoli, Miṣurātah, Benghazi and Derna, from Rome

حيّوا الشباب الماهض الصديدا فالحق أصبح عدّة وعديدا
حيّوا المدافع عن سماء بلاده مثل الحيوذ مطّما وشديدا
حيّوه شهبا ، بانبا ، مستأسدا وأحفوه حتّا ، طائشا ، عريدا 1

Greet the active and brave youth,
Since right has become an instrument
Greet the defenders of the glory of the country,
Like soldiers, who are regular and powerful
Greet them when noble, firm and lion-like,
And ignore them when they are imposter, aimless and quarrelsome.

In the same poem, he praises Mussolini by saying

ها هم بنو روما وما سادوه من ملك ومن محدد ، حدوا تمبيدا
لولا رعامّة (موسولسى وايتلو بالبو) لما كان المسيد وطيدا
هموا تروا الرومان عاد محدد شهما ن مرد هرا به ومسيدا 2

1 D Q , p 90.

2 al-Raqīb al-'Atīd Newspaper, No 803, June 1936, p 1

Here are the sons of Rome and what they have constructed
Power and glory. Accept this fact as a standing point
If it was not for the leadership of Mussolini and Italo Balbo,
The Building would not have been so strong
Hasten! you will see the Romans revived their former glory,
Both of them (Mussolini and Balbo) are noble. They
are delighted at it (the glory) and praised for it.

Following these three lines, in which he praises Mussolini,
Qanābah indicated the differing views of his people towards those
youths, justifying the latter's response to the Italians to visit
Rome, and subsequently his moderate attitude towards them. He wrote

لا تعطوا هذا الشباب حقوقه حلوه وهو ما رآه سديدا
فالناس مختلفون في آرائهم ليسوا سواء سادة وعبيدا
من كان يعلم دين رب محمد لا يحهل التصير والتهودا
.....

لم يدر ما قدر الحقائق بل وما قدر السيوف ادا استحل حويدا
من لم يؤمنه الحقا وصيره فيما ارتاه فلا يعد رشيدا
لا حير في تلك الصائير كلها ما لم تكن مطلوة توحيدا
.....

هذا وأتم والساب وأتمنا سعي معيشا رائعا ورعيدا
والعيش أناس تعد دقيقة والمر لا يرجو عليه مريدا
ربوا حقا هذا الشباب ونظموا ما كان عن رأى الساب شريدا

Do not conceal the rights of the youth,
Leave them, they are right in what they saw
The people are different in their opinions,
They are not equal, being masters and slaves.
Even he who was practicing Islam,
Does not ignore Christianisation and Judaisation

He did not know the value of the facts,
But of the swords if they are changed into
palm-branches stripped of their leaves

He, whose mind and heart did not blame him,
For having an opinion, is not considered intelligent
There is no good in all those hearts,
If they were not filled with belief in the unity of God.

. . .

On the other hand, you, the youth and I wish,
A wonderful and pleasant life.
Life is breaths, considered as brief minutes,
And a man does not hope for more than that
Educate the mind of this youth and organise,
What was absent from the opinion of the youth.

Also, among the patriotic songs that Qanābah has left, there are three songs, published in al-'Adl (Justice) newspaper, which was one of the Libyan newspapers that collaborated with the Italian government at the time

When a Fascist organisation¹ for Libyan youth was established and called "the Gioventu Araba del Littorio" (الشباب العربي الليتوريو) Qanābah was asked by the Italian government to compose Arabic songs for this organisation according to the Fascist anthem for the Italian youth. He responded to its demand. But as was the case with the previous poem, the three songs opened with promoting the Libyan youth to be faithful to their country and to educate themselves for its future. Then, they ended with praising Mussolini. As an example, Qanābah says in the first one

1 Since Mussolini took over power in Italy in October 1922, colonisation in Libya was practised, as Wright says, according to the theories of Fascism. After the pacification of the country in 1931, decisive attempts were made to colour the character of Libya and its people with Fascism. For instance, Libyans were recruited in the army and forced to fight in Abyssinia, to wear black shirts, which was the Fascist colour, to give the Fascist salute and cheer Mussolini and the King of Italy whenever and wherever the Italian flag was flown. See, Wright, p. 181

يا رجال العبد كوسوا حير دحر للوطن
ليس من أيقن بالحد ح كمن شقّ وطس
فكم يرحى بحاح المش مع في كل رمس

....

ان (للدوتشي) لرأيسا حسا أي حسس
كل من أمّ حماء مخلص القلب اطمأن
حس بالمال وبالرو ح فداه والبدن¹

O men of the future, be
The best of treasure for the country
He, who is sure of success is not,
Like he who is distrustful and suspicious
It is only, by you, that the good progress of the people,
Is to be hoped for in every time

..

The Duce has an excellent opinion of you,
Everyone, who accepted faithfully his protection
is set at rest.
We ransom him with wealth, soul and body

In fact his poem and the three songs do not mean that Qanābah was propagating the colonial views of the Italian government in his poetry. They are a logical consequence of his safe attitude which appeared first in the kind of poems composed during the twenties in a symbolic form, also because of his job in the Italian government. As we have already said in his biographical sketch, Qanābah was appointed as a broadcaster on Tripoli Radio in 1938 and remained there until January 1943.

However, it is a kind of poetry which belonged to the period of the Italian occupation. It reveals the difficult circumstances in which our poets lived, and reflects one of the results of the end of the Libyan Armed Resistance, namely the spread of hopelessness

¹ D Q., p 206

in the hearts of the Libyan people who were completely under Italian domination

Whilst agreeing with some of al-Shārif and Qanābah's critics that their patriotic poetry is comparatively limited within the period 1931-43, it is only fair to point out that it comprises in itself many of the finest emotional poems, particularly during the first twenty years of the Italian occupation

In addition to this, during the period 1931-43, both al-Shārif and Qanābah left some poems in which they expressed their political views towards the Arab idea as linked with religion, as we shall see. On the occasions of the deaths of Shawqī and Ḥāfīz in 1932, King Faiṣal of Iraq in 1933 and al-Zahāwī in 1936, they composed elegies inspired by that political current which prevailed in the Arab Muslim World at that time. They used to take advantage of these opportunities to express their secret opinions and feelings towards colonisation. According to these kind of poems, which were influenced by Arabism and Islam and remained as their favourite themes and the object of their affection and pride, one can say that Qanābah and al-Shārif were not sincere in their praise of the Italians. Their poetry about them was a result of difficult circumstances which did not give them a choice to express their real feelings, but forced them to follow the current in order to safeguard their lives.

In spite of this, the Libyan patriotic poetry knew another kind of poem characterised by nostalgia which was presented by Aḥmad Rafīq during his first exile to Turkey from 1925 to 1934. But in the period from 1936 to 1946, which Rafīq spent in his second exile in Turkey, nostalgia reached its peak at his hands. Rafīq has, repeatedly,

expressed his love of his country which is the main spring of his patriotism. But this love became stronger than ever before when he was exiled once again in 1936

By this kind of poetry, which is usually expressive of suffering and touches the hearts and feelings, Rafīq presented to the Libyan patriotic poetry many odes of the finest emotional poetry in any language.

While Rafīq was preparing to leave the country in 1936, he composed a poem entitled Wadā' (Farewell) in which he described his feeling during those days

سكّته يوم الرحيل فهاحيا شوق أثار الدمع الناحيا
حاولت اطهار التحلّد فاشي عرسي وراح تحلّدي أدراحيا
عالحت من ألم الغراي وهولسه مالا يعيد الصر فيه علاحيا 1

I calm it (my heart) down in the day of departure
but it is excited,
My longing caused streaming tears
I pretended to be patient, but my determination
was broken and my patience came to nothing
I treated the pain of separation and its shock,
Which patience is helpless to treat

He followed this with another poem which is one of his richest poems in feeling, but also a lively artistic record of his love of his country ² In its beginning, Rafīq says

رحيلي عند عزّعتي حـدّا وداعا أيها الوطن الميمّدي
وداع مفاقر بالرّعم شـاءت له الأقدار بيل العيش كـدّا
وحير من رفاه العيش كـدّا ادا أنا عشت حـرّا مستدّا
سأرحل عند يا وطني واتي لأعلم أنني قد حثت آدّا

1 D R , Vol 2, p 51

2 See, al-Tellīsī, p 124

....

ويا وطني هجرتك لا لعص ولا أبي محنت سسواك ودا
فلا والله ما هاجرت حتى جهدت ولم أحد من دال سدا¹

My departure from you was very painful for me,
Farewell, O, dearly beloved country
A farewell of separation by force,
And fate wanted him to obtain a living by hard-working

Hard-work is better than a comfortable life,
Since I have lived as freeman and slave.
I will leave you, O my country, and I know,
That I did a horrible thing

O, my country, I departed from you not out of,
Dislike or because I gave my love to someone else
No, by God, I left when I had made every,
Conceivable effort and found that I must do it

In (Jihān), a town in Turkey, Rafīq composed several poems which are full of emotion. Owing to the power of his emotion, they are indeed more of the nature of pure poetry. In these poems, one can see the pure emotion fused with a political attitude

In his sad remembrances he gives us, among others, the following ode composed in 1939 and entitled Ḥanīn Gharīb ʾilā Awṭānih (the longing of an exile for his country)

يا من على السعد بهواه وبهوانا لشد ما شقنا شوق فأصا سنا
ذكرى عهد الهوى ماتت تساورنا يا من يبلع للاحبات شكوا سنا
أنا بحكم الهوى صرنا ولا عجب نريد ذكرا لمن يرداد سياسنا
ما أصفتنا الليالي في نوى تركت حسنا هيا ، وهما القلب ولها ما²

1 D R , Vol 2, pp 53-4.

2 Ibid , p 148.

- حتى شوقنا الى اوطاننا فادا تسم السارق العريسي انانا
ومن سوانا حدير بالعا على ذكرى (الغويها والبركا وحليانا) 2
معاهد حينا لو لم يكن شعفا ما لها من جمال كان ايماننا
قد طوحتنا الليالي عن مواطينا يا ويح كل عريب قدره هاسنا 3

O, he who is far off we love him and he loves us,
Great longing devoured us so that
it consumed us with grief.
Memory of the ages of love came to attack us,
O, he who takes to the dear ones our suffering.
By virtue of love we became, and no wonder,
More in remembrance of one who forgets more and more.
Nights did not treat us with justice in our separation,
They left a body here and the heart passionately'
in love there

We feel compassion for our country,
And when the lightning flashes in the west
it makes us cry
And who else deserves to weep,
Over the memory of al-Fuwaiḥāt, Berka and Jolyānah?
Places which if their love was not an infatuation with,
Their beauty, it was a faith
Nights had thrown us away from our country,
Woe to every exile for his dignity becomes despicable'

Despite the atmosphere of freedom, Rafīq had not satisfaction
in living in Turkey. He was almost sad among its people and felt
completely a stranger in the town of Jihān. It is true that Rafīq

-
- 1 He means the lightning with the wind which blows over Benghazi
from the West in the winter. It is often abounding in rain
2 They are places in Benghazi
3 Op cit p 150.

as we have seen in his previous poems, was not happy through the years which he spent abroad. But at the same time, these years served as an effective element in warming his patriotic poetry. Because of his outstanding poetry, particularly that which he composed during his stay in Turkey, Rafīq became, as al-Tellīsī¹ remarked, the poet Laureate of the country

It was only eight years after the end of the Libyan Armed Resistance when the Second World War began in 1939. In June 1940, Italy entered the war by joining forces with the Germans against the allies. A few months after, a Libyan army was formed from among the Libyan exiles in Egypt and fought on the side of the British from 1940 to 1942.

At the beginning of 1943, the Axis armies were defeated and retreated to Tunisia. As a result of this defeat, the Italian occupation in Libya was ended by a complete evacuation of the Italian troops. It had given the Libyans, among them of course the poets, opportunities to see the Italians retreating and withdrawing from Libya, and to pay off the old scores against them.

While Rafīq was living in Turkey, the news of the Italian evacuation from Libya was passed on promptly to the world and reached him. On this occasion, he composed an ironic poem entitled al-Ḥabīb al-Ḥājir (The Emigrant Lover). At the beginning of this poem, which consists of forty lines, Rafīq wrote

قد اتلف الحمار بأَمِّ عمرو فلا رحمت ولا رجح الحمار
الى نِسِّ المقر وحيث أَلقت برجل حول ساحته الدمار
هصت مصحوبة بدعاء شمر يكرره شمات واحتقار

2

1 See, al-Tellīsī, pp 124-127.

2 D R , Vol 2, p 210.

The Donkey has taken off Umm 'Amr,
Neither she nor the Donkey has returned.
To the worst place, wherever she goes,
May it be in ruin
She went trailing a curse behind her,
Accompanied with malicious joy and scorn

And here is Qanābah, in a poem published in June 1944, he says

رأية النصر رفرفى فوق روما وأنعنى عهد هذا الحديد حوما
عهد حرية، وعهد تصافى لا يرى فيه أى حرّ وحومما

.....

طهرها ممسحى لا تقسرى بين أرحائها عبيدا ظلومما
رمر حرية الشعوب أعيدى كل شعبييت يشكو الهومما 1

O, flag of the victory, flutter over Rome,
And bring on it a new era shining like stars
An era of freedom and settlement,
About which any freeman does feel despondent

Purify it from those who treated it unjustly,
And do not now reside, about its borders, stubborn and tyrannical
O, symbol of freedom of the nations, felicitate,
Every nation spends the night complaining of distresses

However, the evacuation of the Italians from Libya inspired the Libyan poets to glorify the Libyan struggle for liberation and independence which had lasted for about thirty years, particularly the effective armed resistance from 1911 to 1931. This effective resistance proved that Italy could not gain proper control over Libya, particularly Cyrenaica. In addition to this, the Italians did not expect a long war or an Armed Resistance which lasted for about twenty years. Moreover, they did not expect a quicker defeat in Africa, particularly in Libya within a very few years (1940-1943)

1 D.Q , p 86.

About these thirty years of the Italian occupation and of the Libyan struggle for liberation and independence, Rafiq wrote

ألم نتحد العاصيين حقوقنا
تدلى لتحرير البلاد فوسنا
أتيلا بما لم يأت شعب يعوقنا
فأنا وإن كنا قليل عديدنا
ثلاثين عاما صاريس على القتل
كراما ولسنا محجين على المدل
فوسنا وليس العجرى كثرة السبل
لنكتر عند الروع من كرم الاصل 1

Did we not challenge those who violated our rights?
For thirty years we have been patient of slaughter
For the liberation of our country we sacrificed,
Generously, our souls and we have not refrained from sacrificing

We have achieved more than a nation bigger in number,
But glory is not in number of people
Even if we were small, in spite of our number,
We became numerous in the momentous event
because of our noble descent

1 D R , Vol 2, p 9.

Their Patriotic Poetry during the British Occupation

When the Italian occupation was replaced by the British and French Military Administrations in 1943, Libya fell once again under foreign control to remain so until 1949. During these seven years, an important change in the political field occurred as we have already described in a previous chapter

As a result of this change, Libyan political poetry developed in its motifs, subjects and style. It overflowed with the emotion of patriotic feelings. In addition, the Libyan poets have been successful in recruiting all the elements necessary for expressing national political views. Their contribution to the political movement was most effective.

In fact, side by side with the political parties, which were established for the first time in Libya, they played an active part in expressing the national demands to the great powers and in cementing the feeling of patriotism among their people.

During these seven years, Rafīq, Qanābah and al-Shārif composed many poems in which they pointed out to their people the true nature of the British interests in Libya and recorded the important political events that passed in Libya during the forties. Their political output reflects, in fact, the development of political life in Libya within that period.

After his final return to Libya in 1946, Rafīq composed many poems, collected and published in a volume in 1965, concerning the British attitude towards the Libyan issue. Repeatedly, he indicated that the British intended only to administer the country after the

Second World War These poems have proved, indeed, that Rafīq was capable with skill to express the national interests Therefore, they remained an outstanding evidence of the daring ability of Rafīq whose name sounded loudly in Libyan patriotic poetry during the British Administration and afterwards

When World War II was breaking out, the British authorities promised to transfer power to the Libyans but they refused to give a guarantee of independence for Libya after the end of this war.

About this point, Rafīq, in one of his poems, wrote

يناصرنا حق فكيف وحققنا له ناصر داع بححتنا يدلسي
تعهد (شورشيل وايدن) حبرة مهل يحلف الصعاد (يعين) أو (اتلى)
سؤال سيقى في النفوس ملحظا الى أن يبر الوعد بالحق والعدل 1

Right supports us, and how is it that our right,
Has a supporter, expressing it?
Churchill and Eden promised openly,
But do Bevin and Italy keep their words?
A question which will remain in our mind,
And be repeated until the promise is fulfilled
with right and justice

In the same sense, Aḥmad Qanābah says in a famous ode pointing out the true nature of the British policy

حدعونا في رعمهم يوم قالوا
فاستمالوا نفوسنا بوعود
اسما في وعودنا قد صدقنا
أى قيد فكوه عنا بوعود
لم يفعلوا الفيود بعد، ولكن
عاهدونا بالدود عن كل شعب
عاهدونا بالدود عن كل حسي
ليس عند المستعمرين عهدود
لا تصدق بالقول ان وعدونا
اسم من عدوسا حررروسا
لس توي ولو صرنا قروسا
اسما هم في وعودهم كادوسا
فاسألوهم كم مرة راوعوسا؟
كنلوسا بعيرها كنلوسا
حال دون استقلاله المستعمرود
ما لهم لم يعوا بما عاهدوسا
أى عهد أوي به الحشعوسا؟
بله صدق بالعمل ان أوعدوسا 2

1. 'Afīfī, M.S., Dīwān Rafīq, Shā'ir al-Ilaṭanīyah al-Lībīyah, Vol 1. (Cairo, 1959) p.33

2. D.Q., pp 77-8

They deceived us in their claim when they said
That they had liberated us from our enemy
They attracted us by promises never fulfilled,
Even if we are patient for centuries
In our promises we have been faithful,
But they are liars when they promise
Which fetter have they freed us from by promises?
Ask them how often did they deceive us?
They have not yet loosened the chains, but
They, indeed, have replaced them with something else.
They promised us to protect every nation,
Prevented, by the occupiers, from their independence
They promised to protect every right,
Why did they not fulfil their promise?
There is no fulfilment of promises for the occupiers,
Which promise is fulfilled by the greedy?
Do not believe the words they promise,
Believe in action when they threaten us

By knowing the intention of the British authorities to partition the country into three provinces, Rafīq, Qanābah and al-Shārif increasingly emphasised this matter and gave it great attention in their poetry. They condemned the idea of partition and strongly called for the unification of Libya

Since his return to Libya, a new and far happier period of Rafīq's life began. In a poem which shines with emotional feelings he expressed his happiness with this return as he openly says

رجع المطوح من عياده	عاد الحبيب الى بلاد
الحب يععم روحه	والسوق يلهب في فؤاده
وشائر المستقبل الرا	هي تماعف من حبهاده
ليرى حياه حرة	هي وحدها أقصى مراده

He, who was cast away, came back from his exile,
The stranger has returned to his country
Love fills his soul entirely,
And longing inflames his heart
The good news of a wonderful future,
Doubles his struggle
In order to live in freedom,
Which is by itself his greatest wish

In the same poem, Rafīq took up the topic of the unity of his country which is one of the main political ideas of the majority of his people. He says

من ذا الذي يدعو الى تقسيم حوزة وانفراد
تمزيق (برقة) عن (طرا) لفس (حروج عن سداده
ما تلك غير حياصة تأتي على باقي عتاده
ومن الذي يرضى بحكم م غير حر في سلالده؟¹

Who is he who calls for,
The division of a part and its separation?
The fragmentation of Cyrenaica from
Tripolitania is not a right thing
That is nothing but treachery which destroys
The remainder of its power
For who accepts rule except as
A freeman in his own country

In another poem, he attacked those who responded to these colonial views which were created by the British, pointing out the latter's well-known principle in politics (Divide and Rule) and reminding all people of the unity of Libya from times of old. He wrote

¹ Ibid, p 4.

تحالفا في الرأي أحوح ما سرى الى وحدة لاشئ أعظم حسرا
يروحه قوم، وأقسم لم يكس ليصدر الآ عن حمةالة حسرا
متى بان هذا الرأي في عهد فتحها الى عهد حكم التتولأم عهد طليان؟
وما المسب الداعي لتفريق بيننا ونحن بحمد الله أصدى احوا
أيعرب عن عقل اللبيب سياسة خلاصتها (قرو تمد) كآل اسما
ادا لم يوحد صفنا اليوم لم يقم لنا في عد أس التشيد بسيان 1

Our difference of opinion about our great need,
Of unity, is no doubt the greatest loser
It is propagated by a people, I swear,
Who utters it only from ignorance and treachery
When was this opinion expressed? was it during its conquest,
(By the Arabs) till the time of the Turks or of the Italians?
And what is the reason that calls for these
differences between us,
And we are praised be to God, the best of brothers
The intelligent man is, no doubt, aware of a policy,
Which is, in a word, divide and rule every man
If we do not unify, today, our group,
We will never be able, tomorrow, to put up
the foundation of any building

For about nine years (1943-51) Qanābah and al-Shārif had been propagating, like Rafīq, these political views in their poetry Here is al-Shārif, who resumed, once again, his political activities and openly dealt with his country's political problems during the British period, he says

قد طالما قلت في شعري وفي أدبي يا أحت (برقة) في محد وفي حسب
شقيقتان لكل منهما عقب والمحد من عقب يسرى الى عقب
أحتان كوقتنا حيا بعد استقلت له النجاة من آئاته الحب
(ليبيا) تجمع الاحتين واحدة لا فرق الآ بوضع الاسم واللقب
عوامل الربط تندو من طبيعتها بصورة عن حياال المرء لم تعقب
ومن أسار الى تفكيك وحدتها بأي حال من الاحمال لم يصب
ان قلت (فرا) للاحتين مائة قد قلت حقا وما في الحق من ريب
لسكل أحت مع الأخرى مودتها قديمة لم تزل من سالف الحقب 2

1 D R , Vol 3, pp 24-5.

2 D Sh , p 94.

How often, I have said in my poetry and writing,
O, sister of Cyrenaica in glory and nobility.
They are full sisters, each one has got a grandson,
And glory emanates from grandson to grandson
Two sisters produced a generation into which
Nobility was inherited from its noble fathers
And Libya brings together the two sisters into a whole,
There is no division but only the writing of the
name and nickname
The elements of connection appear, by its nature,
In a form never to disappear from man's imagination

And he who refers to the fragmentation of its unit,
Was not, by any means, right
If I said Fezzan is third of the two sisters,
I have said right, there is no doubt
Each sister has its old friendship with the other,
Remaining from the old days

Similarly, the following lines composed by Qanābah

ان (فزان) مثل (برقة) عَصُو من (طرابلس) يشهد المصعوبا
آية الله في السموات والارض تحلت لويقفه الملحديسا

.....

