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Tribe, Islam and state in Libya: analytical study of the roots of the Libyan tribal society and interaction up to the Qaramanli rule (1711-1835).

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School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Languages

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Tribe, Islam and State in Libya;

analytical study of the roots
of the Libyan tribal society
and interaction up to
the Qaramānli rule
(1711-1835)

by

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In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

We created you from a single (pair) of a female and male, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you

Qur'ān, Sūrah 49, verse 13.

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My sincere thanks and prayers to my parents who have encouraged me all the way since I was a little. Also, to Huda, my wife and our three little ones who all patiently stood by me, and not understanding what I was doing.

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Abstract

The subject of this study is **Tribe, Islam and State in Libya**. It is an analytical research of the roots of the Libyan tribal society and the interaction of tribe, Islam and State up to the Qaramānli rule (1711-1835).

The study deals with the acclaimed blood lineage and the genealogical descent, which compels all Libyans to feel related to each other. It focused on the events culminating in the composition of the tribal groupings and the relation between tribes and the Qaramānli State, which is considered as the first Libyan State with Islam playing an instrumental role, a State built and destroyed by the tribes.

This study endeavours to explain the major synthesising components of Libyan society, namely Berbero-Arab, Murābiṭīn and Karāghla who established Libya with its three strong dimensions: Islam, Arabism, and Libyan identity in the 18th Century. The inference is an original contribution to the field of Libyan, Arabic and Islamic societal and anthropological studies since the topic has never been tackled in such specificity.

The aims of the study were to examine the origins of tribes, and the links with Islam and State, and in doing so the methodological approaches of comparative, analytical and chronological were employed. The study found that Libya is a tribalistic society of multitude of races and backgrounds and based on Islam and Arabism despite the fact that some of its people are not ethnically Arabs. There was, also, a bond between Tribes, Islam and State. Moreover, there was an alignment between Islam and tribes to either aide or diminish the power and authority of the State.

The study is divided into seven chapters preceded by an introduction and followed by the conclusion. Likewise, every chapter has its own prelude and ending, and supported by detailed demographical (tribal) maps for Libya's three provinces in addition to family trees and tables of diverse tribes' names.

Transliteration¹

Diacritic (transliteration) marks are shown below as a guide to the correct pronunciation. These marks are designed to help those who are non-Arabic speakers on how words should sound, also intended to help native Arabic speakers on how Libyan words are correctly pronounced, even though it is almost impossible to demonstrate that on printed texts.

For example; the tribe of Ḥrārāt should be pronounced with a glottal sound of Ḥ rather than the ordinary H sound, and the letter Q sometimes in Libyan dialect sounds like G, i.e. Bilgāsm instead of Bilqāsm.

Arabic letter	Transliteration sign	Example	Arabic letter	Transliteration sign	Example
ء	'	<i>Nā'ib</i>	ط	ṭ	<i>Ṭarāblus</i>
اَ	a	<i>Qwāsim</i>	ظ	ẓ	<i>Zāfir</i>
وْ	ū	<i>Ḥsūn</i>	ع	° or °	<i>°Amāmra</i>
يَ	i	<i>Rqī'āt</i>	غ	gh	<i>Ghrārāt</i>
ب	b	<i>Burāwi</i>	ف	f	<i>Fwātīr</i>
ت	t	<i>Trāki</i>	ق	q	<i>Qawāyid</i>
ث	th	<i>°Uthmān</i>	ك	k	<i>Karīma</i>
ج	j	<i>J'āfra</i>	ل	l	<i>Layla</i>
ح	ḥ	<i>Ḥuṭmān</i>	م	m	<i>Madaniyya</i>
خ	kh	<i>Khrībīsh</i>	ن	n	<i>Na °ā °sa</i>
د	d	<i>Drusa</i>	و	w	<i>Walīd</i>
ذ	dh	<i>Gadhādhfa</i>	هـ	h	<i>Hiwāra</i>
ر	r	<i>Rujbān</i>	ة	h	<i>Ṣalāh</i>
ز	z	<i>Zahāwi</i>	ى	y	<i>Yadir</i>
س	s	<i>S'īṭ</i>	زْ	aw	<i>Yawm</i>
ش	sh	<i>Shlāwiyya</i>	ئْ	ay	<i>Sulaymān</i>
ص	ṣ	<i>Ṣūfī</i>	ئْ	iyy	<i>°Arūsiyya</i>
ض	ḍ	<i>Ramaḍan</i>	زْ	aww	<i>Awwāl</i>

¹Source: Islām; Beliefs and Teachings, Ghulam Sawar, the Muslim Educational trust, London (1994).

Introduction

Introduction

When I first presented the topic of tribes and tribalism to some of my informed associates for discussion, I came across a range of rather conflicting and often clashing views. Some thought of the notion of tribe and tribalism as a phenomenon of backwardness, others thought of it as an “Arabian” saga but with Islamic and humanistic reality and, therefore, needs to be dealt with on those basis.

Having looked closely at the origins and historical surroundings of notable Libyan tribes, I found Libya to be one of those sovereign states that was constructed through human groupings, but with a tribal dimension due to its religious and social fabrics. Tribe and tribalism has defects and merits depending on which angle you look at them from, and where you stand in the tribal landscape, if you were a Libyan. Libyans, generally speaking, with the exception of very few ethnic minorities, are of one mixed anthropology of two main races, and with the rest of the population, do share the unifying force of Islam (faith and history), and common aspirations. It had to be said that tribe in Libya is a more of a social umbrella than cognation.

During the Qaramānli rule Libyans for the first time felt politically identified as a nation-state, and this was fashioned in tribal blocks sponsored by Islam as its political motto, and an organisational umbrella which they united under.

The three major synthetic components of tribal Libyan identity are as follow:

The first component: it is the Arab mixture (including the Arabised elements) which has incorporated the native Berbers in relationships by marriage, affinity and alliance, and facilitated the rapid adoption of Arab Islamic identity. This further consolidated the strong fraternal relations, recently forged with their neighbours in the name of Islam, and Arabism.

Arabism was not confined only to those who were ethnically Arabs, it rather meant those who spoke Arabic. In another word, Arabism is a lingua-franca without any claim of racial purity. To speak Arabic is to ascertain your regional Islamic identity amidst political circumstances in given surroundings. This ultimately brought about the much needed integration and fusion between natives and new-comers prescribing the necessary radical changes and transformations in all walks of life such as language, dialect, names, customs, traditions, architecture, food, costumes, arts, literature, music, economy, way of thinking ... Such amalgamation in the name of

Islam between the Arabs and the Berbers was a strategic choice imposed by the need to live together in peace and to maintain security along the fault-lines with those who differ with them in religion.

The second component: is the elite produced by the concoction of the first component to serve its need in preparing politically qualified candidates to take on the role of protecting its interests and defending Islam as a common denominator. This elite was the Murābiṭs “holy tribesmen”, amongst them the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad or his companions. Shurfā (or Ashrāf) as they are colloquially called in North Africa, who have played a major role in the entire Islamic history wherever they happen to be. They are known for the sacrifice and devotion in the defence of Islamic causes, and the ascertaining of Arabism as an Islamic sense of nationalism which is open for any one who wishes to join. The Murābiṭīn tribes played a major role in bridging the gap between all sections of Libyan society in the three provinces of Libya.

The third component: is al-Karāghla; mostly Arabised Berbers and Ottoman soldiers of various ethnic background with some Arabs who all served the State and with time fused into an Arab speaking Libyan tribe became known al-Karāghla. they fortified the first two components by adding a new dimension of nationalism, symbolised by the sense of citizenship, and consolidated by underpinning the base for Arabism in the first component. At the same time, it supported the second component by defending Islam and its representatives. Moreover, Karāghla were the first Libyans to endorse the Libyan identity with its peculiarities by stretching it to encompass their specifications, and to insist on the three dimensions: Arabism (Arabic language), Islam as their religion, and Libyan identity. In addition, the Karāghla adopted the tribal system, especially the Libyan version, as an organising mechanism in the society and more importantly in governance.

The tribal system prevailed to be recognised in all levels of State’s institutions, and duly acquired all the legitimacy as well as becoming a vital instrument in the day-to-day running of the country’s internal affairs.

Also, there were two secondary components living on the fringe of Libyan society, these were the Jews and Black Africans. They have not had equal treatment in history, and the degree of interacting with the entire society was different between them.

The tribal system is very much credited for preserving both Islam and Arabic in Libya for more than 14 centuries, and created a sense of belonging to the wider Arab world. It also consolidated the Libyan identity on the basis of Islam and Arabism. Thus, tribal politics played a major role in the creation of Libya, as modern and sovereign State with social cohesion and whose institutions played substantial role in the support of Islam. Tribes also were ready in putting a fierce resistance, and in extreme cases fighting off the enemies of Islam as was the case against the successive colonial powers in the last three centuries.

The topic of tribes and tribalism in Libya, recently came forth as a result of the discussions took place in Libyan and Arab intellectual circles in mid 1990's. However, the more credible was the argument that favoured dealing with tribes as a reality stems its strength from history and present. Back in history, during the early days of Islam, the Prophet of Islam had to break out of the political dilemma and persecution that he endured with his followers in Makka. He formed some sort of alliance with two non-Makkan tribes, Aws and Khazraj, of the town of Yathrib, who believed in what he preached. By forming this new alliance he managed with their support to lay the foundation-stones of an Islamic State which lasted for many centuries under different names, and went on delivering, more or less, the same message and governing until 1924.

Therefore, Islam, broadly speaking, does not object to tribal politics as long as adheres to its teaching. However, it warns against excessive use of tribalism to satisfy one's greed. In other words, nepotism and favouritism, which are sometimes the illegitimate product of tribalism, considered as unislamic as Islam openly decrees.

The central direction of this study is to look into **Tribe, Islam and State in Libya**; which is analytical study of the roots of the Libyan tribal society and the interaction up to the Qaramānli reign (1711-1835). Moreover, I would accentuate this is not a study of the Qaramānli dynasty nor its about their rule.

The rationale behind the task of researching this subject was, as mentioned earlier, the undetermined and conflicting materials and induction that seemed to have dominated

the region in general, and the intelligentsia of Libya in particular. There were debates about the influence of tribal politics in the Arab world that is experiencing some sort of “democratisation” which is needed, as was widely assumed, to rid the society of tutelage and feud embedded in our tribal traditions. This could only be done, as supposed, by decomposing tribes and their political alignments, or keeping tribes and tribal politics at least neutral in the political debate.

The situation was further aggravated when the debate was deepened further when questions were asked about whose tribe is the most influential or “purer”, and that ultimately threw in the question of ethnicity and the origins of various tiers of Libyan tribal society.

Therefore, I was presented with many questions in regards to the make-up of the Libyan tribal society. But there were many inquiries about whether tribes in Libya are heterogeneous as far as ethnicities are concerned ?. Also, the role of Islam in the indoctrination of people, and their way of life hence its huge influence on the making of Libya ?. The other persisting question was about the role of the State in the reshaping of the country and people in the process I called the “**karaghlaisation**”?. I, also, found myself confining the research span up to the Qaramānli period in which the foundations of Libya’s present tribal society were laid.

Therefore, these were the key questions of this research;

1. Is tribe in Libya a purely cognatic (blood-related) institution, or social umbrella, or both ?
2. How were the natives, namely Berbers, Arabised ?
3. Are the Karāghla of Turkic origins as widely assumed, or natives ?
4. Are the people of Ribāṭ of one lineage or rather a loose confraternity ?
5. The role of the State in creating, sponsoring and in some cases disciplining tribes to maintain its interests ?
6. How does tribe dwell, and how is tribalism manifested in Libya, and what influence did Libyan tribes have on the Qaramānli State and in the neighbouring countries as well ?

This topic was not easy at all and, to the best of my knowledge, not many people dealt with it the way I have tried to. Therefore, I was presented with new more challenges and unanswered questions, as much as I have reached many facts, which may

stimulate further research on the same topic or related matters. But the questions that I have sat out have been answered in such a way that helped me to draw up my conclusions, and may shed some lights on the status quo and offer interpretation on current events.

During my travel to Libya to collect the materials for the purpose of this work, I had the honour to meet the late Muḥammad Muṣṭafa Bazama (1923-2000), the author of more than fifty works on Libya, and unquestionably the Doyen of Libyan historians in the late 1990s. I spent three months with him while I was doing my field-research in the region in the summer of 1998. I learnt a great deal from his experience as a historian and this encounter left a great impact on my approach in researching Libyan history.

There were other momentous stops in my researching journey where I interviewed many Libyan tribal notables in both Libya and Egypt, also a number of historians who helped me to read history differently, such as Nicola Ziadeh, Aḥmad Ṣidqī Dajānī, Najdat Faṭḥī Ṣafwat, John Wright,¹ Michael Brett.

The materials I have gathered and employed in my research varied substantially. I have acquired almost everything that my hand could possibly have reached. However, I relied on both primary and secondary sources on the history of Libya and most of my bibliography entries were Libyan-Arabic based texts that I surveyed for the purpose of this research. I had an access to some manuscripts and unpublished academic theses, historical documents and correspondence in the form of compiled published works. Also, I consulted many biographies, memories related to Libya. Moreover, I feel my research is enriched by my own observation in the countries² I have included in my research itinerary in the region and, also, many of the folkloric tales, songs and prowess that reported historical events related to my topic.

The nature and intensity of research obliged me to be flexible in using whatever Methodology is useful in presenting full account and answering the key questions in order to reach the right conclusion. The main methodology of this research was

¹Those interviews were published over eight consecutive days in al-Quds - the London-based Arabic newspaper (20 Oct to 28 Oct 2002).

²The journey of observation preceded the research and goes back to 1990, and included my native country Libya, and Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Syria, Malta, Greece, Italy, Spain and France as well as Britain where I resided for writing this study.

mostly reviewing published literature as well as interviews, observations, and recording events. However, I primarily relied on the chronological approach in handling the materials by looking at the racial and geographical roots of Libyans and how they became what they are. This was done by dividing the research into historical eras of importance to Libya supported by chronology of momentous events such as the pre-Islamic Berbers, the Islamic conquest and the process of Arabisation, the Ottomanisation of Libya, the expulsion of Muslims from Spain and the arrival to Libya, and the Qaramānli period. These periods were categorised in a chronological sequence as devised in the research plan and concluding at where tribe in Libya eventually developed into what it is now. At the same time I submitted whatever data to the critical techniques in order to sift out the facts for what they are. I did this by critically comparing dates and data from opposing sources usually Arabic-based against European's to highlight similarities as well as dissimilarities. The task was a colossal and had required me to turn to the analytical approach that helped me enormously in scrutinising and analysing narrative, discourse, content, ethnography and so on, in the context of the broad lines set for this research. I did not just stop at the source but looked into the motives behind it, the partiality of the chronicler, and the environment the work was established in. E.g. Ibn Ghalbūn - died in 1763 (1177H) - the great Libyan historian in the sixteenth century and an authority on the early days of Qaramānlis, who could not be entirely relied upon as far as his reports on the Qaramānli news because of the way he mirrored their official biased views.³

One might ask why adopting different approaches ? the answer is embedded in the composition of Libya's tribal society which is too multiple in substance and manifestation.

Among the numerous sources used in this study there are few that stood out as indispensable for any researcher in the same field. The first is the work of Enrico Agostini on the people of Libya. He was a Colonel in the Italian army during their occupation of Libya (1911-1943). Italian strategists in the late 19th century were planning to take Libya, and irrationally thought of it as a backward Arab tribal society hated their Turkish Ottoman rulers for the misery they were in, and the Italians

³Al-Muṣṭafa, A'ḷām Ṭarāblus, pp 130-131.

thought they could really deliver those Arab tribesmen from their Turkish misery. However, the Italians were firstly shocked by the Bedouin tribesmen undaunted opposition to their advance into Libya. Secondly, they were disappointed with their calculation that the Arabs did not welcome them with open arms as they predicated. The Italians after the battle of al-Qurḍābiyya (28th April 1915) in which their forces were almost wiped out by tribes who uniquely came together from Libya's three provinces and stood up to the Italians in Libya.⁴ This defeat prompted the Italians to study those tribes and the overall population in order to understand the psychology and the secret behind resisting the Italians' supposed overtures of friendship. Agostini then headed a State-funded project concerned with the study of Libya and Libyans for their colonial purposes. He published his findings in a book entitled "**Le popolazioni della Cirenaica & Tripoli**" [Peoples of Libya - published in 1917 (1336H)]. This study was carried out by a number of Libyan specialists under Agostini's supervision, included various tribal chiefs, genealogist and prominent writers and historians like Ismā'īl Kamālī. Agostini's unprecedented work is regarded one of the major sources on the origins of the present people of Libya. It was at first translated by Khalīfa al-Tallīsi,⁵ who made it available for Arabic readers and contribution. However, this work induced more Libyans who took it upon them to rectify the mistakes were made by Agostini as well as elaborate profusely on the original work like what Ibrāhīm al-Mahdawi⁶ and Muḥammad Mannā' did.⁷ Agostini followed the path of recording whatever he found in his way about tribes, their dwellings, way of life and historic and political alignments relying on folkloric as well as some written works such as those of ibn Khaldūn, ibn Ghalbūn, and al-Barmūni.⁸ There were some shortcomings, despite its extensiveness, with the tribes roaming the interior in the sense that not enough was said about them like the Tebu for instance. Agostini's research did not follow those tribes that immigrated to the neighbouring

⁴ Agostini, Enrico, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, pp 9-15.

⁵ ———, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb - 1978] [Barqa - 1990], tr. by Khalīfa al-Tallīsi, al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya lil-kitāb, Libya.

⁶ ———, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], tr. by Ibrāhīm al-Mahdawi, Manshūrāt Jāmiʿat QārYunūs, Libya, 1998.

⁷ Mannā', Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *al-Ansāb al-ʿArabiyya fi Lībya*, Sharikat Maṭābiʿ al-Mukhtār, Egypt, 1991.

⁸ ———, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, pp 16-17.

countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Chad who still remain an extension to their cognatic kinship in Libya.

Another source is “**Storia di Tripoli dalla conquista Araba al 1911**” [Libya (Tripolitania); from the Arab conquest until 1911], published in 1968 by Ettore Rossi (1894-1955).⁹ Another Italian historiographer who produced a magnificent work surveying the history of Tripolitania from the advent of Islam until the launch of his country’s campaign to colonise Libya. Again the book was translated by Khalīfa al-Tallīsi who thinks Rossi’s study is the biggest and amongst the best contribution that the library of Libya’s history has known. I would not hesitate in accepting Tallīsi’s judgement; after all, Tallīsi is a historian and authority on his own rite.

This work stands out for using original Arabic sources covering different periods of Islamic history. Rossi is marked for his accuracy and strict academic research methodology, and was one of the luminous academics of his time and the most prominent Italian orientalist. He worked as professor of Arabic literature at the University of Rome, and later headed the Oriental School where he edited his famous journal - known from the Arabic rendering as - “the Modern Orient”, and settling as a specialist on the area where he authored many studies on Libya. Rossi knew Arabic and Turkish very well and that helped him to accurately translate and edit many works e.g. Ibn Ghalbūn’s “Chronology of Tripolitania”.¹⁰ The main feature of this book remains the extensive use of both Arabic and European sources in order to provide a detailed perspective that made it indeed unique in revealing Libyans of European origins that some Arab sources failed to record.

The English anthropologist, Edward Evans-Pritchard (1902-1973), was not too distanced throughout this study. He studied “**Sanūsi of Cyrenaica - 1949**” when he was part of the British military administration after the Second World War. As a professor of Social Anthropology and Fellow of all Souls College in Oxford, was equipped with the right tools to tackle the Sanūsis and the tribes of Cyrenaica. For Evans-Pritchard’s work to be thoroughly verified, I used the comparative approach, by turning - on an equal footing - to the works of the great Sanūsi traditionalist

⁹ Rossi, Ettore, *Libya mundhu al-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabi Ḥatta 1911*, tr. by Khalīfa al-Tallīsi, al-Dār al-‘Arabiyya lil-kitāb, Libya 1973.

¹⁰ ———, *Libya mundhu al-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabi Ḥatta 1911*, tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, pp 5-8.

historian, Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib al-Ashhab,¹¹ and to lesser extent Nicola Ziadeh¹² and Aḥmad Ṣidqī al-Dajānī's.¹³

Another source which I found controversial but very stimulus was “**al-Barbar ʿArab Qudāma - 1993**” [Berbers; the ancient Arabs] by the Tunisian, Muḥammad al-ʿArabāwī,¹⁴ who tried very hard to superimpose the view of Arab ideologue in regards to the Berber question. Nonetheless, the book remains very informative and academically sound, and presented me with some challenges in formulating my own views despite its idiosyncrasy. To balance that I referred to Bazama's work “**Sukkān Libya fil Tārīkh - 1994**” [Libyans; Pre-Islamic ethnography],¹⁵ and the co-authored work of “**The Berbers - 1996**” by the British historian Michael Brett and the American archaeologist Elizabeth Fentress.¹⁶

Finally, Libyan historians flavoured this study throughout, and they are numerous to name. Nevertheless, the traditionalist, and the Libyanised insight of Aḥmad Ṭāhir al-Zāwī's writings was very useful throughout this study, so was the prolific writings and the expertise of Bazama's. I describe al-Zāwī as the shaykh (Master) of Tripolitanian historians whereas Bazama the shaykh of Cyrenaican historians. The two historians complemented each other when al-Zāwī (1890-1986) as a high-ranking clergy – Grand Mufti of Libya - relied heavily on Islamic classical and folkloric sources, whereas Bazama who was privileged, due to his expatriation, to access

¹¹ Al-Ashhab, Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib, al-Mahdī al-Sanūsī, Libya, 1952.

-----, al-Sanūsī al-Kabīr, Maktabat al-Qāhira, unknown publisher, Egypt, 1956.

-----, ʿUmar al-Mukhtār, unknown publisher, Egypt, 1957.

-----, Barqa al-ʿArabiyya; Ams wal Yawm, Muṭbaʿat al-Hawwārī, Egypt, 1945.

¹² Ziadeh, Nicola, Sanūsīyah; a study of a revivalist movement in Islam, Leiden, Holland, 1958.

¹³ Al-Dajānī, Aḥmad Ṣidqī, al-Ḥaraka al-Sanūsīyya; Nash'atuha wa Numuwwuha fil-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar, Egypt, unknown publisher, 1988.

¹⁴ Al-ʿArabāwī, Muḥammad Mukhtār, al-Barbar ʿArab Qudāma, Manshūrāt al-Majlis al-Qawmī lil-Thaqāfa al-ʿArabiyya, Morocco, 1993.

¹⁵ Bazama, Muḥammad Mustafā, Sukkān Libya fil Tārīkh, Dār al-Ḥiwār al-Thaqāfi al-ʿArabi al-Urūbbi, Lebanon, 1994.

-----, Tārīkh Libya fi ʿUṣūr ma qabl al-Tārīkh, Manshūrāt Jāmiʿat QārYunūs, Dār al-Ṣādir, Lebanon 1973.

-----, Libya Hadha al-Ism fi Judhurih al-Tārīkhiyya, Manshurāt Maktabat Qūrīna, Libya, 1965.

¹⁶ Michael Brett & Elizabeth Fentress, the Berbers, Blackwell, Britain, 1996.

European sources namely Italian archives and publications as well as Arabic. Their books and insights are too many to discuss in this limited space. However, al-Zāwi's works titled **"Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya"** [History of the Arab conquest of Libya - 1985] and **"Aʿlām Libya"** [Biographies of Libyan notables - 1970], **"Wulāt Ṭarāblus"** [the Rulers of Tripolitania - 1970], and **"Muʿjam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya"** [Dictionary of Libyan places - 1968] stood out amongst other works of the same genre.¹⁷

Bazama's works are masters too, such as **"Tārīkh Barqa - 1994"** [History of Cyrenaica - 3 volumes], **"Benghazi ʿAbr al-Tārīkh - 1968"** [Benghazi through history], and **"Athr al-Dīn wal-Qawmiyyah fī Tārīkh al-Ummah al-Islāmiyya - 1994"** [Impact of religion and nationalism on the history of the Islamic nation].¹⁸

There were challenges in this study, which I addressed, and yielded results as hoped to form part of the overall contribution to the body of knowledge, and providing the answers to the research key question.

To name some of those obvious successes was to discard the misnomer that the Karāghla are of Turkish origins whereas, in fact, they are mostly of Berbero-Arab origins. Moreover, the chapter of Arabisation caused some unease when I discussed it with specialists from opposing parties for review. Berber experts and zealots thought intimidation and pressurization into Arabisation was more prevalent than inducements and incitation. Arab experts and idealists including my supervisor thought the opposite. I have employed the term Karaghlisation (in Arabic Takarghul), for the first time and no one else has in the past used such referential term to describe a process and the birth of a group of people became in Libya one of the most influential Arab tribes. I also distinguished between al-Ashrāf and al-Murābiṭīn by investigating the historical and linguistic as well as the religious circumstances that brought them about to serve the political and the economic necessities of time.

¹⁷ Al-Zāwi, al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad, **Aʿlām Libya**, Muʿssasat al-Firjāni, Libya, 1970.

-----, **Muʿjam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya**, Maktabat al-Nūr, Libya, 1968.

-----, **Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya**, Darf, London, 1985.

-----, **Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-ʿArabi ila Nihāyat al-ʿAhd al-Turkī**, Dār al-Fath, Lebanon, 1970.

¹⁸ Bazama, Muḥammad Mustafa, **Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni al-Awwal, wal-Qaramānli, wal-ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni al-Thāni**, Dār al-Ḥiwār al-Thaqāfi al-ʿArabi al-Urubbi, Lebanon, 1994.

-----, **Benghazi ʿAbr al-Tārīkh**, Dār Libya, Libya, 1968.

-----, **Athr al-Dīn wal-Qawmiyyah fī Tārīkh al-Ummah al-Islāmiyya**, Dār al-Ḥiwār al-Thaqāfi al-ʿArabi al-Urubbi, Lebanon, 1994.

Another accomplishment is the drawing of maps illustrating tribal dwellings, which I have furnished the study with, showing the distribution of tribes in their respective places in Libya and abroad. I could safely say that I have made precedence in designing as well as collating those maps. I took the map of Libya as a whole and cut it up into three parts along with historic division of Libya's three main provinces; Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fazzān. I went even further by duplicating the maps of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in particular that had more population than the Fazzān, and dedicating one for the Murābiṭīn and Ashrāf, and the other map for other tribes in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. The purpose of that is to show the location of tribes on the ground for those interested to attentively illustrate the broader tribal distribution. However, Fazzān had only one map for its tribes because of the vastness of its territory and the scarcity of dwellers amidst the dunes of the Sahara.

I have used both Gregorian and Hijri calendars where possibly appropriate to ensure consistency. I have also used diacritical marks in all the names and places of Arab-based use in order to provide the accurate form of the proper names. This was hugely time-consuming, but the purpose was a precise transliteration of Libyan names and places to help others understand and hopefully adopt such writings for future publication.

During the process of inspection of names, dates and events in this study I found the help I desperately needed in "**the Islamic Dynasties: a chronological and genealogical handbook-1967**"¹⁹ by Clifford E. Bosworth. This valuable book lists by names the rulers of all the principal Islamic dynasties, each dynastic list being followed by a brief assessment of its historical significance, and by a short bibliography. I was further helped by its Arabised version²⁰ to ensure authenticity and verification. It has indeed been an "immediate and dependable reference" as M.E. Journal described it.

¹⁹Bosworth, Clifford, the Islamic Dynasties, a chronological and genealogical handbook, Edinbrugh University Press, Britain, 1967.

²⁰-----, al-Usurāt al-Ḥākima fī Tārīkh al-Islāmi, tr. by Ḥusayn al-Labbūdi, Mu'ssasat al-Shirā' al-ʿArabi, Kuwait, 1994.

The size and intensity of the chapters kept shifting to the last minute. However, I have directed the study in a way to become far more readable and indeed sense-making to meet the set-objectives of the research and appeal to a spectrum of readers.

The first chapter laid the ground with a historical background to the native Libyans, Berbers, or Amazigh as they like to be known, and their tribes as well as an exhibition of the origins of those tribes by presenting different argument on whether the Berbers were of “Arab” or Hindu-European or other origins. I also brought in the Arab Islamic advance into North Africa and the contact with Libyan Berbers and the impact on them by Islamisation. The chapter was concluded with a close look at the mass Arab tribal migration into Libya and the changes the region witnessed as a result.

The second chapter followed from where I stopped in the first chapter by looking closely at the impact the Arab tribes had on the area and its indigenous population by Islamisation and Arabisation. However, the way I looked at was considerably nonconformist. Thus, I divided this particular sub-study into strata where Arabisation took place by inducement known in Arabic as “*targhiyyib*”, and the other stratum was a one of intimidation or pressurisation “*tarhiyyib*”, where Arabisation was not a choice that natives preferred, but were rather propelled into.

The third chapter was dedicated to Turkey’s influence on Libya by reviewing the process of Ottomanisation of State and people as initially desired by Libyans. The Ottoman rescue of Libya coincided with the arrival of Andalusian refugees to the shores of Libya from Spain through the Maghrib, and the subsequent fermentation of those entire ethnicities in Libya’s mainstream society was discussed in this chapter. Turkey and its Ottoman influence were too visible and cogent to be overlooked in spite of accusation of their backwardness and stalemate. After all, no one could deny Turkey’s sincere commitment to Islam and Muslims in Libya. The other noticeable influence of Turkey was the opportunity for Arabised Turks to incept the first semi-independent Libyan State in the name of the Qaramānli family.

The fourth chapter was teased out from the previous chapter of the Ottoman domination of Libyan life. This chapter for the first time conquered uncharted territory and looked at the process of Karaghliisation of Ottoman Janissaries, Berbers

and Arabs. And the aggregation and creation of State-sponsored Berbero-Arab tribe in the name of al-Karāghla.

The fifth chapter sought to explain the phenomena of Ribāt, Murābiṭīn and Ashrāf in Libya. It investigated the linguistic as well as the historic roots of Murābiṭīn in general, and the ʿAlīd Ashrāf of Libya in particular, and looked at the main Libyan Ṣūfis Orders and the practise of Ṣūfism, and their impact on Libya's tribes and the State's rulers in general. It also looked at the genealogical as well as to a lesser extent the metaphysical link between Ṣūfism and Shīʿism.

The sixth chapter followed the tribes of Libya, who immigrated voluntarily in pursuit for better life, or others who were budged out of the country and sought safe heaven from the oppression of the Qaramānlis and their crony tribes who were employed by them as the government's proxy militias. This chapter, also, looked at the Sanūsiyya as an Order founded by an immigrant embraced by Cyrenaican tribes, and evaluated the influence that Libyan immigrant tribes had on countries that hosted them such as Egypt, Tunisia and Chad.

The seventh chapter, which brought this study to a close, and canvassed the Arab tribes' dispersion into Libya, and for the purpose of once-over dissected its makeup, and examined the difference between the Bedouin tribes and Ḥaḍūr families. I also went on to the historic and intriguing saga between Saʿādis and Murābiṭīn in Cyrenaica, and looked at the backbone of tribes' economy that made them independent and free of the State's spell.

Finally, The approach of this research falls into the fields of cultural, anthropological and tribal studies in the wider Arabic and Islamic inquiry into history. I hope this study will fill the vacuum since it is the first of its type in dealing with a subject that most likely will come back to influence the lives of many in the region and would have its impact on international politics. I also hope to have provoked others to build on what I have done by further widening the scope of study. Finally, I would also like to stress my utter and sole responsibility for any mishaps or otherwise that may be found in this study.

Chapter 1

Berbers and Arabs

Prelude

There is a huge clamorous confusion about the composition of tribes in Libya, and there are many conflicting claims and counter claims about their origins. Some Berbers claim the majority of Libyans are of Berber extraction including those who have been Arabised. Some Arabs particularly, ultra-nationalists, believe all Libyans are all Arabs arriving in the region at different times. Some came to North Africa before Islam, others came with the Islamic conquest, whereas historians believe the majority came in the famous Hilālic and Sulaymid influx from the east.

However, between the two claims, I believe, lies the truth and this chapter will prelude the overall research. The theme of this chapter is not to re-write the history of the region, but to give a solid and informative historical background to many of the issues that will be addressed in regards to the overall title of the research.

These are the topics that will be covered in this chapter;

1. The Berbers: and their origins in Libya
2. Berber tribes populated Libya before the Islamic conquest
3. The Arabic Islamic Conquest of Libya
4. The migration of Arab tribes to Libya.

The Berbers; and their origins in Libya

Anthropologists and historians have differed on the origins of, the Libyan's forefathers, the Berbers. This difference is to be found amongst Muslim genealogists both Arab and Berber, particularly on the genesis of Berbers. However, there is a nearly consensus that those people, the majority of whom live in North Africa, west of the river Nile, loosely formed one ethnic community, inhomogeneous in their dialects, religion and culture to a certain extent.¹

The Berber language has not been categorised as part of either the Semitic nor Hemitic branch yet². However, it used alphabets known as Libyan alphabet,³ and its various dialects spoken by the indigenous inhabitants of North Africa (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, in Sahara desert and the Spanish islands off the west coast of Morocco).

The Berber dialects (language) known collectively as Tamazight,⁴ or Tamashek (Tamahaq-Tamajeq), which has an ancient script that went through evolutionary stages to eventually settle on what know now as Tifinagh alphabet (as portrayed in Appendix).⁵ The Tuaregs living in the great Sahara desert speak one of those dialects today. Chaouia (Shawia) and Kabyle are dialects of many Berbers in Algeria. Shilha (Tashelhayt or Cheluh), also, Sus, and Rīf or Rwāfa dialect spoken in the Atlas of Morocco. Zenaga spoken in southern Mauritania, and Guanche was spoken by the indigenous inhabitant of the Canary islands in the Atlantic ocean⁶.

Also, the Zwāriyya who live in the only coastal Berber city of Zwāra, and brethren Berbers who live in Jabal Nafūsa, known as al-Jibāliyya, live in the west of Libya. In

¹Bazama, *Sukkān Libya fil Tārīkh*, p 65.

Najem, F, *al-Lugha al-Barbariya*, (Berber language), Majallat Jeel Wa Risala, 2nd issue (Sept 1996).

²Al-Şuway'i, *Uşul al-Ḥarf al-Lībi*, p 133.

³Brett and Fentress, *the Berbers*, pp 37-41.

Al-Şuway'i, op. cit., pp 291-351.

⁴Brett, op. cit., p 5.

⁵Cf. Britannica encyclopaedia, article: (Berber).

Everson, Michael EGT (IE), Encoding the Tifinagh script (as portrayed in Appendix).

⁶Belasi, *al-Lugha al-Barabariya* (Berber language), Majallat al-Manhal, issue 494, vol. no. 53, (Feb. 1992), KSA.

addition to the Awājla, inhabitants of the oasis of Awjila in the south east of Libya, and in the south-west Ghāt, Ghadāmis, and Sīwa in the Egyptian western desert (Map.3).

The Berbers also call themselves Imazighen (sing. Amazigh),⁷ which means the free and nobleman⁸. When Islam arrived to the region, the Berbers reacted by unifying their forces to counter the challenge of Arab Muslim conquerors. It took Islam more than sixty years to win the Berbers on its side. Berbers embraced Islam and rejected it twelve times before they became full-fledged Muslims⁹. As a result of the Conquest, a good number of Berbers stood out as prominent historic icons in Islamic history¹⁰. Also, a number of autonomous states, bearing the Berber's tribal names sprang out in the name of Islam, much more than they ever had in their pre-Islamic history. Such states as Zīrids (and Ḥammādids), Zayyānids (°Abd-al-Wādids), Marīnids, Almoravids, Almohads, Khazrūn, Ḥafṣids. However the first which had a pure Berber tribal entity was the Zīrids.¹¹ Moreover, the Idrīsids and Ḥammūdids of Malga were in essence linguistically and culturally Berbers despite their Sharīf origins.¹²

The term Berber is a wrong and misleading.¹³ The word Berber is derived from the Greek word Barbarus or Barbaros,¹⁴ which literally means alien or foreign.¹⁵ It was initially employed by the Greeks to describe all foreigners including Romans.¹⁶ This description (Berber) has become synonymous with scornfulness and Barbarity that the Greeks dubbed their foes with. Then, it took another turn when the Greeks

⁷Kamāli, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. bin Yunūs, p 14.

⁸Al-°Arabāwi, *al-Barbar °Arab Qudāma*, pp 231, 232, 233, 234.

⁹Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-°Arabi fi Libya*, p 147.