1 اتا وحدة من الحس واللهم حة والدين وان حراوسا

Just-men admit that Fezzan, like Cyrenaica,
Is a part of Tripoli
The sign of God in the heavens and earth,
If only the heretic would realise

We are in unity of the race, language and religion,
Even if they divided us

In fact, all the poets have a ceaseless desire to point out
the necessity of unifying the three provinces, Tripolitania, Fezzan,

and Cyrenaica in one state. A deep examination of their poetry, which was composed during the period 1943-51, reveals that our poets were aware of the political tactics of the Great Powers, when the latter failed to agree on the future of Libya. They never accepted the political event as it appeared on the surface, but they probed it to its depth.

Here is Rafiq directing the following lines to the British authorities, pointing out to them the national demands of the Libyan peoples

يا أيها الأصدقاء^١ المالكون لنا
أرى لراما علينا أن نقول لكم
هذه مطالبنا عزا^١ وأصحة
وأنا أمة قامت موحدة
فلس يفرق فيما بيننا أحد
بالحود واستعدتكم منهم المس
أنا سئمتا وعودا كلها دحس
وحقلا لا توارى وجهه حيس
قلوب اسائها لم تعوها القس
قد استهبنا وطار النوم والموسس

O, friends' the possessors of us by generosity,
Those acts of kindness subjugated us'
I think it is necessary for us to tell you,
That we are fed up with promises which are entirely, smoke

These are our demands, honourable and obvious,
And the face of our right has not been hidden by the shields
We are a nation established to unify,
The hearts of its sons, and it is not seduced by intrigues.

No body will differentiate between us,
We have woken up and the sleep and slumber have disappeared

Also, in a fine poem, he wrote

1 D R , Vol 3, p 50.

لا تحد عنكم الوعود فكلها كذب تحققاته بالتحريب
القوم في باريس ليس يهمهم إلا اقتسام فريسة المعلوم
أما حديث الصلح فهو ستارة عطف على فتح لنا مصوب
إن المعقل من يصدق أنهم يوفون أو يرثون لمكروب¹

Do not be deceived by promises which are lies,
Which we have exploded by experience
The people,² in Paris, are interested only in
Dividing the defeated prey
As for the talk of peace, it is a screen,
Covering a trap prepared for us
Stupid is he who believes that,
They will fulfil (their promises) or be sympathetic
to the victor

To prove his views, Rafiq reminds his people, in another poem,
of the unfaithful determination of the British who announced that
Cyrenaica should not again fall under Italian domination but should
be an independent sovereign state

أذا تحلصنا من الظليان هل في ذلك استقلال يا (اسطاوى) ؟
ما صح من تصريح (ايدن) عندنا إلا حديث حرامه و (دواوى)
ومن العجائب ان قومنا آمنوا بحديث عسقوب وفيه (سلاوى)³

O, master, if we became free from
The Italians, does that mean our independence?
The declaration of Eden is not, in our opinion,
True, but false and foolish talk
And the remarkable thing is that your people believed,
In the statement of 'Urqūb⁴ (the British)
In it there are misfortunes

1 Ibid , p 34.

2 He means the delegations of the great Four Powers

3 op cit, pp 115-6.

* They are words from colloquial language mean master, talks and misfortune

4 Name of a famed liar

In several poems Rafīq emphasised this meaning and repeatedly shed light on the real intention of the British Administration for his people. I quote here the following lines from one of his poems in which Rafīq directed his speech to his people

يا قوم ان بلادكم ليصرها أن تقلبوا لصيرها اقسامها
حاجب الذي طس الوعود حقائقها ستبيل (برقة) دولة وبظامها
.....

1 العرب متحد على استعدادا فعلا، ومختلفون بحس كلاما

O, people, your country will be harmed by,
Your acceptance, of its future and separation
May he be disappointed who thought that promises,
Are facts, and that Cyrenaica will gain its own state
and government

The West is in agreement to subjugate us in action,
And we are verbally having a difference of opinion

In another poem, he also says, referring to the promise of the British, based on their recognition of the help that was offered by the Libyans during the World War II

أين الوعود؟ وأين ما اعترفوا به من تصحيات كلهن حسام؟
2 أيصيح ما أسدى اليهم أهلها وحيوشها وأميرها المقدام؟

Where are the promises? and where is their,
Recognition of the sacrifices which are all most significant
Was it spent uselessly what was rendered,
To them by its people, armies and the brave Amir?

1 Ibid , p 53.

2 Ibid , p 80.

When "the hope of independence appeared much too distant and the partition of Libya under foreign trusteeship seemed to be a real possibility",¹ the Libyan poets played an active part in confronting the idea of the partition of their country and in urging their people to protest against a divided Libya

A few days before the question of Libya was referred to the United Nations, the Foreign Ministers of Britain and Italy, Bevin and Sevorza, held a secret meeting on May 6, 1949, which resulted in an agreement which decided that Cyrenaica should be put under the British and Tripolitania (including Fezzan) under the Italians. This agreement was strongly condemned by the Libyans, at the head of them the poets.

Among Rafiq's poems we find these lines

قد فرقنا وما رالت تعرفنا عدوة الشرق والاسلام والعرب
مشروع (بيع وسيفورزا) امان لنا ما اصرتيه وما تحفيه من ريب
فكيف بطمح يوما في صداقتها من بعد ما ساومت فيما لمعتص

The enemy³ of the East, of Islam and of the Arabs has separated us,
And is still doing it

The plan of Bevin - Sevorza explained to us,
What it harboured and was hiding of suspicion
So, how do we hope, one day, for its friendship,
After their bargaining over us with a usurper

Rafiq's attack on the British policy is manifest in this poem, as he openly unmaskes their attitude towards the Arabs and Islam. It gives also clear evidence of an attack by Libyan poets against the Agreement of Bevin-Sevorza

1 Farley, p 38.

2 D R , Vol 3, pp 148-9.

3 He means Britain

In a poem, Rafīq called for the unity of the country in order to face the attempts at its partition, at the same time, he bitterly attacked the above-mentioned agreement by saying

شدوا بوحدها كي مستقل بها في أرض أجدادنا، أما حرار
لا تعقلوا، لا تناموا عن عريكم فكل مستعمر لاشك عندار
.....

1 مشروع (بيغن وسيغورزا) يعلمنا أن الشعوب لها سوق وأسعار

Lay stress upon our unity in order to be independent,
In the land of our forefathers. We are freemen.
Do not be unmindful, do not fail to think of,
Your country Each colonist is, without doubt, faithless.

The plan of Bevin-Sevorza teaches us,
That the nations have a market and prices

Unfortunately, the political views of our poets on the unification of the country did not bear fruit because " the competitive purposes of the powers worked against the chances of a United Libya" ² A federal government was set up in April 1951 in spite of the United Nations' resolution. About this, Qanābah wrote

ما أراد القرار تقسيم ليبيا أما هم لعاية قسموا
شوهوا بصره القرار صاروا بحقوق الانسان يستهزئوا
3 اسألوا الشعب رأيه وتحروا أن تسيئوا بالمخلصين الطوبى

The resolution did not aim at the partition of Libya,
But they (the British) themselves separated us for a purpose

They distorted the splendor of the resolution,
And they became contemptuous of human rights

1 D R , Vol 3, p 88.

2 First, p 61.

3 D Q , p 78.

Ask the people about their opinion, and take care,
Of thinking badly of the faithful

As one of the main national demands for which some political parties called, the poets pointed out in more than a poem that Libya should join the Arab League which was established in 1945. Here is Rafīq, directing his words to his people

لا تؤمنوا إلا لتابع دينكم من يحب الشرق والاسلام
شدوا بحامعة العروبة أركم وتمسكوا بالوحدة استعصاما 1

Do not trust anyone except the adherent of your,
Religion, he who loves the East and Islam
Be supported by the Arab League,
And be devoted to unity as a resistance

Also, he said in another poem

لا سيما ولنا في مصر حامعه بلود منها بأعوان وأنصار
هي الرحاء فما في غيرها ثقة ولا يصيح سواها غير غرار 2

We have especially, in Egypt, a league,
In which we seek shelter with helpers and friends
It is the hope, therefore, there is no confidence
in anything else, except it,
There are no faithful advisers but only deceivers

Celebrating the fourth year of the establishment of the Arab League,
Qanābah wrote

أحامعة الفصحى بعيدن محتفى ومن نطقوا بالصاد كل لك العدا
فعلاب برج الشمس للسعد راسع وشملك سعل لا يرال موحددا
...
(ظرا لملس) تروور (برقه) أحتمها و (فرا) بالعربى اليك توددا 3

1 D R , Vol 3, p 54.

2 Ibid , p 61

3 D Q , p 124.

O, the Arab League, we are celebrating your festival,
And all the Arabic-speaking peoples are a ransom for you

Your year, which is horoscope of the sun, is
fourth for a good luck,
And your gathering is a gathering still united

Tripoli is looking, like its sister (Barqah) at you,
And Fezzan is on friendly terms with you

After a long survey of patriotic poetry in Libya, it is clear that the period 1911-1951 is a productive period of this kind of poetry. Within this period, the national hopes of the Libyan people were very clear and their efforts were directed towards a new life, connected with freedom and independence.

In fact, Libyan patriotic poetry contributed, as well as the Armed Resistance, to the national struggle and political movement against colonisation. As a result, it always overflows with the spirit of patriotism which is characterised by the reality, truth and emotion. For this reason, it was considered as a new phenomenon in the literary life of Libya.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Trend of Arabism in their Poetry

When one goes back to the beginning of the present century, one notices that the concept of Arabism is different from the concept of Arab Nationalism, although there is always an inter-relationship between the two terms. The main thing beyond this difference is the attitude of the two toward religion. While the term of Arabism included religion as one of its elements, the term of Arab Nationalism was based on nationhood regardless of religion

It is in the light of this difference that we will use only the term of Arabism. Subsequently, Libyan national poetry will be discussed in this study

Before showing how far al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah were able to deal with the trend of Arabism, it is necessary to arrive at an understanding of the term of Arabism which was used by them during the first half of the twentieth century

It is known that the political movements in the Eastern Arab world began to orientate themselves towards Arab Nationalism by the beginning of the present century, and particularly after the first World War. It was distinguished by its opposition to Pan-Islamism and aimed at getting rid of the Ottoman Caliphate. This trend was strongest in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Egypt, while it was weakest in North Africa, particularly in Libya where there was only an Ottoman-Islamic trend felt strongly among the intellectuals either poets and writers or religious men and educated people. The reason behind this fact is simply the link between Islam and Arabism, which remained very strong during the first half of the present century. In this connection, Khaddurī says

"Nationalism in Libya and other North African countries was linked with religion. For, unlike the Arab nationalists in the Eastern Arab world, the primary object of their nationalism was not to attack the leading Muslim Power and Islam as a basis of the state, but to enlist Ottoman support and make use of Islam to enforce North Africa's resistance to Christian encroachments. While the nationalists in the Eastern Arab countries were clearly distinguished from, and not always opposed to, the Pan-Islamists, the two were hardly distinguishable in North Africa. Religion was, indeed, one of the most potent factors in the rise and development of Nationalism in North Africa and the sacred authority of the Sultan - Caliph was often invoked to bolster up the national cause"¹

No wonder, therefore, that we see al-Shārif attacking, in one of his earliest poems, the nationalists who, mostly Christians,² were opposed to Pan-Islamism and raised their voices for nationalism as an ideology based upon the concept of nationhood and as a reaction against the Ottoman Caliphate. He wrote

وعصبة من دوى الاصوات قد فرصت فرصا ولكنّه فرص يبا يبا
تريد تمكيس بيت من أقاربها وفي الحقيقة ارهاق العيديبا
كأت على سق الاسلام صعته فادحلوا فيه تعييرا وتلويا 3

A group of well-known voices have been imposed by force,
But it is an imposition, not accepted by us
They (the group) want to establish a ruling house
from among their relatives (in race),
However, to suppress those who are not relatives (the Turks),
The character of the ruling house was of the manner of Islam,
Then, they brought about a change and a new character

1 Khadduri, p 10 See also, Mansfield, the Ottoman Empire, p 3.

2 See, Lewis, p 173.

3 D Sh, pp 88-89.

However, the Islamic-Ottoman trend dominated the literary movement in Libya until the end of the twenties. But at the beginning of the thirties and onwards, the Ottoman spirit completely disappeared as we have seen. It was to become only a national trend linked with the Islamic spirit which coloured the Libyan poetry of this period as a whole.

It is true that Libya is tied to the Arab countries by several ties and good will and co-operated with them for their common destiny. Also, it is a fact that the Arabs began to support the Arab state and Arabism since the present century had started. But Libya refused that political current, led by nationalists who insisted on getting rid of the Ottoman state during the first quarter of this century.

In fact, the Libyan poets believed only in Arabism which was linked with Islam. They never used the expression of Arab nationalism as an ideology based on the concept of nationhood regardless of religion. It is difficult to find in their poetry, during the first half of the present century, the term of Arab Nationalism but rather than the term of Arabism (al-'Urūbah) as was previously explained.

The Libyan poets have supported the Arab state in an organic form which does not put one country below another or limit it to the Arab countries. It combines all the Muslim world. Mostly, they conceive it as a large world combining Mecca, Jerusalem, Mount Sinai, Muhammad and Jesus, the Qur'ān and the Bible. Within this huge span, they dealt with the meaning of Arabism

According to these facts, we may pose the following question: What is the governing idea of Arabism in Libyan poetry through the

above-mentioned poets during the period which concerns us?

When the Libyan poets talk about Arabism, they usually mean the glorious past of the Arabs which flourished through Islam and its influences on the West. They always mention the heroism of the Arab descendants and their glories. Because of having a feeling of unity, they were very responsive to anything which happened in the Arab world. They believed that the Arabs should support each other to be a powerful nation against their enemies. By this sort of feeling they believed that the Arabs would get rid of every obstacle that obstructs their progress or handicaps their development. On several political occasions, they have lent their poetry to the support of Arab union which meant to them the break up of artificial borders between the Arab countries, particularly after the foundation of the Arab League in 1945.

On the basis of this understanding of Arabism linked with Islam, the three Libyan poets, under this study, have sung of the Arab nation. Here is a poem, composed by Qanābah in 1921, entitled Tahīyat Tarābūlus ilā Miṣr (A greeting of Tripoli to Egypt) which reflects the common understanding of Arabism, which was inspired by religion, among the Libyans. In it, he says

فحسبك من (طرابلس) اتماء	شقيقة (مصر) والاسلام ديسا
(طرابلس) التي أمدت شعورا	ولم تعط القياد محاد عيسا
سل الركاب المحد لأرض مصر	يدتك (حماية) الحمر اليقيسا
فقد حث الركاب لها حيثنا	على رسم الوشاة العاد ليسا
فكس بوداد مصر أخط المعالي	ادا قدم الرقاب له معيسا

It is enough for you to know (that),
 Tripoli is the sister of Egypt, with regard to ancestry
 and Islam is its religion
 Tripoli which expressed a feeling,
 and gave leadership, but not deceptively.
 Ask the caravan hastening to the land of Egypt,
 Juhayna will let you know the right news
 The riding animals have been quickly hurried towards it,
 in spite of the censured calumniators.
 Be, therefore, a companion of the heights with love of Egypt,
 If the riding animals will support it

With the death of Shawqī and Hāfīz in 1932, Qanābah and al-Shārif
 composed two poems, showing their love and deep feeling for Egypt
 within the spirit of Islam. As a fine example of this, the following
 lines from al-Shārif's poem may be quoted

ينوء بالوطن المصري حادثة لو لم تشاركه في تقسيمه الأسم
 (مصر) تنفست الصعداء من أسف (والشام) قد دت في أعضائه السقم
 وفي (العراق) وفي نحو (الحجاز) وفي (دار السلام) لطي الاحشاء تصطرم

سهم وسهم أصابا كل حارجة مآ القتيل ومآ من به ألسم
 حطان في الأفق الشرقى اد أفلا عرّ العراء وحل الحادث العمم²

The country of Egypt bears with difficulty an event,
 If the nations do not share in it
 Egypt heaved a deep sigh sadly,
 And the sickness was spread in the body of Syria.

The flame of passion is burning in Iraq,
 Hijāz and in Baghdad

One arrow after the other struck every extremity,
 Some of us were killed and others are in pain.
 As two of the stars disappeared on the Eastern horizon,

1 Ibid

2 D Sh , p 290.

Consolation was difficult and the whole event was momentous.

It is also the spirit of Arabism in the light of Islam that made the above-mentioned poets admire King Faisal of Iraq, the permanent Arab leader in the Peninsula, and compose poems after his death in 1933. We may point out this by quoting the following warm lines from Qanābah's ode, entitled Ritha Faisal 'Aāh al-Arab (An elegy on Faisal, ruler of the Arabs)

عزّ (العراق) وعزّ أهل (الشام) والصرتيين وأمة الاسلام
واستبصهم الهمم التي أعدتها للحادث القاسي من الايام
قد مات فارسها اذا احتدم الوعي واحتل قطر الارض كل لهام

.....

لا ذكره في العرب الذين بعوسهم مطبوعة قد ما على الاكروام
لا ذكره في العرب الذين حياتهم دوما لمعخرة وحفظ دممام
لا تنسى (بالقدس الشريف) نقيّة من مسلمين ومن دوى أرحام¹

Persuade Iraq, the people of Syria, the two Baṣras,²
And the Muslims, to bear with equanimity (the death of Faisal).

And encourage the determinations with which,
You prepared for the hard events of time
Her hero died when the fight broke out,
And every greedy one occupied the land

..

Remember him among the Arabs whose souls were once
Characterised by courage.

Remember him among the Arabs whose lives are ever
Devoted to pride and the protection of rights
And do not forget a remnant of Muslims and,
Relatives in Holy Jerusalem

1 D Q , p 154.

2 He means al-Basrah (port in S Iraq) and al-Kūfah (a big city in Iraq)

In the same poem, Qanābah, describing the grief of the North African countries, indicated the Faiṣal's achievements in the Peninsula, namely his struggle for an independent Arab state. He

says

و (المغرب الاقصى) بدمع هام	تنكى (طرابلس) عليه و (توس)
فسيمة تسيبك نفس عصام	ان العزاء لواحد ييمس لسه
بين العواصم من أحل مقام	مالت بحطوته (العراق) مقامها
حتى استقل بفكرة وحسام	هل صيم لما هام في استقلاله

Tripoli, Tunisia and Morocco are weeping for him (Faiṣal),
With flowing tears
The consolation is for one who had,
A mentality which makes you forget the mind of the self-made man

By his steps, Iraq gained its position which
Is the best among the capital cities
Was he unjust when he was in love,
With independence, in assuming an idea and power?

The last two lines reveal Qanābah's support for the idea of the Arab state, founded by (Shārif Mecca) and later on by his son (Faiṣal) in the Arabian Peninsula after the First World War. The following lines also indicate his understanding of this state which was viewed within the framework of Islam, Arabism and the East

والقول لا يعدو مقال (حدام)	في الشرق آمال بقول توطدت
فحر العروبة في ممالك سام	طأرع لواء المحمد باسم محمّد
طالحت لا يحلو من اللوام	لا تحش لومة لائم في حتمه
.....	
والحق من مشهود كل حصام	أبناء سام يعلمون حصامه
يرحون منه النفع للإسلام	والشرق والعرب الكرام جميعهم

2

1 D Q , p 156.

2 Ibid , p 157.

We say, hopes have been strengthened in the East,
And the saying is no more than the words of Ḥadhām¹
Therefore, raise the banner of the glory by that
unforgettable name (which is),
The pride of Arabism in noble countries
In love for him, do not be afraid of the blame of the censorer,
For love is never free from censorers

The sons of Shem² (the Arabs) know his argument,
And right is the aim of every argument.
The East and all honorable Arabs,
Hope, from him, benefit for Islam

On the same occasion, al-Shārif composed a poem which points out
his understanding of the meaning of Faisal's achievements, but not
as was understood by the nationalists in the Eastern Arab countries
He says, elegising Faisal's death

يشق على سمعي مقالة بعيه وأكره أن ألقى بها متكلمها
فلو مدت الأقدار من نحوه يدا على أمة الاسلام كان المقدمها
ولم تلك أقطار العروسة وحدها عليه ولكن كل من كان مسلما³

The news of his death is unbearable to my ears,
And I hate to inform anyone of it
If fate ever supported, through one like him,
The Muslims, he was the first.
And it is not only the countries of Arabism which cry over him,
But also everyone who is a Muslim

Then he says

مكارم في (دار السلام) تأيمنت ومحد لانباء الرسول تيتما
تودعه الحمى وتنكيه بيعة أقام بها حول العوات وحيما
وكم عدت فيما سلاه دكوره لما عدت الماء الرلال على الطما
وموت مسراه القوم أعظم حادب ولدته في (يصل) كان أعظما⁴

1 She is Ḥadhām bint al-Rayyān, who was proverbial for her good advice

2 Eldest son of Noah

3 D Sh , p 294

4 Ibid

In Baghdad, noble traits lost a companion,
And glory for the descendents of the Prophet (Muhammad)
was deprived of a protector
Fine manners bid him farewell,
And the Homage, by which he lived around
The Euphrates and settled down, weeps over him
How pleasant was the choice wine of his remembrance,
As cold water is sweet to the thirsty.
The death of a people's leader is a great event,
But the death of Faisal is the greatest

With the death of Jamīl Sedqī al-Zahāwī, the Iraqi poet, in 1936,
Qanābah and Rafīq left two elegies. The latter addressed his poem
to al-Zahāwī who devoted his poetry to the awakening of the Arabs.
He wrote

لا تبي تمنع فيه الشعر حيا	كنت للشرق محبا ملصبا
عزمه ، تحو حيا أويبا	مستغرا روحه مستهبصبا
كان محد الشرق الأ عريبا	داكرا للعرب المحد وهبل
عرة قعساء تحكى (ركريا)	كتاد تدعوليجا الشرق في
كان برأ سبي الشرق تقيبا	سيحيب الله يوما داعيبا

You were a lover of and faithful to the East,
And never tired in reviving poetry in it
Always, arousing its spirit, awakening its,
Determination, and you felt sympathy for it like a parent.

Mentioning the glory of the Arabs,
And was the glory of the East anything but Arab?
You were calling for a revival of the East,
In a firmly established power, as with Zakaria
God will respond, some day, to a suppliant who,
Was kind to the sons of the East and was devout

1. D R., Vol 1, p 49.

Similarly, the following lines, composed on al-Zahāwī's death represent Qanābah's views on the understanding of Arabism which is connected with Islam in the full sense and with the East which is in conflict with the West. In these lines, he says

ما وراء العرات يا صاح أودح
 كان للشمرى والعروبة لا رب
 لة ؟ قل لي ، أطمه شرقيا
 ماو (بعداد والحراى) وبقيا

....

كبر (لقمان) عبده و(سليمان
 ما رأته منله (عكاظ) حطيبا
 ن ويحيى) وما حوى (زكريا)
 قام فيها وشاعرا عربيا
 رفعت راية العروبة اد ط
 ل يهنىء ملكه القرشيا

O, my friend, tell me what lies beyond the Euphrates,
 Or Tigris rivers? I think it is Eastern
 He was, no doubt, faithful to the East, Arabism,
 Baghdad and Iraq

He has the treasure of Luqmān, Sulaimān, Yahyā,
 And what Zakariya obtained
 'Aukāz never saw an orator and Arab poet,
 In its lists, like him
 The banner of Arabism fluttered when he
 Congratulated his Quraishite King (Faisal)

It is clear that with the beginning of the thirties, the three Libyan poets dedicated their poetry to Arabism and East, which were linked with Islam. They never intended separation between them in their poetry as the previous lines have proved.

In fact, the terms of al-'Urūbah (the Arabism) and al-Sharq (the East), to which al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah refer again and again in their poems, were used not to contradict each other. The poets

increasingly connected the two terms with Islam as the great majority of their contemporary poets in some Arab countries did, like Shawqī, Hāfīz, al-Zahāwī, Rusāfī and others. About these Bernard Lewis says

"For Muslims the two forms of expression were never really distinguished. The basic sentiment of identity was religious and social, the complete society of Islam expressed sometimes in national terms, sometimes in religious terms as synonymous and interchangeable sets of words denoting the same basic reality"¹

It is no wonder, therefore, that we find the Libyan poets using the two forms of expression, Arabism and Islam at the time when this current was flowing in the direction developed by some of the Arab poets, particularly after the Caliphate was abolished in 1924 at the hands of Muṣṭafā Kamāl Atātūr.

However, the link between Arabism, the East and Islam was manifest in Libyan poetry, yet it strongly remained until the beginning of the fifties. Here is Qanābah saying

ألا رموا الطيِّب مدلحيبنا تحاه الشرق غير معربينا
تحاه الشرق مع كلِّ فصل ومعدن حوهر القنورينا
حماة شريعة الاسلام قدما هداة حسوده المتأحرينا

2

Oh, bridle the riding animal, setting out at nightfall,
Towards the East and not the West
Towards the East which is the place of every merit,
And the origin of the essential nature of educated people.

They (the people of the East) were the protectors of the

1. Lewis , p 173.

2. D.Q , p.116.

law of Islam in former times,
And they are the leaders of its later soldiers

In the same meaning he wrote

لما الشرق مهبط العلم والدين والتقى لما الشرق كهف الحق والمجد والتدى
ليعلم قومي ان للشرق قسوة محبل بهذا العقل ان تتحدا
...
وميه كتاب يرتضيه مقدس كل نجيل (عيسى) او كرقان (أحمدا) ١

We have the East which is the place of science,
religion and devoutness,
We have the East which is the repository of right,
glory and generosity
Let my people know that the East has got a power,
Which it is impossible, by this mind, to limit

In it (the East) there is a Holy Book which we accept,

Like the Bible of Jesus or the Qur'ān of Ahmad
(he means the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him)

Al-Shārif also devoted many poems to Arabism and East, but he never ignored the religious element when he shows his pride in the Arab nation. As an example he wrote in a poem, celebrating the Arab League

والشرق يهتف بالدكوى لحامعة في (مصر) في أمة الاسلام ، في العرب 2

And the East praises the memory of a league
In Egypt, among the Muslims and Arabs

In another poem, as is the case with many of his poems, he described his pride in belonging to the pure Arab tribes, who were chosen to be the defenders of Islam, saying

1 Ibid , p 123

2 D Sh , p 90

لما من بني قحطان أشرف دمه بناه في يوم التغاطر قحطان
نقاسل بالحسي ولما معشر اذا صحوا عتوا وان عاهدوا خاسوا
وحس الألى فينا بعرة هاشم تردد حبريل وأسرل قرآن
أحل بن العراء فصلا ومسة وأعظمهم شأنا اذا عظم الشان
ولا تحبوا والفرع يتبع أصله اذا نحن لنا في المعالي لما لناوا¹

We have a noble conscience from the sons of Qahtān,²
In which Qahtān took pride in the days of vain glory.
We respond with fair means and we are not a people,
Who when they advise, deceive, or when they promise did not fulfil

Because of the best of Hāshim³, we are the people
To whom Gabriel frequently came,
and to whom the Qur'ān was brought
We are the greatest of the sons of Earth in kindness and grace,

And the most outstanding of them when the occasion requires it
And no wonder, that we were in the highest rank,
As they were, since the branch belongs to its trunk

A similar view to al-Shārif and Qanābah was shared by Rafīq who
described, with great enthusiasm, his feeling towards Arabism. Among
his poems are the following lines

4 لفظ العروبة واسم الشرق يجمعنا شعارنا الحب ثم الله والوطن

The term of Arabism and the name of the East bring us together,
Our slogan is love, then God and country

5 لا تؤمبوا الا لتاسع ديبكم ممن يحب الشرق والاسلام

1 Ibid , 100

2 Legendary ancestor of the South Arabians

3 He is Hāshim Ibn 'Abd Manāf, of the Quraish

4 D R , Vol 2, p 50

5 Ibid , p 54

Do not trust anyone except the adherent of your religion,
He who loves the East and Islam

* * *

روح العروبة برحوأ أن توحدنا حتى يؤلف من أعضائنا جسدا
1 في رأسه تاج (حصر) كي يعيد لنا عهد الخلافة والاسلام يتحد

We hope that the spirit of Arabism unifies us,
In order to make a whole body from our parts
The Crown of Egypt is on its head in order,
To bring back the time of Caliphate and for Islam to be united

* * *

2 لا سيما الشرق عرق صم وحدته الى العروبة، ارحيل وفرآن

And particularly, the East which is a race, joining,
In unity, the Bible and Qur'ān, and Arabism

* * *

3 محسنا أننا، والصدق رائدنا باسم العروبة والاسلام احوا

It is enough, as the truth is our guide, that we are,
Brothers in the name of Arabism and Islam

* * *

4 قد فرقنا ومارالت تعرقنا عدوة الشرق والاسلام والعرب

The enemy of the East, of Islam and of the Arabs has separated us,
And is still doing it

It is clear that Arabism, the East and Islam were closely
linked in most of the three Libyan poets' poems in which they dealt
with the national trend There is also manifest throughout the

1 Ibid , p 74

2 Ibid , p 98

3 Ibid. , p 102

4 Ibid , p 148

previous quotations, their understanding that Arabism meant something different from Arab Nationalism as it was produced by the nationalists of the Eastern Arab world

When the spirit of Ottomanism had completely disappeared from Libyan poetry at the end of the twenties, it was replaced by the spirit of the East and Arabism. A national feeling began to emerge clearly in the poetry of the Libyan poets. But this does not mean that Libyan poetry was devoid of any national feeling, expressed by several Libyan poets towards Egypt. Because of the latter's history and its decisive role in the Arab world, Egypt was considered by all Libyan poets as its leader.

It is this spirit of national feeling which made al-Bārūnī admire Muṣṭafā Kāmīl Pāshā, the founder of the Egyptian Nationalist Party and a prominent patriotic leader. He composed a poem after his death in 1908, glorifying his patriotic activities and his party. In it he says

طانت صفاتك (مصطفي) فتمللت ن (مصر) واردات بحرب حافل
قد قمت بالأمير الحظير فأرعدوا فرعا وملت مذمة من حاهل 1

O, Muṣṭafā, your characteristics were good ones,
And Egypt rejoiced in you and was adorned
with well-attended party.
You had performed a very important task, therefore,
They (the British) trembled with fear and you
get blame from the foolish (which means that you are genuine).

1. Dīwān al-Bārūnī, p 40.

In another poem, al-Bārūnī directed his words to Egypt, expressing his love by saying

هويتك يا (مصر) وهل في الهوى صبر ؟
وأنت التي يشعى بأدوائى الصدر 1

O, Egypt, I loved you, and is there any patience in love?
It is by your balms the heart is cured

In several poems, al-Shārif, Qanābah and Rafīq expressed, responding with national feeling, their love for Egypt. No wonder' because there is still in their minds "the assistances, offered by the Egyptian people to their Libyan brothers in their vigorous struggle against the Italian invaders" 2

In one of his earlier poems, which was composed on the occasion of the Egyptian Revolution of 1919, Rafīq showed his sympathy with this revolution by rejecting the British delegation headed by Lord Milner. He addressed it to Lord Milner, saying

أقول وما مديحى في مرادى فطست أشد من بيس العباد
.....
دكاه منك ان أحفيت حقا برور كالعرالة في السوادى
وبعض دكاه أفوام لسوء كما المرى في سول القناد
3 ومار الحق لا تحو محتما تشت وان عدت تحت الرماد

I speak but your praise is not my aim,
I am not exceptional among mankind

It is clever of you to hide forcibly,
A truth, like a gazelle in the early morning
And some intelligence in people is bad,
Like the rain of the cloud in the thorns of the Tragacanth

1 'Afīfī, al-Ittijāhāt al-Waṭaniyah, p 222

2 'Asad, p 351

3 D R , Vol 1, pp 67-8

The fire of truth never dies,
It but bursts into flame even if it is hidden under the ashes

The Egyptian Revolution of 1919 created a patriotic and national feeling among the Arabs. Therefore, it is a natural result to see Rafīq who was living in Alexandria at that time, responding to it. It is this feeling, tying the people of Egypt and Libya, that made Rafīq attack the head of the British delegation. By the spirit of this feeling Rafīq directed one of his poems to Egypt in which he says with emotional power

عليك يا (مصر) بعد الله نعتمد أبت الرجاء وأبت العوب والسد
رعيمة الشرق ان الشرق متكمل عليك في النهضة الكبرى ومعتمد
يا (مصر) آن أو ان الحد من وقد أطل رصته للونمة الأسد 1

Beside God, we rely on you, O Egypt,
You are our hope, help and support
O leader of the East, the East is depending and,
Relying on you in this great development
O Egypt, the time for making every effort has come,
As, the lion kept lurked carefully for the leap

It is also the spirit of national feeling that made Qanābah compose a poem in 1921, in which he emotionally greeted Egypt. It was a reply to a poem, written by the Egyptian poet 'Abdul Wahhāb 'Azzām, entitled Taḥīyat Miṣr ilā Ṭarābulus (A greeting from Egypt to Tripoli). Describing the position of Egypt in the Arab world and his love, Qanābah wrote in the following warm lines

سي (مصر) التي حيت فأحيب فلونا للاحوه حافظينا
فانهم لأنفسهم ربيع هموب سيمه يشقى الحريبا
يملم بالسيم على قلوب (لصبر) ويلها متسوقينا
قلوب ملوها حلد ووحسد لديها تظهر الحب الكيما

نوى سوداءها من (مصر) حب طأرمها التأوه والحيسا 1

O, sons of Egypt who have greeted us and so revived our hearts,
Which are loyal to the brotherhood
They are, for their spirit, a spring,
The blowing of whose breeze cures sadness
By this breeze, he (the Egyptian poet) greets hearts,
Which are longing for Egypt and her Nile.
Hearts that are filled with patience and love,
For her, they (hearts) show their hidden love
From Egypt, a love was buried in the deepest depths of
their hearts,
Therefore, it (love) obligated the hearts to yearn and long

When the Egyptians, though they were under the British occupation,
helped the Libyans and Turkish in their struggle against the Italians
after the latter's invasion of Libya in 1911, their help was acknow-
ledged by the Libyans at the head of them, the poets. Here is al-
Shārif expressing his feeling towards Egypt because of the help
offered during the Italo-Libyan war, in one of his poems

ولولا تأسيسا (مصر) ويلها وحامعها الاعلى لصاى بما الصدر
ادا ما أفضل في حديث متبع طأول ما يعشى مسامعها (مصر)
أبى الله إلا ان ييسر لها كمانته في أرضه ، ولها العجر
يحبس بالأم العروبة شعنها ويوحعها أن لا يكون لها أمر
حب من الاقطار كل شقيقة (مصر) ومن في (مصر) يا حندا القطر 2

Had we not been consoled by Egypt, her Nile and her,
Great Mosque (he means al-Azhar), we would have been anxious
If we are verbose in our pleasant speech,
The first, which comes to our hearing, is (that about) Egypt
God willed to point out (in the Qur'ān) that,
She (Egypt) is His Kīnana (land) on His earth

1 D Q , p 116.

2 D Sh , p 92.

and of this, she should be proud
Her people are deeply touched by the sufferings of Arabism,
And it hurts her not to have power
Among the countries, we are like every sister to Egypt,
And he who is living in Egypt, that country is just wonderful!

It is clear that these poems, which were composed before the thirties, reveal the national feeling of Libyan poets at the beginning of this century

However, the three Libyan poets dealt with the events of the Arabs and Arabism in their poetry. They talk about the Arab League as a hope which brings them close to freedom. They spoke about the tragedy of Palestine. They were proud of the Arabs, the East and Arabism and increasingly they sang of Arab brotherhood and the glories of the Arabs and the Muslims

By the thirties, their poetry contained national themes, and it contained elegies of some prominent Arab figures, rulers and poets. During the British Administration, they turned to the writing of national themes. They were inspired by the foundation of Arab League in Cairo in 1945. They felt deeply sad because of losing Palestine in 1948

I would like here to show their political views on important historical events in some Arab countries, using for this purpose a selection of poems from their Dīwāns

The Arab League

For the aim of securing Arab unity, Arab League was formed on March 22, 1945 in Cairo from the independent Arab states (Egypt, Syria,

Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen). On this great event, al-Shārīf, Rafīq and Qanābah composed several poems in which they welcomed this effective step towards Arab unity

Among the famous nationalist poems of al-Shārīf, is his long ode on this occasion. In the following emotional lines, which were directed to Egypt, al-Shārīf says

عليك لاحت من الآمال نارهم بعقد جامعته موصوله المسب
تحى السحور وتحى كل داكرة كالروض يحيا سهيل من السحب
والصر في طلب العليا لنا حلق ونحن ما بين مشتاق ومرتب
وإما انقادت الأيام صاعرة للحامليس سلاح الصر في النوب
كم للمروسة من فصل يشاد سه في روعة الشعر أو في رنة الحطب 1

By the convocation of the League, which is bound up with origins,
A gleam of hope has appeared in you (Egypt)

It revives feeling and every memory,
As the garden is animated by a watering from the clouds.
Patience, in searching for the heights, is a trait in us,
While we are between longing and expecting
The days were of little burden to the wielders of,
Patience's weapon during misfortune
How many merits were attributed to Arabism, either,
In the splendor of poetry or in reverberation of speeches

After his final return to Libya in 1946, Rafīq addressed a poem to Egypt in which he referred to the Arab League as a supporter of the case of Libya. In it, he says

يا (مصر) مبد لحد الشرق جامعة وللمروسة أقطابها محدد
قولى لهم ان هذا الشعب منتظر لا أمرهم ولما حلوا وما عقدها 2

1. D. Sh , p 95

2. D.R , Vol. 3, p 74.

O, Egypt, in your land, there is a League for the glory
of the East,
And Arabism has leaders who have glory
Tell them that this people (the Libyans) is waiting,
For their instruction and for what they have solved and concluded.

For three successive years, Qanābah had been greeting the
foundation of Arab League in his poetry Tens of brilliant lines,
which are full of emotional feeling, were composed by him to celebrate
this great event In a fine poem, Qanābah wrote

باسم الكلاسه والعرويه والأدب حتى الحمى وأهتف بحامعة العرب
شقيقة في قدسها، عريضة صاعت بيها العرّمس أمّ وأب
شادت سعادتها على آدابها وعلى السعادة أبقى الناس الذهب 1

In the name of Egypt, Arabism and humanity,
Greet the protector (of the Arabs) and sheer the
League of the Arabs
It is Eastern in its holiness, as well as Arab,
It fashioned its noble sons from mother and father.
It built up its happiness upon its good manners,
And for happiness, the people spent their gold

He also says in another poem

أحامعة العرويه أمت أمّ وحلّ بيلك في حصن حصين
.....
أحامعتي أطل عليل عهد كيوم الصر وصرّاح الحيين
مهبي كي بحرر كل قطر أهيس، وكل شعب مستكين 2

O, League of Arabism, you are a mother,
And all your sons are in a stronghold

1 D Q , p 119.

2 Ibid , p 122

O, my League, an era has emerged for you,
Clear as the day of victory.
So, set out to liberate every country which was scorned,
And every nation that was submissive

The other main point to which they drew attention is Arab unity. With the foundation of Arab League, the three Libyan poets were emphasising the power of unity among the Arabs and its effects on their future. They repeatedly called for the unity of the Arab states which was based on language, religion, feeling, history and the welfare of the people.

Here is al-Shārif stressing, in one of his poems, these elements

وحس ، سو تلك العروبة ، لم يرل (لما الصدر دون العالمين أو القبر)
فلا زال دين الله يربط بيننا روابط لا يقوى على هضمها الدهر
لما لعة لا ينكر الناس فضلها تماص في تدوينها النظم والسر 1

We, sons of that Arabism, still have the stoutness of heart,
To withstand the inhabitants of the world or the grave
Islam is still binding all of us with ties,
Which time will never be able to sever
We have a language whose merits people acknowledge,
Both poetry and prose challenged in its writing down

In another poem, al-Shārif addressed his speech to the Arabs referring to these national ties and reminding them of the advantages of unity saying

يا أيها العرب الزمام ومن لهم سرف العروبة والمقام الأول
ان الروابط بينكم سيرى لها أثرا يسحله الرمان المفصل
.....
وإذا أراد القوم حمل سلاحهم طالاتحاد هو السلاح الأول
والاتحاد أساس كل مهمة وعليه في كل الامور يعول 2

1 D Sh , p 92.

2 Ibid , pp 73-74

O, noble Arabs who have the honour of Arabism,
And the most perfect position
The ties between all of you will definitely have an effect,
Will be recorded by the times to come

If the people want to carry their arms,
Then, unity is their first weapon
Also, unity is the basis of every effort,
And in all affairs, it is to be relied upon

Qanābah also called for unity between the Arab countries and urged the Arabs to unify themselves, warning them of the disadvantages of disunity. In a poem, he says

بم التماس في العروبة وهي من تحمي الحي من هت في الدنيا ودت
بم السهام والمردة والسدى بم الساله في الكفاة والحسب 1

What a wonderful solidarity is there in Arabism which,
Defends against every body and his brother in the world

What a wonderful decency, ideal of manhood and generosity,

What a wonderful courage and noble descent is there
in Kināna (Egypt)

He also wrote

ألا هموا بي وطني وديني بدت عن العروبة والعريسي
ألا هموا ألا اتحدوا ومدوا يمينكم وأمد لكم يميني
ولا تهوا فتهمروا وتسوا عهودا من وثاقها حيسي 2

Oh, people of my country and my religion, take up
Arms in opposition, in order to defend Arabism and the land

1 D Q , p 120

2 Ibid, p 121

Oh wake up, Oh unify and extend your hand,
I extend my hand also
And do not be weak otherwise you will be defeated nor forget,
Commitments, among whose its documents, I yearn for

Although the Arab countries, after the first World War, were under the occupation of European powers which aimed at the division of the Arab world, national feeling remained strong among the Arabs. In spite of the dark years that passed over the Arab countries, the hopes of one nation under one flag was still a dream of many poets.