¹⁰To name a few: Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn, al-Mu°izz ibn Bādīs, ibn Tūmart, ibn Baṭūṭa, and from modern Libya; Sulaymān al-Bār ūni, and Khalīfa ibn °Askar.

¹¹Mu°nis, *Atlas Tārīkh al-Islām*, p 180.

Brett, op. cit., p 81.

¹²Bosworth, *the Islamic dynasties*, pp 20-21.

¹³The Arabs, Indians, Persians amongst others who also were at one time dubbed as Berber.

Cf. Bazama, *Sukkān Libya fil Tārīkh*, p 80.

¹⁴Bazama, op. cit., pp 66-80.

¹⁵Al-°Arabāwi, op. cit., pp 220, 221.

¹⁶Cf. Mawrid encyclopaedia, article: (*Barbarian*).

labelled it onto those who did not speak Greek, or more accurately to those who spoke a language ambiguous to the Greeks. The term (Berber) does not apply to a certain race or people, but rather a linguistic association only.¹⁷ When the Roman conquered the region, and went on using the term Berber to the same purpose for people who lived outside their civilisation walls, or in other words those who were not romanised, and those who dwelled outside the spheres of the Graeco-Roman influence¹⁸. This proves that the Romans did not have an absolute authority or influence over the Berber tribes due to the latter rejection of their authority, a fact which is substantiated by many revolts against the Romans by Berber tribesmen.¹⁹

There have been a number of differing opinions about the origins of Berbers.

However, some consider them to be:

1. originated from the ancient and extinct Arabs. So the Berbers migrated from the Near East to the West of North Africa.
2. descended from Hindu-European origin. Germanic to be precise, who moved down from Europe southwards to North Africa.
3. of Hemitic origin, thus, have no ethnic relation with the Arabs who are Semitic.
4. of a mixed race of Mediterranean peoples.

In fairness to the above professed opinions held by academically renowned scholars, it is necessary to discuss them individually in order to find the rationale, evidence, and politico-cultural biases and inclination.

The first opinion:

This is widely held by the majority of Arab scholars and a good number of Berbers, and accepted by a fewer experts.

It is claimed that the Berbers descended from earliest Arabs of the peninsula especially the Fertile Crescent who suffered a great deal of severe environmental

¹⁷Bazama, op. cit., p 65.

¹⁸Op. cit., pp 72, 78-79.

¹⁹Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 37.

changes and ecological calamities. It is thought that those calamities were connected with the draught which followed the age of rain.²⁰

The legends of Arab genealogy and the tales of the informers classified the Arabs into either original or Arabised tribes (Must^ʿraba). As for the original; they are divided into two categories as well; The extinct (Bā'ida), and those who survived known as Bāqiya.²¹ Also it's claimed that all of those are of one race, even of one parentage. Of course, there are grave doubts that the Berbers are the progeny of such ancestors.

The extinct Arabs, Known in Arabic as al-^ʿArab Bā'ida, they are exactly what the term implies "extinct". There is no one of them on this earth any more. So, they all simply vanished like the tribes of Jurhum, Ṭasm, Jadīs, ^ʿĀd, and Thamūd.²²

Amongst the Arab scholars and historians who think that the Berbers are ancient Arabs; are ibn ^ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, al-Ya^ʿqūbi, al-Bakri, and ibn al-Athīr.²³

On the Berber side was Ayyūb ibn Kīdad.²⁴ Also, some contemporary Libyan researchers embraced this opinion such as Mannā^ʿ and al-Tallīsi, whom both relied heavily on Enrico De Agostini's work on the population of Libya.²⁵

Most of those historians think that the Berbers are of extinct Arabs migrated from Great Syria to North Africa, in addition to some tribes of Ḥimyar and Saba'. Some go as far in saying that the Berber tribes of Ṣanhāja and Kutāma are the offspring of the Arab Banu Qaḥṭān and even, some times, Ḥimyar.²⁶ It is also fair to say that some

²⁰Bazama, op. cit., p 88.

²¹Hitti, *the History of the Arabs*, pp 30-31.

Al-Ṣuway^ʿi, op. cit., pp 30-41

²²Hitti, op. cit., p 30.

²³Bazama, *Athr al-Dīn wal-Qawmiyyah fī Tārīkh al-Ummah al-Islāmiyya*, pp 268-271.

Ibn Khaldūn and ibn al-Ḥazem doubted the racial connection between all Arabs and all Berbers.

²⁴Also known as the owner of the donkey who relates both branches of Berber al-Butr and al-Barānis to Canaan ibn Ham. This was reported by ibn Khaldūn in his book (Kitāb al-^ʿIbar).

Cf. Brett and Fentress, *the Berbers*, p131.

Al-^ʿArabāwi, op. cit., pp 232, 279.

²⁵Mannā^ʿ, *al-Ansāb al-^ʿArabiyya fī Libya*, pp 6-7.

Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, pp 2-4.

²⁶Ibn Khaldūn reluctantly excepted only Kutāma and Ṣanhāja of all Berbers are descendants of the Arab tribe of Ḥimyar.

Cf. Brett, op. cit., p 131.

archaeologists link the ethnicity, and the culture of the Berbers to the Arabs who lived on the coast of Great Syria. Amongst them was the British researcher William McBurney.²⁷

The second opinion

It is thought that the Berbers are of Hindu-European origins, came from India, and crossed to Persia and the Caucasus. They, then, dispersed throughout the continent. From Iberian peninsula they permeated and dominated North Africa.²⁸ Some followers of this opinion literally link some of the tribes of Finland and Sweden to others in Tunisia and Morocco.²⁹

Therefore, some experts concluded that the Berbers are of European ancestry, especially those white skinned and blue eyed. Others, at times, regard the Berbers of “Germanic” Vandal descent, who swept throughout the Maghrib in the 5th and 6th century. It is fair to say that, most Libyans in the Eastern part “Cyrenaica” had white skin and blue eyes, like the tribes of Temhu and Tehnu who were scripted on the Egyptian Hieroglyphics,³⁰ which is much older than the Hindu-European phenomenon. That clearly poses a contradiction with the theory, which alleges the Berbers of European descent. This leaves us with an established fact that the tribes of Temhu and Tehnu, who were white skinned and blue eyed were not of Hindu-European origins in accordance with Egyptian sources that are more credible and much older than the others.³¹

The third opinion

It prophesied that the Berbers are the children of Ham, the son of Noah. After the Europeans realised that the theory of Hindu-Europeanism was rebuffed, and perceived as a colonial ploy and an instrument of discrimination between the Berbers and their co-inhabitants of North Africa, the Arabs, eventually they abandoned it. However,

²⁷Bazama, op. cit., p 272.

²⁸Shafiq, *al-Lugha al-Amāzighiyya*, pp 48, 50.

²⁹Al-^cArabāwi, op. cit., pp 24-30.

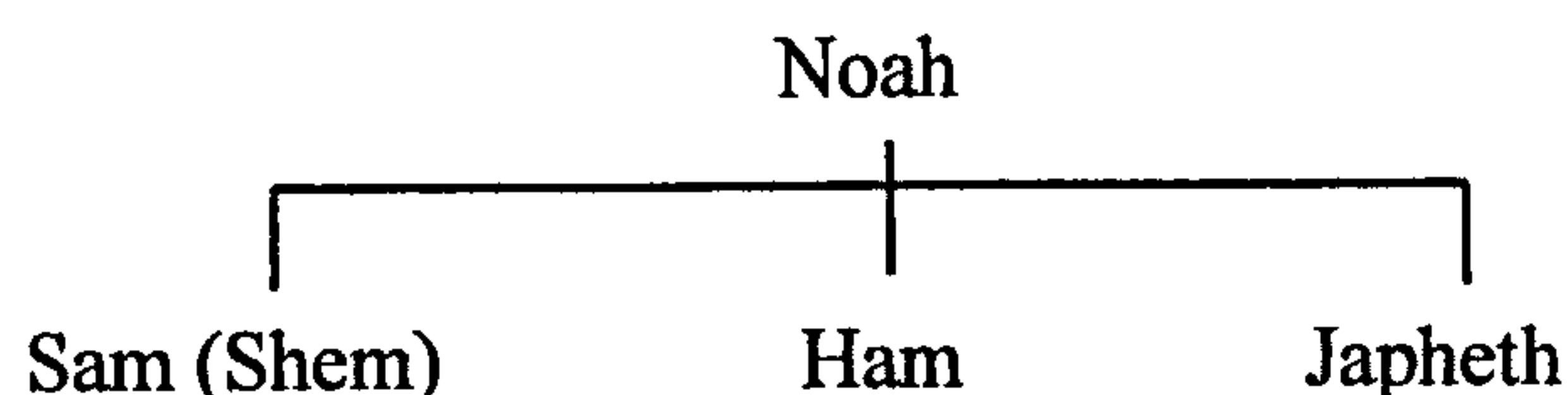
³⁰Op. cit., p 153.

³¹Op. cit., p 26.

such an opinion intended to serve the greed of the colonial powers to coincide with their interests by attracting those who find comfort in the Euro-centric interpretation of the anthropology of the region, especially amongst some of the Westernised inclinations in the area.³²

This was obviously the reason why the Hindu-European theorist abandoned this claim, and begun theorising that the Berbers are Hemitic, therefore they are not racially nor linguistically Europeans, and at the same time, there is nothing to link them to the Semitic Arabs.

This theory was originated by Austrian German linguist Schlozer 1781,³³ and soon accepted by scientists in Britain and France, despite the disassociation of it by some scholars such as the English expert in Berber linguistics, Francis William Newmann in 1950s,³⁴ who dismissed it in its entirety.



The forth opinion

It is said that the Berber ancestors are a concoction of all the races living around the Mediterranean. Those races included the Phoenician, Ethiop, Libu, Egyptian, Nubian, Canaanite, Etruscan, Sicilian, Sardinian, Greek, and Iberian.³⁵

This opinion differs from others in opposing the theories that outrightly distance the Berber from the Arabs, by occasionally relating the Berbers to the Hindu-European tribes, or to the children of Ham, thus having no relation to the children of Sam.

The late Libyan historian Mohamed M. Bazama favoured this opinion. It is also worth mentioning here that the word Semitic does not exist in either the classic literature nor

³²Bazama, *Athr al-Dīn wal-Qawmiyyah fi Tārīkh al-Ummah al-Islāmiyya*, pp 16-17.

³³Al-ʿArabāwī, op. cit., p 85.

³⁴Op. cit., pp 84, 165.

³⁵Bazama, *Sukkān Libya fil Tārīkh*, p 238.

in the Arabic lexicon,³⁶ and oddly enough they constitute the prime sources for any anthropological researcher.

This methodology in classifying people into Semitic, Hemitic and so on, has been disposed of by nowadays scholars, because it had been seen as an deliberate endeavour to interpret the European history and its religious dogmas more than an attempt to understanding the history of North Africa. This, according to some scholars, is an attempt to find some answers to the many enigmatic historical questions in the context of the Old and New Testament.

The races, mentioned earlier in this section, have melted to such a degree their origins have been almost forgotten, and their roots were erased from their collective memory. Therefore, new loyalties were forged, and mixed races had replaced the original ones. This is a natural evolution that is the outcome of specific circumstances throughout different historical epochs.

The Berbers are divided into two distinct groups, the Bedouin (nomads) and the town dwellers (urbanised). The urbanised live as sedentary-housed and regarded as settlers of cities, towns and villages near the coast and fertile-lands of the mountain's versants i.e. Hiwāra. Whereas, the Bedouin are always on the move in search of water and pasture and live in tents throughout the desert, countryside and in oases in the hinterland and regarded as herdsmen, and the most famous nomad Berber tribe is Zanāta (Map. 3).³⁷

The Berbers are spread throughout North Africa and the Great Sahara. In Libya, they are to be found mostly in the North and to a lesser extent in the oases and the deep south of the desert. After the Islamic Conquest of Libya, the Arabs and the Berbers have intractably intermixed to change the entire demographic and geographic map so that it is almost impossible to distinguish between Libyans on the basis of their ethnic origins, or even tell whether that individual person is a Berber or an Arab.

³⁶Al-ʿArabāwī, op. cit., pp 92, 93.

³⁷Al-Darāji, *al-Qabā'il al-Amāzighiyya*, pp 81, 144.

It is also impossible to count for all the Berbers who came to live, or moved on around the region in different times of history. Even with that the Berbers of Libya have persevered their particularities by living in pockets, a fact which had helped them to conserve, and to present their identity as special when the need arises.

One of the most important pockets that Berbers now live in, is the western mountain. Also, it's sometimes called Jabal Nafūsa, or Yifrīn, or Ghiryān mountain, and all these names refer to the Berber identity of the area. Yifrīn, Nālūt, Kābaw, Jādū³⁸ (Fasātū), and the coastal city of Zwāra are the most notable Berber towns in the north. Whereas, southward, in the heart of the desert, the main Berber areas of Ghadāmis, Ghāt and the oasis of Awjila³⁹ are located.

There are many Libyan tribes and towns that carry Berber nomenclatures and names,⁴⁰ such as Miṣrāta, Tāwirghā, Tājūra, Mislāta, Zlīṭin, Sūkana, Mizda, Nafūsa, Wrishfāna, Wrfalla, Ghiryān, Zwāra, Ghadāmis, Ubāri, Mirāwa, Msūs, Awjila, Fītūri, Sanūsi.

It is noticeable that the Berbers, in Cyrenaica, have almost no traces whatsoever apart from a few names, and most clues about Berber history have disappeared from Cyrenaica in comparison with Tripoli and Fazzān, except for the people of Awjila who doubt their affiliation to the Berber in contrary to their brethren in the west and south of Libya. This could be one of the explanations of the fusion of the Arabs and the Berbers, and the high degree of melting to the extent of not being able to recognise who is who.⁴¹ Any observer of social changes in Libya would have noticed the diminishing of the fault-lines between Berbers and Arabs. Therefore, some Arabised Libyans of Berber ancestry have no problem in taking pride of their forefathers, and in the same time Berbers do not object to the use of Arabism as their identity, because they all belong to the religion of Islam, and its Sharīʿa, which governs their lives, and it is the mechanism that divides amongst them their duties, and determines their

³⁸Some elderly Berbers of Libya claim that Jādū is the original name for Jālū, and Ujilin for Awjila.

³⁹In my visit to Awjila in 2000, I saw a written statement issued by the intelligentsia of Awjila adopting what the Zabaydi claimed in his book "*Tāj al-ʿArūs*" as the statement claimed. Zabaydi apparently wrote that Awjila was named after Banu Awjil, a branch of the Arab tribe of Juhina, who lived around Madīna and Yanbūʿ in Ḥijāz, then migrated apparently in 7th century to present day Awjila. By doing so they brushed aside any Berber connection..?

⁴⁰Al-Zāwi, *Muḥjam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 78.

⁴¹Kamāli, op. cit., p 22.

rights, as well as the huge similarity in life styles, cultural and social patterns of both peoples.⁴²

After reviewing the various important theories and opinions about the origins of Berbers, it seems that the conflict between those opinions is a healthy phenomenon, because the Arabs and the Berbers wanted to discover their common roots in order to explain the relatively rapid and smooth integration which took place under the auspices of Islam, unlike that of the Turks and Persians. Also, to abort or suppress any outside (colonial) attempts to revive sectarianism that bear regional incitement of separatism such as Pharaohism in Egypt, Babylonianism in Iraq, Phoenicianism in greater Syria, or Berberism in North Africa.

The Berber tribes that lived in Libya before the Islamic Conquest in 643 (24H) were originally of two branches.⁴³ This is in accordance with most of Arab and Berber genealogists and historians, and the two branches are: Barānis and Butr.⁴⁴

Due to the transformation and changes that the area has experienced, it is appropriate to mention some of the main Berber tribes that were party in the change. However, this will be in summary, so that we can look at them in their historical framework, and in the context of their interaction, subsequently, with other various Libyan social tiers.

⁴²Op. cit., (F.N) p 37.

Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 81-82, 112-113.

⁴³Al-Darāji, op. cit., pp 56-57, 61-62.

⁴⁴Ibn Khaldūn classifies them into Barānis and Mādghīs.

Cf. Kamāli, op. cit., pp 14-15.

Berber tribes

As illustrated earlier Berbers are the indigenous people of North Africa and have lived there since the Stone Age, and have divided themselves into two main tribal branches; Butr and Barānis. Many doubted such branching, and suggested that was the influence of the Muslim Arabs after their appearance in North Africa,⁴⁵ and adopted by Berbers to justify the closeness with their 'Ibyātin (Arab guests) as sometimes described by the Berbers (Map. 3).⁴⁶ Hereunder are some of the famous Berber tribes;⁴⁷

Liwāta : there are claims that Libya derived its name from this tribe as well as the ancient city of Leptis Magna.⁴⁸ Liwāta occupied the area from Cyrenaica to Sirt on the borders of Tripolitania. It was the first Berber tribe to embrace Islam and subsequently became the main supporter and advocate of Islam, and played a noticeable role in the spread of its message and influence.⁴⁹ Their first Liwātan notable in Islam to come forth from the Berbers was; Hilāl ibn Tharwān Al-Liwāti who became the first Muslim commander of Berber background during of Ḥassān ibn Nu'mān campaign in the region in 693 (74H).⁵⁰

Hiwāra : it lived in Tripoli and around Miṣrāta, particularly Saḥl al-Aḥāmid and al-Jufra. They played an obvious role in the conquest of Spain in 711 (93H), and Sicily in 1427 (831H).⁵¹ They backed the Khārijites, but were dispersed by the Fāṭimids.⁵² Qāraqūsh crushed and stamped them out,⁵³ but he was murdered later in Waddān. The whole tribe (Zuwayla of Hiwāra), then, immigrated to Egypt afterwards.⁵⁴

⁴⁵Al-Barghūthi, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, p 31.

⁴⁶Mādi, M, *Ḥukm tasmiyat al-Amāzighiyyūn bil-Barbar*, www.Tawlat.com, April 2003.

⁴⁷Al-Ṭayyib, *Mawsū'at al-Qabā'il al-'Arabiyya*, Vol. 1, pp 925-928.

⁴⁸Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], tr. by I. al-Mahdawi, p 29.

⁴⁹Kamāli, op. cit., p 25.

⁵⁰Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 61.

Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-'Arabi fi Libya*, p 132.

⁵¹Kamāli, op. cit., p 21.

⁵²Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 211.

⁵³Op. cit., pp 233-234, 239.

⁵⁴Op. cit., pp 319-320, 330.

Zanāta : lived around Tripoli , especially Janzūr and Wrishfāna. Bani Khazrūn of Zanāta ruled Tripoli for about 150 years and that makes it the longest ruling dynasty of Libya.⁵⁵ They are Camel herdsman and live in tents. Some of their descendants still, at present, live in Ghadāmis.⁵⁶ The ruling dynasties of Zayyānids and Marīnids descended from Zanāta. They backed al-Mu'izz ibn Bādīs against the Fāṭimids in Tunisia, and fought the Arabs of Banu Hilāl and Sulaym, but they faced almost extinction. The rest of them were incorporated into the victorious Arab tribes in North Africa.⁵⁷

Nafūsa : They inhabited the area from Tāwirghā in the East, and along the coast of Tripoli, to Sabratha in the West.⁵⁸ They were famous for their revolt against the Aghlabids in 896 (283H).⁵⁹ Then, they retreated south onto the western mountain (Jabal Nafūsa) and to the south of Kābaw when the Arabs arrived in the region.⁶⁰ The Western Mountain has since been re-named Nafūsa after them. Most of the Berbers of the mountain who are known as al-Jibāliyya are descendants from them.⁶¹

Kutāma : lived around Khums, Sīlīn, Laptis Magna, Saḥl al-Aḥāmid, and the surrounding areas. Supported the Fāṭimids in their struggle against the Aghlabids in Tunisia, and then backed the 'Abbāsids in Iraq.⁶²

Ṣanhāja : It maintained its fierce opposition to the Romans throughout the occupation of the region before the advent of Islam.⁶³ They lived west of Tripoli in Zwāra and Nafūsa mountain, and in the south in Mizda, Sināwin, the valley of Shāṭṭi,

⁵⁵Op. cit., p 269.

⁵⁶Darāji, op. cit., pp 143-145,

⁵⁷Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 337.

⁵⁸Mannā'c, op. cit., p 467.

⁵⁹Darāji, op. cit., pp 254-255, 258.

⁶⁰Mannā'c, op. cit., p 467.

⁶¹Darāji, op. cit., pp 262-263

⁶²Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 233-234.

⁶³Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 25-26, 28.

and Qaṭrūn. Ṣanhāja was known for its supremacy over North Africa, and produced many of the ruling dynasties such as Zīrids, Hammadids and the Almoravids.⁶⁴

Zuwayla : dwelled in Cyrenaica and Fazzān. Parts of Fazzān were named after it. Most of their fighters moved to Egypt with the Fāṭimid commander Jawhar al-Ṣiqilli.⁶⁵ There is a huge gate with two minarets on its sides in Cairo named Bāb Zuwayla.⁶⁶

Mizāta : lived in Waddān and the great bay of Sirt. Most of them were Arabised, and those who did not, along with Hiwāra, settled in Sūkana. Mizāta embraced Islam at first, then changed their minds, then re-embraced Islam and became good Muslims ever since.⁶⁷

Awajila : it is thought that they are a mixture of Liwāta and Hiwāra colonised the oases of Awjila, Sīwa, Ghadāmis and Zuwayla. They are the first people ever to plant palm trees in the oases.⁶⁸ They are, also, known for their piety and strong attachment to their land.⁶⁹

Tuaregs : they live mostly in the south in Ghadāmis, Ghāt and Janit, and in the valleys of Gran, Salli mountains and in Adrar plains.⁷⁰ They have an extension in the neighbouring countries namely Algeria and Niger, and famous for their traditional clothing and veiled males. They often came north to help their Muslim brethren.⁷¹

⁶⁴Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 262-263.

⁶⁵Hitti, op. cit., p 619,

⁶⁶Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthamāni al-Awal*, pp 78-79.

Clapperton, *Difficult & Dangerous Roads*, ed. by Bruce-Lockhart and Wright, (F.N) p 51.

⁶⁷Bazama, op. cit., pp 40, 63, 69-71.

⁶⁸Mannāʿ, op. cit., p 66.

⁶⁹Agostini, op. cit., pp 523-524.

⁷⁰Op. cit., p 359.

⁷¹Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 18-19.

The Arabic Islamic Conquest of Libya

The history of Arabs goes back to more than 3000 years BC. They established before Islam a number of states⁷² such as Saba', Ma'īn, Qatabān, Ḥiyamar, Anbāt, Mundhirids and Ghassānids.⁷³

Jāhiliyya was the period that preceded Islam by nearly 150 years,⁷⁴ during which, the Arabs lived in clusters of idol-worshipping tribes, and were known for their tribal disputes and subsequent retribution that brought them nothing but feuds and destruction. When they embraced Islam they became united under its banner and sent to call upon the World to believe in the oneness of God.

The history of the Arab Muslims is divided into the following eras:

1. the era of the propagation of Islam during the Prophet's lifetime 610-632 (11H).
2. the era of the Righteous Caliphs 632-661 (11-40H), who succeeded the Prophet as rulers of the Islamic State.⁷⁵
3. the era of Umayyads 661-750 (41-132H). In which the boundaries of the State were stretched far, and sowed the seeds of the great Arab-Islamic culture.⁷⁶
4. the era of the 'Abbāsids 749-1258 (132-656H), during which the various Islamic ethnic cultures intermixed, namely the Persians, Turkish, Indian and Greek, and has witnessed the birth of the newly formed multi-cultured civilisation in the name of Islam which reached its zenith.⁷⁷
5. the Arabs in Andalus 756-1492 (138-897H), in which Muslim Spain during the era of Arab rule was one of most advanced countries in the whole of Europe. But,

⁷²Hitti, *the history of the Arabs*, pp 49-86.

⁷³Bakhīt, *al-Mujtama' al-'Arabi wal-Islāmi*, pp 85-86.

Hitti, op. cit., p 42.

⁷⁴Cf. Mawrid Encyclopaedia, article: (*Jāhiliyya*).

⁷⁵Bosworth, op. cit., pp 3-4.

⁷⁶Op. cit., pp 5-6.

⁷⁷Op. cit., pp 7-10.

when the ʿAbbāsids Caliphate collapsed in Baghdad, the Arab sun set on Spain, and were eventually driven out of the Iberian peninsula.⁷⁸

When the sun of Islam rose on the world, and the call to its message was made to humanity, the Arab conquerors moved out of their peninsula towards North Africa. Egypt, naturally, was the first to fall in the hands of ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ in 642 (21 H).⁷⁹ ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ and his cousin ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ al-Fahri, after securing the permission of the Caliph, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, they progressed westwards to Cyrenaica in 642/3 (22H). Libya saw ten different campaigns by a number of different leaders, from ibn al-ʿĀṣ to Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr.

Ṭubruq, Darna and Intāblus⁸⁰ were first to be conquered by the Arab armies, then Ajdābiya followed suit in 642 (22H).⁸¹ The conquest was almost peaceful and bloodless and resulted in the Berber tribes concluding a truce with the Arab conquerors and paid them tribute. The main tribe that welcomed the Arabs was Liwāta, a significant number of them were converted to Islam, and subsequently became the vanguard in defence of the Islamic State, also, the supply lines for further future conquest.

The Arab commander; Busr ibn abi Arṭāʾ, who ensued the conquest of south Libya, headed south towards Zuwayla and Fazzān in 643 (23H). Whereas ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ headed for Tripoli⁸² in the Northwest, which capitulated, just after a month of siege in 643 (23H).⁸³ Then, Sirt, Sabratha, Leptis Magna and Shrūs⁸⁴ followed suit, after

⁷⁸Op. cit., pp 11-13.

⁷⁹Al-Mizīni, *Libya mundh al-Faṭḥ al-ʿArabi Ḥatta Intiqāl al-Khilāfa al-Fāṭimiyya ila Miṣr*, pp 27-28.

⁸⁰It means five cities: Apollonia (Sūsa), Cyrene (Shaḥāt), Barca (al-Marj), Tocrā (Tawkara) and Euesperides and later Berenice (Benghazi).

⁸¹Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Faṭḥ al-ʿArabi fī Libiya*, pp 41-44.

⁸²It said that the first person to name Tripoli *Tarāblus* was ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ.

Op. cit., p 73.

⁸³Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 45-49.

⁸⁴It was one of the major towns along with Jādū, but it has been reduced to a historical site ever since.

Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 72-73.

which ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ returned to Egypt leaving behind in charge as commander of Cyrenaica, and Sirt garrisons ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ and Busr ibn abi Artāʾ respectively.⁸⁵

Some of the Berber tribes abandoned the new religion of Islam especially Mizāta, which prompted the third Righteous Caliph, ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, to send them an enforcement commanded ʿAbdullah ibn abi Sarḥ in 649 (29H). Ibn abi Sarḥ's army had a number of revered men of the Prophet's companions and their followers. The campaign was dubbed the army of the al-ʿAbādilla,⁸⁶ because all of their names started with ʿAbdullah. They, also, had amongst them the Prophet's own grand children, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. The army was followed with reinforcements with ʿAbdullah ibn al-Zubayr.⁸⁷ This campaign resulted in the reversion of the Berbers to Islam.

Islam encountered many hurdles, at first, in Libya especially in the west. It took the Berbers more than 66 years to accept and establish Islam in Libya. This was reiterated by ibn Khaldūn when he wrote:

**ʿBerbers rejected Islam 12 times, and only accepted it
totally during the rule of Mūsa ibn Nuṣayrʿ .⁸⁸**

The remaining Berbers did not embrace Islam until the conquest of Spain in 711 (93H) by Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād. He was one of Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr's commanders. Ibn Ziyād was a Berber himself from the Djerīd in southern Tunisia.⁸⁹

Midst the dust of the Islamic conquest of Libya and the subsequent Arab tribal immigration, too much blood was shed on and by both parties. Both, mass grave sites

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., (F.N) p 46.

The ʿAbdullahs - plural of ʿAbdullah; and they are ʿAbdullah ibn abi Sarḥ, ʿAbdullah ibn al-ʿAbbās, ʿAbdullah ibn ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭāb, ʿAbdullah ibn Jaʿfar, ʿAbdullah ibn Masʿūd, ʿAbdullah ibn al-Zubayr and ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ.

⁸⁷Al-Qaṭʿāni, *al-Iḥāba miman Duḥina fil-Bilād al-Lībiyya min al-Ṣaḥāba*, pp 17-27.

⁸⁸Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 147.

⁸⁹Brett, op. cit., p 86.

Cf. Mawrid Encyclopaedia, article: (*Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād*).

of the Arab conquerors,⁹⁰ and the killings of Berber tribesmen and their dispersion, proves the sternness and rigidity of the Arabs and Berbers alike. Despite the toughness and the self-esteem coiled in stubbornness, Arabs and Berbers both quickly forgot the past and melted in one another under the umbrella of Islam.⁹¹

While the Muslims were indulged in the civil war in the East, the Berbers all of a sudden negated their ties with Islam. Nevertheless some of them remained loyal to the new religion, and along with the Arab conquerors laid the foundation for the earliest Islamic society in Libya, and offered their support for the wider Islamic State and its troops advancing westward into the Maghrib and Europe. When things went wrong in case of a defeat, they could take refuge in the newly Islamised areas, and re-organise themselves before they march on again.⁹² Like exactly what happened with the Arab commander Zuhayr ibn Qays al-Balawi, when he withdrew from Qayrawān (in Tunisia) to Cyrenaica after the killing of 'Uqba Nāfi' by the Berber leader Kusiyla ibn Lamzam in 682 (63H), and the fall of Qayrawān in the hands of the Berbers. Another Arab leader of the name of Ḥassān ibn Nu'mān took the Islamic army, firstly Arabs and later joined by Berbers, and moved onto Ifriqiya (Tunisia) in 695 (76H). He first stopped in Tripoli and recruited more Arab and Berber fighters. This was a proof that he was not opposed either in Cyrenaica nor Tripoli. Ḥassān went by sending some of his men to Ifriqiya led by Hilāl ibn Tharwān al-Liwāti for reconnaissance. Liwāti was the first Berber commander to be empowered with a rather prestigious position in the Islamic army, and this posed a further proof that most Berbers by now have settled in Islam and had taken on the responsibility of spreading it. It was, equally, a proof for the Arabs who trusted the Berbers and embraced them as their brethren in faith and do not object to them as leaders,⁹³ which eased the task of Islamising and Arabising Libya in a faster time than the rest of the region.⁹⁴

Amongst the Arab conquerors there were lots of al-Muhajrīn and al-Anṣār from the tribes of Aws and Khazraj. Also, there were other Arabs from Yemeni tribes such as

⁹⁰Al-Qaṭ'āni, op. cit., pp 54-56.

⁹¹Kamālī, op. cit., p 8.

⁹²Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 60-63.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 131-133.

Lakhm, Azd, Tujib, Ṣadf, Judhām,⁹⁵ and other Arab tribesmen such as al-Ghasāsina, Banu Dumluj, Muhara, ʿInth, Miydaʿān, Fizāra, Rabīʿa, Ghaṭafān, Jushm, Qurra, Hūn, and were followed with their families and settle in the newly conquered areas in Libya and maintained in the same time their loyalty to the Islamic Caliphate.⁹⁶ Those Arabs spread out in Libya and gradually increased in numbers, and together with the Berbers created the first Islamic society in Libya and prepared the ground for receiving more and more of new waves of Arab migration from the East.

Once the whole of Libya was submitted to the authority of Islam under the leadership of ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ who annexed it to his domain in Egypt,⁹⁷ and this was done in a peaceful manner with exception of Waddān,⁹⁸ Tripoli and the surrounding territories. His rule was semi-autonomous, which islamically meant that he had the overall powers and was only responsible to the Caliph in Madina, and those powers of his included;

1. implementation of Sharīʿa laws with regards to the rights of God and people.
2. defence and safeguard of the Faith and its adherents, and the spread of its message.
3. appointment of judges and settlement of disputes, and other life-related or religious matters.
4. management of the armies and their military organisation in accordance with strict military norms and its pay structure.
5. collection and distribution of tribute, alms and taxes as well as recruitment and dismissal of staff.⁹⁹

⁹⁵Al-Mizāni, op. cit., pp 183-191.

⁹⁶Mannāʿ, op. cit., pp 9-14.

⁹⁷It was reported that ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ to have said " if it had not been for my wealth and children in Ḥijāz, I would have come to live in Cyrenaica. I do not know of a better and peaceful place than this ".

⁹⁸Waddān was a kingdom encompassing the oases of Sūkana, Zalla and Waddān itself. Later on, Hūn joint them after being named after the Arab tribe of Banu Hūn who came with the conquering Arab army from the Arabian peninsula.

Cf. Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, p 73.

⁹⁹Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 69.

But, the Caliph, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, curtailed those powers of ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ down to the leadership of the army and leading the congregational prayers. The rest were transferred to other officials appointed by the Caliph. This was what we call, nowadays, decentralisation in action.

However, credit was mostly due to ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ for setting the principles of Islamic administration in Libya, where he resided for 28 years, from 642- 669 (22-49H). Ibn Nāfiʿ was one of the first leaders bent on spreading Islam and Arabic, and succeeded in making Arabic and Islam, to be at the disposal of every one regardless of their race or tongue. He made Arabic language the official medium of communication. Therefore, Libya's ties with the rest of the Islamic world was further strengthened. In order to ensure efficiency of its administration, Libya was divided into three separate regions;

- **Tripoli** - was under the direct rule of Tunisia's governor, who appoints its leaders and supervises its affairs.
- **Cyrenaica** - was affixed to Egypt's rule, and the governor of Egypt had the powers in ordaining its leaders and running its affairs.
- **Fazzān** – was largely left to the discretion of its tribal leaders to manage it, and if and when, the need arises for intervention, either of the two governments, in Tripoli or Cyrenaica, promptly did just that.

Islam and Arabic went on establishing their roots in Libya and found unquestioned acceptance amongst the natives in most cases which strengthened the pursued Islamic fraternity between the Berbers and Arabs, especially during the short-lived rule of Ḥassān ibn al-Nuʿmān 701-704 (82-85H).

Ḥassān laid the foundations and the pillars of the then modern administration of Libya. He kept records and register everything, collected taxes, and run the other day to day business of the State. This was done in conjunction with the process of Arabisation which was initiated by the Umayyad State, and was pursued strenuously by the Umayyad caliph of ʿAbd-al-Malik ibn Marwān 685-705.¹⁰⁰ He officially inaugurated the Arabisation of administration tools acquired from the neighbouring

¹⁰⁰He was the 5th Umayyad Caliph. He is regarded by some as the 2nd founder of the Umayyad State. During his rule most opposition was eradicated. During his reign ʿAbdullah ibn al-Zubayr was murdered and crucified on the Kaʿba by al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf. Also, he Arabised the administration and minted the State's own currency.

civilisation, things such as the Postal and military systems, treasury, police and so on and so forth¹⁰¹.

Hassān universalised Arabic as the spoken and written language of Libya and popularised amongst all Libyans. Berbers and those of Afro-descent accepted the new reality, because Arabic had effectively become the language of worship as well as dealings. The Berbers were equally in favour for an unified language to ease their daily lives since they spoke many different dialects,¹⁰² and Arabic was the language of the rulers as well as the strongest and, therefore, presented itself as a bond between the various ethnic groups within the State. Arabic had become, also, far superior by that time, and its strength was increasing and prevailed over other languages in the region due to its rich heritage of poetry and literature. The Qur'ān has added considerably to its standing by giving it a sacrosanct gloss and supremacy. Islamic sciences spread throughout the world in those times owing to the great efforts exerted by Muslim scholars, Arabs and non-Arabs alike, and that gave birth to the great Arabic/Islamic intellectual renaissance. This awakening was in the fields of philosophy and jurisprudence in particular, which later turned into schools of thought of differing jurisprudence looking intellectually into the world's religious and socio-politics.

Hassān put the soldiers, whether they were Arabs, Berbers or others, on a register by enlisting their names, descriptions and weapons. In doing so, he re-organised the armies and deployed them to fortify the borders with the enemies.

The army was one of the first opportunity-institutions where the Arabs and Berbers, and others could really mix on equal footings, and thence the Berbers had become a force to be reckoned with in the Islamic State. They, also, played a vitally decisive role in shaping Islam's future political presence in North Africa as a whole after permeating its spheres of influence and power, and becoming, if not in, adjacent to the leadership and decision-making process. With that, the Berbers had become just as powerful as the Arabs, who were their superiors, but now their equals and brethren in

¹⁰¹I visited Damascus in 1999, and saw the treasury hanged high on eight pillars with no entry-ladder to it. Who ever wanted to access it would need a ladder, and the keys of the Caliph, treasurer, guard, and the chief policeman. This was done purposefully to stop theft or squandering.

¹⁰²Cf. Darāji, op. cit., p 144. The Berbers had many dialects to the extent Zanāta was not sometimes included in the Berber group. In Algeria and Morocco Berbers still speak various dialects, and have TV newscasts, in these countries, in their respective dialects.

Islam.¹⁰³ This newly found influence prepared the ground for the Berbers to create newly autonomous political realities in the Maghrib. Those realities became Islamic in their religion, Berber in their tribal leadership and with Arabic as their official language.

The Berbers increased dramatically in significance and power. Arabisation, as subsequent of events, was widespread amongst them especially during the reign of the Just Umayyad Caliph, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz,¹⁰⁴ when he appointed one of his best and just associates, Ismāʿīl ibn abi al-Muhājir in 718 (100H) to the Wali (governor) to rule the Berbers in North Africa. Ibn al-Muhājir was apparently good, and became famous for his good conduct with his citizens, and a great number of Berbers converged into Islam and had forgotten once and for all apostasy.¹⁰⁵ But it was not very long before the shortening of the desired Islamic brotherhood and equality advocated and implemented by ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz himself, whose Caliphate was shortened by his conspicuous death that lasted less than three years.

After the death of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Yazīd ibn ʿAbd-al-Malik took over the Umayyad successor, and inaugurated his rule by sacking Ismāʿīl ibn abi Muhājir. He appointed in al-Muhājir's place a begot in the name of Yazid ibn abi Muslim, former slave and a puppet of al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqāfi the infamous tyrant.¹⁰⁶ Yazīd ibn abi Muslim was just as bad as his master. He oppressed the Berbers badly, and he was an absolute despot and a menace. The Berbers, understandably, did not like it nor took it. They had become accustomed, although for a relatively short period, to fairness by the previous ruler, and now all their achievements had been undermined, so they rejected ibn Muslim's leadership. Subsequently, discriminating against them constricted their role in the army. Ibn abi Muslim even dared to tattoo the Berbers who were working in the palace of government to identify them from their Arab

¹⁰³Ḍayf, *Aṣr al-Duwal wa al-Imārat: Libya, Tūnis and Ṣiqilliyya*, p 47.

¹⁰⁴The 8th Umayyad caliph (717-720AD)-(99-102H) was famous for his justice, piety and asceticism. He conducted his state affairs along the lines of the righteous caliphs before him. He reformed the country internally especially its finances. He was, also, very tolerant with Jews and Christians, and was just in dealing with non-Arabs and their fellow Muslims, by giving them equal rights and duties according to Sharī'a, and because of that he was poisoned to death.

¹⁰⁵Al-Mizāni, op. cit., pp 63-64.

colleagues in clear violation of their rights as Muslims and citizens. The Berbers saw that as a vicious racism and hatred, and also degrading them to the level of non-Muslims. Therefore, Berbers resentfully revolted against ibn Muslim's rule violently, which led to the killing and downfall of him after two months from his appointment by al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf.¹⁰⁷ The Berber revolt continued on against the consecutive oppressive Umayyad rulers, and saw a huge Berber popular revolt by Maysara al-Maṭghari also known as al-Khārjī.¹⁰⁸ He was the first Berber leader to adopt Khārijites' ideology and called Berbers to it.¹⁰⁹ He gained supporters and fought the authorities and scored victories here and there against the Umayyads. He declared himself the Caliph, and was followed by the Berbers for various reasons. His message took an ideological and political as well as racial trend. However, Maysara was too extreme for Berbers who had to depose him, and was killed by his own followers in 739 (122H).¹¹⁰

The emerging of the Khārijite¹¹¹ phenomenon marked a sad chapter of Berber history. This phenomenon of Kharijism found a fertile ground in the hearts and minds of the Berbers. It represented opposition in the name of Islam to the unjust rulers who unjustly ruled in the name of Islam. This phenomenon grew fast amongst the disfranchised by Berbers and was fed by the behaviours of those in the rulers' camp. It got very bad to the extent that the 10th Umayyad Caliph, Hishām ibn ʿAbd-al-Malik,

¹⁰⁶He killed ʿAbdullah ibn al-Zubayr, one of the conquerors of Libya, and one of the first to clothe the much honoured and revered al-Kaʿba. But, al-Ḥajjāj crucified him ibn al-Zubayr on the Kaʿba after bombarding and burning it down

¹⁰⁷Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, p 152.

¹⁰⁸Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 84-86.

¹⁰⁹Op. cit., p 155.

¹¹⁰Darāji, op. cit., p 114.

¹¹¹Those who broke away from the army of ʿAlī ibn abi Ṭālib, the 4th Righteous Caliph, after the battle of Ṣiffīn against the Umayyads led by Muʿāwiya ibn abi Sufyān, especially when ʿAlī accepted arbitration offered by Muʿāwiya. The Khārijites pronounced ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya as Kāfirs (non-believers) and fought both. ʿAlī, in turn, fought them back and defeated them, but their teachings spread, and eventually managed to assassinate ʿAlī in (661AD)-(41H). Their call against rulers who do not adhere to their interpretation of Islam found resonance amongst the disadvantaged Berbers. The Khārijites' teachings evolved into a number of schools, one of them is the Ibadite, despite the Berbers denial of such a link. They had their own ideological-based state known as Rustamids State stretching from Tripoli in the east to Algeria.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit.: (*Khawārij, or Khārijites*).

when it was brought to his attention the unrelenting revolts of the Berbers in North Africa which infuriated him and made him swear by saying;

**"I swear to God ... I will get angry in an Arab manner,
and send them [to the Berbers] an army - its forefront with
them and its tail here with me".¹¹²**

The Umayyad rulers, and the ʿAbbāsids after them, did not really wrong the Berbers by discriminating against them on racial bases, but this was due to the threat presented to their authority by Berbers. This very reason made those rulers play Arab tribes against each other,¹¹³ and the best example the crime the Umayyads committed against the Prophet's household¹¹⁴ to the extent of almost extinction.

Those ebbs and flows of politics in the region bewildered the Berbers too. The Berbers themselves were not coherent in their response to the unfolding of politics and the subsequent alliances to follow. Kutāma stood by the Fāṭimids, Zanāta sided with the Umayyads whereas Ṣanhāja firmly supported the ʿAbbāsids and their propaganda.¹¹⁵ The Ṣanhāja support for the ʿAbbāsids was evidently manifested against the Fāṭimids led by the governor of Ifriqiya Sharf al-Dawla al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs al-Ṣanhāji, or better known as al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs.¹¹⁶

¹¹²Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 87.

¹¹³Al-Mizīni, op. cit., p 55.

¹¹⁴The soldiers of Yazid ibn Muʿāwīya killed al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī and most of his household in Karbalā' in Iraq. Al-Ḥusayn was horrifically mutilated and exhibited openly. Yazid and Ḥusayn are both of Arab Qurayshite stock.

¹¹⁵Brett, op. cit., p 97.

¹¹⁶Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 241-242.

The migration of Arab tribes to Libya

The world of Islam was ruled by a number of successive dynasties after the Righteous Caliphate. The first dynasty was the Umayyads founded by Mu'āwiya ibn abī Sufyān in 661(41H),¹¹⁷ who bequeathed it to his son Yazid. The State survived for about 89 years, during which 14 different Umayyad Caliphs ruled. It stood out for its inclination and prejudice in favour of the Arabs, especially the Umayyads, and ruthlessly opposed the Hāshimites and the 'Alawis ('Alids) were particularly singled out.¹¹⁸ Also, it was allegedly notorious for the mistreatment of the Mawali (non-Arab Muslims). Their racial discrimination was nasty to the extent of not allowing Mawali to lead congregational prayers.¹¹⁹ The Umayyad rule was eventually brought down by the 'Abbāsids¹²⁰ led by 'Abdullah al-Saffāh. The 'Abbāsids went on to rule almost the whole of the Islamic world for about 508 years in which saw 37 different 'Abbāsid Caliphs. The enormity of the size of the 'Abbāsid State meant governance had to be decentralised, which in turn allowed Mawālī to influence its conduct. That ultimately resulted into the creation of a group of mini-autonomous states separated from the main 'Abbāsid body.¹²¹

¹¹⁷He is the founder of the Umayyad State. He was famous for his shrewdness and insight. Fought the 4th and last Righteous Caliph, Imām 'Alī, and after his death reconciled with his son, al-Ḥasan, who in turn relinquished his claim to succeed his father and accepted Mu'āwiya's rule. 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, one of the commanders who conquered Libya, pledged allegiance to Mu'āwiya and fought against 'Alī. Mu'āwiya moved the state's capital to Damascus, and made his administration hereditary in his sons setting new precedence. He was the first Arab leader to establish an Islamic naval fleet.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit.: (*Mu'āwiya ibn abī Sufyān*).

Al-Zereky, *al-A'lam li Ashhar al-Rijāl wal-Nisā' min al-'Arab wal-Musta'ribīn wal-Mustashriqīn*, Vol. 7, p 262.

¹¹⁸The Umayyad's preachers used to curse 'Alī, his wife Fāṭima and their children especially al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn in mosques complying with the wishes of almost all Umayyad caliphs with exception 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz who stopped it. But they immediately restored it after his demise.

¹¹⁹Al-Mizīni, op. cit., p 66.

¹²⁰Their cause was championed in Khurasān, when they eventually became the effective leaders of the Islamic state, they moved the capital to Baghdad. At first the Persians took control of the state, and later the Turkic Mamluks replaced the Persians in directing the state which facilitated, much later, the rise of the Turkish Ottoman State. There were a number of mini-states separated from the 'Abbāsids such as Ḥamdānids in Aleppo, al-Ikhshīdids and Ayyūbids in Egypt, Sāmānids in Persia and Ghaznavids in Afghanistan, and Idrīsids and Fatimids in North Africa. Their reign witnessed the flourish of the Arabic-Islamic state and the extension of its borders to its furthest. The intellectual and literary life reached its peak during the 'Abbāsid's rule.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit.: (*al-'Abbāsiyyūn, or 'Abbāsids*).

¹²¹Bosworth, op. cit., p 10.

One of those groups who broke away from the ʿAbbāsids was the Fāṭimids.¹²² They were, also, known as ʿUbaydiyyūn. They emanated from the Ismaʿīlite Shīʿites sect in 909-1171 (297-567H).¹²³ The movement derived its name from its leader and founder ʿUbaydallah al-Mahdi¹²⁴ in al-Mahdiya in Tunisia, and 13 Fāṭimid caliphs succeeded him. The Fāṭimids were bolstered by the Berber kith and kin of Kutāma tribe, and during the reign of al-Muʿizz they marched into Cyrenaica and met fierce resistance by the dwelling tribes there who refused their Shiʿism, but they were rendered in by the sword edge. They went on to Egypt in the east where they established their rule after subjugating Fazzān in southern Libya and having secured the backing of Zuwayla tribe. Zuwayla left Fazzān for Egypt led by the commander Jawhar al-Ṣāqilli in 969 (358H), who later founded the city of Cairo and made it the capital of the Fāṭimids. When the Fāṭimid Caliph, al-Muʿizz left Ifriqiya for Egypt, he appointed the Berber commander Buluggin al-Zīri al-Ṣanhāji to be his successor.

After the death of the latter his son, al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs, succeeded him as the new Sultan of Ifriqiya in 1015 (406H). Ifriqiya borders included Tunisia, east of Algeria and Tripolitania, and the bulk of its population were with the Fāṭimid Doctrine. Al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs pretended his adherence to Shiʿism, at least in public, and concealed his true belief and following of the Sunni Māliki school. This was in clear dissension to his forefathers observance of Shiʿism. But it was not for long before he was exposed, and in doing so he was supported by his own tribe, Ṣanhāja, and Zanāta as well. Al-Muʿizz, especially his Māliki advocates in Tripoli,¹²⁵ got carried away and incited their fanatic supporters to kill the Shīʿites¹²⁶ who dishonoured the Prophet's

¹²²They derived their name, Fatimids, from Fāṭima the daughter of the Prophet, and sometimes are called ʿAlawis after the name of her husband ʿAlī ibn abi Ṭālib, and they follow the descent to Ismāʿīl ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq. They subjugated North Africa, Sicily and south Italy to their rule. They also extended their rule into Greater Syria. Saladin was one of their outstanding commanders. He ruled Egypt, and later eliminated their state. The Fatimids are famous for building Cairo City and the al-Azhar mosque.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit.: (*al-Fāṭimiyyūn, or Fāṭimids*).

¹²³Bosworth, op. cit., pp 46-48.

¹²⁴From him the ʿUbaydiyyūn derive their name. He is ʿUbaydallah al-Mahdi ibn al-Ḥabīb al-Muṣḍaq ibn Muhammad al-Maktūm ibn Ismāʿīl (the Imām) ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq ibn Muhammad al-Bāqir, and goes up to al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī.

¹²⁵Al-Zāwī, *A ʿlām Libya*, pp 273-274.

¹²⁶In an incitement against the Shiʿites they cried out for killing al-Mashāriqa meaning the Easterners. The Shiʿites came from the East and were known as such.

Cf. al-Zāwī, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, p 288.

companions and did not perform Friday prayers. Al-Mu'izz supporters tore their flags and instructed his Māliki preachers to curse them publicly as a sign of total rejection of the Fāṭimid authority over al-Mu'izz's domain.¹²⁷ He succeeded in annihilating all forms of opposition including Mu'tazila and the Khārijites with exception of the moderate followers of the Ibādite School, but encouraged people to follow the Māliki School. In 1050 (443H), al-Mu'izz ibn Bādīs was followed by the Cyrenaican leader, Jabāra ibn Mukhtār, and his people in negating the Shī'ites, and expressing their support and prayers to the 'Abbāsīd Caliph al-Qā'im bi-Amrallah.¹²⁸

When al-Mu'izz finally managed to cut off all ties with the Fāṭimids in 1050 (443H) and embarked publicly on advocating the 'Abbāsīd's cause, this was perceived by Fāṭimids as an act of war. The 8th Fāṭimid Caliph, al-Mustanṣir billah¹²⁹ 1036-1094 (428-487H), was advised by his close aides headed by al-Wazir al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-Yāzūrī to send in the Arabs of Hilāl and Sulaym, and their clients. Hilāl and Sulaym belong to the same Muḍari agnatic Arab tribal branch of 'Adnān.¹³⁰ Those Arab tribes were prominent in the days of Jāhiliyya and in the early years of Islam for their military characteristics, but when the non-Arab Muslims took hold of the affairs of the 'Abbāsīd State they took to the desert of Najd in the heart of the Peninsula. They, afterwards, sided with Qarāmiṭa (or Qarmatians)¹³¹ and adopted their interpretation of

¹²⁷ Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 333.

¹²⁸ Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-'Arabi fi Libya*, pp 277, 287-291.

¹²⁹ He became a caliph at the age of seven, his mother took hold of him and the affairs of caliphate. His rule lasted for more than half century, during which the Fatimid State saw many disasters and setbacks, one of which was the famine that struck Egypt for seven years.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit.: (*al-Mustanṣir bi-Allah*).

¹³⁰ Mu'nis, op. cit., pp 81-85.

¹³¹ They claim that they descended from Muhammad ibn Ismā'īl ibn Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. They were called Qarmatians in attribution to Hamdan ibn Qarmat ibn al-Ash'ath who spread their doctrine amongst the people of Kūfa in 891AD-278H. The rule of their real founder, Sulaymān ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Harām, went for about 30 years. Lots of Bedouin Arabs like Banu Sulaym and Rabī'a and others were converted and became their loyal soldiers, who later committed horrific crimes against pilgrim caravans. Especially when they sacked Makka and killed pilgrims and carried off the black stone of Ka'ba and tore its clothe, and took them to the eastern coastal part of the Arabian desert (Baḥrayn) where they kept for 22 years. They later marched towards Damascus and took from the Fatimids in 970AD-360H, and tried to take Egypt by they were defeated by the Fatimid al-Mu'izz in 972AD-362H. The Leaders of Baḥrayn annihilated them in 1027AD-418H, and were eventually wiped out after their movement continued for almost a century.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit: (*Qarāmaṭa, or Qarmatians*).

Islam, and accepted the authority of their state in al-Shām (the Levant or what is now known as Greater Syria).¹³²

Ibn Khaldūn describes those Arabs as criminals and thieves,¹³³ who committed acts of banditry against the faithful going to Makka to perform Ḥajj in blind obedience to the Qarāmiṭa.¹³⁴

In the Fāṭimids' expansion east of Egypt, they had to put an end to the Qarmatian rebellion and discipline their supporters of those Arab Bedouin tribes of Banu Hilāl and Banu Sulaym. These tribes eventually were brought into ranks and exiled to the eastern bank of the Nile in Egypt, where they were confined to restricted areas by the Nile, which inconvenienced those Bedouin who were, by nature, accustomed to freedom of movement.¹³⁵ Al-Mustanṣir wanted to teach those discourteous Bedouin a lesson and by the same token to get rid of the renegade ibn Bādīs and his insurrectionist followers. So as it were two bird with one stone. In doing so, al-Mustanṣir contacted the chiefs of those Arab tribes and started luring them towards Ifriqiya by portraying it as the promised heaven on earth, and it is theirs if they wanted it. At the same time to diminish the power and the authority of ibn Bādīs in the Bedouin's eyes. The tribal chiefs thought it out, and decided to take up the offer and get out of their misery in Egypt and head instead for Ifriqiya and resume their pastoral life as Bedouin.

Al-Mustanṣir provided those immigrating Arabs money and a camel each to help them on their journey, and told them:

" We give Ifriqiya and the seat of governance of ibn Bādīs, that fugitive slave, and you would never be poor again " .

¹³²Shinqāru, *Fitnat al-Sulṭa*, pp 257-267.

¹³³Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 331, 334-335, 343-346 .

¹³⁴Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 331-332.

¹³⁵Ibid.

His Wazir, al-Yāzuri, wrote to ibn Bādīs saying:

" We have sent you horses, and we sent on them men until

Allah fulfils something which has been decreed ".¹³⁶

Hundreds of thousands¹³⁷ of Arab tribesmen were dispatched in long streams across the Sahara in a colossal and epical "taghrība" (journey to the west) in 1051 (442H). This exodus of people was like a human flood in waves succeeding waves (Map. 4). The biggest of all was the one that did not stop there, but crossed Cyrenaica and Tripolitania to end up in the far Islamic Maghrib. Those tribesmen were not travelling alone, but had with them their wives, children, possessions and animals. Some of the animals were camels and donkeys were given to them as gifts by al-Mustanşir.¹³⁸ In the forefront of those tribes were Athbaj and Riyāḥ from Banu Hilāl who were first to trespass into Libya in the earliest tribal waves. They were proceeded by Zughba who had control of the land as well as leaders rose from amongst its rank, and followed by other tribes like Jushm and al-Ma'qil who were affiliated to the larger Hilālic tribes (Riyāḥ, Athbaj), and much later by relatively smaller ones such as Ṭarūd and 'Adwān. This flow of humans swelled in size as the time went past, and was increased by the incorporation of the Arabs of the conquest who were there before their advent like Banu Qurra of Cyrenaica. Other Arabs who welcomed them along with the remaining Berbers of the region who felt in fraternity with them.¹³⁹

Sulaym followed suit. Hilāl and Sulaym were related, and both felt the 'Adnāni Muḍari blood which brought them together, and for that both were known for the propensity to war. A fact which Al-Mustanşir found useful when he sent them to ibn Bādīs. Both followed each other in crossing the Nile and spread out in the western desert between Libya and Egypt, and punished ibn Bādīs as it was expected. Hilālīs and Sulaymis tossed the coin on who should have what, and the end result was that

¹³⁶Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 334.

¹³⁷It is thought that no less than half a million Arab crossed the Libyan desert.

¹³⁸Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-'Arabi fi Libya*, pp 293-294.

¹³⁹Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 335-340.

Cyrenaica was given to Banu Sulaym and the Hilālīs crossed the desert of Sirt towards Tripolitania and Gabes and beyond into the Great Maghrib.¹⁴⁰

The initial patch of Hilālīs consisted of Athbaj and Riyāḥ, and the second was Zughba and Jushm.¹⁴¹ A few years later were followed by Adwān and Ṭarūd as well as the Qaḥṭānī tribe of Kahlān. There were a lot of less famous tribes who surged into the west such as Fazāra, Asha° of Ghaṭfān, °Adiyy, Salūl of Murra, the Yemenite al-Ma°qil, But Athbaj was far superior in number and strength amongst those tribes who settled in Libya, notably in Tripolitania.

Banu Sulaym found Cyrenaica and the surrounding vicinities of the desert almost abandoned by the natives, because the Berbers confronted the Fāṭimid Caliph al-Mu°izz who then crushed and nearly wiped them out¹⁴² around 968 (357H).¹⁴³ Whereas Banu Hilāl were resisted by ibn Bādīs supported by the conqueror-Arabs such as Riyāḥ, Zughba and °Adiyy, and the Berber Zanāta and his own tribe Ṣanhāja. But the Arabs defected to their own blood, a sign of the old-age blood solidarity known in Arabic as °Aṣabiya, and so did Zanāta and eventually Ṣanhāja. Ibn Bādīs was defeated at last after numerous attacks and retreats between his armies, which were bigger in numbers than the Arabs. He eventually fled with his supporters to al-Manṣuriyya (Ṣayyād) near Janzūr east of Tripoli. Later he took refuge in al-Mahdiyya until he died in 1062 (453H). Al-Mahdiyya was ruled by ibn Bādīs's son Tamīmi.¹⁴⁴ Ibn Bādīs resigned to the new reality and willingly accepted the presence of the Arabs in his land. He married off his three daughters to Arab chiefs, and died there after a long reign lasted for almost 49 years.¹⁴⁵

Those Arab tribes cultivated military characteristics, which increased demand for their skills and resilience by the Berber ruling elite. This meant that there were mutual

¹⁴⁰Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 296.

¹⁴¹Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 295.

¹⁴²Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 296.

¹⁴³Bosworth, op. cit., p 46.

¹⁴⁴Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 299-300.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

interests for the two to engage one another. The Arabs wanted wealth and land, and the Berber rulers wanted power and security.¹⁴⁶ Some of those Arabs were even berberised, and settled in Tripolitania, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco along with the Berbers.¹⁴⁷

The Arabs spread out in their newly conquered land. Banu Hilāl encroached west towards Tunisia and beyond, and Banu Sulaym contented mostly with Libya. The latter consisted of five sub-tribes¹⁴⁸ and their clients:

- Banu ʿAwf
- Banu Dabbāb
- Banu Zagħb
- Banu Hayb
- Banu Labīd

They, at first, dwelled in Cyrenaica and around the Bay of Sirt, east of Tripoli. Until Sharf al-Dīn Qārāqūsh¹⁴⁹ led a campaign against Almohads and their Berber allies especially Hiwāra in 1172 (568H). Qārāqūsh was a slave of al-Muẓaffar Taqiyy al-Dīn ibn Ayyūb, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's (Saladin) brother, and his troops consisted mainly of Kurds and Egyptians.¹⁵⁰ He later was joined by some Arabs of Hilāl and Sulaym who strengthened his stance and enabled him to conclude the occupation of Tripoli.¹⁵¹

There were some opposition from some of the Arab chiefs and some of the local Berbers, namely Shaykh Murgham ibn Ṣābir ibn ʿAskṛ, the Arab chief of Jawāri tribe. Qārāqūsh captured him and sold to Christians in southern Europe.¹⁵² This occupation displaced a lot of people and brought in a new blood represented by the Kurdish and the Egyptian soldiers who settled there after the death of Qārāqūsh.¹⁵³ It is said that the

¹⁴⁶Al-Zāwi, op. cit., (F.N) p 292.

¹⁴⁷Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 30.

¹⁴⁸Agostini, op. cit., pp 29-38.

¹⁴⁹He is not to be confused with Bahā' al-Dīn Qārāqūsh who ruled Egypt on behalf of Saladin.
Cf. Kamālī, op. cit., p 34.

¹⁵⁰Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 317-320.

¹⁵¹Al-Zāwi, *A ʿlām Libya*, p 411.

¹⁵²Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, p 319.

¹⁵³Mannāʿ, op. cit., p 465.

inhabitants of Wrishfāna are of Kurdish stock, but local historians like al-Barmūni dispute that. However, it is believed that the Kurds settled around Janzūr, ʿAzīziyya, and Wrishfāna where they mixed with the locals, Berber and Arabs, and they are all called Ahāli. The term “Ahāli” usually is used for the Arabised indigenous population of Libya.¹⁵⁴

A section of the Arab Sulaymis of Banu ʿAwf and Dabbāb migrated to present-day Tunisia, while the rest’s progeny currently constitute the majority of the Arabs in west Libya (Figure. 1). They are categorised as follows:

ʿArab al-Sharq (the Arabs of the East), and they consist of:

Awlād Sālim (Swālim) and Awlād Sulaymān.

ʿArab al Gharb (the Arabs of the West), and they consist of:

al-Jawāri and al-Maḥāmīd.

The nomenclature: Arabs of the East or the Arab of the West, is merely an indication of their geographical locations in relation to Tripoli. East here means the area extending to both the east and south east of Tripoli till Sirt. Whereas the west meant all the areas extending west and south west of Tripoli till the Tunisian borders (Map. 7, 8).¹⁵⁵

Ibn Khaldūn claimed¹⁵⁶ that Banu Zagħb settled in Jufra and Fazzān (Figure. 3). They were semi-nomads roaming the area, and from them descended al-Maqāriḥa, al-Ḥasāūnna, al-Zawāyid, al-Ḥuṭmān, and al-Qawāyid (Map. 11).

As for Hayb and Labbīd, they settled in Cyrenaica. There is a consensus amongst Arab scholars that these tribes and some of Dabbāb in addition to Rawāḥa, Fazāra, Nuṣra, ʿAza, and Jaʿfar and the Cyrenaican Arabised Berbers make up the majority of the Arabs of Cyrenaica. Amongst these Arabs stand out the Saʿādis from Banu Hayb (Map. 9). It is claimed they trace their roots to their founder Dhuʿayb (Dhuiyib) abi al-Layl al-Sulaymi of Hayb from Banu Sulaym. He was the chief of both Banu Sulaym and Banu Hilāl who settled in the region. As the legend says that he married Saʿda, the

¹⁵⁴Al-Zāwi, *Muḥjam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 171.

¹⁵⁵Kamālī, op. cit., p 37.

¹⁵⁶Op. cit., pp (F.N) 27-28, 39.

daughter of the Berber chief Khalīfa al-Zanāti, one of ibn Bādīs's commanders and confidants.¹⁵⁷ Sa'ḍa born Dhu'ayb abi al-Layl three sons; Barghūth, 'Aqār and Salām. This means the strongest Arab tribal grouping in Cyrenaica has a Berber maternal ancestry.

This new breed adhered to the strict Arab genealogy that Arab and Berbers agreed to be accustomed to. This further enhanced the Berbero-Arab relation by being blood related and having a common denominator to co-exist.

This particular kind of marriage between the Arabs and Berbers meant a marriage of class of leadership to ensure the continuity of leadership descent, and this was evidently manifested by the Sa'ādis in Cyrenaica throughout their history (Figure. 2). This was further consolidated by the need and desire of others including the Ashrāf, the Prophet's descendants, wanting to be included in the Sa'ādi bloc (Map. 10). Al-Brā'aṣa is a classical example of that despite their claim of their Ashrāf origins, they insist on being and behaving as Sa'ādis first and foremost. Good proportion of those tribes in Cyrenaica relate themselves to the Sa'ādi camp despite the lack of tangible proof of their descending link to Sa'ḍa. Therefore, it is privately admitted that they are a concoction of everyone else, but most importantly they are politically considered Sa'ādis. However, the expression Sa'ādi is to describe those who have or have not any concrete linkage to Sa'ḍa. Frankly no one of them has. So, it's usually a term used for taking pride and pomposity of relating to this rather loose but highly defended and secured coalition. This was a conclusion of almost all historians, and in the forefront was the late Cyrenaican historian Bazama who believed that Sa'ḍa and the assumed tree of her offspring are basically a folkloric legend, after having studied this tradition thoroughly more than anybody else.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷Brett, op. cit., pp 136-138.

¹⁵⁸Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-'Uthmāni al-Awwal*, pp 97-113.

Ending

The Berbers, also known Amazigh, were loosely recognised by others as one ethnic community despite the fact that they are inhomogeneous in their dialects, religion and lifestyle.

The origins of Berbers are far from certain, a fact that paved the way for their association with the conquering Arabs in 643 (24H) leading to a comprehensive transformation of Libya. Despite the conflicting opinions about the origins of the Berbers there were many Berber tribes who immeasurably played different roles at different times that influenced events and people of the region.

North Africa in general and Libya in particular was transformed as a result of the influx of Arab tribes into Berber land. That process altered not only the ethnicity but also the culture and language in favour of the Arabs over others. Despite the strong Arab camp the Berbers always went on to being the rulers of the region after their Islamisation.

Chapter 2

Arabisation between inducement and intimidation

Prelude

The concept of Arabism, particularly Arab Bedouin living in the heart of the desert in Hijāz, Najd, and al-Rub^c al-Khāli (Empty Quarter) of the Arabian peninsula has long changed to new Arabism.

Arabism not just in the desert, but, a new Arabism adjacent to the shores of seas and oceans.¹ This change involved the so-called Arab “race” of the desert into being remodeled by other races. Both the forces and the blessing of Islam brought about this change. Also, the other change was the traditional Arabism of blood feud and Jāhiliyya had to be transformed into Islamic Arabism of coexistence through intermixing and tolerance.

Thereupon, the concept of Arabism in the Maghrib differs in its substance and manifestation from the one in the eastern part of the Arab world. One of the prerequisites of Arabism in the Maghrib is Islam. Whereas in the Arab East is not so. Islam and Arabism in the Maghrib, especially in Libya, are two proximal lines, and could not allow separation between them. Whoever embraces Islam as a religion would accept Arabic as the official language, and develops an affiliation to the land and to Muslims in the neighboring peoples of the region. This ushered a cultural and political loyalty and economic integration for the people in the region as a by-product of Arabism and Islam.

So, the term Arabism was, and still is, elastic in nature, and assimilating of others in its approach. This is without a doubt one of the main mechanisms of its survival, as well as a necessity dictated by human circumstances.

The Arabs traditionally have been divided into three types according to the historical evolution and genealogy; Bā'ida (extinct), Musta^criba Arabised,² and Ḥāditha post-Islam Arabs.³ In the past and present times, Arabism did not just include Muslims, but

¹Antonios, *Yaqāzat al-‘Arab; Tārīkh Ḥarakat al-‘Arab al-Qawmiyyah*, p 77.

²Alī, Muhammad. I., *Majallat al-Fīṣal*, issue no. 158, (1990-Saudi Arabia).

³Bazama, *Athr al-Dīn wal-Qawmiyyah fī Tārīkh al-Umma-h al-Islāmiyya*, pp 144-145.

other faiths as well especially Christians and to a lesser extent Jews and others.⁴ But in Libya it was only confined to Muslims who spoke Arabic and took pride in describing themselves as Arabs whether they were of Arab, Berber, African, European or other origins. Thereby, Arabism in Libya had one prime condition; professing the faith of Islam within the framework of the State, and with the intention of being "Libyanised" in the long run. However, this bonding to Arabism and Arabic language was only to coexist in peace on the acquired land in the name of Islam for the purpose of its ultimate Islamisation.

Therefore, we see a necessity in looking into the intimate integration between the Arabs and Berbers, and try to find an explanation for the almost ethnic melting in one another. This affinity has never occurred to Berbers in the past with the exception of the Phoenicians.⁵ The Europeans, in general, were never able to easily blend with Berbers. Whether they were Greeks, Romans before the advent of Islam, or modern Europeans such as Spanish, French or Italians to the surprise of European observers who could not understand the Islamisation and Arabisation of the Berbers with this rather unprecedented speed. One of those was the French observer, George Marçais, who said: "

"In less than a century, most of Christian [Berber] children became Muslims with zealousness that made them wanting to become martyrs for the cause of Islam. This conversion was successful in the first two centuries of Islam's history, or the following three centuries leaving no one outside Islam in the Maghrib with exception of very few pockets of doubtful existence... "⁶

⁴Before Islam the tribes of Ḥimyar were Jewish, and Najrān were Christians. In the Arab world there are many Christians especially in Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine, and some Jews still live in Morocco, Tunisia, Iraq, Syria and the Yemen.

Cf. Bazama, op. cit., p 76.

⁵Al-Barghūthi, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, pp 94-95.

⁶Al-^cArabāwi, *al-Barbar ^cArab Qudāma*, p 64.

Others may ask why Berbers unlike the Arabs have all since become Muslims and stopped apostatising forever.⁷

Arabisation was oscillated (swinging) between intimidation and inducement. Despite their contradiction both inducement and intimidation have greatly served the cause of Islam and Arabism. They put the people of the region on the road to be Arabised.

So, to discuss this earth-shattering social development in Libyan history I thought I ought to do it in a seriatim manner. I shall start with the inducing nature of Arabisation that had so many components and indicators that appealed to the “Arabiseables”, which included:

1) Islam: religion and identity:

By the advent of Islam the concept of Arabism had polarized greatly. Waves of peoples of different ethnic shades melted in Islam, as it championed the call for fraternity and the endeavor to emancipate mankind from serfdom and subjugation.

The simplicity and proximity of Islam to the Berbers’ character and nature made it easier to spread amongst them. So, Islam removed all social barriers between Muslims of different backgrounds, particularly between Berbers and Arabs. This brought about the intended harmony in accordance with the Islamic teaching of equality.⁸

Moreover, Islam was not a religion intended for a specific area, nor exclusively revealed for one particular race in a given time, and most certainly its civilization was not the product of one specific tribe, race or nationality. Furthermore, it was not the invention of the Arabs, but a divine message and gift from above them.⁹ The Qur’ān emphatically endorses this when it reads:

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah

⁷Kamāli, *Sukkān Tarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. bin Yunūs, (translator’s introduction) p 8.

⁸Maṭar, *al-Dhāt al-Jarīḥa*, p 312.

⁹Al-Ḥuṣayn, *al-Qawmiyyah al-‘Arabiyya min Manẓūr Islāmi*, p 20.

has full knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things)"

,¹⁰ **"The religion before Allah is Islam".¹¹**

However, Arabic was chosen by Allah to be the language of the Holy Qur'ān and subsequently the language of the believers;

"We have made it a Qur'ān in Arabic".¹²

Therefore, Arabism is in essence mastering the language of worship and communication as it was revealed in a number of Qur'ānic verses;

"while this is Arabic pure and clear",¹³

"In the perspicuous Arabic tongue".¹⁴

Also, it was reported that the Prophet of Islam Muḥammad said what loosely could be translated as:

"Arabic is not a father nor a mother, but a tongue".¹⁵

Therefore, Arabism is not an exact race-matter according to Islam. This was further stipulated when the Prophet cautioned his own Hāshimi clan of the tribe of Quraysh, who are regarded to be the finest amongst the Arabs, he said:

**"Oh banu Hāshim; people do not come to me with their
good deeds, and you come to me with your blood-relation
with me. I swear to Allah; I will not do you any good with
that".¹⁶**

¹⁰Sūrah 49, verse 13.

¹¹Sūrah 3, verse 19.

¹²Sūrah 43, verse 3.

¹³Sūrah 16, verse 103.

¹⁴Sūrah 26, verse 195.

¹⁵It was reported by ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh Dimashaq*, 5th edition (1992- Saudi Arabia), vol. 2, Ḥadīth no. 926, p 325. M. N. al-albānī pronounced it to be weak in *al-Silsala al-Ḍaʿīfa*, 5th edition (1992-Saudi Arabia), vol. 7, Ḥadīth no.2, p 203.

¹⁶It was reported in *al-Zamakhshari's Tafsīr of the Qur'ān*. However, al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Ziylāʿi finds this Ḥadīth to be very strange.