Describing the difficult political circumstances in which most of the Arab countries were living, and how much the Arab people were suffering at the hands of the colonisers, al-Shārif wrote

من الذى بالرعم ، أصبح ناصطا ، يده الائمة فون متلكاته
من الذى في (مصر) أصبح لاعبا لعب الكتي سيفه وقتاته
من الذى استبح (العراق) ليستقى من ماء دحلته وماء فواته
من الذى اودى بأفريقيه و (المعرب الاقصى) مصطهداته ١

Who came, by force, extending his evil hand,
(The West's hand) to its properties (Islam's properties)?
Who came to Egypt playing the brave one,
With his sword and spear?
Who took Iraq in order to drink,
From its rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates?
Who oppressed Africa and Morocco with his suppressions?

Rafīq also expressed the same feeling towards the political situation in other parts of the Arab world, referring to the French mandate over Syria and the Lebanon. In a poem, composed in 1946, Rafīq says

أيدرون ما معنى الوصاية؟ ليتهم سألوا أهل الشام ولسان
1 هي الرق لكن لا يرى في رقاسا كقيد حديد بل كأغلال عقيان

Do they (group of Libyans) know what is the meaning
of the mandate?

I wish they had asked the people of Syria and Lebanon about it
It is slavery but it is not seen,
As iron fetters but as chains of carnelian

In another ode, Rafīq wrote the following lines which prove his
political consciousness of what was happening in the Arab world

لكن من عجايب دعوا الى أسف (مصر) يقال لها (مصر وسودان)
2 وهل أمجاد سوى تقسيم مملكة مد قام في (سوريا شام ولسان)

But the remarkable thing which causes grief,
Is that Egypt is to be called Egypt and the Sudan'
Was it helpful, since Syria and Lebanon,
Existed, except as the partition of a Kingdom?

The Tragedy of Palestine

Responding with national feeling, the three Libyan poets drew
special attention to the Arab tragedy of Palestine when it was lost
to the Zionists in 1948. In this year, Rafīq wrote the following lines
describing his feeling towards the loss of Palestine

يا عام تقبل والحوادث حمة في الشرى يوشك ان يشب صرام
هدى (فلسطين) العريرة حرحها دام يكاند داه الاسسلام
لله من كند العروبة فلددة بالسيف يعصب حقها وتصام
3 حتى كصو الشمس عيم حوله من وعد (ملغور) الانيم طلام

O year, you are coming and the events are many,
In the East, and fire is about to break out
Here is beloved Palestine, its wound is bleeding,

1 D R , Vol 3, p 26.

2 Ibid , p 100.

3 Ibid , p 78

And Islam is affected gravely by its pain.
This piece of Arabism is due to God,
Its right was taken away by force and it was treated unjustly.

A dark shadow drew over a right,
Like the light of the sun, because of the evil
Balfour Declaration

Similarly, these lines on Palestine, with which al-Shārif is
in full accord

ان صح أن (فلسطين) قد انقسمت فكل قطر لها أصحى (فلسطين)

...

تأبى العروبة أن يتناها حور وان تكون من القوم الادليبا
بحر الاشواش في ندو وفي حصر وكل أرض لها كات مياديبا 1

If it is true that Palestine was divided,
Therefore, every country which belongs to us, became Palestine

Arabism refuses to be afflicted by weakness,
And to be one of the lowly people
We are adventurous whether in the desert or in a civilised region,
And every land, which belongs to us, has been a battleground.

Because of the lack of attention given to the Palestine problem,
the Arabs and Muslims have lost their sovereignty over this land.
Among the reasons behind its loss, is that the leaders of the Arab
states at that time, it seemed, were concerned only with their personal
interests. About this historical fact, Rafīq wrote in a poem

صاعت (فلسطين) لا بالسيف من يدنا لكن بأصبح عذار ومسحوب
صاعت بأيدى رجال لا مرام لهم الآ الحصول على الأموال والرتب
لوعد (لعمور) ألفت يمسهم وسعت بار قنتها ، حمالة الحطب 2

1 D Sh , p 89

2 D R , Vol 3, p 148

Palestine was lost from our hand not by
the sword (He means by war),
But by a deceitful figure and retreator (he means Britain)

It was lost by the hands of men whose aims,
Were only to get money and degrees.
For the sake of the Balfour Declaration, she (Britain)
laid down and let loose the fire,
Of her intrigue, as the wife of Abu Lahab¹ did

With the same meaning, al-Shārif also says in a poem, composed
during the period that witnessed the differences of the Libyans'
opinions about the future of the country

واليوم توحد أوضاع لنا حدثت بعيدة الشكل عن أوضاع ما صيدنا
في كل مملكة من نفسها شعب وكل قطر لنا أصحى (فلسطينيا)
شكو وصرح من ظلم أئتم بنا والظلم لم يأت إلا من مساوينا²

Today, there are conditions coming into being for us,
Which are completely different from the conditions of our past
In every Kingdom, there is trouble from itself,
And every country, which belongs to us, became a Palestine
We complain and shout because of an injustice
which overcame us,
While the injustice came only from our disadvantages.

However, a deep examination of their national poetry during
the first half of the present century , reveals that the three Libyan
poets, al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah were keen to show their national

1 The carrier of firewood is a nickname of Umm Jamīl, Abū Lahab's
wife, who was concerned about dirty tricks She was mentioned
by this name in the Qur'ān, Al-Lahab, CX1, 4

2 D Sh , p 105

feeling towards the Arab countries. They were all emotionally of the same opinion on the understanding of Arabism. They gave considerable attention to all important events which had happened in Arab countries. They politically supported every Arab struggle against colonisation and European domination. They were concerned about the future of the Arab nation and increasingly urged the Arab people to unify themselves against their common enemy, imperialism, and not to ignore the lessons of history as disunited people. They left many poems which dealt with national themes as the outcome of their beliefs in Arab unity. Their own political views which permeate their poetry, were recorded in many brilliant verses.

Because of the limitations of this study, which concerns us as far as 1951, the quoting of the nationalist poetry of the three Libyan poets after this year is out of its place. But it will be none the worse for saying that in the fifties the Arab world witnessed several important events relating to its national issues like, the British evacuation of the Suez Canal in 1954 and British-French-Israeli attack on Egypt in 1956, the Tunisian struggle for independence in 1956, the Algerian Revolution against French occupation in 1954. On these national events, al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah composed several poems, expressing their feelings and recording with enthusiasm the Arab victories in these events. No wonder they did so, because in many ways the fifties, as Wallerstein says, "marked a turning point because these years saw some major victories and consequent signs of new boldness among nationalist movements" ¹

1 Wallerstein, I, Africa, the Politics of Unity, (London, 1967) p 18

Finally, I would like to finish this study by quoting the following lines, composed by al-Shārif, entitled 'Urūbah (Arabism) which are full of emotion

ولطيف أشواقى وفرط هيامى	مس ملع عتى حديث عرامسى
ويشها لاشاوس الاقشوام	يلقى على الحرميس حير تحيية
داك المقام ، و فوق كل مقام	ويمر معرطا ومعطفا على
لملاد (مصر) أو ملاد (الشام)	ويسعود بالاشواق يحترق الفلا
ويسبى فى (دار السلام) سلامى ¹	ويحب منها (للعراق) بروعه

Who, on behalf of me, will bear the message of my passion,
My best wishes and my infatuation?
He extends best greetings to the two Holy Places,
Mecca and Medina,
And he lets the daring people in on it.
And he passes on curving and turning towards
That sacred place (he means the grave of the Prophet
Muhammad, peace be upon him), which is the best of all places

And he returns with longings, crossing the desert,
Towards the land of Egypt or of Syria
From these, he quickens his pace to Iraq,
And he extends my salutation to Baghdad

However, after showing the themes of the three trends of Libyan political poetry which were dealt with by the three Libyan poets, al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah, we can say that these trends had a favourable influence on their poetical output. They left, indeed, a great many poems which are radiant with the spirit of patriotism, Arabism and Islam, because their lives fell within a period of military and political activity

1. D Sh , p 81

The above-mentioned poets have sung of freedom, but their love of freedom was linked with their pride in the Arab race and Islam in an amazing combination. In fact, these elements, patriotism, Arabism and Islam shaped their firm political attitudes and consequently their political poetry. They were not only emotional feelings but also subjects for their poetic talent. Therefore, their patriotism and their admiration of Arabism acted as a powerful factor in their choice of political poetry in general.

It is true that their patriotism, which was untainted by fanaticism, colours most of their works, nor did they hide, on many occasions, their national feeling and religious zeal. Their patriotic poetry reveals that they had a wide vision because of its link with another inclination. Briefly, the occupation period (1911-1951) has given us a fine poetry which originated from emotional patriotic feeling in a national form together with the spirit of Islam.

Eventually, the Libyan Resistance Movement gave 'Umar al-Mukhtār as a patriotic hero to Libya in particular, and to the Arab world in general. Has the Libyan literary movement provided a patriotic poet in the literary field like 'Umar al-Mukhtār in the theatre of war? We may put this question in another form. Was Libyan political poetry on an equal level with the patriotic and national struggle which was continued for about half a century?

Regarding our showing and analysing Libyan political poetry and its various trends within the first half of the present century, the answer will be yes. Certainly, we can say that the literary movement in Libya gave Ahmed Rafīq al-Mahdawī as a patriotic poet. It is true that many Libyan poets contributed to the political patriotic move-

ment in Libya. But Rafīq was highly qualified for the leading task of patriotic poet.

Owing to his extensive handling of the patriotic issue and to his keeping himself away from any official position offered by the Italians¹ and to the length of his stay outside Libya, which lasted for about twenty-five years out of the Italian period. Owing to these facts, Rafīq served his country very well and he was the only Libyan poet who devoted most of his poetry to defend her case and to attack her enemies at all times. Rafīq holds, in fact, a leading position among his contemporary poets in Libya as a poet supreme in his feelings. He never eulogized² the Italians or accepted their domination in contrast to some of his contemporary poets who became collaborationists with the Italian authorities as soon as they were appointed to the government. He is the only poet who was distinguished by his political frankness towards the Italian and British occupations. His poems led him more than once into trouble with the Italians and into exile.

However, it is possible to say that there are well-known figures in the literary field as there are famous and remarkable fighters in the theatre of war.

1 See, al-Tellīsī, p 134.

2 See, Introduction to D R , Vol 1, p 9.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Poetic Technique of their Political Party

Introduction

As a study examining the political poetry of three Libyan poets during the Italian and British occupations 1911-1951, and discussing its themes and trends, it is necessary for me to analyse and assess the poetic technique of this kind of their poetry.

Concerning the poetry composed during the second Ottoman period, one may note that its poets emphasised form rather than content. In addition to the traditional themes, they showed the insistence on diction of the long period of literary decay. With the exception of the Sanūsīyah poets, whose poetry is characterised by originality and purity of style, the poets of the above mentioned period mostly presented an artificial poetry which was the general character of Arabic poetry during the whole Ottoman period. For several reasons,¹ the Sanūsīyah poets were more original in their poetry than the poets who lived in the towns.²

Perhaps the best example of the former's poetry, concerning a political theme, is Muḥammad al-Sunnī's poem, composed after al-Mahdī's move to al-Kufrah in 1895. In it he says

وقفت بالصر، فالعداء من فرق منكم على بعد أعيانهم الحذر
الله أكبر! إن القوم في قلق تكاد أوصالهم بالحواف تستر
محال الحق لاحت وهي تحيرنا طهور موعده صدق كان يتقطر
قد آن للبين أن يسهل وألمها وعن ساهل ظلام الكفر يحسر³

You have succeeded in victory because the
enemies, afraid of you in spite of distance,
Were tired by weariness

1 See, Part III Chapter I of this Thesis, p 169

2 See, al-Tellīsī, p 36 and al-Hājirī, p 62.

3 Al-Hājirī, p 57.

God is great' The people (the French) are disturbed,
Their limbs are about to sever because of fear.
The visions of sight have appeared, telling us of,
The emergence of an expected reliable engagement.
The time has come to be showered with a hail of swords,
And the darkness of unbelief is pulled away from its light.

While Ibn Zikrī's poem, composed in 1897 on the occasion of the Turkish victory over the Greeks, is abundant with Jinās (paranomasia) and Tibāq (conformity).

يا سعد سرّ مرمما نشأثر المصّر الميسر
ودع المطيئة طاويما بحر السّفين على السّيفيس
وأعمر عساب (الدردييل) وحيّ حتى الاكريميس
وأعطى على دار الحلامة باليسار واليميس

Regarding the political poetry of the period, which concerns us, we have previously said that al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah are outstanding classical poets whose poetical works belong to the neo-classical school in style and spirit. There is no need here to emphasise that they derived their classical attitudes from the old Arabic poetry, as well as from their contemporaries among the Arab writers and poets, particularly in Egypt and Iraq.²

Although modern Arabic poetry changed in form and content within the first half of the present century, they remained faithful to the classical forms and did not try to break with the traditional form (Qaṣīdah). In fact, the poetical productions of the neo-classical school, which were characterised relatively by its refinement, correct-

1 A translation of these lines appears on page 200 of this study

2 See, al-Misurātī, Ahmad al-Shārif, p.28, al-Tellīsī, pp. 45-57 and Abū Dīb, p 33

ness and classical purity,¹ influenced the works of the above-mentioned poets. Their admiration of its poets was the main effect upon the style of their poetry. Furthermore, they couched their thoughts and emotions within the framework of the form and content of this school.

However, their contact with the poetry of the great poets of neo-classical school was, to a considerable extent, effective. For instance, they produced in their poetry the new themes, political and social and the new poetic style that was presented by the younger generation of this school, like Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, al-Zahāwī, al-Kāẓimī and others. They strongly rejected the Free Verse trend, though Rafīq adopted al-Zahāwī's views on rhyme and metre, as we shall see. These are the principles to which they remained faithful to the end.

In spite of this, there are some special characteristics which distinguish their poetry. I would like to stress, however, that we cannot ignore the influence of the poets of the neo-classical school which was strong and clear on each poet under this study, albeit, variable.

Here is, for instance, al-Tellisī² attempting to assess how far the relationship went between Rafīq and some poets of this school like al-Zahāwī, Shawqī and Ḥāfiẓ? He emphasised this relationship, but pointed out that their effect on him was different from one to another. He believed that, while Rafīq was inspired by al-Zahāwī in his poetic composition, by the simplicity which is close to being

1 Khourī, An Arithology, p 6.

2 Al-Tellisī, pp 45-55.

prose, and by his views on rhyme and metre, he was not affected by Shawqī in his poetic style. Concerning Ḥāfīz, al-Tellīsī confirmed his influence on Rafīq and the existence of several similarities between them, particularly their insistence on clarity and a straightforward treatment of their themes.

Secondly, they could not escape, in several poems, from the prosodic and linguistic norms of the past. Although they lived in the modern age, they spoke to their people by using the diction, visions and technique of a past age. In other words, they sometimes expressed their thoughts and emotions in conventions of old language and old forms. I give this quotation from al-Shārif's poetry as a characteristic specimen of this phenomenon:

كلعى ، ولكن لا نظية حاجر شعى ، ولكن لا نظية رام
معاشر العرب الذين تعودوا يوم الوعى بالكر والاقدام
واذا طعى جهل العدو ولم تعد حسانتهم رجعوا الى الاثم
بالسار حامدة وان لعنت بها ربح الشمال تريد حر صرام
من كل قرم ليس يعد سيعه حتى يعود من الدوائت دامى
.....

ما نفعت تلك الاستة والقبا الا لدفع مطنة الاحرام 1

Another characteristic is that al-Shārif and Qanābah, in spite of their belonging to the neo-classical school, have left some poems ending in chronograms ². Although it appears to a limited extent, it proves their imitation of one of the aspects of the period of literary stagnation.

We can say that because of their adoption of neo-classical school's norms, they did not open up new horizons in the development of modern Libyan poetry.

1 D Sh , pp 81-82.

2 See, Ibid , pp 107, 287 and D Q , p 147.

It is generally understood that the structure of poetry is based on four elements, word, meaning, metre and rhyme. It can be summed up in the criteria by which the old critics used to examine literary works to distinguish between good and poor work, in two aspects, word and meaning.

With regard to the first aspect, their discussion was, and still is, concentrated on approved and disapproved words. It was also, and still is, concentrated, regarding the meaning, on the style of the writer or the poet, his use of meaning and of rhetorical dictions.¹

These criteria can be used, here, in order to analyse the poetic works of the poets under consideration and consequently to know how far did they contribute to the renewal of style in their poetry with respect to words and meanings.

WORDS

In our dealing with the style of their poetry, we start with the aspect of the words they used. In view of the fact that any kind of poetry, which requires specific style, has its own chosen words, as well as its visions, images and poetic music in order to express the sensitivity of the poet's experience. For instance, within the patriotic poetry, the style takes a form which is not suitable for other kinds. Besides, there are two different ways of using the words to express the patriotic feeling of the poet. In the surge of pride, enthusiasm and describing the battles, softness becomes roughness and sensitivity changes into violence. Also words

1 Muhammad Farīd Abū Ḥadīd, cited by 'Afīfī, al-Sh'ir wa al-Shu'arā' fī Lībyā, p 8.

of delicacy of feeling will be replaced by words showing terror, fear and destruction and describing blood, fights and power

While in the flow of nostalgia the loud and roaring music changes into a soft tune and easier speech, expressing higher feelings

In tracing this in the works of the poets concerning us, we find that they gave considerable attention to the language of their political poetry. They chose words which have suitable sounds for their meanings. They were interested in the powerful style and resounding phrases when they described the national battles, encouraged their people to continue the fight and inflamed the spirit of the Mujāhidīn. No doubt, these themes require strong sounding phrases and resonant words to the ear

In fact, many poems reveal this aspect, such as al-Shārif's ode

رصيفا بحتف المعوس رصيفا ولم يرض ان يعرف الضيم فيما
...
وادا فامت الحرب كنا رحالا الى الحرب أرسح من طور سيفا
ترانا عليها شماوى كأتنا شربنا بها حمرة الاندرينا
لب وسات بها و ثبات فصحا بها بوره الناثرينا
ولا عجب في الوعى ان أتينا سيمه آتائنا الاوليينا
ادا لم يعنا على الحطب رأى جعلنا المسالة فرضا معينا
سيوى قبصما عليها أكها وفيها تراسا من المبرينا 1

Here is also Qanābah's poem, in which he says

الحرم والعزم والبارود والسيار أشياء لا تد منها حين بحتار
...
هنوا بنى وطنى ، هنوا بنى وطنى ان التصامم للبنى معيار
فكروا القيود التى طلعت تدتلبنا حينا من الدهر طالبنى معوار
فكروا القيود التى صدت تقدمنا فلم تكن لسواها هذه السدار
شدوا بوحدتنا كي ستقل بها فى أرض أحداتنا أما لأخرار
لا تعملوا لا تماموا عن عربكم فكل مستعمر لا شق عذار 2

1, 2. These lines were translated in pages 220-221, 268 of this thesis

Also Rafīq says

ورأى الابطال ان الموت لا	ثقت فيه فلقوه رؤاما
فقدوا أرحلهم صبرا فما	حلها غير رصاص يتراما
حلها من ريقة العار ومن	عيشة الدال هدم ماتوا كراما
هون الحطب علينا موتهم	في دطع كان للحق انتقاما

But all these resounding phrases and words disappear when Rafīq, for instance, describes his love of his country while in exile

رحيلى عنى عتر على حذا	وداعا أيها الوطن المعدى
وداع معارق بالرعم شامت	له الأقدار بيل العيس كذا
وحير من رفاه العيش كذا	ادا أنا عشت حرا مستندا
سأرحل عنك يا وطنى واتى	لاعلم اننى قد حثت ادا

He also wrote

حييا وشوقا يا ملادى فاسسى	وان طال عنى العهد لست بحوان
فما كان بعدى عن الآ ترعما	عن الصيم لا معطا ولا فصد هحوان
واي لاكسى في الحواح لوعة	لحد يوربها على البعد تحناسى
ادا حفف الدمع الاثنى فدامسى	لها وقدة رادت أساى وأشحاسى

It is true that the poets of this period were not interested very much in decorating their poetry with the rhetorical style. In other words, they did not emphasise verbal jugglery or false archaism which "deprived Arabic poetry of depth, coherence and vitality"⁴ It may be because they felt that they must concentrate on content with a considerable attention to improve the form. Moreover, the nature of the subject rejects the sort of words which fettered with the old chains of metaphors, paronomasia and conformity.

1, 2, 3 A translation of these lines appears on pages 241-242, 253 and 231 of this Thesis.

4. Khourī, p 5.

Nevertheless, we find that al-Shārif, because of the nature of his educational career and his knowledge of the arts of rhetoric, was fond of verbal jugglery¹ With the rich cultural and literary heritage of the Arabs behind him, he could not remain immune from the traditional diction. Within some of his poems, particularly love-poetry,² he uses, in parallel construction, two words of the same letters but of different meaning. He sometimes joins in pairs between two phrases

Here are some examples³ from his political poetry

عرب الحَيِّ ، وحيِّ العرب مظهر الحدِّ ومأوى الحسب

= = =

قد أوقدوا نار الوعى فتأححت فى محدِّ أسرته ومحدِّ سراته

يا أمة الحرير هل من بهمة وحيمة تحمى الحى وحماته

= = =

ويحت منها (للعراف) بروعه ويث فى (دار السلام) سلاي

This leads us to another characteristic which appears in their poetry to which I would like to draw attention. For giving strength to the expression of their feelings and stressing particular phrases and important sentences, they used frequently "an artistic feature known in Arabic literature as al-Takrār (tautology) which is the repetition of certain words, phrases and even lines in the same poem"⁴ Using this artistic feature means also the breaking of the unity of the poem. The association of ideas and the development of meanings

1 See, al-Misurātī, Aḥmad al-Shārif, pp 46-47

2 See, e.g. the poems on pp 154, 159, 170, 174, 177

3 D Sh , pp 65, 75, 81.

4 Yukse], 'Azmi, al-Zamaḥsharī's Life and a Critical Edition of his Diwān, (Ph D Thesis), p 137.

In fact, this phenomenon is obvious in the political poems of Qanabah and his poetry is rarely devoid of it. Here is one of his poems

يوم هت الشعب صفا واحدا	وبشير السعد فيما كعمر
يوم هت الشعب ركنا شامحا	لم يحد عنا على الحق نمر
يوم هت الشعب روحا واحدا	في اسحام بين ندو وحصر
يوم هت الشعب بحرا راحرا	وقع العياق في لمح الصر 1

In another poem, entitled "Taḥīyat al-Shabāb" he repeated the word Ḥayyūhu (greet him) nine times at the beginning of the first nine lines ²

In the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries, the impact of the press on the Arabic style was considerable. It developed the Arabic language by publishing articles, essays, reports, poems and so forth in a simple language in order to be understood by a larger group ³. We have previously said that Libya had the Press since 1866, and the effective contribution of Libyan writers and poets began in 1897 when Al-Taraqī newspaper was established. In addition to this factor, their imitation of the old Arabic style and the poetic composition of modern Arabic poetry as it was produced by the new generation of the neo-classical school did, indeed, influence the clarity and simplicity of their poetic style. They employed the common words, phrases and sentences that were used by the press and people, in order to spread their poetry among their people as far as possible. Even if their use

1 D Q , p 79.

2 Ibid , p 90.

3 Ḥamzah, Abdul laṭīf, Mustaqbil al-ṣahḥāfah fī Miṣr, (Cairo, 1957) p 2.

results in their poetry losing its power and in giving their poems an oratorical tune, such as the following lines from Qanābah's ode

فلتحى ليبيا المستقلة ابها بالحق أصحت مصر الأمتال
شعب العروبة لم يعد مستعمرا في الحال أوى أى وقت تالسى
هل أنت تنكران ما أحرزته بالكرم والایمان لا الاعمال؟
فأعمل لتسعد أمة عربية قاست من الآلام والأهوال 1

Here is also Rafīq who says in one of his poems

يا فتية الوطن المشتت شمله حتى متى تقعون مثل عرب؟
الأمر فى يدكم وليس لعيركم قول لا عمل بلا تنويك
أنتم أمام الله مسئولون عس وطن تعرفه يد التحريك 2

While al-Shārif wrote

عهد به كان حل الودّ مقصلا وقد صفا الحو بين الترك والعرب
لما اقصى دارت الايام دورتها توقع الناس منها سوء السقلب
مدت اليها يد العدوان فاصطدمت بصحرة لم تبل منها العطب
فكان من أثر العدوان أن فشلت يداه وانقلبت رأسا على عقب 3

However, Rafīq went too far in decorating his poetry with some words from the colloquial and foreign languages.

As a result of their deep awareness of the circumstances and conditions in which they lived, and in addition to their desire to simplify their poetry to be more widely understood, we find Rafīq padding his poetry with many words from the colloquial which were popular and current in the spoken language 4

As examples,⁵ Rafīq says

1 D Q , p 83.

2 D.R , Vol III, pp 32-33.

3 D Sh., pp 93-94.

4 See, 'Afīfī, Rafīq shā'ir al-waṭaniyah, p 17 and Tellīsī, p 79.

5 D R , Vol II, pp 70, 71, 210, 212

جعلوا (مسخرة) بأيدي صبية لا يعدون من الحير تدسا
 = = =
 يا من تطوح في اللامهاحرا مثلى و (حلاها) لمن قد (طليبا)
 = = =
 قد (اتلف) الحمار بأتم عمرو فلا رجعت ولا رجح الحمار
 = = =
 وليس من السياسة في محلل صياح و (انكلا) واعتسار

We can add to this, his use of some Italian words. As we have previously mentioned Italian culture did not leave a distinctive mark on modern Libyan poetry in general. Some Libyan poets, however, such as Qanābah,¹ translated a few Italian poems into Arabic and, in spite of Rafīq's poem addressed to an Italian poet, Danonzo,² one can find, to a limited extent, its influence on their style. It has appeared only in a very few works of some Libyan poets. Among them is Rafīq whose poetry contained a few Italian words such as in the following lines

3 صارت عروبتنا لسا شتما لأصحا (أراسى)
 والحرّ (انديحو) يرا د بها الدواحن في الرراى

However, summing up the various styles used by the poets, we can say that although each poet has his own character in expressing his feelings, thoughts and emotions, their poetry is distinguished by the general characteristic of modern Arabic poetry, namely clarity and simplicity. In addition to their use of new words, which are suitable for the meanings and style of the new themes, they employed the same common words that were used by the old poets, imitating the modern poets' examples

1 See, 'Afīfī, Rafīq shā'ir al-watanīyah, pp 6-7

2 D R , Vol II, pp 121-124 Al-Tellīsī denies any kind of relationship between Rafīq and this poet, p 72

3 (Arabi) means an Arab (Indigino) means inhabitants. Then, these words were used for scorn

The second was the symbolic form of diction which was wide-spread during the period of Italian domination. This kind of expression, which is usually current among the people when their freedom is banned and when they are afraid of expressing their opinions towards the ruler, relied on word rather than idea.

The third form of diction was presented by Rafīq throughout his narrative poetry. It seems that he refused to accept the poverty of modern Libyan poetry in this kind of poetry. In 1934, he produced his historical poem "Ghāith al-Ṣaghīr". But, unfortunately, narrative and descriptive poetry, in his works, comprise only two odes.¹

The fourth one, which spread during the British occupation, was exercised in composition and took the form of successive questions without giving the answer being left to the reader to try to grasp it.²

As an example, the following lines from one of Rafīq's poems

متى كان هذا الرأي ! في عهد فتحها الى عهد حزم التزل أم عهد طليان؟
وما السب الداعي لتعريق بيضا ونحن بحمد الله أصدق احوان؟
أيعرب عن عقل اللبيب سياسة خلاصتها (فرو تسد) كل اسان؟ 3

Here is also al-Shārif in one of his poems

يا معشر الأفوام هل من بهصنة وحمية ؟ يا معشر الأفوام
أجهلتم ان الدسائس بيدكم بلعت بها الاعداء كل مرام ؟
طرقت عقولكم طوارق علية أم ستم والقوم غير بيكلم ؟
أم فصل ديككم وبور يقيمكم عظت عليه وساوس الاوهام 4

1 See, D R , Vol III, pp 9-16, 196-209

2 'Afīfī, al-Ittijāhāt al-Waṭaniyah, pp 465-469

3 D R Vol III, pp 24-25.

4 D Sh , p 82.

Sometimes this diction takes the form of promotion, such as the following lines of Qanābah

لا تصدّى بالقول ان وعدوسا له ، صدّى بالفعل ان اوعدوسا
1 ان قوما لا يؤمنون بحق ارفعهم قوة بها يؤموسا

Also, al-Shārif says

في سبيل المجد ، في رفع الهمم قم بأمر السيف لا أمر القلم
عماد اللدات ان رمت العلا وأصح الحطب ان الحطب ألم
2 لا يعزّك طعام سائغ فمن الادواء قد يسرى الالم

CONCEPTS

Image or meaning, as a technical term used by the critics, is an important element of poetry. When the Arab critics mention meaning in poetry, they used to mention, next to it, reality, metaphor, imagery, similarity and so forth³

Concerning the political poetry of our poets, we find that its concepts moved mostly within the scope of the old meanings of Arabic poetry. It may be because of their insistence on the old form which helped in fixing these concepts. Under the huge weight of imitation, the neo-classical poets could not express the new features of modern life as clearly and as strongly as the Free Verse poets have done.

As adherents of a school which insists on the traditional literary heritage, they followed its examples, developed its words and concentrated on its meanings. In addition, they did not give

1 D Q , p 78.

2 D Sh , p 87.

3 Abū Ḥadīd, M F , cited by 'Afīfī, al-Sh'ir wa al-shu'arā', p 11.

free rein to their imagination or look at the image from different angles to use its several aspects

Here is al-Shārif in his ode Raḡīnā still using the old meanings in translating his ideas into words, when he describes his people in their fight against the Italians as lions and their clamor as a horrible roaring

فكم في (طرابلس العرب) لبي يصون البلاد ويحمي العريضا
وما راد صرح العداغ الا رئيسا لاشمالها الصائريا 1

Qanābah has done the same thing when he describes the determination of his people in the face of difficulties.

وحمل الحقّ مشدود معرم وحمل الظالمين الى احلال
وطوى الكشح في حت المعالي طس يرتاح الا بالوصال
.....
صوب ترس متا يا ليالى فعلا في التسلسل كاللال 2

But this does not mean that their meanings were not affected by the new circumstances which the first half of the present century witnessed. In addition to clarity and simplicity in their poetic rendition, the meanings of their poetry were deepened during the above-mentioned period

In fact, their dealing with social and political themes gave them an opportunity to care, to a certain extent, more about meanings than words. Their experience of social and national freedom induced them to use the new meanings which were derived from the new social outlook and from the new understanding of patriotism, not from that used by the poet in the past when he talks about his tribe, the ruins and traces

1 D.Sh , p. 84.

2. D.Q., p. 105.

Among these new concepts is freedom. In many poems, they described their hate of the Italian occupation, their country's political affairs and their longing for its independence. They have sung to freedom and repeatedly wrote of their hope for the day in which they would regain their liberty.

In his famous ode, al-Shārif produced an excellent meaning

ولم يرض بالعيش إلا عريـرا ولا تقى الشر بل يتقيـما
فما الحرّ إلا الذي مات حرّاً ولم يرض بالعيش إلا أميـما 1

In the patriotic poetry of Rafīq, there are some new meanings such as his finest poem Furāq in which he says

ويا وطني ما بي عـمك حب وأحيانا يكون الحـب صدّا 2

Also in his poem Hanīn gharīb lawṭānīh, in which he produced beautiful meanings, Rafīq says

أنا بحـم الهوى صرنا ولا عـم سويد ذكرنا لمن يرداد سياسا
ما أصغتنا الليالي في نوى تركت حسنا هـما وهما القلب ولها 3

We have already seen that, apart from the spirit of Arabism which strongly influenced their poetry, there is the Eastern strand. Both of them were inspired by religion which enriched their thoughts and meanings. In fact, their ideas were deepened by religion which remained the main source of influencing the various aspects of Libyan poetry in general.

In addition to this, their meanings were enriched by adopting the form of exaggeration ⁴. Here is Qanābah in one of his poems

1 D Sh , p 83.

2 D R , Vol II, p 54.

3 Ibid , p 148.

4 'Afīfī, al-Ittijāhāt al-waṭaniyah, p 470.

وحدة تدو لها من وضعها وحدة الحس وتقيل الحسر
ان تك الوحدة في توحيدها فالدى يكرها ما كسر 1

He also says

سل وفود الحفل مولاي ومن هم حواليلك شهود وحسر 2

As an example from al-Shārif's poetry

حسن الأشاوس في بدووي حصر وكل أرض لها كانت مياديبا 3

In another poem, he wrote

ألم بما شوى يدوب له الصخر ويقص علينا النوس وفقد الصبر
وما شوقنا إلا لوحدة أمة يساد على مرّ الرمان لها ذكر 4

Rafīq describes his feeling while leaving his country

كادت تطير بأصلي أشواقى يوم العراق فهل يكون تلاقى ؟
ودّعت راحة قلبي الحقان ودّعت راحة قلبي الحقان
يا راحلا بالصبر لم يترك لنا غير الحيين ورسرة المشتاق
دكرال مثل التار في أشواقنا ترداد بالتحريك في الاحراق 5

METRE AND RHYME

Having known the school to which the poets belonged, we can know their attitudes towards the traditional form (Qaṣīdah) They were, indeed, interested only in using one monorhyme in all their works Their adoption of the classical definition of poetry as metrical and rhymed, illustrates their emphasis on these two main elements, metre and rhyme, particularly the former which was considered

1 D Q , p 80.

2 Ibid , p 79.

3 D Sh , p 89.

4 Ibid , p 91.

5 D R , Vol II, p 17.

most important for distinguishing poetry from prose. It also reveals the reasons behind their taking the same attitude as the neo-classical poets like Shawqī, Ḥāfīz, Ruṣāfī, Aḥmad Muharram and the like, who were keen on monorhyme.

At the beginning of this century, al-Zahāwī, who was a neo-classical poet, proposed the abolition of the monorhyme, to free Arabic poetry from restrictions. He believed that rhyme does not constitute an element of Arabic poetry.

In the 1920s, al-Zahāwī's views on rhyme as an obstacle in poetry created a widespread anxiety among most of his contemporaries. Many poets disagreed with him and a few were attracted by his arguments for abolishing the monorhyme and by his suggestions for varying the rhyme in the poem.¹

Among those who adopted al-Zahāwī's views on rhyme in Libya was Rafīq. This is not to be wondered at because he was an admirer of the man and his poetry.² It seems that Rafīq was fully aware of the restrictions of Arabic poetry among which is the obstacle of rhyme in the poem. He courageously introduced al-Zahāwī's views into modern Libyan poetry. Never before has someone dealt in his poetry with a subject like this.

His adoption of al-Zahāwī's views appears in an ode entitled Amā 'ān³ in which Rafīq says

1 Musliyah, Sadok, "Monorhyme, Stanzaic Poetry and Blank Verse in the Poetry of the Iraqi Poet Jamāl S. Az-Zahāwī (1863-1936)" (An article), pp. 14-15.

2 Al-Tellīsī, p. 48.

3 D R, Vol. II, pp. 80-81.

أما آن للشعر أن يستقل ويخلص من رقة القافية
قد طال والله تقييده تقليدا الأعصر الحالية

Has not the time come for poetry to be free,
And to get rid of the noose of rhyme?
By God, its restriction has lasted too long,
By our imitation of the past ages

In the remaining lines of this ode, he expressed his views on metre. He called for the creation of new patterns of metre instead of moving in the circle of the severe limitation of metres which were known in Arabic poetry.

الى م سير بورن الحليل و يوسف في قيده العائس!
وللشعر في كل لحس جميل محال مع العم الشائق

= = =

سل الموسيقار عن التعمات أيمن للفن تحديد هـا؟
فما لنا في (محول محول) وقفا بخادر تحديد هـا؟

= = =

.....

فيا شاعرا لعصر حدّد لنا من الورن غير الذي معرف
ولا تحش مرّا تقاد العلاة فسوف يؤيدل المصف

Till when are we to act according to Khalil's metre
And move in its shackles?
In every beautiful tune poetry has
Connection with a splendid tone
Ask the musician about tones,
Is it possible for music to restrict them?
Why is it that we, concerning Fa' ūlun Fa' ūlun,¹
Are cautious of its reform?

O, poet of this age, make anew for us,
Metres of which we know nothing
And do not be afraid of the bitter criticism of extremists,
Just men will support you

1 Foot of a verse This poetical metre is called al-Mutaqārib

Rafīq followed this ode with an article in which he explained his point of view about the restrictions of monorhyme in Arabic poetry. He pointed out, in its beginning, his strong rejection of either abolishing metre entirely from the poem or using different metres in a single poem. He admitted that metre constitutes an important element of poetry, but that poets must create new patterns of metre instead of the sixteen metres of al-Farāhīdī.¹ He also admitted that he refused to accept variety of rhyme in the same poem²

To put his views in practice, he composed an ode entitled, Qalb al-shā'ir wa al-jamāl (the Heart of Poetry and Beauty), in which he used a new metre adopted, freely, from a Turkish metre.

كالتحفة في الروضة تعبت بالسوار

= = =

لا يفتأ حيران ، كثير الحولان
 يفتحم الاشواك ، الى رهر الستان
 لا يبلغ ما يمكن مقدار الطيران
 ان رمى كالواقف أو حوم أو طار
 كالتحفة في الروضة تعبت بالسوار

3

With the exception of this ode and a few poems in which he practiced al-Zahāwī's views on varying rhyme in the poem, Rafīq used monorhyme in all his poetry. Although he called for the freeing of Arabic poetry from the trammels of rhyme, he was not against honoured forms

However, it is clear, as understood from another article⁴ written by him on the above-mentioned subject, that Rafīq was not opposed by

1 He is al-Khalīl Ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī who codified the well-known metres of Arabic poetry

2 D R Vol I, p 12 See also Libya al-Muṣawwarah, Vol 1, No.10, July 1936, pp 18-19

3 Ibid , Vol II, p 125.

4 Ibid , Vol I, p 20 See also Libya al-Muṣawwarah, Vol 2, No 6, March 1937, pp 7-8

anyone Also, it seems to me that he was not serious enough in his adoption of al-Zahāwī's views because he did not produce more examples within the period from 1936, the date of his poem, to 1961 the year of his death

Regarding the new form of poetry, presented by the modernists and known as Free Verse, it is natural that the poets who concern us, should strongly reject it For instance, al-Misurātī¹ stated that al-Shārīf maintained the monorhyme ode and respected the well-known metres He added that al-Shārīf disliked the new kind of modern Arabic poetry which is without rhyme and metre, and therefore attacked it

Similarly, Qanābah expressed his views on it when he first defined poetry as metrical and rhymed speech, preserving the main elements of Arabic poetry. Consequently, any expression, in his opinion, which does not versify in metre and rhyme, is definitely prose. Therefore, he did not accept Free Verse or prosaic poetry which is called by him al-Nather al-Mash'ūr²

In one of his poems, Qanābah pointed out his attitude towards this kind of poetry He says

هل يكون الشعر حرًا	ما تراه؟ (عند ربه)
غير حر في اعتقادي	من محور الشعر يأسه
لا يريد الشعر إلا	أن يكون الصاد لثه
لا يريد الشعر إلا	أن يكون الورن طثه
لا يريد الشعر إلا	من قسى يهضم صحبه
ليس رصف الشعر قثا	ان قث الشعر دربه
والقوافى دون ور	بينها والشعر حدسه
كل شعور حاءا	كان بالمسور تثه

1 Al-Misurātī, Ahmad al-Shārīf, p 33

2 See, Abū Dīb, pp 35-37

1

Should poetry be free?
What do you think? 'Abd Rabbah²
It is not free, in my opinion,
From metres
We do not want poetry unless,
Metre is its practice
We do not want poetry unless
The young man masters its difficulty
The versification of poetry is not art,
The art of poetry is skill
There is no connection between rhymes,
Without metre, and poetry
Any poetry, without metre,
Is similar to prose
Any poetry, brought to us,
As an import, should disappear
Any metrical, rhymed speech is a
Sign of a purer language, so pay attention to this

EMOTION

Regarding the poetic emotion of this genre of poetry, we can say that when the poet finds himself in the position of responding to political currents which are prevailing in his time, he expresses his feelings as if he is dealing with the common themes of Arabic poetry such as praise, eulogy, love-poetry and so forth

In other words, throughout the political poem the poet expresses his political emotion as well as his views and thoughts. But "the degree to which politics and art mingle in any poem depends upon

1 D Q , pp 194-195.

2 He is 'Abd Rabbah al-Ghannāy, one of the well-known poets of Benghazi

the approach as well as competence of the poet. When transmitted into poetry, political attitudes may merge into the texture of a poem to produce, "a complex blending of personal and public passion".¹

For these reasons political poetry which effects the poet's own feelings, was considered emotional poetry. In addition to this, it is characterised by reality, sincerity and religious passion.