So, Islamic Arabism was alone the motive behind the fact that made the Arabs a nation to rival the greatest of civilizations culturally, socially, economically and politically. This Arabs' eminence and elevation are solely because of Islam. The Qur'ān still extends reverence and prevalence to the language of the Arabs, and made it sacrosanct and international in both in this world and the hereafter, as Muslims believe it. It is also fair to say that Islam has immunized Arabic from fragmentation into so many languages like what happened with Latin when it splintered into Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese and others.¹⁷

In addition to the virtue that Islam has bestowed upon the Arabs, they had remarkable potentialities to undertake this mission, one must not belittle the historical role the Arabs played in the ascension of Islam and its advancement of knowledge. The respect for Arabs and wanting to join them was further boosted by an assumed Ḥadīth by the Prophet when he allegedly guarded against minifying the Arabs, he said;

"The Love of the [Muslim] Arabs is part of faith, and hating them is a sign of hypocrisy".¹⁸

"Allah chose from amongst the children of Adam the Arabs. From the Arabs chose Muḍir, and from Muḍir chose Quraysh, from Quraysh chose banu Hāshim, and He chose me [Muḥammad] from banu Hāshim. So, I am chosen from the chosen. Whoever loves the Arabs, with their love he loves me, and whoever hates them with their hatred he hates me".¹⁹

Cf. Jamal al-Dīn al-Ziylā'i, *Takhrīj al-Aḥādīth wal-Athār*, ed. by 'Abdullah al-Sa'd, 1st edition (1993-Saudia Arabia). vol. 1, p 91.

¹⁷Arabic is one of the official used languages in the United Nations along with English, French, Russian, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese.

¹⁸It was reported by abu al-Qāsim al-Ṭabarāni, *al-Muḥjam al-Āwsaṭ*, ed. by Tāriq al-Ḥusayni, (1994-Egypt), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no. 2537, p 76. M. N. al-albāni pronounced it to be very weak in *al-Silsala al-Ḍa'īfa*, 3rd edition (1988-Saudi Arabia), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no.1190, p 329.

¹⁹It was reported in *Mustadrak 'ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, abu 'Abdullah al-Ḥākim al-Nīsāpuri, ed. by Mustafa 'Aṭṭā, 1st edition (1990-Lebanon), vol. 4, Ḥadīth no. 6953, p 83. M. N. al-albāni pronounced it to be weak in *al-Silsala al-Ḍa'īfa*, 1st edition (2000-Saudi Arabia), vol. 7, Ḥadīth no.3038, p 75.

He also said:

"If the Arabs are humiliated then Islam is humiliated."²⁰

Despite the weakness of the aforementioned Aḥadīth in terms of whether they were ever said by the Prophet and, therefore, sanctioned and authenticated to that affect, all the above mentioned Islamic textual stipulations promoted and made Arabisation a subject of high demand, at least for the many influential believers. Islam presented, to mankind, equality and justice in its purest form, and Arabism was endorsed as part of its identity. The Prophet laid one of the golden rules that attracted people into Islam when he said;

**"Oh people your God is one and your forebear is one, and
there can be no difference between Arabs and non-Arabs
except for piety and good deeds".²¹**

This had since become the motto of Islam. The Ibādīte (commonly known Abādīte after ibn Ibād)²² found in the Qur'ānic verse;

**"Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is
(he who is) the most righteous of you"²³**

a base for their principal doctrinal conditions for whoever wanted to become a Caliph.²⁴ In doing so, they parted from the rest of the majority Muslims (with the exception of Ḥanīfites) who demanded the belonging to the Qurayshite or even the Hāshimite to be nominated as a candidate for the Caliphate. However, all schools of Islamic thoughts have agreed that Islam with the Arabs will remain, and with others

²⁰It was reported in *Muḥjam al-Mawṣili*, abu Ya'la al-Mawṣili, ed. by Ārshād al-Ḥaq al-Āthari, 1st edition (1986-Pakistan), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no.1881, p 402. M. N. al-albāni pronounced it to be fabricated in *al-Silsala al-Ḍa'īfa*, 1st edition (1992-Saudi Arabia), vol. 1, Ḥadīth no.163, p 301.

1st edition (1992-Saudi Arabia).

²¹Ḥanbal, Ahmad ibn , *al-Musnad* (Egypt edition), vol. 5, Ḥadīth no. 23536, p 411. M. N. al-albāni pronounced it to be authenticated in *al-Silsala al-Ṣaḥīḥa*, 1st edition (1996-Saudi Arabia), vol. 6, Ḥadīth no. 2700, p 449.

²²Hitti, *the History of the Arabs*, p 247.

Al-Ṭabāṭabā'i, *al-Ibādīyya Tārīkhan wa- 'Aqīda*, p 54.

²³Sūrah 49, verse 13.

²⁴Al-Shak'a, *Islām bilā Madhāhib*, pp 139-140.

will be strengthened and flourish. The Christian Lebanese thinker, Clovis Maksoud,²⁵ echoed this when he said;

"There is no Arabism without Islam, and no Islam without Arab referential authority".

Arabisation requests and ascertains the necessity of this referential authority so as to be the showcase for the identity of Islam. Therefore, many Islamic languages are abundantly injected with Arabic. Even some of the world languages are strongly influenced by Arabic, and they differ in proportion. For example; Maltese is overwhelmed, and so as, to a lesser extent, Hindi and Spanish.

2) Sizeable section of Imams, Islamic scholar and thinkers are of non-Arab origins:

A good number of Imams who founded schools of Islamic thoughts are of different races and shades. In addition to Arab scholars, there were, and still are, many non-Arab savants and intellectuals at the core of Islamic Call who make up the backbone of the Islamic and Arab thinking machine.

Yet, those ones who made the great Islamic culture, as we know it now, are mostly of non-Arab origins. Most Arab sources go in so far in acknowledging that prominent scholars such as abu Ḥanīfa,²⁶ al-Ṭabari,²⁷ ibn Ḥazm,²⁸ al-Bahīqī are of Persian origin. Also, there were other scholars of non-Arab origin such as ibn Sīrīn, ibn Khallikān, al-Shahrastānī, Yāqut al-Ḥamway, Sībaway, ibn Sīna, and al-Layth ibn Saʿd,²⁹ and Saʿīd ibn Jubayr and Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr. More than that, the overwhelming majority of

²⁵A distinguished academic and prominent commentator, was the Arab league representative in London during 1990s and later became the director of the centre of the studies of the South at the American University of Washington.

²⁶He was the grandson of a Persian slave.

Cf. Hitti, op. cit., p 397.

²⁷Zuḥaylī, *al-Imām al-Ṭabari*, p 29.

²⁸Khalīfa, *ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusi*, pp 11-14.

²⁹Al-Zerekly, *al-Aʿlām li Ashhar al-Rijāl wal-Nisā' min al-ʿArab wal-Mustaʿribīn wal-Mustashriqīn*, vol. 5, p 248.

the Ḥadīth (Prophet's sayings and traditions) scholars are non-Arabs including by al-Bukhārī, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisā'i and ibn Māja.³⁰

Abu 'Ubayada Muslim ibn abu Karīma, a referential authority in the Ibāḍī school was a Negroid. But, this was never a deterrent, and nor it impeded the manifestation of his scholarly knowledge, piety, and grace. He is extolled greatly and held in the highest eminence by his Ibāḍī followers.³¹

If I was to elaborate by digging up the origin of Muslim scholars or their relation to Arabism I would unnecessarily overburden this chapter. However, we can sum up by saying people are all related in one way or another. Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet Muḥammad, his mother was of an Egyptian Copt background. The mother of 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn (4th Shī'ite Imām), Shah Zinān, the Persian princess descendant of the Sāsānid dynasty of Persia.³² Also, Ḥamīda al-Barbariya, of Berber origins, who was the wife of al-Imām al-Ṣādiq (6th Shī'ite Imām) and the mother of al-Imām al-Kāẓim, (7th Shī'ite Imām) who is buried in his famous Shrine in al-Kāẓimiya area of Baghdad.³³

There were also many Muslim rulers, whether they were Berbers, Seljuqs, Ayyūbids, Ṣafavids, or Ottomans, made Arabism an acceptable notion to be embraced, and exhibited Arabisation to people as a fashionable and desirable commodity.

3) The rivalry between the Ibāḍites and Mālikites:

The Ibāḍīte School had the precedence to disseminate its teachings amongst the Berbers particularly in "Libya",³⁴ and it was then the only Islamic school to have a

³⁰ Al-Ḥusayn, op. cit., pp 83-86.

Amīn, *Ḍuḥā al-Islām*, pp 171-203.

Al-Wā'ilī, *Hawīyyat al-Tashayyū'*, pp 94-98.

³¹ Al-Shak'a, op. cit., pp 148-149.

³² Lawsānī, *al-Durūs al-Bahīyya fī Mujmal Aḥwāl al-Rasūl wal-'Itira al-Nabawiyya*, pp 74-75.

³³ Op. cit., p 106.

Momen, *an introduction to Shi'ī Islam*, p 34.

³⁴ Al-Shak'a, op. cit., p 135.

stronghold especially in and around Tripoli and Jabal Nafūsa.³⁵ Their doctrine spread, in just 20 years, in all the area between Sirt and Tlemcen around 737(120H) on the hands of Salma ibn Sa'īd who came from the East to Ifriqiya. When he was in the East, he met 'Āṣim al-Sidrāti, Ismā'īl ibn Adrār al-Ghadāmsi, Dāwūd al-Qibli al-Nifzāwi, and 'Abd al-Raḥman ibn Rustam.³⁶ They all studied under him and learnt the tenets of the Ibāḍite doctrine, then went on to Baṣra where they spent five years reading jurisprudence that qualified and enabled them to be the scholars and advocates of Ibāḍism in the Maghrib. The teachings of the Ibāḍites found a fertile ground in the Maghrib for its message of opposing tyranny and dictatorship in the form of the central authority. It legitimizes the struggle against despotic rulers, if and when, they deviate from the right path of Islam as they saw it.³⁷

The Berbers saw that as instrument of abreaction, and an expression for their dislike of Arab dictate, but perhaps yearning for ruling themselves in separation from outsiders under their own "berberised" brand of Islam.³⁸

The Ibāḍite teaching spread in Libya before the advent of the Māliki School of jurisprudence. The Mālikis owe their popularity and prevalence in Libya to 'Alī ibn Ziyad al-'Absi. He was the man who introduced Imām Mālik's book (al-Muṭṭa) into Ifriqiya.³⁹ He was Tripolitanian born and bred, and received his education on the hands of the very founder of this school, Imām Mālik himself, in Madīna.⁴⁰ 'Alī ibn Ziyad al-'Absi returned to Tripoli to propagate this new Sunni school at the expense of the Ibāḍites. Afterwards, Ibn Ziyad moved to the Qayrawan where he taught in its great mosque. According to Saḥnūn that ibn Ziyad al-'Absi was not of an Arab origin, and died around 799 (183H) in Ifriqiya.⁴¹

'Abd al-Salām ibn Saḥnūn was one of Ibn Ziyad al-'Absi's brightest students, who later became influential scholar and judge, who then spread the Māliki knowledge in

³⁵ Al-Ṭabāṭabā'i, *al-Ibāḍiyya Tārīkhan wa- 'Aqīda*, pp 61-62.

³⁶ Al-'Arabāwi, op. cit., p 35.

³⁷ Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Faṭḥ al- 'Arabi fī Libya*, pp 156-160.

³⁸ Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 84-90.

³⁹ Al-Sharīf, *al-Jawāhir al-Iklīliyya fī A 'yān 'Ulamā' Libya min al-Mālikiyya*, pp 34-36.

⁴⁰ Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 193, 194.

⁴¹ Op. cit, pp 194, 195

the whole of North Africa in the 3rd century Hijri (10th century AD). He died in 854 (240H).⁴²

The Berbers used to call whoever wasn't an Ibāḍī "Urmiyn",⁴³ meaning literally Roman, but they used it as another word for Christians as opposed to Muslim (Ibāḍīs). They believed dogmatically in the Ibadite School with its Islamic manifestation expressing their pain and wishes. At that point, the Mālikites had spread quicker in what was traditionally considered as an Ibāḍī territory in Libya. The Ibāḍīs were severely waned and isolated in isolated pockets. This later pushed those remaining Ibāḍīte Berbers and Arabs, who would be berberised later on, to take to the mountain of Nafūsa and the coastal town of Zwāra as a safe refuge to preserve their Ibāḍīte faith and Berber identity.⁴⁴

That atmosphere sparked a competition between the Ibāḍīs and Mālikīs for recruits and consolidation. To entrench and strengthen their positions both found in Islamic learning the moral high ground, they had to maximize their knowledge in Islam, and to do so, they had to be well-versed in Arabic in order to serve their interpretation of Islamic texts, and impress their audiences. This had ultimately led to more people crossing over from the Ibāḍīte school to the Mālikite's, and the subsequent Arabisation of Berbers, and increase the Ibāḍīte knowledge for those who remained Berbers. Anyhow, this was not perceived as a victory for the Arabs and a defeat for the Berber, but rather an unequivocal triumph for Arabisation itself and also for Islamic bonding, whether there were on the side of the Ibāḍītes or the Mālikites.⁴⁵

This scholastic contest was almost peaceful in its conduct, unlike the rivalry between Shī'ite and Sunnis in the eastern part of the Islamic World. Such peaceful competition added to the pace by which Arabisation swamped the region because of the use of Arabic as an essentially advantageous mechanism to prove one's viewpoint. Ibāḍī scholars went further by decreeing that Berbers who learn Arabic would gain more

⁴²Al-Sharīf, op. cit., pp 37-40.

⁴³ʿIsā, *Mudkhal li-Dirasāt Mumayyizāt al-Dhihniyya al-Maghāribiyya Khilāl al-Qarn al-Sābiʿ ʿAshar*, (F.N) p 112.

⁴⁴Ibn Mūsa, *al-Mujtamaʿ al-ʿArabi al-Lībi fī al-ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni*, p 65.

⁴⁵Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 158-161.

religious virtues and rewards, and al-Shaykh Abu ʿUmrān ibn Zakariyya - a Berber himself from Mizāta tribe - used to tell his disciples that;

"Learning a single Arabic letter like learning eight subjects, and learning one subject is the equivalent of worshipping Allah sixty years".⁴⁶

4) The spread of Sufism and the various Sūfī Orders:

Sufism played a pivotal role in the spread of Islam and Arabic amongst the people of the region and in Libya in particular.⁴⁷ One of the obvious attractions behind the Berbers joining Ṣūfī Ṭarīqas (Orders) was the fact that Berber Shaykhs headed them, or Shaykhs of Berber background. Shaykh Ahmed ibn ʿArūs, whose al-ʿArūsiyya Ṭarīqa was named after him, and Shaykh Ahmad al-Zarrūq are but few examples.⁴⁸

Those Ṭarīqas did not usually wait for people to come to them, but it is the other way around. The Ṣūfis got to those spiritually hungry wherever they were, in the desert or the mountains. The Ṣūfis were, and still known, for their tenderheartedness and spiritual sentiments for conciliating followers who live on the margins of the mainstreams. Those Ṭarīqas lived people's daily worries, and gave them the strength by the power of blessings. But most importantly they assert their Islamic identities of those people crossing the boundaries of ethnicity and sectarian affiliations.

5) The notion of Arabs and Berbers of common origin:

Many Arab and some Berber genealogists went in so far in believing, and propagating that Arabs and Berbers are of one source.⁴⁹ The only logical reason behind that could be to unite their origins in order to explain the fusion that took place between the Arabs and the Berbers. This mixing with Arabs was far less with the Persians or the Turks.

⁴⁶Al-Durjīnī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mashāykh bil-Maghrib* (1271), Vol. 2, p 411.

⁴⁷Trimingham, *Sufi Orders in Islam*, p 84.

⁴⁸Khushaym, *Ahmād al-Zarrūq wal-Zarūqiyya*, pp 20-21.

⁴⁹Brett and Fentress, *the Berbers*, p 130.

The Maghrib saw many “Berber” States that played an important role in Islamic history.⁵⁰ The Berber ‘Aṣabiya (group spirit and solidarity) for politicking was purely Islamic unlike what happened in the Muslim East. It has been an established fact that those Maghribian States were never, at heart, based on Berbero ‘Aṣabiya, but rather on pure religious appeals that Berberism had no cause in them.⁵¹

Many of the Berber dynasties founded States in the Maghrib such as banu Khazrūn who ruled Tripoli for about 150 years.⁵² Ḥafṣides, Marīnids, Zayyānids (Banu ‘Abd al-Wādids),⁵³ Almohads leaders claimed to be of Arab origin. Even some of them claimed to be of Hāshimite descent like that of their founder leader, Muhammad ibn Tūmart, who alleged to be of the Prophet’s lineage.⁵⁴ He even dared to claim to be the long awaited guided Imām (al-Mahdi al-Muntaẓir).⁵⁵ Others invited authors to write books about their Arab descent like those of the Zayyānids.⁵⁶

This was later repeated with the ruling Ottoman Turks who founded the Ottoman State when it was claimed in a book written in Arabic that they were of an Arab descent from al-Madīna in Ḥijāz.⁵⁷

6) Arabism has never been a monopoly of anyone:

To be an Arab does not require a particular colour of skin or eyes, ethnicity in terms of racial purity, or a particular religion. This is contrary to the Jewish belief in racial purity, which is supposedly the Semitic sibling of Arabism. However, this stemmed from the old classification of being either Arab;

- 1) **Bā’ida** (extinct),
- 2) ‘**Āriba** - also known as Bāqiya (remnant), who are subdivided into;
 - 1) **Musta’riba** - “Arabised”
 - 2) **Ḥāditha** - “post-Islam Arabs”.

⁵⁰Kamāli, op. cit., (F.N) p 24.

⁵¹Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 114-115.

⁵²Al-Zāwi, *A ʿlām Libya*, pp 317-268.

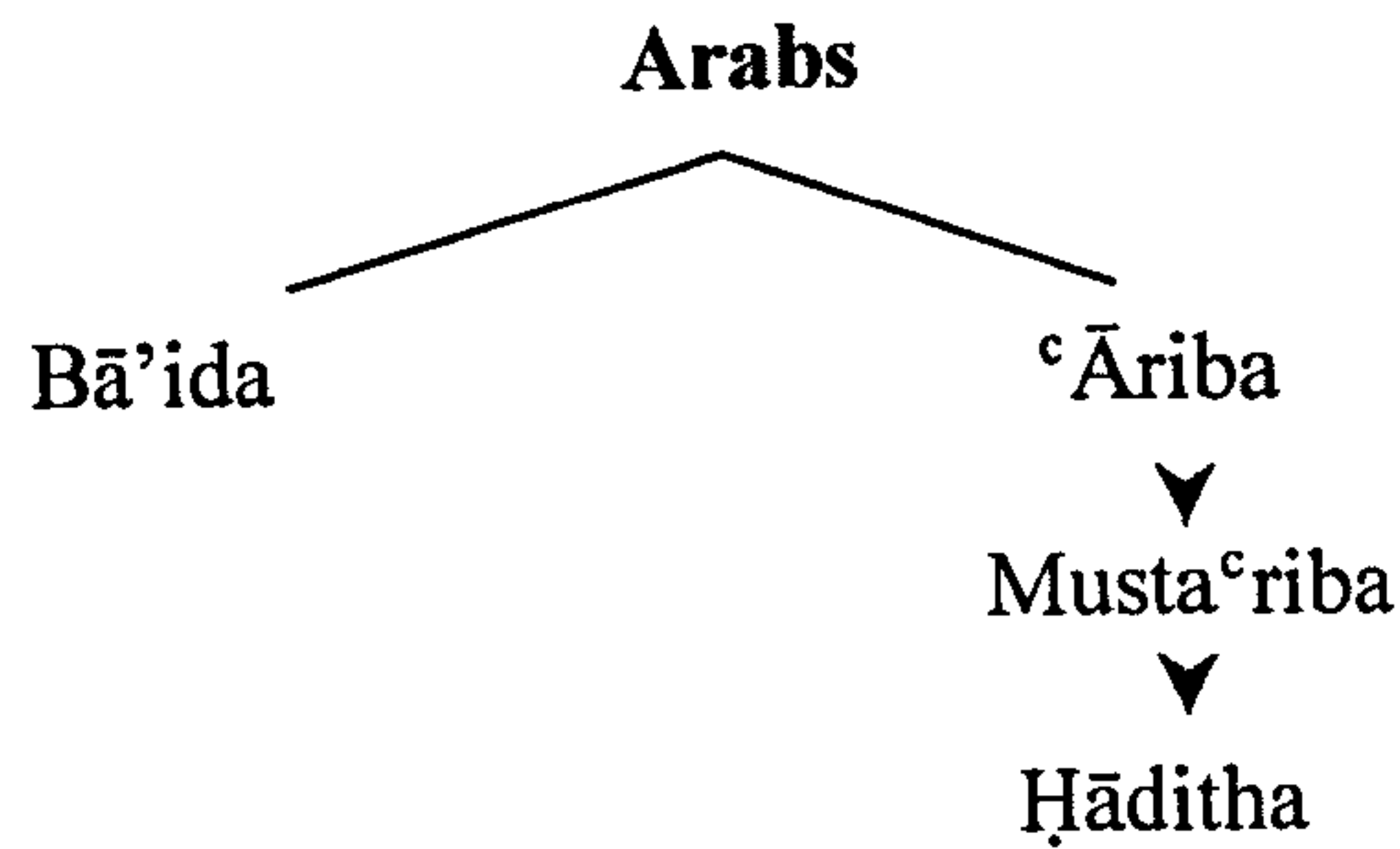
Al-Zāwi, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-‘Arabi ila Nihāyat al-‘Ahd al-Turkī*, pp 81-97.

⁵³Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], tr. by I. al-Mahdawi, pp 40-41.

⁵⁴Al-‘Arabāwi, op. cit., p 65.

⁵⁵Bosworth, *the Islamic dynasties*, p 30.

⁵⁶Al-‘Arabāwi, op. cit., p 65.



It's also fair to assume that the term “Arabism” has been subjected to a successive re-interpretation and perversion that gave way to deviation from the path originally determined for it since early history of the Arabs. This divergence inspired the intervention of Islam by a way of re-examination in the light of its multiculturalism, universality and tolerance.

Arabism was in ancient times a monopoly of a certain people despite the fact that the first Arabs were not pure according to the theory of racial purity. The forefather of the Arabs is Ismāʿīl ibn (son of) Ibrāhīm, and also the son of Hagar, was not a “pure” Arab. As a matter of fact he was Arabised.

In accordance with the historic tradition that the Arabs are classified into the following:⁵⁸

Bā'ida “Extinct Arabs”: who were the first Arabs, and have precedence over others. They were mainly made up of the tribes of Ṭasm, Jadīs, Uym, al-ʿAmalaqa, Jurhum, ʿĀd, Thamūd, Iram and so on. But they have all disappeared, and they are no more. Therefore, they are called Bā'ida.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tidhkār fī man malaka Ṭarāblus*, ed. by Ṭ. A. al-Zāwi, p 138.

⁵⁸Al-Anṣārī, ʿAbd al-Raḥman, *Majallat al-Thaqāfiya*, issue no. 31 – year 6 (Agust 1999-London). Dr. al-Anṣārī is a prominent Saudi archaeologist, and in an interview with *al-Thaqāfiya* he entirely dismissed such classification of early Arabs. He said; “in my view there is nothing in the name of **Qaḥṭān** [ʿĀriba] or ʿAdnān [Mustaʿriba]... **Qaḥṭān** has never appeared in any [archaeological] texts ... this classification is purely political – not genealogical ... this is a complicated subject ... and I do not believe in such classification...”

⁵⁹Bazama, op. cit., p 46.

‘Āriba “Pure Arabs”: who are the “pure” Arabs, meaning the purest that one could possibly find. They are thought to be from southern Arabia, from the Yemenis of Banu Qaḥṭān to be precise.⁶⁰

Musta‘riba “Arabised Arabs”: Arabised signaling their impurity. Their origins were not of Arabs according to the aforementioned classifications and descriptions. They then became Arabs by merging in one of above two types of Arabs. In other words, they acquired Arab naturalization by Arabisation.⁶¹ Ismā‘īl, as aforesaid, was the first to be Arabised. Both of his parents were not Arabs.⁶² His father, Ibrāhīm, was Chaldean from Ur, near Kūfa, on the west bank of the Euphrates of Iraq, and his mother, Hagar, was an Egyptian princess. Ismā‘īl parents migrated to Makka where he was born and raised amidst the Arab tribe of Jurhm where he learnt to speak Arabic, and then married from them.⁶³ The result of that marriage was twelve sons who became later on twelve tribes, and became the first Arabised Arabs and lived in Makka.⁶⁴

The lineage of Ismā‘īl were the ‘Adnānis, the forefathers of the Prophet Muhammad. The ‘Adnāni Arabs were at the same time as the Qaḥṭāni Arabs of Yemen who moved into the heart of Arabia. They all commingled beyond recognition to the extent the cliché of Must‘arba (Arabised) became common use. ‘Adnān is undoubtedly the descendant of Ismā‘īl, but the lineal order of descending between the two men as known is far from certain.⁶⁵

⁶⁰Op. cit., p 113.

⁶¹Al-Maṭiyri, Ḥākim, *Majallat al-Thaqāfiya*, issue no. 32/33 – year 6 (1999-London). Al-Maṭiyri is a Kuwaiti researcher wrote in response to al-Anṣārī’s comment in the previous issue of *al-Thaqāfiya*. He wrote; “...The origins of Ibrāhīm, the forebear of the Musta‘riba Arabs, goes back to the Arabian Peninsula. Ibrāhīm was an Iraqi, and the people who lived in Iraq, as modern historical sources suggest [?], came from the Arabian Peninsula before they immigrated to Iraq fleeing drought. The proof of that is Ibrāhīm’s knowledge of Makka ... as the Qur’ān confirms that... Therefore Ismā‘īl’s children and his offspring are Arabs even though came from outside the peninsula, therefore, they are Musta‘riba ...”

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Maṭar, op. cit., pp 85, 306-307.

⁶⁴Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī Tārīkh*, ed. by al-Qāḍi, vol. 1, pp 77-81.

⁶⁵Bazama, op. cit., p 141.

Ḥāditha: “Post-Islam Arabs”: they are the contemporary Arabs resulting from the product of global Islamisation from the advent of Islam to present day. They are basically a multitude of races mixing with the traditional Must‘arba. It is viewed as an additional buildup of the existing system of Arabisation and creating a new Arab reality.⁶⁶ This actuality encompassed all the changes with a little attachment to racial genealogy, but a fundamental affinity to Islam, Arabic language, land, collective sentiment, life-style, loyalty and so on and so forth.⁶⁷

From what has been discussed above, the present-day Arabs are not necessarily pure Arabs, but rather a circumstantial Arabs. Moreover, the Prophet Muhammad, according to the aforetime discussion, was not pure Arab but an Arabised Arab. Meaning that he procured Arabism through ancestral naturalization by birth. It was not blood hereditary, but birth, linguistic, sentiment and affiliation. It was also reported that the Prophet had said in favour of his Persian companion Salmān al-Fārisi;

**"Salmān from amongst us, we the household of
Muhammad".⁶⁸**

This proved to be further evidence that Arabism is no one's monopoly, and it is a club with wide-open doors for membership for whoever wants to join. An Arab can be white like the third Caliph , ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, or black like the Abyssinian Bilāl al-Ḥabashi, or the Arab ‘Ubāda ibn al-Ṣāmit, or in between like the majority of the Arabs nowadays. Arabisation can also be extended to Muslims and non-Muslims as long as they felt joining the Arabs in their sentiment without essentially embracing Islam like the Christians who came from Europe with the Crusade and settled in greater Syria.

⁶⁶Bazama, op. cit., pp 144-149.

⁶⁷Op. cit., pp 144-149.

Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-‘Uthmāni al-Awwal*, (F.N) pp 59-62.

⁶⁸It was reported in *Mustadrak ‘ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, abu ‘Abdullah al-Ḥākim al-Nīsāpuri, ed. by Mustafā ‘Aṭṭā, 1st edition (1990-Lebanon), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no. 6541, p 691. M. N. al-albāni pronounced it to be doubtful in *al-Silsala al-Ḍa‘īfa* at first then went on to say the other narration by ‘Alī is authenticated, 1st edition (2001-Saudi Arabia), vol. 8, Ḥadīth no.3704, p 176.

7) The Arabs' acceptance of Berbers as equal partners:

Arabs did not seemingly look down upon Berbers as an inferior race nor did they disesteem them. Historical evidences tell us that Berbers were seen as deservedly equal partners for their reliability as proud Muslims, and so rightly had a lot to offer their fellow Arab Muslims. They ruled North Africa more than the Arabs did, and the longest serving dynasty that ruled Libya was Khazrūns.⁶⁹ This inspired the Arabs to adopt, in exchange, Berber names and vocabularies, food, traditional cloths. Many names used in North Africa that start with Tā e.g. the Cyrenaican village of Tākinas, is of Berber origin, so is the honoring title for ladies "Lila".⁷⁰

The Arabs of Libya, indeed, embraced Berber particularities especially traditional food and dress. Those dishes such as Bāziyn, Zumīta, and Couscous constitute the dietary subsistence of Libyans, while Couscous namely had become the national dish of North Africa as a whole. When one visits Libya can not help seeing places that Arabs retained their Berber names i.e. Miṣrāta, Zlīṭin, Trāghin, Msūs .. etc.

So, the Arabs did not really have confessed problems in dealing with the Berbers. They never treated the Berbers as conquered people who deserve nothing short of slavery. On the contrary, they saw them as complementary partners, which nurtured more of mix-marriages. The Fairy tale of Sa^cda al-Zanāti and her children-tribes of Cyrenaica is a good example of the degree of integration. But, also, many Arabs who were Berberised and lived amidst the Berber tribes for reasons of trading or because they were Ibāḍites proved being a Berber was cause for pride. Those families like al-Bārūni, Awlād ^cAṭṭiya and ibn Zikri of Libya.⁷¹ Also, some of the people of M'zāb in southern Algeria.⁷² There were also two states in particular, Idrīsids in Morocco and the Ḥammūdids in Spain were of Sharīf Arab origins but operated in a complete Berber environment, adopted Berber as their language along with Arabic and surrounded themselves with everything Berber.⁷³

⁶⁹Al-Zāwi, *Muḥjam al-Buldān*, pp 50-78.

⁷⁰Op. cit., pp 81-97.

⁷¹Kamāli, op. cit., p 143.

Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 79, 170, 317.

⁷²Al-^cArabāwi, op. cit., p 64.

8) The resemblance in the style of life, mentality, and temperament:

The Berbers share with the Arabs many traditional and behavioural similarities.⁷⁴ This was summed up by the leading Arab conqueror Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr when he described the Berbers to the 7th Umayyad Caliph, Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, by saying:

"They are [the Berbers] the most like of Arabs in terms of welcome, bravery, chivalry, tolerance and Bedouin's spirit".⁷⁵

The Berber's family-structure was almost exactly the same as the Arab's. The family's net based around the man as the central player. Berbers did not allow premarital nor extra-marital relations. Therefore, pre-Islamically wedlock was the norm of Berber life, and polygamy was also permissible. Berber men did keep beards as a sign of manhood, and boys got the male-treatment of circumcision.⁷⁶ Thusly, Islam and its practices did not culturally represent total estrangements, nor did the Berbers oppose its Sharīʿa.

Berbers have also been well-known for cherishing their neighbours, protecting guest travellers, fulfilling their promises and commitment, exercising patience when facing troubles and hardships. Even their folklore music was actually similar to the Yemeni's in melodization and singing.⁷⁷ The lives of those Berbers nomads were not much different of those of their Arab counterparts. They moved around looking for pasture and bred cattle, sheep, and horses for their use and reproduction.⁷⁸ They did not eat pigs either. In fact the Romans introduced pigs to the area.⁷⁹ All those characteristics made them identify with the Arabs, and brought the Arabs closer to them in respect.

⁷³ Hasan, *Tārīkh al-Islām al-Siyasi wal-Dīni wal-Thaqāfi wal-Ijtimāʿi*, vol. 3, pp 184-193.

⁷⁴ Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 114.

⁷⁵ Op. cit., p 97.

⁷⁶ Al-ʿArabāwī, op. cit., pp 257-261.

⁷⁷ Al-ʿArabāwī, op. cit., pp 264, 266.

⁷⁸ Al-Darāji, *al-Qabāʾil al-Amāzighiyya*, pp 144-145.

⁷⁹ Al-Ṭāhir, *al-Mujtamaʿ al-Lībi*, p 106.

Al-ʿArabāwī, op. cit., p 261.

9) The social make-up of the family and tribe:

Berber tribal society throughout recent history has been approximately similar to the tribal Arab society. There were sedentary and nomads as well as herders and farmers.⁸⁰

Generally, tribe plays a pivotal role as a one social unit. And it soon breaks up into two or more sub-tribes when it increases in number by way of expansion. The tribe, then, is made up of branches of (sections) septs and moieties. In other words, into sub-tribal divisions, which would ultimately have to coalesce amongst themselves and come under one leadership of its own choosing in most cases.

The Berbers relate themselves to a line of ancestors like the Arabs do,⁸¹ and this is the natural format of the social procedure built around the paternal families.⁸² In doing so, they would say i.e. °Alī is the son (ibn) of °Umar. Furthermore, the tribe consists of clustered cells of families; the principal actor is the father whose authority lies in the social traditions and mores. These customs are usually regarded as the de facto constitution of life, by which relations are regulated between individuals vis- a- vis their rights and duties. It also plays a major role in accepting outsiders as new members of the tribe in conformity with treaties of allegiance and fraternity, or even in forming an alliance with other tribal pact under unified leadership.

As part of the anthropological contact that took place between the Arabs and their Berber hosts, the process of Arabisation had inevitably developed intrinsic instruments of some intimidation and pressurization as a result, and the indications are:

1) Arabic, the language with its vigor and potency:

There is a common understanding among Muslims that whoever wants to win this life and the hereafter has to communicate in Arabic. Such subliminal emotionalism throughout the Islamic history has served as a source of pressurization to so many, which brought about, for the sake of Islam and its attached rewards, their logical Arabisation. But the spread of Islam was a lot faster than the spread of Arabisation

⁸⁰ Al-Darāji, op. cit., pp 144-145.

⁸¹ Al-°Arabāwi, op. cit., p 202.

⁸² Op. cit., p 258.

and the use of Arabic.⁸³ It was until the third Hijri century (9th & 10th AD) when Arabisation of Libya was beginning to look almost complete.⁸⁴ However, Arabic did not prevail as a culture and way of life until the massive flux of the Arabs of banu Hilāl and Sulaym into Libya.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, there has been a retention of Berber language in some pockets in Libya like the mountain of Nafūsa till the present day.

Hence, Arabisation, and learning Arabic especially by Berbers was felt as a religious duty, as the Holy Qur'ān ascribes it;

"We have made it a Qur'ān in Arabic",⁸⁶

for the purpose of worship, and day to day dealings with Arabs or other Berber vernaculars. The third Caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, wrote to his political protege, abu Mūsa al-Ash'ari, ordering him;

" ... learn your religion ... learn Arabic ".⁸⁷

For that reason, whoever craves to study and seek to master some aspects of knowledge, particularly Islamic learning, has to learn Arabic. Otherwise they would face exclusion especially from those high-profiled jobs in the State organs, which carry prestige, promotions, and statues. Otherwise, they could be described as ignorant, or even worse, labeled as uncultured, because of their inability to speak Arabic.⁸⁸

The efforts that had been made by the Umayyad Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, especially with his famous dispatch dubbed as "The Ten Men Mission" led by his governor Ismā'īl ibn abu al-Muhājir and nine other scholars to settle in Libya. They embarked on teaching natives Islam and Arabic, and also to incite them into fighting

⁸³ Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 101.

⁸⁴ Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-'Arabi fi Libya*, pp 203-204.

⁸⁵ Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 101.

⁸⁶ Sūrah 43, verse 3.

⁸⁷ *Muṣanaf abi Bakr 'Abd al-Razāq ibn Hamām al-Ṣan'āni*, ed. by Ḥabīb al-Raḥman al-'Azami, 2nd edition (1982-Lebanon), vol. 4, Ḥadīth no.7948, p 323.

⁸⁸ Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 80.

“Jihād” against the enemies of Islam and Muslims. The influence of those scholars was far-reaching amongst Berbers, and soldiers in particular.⁸⁹

Those fine men were well-versed in Arabic in terms of eloquence, encyclopedic knowledge, poetry, oration and most importantly their teaching methodology. Needles to say, those above-mentioned merits left an everlasting impact not only on local dialects but on other languages specially the Islamic ones such as Persian, Turkish, and indeed Berber. These languages could not compete nor keep up with the geographical spread of Arabic. Therefore, others had to learn Arabic, and creatively use it for crowning and perfection, whereof there was a huge enthusiasm for it, and Arabic had since become the language of religion and State as well as culture and knowledge for Muslims and others alike.