As poetry dealing with "public themes or public figures with events that extend beyond the concerns of the individual self",² it always flows over with a powerful spirit and emotional feelings. This can be seen in the political works of our poets, which describe the courage of Mujāhidīn in the theatre of war, urge them to continue the fight and praise their heroism and patriotism

As a fine example of this kind of poetry, is the following short poem in which Qanābah is in love with his country. He sees himself alive and everything surrounding him the same when he lives on its land

أفديك يا وطني ومثلك يعتدي	بالروح من شرّ الجبال والعمدا
ان لم أصل وأقتحم فيك الردى	وطني فلمست فني على بهج الهدى
أى سماء تطلّسى	أى تراب يقلمسى
أى العفوس تحلمسى	ان صاع تفكيرى مسدى
أهوى ربك ولحن طيرك ان شدا	يستهمص الوادى فيشجيه الصدى
أهوى الشبّ معاصدا ومسا سدا	والشيخ للعرفا ان أسدى يدا ³

In Rafīq's poetry, of which many critics⁴ were passionately fond, particularly his poems composed in his exile in Turkey, there are many poems versified with powerful emotion. For instance, it is

1 Preminger, and others, p 970

2 Ibid

3 D Q , p 205

4 D R , Vol II, pp 53-54

impossible to ignore a single line from his nostalgic poem entitled Furāq in which he says

رحيلى عند عرّعلّى حدّا وداعا أيها الوطن المعسدى
1 وداع معارق بالرّم شاءت له الأقدار بيل العيس كدّا

In the twenty-six lines comprising this ode, Rafīq speaks of his country "with a marvellous display of his emotions and thoughts and in beautiful rhyme and yet free from all artificiality" ²

Another example is the following poem which is typical of Rafīq's art at its best in style and expression. It portrays clearly his deep emotion

يا من على السعد بهواه وسهوانا لشدّ ما شعنا شوق فأصابنا
.....
حتّى شوقا الى أوطاننا فأدا تسم البارق العريسي أنكاسا
ومن سوانا حدير بالنكاه على ذكرى (العويّهات والبركا وحليانا)
معاهد حمها لو لم يكن شعفا بما لها من جمال ثان ايمان
3 قد طوّاحتنا الليالى عن مواطنا يا ويح كل عرب قدره هانا

However, it is generally acknowledged that Rafīq has a masterly ability in his artistic representation of patriotism whether in Libya or elsewhere

We can also well appreciate al-Shārif's emotion in some of his poems such as his famous ode Raḍīna⁴

رصيدا بحتف العوس رصييدا ولم يرض أن يعرف التميم فييدا
also the following poem in which he says
من ملىع عتيّ حديس عرامى ولطيف أشواقى وفرط هيامى
يلقى على الحرميس خير تحيئة وينبها لاشاوس الامسوام
5

1 See, al-Tellisī pp 76-78 and 124-128 and al-Hājirī pp 98-104 and 114-117

2 Edham, p 11

3 D R , Vol II, p 148-150.

4 D Sh , pp 83-84

5 Ibid , pp 81-83

In spite of their emotional power, however, they are distinctly classical in style

Apart from this kind of poem, which will perhaps appeal to many of us because of its emotional power, there is a considerable number of poems in which the poets were less expressive of the individual experience. They appear throughout these poems, to be taking the role of press, patriotic speakers and national leaders when the words are inflaming the feelings of their people by their zealous speeches. The following poems, as examples, are devoid of the poetical spirit and most distinguished by the rhetorical style. Here is one of Rafīq's poems

الدكتورية في عصرنا	صارت من المنكر في عرفه
فمن أراد اليوم تطبيقها	في قومه دلّ على سحره
حزبها (هتلر) فيما مضى	فكان نالاحت عن حتفه
وحرّسها (موسوليني) الى	صك وتكيس على قحفه

1

Among Qanābah's poems which is weak in its emotional power and is greatly fettered by its form, are the following lines

ألا هبوا من وطني وديسي	ندب عن العروبة والعريس
.....	
ففي ذا اليوم يحتفل انتهاحا	ثالث عام ، ميلاد الحيس
حيس قد ترعرع بعد عام	وشت على يدي بطل صيس
سحعل يومه عيداً ودرى	حللها على طول السيس

2

In fact, this artistic characteristic is a common one in the poetical works of many Arab poets belonging to the neo-classical school. Therefore, for the purpose of having a proper understanding

1 D R , Vol III, pp 127-129

2 D Q , pp 121-122

of emotion in this kind of poetry which took this form, I entirely agree with Ma'īn Besīso¹ in his critical judgement of it. He pointed out that we must carefully be aware of the historical stage which imposes its political climate upon literature.

IMAGINATION

As one of poetry's elements, imagination was generally confined, in their political poetry, to a kind which retains the characteristics of the old Arabic images. It is represented in using everything observed in the outside world in order to portray the poet's feelings, thoughts and emotion.

As an example, here is one of Qanābah's poems:

وأقمع سيف الحق كل صعوبة وأكزع من الآداب فهي ماهل
وأركب حياض العزم وأعتسق العلا فالمرحون من الأثام بواكل

•••

2 والشمس قد تحفى سلاها سطات والمرؤ قد تحفى عليه عواطل

Also al-Shārif says

عرب الحى وحى العسرب مطهر الحد وماوى الحسب
أنا من حكمو فى تعب ليتنى أحي ثمار التعب
هده المهجة مى اضطرت كاضطرام الماء فوى اللهب

••••

3 جلست بالرق فى ححر العلا كحلوس الظفل فى ححر الأب

The result of using this sort of imagination is that the power of the previous poems and the like "lies in its directness in the outside world than in the poet's own subjective visions" ⁴

1 Besīso, p 34

2 D Q , p 108.

3 D Sh , p 65.

4 Yhourī, p 4

Even Qanābah's poems, which were composed in symbolic form, were less in having that kind of image which depends upon the poet's own subjective visions. The reason behind this is that their symbolism appears within the expressive word, rather than the comprehensive picture of vision and meaning. As an example, Qanābah says

1 يوم هت الشعب صفا واحدا وشير السعد فيسا كعمر

In the above mentioned line, he means the Tripolitanian leader (Bashīr al-Sa'adāwī), not a bringer of glad tidings. He also says in another poem

كفى يا دهر من جهر السلاء ومن حن التسيطر والعداء
2 كفى ولترتقب يوما عبوسا لدى ملك السيطنة والسماء

He meant by dahr not time or fate but the West.

In fact, a great deal of their poetry suffered from the lack of imaginative images. Therefore, it remained within the circle of a traditional vision. Although the contemporary Arab poets in Egypt, Iraq and Syria had impregnated modern Arabic poetry with various kinds of visions and imagination from French and English literatures,³ the Libyan poets did not colour Libyan poetry with Italian literature.

Their poetry was, indeed, devoid of lofty imagination and of wide and complex poetic pictures. It was presented with a simplicity of imagination. No wonder, therefore, that al-Misurātī stated⁴ that al-Shārif rejected that kind of poetry which uses symbolism, because

1 D Q , p 79.

2 Ibid., p 99.

3 See, Badawī, pp XIII - XVII

4 Al-Misurātī, Ahmad al-Shārif, p 33

of its opposition to reality, its use of extreme imagination and ambiguous visions, its own private linguistic universe and its concentration on the inner world of private symbols ¹

In brief, their poetry is mostly based on an imagination which is easy to understand and on meaning which describes material facts. Hence, it remained "sonorous, declamatory, oratorical rather than intimate or lyrical" ²

GENERAL ASPECTS

Their political poetry reveals various aspects of their education, culture, knowledge of the Qur'ān and the Islamic sciences such as Fiqh (jurisprudence) and Hadīth (prophetic tradition)

Concerning the influence of the Qur'ān on their poetry, it can be seen in tens of lines of different themes that they dealt with. It is obvious that they adopted certain words and phrases from the Qur'ān. For instance, in one of Qanābah's poems, the following lines contain a verse of the Qur'ān

وما نحن إلا خير الحلو صفوة وما نحن إلا كرام أحلنة

.....

3 يا قوم ما ان لم تبالوا مرادكم موتوا كراما إنكم خير أمة

The verse of the Qur'ān is

4 " كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُحْرِحَتْ لِلنَّاسِ "

In the following line, al-Shārif, there is a verse from the Qur'ān

1 Badawī, p XX

2 Khourī, p 6.

3 D Q , pp 102-103

4 The Qur'ān ('Āl 'Imrān) III/109

وقل للعادليس فلا تماروا اليكم دينكم والى ديسى 1

His line is obviously taken from the Qur'anic verse

" لکم دینکم ولی ديسى " 2

Rafiq also made good use of the Qur'ān in his poetry, as in the following line

سمعت أماسا يدكرون وصاية عود برت الناس من شر شيطان 3

The verse of the Qur'ān he quoted is

" قل أعود برت الناس ، ... من شر الوسواس الخناس " 4

Beside their quoting from the Qur'ān, they frequently employed terms relating to Fiqh, Hadīth, Sīrah and so forth. Regarding his good knowledge of jurisprudence, al-Shārif says

على أن الصابة متى تقصى بأن لقاء الاحنة " فرض عيس " 5

In another poem he wrote

وكم نقل الواشى حديثنا " مصعفا " فيوهم أبنى قد تسليت عنكمو
على أنه يروى حديثنا " محرردا " بلا " سند " ما كان يرويه مسلم " 6

Here is also Rafiq in the following lines which reveal his readings in the Sīrah

أما لكم أسوة فى بهج قائدكم (محمد) حينما جاءه بالفسد
اد قال لا ، والله لو هلكست ، فى مطالب الحق ، روحى عنه لم أحد 7

1 D Sh , p 118.

2 The Qur'ān (al-Kāfirūn) CIX/6

3 D R , Vol II, p 26

4 The Qur'ān (An-Nās) CXIV/1 and 4

5 D Sh , p 121

6 Ibid , p 45

7 D R , Vol III, p 258.

They also referred to the Prophets like Muḥammad, 'Isā, Zakarīyā, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and others. As an example, Qanābah says

1 قد مات "خير الحلق" قدرا ورمعة ومات "حليل" قلبه و" لليم "

They also borrowed lines from other well-known poets whom they admired. Here is al-Shārif in one of his poems

2 وحنى بو تلك العروسة لم يرل (لما الصّدر دون العالمين أو القبر)

The second hemistich of the above line is taken from Abū Firās al-Hamadānī (932/320 - 968/357) whose verse reads

(وحنى أسامس لا توسط بييسا لما الصّدر دون العالمين أو القبر)

Another example from Qanābah's poetry is the following line

3 وى (اما الامم الاحلاق ما نقيت) أحلاقنا العرّ من فيها يساويسا

The first hemistich is taken from Ahmad Shawqī's verse

(اما الامم الاحلاق ما نقيت فان هم دعت أحلاقهم دهبوا)

He also wrote

يا أمة الشرق والعرب أشهدى وتقى أما سيقد هي عرم فلسطينا
4 (أن الراريسر لما قام قائمها توهمت أنها صارت شواهييسا)

The last line belongs to Ibn Zaidūn and is taken from his famous ode al-Nūniyah

In addition to enriching their poetry by adopting appropriate well-chosen lines, there are many examples in their Diwāns, particularly

1 D Q , p 141

2 D Sh , p 92

3 D Q , p 128

4 Ibid , p 127

Rafīq's which reveal their decorating their poetry with wisdom, proverbs, and traditional sayings. As with most of the old poets, like al-Mutanabbī, and the neo-classical poets, like Shawqī, have done, they made good use of this aspect by composing sometimes lines which contain traditional sayings and popular proverbs in Libya. For example the following verse of Rafīq

1 اهبصوا للأمر في آتاسه قبل قول (الصيف صيغت اللبس)

Contains the proverb

" في الصيف صيغت اللبس "

He sometimes adopts appropriate well-chosen popular proverbs in Libyan society in his poetry. Here are some examples from different poets ²

فما حيلة الشعب المحاهد وحده (الا ان كفا وحده لا يصقو)

أحلف رعم من صحكوا وقالوا (كلام الليل يمحوه النهار)

أحساسا الطامعيس فينا (في الحج) بل (تحلم الدحاه)

قال الذي ستر العصيحة حاقفا (من كان لا يدري يقول اسولا)

However, all these various aspects of their poetic technique prove that their poetry is typical of their cultural milieu. It is classical in style and in expression because of their enthusiasm for that type of poetry which is representative of neo-classicism.

So, whatever style, emotion and image they give, are distinct and in keeping with their lives, feelings and thoughts. In other words, "it was not easy to transcend the traditions of a language and a poetic

1 D R , Vol III, p 8.

2 Ibid , Vol II, p 211 and Vol III, pp 16, 66, 241

technique that had been the accepted norms for about fifteen centuries
in order to establish a new norm consonant with their new visions" ¹

¹ Boullato, Issa J , Modern Arab Poets 1950-1975, (Washington, 1976) pp XIV, XV

CONCLUSION

Poetry has always been an important method of recording the historical events of a nation and of portraying its feelings, thoughts and orientations. Therefore, if one examines the poetry of a nation, one will find several genres (ʾAghrād), expressing the various feelings which echo the experiences that have come the poet's way according to his circumstances and their effects.

In modern times, Arab poets have devised several new kinds of poetry to portray the various intellectual currents, the national heritage and their attitudes towards political development past and present. The forms of this poetry are always as different as the variety of its sources.

At the beginning of the present century, Libya was still under Ottoman rule while some Arab countries were under either British or French occupation, though they were autonomous from the Ottoman Empire. This means that features of Ottoman life remained longer in Libya. Consequently, the influence of the Ottoman spirit, which lasted until the end of the second decade of the present century, was clear in modern Libyan poetry.

Like the Arab contemporaries, the Libyan poets expressed their loyalty to the Sultan and the Sublime Porte and their devotedness to the Ottoman connection. They expressed also the spirit of Islamic fraternity. If we cast a glance at this Ottoman trend, which was dealt with by Libyan poetry, we will find that it remained, in fact, within the same circle of the subjects of modern Arabic poetry. Indeed, Libyan political poetry was not the only poetry which praised the Sultan 'Abdul Ḥamīd II. This being the aim of most of the poets in

Arab countries, particularly in Egypt. Also, the Libyan poets were not the only poets who were loyal to Turkey in their poetry. In fact, the provocation of Turkey meant, in the opinion of many Arab poets, friendship of her enemy. No wonder, therefore, that we find that the Ottoman trend was one of the political trends which prevailed during that time and was dealt with by the poets under this study.

In the year 1911, Italy launched an attack on Libya after having taken initial steps towards colonisation. This year is, indeed, the most important one in the modern history of Libya, because it witnessed the Italian occupation of Libya, the fall of the Turkish hegemony and, above all, the emergence of the Libyan Resistance Movement.

For this reason, 1911 was considered to be the decisive year for the appearance of a national conscience among the Libyan people who found themselves, for the first time, facing Western colonisation in the full sense. Therefore, they set up a firm resistance in defence of their country and unified themselves in a sacred struggle, since they had suffered enough at the hands of the Italians. Their struggle was to continue, militarily and politically, for about four decades, 1911-1951, which included a period of British occupation.

In fact, the period between the year 1911, in which Libya entered the first phase of her journey to freedom, and the year 1951, in which Libya regained her independence after it was recognised by the world in late 1949, this period tells us the heroic story of the Libyan nation against imperialism. It is also the most productive period of Libyan political poetry.

Due to the fact that patriotic and national feeling is firmly rooted in the soul of man from birth and because of the link of every-

one with his homeland, the Libyan poets gave considerable attention to the importance of patriotism in their poetry

If one wants to evaluate their patriotic contribution to the Libyan Resistance Movement, in particular, and to the political development in Libya during the Italian and British occupations 1911-1951, in general, one can say that it was considerable. Referring to the surviving political works of the poets under this study, one can learn throughout these works, the details of the heroic story of the conflict between the Libyans and the Italians. They expressed, in the first place, their patriotic feelings and their love of their country as a part of the Islamic faith. They continuously fed the Libyan Resistance Movement by awakening the spirit of the struggle of the Libyan people against Western colonisation. In their poems, they induced everyone to continue the fight for the recovery of their country. They were proud of the Mujāhidīn victories over the Italian troops. They have recorded certain events and battles and eulogised the heroes of the Jihād

Because the poets were themselves members of Libyan political parties and toed the party line, they employed their poetry in spreading the political attitudes of these parties. This reflects also their political consciousness. In fact, there is a certain contribution to the national struggle in particular, and to the literary life in Libya in general, in the aspects of patriotism. Therefore, the patriotic trend is the important political trend which was expressed in their poetry

But this does not mean that their patriotic contribution was confined only to Libya. It combined a wider aspect, namely Arabism

Beside the above-mentioned trends, we find, in their political works, an echo of the major political currents and movements of their time. The poets have sung of Arabism and were proud of the Arabs. On repeated occasions, they emphasised their belonging to the Arabs, considering their glorious past as a part of their history

It is clear that the political currents of the first half of the present century were strong elements which influenced the creative thinking of the Libyan poets. They were also one of the main factors which helped in making the expression of the poets' opinion very clear. It is also clear that the poets did not look at the political events with different eyes because they drew from the same springs as other contemporary Arab poets.

However, after a long consideration of the political poetry of three Libyan poets, al-Shārif, Rafīq and Qanābah, one can say that they have succeeded in reflecting the political currents which were prevailing in the Arab Muslim world during the first half of the present century and their contribution has wide political scope. From their political works, one can deduce that there are three political trends in modern Libyan poetry as is the case with modern Arabic poetry. The emergence of these trends can be said to have been a logical result of their lives, historical environment and the political currents at the time.

But although they reflected these political trends in their poetry, one can hardly consider them as political thinkers. They were merely voices expressing various political trends. They were political poets not only because of their great many political poems, but also they were honest and faithful in their expression of Libyan public

opinion and in their translation of what was happening during their time in the political field. Moreover, by their political works, they presented a new theme, namely the political poetry, to modern Libyan literature

In addition to this, the present study shows that Libyan political poetry, comparing it with what was composed during the late period of the second Ottoman period, is distinguished by the spirit of struggle against imperialism and of Arabism which coloured many lines of the poetical output of the above-mentioned poets. It shows that Libyan political poetry reveals, indeed, a page of the political consciousness in Libya during the colonial period. It demonstrates the political orientations which were created from the contacts between Libya and the Arab countries, particularly Egypt. It proves, also, that political development in Libya during the first half of the present century is not only a result of the internal circumstances but also a part of general modern Arab history. It proves that the poets were not isolated from the political currents of their time because their political poetry extends outside their own country and to their concerns which they shared the other Arab countries in its misfortune or happy times. Their concern with Arabism ensures that their patriotic poetry is far from any concept of individualism and fanaticism

Furthermore, I would like, here, to stress that their political poetry illustrates their understanding of patriotism and Arabism which are linked with Islam. Their usage of these two political terms are connected with religion in contrast with the Arab nationalists in the Eastern Arab world. It emphasises the fact that Islam was the

main spiritual factor behind their political contribution and was a distinct influence on their patriotic and national poetry.

Finally, this study shows also that Rafīq, throughout his political works, was more capable of taking up a firm political attitude towards imperialism.

An Anthology of their Political Poetry
(1911 - 1951)

Aḥmad Aḥmad al-Shārif

رَضِينَا نَحْتَفِ التُّفْسِ رَضِينَا
وَلَمْ نَسْرُضْ أَنْ يُعْرِفَ الصِّيمُ فِينَا

عودة الدستور

نقلت هذه القصيدة من جريدة «الترقي» حروباً

أعيد لنا الدستور والعود أحمد
شفا علة ما وكنا على شفا
ولاحت شمس الحق بعد حمائها
وماحه «عند الحميد» لأمة
وهذا الذي قد كان يبعيه أولاً
سمت فئة الأحرار تنطم شمله
وقامت على التدريح فيه ودرت
ونادت بأصوات تخرق قوافياً
ولولا أمير المؤمنين أحابها
لقامت على ساق الكفاح رحالنا
ولكن الى الداعي فدهم احانة
احانة مصطربين عادرا صلاحها
وكل مقام يوحى الحمد والنشا
وما اعلت بالورر الا وراة
وأبي حياة للمكارم والملا
ولا عيش دون المحر والمهد والتقى
ادا المال تاماه العقول فعمده
هو السعي في مجد ولو نتكده
وما منح الدستور إلا للملة
ترقى الى عرش الخلافة أمره
وقد تم جمع الاحتفال بمجلس
محاح وأفراح ووصل رمة
لدى ملك يستول الصخر عرمة
مهدي رحال الاتحاد وهذه
من ربيع الدستور ارحت فجرها

من حقه يثنى عليه ويحمد
وبار الأسي كانت سا تتوقد
وصاء لنا بي حدس الليل فرقد
يحق له الذكر الجميل المحمد
ولكن له في عالم السر موعده
فأصبح في سمط المعالي يصد
عواقسه والرأي رأي مسدد
نأحسن دور عهده متحدد
على نقه من حيث لا يتردد
صعوقاً بحراب المية تسجد
لحقن دماء عندما يتأكد
لملك له فوق السهاكين مقعد
يضاف الى «عند الحميد» ويسد
ادا لم تكن للحق والعدل ترشد
ادا لم يكن فيها معين ومجد
ادا لم تكن فالموت أعلى وأحمد
مقال وإلا فالخسام المهدي
ألا في سبيل الله طاب التنكده
ودين بأعلال الفساد مقيد
فأضحى نقاون الأساس يصد
تماماً له فوق الكواكب مشهد
وعر وإقبال ومجد وسؤدد
وفي داته جمع العلا وهو مفرد
رحال الترقي بالعلا تتقلد
أعيد لنا الدستور والودود أحمد

رصيا بحتف النفوس رصينا

هذه القصيدة من أشهر قصائد أحمد الشارف، ولقد نظمها أيام الجهاد والمبارك وقد ساهم الشاعر بكثير من قصائده في تلك الحقبة

رصيا بحتف النفوس رصيا
ولم يرص بالعيش إلا عريراً
وما الحر إلا الذي مات حراً
وما المر إلا لمن كان يعدي
وما الحري والمار إلا لشخص
ونحن فروع ركت من أصول
لتأريخ عصرنا في الورى
وفي حانب المر كأس المايا
إذا قامت الحرب كما رحالاً
ترانا عليها شاوى كأننا

لنا وثباتٌ بها وثباتٌ
ولا عجب في الوعى إن أتينا
إذا لم يُعينا على الخطب رأي
سيوف قصا عليها أكفأ
وتلف أموالنا في المعالي
وشرب كأس الملا وهي صرف
وما أنطأت عارة الله ما
أتمتد فينا مطامع قوم
وحاءت صحائفهم كادات
وقالوا وما عرفنا قولهم
أيا من يجزرون اسطولهم
فما صرنا أن حلتهم شطوطاً
فكلم في طرائس العرب ليث
وما راد صرح المدافع إلا

فصحا بها ثورة الثائرينا
نشيمة آثاننا الأولينا
جعلنا الدسالة فرصاً معينا
وفيها ترانا من المسرفينا
ولسنا عليها من الآسفينا
ولا نشرب الكأس ماء مهينا
إشاعةٌ بعض من البطليبا
لقد ملأوا الارض إفاكاً مينيا
تزيد الورى كل يوم طيبنا
أنى ان يكون التوحش فينا
الينا نالاهم والمنينا
إذا شط ما كتم قاصدينا
يصون البلاد ويحمي العربينا
رئيراً لأشاهلنا الصائرينا