Some scholars concluded that Arabic and Berber share many similarities. Linguists believe that Berber dialects became accustomed with Arabic, and Berber grammar is near to the Arabic one.⁹⁰

2) Arab camp and their power base:

The Arabs in Libya enjoyed all kinds of powers and controlled the base of those powers. Those powers included the executive, where often the ruler himself and/or his entourage, army and police lied. They also had the power of legitimacy in the form of ‘Ulama as well as the judiciary who were often Arabs.⁹¹

Furthermore, the Arabs were persistently adamant to Arabise the area, and certainly had the urge for it. Their large number, their resolve and zeal, assisted them in making Libya an Islamic domain. They were also determined in making Libya a place for Arab permanence at any cost or sacrifice. It was made clear that the Arabs are not here to be pushed around,⁹² and they would repeat what they did to ibn Bādīs must the necessity arises again.

Berbers, in return, were somehow convinced that the Arabs had a message of salvation and domination to convey to others. It was also made clear that the Arabs

⁸⁹Op. cit., pp 99-101.

⁹⁰Shafīq, *al-Lugha al-Amāzighiyya*, p 46.

⁹¹Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 80.

⁹²Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 122.

had come here not of their own choice but rather pushed west of the Nile, and would never allow themselves to be pushed east of it. Having the Berbers accepted the new reality, and were somehow convinced that they had a role to play along with their new cohabitants on equal footing unlike those days of the Roman rule, when Berbers were treated slavishly, and as strangers instead of being the original inhabitants of the land. Since then, an inheritable deal was struck between Berbers and Arabs that; Arabic is the official language for all, and would remain so as long as Islam remains no matter what happens.

3) Immigration and expulsion:

The movement of tribes whether voluntarily or by force undoubtedly played a part in the Arabisation of Berbers. The biggest influx of all was the Arab tribes from the east, which helped the Hilālic and Sulyamid in particular to penetrate and disturb Berber settlements (Map. 4). This contact tore down all sorts of racial, social and psychological barriers between Arabs and Berbers, and brought the two communities into a marriage that gave birth of the present-day Libya.⁹³ It was not just the Arabs who immigrated into Berber land but the Berbers too immigrated outside their land for pursuit of better life for economic or political reasons, which entailed them to Arabise in order to survive in the new environment.⁹⁴ Many of Berbers who went to Spain became Arabs, also the tribes of Zuwayla and some of Hiwāra who immigrated to Egypt in 13th century AD.⁹⁵

4) Common enemy:

Over the years Berbers and Arabs, in Libya, contrived a sense of solidarity against outsiders, and felt particularly alert towards their Christian neighbours on the northern flank of the Mediterranean. This was due to the Christian endeavors to re-conquer North Africa and annihilate Islam from it. All those enterprises ended in absolute failure, and that increased the European outrage and frustration, and bred solidarity and unity on the side of Berbers and Arabs.

⁹³ Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., pp 47, 58, 69.

⁹⁴ Op. cit, pp 69-75.

⁹⁵ Al-Muntaṣir, *Tārīkh Misrāta mundh al-Fath al-Islāmi wa ḥatta Nihāyat al-‘Ahd al-‘Uthmāni*, (manuscript), p 49.

Berbers and Arabs realized the continuous need to unify their stand against their common enemy in the North for the sake of their own survival. This kind of feeling eased the tension between Berbers and Arabs in al-Andalus as well as in many parts of the North African ribāṭs (fortified complex). This inbred assimilation ultimately led to the Arabisation of Berbers, and by the same token accepting of many of the Berbers' customs and traditions by the Arabs as explained previously.

5) Dictations of benefits and interests:

After the Berbers having accepted Islam, they took in the rest of its package including Arabic as their language. This had started a little earlier when ʿAbbāsids completed most of the Arabisation strategy of their state, which started slightly earlier with their Umayyad predecessors who were,⁹⁶ the least one could say, suspicious of Mawali (non-Arab Muslims), yet they could not do without them especially in the field of civil service.⁹⁷

From amongst those Mawali were judges, governors, administrators and civil servants. These circumstances made it impossible for Arab zealots to push them aside, let alone rooting out those "dubious" Mawālī as perceived by Umayyads.

Ḥassān ibn al Nuʿmān cut off the links between the church of Cartage and those in Rome and Byzantine. He instead linked Cartage to the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt.⁹⁸ This disconnection of relation with the northern churches and the new cord with Egypt presented enormous difficulties for Berbers to continue linguistically and spiritually with their co-religionists in Egypt. That eventually made more Christian Berbers embrace Islam. In addition to that Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr minted an African-Arab currency to be used after his successful venture in Andalus.⁹⁹ This new currency promoted exchange of interests and benefits between Berbers and others as well as granting them a sense of independence and self-assertion.

Also, the process of urbanization and sedentary settlements in Libya after its Islamisation facilitated the movement of people around the region. People had

⁹⁶Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 80.

⁹⁷Al-Mizīni, *Libya mundh al-Faṭḥ al-ʿArabi Ḥatta Intiqāl al-Khilāfa al-Fāṭimiyya ila Miṣr*, pp 64-66.

⁹⁸Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 82.

become more able to move from one place to another, especially the rural population who found new lives in towns, or those escaping clannish clashes or fatal pursuits either by hostile tribes or the authorities. All those circumstances prepared the ground for more comprehensive Arabisation as means of survival in the new environment.¹⁰⁰

The first of such an Arabising place was the city Qayrawan built by ‘Uqba ibn Nāfi’. This man stayed in Libya almost 28 years in which he succeeded in igniting the process of Islamisation and Arabisation not just in Libya but in all the area from Suez canal to the Qayrawan.

Qayrawan was the first biggest Islamic City in the Maghrib,¹⁰¹ and had a huge mosque, which served as multi-racial and tribal home for all Muslims. This example of Qayrawan was echoed in the Libyan coastal ribāts such as Tripoli, Benghazi, Darna, Janzūr etc, with the same message and devotion.

6) The pressure of Arab rulers on non-Arabs and non-Muslims:

Numerous Arab rulers crossed all boundaries of justice with their citizens regardless if they were Muslims, Arabs or others.

History books are full of such unjust practices.¹⁰² An example of that is the Umayyad Yazid ibn ‘Abd al-Malik 720-724 (101-105H) and later his brother Hishām 724-743 (105-125H)¹⁰³ during their reign, when they favored Arabs over Berbers in tax-payment collections,¹⁰⁴ and imposing tyrants to govern Berber dominated areas.¹⁰⁵

One of them even threatened the rebellious Berbers that **“In the name of Allah; you will feel my Arab anger”**, which was a self-evident sign of animosity that bore the hallmarks of bigotry.¹⁰⁶

The Umayyads in most times favored Arabs for the posts of governors, judges and even leading ceremonial prayers.¹⁰⁷ This kind of unislamic and unsavory behaviour,

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Maṭar, op. cit., p 316.

¹⁰¹Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 78.

¹⁰²Amīn, *Ḍuḥā al-Islām*, pp 24-26.

¹⁰³Bosworth, op. cit., p 5.

¹⁰⁴Al-Mizīni, op. cit., p 65.

¹⁰⁵Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 84-86.

¹⁰⁶Op. cit., p 87.

¹⁰⁷Shinqāru, *Fitnat al-Sulṭa*, pp 135, 159, 161-162.

towards non-Arabs and non-Muslim Arabs created an environment of hostility and contempt of those unfortunate groups.¹⁰⁸ The ʿAbbāsids went even further by describing the Muslim Turks as “the sons of adulterers”.¹⁰⁹

Furthermore, the mistreatment of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) on the hands of those despotic rulers by burdening them with heavy tributes and taxes was unacceptable.

The Fāṭimid Caliph, al-Ḥākim bi-Amrallah, even forced the Jews and Christians to wear discriminative clothes in clear visible distinction of others, and harass other Islamic sects in Egypt that disagreed with his authority and interpretation of Islam.¹¹⁰

This conduct was perceived as unislamic and violated the essence and tolerance that Islam preaches, and prompted an angry opposition and protestation by Islamic scholars.¹¹¹

Those dictatorial rulers in Libya did not really ill-treat Berbers because of their race, but in retaliation to their opposition and the subsequent threat they constituted to their authority. On the other hand, the status of the Arabs was only good as long as they surrendered to those rulers. If their interests conflicted with the Arabs, then they would be equally mistreated like everyone else. This happened during the days of the Umayyads as well, when they used Arab tribes to crush fellow Arabs for their benefits.

The historian former Mufti of Libya, al-Ṭāhir Ahmad al-Zāwi in his biography of Busr ibn abu Arṭāʾ, one of the early conquerors of Libya, described him:

"Busr was one of Muʿāwiya's enthusiasts, and fought in the battle of Ṣiffīn¹¹² against Imām ʿAlī. Busr was brave and had the harshness of a Bedouin. He inflicted death and displacement on members of the Prophet's household. He

¹⁰⁸ Amīn, op. cit., pp 18-35.

Kamālī, op. cit., p 21.

¹⁰⁹ Bazama, *Athr al-Dīn wal-Qawmiyyah fī Tārīkh al-Ummah al-Islāmiyya*, p 323.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Mawrid encyclopaedia: (*al-Ḥākim bi-Amrallah*).

¹¹¹ Al-Sharqawi, *ʿĀʾimmat al-Fiqh al-Tis ʿa*, pp 47-48.

killed both of ‘Ubaydallah ibn ‘Abāss’s little children in front of their mother. She lost her sanity as a result. Imām ‘Alī invoked Allah to make Busr live longer and lose his mind as well. That was exactly what happened to him”.¹¹³

Then the Mufti went on remarking on that saying:

“I do not suppose that the gaieties of Islam ever touched that man’s heart”.¹¹⁴

Berbers rectified their understanding accordingly of how those rulers were thinking, and soon realized that they were not really targeted because of their Berberism after all. That behaviour of those despotic rulers was to remove them completely from the political scene because of their political stances, rather than their Berber ethnicity. Thus, Berbers decided not to miss out as they did in previous times under the Romans.¹¹⁵ So, they joined the Islamic march and jumped on its bandwagon and got what they rightly deserved in terms of precedence and eminence. In fact, Berbers plunged themselves with the Arabs and played a major role in all walks of life. They founded many States ruled by Berber dynasties, and produced many great scholars i.e. ibn Baṭṭūṭa, al-Buṣiri, and many great commanders such as Ṭāriq ibn Ziyad and Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn. Consequently, Arabisation that they were forced into was, after all, for their own good. Had they stayed out of it, they would have lost a great deal, and could not have achieved what they have achieved in the name of Islam.

¹¹²Yahya, Mahayudin (*the events of Ṣiffīn in early Arab tradition*), *Islamic quarterly*, 2nd issue (1994-London), pp 91-112.

¹¹³Al-Zāwi, *Wulāt Tarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-‘Arabi ila Nihāyat al-‘Ahd al-Turkī*, p 12.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 25-26, 28.

Ending

The Berbers were Arabised by various means of inducement and pressure applied on them. But, in fairness, inducement exceedingly outweighed pressure as evidently discussed above. Moreover, Berbers and Arabs interacted with one another and created a new social structure that upheld Islam and endorsed Arabism.

Clearly, there was a very little room, if any, for discrimination or racial extremism, if one has a panoramic view of the whole period, which helped the acceleration of the Arabisation process in the region. The repercussions, detriments and indemnities of the political fall-outs throughout the history of political Islam were less harmful on those who were Muslims and Arabised, and definitely made those infamous “**Arab angers**” avoidable.

In closing, it was mainly the motion of Islam and its consequences which played a crucial role in Arabising those peoples, and at the same time preserving the remaining ethnic and religious communities who wished to remain so.

Chapter 3

Ottomanisation of Libya

Prelude

Libya was captured and brought into the Ottoman fold by a popular consent and demand of its people, since the Ottomans were invited by the Libyans to come and protect them by extending their mighty power to sustain them from Christian North. The Ottomans visibly left their marks on the area, and played undeniable role in preserving Islam and inadvertently Arabism in the region.

The purpose of this chapter is to look into the historical relationship between the Ottomans and the Turkish influence on the Libyan society, particularly its impact on the religio-tribal structure of the Libyan society as a whole. At the same time to appraise, in the Libyan theatre, the influence of Libyans on the Ottomans.

In doing so, our approach to the above question will cover the following topics:

1. Ottomans in Power
2. The expulsion of Muslims from Spain and their arrival to Libya
3. The Ottoman reinforcements of the Libyan shores
4. The Janissaries and their control of the various Ottoman State's institutions.

The Ottomans in power

The Turkish influence grew enormously during the ‘Abbāsīd’s era to the extent that determined the fate of the Caliph himself. The Turks were sometimes able to depose the Caliph, and at other times reinstate him as they pleased, or at worst pluck out his eyes like that of al-Qāhir, or even starve him to death like what they did with al-Muttaqi.¹

The first to fall prey to their malicious sway was the 11th caliph, al-Mutawakkil ‘ala Allah 847-861 (232-247H),² who continued the policy of relying on Turkish fighters. This policy was initiated by the 9th Caliph al-Mu‘taṣim 833-842 (218-227H). Al-Mutawakkil was the first ‘Abbāsīd Caliph to be assassinated after being conspired on by the Turkish military.³ This was repeated later on with 14th Caliph, al-Mu‘tazz 866-869 (252-255H), who tried to use the Maghribians to offset the Turks and their influence, if not to rid his court of their hegemony, but his attempts were to no avail.⁴

However, the first Caliph to employ eunuchs was Mu‘āwiya ibn abi Sufyān,⁵ and the first to employ Turkish soldiers in the early history of Islam were the Umayyads, and it was precisely their Wālī, ‘Ubaydallah ibn Ziyād in 673 (54H), who settled them in Baṣra in southern Iraq.⁶ Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafi made of them an armed unit and stationed them in Wāsiṭ. But they did not fully rise in preeminence until the onset of ‘Abbāsīd’s reign. The Persians were amongst those who stood with ‘Abbāsīds against the Umayyads, and in the forefront of them, were al-Barāmika (Barmakids)⁷

¹Bazama, *Athar al-Dīn wal-Qawmiyyah fi Tārīkh al-Ummah al-Islāmiyya*, pp 325, 327.

Cf. Mawrid encyclopaedia, article: (*al-Qāhir & al-Muttaqi*).

²Bosworth, *the Islamic Dynasties*, pp 7-10.

³Bazama, op. cit., p 327.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit., (*al-Mutawakkil*).

⁴Op. cit., (*al-Mu‘tazz*).

⁵Al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’*, p 160.

⁶Al-Ṭabari, *Tārīkh al-Umam wal-Mulūk (Tārīkh al-Ṭabari)*, ed. by ‘Abd Mihanna, vol. 4, p 515.

Al-Dāqūqī, *Ṣurat al-‘Arab Lada al-Atrāk*, p 15.

⁷An influential Persian family originated from Balakh and flourished in Baghdad 786-803 (170-188H). They rose in eminence through the offices they ran on behalf of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphs. However, Hārūn al-Rashīd saw them danger to ‘Abbāsīd’s rule and embarked on a campaign became known as “Nakbat al-Barāmika” which ended with their demise.

who emphatically championed the ‘Abbāsīd’s cause. They started out in Khursān rallying the faithful and the converted to the ‘Abbāsīd’s cause, eventually they managed to put out the Umayyads’ flame for good, and in their place they inaugurated the ‘Abbāsīds for the Caliphate in al-Anbār, then they moved the Caliphate’s seat of power to Baghdad.⁸

The influence and sway of Mawālī was not so obvious until the Caliphate of Hārūn al-Rashīd 786-809 (170-193H) who left behind him three sons, from three different mothers, the three of them became Caliphs. During the rule of the first son, al-Amīn 809-813 (193-198H), the Arabs had the upper hand and were in control of the State’s affairs, but after his murder, his brother al-Ma’mūn 813-817 (198-201H) succeeded him as the 7th ‘Abbāsīd caliph.⁹ The change of power from al-Amīn whose mother was an Arab, Zubayda the daughter of Ja‘far al-Manṣūr - 2nd ‘Abbāsīd Caliph - to al-Ma’mūn was seen as a shift of power of influence from the Arabs to the Persians because of al-Ma’mūn’s mother who was a Persian odalisque called Marājil.¹⁰

However, the new setting did not remain still when al-Mu‘taṣīm became Caliph, but rather developed into circumstances that favored the Turks at the expenses of both Arabs and Persians.¹¹ Again, al-Mu‘taṣīm’s mother was a Turkic odalisque called Mārada. Al-Mu‘taṣīm kept the Arabs at an arm’s length, distanced the Persians, and surrounded himself with his maternal Turkic proteges, which in later times allowed them to creep into the core of the Caliphate and claim it for themselves.¹²

Al-Mu‘taṣīm was the first Caliph to heavily rely on the Turks as his own bodyguards.¹³ This was no surprise since they proved chivalrous and good warriors, but foremost were devotedly loyal. This could have well been the idea, which later on encouraged the Ottomans to set up Yençir or Yeni Cheri (Janissaries), and employing them in the various organs of the State.

Cf. Mawrid, op. cit., (*al-Barāmika*).

⁸Ḥasan, *Tārīkh al-Islām al-Siyasi wal-Dīni wal-Thaqāfi wal-Ijtīmā‘i*, vol. 2, pp 164-168.

⁹Bazama, op. cit., p 316.

¹⁰Ḥasan, op. cit., pp 179-192.

¹¹Op. cit., p 193.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Bazama, op. cit., p 315.

Al-Mu'ṭaṣim taylor-made his own soldiers by buying thousands of Turkish Mamluks (slaves) who later dominated the 'Abbāsid Caliphate to the extent of harassing the Arab population of the capital, in which he later was forced to build the city of Samarrā' to re-house those restive soldiers.¹⁴ He transferred the caliphal capital to Samarrā' in 836 (222H) in which Turkish soldiers multiplied in numbers and strength.¹⁵ From amongst those soldiers rose the Seljuqs in 1055 (447H),¹⁶ and in particular the Zangids 1127-1222 (521-619H)¹⁷ who proved themselves to be a force to be reckoned with, especially when they confronted and fought the crusaders with their Kurdish subordinates at a time where the Arabs all but relapsed. The Turks took off from there, and went on conquering the world and spreading the Word of Islam.

The Turks are not of one origin, nor of a homogeneous stock.¹⁸ This is one of the many similarities they share with the Arabs. The Turks are a mixed race that goes back to ancient times that came from North Eastern Asia (North China, Manchuria and Mongolia) and swept westwards to settle around the Caspian Sea.¹⁹ They lived in a tribal society plagued with deadly internal feud, and later were converted to Islam on the hands of the many Ṣūfi Dervishes who roamed the Caspian Sea, and spread out in the surroundings. There is a common consent amongst Islamic sources ascertains that the Turks were converted at their own freewill, and undeniably contributed hugely to Islam's prosperity and advancement.²⁰

Eventually, the Turkish tribes during the 6th and 7th AD century moved into Asia Minor and settled there²¹ after mixing with the remaining Hittites and Lydians,²² the indigenous population of Asia Minor, and later with the Greeks and Armenians who all accepted Islam as a religion and adopted Turkism as an identity.

¹⁴Op. cit., p 319.

¹⁵Ḥasan, op. cit., vol. 2, p 196.

¹⁶Bosworth, op. cit., p 9.

¹⁷Op. cit., pp 121-122.

¹⁸Garnett, *the Turkish people*, (introduction) pp xii-xiii.

¹⁹Bazama, op. cit., p 309.

²⁰Mu'nis, *Aṭlas Tārīkh al-Islām*, pp 356-357.

²¹Al-Ṣallābi, *al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, pp 25-26.

Al-Murja, *Ṣaḥwat al-Rajul al-Mariḍ*, p 39.

²²Cf. Mawrid, op. cit.,: (*al-Ḥithiyūn or Hittites*), (*al-Līdyā or Lydian*).

However, the Ottoman Turks trace their roots, as claimed, to the Qayigh tribe part of the Öghuz tribal pact.²³ Their chief, Sulaymān Shah, drowned in the river near Aleppo,²⁴ and his son, Orkhān, succeeded him as their leader. Orkhān was the man who founded the Ottoman Turks, and therefore the Turks claim their descent to his nephew Osmān (ʿUthmān), the son of Ertoghril, who settled in Asia Minor during the Seljuq rule in 13th AD century.²⁵

Osmān 1st, the son of Ertoghril, established and ruled the Ottoman State between 1281-1324 (680-734H)²⁶ after securing a victory over the Byzantine Romans in the region.²⁷ This victory prepared the ground for many of those people who had suddenly become Ottoman citizens to embrace Islam, and that radically changed the racial make up of the Turkish nation. That change effected the original yellow Asian Turkish features with black hair to be more of pale European with blonde and reddish hair.

The Turks since then moved to be in the forefront of the Islamic world especially in fighting off the crusaders. The first was to do so was Maudūd the Atabeg of Mosul. He was a Turk, and his move was the prelude of wider Islamic awakenings to fight the crusades. After him it was ʿImād-ad-Dīn Zangī, the ruler of Mosul, who was a Turk too. He had a little trouble in taking Aleppo from crusaders and annexing it to his Emirate in Mosul, then marched his troops to Edessa in 1144 (539H),²⁸ which was one of the four crusade territories in the Levant, but it did not resist long before it fell in his hands. After his death, his son Nūr-ad-Dīn followed in his father's footsteps in fighting the crusaders. The star of the Zangids, and the Turks in general, rose further when their Kurdish commander, Ṣalāḥ-ad-Dīn Ayyūbi (Saladin), and his soldiers mostly Kurds and Turks defeated the crusaders.²⁹

Despite the resounding victory over the crusade, the Islamic world continued experiencing all sorts of upheavals and insurrections here and there which prompted

²³Bosworth, op. cit., p 137.

²⁴Beldiceanu, I, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 17.

²⁵Aṣāf, *Tārīkh Salāḥīn bani ʿUthmān*., pp 29-32.

²⁶Bosworth, op. cit., p 136.

²⁷Cahen, *the formation of Turkey*, ed. by P.M. Holt, p 3.

²⁸Bosworth, op. cit., p 121.

²⁹Op. cit., pp 61-62.

the Ottoman sultan, Salīm Khan I 1512-1520 (918-926H), also known as Yavuz (the Grim),³⁰ who was growing in strength, influence and name to take over the Islamic Caliphate from the last ʿAbbāsīd Caliph al-Mutawakkil III in Cairo. He did just that successfully upon his seizure of Egypt in 1517 (923H) after defeating the Mamluks in Marj Dābiq in al-Shām.³¹ With that, the Turks have effectively taken the Islamic Caliphate from the Arabs, which was a new but huge turn-around in the history and the nation of Islam. The Arabs never thought that the Caliphate would ever leave them, but history teaches us survival for the fittest not the righteous. The Turks did combine the strength and legitimacy for being righteous by defeating the enemy (crusaders), and uniting the Umma. This was enough justification for Muslims to accept and to content.

³⁰Op. cit., p 136.

³¹Al-Murja, *Ṣaḥwat al-Rajul al-Marid*, p 41.

Raymond, A, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 519.

The expulsion of Muslims from Spain and their arrival to Libya

Muslim Berber and Arab troops crossed over the straits of Gibraltar from Morocco and conquered southern Spain in 711 (92H) during the reign of the Umayyad Caliph al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik 705-715 (86-96H).³² They overthrew the Visigoths (the Germanic military aristocracy who ruled Spain).³³ It was only seven years before the Muslims controlled the whole of Spain and called it al-Andalus which is the revision of its original name Andalusia, and made it an Umayyad dependency. Muslims continued their military advance across the Pyrenees towards Frankish Gaul (France) but were met by Charles Martel at Poitiers who defeated them in 732 (114H). This battle stopped the Islamic encroachment into France. This battle commemorated by Arab historians as Balāt al-Shuhadā' (the Martyrs' court), and in European sources as the Battle of Tours.

When the ʿAbbāsids terminated the Umayyads' rule in the East, in 756 (138H) ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Dākhil, an Umayyad prince, re-appeared in Andalus after escaping the ʿAbbāsids' slaughter of his fellow Umayyads, and founded an Umayyad Emirate there. He made Cordova his capital in 756 (139H), and during his reign Spain reached its peak of cultural glory and prosperity. However, the Umayyad State, after years of glory, began to disintegrate into petty parties and kings in the Iberian Peninsula.³⁴

By 11th century AD the rule of Mulūk al-Tawā'if (Reyes de Taifas or Party Kings)³⁵ began to take hold of Spain and fragmenting it into more than 23 pitiful cantons lasting between 1009 till 1091 (400-484H). The Almoravids eventually ended the reign of those kings. Despite the political friction, Muslims made Spain a remarkable centre of trade and industrial production, and a home for Arabic culture and learning, Cordova was only inferior to Cairo or Baghdad.³⁶ After Almoravids, Spain fell in the

³²Watt, *Fi Tārīkh Isbānya al-Islāmiyya*, tr. by M.R. al-Miṣri, pp 28-31.

³³Bosworth, op. cit., pp 12-13.

³⁴Op. cit., pp 14-15.

³⁵Op. cit., p 14.

³⁶Op. cit., p 12.

hands of Almohads, and the last Islamic dynasty ruled Spain were the Naşrids or Banu-l-Aḥmar of Granada 1230-1492 (627-897H).³⁷

Libya was, as part of North Africa, at that time suffering from neglect and backwardness like many of the Islamic provinces around the Mediterranean. That made it an easy target for many Christian powers seeking to undermine the regional Islamic authority. This attitude of war mongering was championed by Christian Spain, which had just managed to demolish the last Muslim Bastille in Granada in 1492 (898H). This newly found strength was achieved by the unification of Christian Spain under one crown brought about by the marriage of Ferdinand II of Aragon to Isabella of Castile in 1469 (874H) and the birth of one kingdom.³⁸

This fundamentalist Christian union and the collapse of Muslim Granada led to the mass deportation of Muslims from Spain by a Royal Decree issued back in 1503 (909H). This rather religio-ethnic cleansing of Muslims and Jews into North Africa meant new reality to Libya and the dawn of new era of uncertainties.³⁹

The phenomena of Muslims fleeing Spain for North Africa began with the capitulation of Cordova as the first Muslim Bastille in 1236 (634H) in the hands of Spanish Catholics.⁴⁰ That marked the first wave of displacements of Muslims into other Muslim controlled parts of Spain and North Africa, but it was also deemed as a momentous indicator of the fall of Muslims' star in the Iberian skies, and an end of a remarkable Arab culture in Europe.

There were unrelenting waves of Muslim deportees heading for the southern flank of the Mediterranean seeking asylum from the abominable treatment by the infamous Spanish inquisition. Those measures were bent on the eradication of Muslims from the whole of the Iberian Peninsula by execution, expulsion or Christianization.⁴¹ The conversion to Christianity process was too brutal to the extent that Muslims had to

³⁷Op. cit., p 18.

³⁸Op. cit., p 19.

³⁹Goldberg, *Cave dwellers and citrus growers*, p 9.

⁴⁰Al-Zāwī, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, p 360.

⁴¹Al-Ḥamrūnī, *al-Murāsikiyyūn al-Andalusiyyūn fī Tūnis*, pp 23-24.

abandon their Islamic names, worship, traditions, male child circumcision, events and festivals, and anything to do with their Islamic background and culture.⁴²

It was Philip III who decided that Muslims and their Arab presence would no longer be allowed in his Spanish kingdom. In doing so, he issued a decree in 1609 (1018H) to exclude the remaining in a period of not more than three days.⁴³ Also, to add insults to injuries, those deportees were not allowed to take any of their possessions apart from trivial things that could be hand-carried. The last of those refugees arrived to the shores of Morocco in 1610 (1019H) ending a chapter of colourful Arab civilization in Spain. Those boats of the beleaguered finally anchored on north Moroccan coast and dispersed in Tetouan, Tangier, Casablanca Fes, Sale.⁴⁴ There were others who went east to Oran, Algiers, Tlemcen, Bejaia, Constantine,⁴⁵ and some settled in many places in Tunisia.⁴⁶ The rest ended up in Tripoli, Benghazi and Darna on the Libyan coast,⁴⁷ with the exception of a smaller minority that went to the eastern part of the Islamic world especially the Jews who settled in the Ottoman City of Thessalonika (Salonika) in Greece.⁴⁸ Some sources estimated the number of those arriving at the Maghrib around three million refugees.⁴⁹ The region benefited greatly from the influx of those refugees especially in Tunisia where they established 24 villages,⁵⁰ amongst whom were the historian Ibn Khaldūn's forebears.⁵¹

Muslims of Spain were of a mixture of various races.⁵² There were chiefly Berbers, Arabs, Black Africans and good proportion of what was known as Muwalladūn⁵³ who

⁴²Razzūq, *al-Andalusiyyūn wa Hijrātuhum ila al-Maghrib Khilāl al-Qarnayn al-Sādis 'Ashr wal-Sābi 'Ashar*, pp 45, 81-84.

Al-Ḥamrūni, op. cit., pp 9-13.

⁴³Al-Ḥajji, *Maḥākīm al-Taftish al-Ghāshima wa Asālībiha*, p 33.

⁴⁴Bergna, *Tarāblus (1510-1850)*, tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 90.

⁴⁵Brett and Fentress, *the Berbers*, p 66.

⁴⁶Al-Ḥamrūni, op. cit., pp 29- 33.

⁴⁷Bazama, *Benghazi 'Abr al-Tārīkh*, pp 250-251.

⁴⁸Beldiceanu, N, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-'Uthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 197.

⁴⁹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-'Uthmāni al-Awwal*, p 179.

⁵⁰Bergna, op. cit.

⁵¹Bosworth, op. cit., p 37.

⁵²Razzūq, op. cit., pp 24-25.

were Hispano-Romans who became Muslims, in addition to some Franks and Slavs (Ṣaqqālība).⁵⁴ All those people were Arabised in Islam and followed the Mālikī School of worship. The strength of Arabic and the culture of Arabism as well as the pressure of Catholicism helped unifying them in Semi-homogenous community. It was Islamic in its identity, Arabic in its language, and were all resented by the Spaniards, who colloquially dubbed them Moro (Moors).⁵⁵

Amongst those Andalusians who found refuge in Libya was Qāsim Pasha who succeeded Muṣṭafa al-Sharīf al-Dai as the governor of Tripolitania in the first Ottoman rule of Tripolitania (Libya) 1630-1632 (1040-1442H).⁵⁶

Qāsim Pasha sought the assistance of his fellow Andalusian countrymen who marked his foreign policies with some hostilities towards the Christian states in general, and Spain in particular. Those Andalusians understandably hated European Christians and encouraged and resumed piracy against them throughout the Mediterranean in 17th century AD. They regarded it as a form of Jihād against those who expelled them from their homes.⁵⁷

When Qāsim Pasha left the seat of power in Tripoli he went to Cyrenaica, and considered for a while to settle there. He eventually managed to obtain a Firmān⁵⁸ from the Sultan in Istanbul to settle his Andalusian compatriots in Cyrenaica, and embarked on a campaign to attract Andalusians either in Tripolitania and from Tunisia to settle in Cyrenaica in particular.⁵⁹ Some relate the small village of Granada on the Green Mountain in Cyrenaica to the Andalusians who built it as a reminder of the much loved and missed Granada that their parents left behind in Spain.⁶⁰

⁵³Bosworth, op. cit., p 12.

⁵⁴Op. cit., p 13.

⁵⁵Razzūq, op. cit., pp 26-27.

⁵⁶Bazama, op. cit., p 198.

⁵⁷Bergna, op. cit., p 91.

⁵⁸Juḥaydar, *Afāq wa Wathā'iq fi Tārīkh Libya*, p 228.

⁵⁹Al-Ṭarāblusi, *Darna al-Zāhira Qadīman wa Ḥadīthan*, pp 46-47.

⁶⁰Bazama, op. cit., pp 198-209, 217.

Most Andalusians settled in the big cities of Tripoli,⁶¹ Benghazi and Darna.⁶² However, their influence was so limited in comparison to those in the neighbouring countries. Their number did not really exceed few thousands, and all but a few melted in the Libyan society like everyone else. We still know very little of them and about them⁶³ if it had not been for the tales that point to those who came from Spain such as Awlād Ḥarb who live in Wrishfāna.⁶⁴ There are other Tripolitanian families such as al-°As°ūs,⁶⁵ better known as al-Nā'ib al-Anṣārī,⁶⁶ ibn Zikri, al-Bahlūl, ibn Gannūnu, Qarqani,⁶⁷ Aftīs,⁶⁸ al-Ṭashāni,⁶⁹ and °Abd al-Mālīk of Miṣrāṭa. Also, the Dilinsi (Andalusi) Qāḍi family in Benghazi,⁷⁰ and Mu'adab, al-Imām, Zaytun (who are extinct),⁷¹ ibn Fāḍil, °Azūz, al-Bnāni and some of al-Shā°ri tribe in and around Darna.⁷²

There are numerous indications about the reference of some families to Andalusia namely al-Ṭwāhir who first resided in Benghazi before moving and settling in Darna, where they still live until now. Even though Ṭwāhir are meant to have come from Zlīṭin, but after investigating the Zlīṭin link by whether they have uncleship, legacy, or any tangible materialistic trace, the finding was none. Zlīṭin population are known for its fervent tribal tendency, and it is divided into three main tribal groups, the °Amāym, Fwātīr, and Awlād Ghayth and al-Barāhma together as one.⁷³ We found that the Ṭwāhir do not seem to have any link whatsoever to these tribal groups, nor had any

⁶¹Al-Barghūthi, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, p 420.

⁶²Bergna, op. cit., pp 90-91.

⁶³Juḥaydar, op. cit., pp 246-247.

⁶⁴Mannā°, *al-Ansāb al-°Arabiyya fī Libya*, p 465.

⁶⁵Al-Tallīsi, *Mu ḡam Sukkān Libya*, p 227.

⁶⁶Great Tripolitanian literary family. One of them authored "*al-Minhal al-°adhb*".

⁶⁷Al-Zāwi, *Mu ḡam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 148.

⁶⁸Al-Zāwi, *A ḡām Libya*, p 369.

-----, *Mu ḡam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, (F.N) p 135.

⁶⁹Al-Zāwi, *Mu ḡam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 48.

⁷⁰Bazama, op. cit., p 223.

⁷¹Jibrīl, *Tajrīdat Ḥabīb*, pp 25-26.

⁷²Al-Ṭarāblusi, op. cit., pp 48-50, 54.

Bazama, op. cit., pp 219-220.

⁷³Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi. Cf. (Zlīṭin), pp 208-241.

confessed links to the broader al-Swālim group who were mentioned in the first chapter of this research.

Therefore, we think that some of the Ṭwāhir - only some - could have descended from the Andalusians, with exception of a few who might have been Arabised Berbers e.g. al-Mājri. They, at first, came to Zlīṭin through Tripoli, then some of them went to Benghazi while the rest settled in Darna.⁷⁴ The distinction that made them stands out from the larger population of Cyrenaica that they were not Bedouin. In other words, they had an urbanized background unlike the majority of the Libyan peasantry. They must have come from an affluent society and sophisticated metropolis. This could come from nowhere but Spain, whose Muslim people who found themselves on the run. The other proof that they were not able to be assimilated nor absorbed by the Bedouin surroundings as compared to other Libyan groups who came from various part of western and southern Libya and interacted peacefully in one way or another with the Bedouin. A good example was the people who came from Miṣrāṭa and Wrfalla, and metaphorically were known in Darna as al-Miṣrāṭiyya who almost lived like the Bedouin did, and intermarried from amongst each other more than with Andalusians. Whereas the Andalusians, including the Ṭwāhir, had a way of living similar to those who were town-dwellers, and wholly different from the Bedouin in all aspects of life. They differed in terms of daily-jobs, houses (architecture), music, literature, cuisine, temperament and even in accent amongst many,⁷⁵ and kept marriages amongst themselves.

There is a prevailing view that Benghazi and Darna have been restored by Andalusians after many years of neglect and oblivion. The Tunisian traveler al-ʿAyyāshi endorsed that view as a result of his observation when he visited the area three times on his way to Makka, the last was in 1661 (1072H).⁷⁶

The assumption that some of Ṭwāhir being of Andalusian background can be extended to the urbanized inhabitants of Benghazi, especially the multi-faceted

⁷⁴Bazama, op. cit., pp 285, 372.

⁷⁵Al-Muṣrāṭi, *al-Taʿābir al-Shaʿbiyya al-Libiyya*, p 293.

⁷⁶Al-Ṭarābluṣi, op. cit., pp 55-63.

Bazama, op. cit., p 124.

familial group of al-Shwaykhāt.⁷⁷ They transformed Benghazi through their architecture style that they carried with them in their collective memory. The vast majority were traders, farmers and to a certain extent artisans. Like their brethren in Darna who developed the irrigation system, they introduced new agricultural means of farming like canalization. They also built arches, gates and homes similar to those were in Islamic Spain, and introduced new handicrafts and textiles which were not known to the majority nomadic Libyan Bedouin who lived rurally in tents.⁷⁸

⁷⁷Al-Shwaykhāt is not what we call a proper tribe. It consists of a number of independent families clustered in Benghazi City for hundreds of years, and they are not related by kinship to each other. They are rather an alignment than cognatic kinship. Some claim to belong originally to Wrfalla tribe others deny such a link, since do not have any properties or kinship there. The most famous of them all are the following Bengazian families: Zīu, Lanqi, Adghīm, Qarqūri, Bal'am, Ghanāyi, Ba'ba', Qazaḥ, Bu Qa'iqīs, al-Shayn, 'Ibīda, Shirmdū, Darūli, Mahdawī, Ḥabāq, Waḥayshi, Makhalūf and other smaller families.

⁷⁸Jibrīl, op. cit., p 25.

The Ottoman reinforcements to the Libyan shores

The ethnic “cleansing” and religious purging, and the subsequent victory over Muslims in Spain hugely boasted the confidence of the youthful and vengeful Christian Kingdom of Spain. That also increased its belligerence towards their southern Muslim neighbours who felt powerless and patronized. This new reality forced the Muslims living on the southern bank of the Mediterranean to seek help and protection from their co-religionists in the East, and to seek revenge from those who expelled them from their homes in Spain.⁷⁹ This was synchronized with the rise of the Ottoman Turks northeast of the Mediterranean, both in sea and land. The Ottomans had just succeeded in conquering Constantinople,⁸⁰ and changing its name to Istanbul after becoming its capital in 1453 (857H) on the hands of Sultan Meḥmet al-Fātiḥ (Muḥammad II the Conqueror).⁸¹

According to some historians, the end of the mediaeval era was marked by the Ottoman capture of Constantinople.⁸² This era lasted from the split of the Roman Empire back in 395 till its fall in the East in 1453. That collapse of the Roman Byzantine rule was accompanied with the curtailing of the Orthodox Church influence, which led to the Islamization of so many natives and the subsequent Turkicization particularly amidst the Greeks within the jurisdiction of the Ottoman State.⁸³

It is fair to say that, the conquest of Constantinople made the Turks a legitimate Legatee of the two “Empires”; the Roman Byzantine in the North and the Arabic Islamic in the South.⁸⁴ This was achieved by militarily defeating the Byzantines and taking their capital by force, and changing it into Istanbul, which means the abode of Islam.⁸⁵ Also converting the great church of Saint Sofia to Ait Sofiah Mosque. At the

⁷⁹Al-Ḥamrūnī, op. cit., pp 24-25.

⁸⁰Al-Bārūnī, *al-Asbān wa Fursān al-Qiddīs Yuhanna fi Tarāblus*, p 7.

⁸¹Bosworth, op. cit., p 138.

⁸²Al-Barghūthī, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, (F.N) p 410.

⁸³Beldiceanu, I, op. cit., pp 22-32.

⁸⁴Vatan, N, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-‘Uthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 123.

⁸⁵Alkhūlī, *Dictionary of Islamic Terms*, p 41.

Juḥaydar, op. cit., (F.N) p 226.

same time putting the Islamic House in order by taking and transferring the Caliphate to themselves as the legitimate administrators of the Islamic world.⁸⁶ In pursuit of further legitimatization of their rule they brought from Cairo to Istanbul the turban and waistcoat of the Prophet Muḥammad, and ‘Uthmān’s copy of the Qur’ān and the sword of ‘Alī,⁸⁷ where they’re reportedly still there. It was, also, the visit of Sultan Sulaymān II Qānūni to Baghdad, which coincided “miraculously” with the discovery of the remains of Imām Abu Ḥanīfa.⁸⁸ Abu Ḥanīfa was venerated for his known political ideas - namely that he did not see that the Caliph had to be a Qurayshite or even an Arab as a condition, but rather any Muslim who is fit to be a Caliph. By doing so, the Ottomans broadened their rule to all of the Holy Places of Islam; Makka, Madīna and al-Quds, besides the sacred places to the Shī‘a minority in Karbalā’ and al-Najaf. That secured them the control of the two main branches of Islam, Sunnis and Shī‘ites.⁸⁹

In critical times, Islam presents itself as valid and steadfast in coping, and flexible in devising solutions to the problems of its followers. That was exactly what happened when there was no Arab to fill the declining Caliphate seat, a Turk rose up to the occasion and became the Caliph of all Muslims. The Sultan Salīm was of Qayigh, Öghuz, Ottoman and Turkic background⁹⁰ and became the Caliph despite being a non-Hāshimite, a non-Qurayshite or even an ‘Adnāni Arab.⁹¹ In fact, it was the sword-edge that changed factors on the ground and made the Turkish Sultan the Caliph. As things unfolded rapidly in favour of the Ottoman Turks, it did not take long for the Sharīf of Makka to formally accept the new Turkish authority and hand over the keys of Ka‘ba to Sultan Salīm Khan in explicit expression of his blessing and recognition.⁹² In no time, the Arabs and the majority of the Muslims submitted to the will of their new Caliph who held by now all the heritage of the Arabs and the legacy of Byzantine. The Ottomans went to extend their rule to the rest of the Islamic world

⁸⁶Al-Ṣallābi, op. cit., pp 311-312.

⁸⁷Al-Murja, op. cit., p 364.

⁸⁸Veinstein, G, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-‘Uthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 251.

⁸⁹Op. cit., p 244.

⁹⁰Beldiceanu, I, op. cit., vol. 1, p 37.

⁹¹Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 244.

⁹²Al-Ṣallābi, op. cit., p 313.

including North Africa with exception of the Far Maghrib (Morocco), which remained under the rule of °Alīds.⁹³

The Ottoman State was divided into 32 provinces 1609 (1018H) of which 13 were Arabic speaking, which made the Arabs of not less than 50% of the whole ottoman population.⁹⁴

Amongst those provinces was Libya, which was then known amongst Muslims as Ṭarāblus al-Gharb, and in Europe as Tripolitania (approximately modern Libya). Those provinces included:⁹⁵

- | | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| 1) Al-Iḥsa | 2) Baṣra | 3) Baghdad | 4) Mosul | 5) Al-Raqqa | 6) Aleppo |
| 7) Al-Shām | 8) Tripoli (Lebanon) | 9) Yemen | 10) Egypt | 11) Tunis | |
| 12) Algeria | 13) Tripolitania. | | | | |

The rise of the Spaniards was at the expense of the Arab demise, but the Turks' rise in the East was to offset that precarious balance. The Spanish were bent on reconquering North Africa, and started on a campaign, which was considered as a continuation to the movement described as the Reconquista.⁹⁶ They did succeed in taking Algeria, Tunisia and then Tripolitania in 1510 (916H). The Spanish took pride in pillaging Tripolitania, and regarded that as a victory for the whole of Christendom.⁹⁷ They wanted to change the demographic geography of the Mediterranean area. The Christians succeeded in driving Muslim Arabs out of Europe by starting with Sicily and Malta and later out of Spain. Also they wanted to settle Christians in North Africa, and in Tripoli in particular to the extent they converted a mosque into a church in the old city of Tripoli and named Leonardo Church, which was reconverted to what it was when the Turks took the city back.⁹⁸ This was one of

⁹³Bosworth, op. cit., pp 38-40.

⁹⁴Raymond, A, op. cit., p 521-523.

⁹⁵Op. cit., p 523.

⁹⁶Bergna, op. cit., p 21.

⁹⁷Rossi, *Libya mundhu al-Fath al-°Arabi Hatta 1911*, pp175-176, 182.

⁹⁸Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 186.

Spain's deliberate policies of avenging the 781 years of the Arab Islamic rule of Spain.⁹⁹

This Spanish pomposity and presumptuous exultation outraged Muslims worldwide, to the extent that Maghribian Arabs in Egypt, and especially those of Libyan tribal descent in Alexandria who hastily organised a meeting in one of their mosques when they heard of the fall of Tripoli in the hands of the Spaniards. They took to the streets and attacked Spanish businesses and caused too much damage to a Spanish-owned hotel. However, matters were calmed after the intervention of the Prince of Alexandria who quelled the situation before it got out of hand.¹⁰⁰

The situation was internationally aggravated when the Ottomans felt that they were obliged to protect their fellow Muslims from Spanish aggression,¹⁰¹ but also, felt that they were a power to be reckoned with, and had to intervene as part of their regional power prerogatives.

The first appearance of the mighty Ottoman fleet in the Mediterranean basin was made in 1512 (918H).¹⁰² With that, it was made clear to the Europeans, particularly to the Spanish who landed in North Africa that the Muslims were back. The activities and military maneuvering of the Barbarossa brothers; Khayr-ad-Dīn and Uruç represented the Ottoman maritime strength.¹⁰³ In return the Ottoman Sultan gave Khayr-ad-Dīn the rank of Capudan, and both brothers were known for their bravery and heroism.¹⁰⁴

The first post-Islam major European intervention in Libya was by the Normans led by King Roger of Sicily in 1135 (530H).¹⁰⁵ They attacked the Island of Djerba, then Tripoli, but they were pushed back in failure. However, the Spanish appeared at the Libyan coast for the second time and succeeded in occupying Tripoli in 1510 (916H)

⁹⁹Al-Barghūthi, op. cit, pp 418.

¹⁰⁰Op. cit., p 177.

¹⁰¹Ibn Ismā'īl, *Inhiyār Ḥukm al-usra al-Qaramānliyya fī Libya (1795-1835)*, pp 18-19.

¹⁰²Op. cit., p 181.

¹⁰³Op. cit., pp 186-187.

¹⁰⁴Al-ʿAsali, *Khayr al-Dīn Barbarossa*, pp 19-29.

¹⁰⁵Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, pp 306-308.

using a massive fleet that sailed down from Siracusa in Sicily and Malta.¹⁰⁶ The fleet's large canons were set on the city, and in response the Tripolines took to the streets with their primitive weaponry in defense of their beleaguered city. They suffered heavy casualties, and lost around five thousand of their people to the extent that the narrow streets of the city were filled with corpses.¹⁰⁷

The city eventually submitted unwillingly to its Spanish masters, but the Pope, Clement VII, pressurised Charles V to award Tripoli to Saint John's Knights, and they became its new rulers in 1535 (942H).¹⁰⁸

The Ottomans expelled the knights from the Island of Rhodes after a bitter defeat on the hands of Sultan Salīm in 1523 (929H).¹⁰⁹ The Spanish ruled Tripoli about twenty five years.¹¹⁰ However, their rule did not go beyond the walls of the old City because of the standoff with the war-mongering tribes surrounding the city, who earlier fled the surroundings of Tripoli city, especially to Tājūra.¹¹¹ More importantly, the Spanish did not reach the rest of the country, which remained largely unscathed due to the tribal pressure on them.¹¹²

Meanwhile, Bedouin Arab tribes and their Berber allies dominated Tripolitania (Figure. 1, Map. 7, 8). The famous of all those Arabs who posed threat to the Christian rule of the land were the Washshāḥīn clan of al-Jawāri and Awlād Sālim tribes and their other Arab clients who had control over Tripoli and its surroundings as well as Tājūra,¹¹³ Janzūr and Ghiryān.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, the cousins of those tribes ruled the inner parts of Tripolitania, namely the Maḥāmīd who exercised almost

¹⁰⁶Op. cit., pp 25, 360-365.

Al-Tallīsi, *Ḥikāyat Madīnat Ṭarāblus lada al-Raḥḥāla*, p 67.

¹⁰⁷Rossi, op. cit., pp 170-171.

Feraud reported there were six thousands killed in Tripoli.

Cf. Feraud, *al-Ḥawliyyāt al-Lībiyya mundh al-Faṭḥ al-ʿArabi Ḥatta al-Ghazw al-Iṭāli*, tr. by M. al-Wāfi, p 77.

¹⁰⁸Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 379-380.

¹⁰⁹Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tidhkār fī man malaka Ṭarāblus wa ma kāna biha min al-Akḥbār*, ed. by Ṭ. al-Zāwi, p 116.

¹¹⁰Op. cit., (F.N) p 124.

¹¹¹Op. cit., p 120.

¹¹²Rossi, op. cit., p 196.

¹¹³Al-Tallīsi, op. cit. P 74.

¹¹⁴Al-Barghūthi, op. cit, pp 400, 418.

complete control over the area between Nafūsa Mountain to Gabes (now inside Tunisia).¹¹⁵

It is worth noting that some of those tribes, especially Banu Thābit of al-Jawāri,¹¹⁶ at this juncture experienced social changes dictated by politico-economic realities, which brought about a radical shake up resulting into a transformation from being nomads living in pursuit of greenery and water to a life of agrarian-sedentary. So, those tribes managed to combine wealth and power, as well as enjoying the Arab blood, which was perceived necessary to enhance their status in the region.¹¹⁷

The inhabitants of Tripoli and the tribes in the neighbouring areas realized that the liberation of their land from the much-disliked Knights could not be achieved without an outside intervention. In 1519 (926H), the number of Muslim families in Tripoli declined to only sixty who remained along side the Jewish community who did not flee the city.¹¹⁸ Then it occurred to Tripolines to seek help from the Great Ottoman Corsair Khayr al-Dīn Barbarossa,¹¹⁹ as they thought, that he alone could return to them their city, especially after pledging his allegiance to the Caliph and vowing to fight the Christian enemies in his name.¹²⁰ Most of the Mediterranean was within the much feared Khayr al-Dīn's grasp, especially when he was previously successful in freeing the cities of Algiers, Constantine, Tunis from Spain, and annexing them to the Ottoman Regency.¹²¹

When the Tripolines met up with Khayr al-Dīn, the later suggested that they should seek direct help from the Caliph himself.¹²² Then, the Arabs of Tājūra elected a committee made of 'Ulama and Wujaha (scholars and notables)¹²³ who went to

¹¹⁵Op. cit., p 400.

¹¹⁶Al-Zāwi, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-'Arabi ila Nihāyat al-'Ahd al-Turkī*, pp 123-124.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Al-Tallīsi, op. cit., p 74.

Rossi, op. cit., p 191.

A l-Bārūni, op. cit., p 35.

¹¹⁹Bergna, op. cit., p 32.

¹²⁰Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-'Arabi fi Libya*, pp 382-385.

¹²¹Rossi, op. cit., pp 186-189.

¹²²Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., p 420.

¹²³Sharf al-Dīn, *Mudkhal ila Tārīkh Ṭarāblus al-Ijtimā'i wal-Iqtisādi (1711-1835)*, p 245.

Istanbul in the hope that they find military help to rid them of their common enemy, Saint John's Knights.¹²⁴ They met the Sultan, Sulaymān al-Qānūnī, who was most welcoming and sympathetic. They told him of how much they disliked the Spanish for what they had done to the Muslims and reminded him of the Islamic brotherhood that they all shared. They even advised the Sultan to re-conquer Spain and bring it back to the Islamic fold, and expressed the readiness to give whatever they had for that. Also, they re-affirmed their pledge to him as the Caliph and Amīr al-Mu'minīn (the Commander of the Believers), and urged him to deliver Libya from the Knights and incorporate it into his Caliphate.

Sultan Sulaymān appointed Murād Agha (also known in Turkish as Aga Murat), who was one of the Kullar,¹²⁵ who knew Arabic very well to accompany them to Tripoli and find a way of liberating it from the Christians.¹²⁶

Murād Agha landed on the shores of Tājūra in 1550 (957H), and quickly embarked on mobilizing the locals to evict the Christians from their homeland. He wrote to Sultan Sulaymān reporting to him the latest news. The Sultan, then, ordered the Chief of the Ottoman Navy, Sinān Pasha, to co-ordinate with Murād Agha on how to liberate Tripoli from the Knights.¹²⁷ When the final decision was made on the liberation of Tripoli, both men saw the need to the expertise of Darghūt who was roaming the Mediterranean. The Sultan asked him to help in the rescue, and he was sent a copy of the Holy Qur'ān and gold-plated sword¹²⁸ as a good gesture and in recognition of his skills,¹²⁹ but most importantly Darghūt was promised the Emirate of Tripoli once it is freed from the enemies.¹³⁰

Darghūt was so delighted to be given another opportunity to fight the Christians, which he believed as his religious duty, and a form of Jihad.¹³¹ He was well known for his sheer courage, and the moment he received the sailing order towards Tripoli,

¹²⁴Rossi, op. cit., pp 198-199.

¹²⁵One of the close Palace eunuch slaves.

¹²⁶Al-Nā'ib, *al-Anṣārī l-Minhal al-‘Adhb fī Tārīkh Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, pp 188-190.

¹²⁷Feraud, op. cit., p 92.

¹²⁸Sāmīh, *al-Atrāk al-‘Uthmāniyyūn fī Shamāl Ifriqiyya*, tr. by ‘Abd al-Salām Adham, pp 47, 49.

¹²⁹Prochshin, *Tārīkh Libya min Muntaṣaf al-Qarn 16 Ḥatta 20*, vol. 1, p 31.

¹³⁰Op. cit., p 90.

¹³¹Bergna, op. cit., (translator's F.N) p 40.

he quickly moved on, and in no time attacked the city, and the natives cooperated by joining him against the Knights who had no choice but to surrender to his men. Sinān and his victorious army entered the liberated city along with Murād and Darghūt in 1551 (958H) signaling the beginning of a new era in Libyan history.¹³²

The resounding Ottoman victory in Libya concluded an episode of distress for the people of the region, and started a newer but different one under the protection of the Ottoman Caliphate firmly established in Istanbul. Libya by now had become a subsidiary of the Caliphate ruled by Murād Agha who was temporarily appointed by Khayr al-Dīn Barbarossa, and later on his recommendation was also confirmed by a Sultanic Firmān by the order of Sulaymān al-Qānūni¹³³ himself.

Darghūt rose to the throne of Tripolitania in 1553 (960H)¹³⁴ succeeding Murād Agha who retired in Tājūra in compliance with the Sultan's will in making Darghūt the new governor.¹³⁵ Murād was most welcomed in Tājūra where he built a great mosque named after him, and died there where his tomb still lies.¹³⁶

However, Darghūt continued roaming the sea where he was most feared for his skills and bravery. He used Tripoli as a base for launching attacks on Christian navies especially the Spanish whom had a grudge against for what they had done to Muslims. Darghūt often came back with too many spoils and captives that led to an economic boom in the regency, but the most important was the panic inflicted on Europeans, which frightened them away from North Africa. This was, the least in their eyes, Islamically legitimate to prevent Christian European's dominance of the land of the Caliphate.¹³⁷

Furthermore, Darghūt did not stop there, but saw Malta as a legitimate target since it was the vanguard of Christian aggression, thus he decided to expel the Knights from it

¹³²Al-Zāwī, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-ʿArabi ila Nihāyat al-ʿAhd al-Turkī*, pp 151-158.

¹³³known in the West as Sulaymān the Magnificene. Cf. Grammont, J, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 235.

¹³⁴Al-Zāwī, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, p 398.

¹³⁵Al-Zāwī, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-ʿArabi ila Nihāyat al-ʿAhd al-Turkī*, pp 153-155.

¹³⁶Rossi, op. cit., p 220.

¹³⁷Hitti, *the History of the Arabs*, p 712.

once and for all. He attacked the Island with both his Janissaries and Libyan recruits during which he received while battling a fatal injury in the head and died in 1565 (973H) in Malta.¹³⁸ His men brought his body back to Tripoli where he received a funeral with a full honour given usually to special fallen men, known in Arabic as a Shahīd “martyr”. His tomb is still in Tripoli to which people still pay homage from time to time in his remembrance, where he has been elevated to a level of reverence usually reserved for Murābits.¹³⁹

¹³⁸Op. cit., pp 228-232.

¹³⁹Al-Zāwi, op. cit., p 158.

The Janissaries and their control of the various Ottoman State's Institutions

The Janissary force was a complex institution in its own right. It was the backbone of every niche of power that supported the Caliphate and its Sultan.¹⁴⁰ The foundation of the Janissaries (known in Arabic as *Inkishāriyya*) can really be traced back to the ʿAbbāsīd's days. Even though we saw how Ḥājjaj employed them to a lesser extent during the Umayyads, but its systematic arrangement goes back to the ʿAbbāsīds, and particularly to the reign of al-Muʿtaṣim as discussed earlier. This since had become a strategic asset inside the military norms and recognized as part of the political strategies of the states and emirates within the largely decentralized body of the Caliphate.

In Libya, this military arrangement meant a new political instrumentation accompanied by an ethnic dimension in order to inject new blood into Libya's Berbero-Arab veins. That, subsequently, affected the tribal order and cast some sort of a life of civics to the country as well as this "foreign impact" which in turn was influenced by the host Arab-Bedouin temperament.¹⁴¹

This mutual influence calls for a reflective look at the Janissaries in terms of inception and growth, and its organisational structure as well as the evolution of its mentality and sociability in the Libyan arena.

The first proper and officially recognized Janissary squad was formed by a Firmān issued by the Sultan Murād I in 14th Century (8th H) as a contingent of personal body guards in the inner Sultanic circles.¹⁴² The very word "Janissary" or as it is in Arabic "Inkishāriyya or Yinkajariyya" is derived from the Turkish word *Yeniçer* which literally means the new troopers to serve after training in the Sultanic Court and as special forces.¹⁴³ The Agha of the *Yeniçer* (Janissary) in addition to being the guardian of the Sultanic Court is also the head of the elite forces of the State by which

¹⁴⁰Goodwin, *the Janissaries*, pp 69-70.

¹⁴¹Kamālī, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. ibn Yunūs, pp 41-43.

¹⁴²Op. cit., p 27.

¹⁴³Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 258-259.

he enjoyed the powers of the head of the Wilāya (province) or the mayor of the city.¹⁴⁴

The bedrock of the Janissaries was mainly Christian slaves and war-captives, which can be interpreted as the Sultans distrust of the Ottoman Turks (Map. 6). The Yeniçer presence expanded from being guards only to infantry and to the navy, a fact which enabled them in the 15th and 16th centuries to become the driving force in the decision-making process in the Palace as well as in the Majlis (Chamber of the Representatives). These acquired political prerogatives ensured them that their unchallenged interests are above all's; i.e. corruption included political extortion of officials and accumulation of wealth. That ultimately led them into a conflict with others' interests, namely the Sultan's himself. Sultan Maḥmūd II 1808-1839 (1223-1255H) did not like the way they interfered in the State's affairs and decided to put an end to their lethal corruption especially when they rejected the military reforms that he proposed, which they saw as a reduction of their privileges and powers. For that reason, the Sultan gave the orders to put an end to their influence and that was carried out in a massacre inflicted on them inside their barracks in Istanbul in 1826 (1242H).¹⁴⁵

The Turkish Sultans were not obsessed with the so-called "blood purity"¹⁴⁶ as the Arabs, who perhaps were. In other words, this purity did not bother the Turks, as long as the persons concerned were Turkicized. The Sultans had wives of different racial backgrounds and lots of children, whose maternal uncles were other than Turks, who made it to the top. A good example of that was Sultan Sulaymān Qānūni, whose wife was a Russian and gave birth to his son, Salīm II, who succeeded him to the throne.¹⁴⁷

The Turks generally were not into racial purity, and they are not of one pure race, but a mixture, exactly like their fellow Arab Muslims.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴Cf. *Inkishāriyya*. al-Murja, op. cit., p 450.

¹⁴⁵Aṣāf, op. cit., pp 116-117.

Trimingham, *the Sufi Orders in Islam*, p 81.

¹⁴⁶Veinstein, G, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, pp 243.

¹⁴⁷Al-Murja, op. cit., p 228.

Veinstein, G, op. cit., pp 265, 267.

¹⁴⁸Cf. Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., (F.N) p 433.

The recruitment of Janissaries was done through *Devşirme*, a Turkish word meaning recruitment for the purpose of military conscription midst the Christian subjects under the Ottomans.¹⁴⁹ Others went in saying that the *Devşirme* meant those Christians who were not able to pay their due-taxes, then their children would be taken instead, and would be brought up as good Muslim soldiers with promising prospects in return. Therefore, it was dubbed the children-tax. The *Devşirme* processes used to take place either every three or seven years, depending on the level of demand.¹⁵⁰ The actual number of recruits varied from a thousand to three thousands boys each round. Despite the pain and anguish *Devşirme* used to cause those families, it represented alight at the end of a tunnel full of poverty and deprivation, and if the recruit continued his career he might elevate the standing of his family along with his.¹⁵¹

The recruitable Christian youngsters were from different races. Some were of Hellenic background; others were either Aryans or Slavs. The majority came from Rumeli whose 80% of its population was Christian Orthodox.¹⁵² Rumeli was a name given to the western area of the Ottoman territories in Europe covering Thracia (northern Greece), Albania and Macedonia. It is said, that Turks gave the name “Rumeli” to the land that was mainly populated by Byzantine Romans.¹⁵³ *Devşirme* used to also take place in the Greek archipelago, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and fewer numbers from Bulgaria, Hungary, Transylvania, Moldavia, and Romania. The Caucasus played part in supplying Janissaries too. People from the Caucasus are known in Turkish as Laz, and their homeland extends from Black Sea to the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus Mountains constitute the natural borders between southern Europe and Asia.¹⁵⁴ The people of the Caucasus differ immensely in their ethnicity ranging from Georgians to Circassians, Chechnyans, Abkhaz, Tatars to

¹⁴⁹Cf. Goodwin, op. cit., (glossary) p 13.

Al-Murja, op. cit., p 455.

Bazama, op. cit., pp 375-377, 381, 388.

¹⁵⁰Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 256.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 245.

Kamāli, *Wathā'iq 'an Nihāyat al-'Ahd al-Qaramānalli*, tr. by M. Bazama, (F.N) pp 25-26.

¹⁵³Cf. Mawrid encyclopaedia, article: (*Rumili and Traqiya*).

¹⁵⁴Op. cit., (*Caucasus mountain*).

Armenians.¹⁵⁵ The people of the Caucasus constitute more than 50 different ethnicities; some of them do not count more than few hundreds,¹⁵⁶ whereas others are in millions. They are all regarded as white in terms of the 19th Century racial classification, which divided human beings into three distinct categories; Caucasian (white), Negroid (Black), and Mongolian (Yellow). Therefore, the people of the Caucasus have been called so because of their colour, they also speak more than thirty-seven languages.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, the majority of them are Muslims and some have settled in the Arab world. There is, also, a tribe of considerable size in Miṣrāṭa known as al-Sharākisa (Circassians), and has since become an integral part of the Arab-Libyan society.¹⁵⁸

Moreover, Devşirme reached those in Anatolia, Armenia and occasionally Kurdistan and even al-Shām.¹⁵⁹ There were also the unusual captives or slaves from Italy, France, and Spain.¹⁶⁰ The only ones who were exempted from Devşirme were the Jews and those who belonged to traditional Muslim families in an established and respected community such as those in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Map. 6).¹⁶¹

Those Europeans who had lived under the Ottoman jurisdiction can be traced to three main races, bringing the diversity of the Ottoman ethnic mixtures to such a point that it became impossible to tell, who is who; whether they are Hellenistic, Slavs, or Aryans.

1. Hellenistic – which means Greek; encompassing different ancient peoples lived in the Greek archipelago and other parts of the Mediterranean. Greece saw many waves of invaders who left their cultural and ethnic marks on the land and its people. There were Phoenicians, Dorians, Romans, Celts, Visigoths, Slavs to the multi-racial Crusade, and finally the Turks. The Greeks built one of the most interesting

¹⁵⁵Op. cit., (*Caucasians*).

¹⁵⁶Op. cit.

¹⁵⁷Op. cit., (*Caucasian languages*).

¹⁵⁸Agostini, op. cit., p 266.

¹⁵⁹Bazama, op. cit., p 388.

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

¹⁶¹Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 255.

civilizations that the world had ever witnessed, and left its marks on European mentality until modern times.

The word Hellas (the source of Hellenistic) means Greece in its geopolitical sense, and it does not necessarily mean today's Greece, but rather those countries that the Greek culture reached and influenced in many respects.¹⁶² The Greeks went East reaching with their culture Asia Minor (Turkey), Syria, Egypt and some parts of Asia between the fourth century BC and the first century AD. All the people of those different areas were historically known as Hellenistic as a result of the cultural union and intellectual assimilation that took place between them all.¹⁶³

2. Slavs - It is a name the Arabs collectively used to describe those who populate Eastern and Central Europe. The Muslims in Spain used the word “Şaqāliba” meaning Slavs to war-captives who were the product of Europeans fighting Europeans, and then sold in Spain.¹⁶⁴

The Slavs live in three European geographical communities:¹⁶⁵

The southern group – Serbians – Slovenians – Bosnians – Bulgars – and Macedonians.

The western group – Czechs – Slovaks – Poles.

The eastern group – Russians – Byelorussians¹⁶⁶ – Ukrainians. This group makes up the majority of the Slavs.

3. Aryans¹⁶⁷ – which literally means, in Sanskrit, “Nobleman”. Sanskrit was the ancient Aryans' language, from which other Hindu-European languages derived from.¹⁶⁸ The Aryan tribes lived in the highland of Asia and then spread in the Indian subcontinent and Europe. Some of them occupied the hills of Iran, other went into the north Indian subcontinent (Kashmir – Pakistan - Afghanistan) mixing with its original

¹⁶²Mawrid, op. cit., (*Greeks*).

¹⁶³Op. cit., (*Hellenism*).

¹⁶⁴Mawrid, op. cit., (*Slavs or Şaqāliba*).

¹⁶⁵Op. cit., (*Slavic languages*).

¹⁶⁶Belarus means white Russia and they claim not to be racially tainted by the Tatars like the Russians did.

¹⁶⁷Mawrid, op. cit., (*Aryans*).

¹⁶⁸The new Oxford illustrated Dictionary, vol. 1, article: (*Aryan*).

population.¹⁶⁹ The Aryans generally lived between the Caspian Sea and the Hindu Kush Mountains, and still use Sanskrit in its derivatives. It is also widely assumed that their descendents are Albanians, Germans, Kurds, Persians (including Tajiks), Armenians, Pashtun Afghans, and many of the smaller races that make up the peoples of the Caucasus Mountains.¹⁷⁰

When the Turkish Ottoman momentum mobilized all those races, it did not really matter so much to the common man in the street whether you were former slave or freeman, or even which part of the world you came from. There was not any criterion of scrutinization to find out whether a person was a good Muslim or still covertly profess his previous faith and pretending otherwise.

The recruitment of all those peoples gave rise to the general Turkish term of Kullar, the Arabic pronunciation is Qulat, which had overstepped its actual linguistic significance to the specific situation that it was designed for, and found new fertile ground for different use in a country like Libya.

Kullar meant slaves.¹⁷¹ They were basically the Sultan's allotment of war-spoils estimated one tenth of the total.¹⁷² Kullars sometimes bought on the market, or were the Devşirme's intake. The Kullar securely established themselves by being well-positioned around the Sultan, and ensured an ascension to the highest offices within the Sultan's Camp.¹⁷³ They became the rulers of al-Shām as well as Egypt with the blessing of Istanbul, especially in the golden days of Egypt, Mamluk State was re-confirmed by the Ottomans, and whose rulers ruled Egypt as vicegerents of the Sultan until the French invasion of Egypt in 1798 (1213H).¹⁷⁴

This method of delegating powers to former kullars had become an Ottoman State-policy, to the extent that big part of the State's staff and key army personals were of

¹⁶⁹Mawrid, op. cit., (*Indo-Aryan languages*).

¹⁷⁰Op. cit., (*Iranian languages*).

¹⁷¹Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 255.

¹⁷²Ibid.

¹⁷³Veinstein, G, op. cit., pp 261, 264-265.

¹⁷⁴Bosworth, op. cit., pp 43-45.

Kullar's background.¹⁷⁵ Those Kullars were not as ordinary slaves as one might assume. They could not be sold once they procured by the Sultan's Court,¹⁷⁶ and were not allowed to do other jobs apart from serving the Sultan and his Camp. In other words, they could only serve in the army or the civil services.¹⁷⁷ Those jobs were mostly in the Palace (the nerve centre of the State), the interior and foreign ministries, and the consultative assembly (parliament), in addition they were also the keepers and the watchful eye of the Sultan on practically most State's affairs.¹⁷⁸

The Devşirme process involved a strict selection of Christian cadets from Rumeli, Anatolia and other places as mentioned earlier. However, from amongst those youngsters the fittest and the strongest would be chosen, especially those who were handsomely tall and generally good-looking.¹⁷⁹ They would then be transported to either Istanbul or Bursa where they would undergo the surgery of circumcision as prescribed in Islam, known in Turkish as "Sonnet", after vowing to profess Islam as their religion from now on. The majority of those youths' age range from seven to twenty years. Once they are selected they undergo tough training, in which they would be, at first, lodged with Turkish peasants and army personals in Rumeli and Anatolia to work as servants, and more importantly learn Turkish language and traditions, and learn more about Islam. When they successfully complete the course then they would qualify to the long-awaited ranks of the Janissaries; an honour well deserved. The kullar-Janissaries would then be distributed to Açımi oğlan (the foreign youngsters' force) where they receive further combatant training, and indoctrination until they show absolute obedience to their superiors.¹⁸⁰

Amongst the very famous men who graduated from Devşirme was the Greek born Sinān Pasha the architect;¹⁸¹ also Mehmet Sokollu, originally Bosnian Serb, who became Sadr-i-azam (Prime Minister) of the Caliphate.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁵Veinstein, G, op. cit.

¹⁷⁶Op. cit., p 258.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

¹⁷⁸Op. cit., pp 256-258.

¹⁷⁹Op. cit., p 257.

¹⁸⁰Op. cit., pp 256-257.

¹⁸¹Some Albanians claim Sinān to be of Albanian origins. Cf. Goodwin, op. cit., p 153.

¹⁸²Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 259.

In fact, that sort of training entails them to cut off any links with their religious, cultural and indeed ethnic past.¹⁸³ Instead they would be, without much choice, encouraged to be turkicized in language, traditions and practices.¹⁸⁴ They would also be strategically mobilized against the “infidels” by indoctrinating them in a Şūfi manner to the point of saturation and ever-readiness for holy Jihād against the enemies of God and the State. If those young men were to refuse or falter they would be punished severely by either clubbing or worst sending them to do routinely guard duties in a faraway garrisons.¹⁸⁵

How and who persuades those youngsters to embrace Islam and become the Defenders of the Faith, this would be the duty of the Kullar’s Imam known in Turkish as (Hoça).¹⁸⁶ There would be a number of Bektaşī (Bektāshi) Dervishes along with Hoça who enjoy much freedom in dealing with cadets, and would convince and prepare them for any eventualities that the State in the name of Islam may require from them, even if they had to die.

The Bektāshiyya Order is traced to its founder Hājji Bektāsh Wāli of the 14th century (8th H). He was a Şūfi who claimed to be of °Alīd descent.¹⁸⁷ His Şūfi teachings were considered by many scholars of mainstream Islam to be full of heterodoxy and deviations,¹⁸⁸ but were under the state control in the context of “Islam within the “Shahanic” Sultanic institutions”.¹⁸⁹ This ṭarīqa had traditionally been linked to the palace,¹⁹⁰ and particularly the Janissaries; and the link was manifested in later years with the dealings of Murābiṭs of Libya with veneration when the Janissaries served there.

The Bektaşis mixed Turkish poetry with light music in a militaristic setting, which exerts a dazzling spiritual influence on the young cadets. With that, their acceptance of Islam is concealed with content and pleasure. They kept those Şūfi practices even

¹⁸³Ibid.

¹⁸⁴Op. cit., pp 256-257, 299.

¹⁸⁵Op. cit., pp 256-289.

¹⁸⁶Goodwin, op. cit., pp 148-149.

¹⁸⁷Trimingham, op. cit., pp 81-83.

¹⁸⁸Op. cit., p 81.

¹⁸⁹Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 290.