عروسة

من ملع عي حديث عرامي
يلقي على الحرمين خير تحية
وير مسرحاً ومسطعاً على
ويعود بالاشواق يحترق الملا
ويحثّ منها للعراق بروعه
لو أنهم سألوا الصنا لأحاهم
ودليل وحدي رد شبة عادلي
ما وحد نارحة أصر بها النوى
تسكي فتتثر لؤلؤاً من برحس
نأصر من وجد أناح بمحقي
كفني ، ولكن لا نطية حاحر
بمعاشر العرب الدين تعودوا

ولطيب أشواقني وفرط هيامي
ويشها لأشائوس الاقوام
داك المقام وفوق كل مقام
لبلاد مصر او بلاد الشام
ويثتّ في دار السلام سلامي
فهو الخير بطني وسقامي
فيهم وأسقط شبة اللوام
وكثينة فقدت دوي الارحام
يساب في الورد اسباب عام
وقصى على صدي وطيب سامي
شعبي ، ولكن لا نطية رام
يوم الوعي بالكر والاقدام

وإذا طعى جهل العدر ولم تقدر
كالبار حامدة وإن لعنت بها
من كل قرم ليس يعمد سيمه
وكأن قعقة الأسة عنده
ما أودعت تلك العرائم عندهم
ما ثققت تلك الأسة والقما
والفمس إن شعرت بواحد حقها
لا حير في وطن يرى رحاله
وإذا تقاعدت العوس عن العلا
والجهل أقتل للفتى من طعمة
وإذا تور بالمارف عنصر
يا معشر الاقوام هل من همة
أحبلتم أب الدسائس فيكم
طرقت عقولكم طوارق عقلة
أم فصل ديبكم وور بقبكم

حسانهم رحعوا الى الآثام
ريح الشمال تريد حر صرام
حق يعود مع الدوائف دامي
بمات عود او نشيد عرام
إلا ليمقى العيش غير مصام
إلا لدفع مطنة الاحرام
صارت على الاقوام صر كرام
ثقل الحسوم وحممة الأحلام
لم تنته الحوادث الايام
مهد او رمية سهام
فاصت عليه مواهب الانعام
وحمية ، يا معشر الاقوام
بلعت بها الاعداء كل مرام
أم بتم والقوم غير بيام
عطت عليه وساوس الاوهام

تأث ما كتب الرباط عليكم
إنا ليرضى بالتقاعد شيمة
لكه حطت تدق وراءه
ولئن تفرق جمعكم أيدي سا
فلقد شقيتم واستراح عدوكم
وإدا سرى داء الشقاق أصركم
عدم اتفاق اثنين أعم للعدا
إب تسلموا يوماً قرب سلامة
أمن الشهامة ان يعص دينكم
الا لخط رواط الاحكام
لو كان امر تارح وحصام
قن الحال وشمح الآكام
ونقيتم ملاً بغير إمام
من كل مقدم وكل ممام
وشعا عدوكم من الاسقام
من ألف قسلة وألف حسام
رحمت عواقبها إلى الآلام
أب تقنعوا بتعم الاحسام

أمن السعادة أن تهاى حياتكم
دل وحدلاب ورقة حاب
يا صاحبي ترفقا وقمانا
من لم يكن اصاه يبكي دماً
وتداس تحت مواطىء الاقدام
وهواب عيش وانتهاك مقام
سك الديار كما نكى ان حرام
فليكه اصبنة الاسلام

وطي العريز

وطي هو الوطن العريز أحبه
 لم أبح يوماً من عقارب أرصه
 ولطالما اضطرت سياسة أمة
 يلقي الوشاية من حرارة صدره
 لم يتحدح سح الكلام ووشيه
 ومن اللية أن يكون لثته
 ليس المصاب نأفة من حسه
 ورداءة الأخلاق مررعة الردى
 وادا نظرت الى الشقاق فلم يكن
 وقصية الاتراك في حاقها
 قد أوقدوا نار الوعي فتأججت
 يا أمة الحرمين هل من هصة
 قلم كما قالوا رمان ' تمدن
 والدين دين الحق ليس لأمله
 أحهلمو وأطكم لم تجهلوا

ومن الذي بالرعم أصبح ماسطاً
 ومن الذي في مصر أصبح لاعماً
 ومن الذي انتحج العراق ليستقي
 ومن الذي أودى بأفريقيّة
 الجهل أصبح من أدلة حصمكم
 الله يعلم أنكم لن تجججوا
 والله يعلم أنكم لن تهصوا
 حتى تلند بالحوادث حوكم
 وانتاكم حطر المفرق بيديكم
 ومن الحوادث ما يكون مسها
 وإدا العتي وقد الشعور فحطه
 عرب الحزير قد تصائل محدم
 سيمر حيل إثر حيل بعدكم
 والمرء ليس تارك أثراً سوى

بيده الأثيمة فوق ممتلكاته
 لعب الكميّ نسيه وقاته
 من ماء دخلته وماء فراته
 والمغرب الأقصى عصطهداته
 والترك والاممال من حججته
 سوى أوامره ومهيانه
 لتدارك المطلوب قتل فواته
 وعدا الشقاق بدور في حلقاته
 ورسائل التهريق من برعته
 من حقه' التنبه من عقلاته
 وبصيه الاعراق في شهواته
 وتمس الصعداء من دكاته
 ويكون من حماطه ورواه
 ما سجل التاريخ من حساته

قد طالما قلت في شعري وفي أدبي
 شقيقتان لكل منهما عقب
 احتان كوننا حبيلاً قد انتقلت
 وليبيا تجمع الاحتين واحدة
 عوامل الربط تدو من طبيعتها
 ومن أشار الى تفكيك وحدتها
 إن قلت ورا للأحتين ثلاثة
 لكل اخت مع الأخرى مودتها
 مودة ان ذكرناها تذكرنا
 عهد به كان حل الود متصلاً
 لما انقضى دارت الايام دورتها
 مدت اليها يد العدوان فاصطدمت
 فكان من أثر العدوان ان فشلت
 ورو امية حانت ولو بنيت
 والحرب ان رفعت أورارها ارتفعت
 حلف قد اتسعت في الناس رفته
 وكل نفس بما تهواه طالسة
 وربما كانت الاهواء طاهرها
 وقادة الفكر لو صحت صمائهم
 يا حارة الحي لا ترري بعاصفة
 لا تعذلي ادا ما قمت مندوماً
 كحافظ قال «هل في مصر معجزة
 وداك تذكرة منه وتصره
 فلا تكوي كبيت لا حراك به
 وهذه فرصة حانت فلا تقهي
 عليك لاحت من الآمال بارقة
 تحيي الشعور وتحيي كل ذاكرة
 والصبر في طلب العليا لنا خلق
 واما انقادت الايام صاعرة
 كم للعروة من فصل شاد به
 ادا تطلت العليا فلا عجب
 لا فصل للشعب إلا ان يكون له
 يا أحت برقة في محدوفي حسب
 والمهد من عقب يسري الى عقب
 له السحابة من آتائه السحب
 لا فرق إلا نوصع الاسم واللقب
 بصورة عن حبال المره لم تعب
 بأي حال من الاحوال لم يصب
 قد قلت حقاً وما في الحق من ريب
 قديمة لم ترل من سالف الحقب
 عهداً تكلم بالأفراح والطرب
 وقد صما الحو بين الترك والعرب
 توقع الناس منها سوء مقلب
 بصحرة لم تمل منها سوى العطب
 يدها وانقلت رأساً على عقب
 يوماً على الصدق والاحلاص لم تحب
 أصوات شاكٍ ومستاهٍ ومصطرب
 والحامف يدعو الى الويلات والحرب
 وهل لها غير ما تهواه من طلب
 حد وباطنها صرب من اللب
 لم يبق في الامر ما يدعو الى الشعب
 من الملام على التقصير في الطلب
 من ثورة الحب او من ثورة العصب
 سوى، التماس في الالتقاء والرتب،
 وفي التصرور غير محتجب
 تحت التراب ادا بوديت لم تحي
 عنها فقد قيل ان الوقت من ذهب
 بعقد جامعة موصولة السب
 كالروص يجيا بمهلٍ من السحب
 ونحن ما بين مشتاق ومرتب
 للحاملين سلاح الصبر في النوب
 في روعة الشعر او في رنة الخطب
 واما تركها العليا من العجب
 عقل الى العلم أو روح الى الادب

Ahmad Rafīq al-Mahdawī

رَجَلِي عَمَدٌ، عَمَّرَ عَلَيَّ حَسَدًا
وَدَاعًا أَيُّهَا الْوَطَنُ الْمُعْتَدَى

فراق

رجلى عنك ، عر علىّ حدا
 وداع مفارق ، بالرعم شاءت
 وحر من رفاه العيش ، كد
 سأرحل ، عنك ، يا وطنى ، وانى
 ولكى ، أظعت اناء نهن
 علو النهن ، ان عطمت ، شقاء
 اذا ررق الفتى ، نسا عروفا
 طللت العرفى وطنى ، مقيما
 سأرك عرمة ، حداء ، أمضى
 أبلغها ، وراء السعى ، عدرا
 سواء عاد بعد الجهد ساع
 فلم أر راصيا بالعيش ، الا
 ويا وطنى ، هجرتك ، لا لعص
 فلا والله ، ما هاجرت حتى
 يقول . لى الصديق ، أرح ركانا
 يكلمنى ، لأبلغ ، من حطام
 فقلت لطالب الاحسان قيدا
 هداك الله ، كيف تطيب نهنى
 تعصف ، لى غير الله ، يعطى
 ويا وطنى ، بانى ، عنك ، حب
 وقد يأتى العيور بما يراه
 فليست ألام ، فى تركى حيا
 ويا وطنى ، وداعا من محب
 وداعا ، لا أظن له لقاء
 أناديه ، وقد رُمئت ركابى
 وحاشت ، تحق العبرات صوتى
 وداعا ! أيها الوطن المهدى !
 له الأقدار ، بيل العيش ، كدا !
 اذا أنا عشت ، حرا متدا !
 لأعلم ، أسى قد حئت ادئا !
 أت لمراها فى الكون حدا !
 يلد ، لمن الى الحد استعداد !
 تهاون بالخطوب ، وراذ حدا
 فأوسعى رمان السوء ، ردا
 أقدث بها حجاب العيب قدئا !
 لحج ، صد عنها ، أو تصدى !
 نهور ، أم سعى حتى تردى
 صعيما ، أو من الحسن استمدا !
 ولا أسى محت سواك ، ودا
 جهدت ، ولم أحد من داك ندا !
 فاسك واحد أربا ، وحدا
 عى ، أرضى به ليدى ، قدئا !
 قول الميد ، من شيم العيد !
 وفى عقى ، أرى للأسر قدا
 بلا من ، ولا شكر يؤدى !
 وأحيانا يكون الحب صدا !
 حلى ، من حوى ، للعقل صدا
 أرى فى حبه ، الأعداء ندا !
 تعبير رأيه ، أحدا وردا
 فوا أسما ، اذا ما الين حدا
 وهد الين ركس الصر ، هدا
 وداعا ! أيها الوطن المهدى !

بعرى

١٩٢٦

كتب الشاعر جروحاً من وطأ العرير يوم
الست ٢٥/٦/٢٠ سنة ٩ مساءً ، فراراً من
ظلم ايطاليا شنت الله شملها . (فيكون تاريخ
هذه القصيدة ٢٦/٦/٢٠) .

تكامل حول ، مد فارقت أوطاني
فما بلت في أثنائه ، غير أحران

بوى قدف ، رممت ركابي ، ولم ترل
تقلقل بي حتى أتت أرض حيجان

فألقت عصا السيار ، في شر بقعة
تأك في أرحائها شر سكان

تركت بلادى ، اد شعرت نأسي
سألقي صعارا ، مه يأنف وحداني

وسرت لأرض غير أرمى ، مؤملا
لعر ، فكانا في المصيبة سيان

ويا حية المسعى ، الى غير موئل
من الحج مشعوع بأعظم حيران

فقدت بلادى ، وهى عدى عريره
ولم ألق ما أمك في بلد ثابى

كأني عراب النين ، صيغ مشيه
ولم يكسب مشى الحمام باتقان

حيا ، وشوفا يا بلادى ، فاسى
وان طال عك العهد لست بحوان

فما كان بعدى عك ، الا ترعما
عن الصيم ، لا بعضا ولا قصده حيران

وانى لأكسى في الحواصح لوعة
لحك ، يوربها على العمد تحابى

ادا حفف الدمع الأسى ، فمدامعى
لها وفده ، رادب أساي وأشجابى

كما كان عدب الماء في الحر مشسا
، على حصّر فه ، حراره سيران



غيت الصغير

١٩٣٤

انام الجهاد العمر المكافء ، والسجون ،
والمصغلات وبكتاتها ؛ في الربيع ، والمعيلة ثم ما
ربت على ذلك من تكويين الملاحية لابناء انساء
من فقتدوا آباءهم واصبحوا سامي في المقرون
وفي سلوك ذكريات نعت في النفس، الا ما واما
والشاعر هما بصور حالة دمسية لاكثر من
اقاموا فيها انها ذكريات لا نسي ١١

هو في الملحأ ، من دون السامي
واصح الحد ، قليلا ما يرى
ناقد اللخط ، تراه باطرا
يتقى أقرانه صولته
رمقوه باحترام هية
وإذا الحد مع العرم التقى

دائم الصب ، وفارا واحشاما
صاحكا ، الا اذا استجيا اتساما
نظره الأحدل ، يرتاد الحماما
حين يحتد اذا اشتدوا حصاما
وقدينا ، أورث الحد احتراما ١
جعلنا للمرء في الساس مقاما ١

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هو في الملحأ أدكى طالب
فهو رأس القوم ، رأيا وهدى
دون تسع ، ناحف ، في صحة
تتحى عرة نمن شمحت
وإذا نمن الفتى ، شت على
ليس غير النمن ، باستعدادها

يدهم حمطا ، وفهما ، وانتظاما
شيخهم عقلا ، وان كان علاما
واستواء كالرديبي قواما
للعلا ، ألا يرى فيهم اماما
عرة ، راحم للمحد وسامي
سودت في سالف العصر (عصاما)

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حنت اعجاباته ، أسأله
هب ، كالثلث شاطا ، واقفا
أطرق الرأس ، وحيًا حاوصا
قلت يا عيت ، ألا تحرمي
ويك يا عيت ، توسمت فتى
ابن من أنت ؟ ومن قومك ؟ من

قتست ، واهديت السلاما
وقفة الحدى للقائد قاما
طرفه ، مني حياء ، واحتراما ١
عك ، ابى بك قد ردى اهتماما ١
أروعا حرا ، وآباء كراما ١
لك في دا الملحأ اختار المقاما ؟

لم اكس أحس أبى ناعث منه حربا ، كان فى السر مقاما
 كم العره ، الا سره عرص فى الصدر عاقه الكلاما
 حاشت الفس بحرن مثلما حال الدمعه ، فى الحص اسحاما
 واشى مسما حربا ، وما أفصح الحرن ادا لاح اساما

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قال يا مولاي الو عرك لم أنك فى حصرته أحنى ملاما
 مك ، آسب حانا ، لم أحد بعد أمى مثله ، يشمى أواما
 ان للشاعر روحا ، حلف فو روح الحلق ، حسا وعراما
 لك ، يا مولاي ، أفصى بالدى كاد صدرى مه يشق اكماما
 ان فى الشكوى ، الى دى رحمة ، سلوه ، تشه بالصر اعصاما
 رب شكوى ا جعل نار الأسى نار ابراهم بردا وسلاما
 فارع لى سمعا ، فهدى قصى تشرح التوس ، اسداء وحاما

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كان مسعود أبى ، فى قومه ، سيد الأعراب معروف هماما
 فارس الجيل ، عياث المحمى ، مكرم الصيف ، كفيلا للأيامى
 سارك الله له فى ثروة تملأ الوادى ثعاه وبعاما
 وله من س عم ، احوتى ، حمسة ، تقص الدر التماما
 من الأيام ، لم تعرف لها كدرا ، من نعم كانت حساما
 فكأن الدهر ، اد سالما سهر السعد لنا ، والحس ناما
 ثم لما غلب شيمه قعد السعد ، وهول الحطب قاما

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بيما الحى رقود ، اد غلب صرحه ، تندر بالثر الياما
 تارب الأطفال من مصعها تملأ الرحب صاحا ورحاما
 رحب الأرض ، سهلا مفرعا ورعاء ، وناحا ، وحصاما
 لسوا ثوب الدحى ، أيدى سا يحطون السد ، فى البر اهراما
 تركوا الاتفال ، والمال ، وما حف حملا ، والمطايا ، والحاما

* * *

ورأى الأبطال ، أن الموت لا
 قيدوا أرحلهم صرا فما
 حلها من رقة العار ، ومن
 هون الحطب علما ، موتهم
 ما ترى في الحى حيا ، بعدما
 سلكوا في كل شعب ، هربا
 شك فيه فلموه رؤاما
 حلها غير رصاص يترامى ا
 عيشة الدل ، فقد ماتوا كراما
 في دفاع ، كان للحق اسقاما ا
 قرب السوء ، يحملن التامى
 يستحرون من الظلم ، الطلاما

لست أسى احوتى ، في حل
 مد يومين ، يسيرون ، وما
 ساقا الحوف الى عار ندا
 ما دخلنا العار ، حتى هجمت
 واشت (في اثر) ثار ، فاقمت
 وتردى تالت في هوة
 أمه تحرى ، ولا تدرى ، وفي
 يصاعون ، من الجوع صياما
 شربوا ماء ، ولا داقوا طعاما ا
 تنوقى الحسن فيه أن تاما
 صنع ، فافتست ما علاما ا
 طفلة ، في لحظة صار عظاما ا
 لم يرد عن قول (يا أم) كلاما ا
 صدرها من لم يطق بعد فظاما

تركت أطمالها صرعى ، لها
 حلفتى ، وهى لا تعلم ، هل
 حاسى عرمى ، ورحلاى ، فلم
 ففقدت الرشدا ، معشيا ، فما
 وفقدت الأم ا لا أعلم هل
 ليتى أسع عن موتها
 حدا الموت ا ولا العيش ها
 لفتة ، كات الى القل رماما ا
 حلها آتبع ، أم (فت) أماما ؟
 أستطع من شدة الهول قياما ا
 قمت حتى هرم الصوء الطلاما ا
 أفلتت بالطفل ، أم ماتا هياما ؟
 فلقد أنقت لى الهم لراما ا
 حاصعا ، في رقة الأسر مصامما ا

وها ، أجهش عيت لاحا
 وارتمى بين دراعى ، فما
 اد رأى دمعى كالعيث رهاما
 رام عن صدرى صما ، والراما ا

سما ، رحب أهدي روعه
فيل هذا (دولة الوالى) أتى
حرح الأطلمال ، واصطفوا له
حال ، يسعرضهم ، مسحاً
ما رأى ويهم كعيث ا اد رأى
وإدا بالقوم يدون اهتماما ا
لرى فى (ملحا الر) البطاما
للحجات ، هتافا وسلاما
وهو يحار علاما ، فعلاما
من دكاء ، عجا ، فان الأناما ا

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حاطب الطفل ملما ، فرأى
قال هذا عمرى ا فارفموا
فلمناه شكرا ، مطهرا
وحاه بقود ، قائلما
رابط الحاش فصيحاً لا كهاما
فدره ، ابى سأعطه وساما
لسرور ، تحته يحيى احتداما
أعط ، ، انفاها النفس مراما ا

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قال يا مولاي ا أقصى عايى
لا أحب الحل ، انا معشر
هكذا ، علما آأؤنا
ان احلاق القتى ان لم تكن
عرف الوالى لعيث ، همة
راده رعيما ا وهل غير دوى ال
قال حد يا عيث ، هدى مائة
قال يا مولاي سمعا ابى
لا أرى المال ، ادا لم اكسب
قال ما تصعب يا عيث ؟ بها
قال عيث ، وبدا الحد على
ان لى ثأرا ادا أدركه
لو تحصلت على مال به
أدرك الثارات من فلوا
هو مشودى من الدسا ، الى
صرفها بين الأحلاء افساما ا
تؤثر العر ، ولو تتا صامما ا
طب الأحلاق فعلا ، لا كلاما
عن عزير الطمع ، لم تنق دواما ا
ورأى حودا له يحكى العماما
مصل ، يرعى لدوى الفصل دماما ا
لك . لا تسرف ، وكن فيها قواما
سوف أقيها ، وان كانت حطاما
مه ذكرنا حسا ، الا حراما ا
قل لى الحق ، ولا تخنى ملاما
وجهه ، يشه ليثا أو قطاما
لا أنالى بعد ، ان دقت حيماما
أشرى عدة حرن وحساما
والدى . ابى أريد الانساما ا
لى ساء ، مستقرا ، ومقاما ا

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لس في التصريح بالحق - وان
ان حر المس ، لا يحجم عن
حر ويلا - حراة تكسب داما
ان يقول الحق ، للصدق الراما ا

* * *

نظر الوالى الى عث ، ولم
ورأى أتباعه ما عاطهم
اصروا سوءا ، ولكن لم يروا
لحأوا طلدا ، وعدواها ، الى
عادة الدل اغتيال ا ولدا
يطهر الحقد ، ولا أئدى ملاما
فتعاطوا بظره ، كانت كلاما ا
سا يوحب مه الانعاما ا
أقطع الأفعال ، اد كانوا لناما
جعلوا سرا له السم طعاما ا

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ما جرى في حوفه ، حتى سرى
حر للموت ، صريعا ، يلتوى
لم يرل ، يمت من فيه دما
يلمط الآحر من أنفاسه
راح مظلوما ، شهيدا ، حاعلا
في وتين القلب كالنار اصطراما
يطلب الماء ، فيدون اتناما ا
أسودا من كد ، دانت رماما
ويادى الاتقاما ا ا الاتقاما ا ا
لمطة التوحيد ، لله حناما

٢٢٢

عليك يا مصر.....