¹⁹⁰Bayyūmi, *al-Ṭuruq al-Şūfiyya bayn al-Sāsa wal-Sīyāsa fī Miṣr al-Mu‘āṣira (1903-1983)*, pp 39-41.

in later life. Whenever they went to war they used to enchant a special Du‘ā’ (invocation), in which they call upon “the spirit” of Imām ‘Alī and Ḥājī Bektāsh, the Order’s founder, to accompany them and intercept with God so to come to their help if and when needed.¹⁹¹

There was no female Devşirme as such. Girls used to be brought to the palace either as gifts from other world leaders or captives, or in most cases bought on the open slave market.¹⁹² Those women played an important role in the direction of the Ottoman politics at different phases of its history just like other Muslim women did throughout the Islamic Arab history.¹⁹³

Janissaries were not allowed to get married at first, including those who were willing and able to do so. Some of them used to be forcibly subjected to castration by which the testicles were removed to deprive them from any sexual desire or arousing.¹⁹⁴ The person who received this kind of surgery would be called Agha, literally meaning eunuch.¹⁹⁵ In some extreme cases; the testicles and the penis would be removed, and then one would entirely lose desire and ability for any sexual practices, exactly like the way it used to be practiced in the Byzantine times. As a result, eunuchs were able to serve in the Ḥareem court.¹⁹⁶

It must be said that the Arabs did not know the practice of castration or any gentle mutilation for the purpose of depriving one of manhood. However, this was a militaristic practice came from Europe through the Turks to Muslims, whereas Islam strictly forbids it. Moreover, those practices were frequently performed during the reign of Salīm I 1512-1520 (918-926H), an important period of the Janissaries’ military development. Later recruits were spared the practice and were allowed to resume their life by marrying, and were also permitted to live with their wives outside

¹⁹¹Veinstein, G, op. cit.

¹⁹²Op. cit., pp 265-267.

¹⁹³Op. cit., pp 266-267, 279.

¹⁹⁴Op. cit., p 268.

¹⁹⁵Op. cit., p 264.

¹⁹⁶Op. cit., p 265.

barracks, as opposed to bachelors who were confined to designated areas.¹⁹⁷ The Children of those Janissaries had the opportunity to follow in their fathers' footsteps and become potentially distinguished.¹⁹⁸

The governor or as he is called in Turkish "Pasha" or "loosely known as Wali", was the representative of Turkish Sultan (Caliph) in one of the Caliphate's provinces. The Pasha almost enjoyed absolute powers; and he had a full command of the following:¹⁹⁹

- 1) Main forces (national Janissaries and infantry) stationed in the province
- 2) The provinces' own local forces
- 3) The provincial navy

The judiciary, education and religious edification were left firmly in the hands of the religious institution under the directorship of the Grand Mufti, also known as Shaykh al-Islām.²⁰⁰ The Ḥanifi Madhhab (School of Jurisprudence) had become the official religious line to be followed throughout the Caliphate. It is called after al-Nu'mān Abu Ḥanīfa 699-767 (80-150H)²⁰¹ besides the other Sunni Madhhabs namely the Māliki, Shāfi'i, and Ḥanbli were allowed to be practiced each by its adherents. Whereas the other non-sunni Madhhabs such as Shī'ites or Ibadites were not recognized by the State.²⁰²

In Libya, the Ḥanifi and the Māliki Madhhabs were considered as the official interpretation followed by the Sharī'a courts. The office of the Mufti of Libya used to be assigned to a Ḥanifi preferably of Turkish origin, whereas his Deputy would be a Māliki of Libyan-Arab Murābitic or Sharīf background.²⁰³ The Deputy's office had traditionally been more or less given to the same family especially al-ʿAsʿūs that later

¹⁹⁷Veinstein, G, op. cit., pp 289-290.

¹⁹⁸Op. cit., p 259.

¹⁹⁹Al-Murja, op. cit., pp 461-462.

²⁰⁰Veinstein, G, op. cit., pp 281-282.

²⁰¹Al-Shak'a, *Islām bilā Madhāhib*, pp 411-421

²⁰²Ibn Ismā'īl, *Inhiyār Ḥukm al-Usra al-Qaramānliyya fī Libya (1795-1835)*, pp 169-170.

became known as al-Nāyib (meaning the deputy), because they had always deputized the Mufti.²⁰⁴

At the same time the Ibāḍi Madhhab remained very remote in strictly Berber populated areas in Libya, namely Jabal Nafūsa. They had their own indigenous courts, and their followers consulted only Ibāḍi scholars and arbitrators who lacked the official seal of the Ottomans. They were not allowed to participate in any of the State sponsored religious activities, which might have brought them closer to recognition. The same situation still sadly remains to the day.

It is fair to say that the Sultan had no religious powers in Sharīʿa or the formulation of legal opinions. He would get away with breaking these laws if he could, but could not make, alter, or interpret them at all. Those were the limits only of the Mufti and his institutions. However, the Mufti was appointed, replaced, and dismissed by the Sultan. But the Sultan could never take over the religious authority and powers of the Mufti.²⁰⁵

The position of the Mufti was a post of honour and eminence equated to that of the Ṣadr-I-aẓem (Prime Minister), and his prestigious position made him the opposite number to the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Eastern Church,²⁰⁶ which included the church of Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem. These cities have since become Islamic and their Christian character had irrevocably diminished.

The Eastern Patriarch is regarded as the Archbishop and the “Pope” of the Orthodox Church that recognizes and worships in accordance with the Byzantine’s theology. Thus Patriarch of Constantinople was ennobled to the status of the Sadr-i-azam.²⁰⁷

The Mufti enjoyed many special authorities, and was in charge of all clergies and the approved Islamic institutions in a State sponsored quasi-pyramidal structure. The clergies were distinguished from commoners by their long dress and white-voluted turbans, as it is the case now amongst the clergies in al-Shām and Turkey. It must be said that this ceremonial dress and hierarchy is somewhat strange to the Islamic-Arab

²⁰³Ibn Mūsa, pp 65-66.

²⁰⁴Al-Tallīsi, *Mu ʿjam Sukkān Libya*, p 227.

Juḥaydar, *Afāq wa Wathāʾiq fī Tārīkh Libya*, (F.N) p 11.

²⁰⁵Veinstein, G, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 251.

²⁰⁶Op. cit., p 282.

²⁰⁷Ibid.

culture. At the same time, it is thought to be a bi-product of an estranged matrimony involving the Islamic Ottoman Sultanate and the inherited Byzantine Empire. That situation excited the Ottomans, and made them grew in confidence by the consecutive victories over Christians and expansion at their expense in Eastern and Southern Europe. This feeling became even stronger as they threaten various European kingdoms including the siege of Vienna twice,²⁰⁸ and succeeding in turning the East and South of the Mediterranean into an Islamic protectorate.

The relationship between Islam and the Ottoman Caliphate was one of reverence and sacredness. Islam in the Ottoman Caliphate was respected at all levels. This is no surprise since the Ottoman Turks drew their legitimacy from Islam. The Sultans had the utmost and infinite respect for the *ʿulama*, al-Ashrāf as well as the Murābiṭs amongst others.²⁰⁹ This was manifested in reality by the influence the *ʿulama* exerted on the Sultan and his courtiers. Istanbul could not do anything without consulting the *ʿulama* in every small and big.²¹⁰ The Shariʿa (with its laws) was officially and publicly observed. In addition, the State assets were put in the services of Islam, and consorted with full recognition and respect for the covenanted people under protection i.e. Christians and Jews. To assert the Islamic identity of the State the Turks used to pledge their allegiance to the new Caliph in one of the revered mosques just on the outskirts of Istanbul, Abu Ayyūb al-Anṣārī Mosque, where one of the Prophet's close companions is buried and frequently visited. Further evidence of the State's Islamic adherence.²¹¹

The loyalty of the Janissaries was too dear. Their salaries used to suck up around third (30%) of the State expenditure.²¹² It was a customary tradition each time a new Sultan sat on the throne, he would give out to those men of arms what was called Bakṣiṣ, also in Arabic "Bakshiysh",²¹³ or other wise known as tips or gratuity. The head of the Janissary force was the Agha. He was a strong Janissary, one of the Sultan's Kullar and reported to him directly.

²⁰⁸Grammont, J, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, pp 218-222.

²⁰⁹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni al-Awwal*, (F.N) p 253.

²¹⁰Grammont, op. cit., p 209.

Veinstein, G, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, pp 249, 251.

²¹¹Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 249.

Al-Murja, *Ṣaḥwat al-Rajul al-Marid*, p 46.

²¹²Veinstein, G, op. cit., p 287.

²¹³Op. cit., p 249.

The Janissaries used to guard the sultan as well as generally fight, but also did the following:²¹⁴

- 1) keep public order
- 2) fight fire alongside fire brigade
- 3) guard the Diwān (Parliament)
- 4) defend and guard frontiers' outposts for which they received overtime.
- 5) protect the people of the Scripture (Christian and Jews)
- 6) take part in naval raids, known in the West as corsair.

The Janissaries' roles were similar in various Ottoman provinces, and in many cases the local troops used to join them especially at times of wars, which led to "karaghlization" of many Arabs and Berbers.

The Janissaries' apparatus explained the multitude of so many races reaching the top or the ruling elite. Beside the Sultan-Caliph, there was the Prime Minister and his office was the second highest in the land. The Sadr-i-azam (PM), as he was known, was the responsible for all State affairs, either by full mandate from the Caliph or by his executive role. Also, he was the head of the parliament as well as the government and the supreme Sultan representative, and the second man after the Caliph.²¹⁵

Amongst those Janissaries who became Prime Ministers between 1453-1623 (857-1033H) were only five native Turks, where as there were eleven Albanians, six Greeks, a Circassian, a Georgian, an Armenian, an Italian, a Serbian, a Croat, and many others who were Turkicized and the origins were either lost or forgotten.²¹⁶

²¹⁴Op. cit., pp 290-291.

²¹⁵Op. cit., pp 277-278, 281.

²¹⁶Op. cit., pp 258-259.

Ending

The Turks progressed gradually within the Arab-dominated caliphal structure to reach the zenith of the Islamic State and that coincided with the Spanish inquisitions and Reconquista, and the ultimate expulsion of Muslims from Spain, which led to the fleeing of some of them to Libya. However, the Turks never occupied Libya against the wishes of its people; they were rather called upon by Libyan notables to bring Libya into the Ottoman fold and reinforced its shores against Christian aggression.

Those events saw Libya changed dramatically yet introduced more ethnicities that by time were tribalised in a Libyan fashion. More importantly, Libyans adopted many of the Turks practices such as piracy and military code of conduct and political traditions.

As for the janissaries, they were more than fighting force; they actually dictated the policies of State and the destiny of its high-ranking officialdoms including the Sultan himself, and that re-shaped the history of Islam where enslaved conscripts became the masters of the land.

Chapter 4

Karāghla; transmutation of Ottoman Janissaries into an Arab tribe

Prelude

Karāghla emerged from the mixture of Ottoman soldiers with local Libyans mainly Berbers, Arabised and Arabs, to dominate the affairs of the State and subjects alike. As a result, there has been a fallacy that the Ottoman soldiers are of Turkish origins, therefore, the Karāghla are the product of Turkish soldiers marrying local women, and the conclusion that Karāghla are of Turkish ancestry that has no paternal roots in Libya. It is also assumed that the Turks, and only who were ethnically Turks, ruled Libya. These are some of the misnomers in the history of Libya.

This chapter is dedicated to deal with these precise fallacies, and hereunder the topics that would explain the ambiguity;

1. The origins of some of Libya's Ottoman rulers
2. The process of Karaghlization and the composition of al-Karāghla
3. Majority of Karāghla are of Libyan descent
4. Karāghla; the Qaramānli State of Libya

The origins of some of Libya's Ottoman rulers

When the Ottomans landed on the Libyan shores in 1551 (958H), there was a detachment of Janissaries amongst the men who docked there, and that terrified the Christian knights at the same time encouraged the locals to fight.¹ This was due to the reputation of fierceness as well as the Islamic zeal that the Janissaries were famous for.²

In addition to the professional mariners and the dedicated Janissaries there were convicts and other lawbreakers who were seeking a life other than that of guilt and shame,³ and the Libyan campaign represented to many of them a window of opportunity. But there were lots of Libyans who wanted and joined the liberating army from various tribes led by al-Swālim and al-Jawāri tribes of Tripolitania.⁴ The Janissaries were part of the Ottoman force that eventually drove out the Knights.⁵ The Leader of the army was Sinān Pasha who was a Janissary himself and a brilliant general of Albanian origin.⁶

After the successful recapture of Tripoli and the complete expulsion of the invading Christians, the victorious Ottomans became the new masters of Tripoli. The Tripolines warmly and understandably welcomed them, pledged allegiance to the conquering Caliph, and recognized in acknowledgement the ample service that his representatives had done to their country. This welcome that the Libyans had shown to the Ottomans was genuinely out of sense of gratitude. Also, Libyans were very impressed with the rather non-Arab and newly converted Muslims' enthusiasm in defending Islam. Especially in a country like Libya, which was regarded as a liability-state due to its widespread poverty, illiteracy and general lack of any economical and

¹Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-‘Arabi fī Libya*, pp 391-392.

²Feraud, *al-Hawliyyāt al-Libiyya mundh al-Fath al-‘Arabi Hatta al-Ghazw al-Iṭāli*, tr. by M. al-Wāfi, pp 94-95.

³Veinstein, G, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-‘Uthmāniyya*, ed. by R. Mantran, vol. 1, p 307.

Sāmiḥ, *al-Atrāk al-‘Uthmāniyyūn fī Shamāl Ifriqiyya*, tr. by ‘Abd al-Salām Adham, (F.N) p 25.

⁴Feraud, op. cit., p 107.

Al-Barghūthi, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, p 418.

⁵Sāmiḥ, *al-Atrāk al-‘Uthmāniyyūn fī Shamāl Ifriqiyya*, tr. by ‘Abd al-Salām Adham, pp 49-52.

Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 391-395.

⁶Hitti, *the History of the Arabs*, p 710.

political strategic importance enjoyed by countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria. The state of affairs, which Libya had lived, makes one wonder about the acceptance of those foreign Muslims fighters, and the encouragement they were met with to unite with the natives to the extent of assimilation beyond recognition.

Those foreign troopers had become the masters, and as a result made the seat of power in Tripoli a monopoly of theirs. Tripoli had been since then ruled by non Berbero-Arab governors, but also amongst those Ottoman rulers were lots of non-Turkish natives as revealed in the following:⁷

- 1) **Murād Agha** was the first Wālī in Tripoli since Libya was brought into the Ottoman fold after being liberated. His reign lasted from 1551 till 1556. It is said that he was of Italian origin and precisely came from Ragusa in south Italy.⁸
- 2) **Dargūt Pasha** (1556-1565) came from Mentsha on the Turkish western coast,⁹ which was overwhelmingly populated by Greeks. It was thought that Dargūt came from amongst them.¹⁰ Even though, most sources did not really elaborate on his ethnic background. However, the Greeks made up the majority inhabitants of Asia Minor since the days of Homer (9thBC), and were not expelled entirely until 1922 in direct response of their mistreatment and deportation of Turks from the Greeks' dominated areas.¹¹ The Greeks as well as the Italians knew the sea from early times and lived on it. The Greeks, in particular, made a living from the sea due to their geographical archipelago location, and as a result they cultivated a considerable experience in dealing with the sea, in which they emotionally became attached to.¹² In contrast, this was different with the Turks who were not acquainted with the sea due to their early life as nomadic horsemen roaming the plains of Asia similar to the Arabs.

⁷Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-'Uthmāni al-Awwal*, p 388.

⁸Feraud, op. cit., (F.N) p 107.

⁹Rossi, *Libya Mundhu al-Fath al-'Arabi Hatta 1911*, p 204.

¹⁰Feraud, op. cit., p 89.

¹¹Cf. Mawrid encyclopaedia, article: (*Greco-Turkish wars*).

¹²Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-'Uthmāni al-Awwal*, pp 388, 395.

- 3) **°Uluġ °Alī Pasha** – (1565-1568) - he was from Calabria in south Italy.¹³
- 4) **Ja°far Pasha** - (1581-1582) – it was thought that he was from the Caucasus, and it is not known for sure whether he was a Russian,¹⁴ a Circassian or else.
- 5) **Muḥammad al-Sagizli** – (1633-1649) – a Greek sailor from Sagis in the island of Khios (Chios), came to Tripoli on Christian ship then moved on to Algiers where he embraced Islam and took on the name Muḥammad instead of (Giovanni Soffieti).¹⁵ He was the first Ottoman Tripolitanian ruler who minted provincial currency made of silver called Qarmil. During his reign, the Ottoman umbrella was stretched to cover Cyrenaica when Sagizli's forces extended their control to the city-port of Benghazi in 1638.¹⁶ Cyrenaica was then under the Mamluks of Egypt spheres of influence.¹⁷ The Benghazi campaign was successful because of the 300 strong Janissaries, Sagizli employed as well as some the captured Christians who were put to that use. After installing Yūsuf Bay ruler of Benghazi, Sagizli moved south on the Oasis of Awjila and annexed it to his rule in Cyrenaica.¹⁸
- 6) **°Uthmān al-Sagizli** – (1647-1672) – was a Greek slave then embraced Islam and was freed just before the campaign on Cyrenaica.¹⁹ He was also the first commander to recruit local Arabs from the tribes of Swālim, Jawāri, and Maḥmīd into his force alongside the Janissaries.²⁰
- 7) **Pāli Shaos Dai** – (1672-1675) – from the Balkan and the name sounds and could well be an Albanian.²¹
- 8) **Ibrāhīm Celebi** – 1676AD – from the Greek peninsula of Morea (Peloponnisos).²²

¹³Rossi, op. cit., p 233.

¹⁴Op. cit., p 234.

¹⁵Op. cit., p 267. Others spelled it (Juvani Suviti).

¹⁶Bazama, *Benghazi °abr al-Tārīkh*, p 251.

¹⁷Shākir, *Tārīkh al-Islāmi (al-Tārīkh al-Mu°āṣir li-Bilād al-Maghrib)*, vol. 14, p 12.

¹⁸Bazama, op. cit., pp 251-252.

-----, *Wāḥāt al-Janūb al-Barqi*, pp 275-280.

¹⁹Rossi, op. cit., p 268.

²⁰Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil °Ahd al-°Uthmāni al-Awwal*, pp 235-238.

²¹Rossi, op. cit., p 290.

Bernga, *Ṭarāblus (1510-1850)*, p 175.

- 9) **‘Uthmān Bābā Dai** – he was enslaved and brought to Algeria, and somehow became the ruler of Tripoli. He was from Nice in France and not Nis in Serbia.²³
- 10) **‘Alī Dai** (the Algerian) – (1683-1684) – originally from Rumeli, he was thought to be a Greek.²⁴
- 11) **Al-Ḥājj ‘Abdallah Dai** – (1684-1687) – he was most likely Greek from Izmir, and not Turkish.²⁵
- 12) **Muḥammad Pasha al-Imām** (1687-1701) - He was an Imam for one of Tripoli’s mosques and his origins were said to be from Montenegro.²⁶
- 13) **Khalīl Pasha al-Arnauti**²⁷ – (1702- 1709) – He was one of the very few Albanians who ruled Tripoli.²⁸
- 14) **‘Alī Burghil** (Aljazā’iri which literally means Algerian) – (1793-1795) – He was a Georgian from the Caucasus.²⁹ He was a mercenary and artful at the same time, he took Tripoli by deception but was eventually forced to escape to Egypt.³⁰

There were, also, other distinguished military commanders who brought Libya respects and standing in the region such as;

- 1) **Ḥusayn Caliji** – Italian – Top General – 1683.³¹
- 2) **Muḥammad Khazindar** – Italian – treasurer as his name suggested – 1684.³²
- 3) **Murād al-Mālṭi** – Maltese – as his name suggested – the military commander of Ghariyān – 1687.³³

²²Rossi, op. cit., p 295.

²³Op. cit., 297.

Feraud, op. cit., p 193.

²⁴Rossi, op. cit., p 300.

²⁵Bernga, op. cit., p 191.

²⁶Rossi, op. cit., 307.

Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-Qaramānli*, p 120.

²⁷It comes from the Albanian word *Arnahut* which means Albanian-conscript in the Ottoman army.

²⁸Rossi, op. cit., p 298.

Shalābi, *Albisa ‘ala Mashjab al-Turāth*, p 34.

Bernga, op. cit., p 180.

²⁹Micacchi, *Ṭarāblus al-Gharb Taḥt Ḥukm Usrat al-Qaramānli*, pp 119-120.

³⁰Al-Zāwi, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabi ila Nihāyat al-‘Ahd al-Turkī*, pp 227-229.

³¹Rossi, op. cit., (F.N) p 300.

³²Op. cit., p 298.

- 4) Khalīl Beg Qardiğuli – Montenegro - Military Commander – 1697.³⁴
- 5) Zayd ʿAbdallah – Governor of Awjila – from Toulon in France – 1825.³⁵
- 6) Murād al-Rayis – Navy chief – His real name Peter Lysle from Perth in Scotland – married Yūsuf Pasha’s daughter.³⁶
- 7) Mustafa al-Aḥmar – of Georgian origin - the governor of Murzuq – and married the other daughter of Yūsuf Pasha.³⁷

The institution of Janissaries had its own titles of honour for its leaders who worked their way up through the system imported from Turkey, and was accustomed to the Libyan environment.

The synthesis of those titles carry Arabic expressions like Khazindar which literally mean treasurer, but there were also other titles of Perso-Turkic origins such as Pasha, Dai, Beg, Agha Bölük Pasha...³⁸

The title of Pasha meant in political terms the sole representative of the Sultan-Caliph in the province and lived in the castle or palace in the capital of that province or state. He used to be appointed for a year subject to renewal, some stayed longer where others were not allowed to serve their full term depending on their circumstance.³⁹ However, the average Pasha served for uninterrupted two years at best. One must not confuse the Pasha with Wāli. The title of Wāli in the Ottoman rule was restricted to a person who normally keeps law and order within the province, like the chief of the police nowadays.⁴⁰

The deputy of the Pasha was called Kahya.⁴¹ This word was changed in Libya in pronunciation and writing to Kīkhiya.⁴² Also, the title Khazindar was to deal with the

³³Op. cit., p 299.

³⁴Op. cit., p 308.

³⁵Op. cit., p 393.

³⁶Op. cit., p 374.

³⁷Clapperton, *Difficult & Dangerous Roads*, ed. by Bruce-Lockhart and Wright, (F.N) p 203.

³⁸Rossi, op. cit., p 357.

Goodwin, *the Janissaries*, (Glossary) pp 12-16.

³⁹Al-Murja, *Ṣaḥwat al-Rajul al-Marīd*, p 462.

⁴⁰Goodwin, op. cit., (Glossary) p 16.

⁴¹Cf. Al-Murja, op. cit., p 459.

Goodwin, op. cit., p 14.

Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-Qaramānli*, p 162.

financial side of the state's affairs. Whereas Khūja⁴³ was for those who handle the state's correspondence and offer consultancy that required particular competence. Daftirdar was for those who managed the administrative and financial matters as well.⁴⁴ However, Dais, Begs, Aghas occupied the highest ranking within the state's chain of scalar.⁴⁵ Dai meant in Turkish literally uncle, then with time, it had changed to be limited to staff officer who was in charge for paying soldiers salaries.⁴⁶ Whereas the title Beg was given to those responsible officers who were at the highest rank. It later became an honorary title given to the sons of the Pasha who did not even occupy senior military posts.⁴⁷

Karāghla was a distinct phenomenon in its kind in Libya, especially to the largely tribal bedouin society, since Libya was known for its zealot tribalism, and introvert. Usually, Libyan societal structure fundamentally based on lineage and ethnicity under a tribal umbrella bears either a Berber or an Arab label. In most cases those tribes are named after an Arab tribal names such as Awlad Sulaymān, 'Ibīdāt, or Berber ones such as Zamūra or Wrfalla. Sometimes those tribes get their names from towns, cities, countries or even professions such as; Miṣrāti (Miṣrāta), Ghiryāni (Ghiryān), Zwāri (Zwāra) Jibāliyya (the Berbers who live on Jabal Nafūsa), Mālṭi (Maltese), Tūnisi (Tunisian), Miṣri (Egyptian), Sūdāni (Sudanic), Albāni (Albanian), Bushnāq

Juḥaydar, *Afāq wa Wathā'iq fī Tārīkh Libya*, (F.N) p 206.

The Khūja family in Tripoli and the Kīkhiya in Benghazi., and both are prominent there.

⁴²Rossi, op. cit., p 278.

⁴³Al-Zāwi, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al- 'Arabi ila Nihāyat al- 'Ahd al-Turkī*, p 216.

Rossi, op. cit., p 357.

⁴⁴Goodwin, op. cit., p 13.

⁴⁵Al-Murja, op. cit., pp 449-454.

⁴⁶Rossi, op. cit., 255-257.

⁴⁷Ibid.

Sāmiḥ, op. cit., pp 176-177.

(Bosnian), Sharkasi (Circassian), Kurdi (Kurdish), Bornawi (Borno in Chad), Ḥadād (Blacksmith) and many other names that draw their origins from such places and trades.

The process of Karaghlization and the composition of al-Karāghla

The phenomenon of Karaghlization introduced newer circumstances in the Libyan society in recent history. The 16th, 17th and 18th centuries saw the absorption of relatively large numbers of recently Islamised and Turkicized Europeans came amongst the lines of Ottoman Janissaries arriving in Libya (Map. 6).⁴⁸ This was a natural outcome, due to the assimilation of peoples with each other under given circumstances. Libya was no exception in the Ottoman world in so far as the mixing with those incoming-Muslims with their Libyan hosts. These new circumstances resulted in new synthesis of the make-up of the Libyan population. So, beside Libyans (Berbero-Arab), there were people of Turkish origins, Turkicized, and their allied Libyan Karāghla.

The nomenclature Kuloğlu, or better known in Libya in plural as Karāghla (sing. Kurghli) is a Turkish expression given to the offspring of the intermarriage between Ottoman soldiers with the Local women.⁴⁹ In other words, that hybrid was the outcome of islamically legitimate marriages between foreign combatants coming from various parts of the Ottoman Jurisdiction in Europe and Asia with the local women who were mostly Berbers and Arabs, but, also, with enslaved black and white women as well. Amongst the-in-bondage women, there was a large proportion of European Christians who were captured by the Tripolitanian corsairs who roamed the Mediterranean in response to Christian challenge to the predominantly Islamic south and east of the Mediterranean. Tripolitaniens made a thriving trade from the sea and enabled the government to levy huge sums of money and gifts as a result.⁵⁰

Most prominent historians were more or less of the same opinion with differing details of Karāghla being the produce of Ottoman soldiers by local Libyan women. Amongst those who wrote about this span of Turkish influence in Libya were the

⁴⁸Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-Qaramānli*, p 127.

Kamāli, *Wathā’iq ‘an Nihāyat al-‘Ahd al-Qaramānalli*, tr. by M. Bazama, (F.N) p 25-26.

⁴⁹Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 43.

⁵⁰Rossi, op. cit., pp 158-163.

Sāmiḥ, op. cit., p 111-112.

Libyan-Arab Ibn Ghalbūn, the Italians Agostini and Rossi, the Turkish ʿAzīz Sāmīḥ, and the Libyan Maḥmūd Nāji of Albanian origin.⁵¹

However, the number of Karāghla increased over the years, which in due course led to similar increase in influence and political leverage in the street, and corridors of power. They also altered the demographic map by adopting the tribal system that was already in place, which facilitated the cohabitation in peace with the rest of Libya's social tiers, and more importantly submitting to the inherited Arab-tribal customs.

Thereupon, the Karāghla since became equally like the rest of the majority Libyans. They increased more and more till the numbers reached tens of strong thousands,⁵² and their tribal features began to surface with the Libyan tribal imprint in privacy and public that ultimately distanced them from the Turkish elements especially during the rule of the Qaramānli. The rise of the Karāghla was at the expense of the Turks who were marginalized in Libya's mainstream.

Most of al-Karāghla lived outside the walls of the city of Tripoli,⁵³ whereas those who lived inside the walls were mostly the ruling elite and courtiers, in addition to prominent Turkish families, the country's notables and Top Brass. There were also the Jews who lived in a ghetto within the city's walls. Ahāli dubbed all those as the government's proxies. At the same time, Karāghla settled around the exterior of the walls in al-Nawāḥi al-Arbʿa (four quarters), al-Manshiyya, al-Sāḥl, al-ʿAlāwna, and al-Rqīʿāt, also in Warshfana better known as al-ʿAzīziyya.⁵⁴ This then classified the Turks and their alike as Ḥudūr (urbanized), and the Karāghla bonded with the rest especially the Bedouin Arab tribes of Jawāri and Swālim who they mingled with.⁵⁵ The successive governments inside the walls led by ʿUthmān al-Sagizli encouraged this assimilation between the mainstream population and Karāghla outside its walls of power.⁵⁶

⁵¹Al-Zāwi, *A ʿlām Libya*, pp 406-407.

⁵²Sāmīḥ, op. cit., p 110.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Rossi, op. cit., pp 322-323.

⁵⁶Kamālī, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. ibn Yunūs, pp 41-42.
Rossi, op. cit., pp 268-270.

Karāghla and Karaghlisation since then spread out in the main cities and towns far from Tripoli and affected the demographic balance in Miṣrāta, Zlīṭin as well as Tripoli itself. They proved themselves to be worthy of belonging to the community since they were known for the courage, and their status of being first class fighters which made them demanded, and at the same time acquired them the respect and standing of the Libyan tribes. The Karāghla continued to enjoy the special status they enjoyed since inception till 1902 (1320H).⁵⁷ This status entailed them to execute tasks involving arms such as security, defense of the establishment, and tax-levying, disciplinary campaigns against rebellious tribes in addition to civil service,⁵⁸ in return for those jobs they basked in special privileges and prerogatives.⁵⁹

Karāghla in comparison with other groups in some of the administrative areas of Tripolitania were the strongest, and most united and disciplined. This perhaps emanated from the fact that they were the most regularized due to their social structure intertwined with the military norms.⁶⁰ This history of service to various governments has successfully consolidated their political position in various forms till the present-day.

Therefore, the Karāghla, in Libya, can be seen through the following social groups:

- 1) **The Turks** – they are of Turkish origins from their paternal side. In other words, they are ethnically Turks and NOT Turkicized.⁶¹ This sometimes extended to those whose mothers could be Libyan and not necessarily Turkish, but the father is Turkish even if he was born in Libya.⁶²

⁵⁷Rossi, op. cit., pp 488.

Agostini, op. cit.

⁵⁸Agostini, op. cit.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Op. cit., p 242.

⁶¹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-‘Uthmāni al-Awwal*, p 375.

⁶²Al-Zāwī, *Muḥjam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 171.

2) **The Turkicized** – they are naturalized as Turks. These were not ethnically Turks in their roots, but rather Turkicized through the process of Devşirme.⁶³ It is thought that they were considerably Greeks of Hellenic origin who lived in the Greek archipelago and Rumeli, or even the west of Asia Minor (Turkey).⁶⁴ Also, there were Albanians who were sometimes called Arnahut, and other Balkaners as well as Circassians and other Ottomanised subjects (Map. 6).⁶⁵

3) **The Karaghliized** – they were the product of the process of Karaghliization, which was basically the end-result of many individuals and families belonging to the Karāghla bloc. Those newly Karaghliized were mostly of Berbero-Arab origins, and they still until now retain their tribal names and peculiarities that refer them to their Libyan roots. A good example of that are the tribes of Siniynāt in Khums, and Ziyiyāna in Zlīṭin who are thought to be of Arab (or Arabised) origins.⁶⁶ However, this particular group of Karāghla had swelled due to the influx of locals who craved for the privileges and prerogatives that ensured them a good life, and spared them taxes and governments' wrath just in case, as outlined earlier.

⁶³Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-Qaramānli*, p 39.

⁶⁴-----, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-'Uthmāni al-Awwal*, p 395.

⁶⁵Op. cit., p 388.

Kamāli, *Wathā'iq 'an Nihāyat al-'Ahd al-Qaramānalli*, tr. by M. Bazama, (F.N) pp 25-26.

⁶⁶Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 43.

Majority of Karāghla are of Libyans descent

The prevalent understanding amongst Libyans of the assumption at large that all the Karāghla were either paternally Turks or Turkicized Europeans, and their mothers were Libyans. An opinion, which is a common amongst researchers and laymen that finally, drew my attention. I am of the opinion that this assumption could not stand tall especially after investigating the surrounding circumstances carefully. After surveying most literature with some thorough and hearing from those concerned (Karāghla and other tribal chiefs) regarding the above assumption, I still remain to be convinced of it. I, also, still have some uncertainties, which still await clarification. However, by a way of contribution towards the intended investigation I present here some reasons, and they are as follows:

- 1) Most Libyans did not have the luxury of inquisitiveness that we have today in trying to explore our roots. This perhaps was due to the hardship and stricken poverty that our forefathers were living in which dissuaded them away from finding out where they came from ?
- 2) The lack of knowledge of roots was the direct result of the Libyans' negligence from the outset, and subsequently the lack of documentation. This could be explained in the context of illiteracy, lack of documentation, geographical dispersion, lack of accurate statistics gathered in courts, zāwiyas, and mosques.

Thereupon, we find ourselves asking the big question in regards to what we discussed before;

Are most of Karāghla of Libyan (Berbero-Arab) origin ? Other than the fact that they are Libyan born and bred with Libyan cultural characteristics ?

There are many facts that cast doubts over the Karāghla being anything else other than of Libyan origins ? And to be more precise that those factual indicators endorse Libyan reality, and categorically rebuffs the assumption of the Karāghla being of Turkic or Turkicized origin. These indicators that state the majority of al-Karāghla are of Arabised Libyan background, and they are;

- 1) there were those who claimed that Devşirme was carried out amidst the locals instead of bringing outsiders.⁶⁷ Therefore, they were already Muslims and spoke Arabic, and more importantly knew Libyan customs and traditions very well. They were likely native mercenaries who were ashamed of explicitly saying who they were, or even which tribes they belonged to. This perhaps was in fear of backfire or retribution since their shameful deeds included pillage and killing of al-Ahāli. This was beside the fact that they were part of the very much-hated central government in Tripoli.
- 2) if one scrutinizes closely the history of the Karāghla and their first appearance on the political stage would notice that it was a recent phenomenon that was established politically just before the advent of the Qaramānlis. To be even more precise their phenomenon emerged in prominence with the emergence of al-Ḥājī Rajib to the throne of Tripoli towards the end of the first period of the Ottoman rule 1711 (1123H).⁶⁸ That laid the ground for the Karāghla to lay the foundation of their semi-autonomous State represented in the Qaramānli dynasty. The Qaramānli State administered roughly the whole of Libya geographically and politically. That was the first time that Libyans ruled Libya during the Ottoman era.⁶⁹
- 3) in contrast with other non-Arab minorities in the Arab world such as the Chechnyans in Jordan, Kurds, Turkmen and Armenians in Iraq who still retain their traditions, costumes, accent and other ethnic characteristics unlike the Libyan Karāghla who possess nothing of that nature. It is the contrary; Karāghla culturally are no different in every sense of the word from the rest of Libyans.
- 4) Karāghla are largely Arabised Berbers as far as the above ethnic characteristics are concerned. Those were mostly the dwellers of Tripoli, Miṣrāta, Zlīṭin and Benghazi. Some still retain their Berber tribal names and other nomenclature such as Zīri, Barbār, Ādgham.⁷⁰ They are tribalized and adhere to the tribal code of conduct. They also evince their tribal obsession towards their Libyan Arab culture under the umbrella of the Islamic Māliki Maghribian School of worship as

⁶⁷Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-Qaramānli*, pp 53-55, 66-67.

⁶⁸Al-Zāwī, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-‘Arabi ila Nihāyat al-‘Ahd al-Turkī*, pp 216-217.

⁶⁹Folayan, *Libya Athnā’ Hukm Yūsuf Pasha al-Qaramānli*, tr. by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Miḥīshi, p 9.

⁷⁰Kamāli, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. ibn Yunūs, pp 36, 41, 43.

opposed to the official line of Ḥanafī practiced in the Islamic-East by the government and its Ottoman officialdom in Libya.

- 5) despite what ʿAzīz Sāmiḥ cited in his book “**al-Atrāk al-ʿUthmāniyyūn fī Shamāl Ifriqiyya**”, that the Karāghla are mostly Arab Maḥāmīd and Riqīʿāt. But he went back and contradicted himself by commenting that “the Karāghla were the sons of those brave Turks”. However, ʿAbd al-Salām Adham, who Arabised Sāmiḥ’s book, stated in his footnotes that the Karāghla were Arabs and with that he refuted Sāmiḥ’s latter comment.⁷¹ In an interview I had with the Palestinian Historian, Aḥmad Dajāni, who knew Adham closely and lived with him through the experience of translating that book and other Ottoman documents which Dajāni later compiled and published. Dajāni told me that he would favour Adham’s views and judgment more than Sāmiḥ’s. He told me personally that Adham was more credible in making a ruling on an issue such as this than anyone else he knew. While researching this, I found that Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Riqīʿa,⁷² the chief of Riqīʿāt tribe,⁷³ helped Muḥammad al-Sāgizli in recruiting Libyan-Arabs to the lines of the regulars, which in due course weakened the janissaries and propped up the Karāghla’s voice and numbers. It has been reported that Ismāʿīl Kamālī 1882-1936 (1300-1355H),⁷⁴ prominent Libyan Historian, wrote: the expression “Kuloğlu” (or Karāghla) was used to describe all those who joint the military service, whether they were Tripolitanian Karāghla, the product of Janissaries mixing with [Arabised] Berbers in marriages.⁷⁵ Under the second Ottoman rule (1835-1911) this expression was extended to some Arab tribal families which the draft included them. Those tribes included al-Jawāri (Riqīʿāt, ʿAlāwna, Khutna), and tribe of Wrishfāna in 1866. The draft included Maḥāmīd (Awlād Saʿīd ibn Ṣūla, al-Sabāʿa, Awlād Shibl,⁷⁶ Ḥwāmid, Awlād Sulṭān) in

⁷¹Sāmiḥ, op. cit., pp 110-111, (F.N) 227-229.