الوطن - ٤٧/١/٢٢ - عدد ٦٢

عليك يا مصر ا بعد الله بعد
 ا ب الرحاء ، وأنت العوث ، والسد ا
 ربيبه الشرق ا ان الشرق مكل
 عليك، في الهمة الكرى. ومعتمد ا
 يا مصر آن أوان الحد ، مك ، وقد
 أطال رصته للوثنة الأسد ا
 لا يتح الصعظ ، عر الانحجار ، وقد
 صرنا ، من الصعظ ، كالركان تقدا ا
 لم يبق ، للعهد ، حكم برتجيه ولس
 نعتر ، بعد ، بما موا وما وعدوا ا

ساسه العث ، فما فاب ، فد لعب
 أدوارها واسهى الدلس والفند ا
 وسان من حان ، من في عقده
 نَصَلت ، فاستان العى والرشد ا
 لو لم يكن عصا في قلبه مرض ،
 لم تسطع حكما ، للأحسى ، يد ا

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يا مصر ا فك ، لمحد الشرق، (حامعه)
 وللعروبه أقطان ، بها ، محدا ا
 قولى لهم ان هدا الشعب مسطر
 لأمرهم ، ولما حلوا ، وما عمدوا ا
 روح العروبة ، رحو أن توحدنا
 حى يؤلف من أعصائنا حسدا ا
 في رأسه (تاح مصر) كى يعيد لنا
 عهد الخلافة والاسلام يحد

* * *

يا مصر احوذك بالأموال أعشما
فليجيا معويا ، بعده ، المدد ا
اسا الى مرشد ، فى حاحه ، وعلى
احلاص مصر ، لنا ، بالصح سندا ا

سعى الى غاية الا سد ندركها
مهما تظاول عا دويها الأمد ا
فوحده القطر ، واسفلاله ، هدف
نغديه بالروح ، ان لم تنجح العتد ا
كما فدى عمر الحار مداه ا
بروجه ا سما فى ذكر من حلدوا ا
ها هم ، على اثره ، أشاله بهصوا
يسعدون المايا أيما وردوا ا
ادا انصوا ، صارما ، للكرم واندفعوا
لا يكصون ولا يشهمو أحد ا
اما الشهاده أنطالا ا كهائدهم
أو يستقلون ، أحرارا ، كما ولدوا ا
(فما يقيم على صيم ا يراد به
الا الأ دلان ، عَير الحى ، والوتد) ا

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وفدّ الأحة ا أحيم برورتكم
آمال أما ! أحياكم الصمد ا
شكراً لما نذل مصر ، العريه ، من
عون سيدكره الناريح والأند ا

مات

Ahmad Ahmad Oanābah

سَيِّدَ اللّٰهِ سَلِّمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَرَقُوبَنَا
وَاتِّمِّمْ طَالِمُونَ مُسْتَعْرِبُونَ

ظهور الحق حجة *

« من الديهي انه لا بد من يوم فيه تترى الدين يجادلون بالناطل لادحاص حجة الحق الدامغ
والرهان الساطع ناكى رؤوسهم امام الحق حصاً أمام الانصاف »

ومن حادع الاسلام يوماً نعمة «وان حالها تعفى عن الناس بعلم»

والدهر ابو العجاب

كفى يا دهر من حبر اللاء
كفى ولترتق يوماً عوساً
أعدك ثعلب أردى هرسراً
فقد عكرت صمو العيش جهلاً
كأنى ان محصتك كت محصاً
أترجسو بالدهاء قياد أمرى
وانى من عروك فى امتعاص
فقد حملتى فى الأمر أمراً
علام بروع ملك وات خلق
وانا فى الريه خير قوم
ويعتقد القصاص اذا اتليبا
ومحط حرمة الانسان فيبا
فقم بالحد واسع ليل فصل
فانك قد هصمت حقوق قوم
اذا حاصرو المعامع امد عاب
ولست أحال ليثاً رام حرباً
وأبورهم له حق مصى
وهذا مصطفى فيهم كمال
هم دار السعادة سوف تحطى
ويصبح من يلودهم عربيراً
فيبا انباء (انقرة) المعالى
محرمكم لسلطنة أهيت
محصت الاناطح من دماكم
وما الديبا بحالدة ولكن

ومن ح التسيطر والعداء
لدى ملك السيطه والسماء
وأنعته اللدادة بالبراء
عما قوصت من أس العلاء
وان اهملك ت على الطواء
وانى فيك منه وراء
اذا ما حدث عن سل السواء
فحكك صادعاً دائى العياء
دليل عن مقاومة اللاء
تآحت فى الاحانة للداء
وغير الناس معتقد القصاص
وبرعى حقه بعد الهاء
وودع حكم ايام الصاء
أناة الصيم من حدر الشقاء
تحال الكار محتجع الدماء
ها الويلات من لب الصلاء
صباء الشمس فى كند السماء
فداء المسلمين من الاداء
وترفل فى حلى عصر الهاء
نعر لا يؤول الى انتهاء
لقد حرتم به شرف الشاء
كأنكم حلقتم للشقاء
نظلم الظالمين بلا مرأ
نموس طامحات فى القفاء

تحيّة طرابلس إلى مصر *

ألا رموا المطية مدحياً
 تجاه الشرق مع كل فصل
 حماة شريعة الاسلام قدما
 نبى مصر التي حيث فأحييت
 فاهم لادسهم ربيع
 يسلم بالنسيم على قلوب
 قلوب ملؤها حلد ووحيد
 ثوى سوداءها من مصر ح
 فقصت حسرة عمر الثانى
 فألغها التحية حير شهيم
 فعوخوا يا نبى وطى شوق
 وحدوا السير لا تلوا عانا
 فان حتم مراعه ادخلوها
 وان كان السحود يحل شرعاً
 فقد وحت تحيتهم بص
 فان قلوبنا نحتنا شوق
 وان انما بعد شقيت خطاكم
 فان العنو شيمة كل حر
 هم الاحرار والصلاء دوماً
 سلام آل مصر سلام ود
 سين لا تكون كما تقصت
 يلازما السقام اذا نأتم
 وانما لكم أنداء فداء
 ودا (عرام) محلكم لديها
 وان يك من دياركم انسانا
 طمعا حه فى كل قلب
 وما روحان فى حسد عجياً
 فكان وجودها فى الجسم سعداً
 وطب نفساً على (عرام) يا من
 اقر الله عيسك بالتلاقى
 تجاه الشرق غير معربيا
 ومعدن حوهر المتوريبا
 هداة حوده المتأخرينا
 قلوباً للاحوة حافظينا
 هوب نسيه يشمى الحربا
 لمصر ويلها مشوقينا
 لديها تطهر الحب الكمينا
 فألمها التأوه والحينا
 تكابد لوعة المتحسرينا
 لقد ولدته مصر فى أمينا
 الى تلك الشهامة مسرعينا
 الى ان تلغوا الحرم الحصينا
 كراماً بالتحية آمينا
 مع التسليم كويوا ساحدينا
 من التريل هادى المتقينا
 فكويوا للوصال مطالينا
 فادوا بالخصوع الا أرحمينا
 أحب محمداً والمرسلينا
 تتوق لهم قلوب الماحدينا
 عليكم نشره بقى سينا
 سين لم نكن مصافحينا
 وان محلل درعكم شعبنا
 وانتم حدا من مفتدينا
 هو المحبوب ان يسم رصينا
 فقد أصحى لانسا قريبا
 يلازم ان نأى عنه الأينا
 على الخلاق موحد داك فينا
 وفى طى الواد السعد صينا
 يلغى التحية ما حييا
 وأرعم ان قوم كارهينا

وأهل الجهل في حب العمام
 نحرته المصير الى هاء
 على المكوب في شرف اللواء
 وحير الرهس عند دوى الوفاء
 فدو الحرمات أحدر بالكاء
 أصاب المسلمين من الرءاء
 على من طوحته يد العداء
 ثوى اساوها وسط العماء (١)
 ودى حرج وملتزم الرجاء
 ولم يحفظ له حق الاحاء
 لمس عطاءه عمر الرداء
 بو الاسلام من عدن السحاء
 سوى الاحيار مستمعى السداء
 ثمار الفصل من حس الحاء
 يربع فيه أرساب الثراء
 ولكن بالقاعة والوفاء
 كناه الوصف وصف دوى الحاء
 فمادا يتنى وصف العماء
 تظاله به بعد المساء
 اذا هجم الشعوب على الفتاء
 تخم ان يكون على ازتياء
 سيعلم قبح عاقبة الاناء
 تجرع منهم مصص الاساء
 يصد الخرع عن عصر المساء
 فقد رهق الظلام لدى الصياء
 أتاه الخطب من قسل المساء
 تحوط حمى الخليفة دى الساء
 يضان محيطهم سدرا الدهاء
 الى طى السحل من السماء

(صوت مؤمن)

فأهل العلم تأنى عيش دل
 ومن يسر صروف الدهر يعلم
 فكم دروت وكم سكت حمون
 وقلبي اليوم عندهم رهين
 لبك اليوم معتقد حليلاً
 فبا أسعى ويا حرنى على ما
 فصراً يا بنى الاسلام صراً
 فأيس الراحمون لوح ثكلى
 وأيس المحسون لسدى حروح
 معيب ان نرى فيهم حريماً
 وهذا موضع الاحسان حقاً
 أحسوا يا بنى وطنى فانتم
 فليس لكل مكرومة محب
 ومن يروع بدور الخير يحى
 ومن يجرمه يجرم حير فصل
 وليس وفور مالكم محرض
 فمن لا يحده نعماً قسوع
 وان هو لم يصن اصلاً وعرضاً
 أيكبره ومحجد حق نفس
 وليس لمتعى الدينى رواء
 ومن يعهد اليه مكان قوم
 ومن يأت اتعاع سبل صوب
 ومن يركن لمن ظلموا محقاً
 ولم تثمر تحارته لظلم
 أيقوا من مامكم أيقوا
 فمن لم يتنه لطويل يوم
 فان الدهر حان عهد قوم
 ولم يعلم نأهم قروم
 وان النصر صار لهم حليماً

* نشرت هذه القصيدة محررة (اللواء الطرابلسي) في العدد ٧٧ الصادر يوم الخميس ٢٧ محرم

١٣٤٠ الموافق ٢٩ سبتمبر ١٩٢١م

(١) بداية نفاة القصيدة التي نشرت في العدد ٧٨ من الحريه نفسها ناربع يوم الخميس

٤ صفر ١٣٤٠ الموافق ٦ أكتوبر ١٩٢١م

وان نطلم فمصح ناعصيا
 ستعلم فوق ذلك عامليها
 سحعل طها فيا يقيا
 سلايم الماة ها رقا
 سحعل ذكره في العاريا
 وبقحم الحطوب مرعريا
 وبورث حها السامى نيا
 وكل حاسر الا اليا
 ادا المقات ناهر اربعيا
 وبأى عيشة المستعديا
 أنت الا سبيل المسلميا

سمى نالسلام ادا انصما
 وما علمته حادثة الليالى
 وان حالت شهامتا طوباً
 وان جعلت لادراك المعالى
 وكل مسطر يعى عليا
 بحم في حواطربا حقوقاً
 بلود حياصا عن كل صيم
 برى كلاً عدا يسعى لأمر
 وليس الانتظار لنا بمحد
 بموت على المعامع موت حر
 فان حيا فقد سعدت نوس

نمر نعلم محمد الأقدميا
 كسوبا العار قوماً معتديا
 ندرسا الوعى حياً وحييا
 وقدت فيه كيد المسديا
 ويجهل حرما الحامى المكيا
 لحملنا عليها مرتبيا
 ويحلها قواعد آخريا
 نق الاسلام كيد الطالميا
 شقيقة مصر والاسلام ديا
 ولم تعطى القيادة محاديا
 يدعك هيئة الحر اليقيا
 على رعم الوشاة العادليا
 ادا قدم الزكاب له معيا
 يعركس كلمة المتعرقيا
 يسوه ها صاح المدريا
 يمثل قوم بدر صائليا
 لمس برحانهم مستسكيا
 سر يثت الله اليا
 نحم حكيم ديا وديا

وان سبق الماة نكأس عر
 ألسا من نى الاسلام لما
 ألسا من نى قوم كرام
 ألسا أمة حاصت عاراً
 يراقبا العدو نكل عين
 تكاد قواعد العوصى تداعى
 فهدم من قواعد ما سوه
 هلم هلم يا نطل المعالى
 وحسك من طرابلس انماء
 طرابلس التى أنهدت شعوراً
 سل الرك المهد لارض مصر
 فقد حث الزكاب لنا حيثاً
 فكن بوداد مصر احا المعالى
 سيعلها التحية عن وداد
 ويمتخ بسا الرحمس فتحا
 يوطد في طرابلس اتحاداً
 فتلك تحية الشرى نور
 بح سيبنا البارى ماباً
 فانا في الأسام أولو وفاء

طرابلس - وطنى

* نشرت هذه القصيدة بمجموعة (الواء الطرابلسى) فى عددها ٨٦ الصادر يوم الخميس ١٥ ربيع
 الاول ١٣٤٠ الموافق ١٥ ديسمبر ١٩٢١ م كرد على تحه الاساذ عبد الوهاب عرام.
 وقد نشرت بقية هذه القصيدة فى عددها ٨٧ الصادر يوم الخميس ٢٢
 ربيع الاول ١٣٤٠ الموافق ٢٢ ديسمبر ١٩٢١ م

تحية الشاب

حيّوا الشاب الناهض الصديدا
حيّوا المدافع عن ساء بلاده
حيّوه شهماً ثاتاً مستأسداً
حيّوه تَوَاقاً إلى المحد الألى
حيّوه ما رام الحياة محددأ
حيّوه كهماً للعلى مستوفراً
حيّوه طمأحاً إلى بيل العلى
حيّوه وهو المستفيد بعمره
حيّوه من يسعى ليطم ذكركم
هدا الرمان فلا يروق مقلدا
فالشعب لا يسمو ولو طال المدى

فالحق أصح عدّة وعديدا
مثل الخود مطماً وشديدا
واحوه حثاً طائشاً عريدا
لم يرهوا موتاً ولا تهديدا
واحوا عليه وحلوا التحديدا
يأى الجوع ويمقت التقليدا
والمحد والمك الكير وحيدا
علماً به عاد الشقى سعيدا
بالحرم كالدرّ اليتيم فريدا
دعوا المقلد واسدوه بعيدا
حتى يبال شابه التمجيذا

لا تعظوا هدا الشاب حقوقه
فالناس مختلفون فى آرائهم
من كان يعلم دين ربّ محمد
وارحمته لراع عن ديبه
يرضى التددب بالتدهور مسحطاً
لم يدر ما قدر الحقائق بل وما
من لم يؤنسه الحجا وصميره
لا حير فى تلك الصمائر كلها
احس بما مثل الصار نقاوة
شر الحياة حياة جهل مطنق
هل نال مقنة شاب حامل
الحق اللع والجرعات لا
انا لافعل لا نقول وان نقل
من حاص معترك الحياة ولم يكن

حلوة وهو وما رآه سديدا
ليسوا سواء سادة وعبيدا
لا يجهل التصير والتهويدا
بحو التدهور كيف صار بليدا
رب السماء ولا يحاف وعيدا
قدر السيوف ادا استحلن حريدا
فما ارتسأه فلا يعد رشيدا
ما لم تكن مملوءة توحيدا
من دا رأى فوق الصار فسيدا
تردى الشعور وتخلب التبيدا
من عهد آدم حين كان وليدا
تحدى طعاماً حاملاً رعديدا
فالقول تجعله المعال حميدا
مستأهلاً للحمد عاش قعيدا

حيوا الشاب واحكموا تثقيمه
صوبوا عقيدته العلية وانعشوا
شدوا به وله اعيدوا محمده
شدوا حرائمه وقبوا عرمة
هذا الذي برحو العلى بهوصه
لا تحادلوه فهى التحادل سة
ان التحادل ما سرى في امة
حب الحان مدلة ومهامة
لله نفس فى اذا احتدم الوعى
تأنى الشهامة فيه ان يرصى الونى
قولوا لمن حاف المية راحياً
فهو ان يحدثنا ونوثوها ومن

•••

هدا وانتم والشاب واسا
والعيش أنفاس تعد دقيقة
ربوا حتى هدا الشاب وطموا
طول الحياة سعادة ما طالها
طول الحياة مرية حصت عن
فاحوا على هدا الشاب متمماً
نعى معيشاً رائعاً ورعيدا
والمرء لا برحو عليه مريدا
ما كان عن رأى الشاب شريدا
من لم يكوبه الاله مريدا
دو العرش حلسد ذكره تحليدا
محدأ يطول على الزمان مديدا
(الشاب الطرابلسى)

* نشرت هذه القصيدة بحريدة « الرقيب العقيدة » فى عددها ٨٥٣ الصادر يوم الخميس ٢٢ ربيع
الأول ١٣٥٥ الموافق ١٢ - ٦ - ١٩٣٦ م

عيد الجامعة العربية (الذكرى الثانية) *

باسم الكنانة والعرونة والأدب
شرقية في قدسها عربية
شادت سعادتها على آدابها
عامان قد عدوا وهذا ثالث
فارع لواء السلم يحق عالياً

حتى الحمى واهتف بجامعة العرب
صاعت سبها العرّ من أم وأب
وعلى السعادة اتفق الناس الذهب
يعدو وفي اطوائه يبدو العبح
وأمل فيوصات الكرم فقد وهب

...

العرب طن بنا الطوبن واما
هل كان آحي الشرق حين تقانلا
والشرق يجمعنا على علاقته

عد الخطوب تنددت تلك الريب
في مركز حل السلام نه اضطرب؟
والعرب يقسما وثروتسا السب

...

مادا وراءك يا عصام أحمور
كاليث يرأر وهو في طعيانه
والشر سدر من بيان حطيه
قد كان مداه يروق ومطهر

ثان كسافة بصير الى لهب؟
تصمى له الدنيا وتحشع في رهف
فيما تردده الاداعة من حطب
يعرى فراوع في رياء فانقلب

أين الحطيب ورعده وزيره
لم يحده حيث العدالة بدت

لم يحده مال الشعوب وما كسب؟
فيمس يلبه وفيه نل فيمس هرب

...

هل تنكر الدول الخليفة انا
كما محانها محس طوية
تأني الكرامة ان محيف وانا
والظلم حسك ما فشا في أمة

كما محانها فكان لها العلب؟
مستأصلين دوى التصانغ والشعب
بالعدل محكم في الرضاء وفي العصب
الا وأسلمها لسو المقلب

...

نعم التصام في العرونة وهي من
نعم الشهامة والمروة والسدى
اعظم بوحدتنا وناستقلالنا
واشكر لجامعة العرونة سعيها

تحمى الحمى من هب في الدنيا ودب
نعم السالة في الكنانة والحب
واطرب فقد نالت بنا ليبيا الأرب
وايح الامين ومن الى العرب اتسب

...

فصل الامين لتد توالى هل ترى
ان الحجاج محقق فيما أرى

يخصيه ما كاتب مهما كتب
فالله يقصدنا به عند الوب

...

سنت الله شملهم فرقونا *

سنت الله شملهم فرقونا
 أوهموا الناس أنا في انقام
 أوهموا الناس أنا في شقاء
 أوهموا الناس أنا في أسار
 أوهموا الناس أنا في اعتلال
 أوهموا الناس أنا في احتياج
 يعلم الله من أشد احتياجاً
 قاسمونا في أرضنا كل شيء
 حذعونا في رعمهم يوم قالوا
 فاستمالوا يهوسا بوعود
 إنا في وعودنا قد صدقنا
 أي قيد فكوه عما بوعد
 لم يهكوا القيود بعد ولكن

عاهدونا باللود عن كل شعب
 عاهدونا باللود عن كل حق
 ليس عند المتعمرين عهد
 لا تصدق بالقول ان وعدونا
 ان قوماً لا يؤمنون بحق

إعما الحق قوة يوم تحمى
 ما أراد القرار تقسيم لينا
 شوها نصره القرار فصاروا
 إسالوا الشعب رأبه وتحرّوا
 إن للمخلصين رأياً سديداً
 قل ليمس أندوا القرار حميماً
 ان قرآن مثل برقة عصو
 آية الله في السموات والأر
 حالقوا قاتل المسيح وأحو
 يا لها وصمة ودلّ وعار
 لا تحف ما ترى سحابة صيف
 إنا وحدة من الحس والله

حال دون استقلاله المعتدونا
 ما لهم لم يعوا عما عاهدونا
 أي عهد أومي نه الحشعونا
 نله صدق بالفعل ان أوعدونا
 ارهم قوة لها يؤمنونا

(ليك سكيس) قرارها سيعونا
 إعما هم لعاية قسمونا
 محقوق الاسان يستهرثونا
 أن تسيثوا بالمخلصين الطبونا
 وقليل بين الوري المخلصونا
 بقده أو سارعوا عاونونا
 من طرابلس يشهد المصعونا
 ص نخلت لو يفقه الملحدونا
 من رب المسيح لا يوقونا
 وصعار لو أنهم يعقلونا
 إن لله كل يوم شوونا
 حة والدين وإن حرأونا

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