⁷²Rossi, op. cit., p 268.

⁷³Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni al-Awwal*, pp 235-239.

⁷⁴Kamālī was a Libyan of Albanian origin, wrote extensively on Tripolitanian tribes and history, and the Qaramānli dynasty. He mastered Italian, Turkish as well as Arabic, which he employed in his researching life. Cf. al-Zāwi, *Aʿlām Libya*, pp 107-110.

⁷⁵Sāmiḥ, op. cit., p 60.

⁷⁶There is a branch of Awlād Shibl known as al-Shabāla amongst the ʿAwāqīr in Cyrenaica and their origins thought to be Karāghla, but they are clearly Arabs from the West joint another Arab bloc in East of Libya.

1880, whereas the tribes of al-Shāṭṭi (Maqāriḥa and Ḥsūn) were recruited as late as 1887".⁷⁷ Muḥammad Bazama who Arabised the book commented on al-Karāghla and said:

"they make up the majority of the tribes in Miṣrāta. Over the years, they acquired the requisites that made them part of the tribal society as a result of relationship by marriages and neighbourhood. They are part of the tribal system now".⁷⁸

- 6) the phenomenon of al-Karāghla had not exceeded two hundred years before the Italian occupation of Libya in 1911 which started officially documenting the history as well as the genealogy of Libyans before they were well established. This period of time is short and good enough for the collective memory to advise them of their foreign origins. That is if they were? Tribes may not have had a recording system, but always have had an effective method of doing so by folkloric poetry. This was one of the most articulate ways of recording their oral history by memorizing as much as possible and passed on to others through successive generations. This kept records of what happened in wars especially that war in 1807 (1227H) between the Arab tribes of the east and west, better known in Libya as Ḥarb al-Ṣaff (the war of the sides). The war was between the tribes of the Cyrenaican side (Ṣaff al-Sharq) against the Tripolitanian side (Ṣaff al-Gharb), in other words, the side of the Arab in the east (Cyrenaica) fighting off the side of the Arab in the west (Tripolitania).⁷⁹ Also the massacre of the Cyrenaican tribe of Jawāzi by the Qaramānli soldiers in the Palace of al-Birka in Benghazi in 1817,⁸⁰ and other incidents that the folk poetry has kept for us.⁸¹
- 7) If one studies the Arab traditions and customs in Libya, would notice that Libyans do not generally marry their women to foreigner with ease. This has never been established as a racist act or anything of that sort. However, this conduct was

Cf. Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], by I. al-Mahdawi, p 461-462.

⁷⁷Kamālī, *Wathā'iq 'an Nihāyat al-'Ahd al-Qaramānalli*, tr. by M. Bazama, (F.N) pp 25-26.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Al-Ashhab, *Barqa al-'Arabiyya*, pp 115-122.

⁸⁰Ibn Ismā'īl, *Inhiyār Ḥukm al-Usra al-Qaramānliyya fī Libya (1795-1835)*, p 213.

rather part of their paternalistic instincts that to secure the future of their much beloved daughters as they saw it. Therefore, one could never imagine that the majority of tribal Libyans would marry their daughters to unknown Janissaries, especially for the Arabs that would be inconceivable since they take pride of their ancestry and tribes. In addition, those Janissaries did not speak Arabic let alone their unknown origins and their status of being recent converts to Islam would make it uneasy for them to easily assimilate so quickly to the point they forget where they came from. That outrightly dismisses the assumption that the Karāghla were at large aliens, but paradoxically that affirms that they were of local stock. The Berbers when it comes to marriage they are even tougher than their Arab brethren, that is why they have survived and maintained their indigenous sub-culture, and exist in pockets around the country.

- 8) Karāghla have managed over the years to penetrate Libyan geography and spread out by reaching deeper into the tribal hinterland. Besides, Tripoli where they firmly established themselves and settled in almost everywhere important in Libya, in places such as Zāwiya, Ghiryān, Wrfalla, Tarhūna, Zlīṭin, Miṣrāta, Ajdābiya, Benghazi, Darna and in many parts of the south as well (Map. 12).
- 9) the other remarkable character about the Karāghla, was their ability to become tribalized and even Bedouin in some cases, and accepting and obeying the Arab tribal code of conduct, which ultimately earned them the respect of others like every one else in this peculiar environment. They adopted the same Arab tribal framework of various subdivisions and duties, and with its sections, families, and the appointment of shaykh-leader, and so on. Also, their allegiance was never in question either to their Faith or the land and its people. Moreover, they lived the Libyan-Arab culture with no reservation and no addition, which further cast doubts about the assumption of being foreigners. They have had the same Libyan-Arab tradition, customs, costumes, food, singing, accent, attitude, stamina, mentality and so on and so forth, and more importantly, the Arab acceptance of them was unreserved, and treated them as equal and a force to be reckoned with.⁸²

⁸¹Op. cit., pp 109-114.

⁸²Kamālī, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. ibn Yunūs, p 22.

10) Karāghla rose against the Qaramānlis and destroyed their rule,⁸³ they had always upheld their bias towards their fellow Arabs whether that in the language or in presentiment against the Turks and their followers in Libya.⁸⁴ That doubted even further their Turkish origins-assumption.⁸⁵

⁸³Kamāli, *Wathā'iq 'an Nihāyat al-‘Ahd al-Qaramānalli*, tr. by M. Bazama, pp 69-86.

⁸⁴Ibn Ismā‘īl, op. cit., pp 265-267.

⁸⁵Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-Qaramānli*, p 121.

Ibn Ismā‘īl, *Inhiyār Ḥukm al-Usra al-Qaramānliyya fi Libya (1795-1835)*, pp 212-213.

Karāghla; the Qaramānli State of Libya

The Karāghla settled nicely in the Maghrib in general, and in Libya in particular. They became part and parcel of the Maghribian society especially when they took reins of power in those regencies. In Tunisia, the Karāghla establish their rule represented by al-Ḥusayniyya dynasty early in 1705 (1117H), while Algeria was taken over by the Karāghla led by the Dāis in 1710 (1122H). However, in Libya, it was the Qaramānlis who took over Tripoli in 1711 (1123H). The Karāghla in Algeria and Tunisia were named Khuzna, and Ṣāhib al-Makhzan in Morocco, unlike in Libya. Khuzna derived from the word Khāzin, which meant the guardian of goods, because they traditionally did such jobs.

Moreover, all those governments of the near and middle Maghrib were given quasi-independence in return they pledged their allegiance to the Islamic Caliphate in Istanbul. That was done through a Sultanic Firmān in which the Caliph confirms the Dai or Pasha on the throne.⁸⁶ The Dai or the Pasha, then, would carry out the traditional formality in the name of the Sultan, which includes sending tributes to the treasury in Istanbul, and gifts to the Sultan's ministers, courtiers, and messengers, as well as make supplication for the Caliph in mosques throughout the Maghrib.

Karāghla grew in numbers and strength to the extent that they became parallel-force to the janissaries, which bred rivalry and contempt amongst the rank and file. The Janissaries were in control of the seat of power in Tripoli until 1711 (1123H). They dealt with the fate of the governors like the way their predecessors, Mamluks, did in the days of ʿAbbāsīd Caliphs in neighbouring Egypt either by abdication or assassination. However, with the emergence of the party of Karāghla on the Tripolitanian political theatre, Karāghla acquired respect and support amongst the masses especially when it had local Bedouin amongst its rank and file. The recruitment of the Bedouin was done on the recommendation of their Shaykhs from the Arabs of Nawāḥi al-Arbʿa, to Muḥammad al-Sagizli who agreed by including them into the State's regulars. The new recruitment was accomplished, and it added quantity and quality to the force especially when ʿUthmān al-Sagizli was appointed to

⁸⁶Op. cit., (F.N) p 87.

lead them. The new development drove a wedge between the newly created national army for Libya and the very much-discredited and hated Janissaries who were infamous for rape and pillage of the country.⁸⁷ As a result, much of the conscripted Libyans were Karaghized, and the Arabisation of Berbers and all those of non-Libyan origins preceded that. In return, the conscripted-Libyans confirmed the Libyanisation of the Karāghla, and reconfirmed their Arabisation and ingrained in them the Bedouin traditions of the Arabs. That opened the door widely to the Karāghla to assimilate in the wider society with full acceptance, and the inability to discriminate between them. But, at the same time, that created problems of dissension by distancing Karāghla from those who preferred to remain Turks on one hand, and the Janissaries on the other hand.⁸⁸

The first time the Qaramānlis appeared in the political arena in Libya was by the arrival of their forefather, Muṣṭafa al-Qaramānli, amongst those sailors and Janissaries who came to Libya towards the end of 16th and early 17th century (Figure. 5).⁸⁹ It is said that the Qaramānids (Qaramānlis) appeared in the central Anatolia around 1256 (654H) and their founder was Qaramān ibn Nūra Ṣūfī, who was succeeded by 14 ruler from amongst the Qaramanids. They were the strongest and most influential Turkish clans that ruled Anatolia longer than most. They lived side by side with the Ottomans before the latter took over the whole of Asia Minor. However, the Ottomans eventually managed to reign in the Qaramānids and expropriated their land to the benefit of the Turkish Ottomans' estate.⁹⁰

It is believed that the Qaramanids were the offspring of Afshar Turkmens, contrary to the Ottomans who were Qayīgh of the Öghuz. It is also believed that Nūra, the father of Qaramān the founder, was one of Ṣūfī shaykhs in Anatolia who enjoyed extensive power and authority of being Ṣūfī point of reference as most of the ruling dynasties did because of their dervish pertinence.

The Qaramanids managed to spread their control into central and southern Anatolia making the town of Qaramān (Karamān) their capital as well as the most famous for

⁸⁷Bernga, op. cit., pp 59, 109, 121.

⁸⁸Micacchi, op. cit., pp 8-9.

⁸⁹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-Qaramānli*, pp 21-26.
Bernga, op. cit., p 216.

artistic and cultural activities in the region. The Qaramānids acquired the respect of other Turkish tribes for encouraging the promotion of Turkish language and its employment in the administration of the land instead of Persian.⁹¹

Muṣṭafa al-Qaramānli, the forefather of the Qaramānli dynasty (Map. 5), descended from Turkish origin that goes back to the village of Qaramān, about 100km to the south east of the city of Konya in south central Anatolia.⁹² So, the origins are ethnically Turkish and not Turkicized. But their descendants in Libya have become Libyan-Arabs to the extent none of them spoke Turkish.⁹³ Furthermore, we have neither proof nor any historical records to suggest they had any links with Turkey as far as their blood relation is concerned, or even they ever visited Turkey for that purpose. The Libyan Qaramānlis had only an official relation with Turkey like every Muslim around the globe. However, they knew no other country as a home apart from Libya, they spoke no other language apart from Arabic, and their belief was in Islam according to the Māliki teachings. With that, they felt full-time Libyans and were accepted by the rest of the Libyans.⁹⁴

After the death of Muṣṭafa, his son, Maḥmūd, carried on the tradition in joining the military. The grandson Yūsuf again succeeded Maḥmūd and became the commander of the forces, which was largely made up of Karāghla who lived in al-Sāḥl and al-Manshiyya on the eastern side of Tripoli. After the death of Yūsuf, his son, Aḥmad, inherited his father rank. Aḥmad rose to the rank of Pasha-Agha, and became in charge of the Karāghla in al-Sāḥl and al-Manshiyya, and enjoyed unprecedented influence and confidence of all people in the area.⁹⁵

The Janissaries were playfully throwing back and forth the various governors of Tripoli amongst themselves with a little disregard for the Tripolines.⁹⁶ At the same

⁹⁰Bosworth, *the Islamic Dynasties*, pp 134-135.

⁹¹Op. cit., pp 134-135.

⁹²Rossi, op. cit., p 326.

Bazama, op. cit., pp 18-21.

⁹³Rossi, op. cit., p 323.

⁹⁴Ibn Ismāʿīl, op. cit., p 348.

⁹⁵Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-Qaramānli*, p 40.

⁹⁶Op. cit., p 80.

time Aḥmad al-Qaramānli stood by watching while the various partisans were fighting it out without showing the slightest of support to anyone as if that did not concern him at all. Moreover, Aḥmad never crossed his mind of jumping on the throne, but apparently his fate and military position inattentively dragged him to it. The Governor of Tripoli, Abu Umiys, felt uneasy of the good position that Aḥmad al-Qaramānli was enjoying throughout the country. He felt, then, he had to cook a conspiracy to get rid of him by sending him on a military mission to Ghiryān, and empowered him with a message from Abu Umiys himself to the ruler of Ghiryān. The content of that message was to cruelly shoot the messenger. But, Aḥmad very soon discovered what was to be his designed fate by his master in Tripoli. He hurried back to Tripoli and gathered the members of al-Majlis (Parliament) and his sworn supporters and all agreed the abdication of Abu Umiys and confirming Aḥmad al-Qaramānli in his place as the new governor of Tripoli in 27 July 1711 (11 Jumāda al-Thāni 1123H).⁹⁷

The Ottoman Caliphate in Istanbul was reluctant at first to accept in recognition al-Qaramānli as the new governor of Tripoli. But the Ahāli and the armed forces insisted on their choice of appointment, and eventually convinced sultan Aḥmad III 1703-1730 (1115-1143H)⁹⁸ who was engaged in the Turco-Russian war, and confirmed Aḥmad al-Qaramānli as the new Pasha of Tripoli by issuing a Sultanic Firmān in march 1712 (1124H).⁹⁹

Under the Qaramānlis Libya became Semi-independent from Ottoman's influence,¹⁰⁰ and to ensure this self-rule, Aḥmad Pasha al-Qaramānli had to root out his opponents and rivals especially the antagonistic self-proclaimed invincible Janissaries. Before they had him for dinner, as the Arabs say, Aḥmad Pasha decided to have them for lunch when he invited those troublemakers to his Palace in al-Manshiyya near Sīdi al-Hāni for a walīma (feast). The moment that he was assured they were all inside, he gave his orders to put his swords and guns into work, and mercilessly massacred them

⁹⁷Ibn Ismā'īl, *Inhiyār Ḥukm al-Usra al-Qaramānliyya fī Libya (1795-1835)*, pp 32-35.

⁹⁸Aṣāf, *Tārīkh Salāṭīn bani 'Uthmān*, pp 100-102.

⁹⁹Ibn Ismā'īl, *op. cit.*, p 37

¹⁰⁰Kamālī, *op. cit.*, p 7.

all.¹⁰¹ His men did just that while he was looking at them with pleasure in 1711 (1123H).¹⁰² In that ominous feast the Pasha slaughtered more than 300 men whom he deemed as active opposition, and set an example for whoever thought of rebelling against his rule. By doing so, he set new lessons to follow for political conspirators and political aspirants alike.

The man who seemingly learnt from this rather ruthless but useful lesson was Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha of Egypt who a century later literally implemented this very lesson on his Mamluk rivals in Egypt in the infamous massacre in the Castle of Cairo in 1811 (1226H).¹⁰³

Libya under the Qaramānlis functioned as an independent nation in dealing with the rest of the world as if she was not an Ottoman province after all. Nevertheless, Istanbul remained in Tripoli's subconscious as its referential authority, and the focus of all Muslims as the only legitimate Caliphate. With that in mind, the Qaramānlis set out on running their own affairs as they wished without Istanbul's interference, and that included signing separate treaties and pacts with Europe, and even going into wars with them. With this newly found strength Libyans threatened European as well as American navies in the Mediterranean to the extent that Libyans along with Algerian and Tunisian seamen were labeled as the devils of the sea.¹⁰⁴

The Qaramānlis of Libya felt overconfident and started distributing titles amongst themselves and their entourage shamelessly, they even dared by calling the Pasha Amīr al-Mu'minīn (Prince of Believers), a title exclusively and usually reserved for the Caliph.¹⁰⁵ However, most Tripolitarians blindly obeyed them and felt that they were somehow free at least of Janissaries' dictate, and the masters of their own dynasty, even though Turkish remained as the official language of the State during the rule of Aḥmad Pasha in 1795 (1210H). However, his grandson, ʿAlī Pasha, was the first to start the process of re-Arabisation of the Turkish designed system. But Arabic did not really become the lingua franca of ins and outs of Libya until the ascension of Yūsuf Pasha to the Throne of Libya. Yūsuf was the first Qaramānli Pasha to be

¹⁰¹Bernga, op. cit., 222.

¹⁰²Rossi, op. cit., pp 328-329, 338.

¹⁰³Bosworth, op. cit., p 66.

¹⁰⁴Rossi, op. cit., p 301.

Sāmiḥ, op. cit., p 147.

considered as a genuinely true Arab Tripolitanian.¹⁰⁶ The strong Arab Shaykh of al-Maḥāmīd tribe, Ghūma al-Maḥmūdī, considered the Qaramānlis as Arabs just like him.¹⁰⁷

Moreover, the Qaramānlis were not exactly orderly when it came to disagreements. They employed every treacherous technique in the book, and used optimum force in stopping their rivals without any religious or familial regards. This behavioural madness started with Aḥmad Pasha who could not wait any longer for his natural end, because of his ailing-health and blindness, he eventually decided to pre-empt his death by committing suicide.¹⁰⁸ While his son, Yūsuf, had no sense of remorse in assassinating his own rival brother, Ḥasan for the sake of power after comforting his own mother who stood in between the two in a gesture of reconciliation. Yūsuf pretended that he was not there to harm Ḥasan, but to pardon him. When the perfect moment arose he leapt on his brother and shot him dead, injuring his mother badly in the way.¹⁰⁹ Yūsuf Pasha, in later times of his life, almost met the same fate he inflicted upon his own brother, but this time was by his own son, ʿAlī Pasha, who stabbed him, and miraculously survived it ... and so on so forth.

The Qaramānlis brought relative stability to the country despite the deadly inner-family quarrels. They, also, succeeded in bringing to light the Libyan geography as one unit for better and worse, and further the emphasis of Libyan sense of identity as Tripolitaniāns in addition to the fact of being Muslim Berbero-Arabs, in précis known as a Maghribean. On the other side, they neglected the country's infrastructure and left no visible architecture to remind the Libyans of them apart from a few mosques, and corsairs. They also fortified the walls of the city and revamped its harbor. But there was an ugly side to the Qaramānlis, which brought about their demise, and that was their absolute greed, which affected trade badly, and forced tribes to rebel against their rule. That sad state of affairs Libya reached in the first half of the 19th Century prompted Istanbul to intervene, which she did in the right time and salvaged the country from falling prey to foreign powers. The Qaramānli, also, drove some of

¹⁰⁵Sāmiḥ, op. cit., p 146.

¹⁰⁶Rossi, op. cit., p 323.

¹⁰⁷Ibn Ismāʿīl, op. cit., p 348.

¹⁰⁸Al-Zāwī, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Faṭḥ al-ʿArabi ila Nihāyat al-ʿAhd al-Turkī*, pp 223-224.

Libya's tribes to exile, as would be discussed later, and that largely shook up the country and upset the balance of tribal geography.

¹⁰⁹Sāmiḥ, *op. cit.*, p 153.

Ending

The transmutation of Ottoman Janissaries into an Arab speaking tribe known as Karāghla emerged from the fermentation of Ottoman soldiers with local Libyans and the drafting of mainly Berbers, Arabised and Arabs into the ranks of Ottoman soldiery with the active blessing of the local tribal shaykhs. Karāghla went on to dominate the affairs of the State and subjects alike. As a result, there has been a fallacy that the Ottoman soldiers were of Turkish origins, therefore, the Karāghla are the product of Turkish soldiers marrying local women. But the problem lied in the assumption that Karāghla are of Turkish ancestry who have no paternal roots in Libya. This has been one of the biggest misnomers in the history of Libya.

The established inference is that many of Ottoman rulers of Libya were not locals nor were they Turks, with exception of Qaramānlis, yet they still felt and behaved like Tripolitarians, and were accepted as such by Libyans. Likewise most of Karāghla are of Libyan origins adopting Arabism under the auspices of Islam with its indigenous interpretations.

Chapter 5

Ashrāf and Murābiṭīn

Prelude

Firstly, the reason behind dedicating this whole chapter for ribāṭ and Murābiṭs (Murābiṭīn) is firstly because of the ongoing confusion between the religio-political status of Murābiṭs particularly in Libya, and the wider Maghribean historical Almoravids. Secondly, the most important is the role that Murābiṭs have been playing in the Libyan arena since the advent of Islam to the region.

Clearly, There is a distinction between the two in pronunciation and historical experiences. The Almoravids is known in Arabic as al-Murābiṭūn, whereas the Murābiṭs known in Libya as al-Murābiṭīn, and the latter is going to be the subject of this study. However, this chapter will tackle ribāṭ and al-Murābiṭīn from different angles, investigating the concept, the historical experiences and the social impact it had on the tribes and the State in Libya during the Qaramānli rule.

Hereunder are the particulars that will be studied:

1. The linguistic roots of ribāṭ
2. The historical roots of ribāṭ
3. The historical roots of al-Murābiṭīn
4. Al-Ashrāf al-Murābiṭīn
5. The spread of Ṣūfi Orders and their influence in Libyan society
6. The shared impact and influence between the Ṣūfi Orders and Libyans
7. Al-Murābiṭs and the Karāghli Qaramānli State
8. Al-Murābiṭs and their influence in State's politics

The linguistic roots of Ribāṭ

The word ribāṭ has many meanings in Arabic and as a result scholars differed on its interpretation in reference to anthropology despite their agreement on its Qur'ānic source. Furthermore, the word enjoys a status of reverence in the history of Islam in general, and in the Maghrib in particular.

The Arabic lexicon “*al-Hādi ila lughat al-‘Arab*” states that the words ribāṭ and al-Murābiṭūn are derivatives from the root rabṭ or rabaṭa.¹ However, rabaṭa means tightly bind and firmly bolted as opposed to loosening.² When one says God has tightened someone's heart, it means in Arabic He inspired him with patience, and strengthened him. God has tied down someone's pain meaning denied it or stopped it. The man has a tied-heart meaning has a brave heart. When the word rabaṭa is used with the army, it means it stood guard on the frontiers.³ The adjective of rābiṭ, which is murābiṭ, means a worshiper and ascetic. There are some similarities between the life of ribāṭ and the life in Christian monasteries.

However, ribāṭ could be considered as a fortified monastery for combative hermits who gathered and stayed put for the purpose of defending the Islamic borderlines with enemies. Ribāṭ, also, became in late Middle Ages a gathering place for the poor to take refuge in. The other derivative is rābiṭa, which means an association of friendship, and later developed into an Islamic community made up of the poor and pious.

Qur'ān refers to ribāṭ in an honorific manner, and regards it as the highest status of preparedness and alert in facing the enemy:

"O ye who believe! persevere in patience and constancy; strengthen each others; and fear Allah; that ye may prosper." ⁴, "Against them make ready

¹Al-Karmi, *al-Hādi ila lughat al-‘Arab*, vol. 2, pp. 121-122.

²Evans-Pritchard, *the Sanūsi of Cyrenaica*, p 66.

³Al-Karmi, *op.cit.*

⁴Sūra 3, verse 200.

**your strength to the utmost of your power, including
steeds of war".⁵**

It has also been reported that the Prophet has said:

**"ribāṭ (standing guard) in one day for the sake of Allah is
much worthier than the earth, and who is on it".⁶**

Also:

**"ribāṭ in a day and a night is better than the fasting and
worshipping for a whole month".⁷**

This particular ribāṭ mentioned in the above texts is meant being in a state of full alert and ready to fight off the enemies, and under no circumstance to allow them to violate the borders of the Islamic State. Ribāṭ then became a sophisticated network of communities ready to fight for Islam, and those devotees, who dwelled the ribāṭs, became one integrated community known as al-Murābiṭīn literally those who implement the above-mentioned religious texts. Al-Murābiṭīn formula for living was basically absolute faith in Allah and their cause, perseverance in tough times, piety attained by continuous worship, and standing up to face the enemy. In return, they are promised the greatest of rewards in this life and the hereafter.⁸

If one minutely looks at the word rabṭ and its derivatives, especially ribāṭ and Murābiṭ, would unequivocally find that it rotates around all the meanings found in the lexicon referred to earlier. These meaning are intricately linked to this category of people who live in North Africa in general, and Libya in particular, and they are commonly known as al-Murābiṭīn.

According to Arabic grammar the word Murābiṭīn is incorrect syntax as far as morphology is concerned. However, it served the purpose by distinguishing it from al-Murābiṭūn,⁹ also known as Almoravids.¹⁰ Al-Murābiṭūn was an Islamic dynasty 1056-

⁵Sūra 8, verse 60.

⁶*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. by Mustafa al-Bagha, 3rd edition (1987-Lebanon), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no. 29926, p 117.

⁷*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. by Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Bāqī (Lebanon), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no. 1913, p 1520.

⁸Brett & Fentress, *the Berbers*, pp 101, 142.

⁹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni al-Awwal*, (F.N) pp 95, 113-115.

1147 (448-541H), and founder of the first of two states (the second is Almohads) that ruled the Maghrib and Andalus under Berber leadership.¹¹ However, we will use the Murābiṭīn nomenclature in clear distinction to Almoravids, and chiefly trusting the opinion of Bazama who saw fit in using it.¹² So, ribāṭ was, as it is in lexicology, a tangible manifestation of the life of al-Murābiṭīn who immovably held on in the borderlines braving the risk and enduring a great deal of pain and suffering with immeasurable patience. Those courageous men knew what they were for, and in helping them to be strong they were accompanied with their families and animals indicative of no-return policy. They guarded the borders with diligence and commitment, because they knew that the State relied on them and on the good work they were doing, and history has positively recorded that for them.

Al-Murābiṭīn were steadfast in character, this was perhaps projected, or the result of the relationships they had with others in the name of Allah. Those relations were in the form of uniting smaller groups with larger tribes in brotherhood.¹³ The larger tribes had the strength and the land, and in contracting these relations with the smaller groups meant an exchange of benefits and interests such as pasture, schooling, judiciary, or even in protecting each other or raiding others, as will be explained in due course.

¹⁰Cf. Britannica Encyclopaedia, article: (*Almoravids*).

¹¹Bosworth, *the Islamic Dynasties*, pp 28-31.

¹²Bazama, op. cit.

¹³Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, pp 40-41.

The historical roots of ribāṭ

The very early ribāṭ goes back to the reign of the third rightly guided Caliph, ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, when Muslims went on the sea for the first time as fighting force.¹⁴ However, the Umayyads who conquered the rest of North Africa and Spain and made Damascus their capital built the first proper Islamic combatant naval fleet.¹⁵ But the downfall of the Umayyad Caliphate and the entrapment of the ʿAbbāsids with internal insurrections and commotion away from the sea meant the navy suffered oblivion and neglect. The North African discord was powered by the successive Berber revolts against the ʿAbbāsīd rulers who met all opposition with the sword-edge in order to consolidate the central authority of Baghdad. These circumstances were preceded by the Byzantine fleet in 688-689 (69H), when it reappeared on Cyrenaica,¹⁶ and presented threat to the Islamic achievements in the Mediterranean by attacking the Libyan shores hoping to restore their past glories.¹⁷

This time round, the Byzantines were not, at least militarily, successful to capture the Libyan shores. Al-Murābiṭīn embarked upon building ribāṭs to fortify the Islamic frontiers. They built a chain of ribāṭs to serve as the vanguard of patrol-towers to stop any enemy penetration from the sea.¹⁸

After the building of the Islamic city of Qayrawān in 670 (50H) by ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ,¹⁹ the first ribāṭ was built by the ruler of Ifriqiya Hirthima ibn Aʿyūn in Tripoli in 796 (180H) who installed Sufyān ibn abu Muhājir²⁰ as the governor of Tripoli.²¹ Hirthima instructed Sufyān to lay a fortified wall from the seaside around Tripoli,

¹⁴Al-Ṣallābi, *ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān*, pp 203-206.

Al-Zāwi, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-ʿArabi fī Libya*, p 90.

¹⁵Cf. Mawrid encyclopaedia, article: (*Mu ʿāwiya ibn abi Sufyān*).

¹⁶Al-Mizīni, *Libya mundh al-Fath al-ʿArabi Ḥatta Intiqāl al-Khilāfa al-Fāṭimiyya ila Miṣr*, p 55.

¹⁷Rossi, *Libya mundhu al-Fath al-ʿArabi Ḥatta 1911*, tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 66.

¹⁸Al-Mizīni, op. cit., pp 255-256.

¹⁹Al-Ṣallābi, *Ṣafaḥāt min Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi wa al-Shamāl al-Afrīqi*, p 247.

²⁰He was the last ʿAbbāsīd governor of Tripoli, and afterwards was reinstated as the first Aghlabid governor on Tripoli. Cf. al-Zāwi, *Mu ḡam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, pp 53, 57, 60-61.

²¹Ibn Mūsa, *al-Mujtama ʿ al-ʿArabi al-Lībi fī al-ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni*, p 76.

which was not walled before.²² Hirthima also gave his orders to build a palace of governance in the heart of Tripoli on the shore, which is thought to be the present al-Sarāya al-Ḥamra (old castle).²³ After that, the ribāṭ of Monastir in Tunisia was built in 797 (181H) and from that day a number of ribāṭs sprang along the Maghribean coast.²⁴ Perhaps the most famous of all is Ribāṭ al-Faṭḥ (Rabat), the present capital city of Morocco. It is situated on the north-western side of the Atlantic ocean, and was built in 12th century (6thH) as ribāṭ.²⁵ Also, another Rabat is the capital of the island of Gozo, the second largest in the Maltese archipelago. The British tried to change its name to Victoria but to no avail.²⁶

However, the ribāṭs of Jihād did not really increase in number until the era of the Aghlabids in 9th century (3rdH), who initially wanted to deal with the threat that the Christians constituted to North Africa.²⁷ Ziyādat-Allāh I moved on and captured Sicily in 827 (212H).²⁸ Then, the Aghlabids corsairs subjugated the whole of the central Mediterranean and extended their supremacy over the coast of southern Italy,²⁹ Sardinia, Corsica, and captured Malta in 868 (255H).³⁰

Those ribāṭs were basically a coastal chain of fortified monasteries; their prime duty was to look out for the enemy, expanded uninterruptedly from Tripoli in the west to Alexandria in the east.³¹ They, also, stretched from the shores of the Mediterranean in the north crossing the great Sahara to the western shores of the Atlantic Ocean. The desert ribāṭs served the trading caravans as well as the moving tribes in the desert. The

²²Al-Zāwī, *Tārīkh al-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabi fī Libya*, p 198.

²³Al-Zāwī, *Muḥjam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, pp 184-187.

²⁴Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 76.

²⁵Cf. Mawrid encyclopaedia, article: (*Rabat*).

²⁶Bazama, *Tārīkh Mālṭa fī al-‘Ahd al-Islāmi*, pp 20, (F.N) 72.

²⁷Op. cit., pp 54-59.

Al-Mizīni added; “Ibrāhīm ibn al-Aghlab managed to occupy the island of Morea in the Greek archipelago in 804 (189H).” I could not find that in any of the other sources that I have.

Cf. Al-Mizīni, *Libya mundh al-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabi Ḥatta Intiqāl al-Khilāfa al-Fāṭimiyya ila Miṣr*, p 256.

²⁸Al-Zāwī, *Tārīkh al-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabi fī Libya*, p 214.

Cf. Al-Mizīni, op. cit., p 256. He suggested either 214 or 216H.

²⁹Sālim, *Tārīkh al-Maghrib fī al-‘Aṣr al-Islāmi*, pp 304-306.

³⁰Bosworth, op. cit., pp 24-25.

³¹Al-Mizīni, op. cit., pp 256-257.

number of these ribāṭs estimated to be of around thousand of them, and the distance that separated between the ribāṭs was thought to be of a few Kilometres.³² The ribāṭs continued to be populated by Murābiṭs intent on Jihād, it also included Ṣūfis as well until the arrival of the Ottomans to Libya.³³ This new development marked a transformation in the makeup of ribāṭs. The ribāṭs had to give way to zāwiyas, which were effectively borne out of ribāṭs to serve the spiritual demand of its dwellers in the region.³⁴

Ribāṭ is basically an open courtyard encircled by fortified chambers from the exterior, and it has a mosque in it with its tall minaret used for the daily five-times call of prayers, and as a watch-out tower against pirates and invaders mostly Christians.³⁵ There also lit a huge fire as a lighthouse at night. Ribāṭs were also used as signposts for caravans and travellers seeking trafficking guidance as well as postal service using pigeons that were kept in there. They also offered medical and educational provisions free of charge for the Murābiṭīn and wanderers, which attracted more and more recruits to the cause of ribāṭ, and subsequently increased the number of Murābiṭīn.³⁶

When the Fāṭimids eventually managed to extend their control on the whole of the eastern part of North Africa, and Libya was brought to the fold of their caliphate, the ribāṭs then ceased to exist as military barracks as well as monastery for hermits. The main reason behind this discontinuation was because the threat that brought them into action at the first place vanished. This was an obvious reflection of the strength and solidity of the Islamic State which felt confident enough to arrange its own security in relation with its Christian neighbours instead of relaying on vigilantes. Al-Murābiṭīn and their kinfolk, then, found themselves and their voluntary military services not needed, at least, for the time being, then they turned into ascetics pursuing a spiritual

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 78.

³⁵Al-Mizīni, op. cit., p 256.

³⁶Al-Mizīni, op. cit., p 257.

Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 79.

elevation by delving in Islamic sciences and knowledge. This led to a tremendous increase in the number of shaykhs (teachers) to meet the upsurge of Ṣūfī disciples seeking all kind of discipline in the Islamic scope of learning.³⁷ This ultimately brought about new Orders headed by shaykhs who gradually became self-reliant and had to branch out by creating their own warranted zāwiyas. Those zāwiyas geographically spread out amongst population concentrations, to the extent that the zāwiya had become a human necessity for neighbourhoods along with markets cemeteries and other social services (Map. 1).³⁸

Some of those ribāṭs were located on the coast, and were known as the coastal ribāṭs. However, there were others in the desert known as desert ribāṭs that became centres of propagating Islam beyond the Sahara and into southern Africa amongst the pagan tribes of the Sudan.³⁹ By now ribāṭs were pacified in the sense they were no longer producing soldiers but learned men. In order to do so, they had to become self-sufficient in everything to include the production of ink, paper and duplication of copies of the Qur'ān, and books of Ṣūfism, jurisprudence, Arabic language, literature amongst others.⁴⁰ Clearly ribāṭ had embraced the concept of the so-called "greater Jihād"⁴¹ instead of the state of readiness to fight. And it had between its walls many scholars, Ṣūfī shaykhs, disciples, dervishes, hermits who enjoyed free housing, food, medical treatment, in addition to eradication of illiteracy and even higher education to the point of becoming learned referential authorities themselves.

When Almohads eventually took over Almoravid State in 1147 (540H),⁴² zāwiyas began to replace ribāṭs. But it was not until 16-17th century (9-10thH) when zāwiyas

³⁷Al-Mizīni, op. cit., p 258.

³⁸Brett, Michael, *Islam in the Maghreb: The evolution of the Zawiya* (Pt.2), The Maghreb review, vol. 2, No.4, Jul-Aug 1977.

³⁹What is meant by Sūdān is not the country as we know it, but rather the sub-Saharan Africa that populated by the Blacks (Negroid) as opposed to Arabs and Berbers of the North.

⁴⁰Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 77-78.

⁴¹According to a Ḥadīth; "the smaller Jihād is to fight the enemy of Islam, where as the greater Jihād is one struggles against oneself". M. N. al-Albāni pronounced it to be weak. *Al-Jāmi' al-Ḍa'īf*, Ḥadīth no.4080.

⁴²Bosworth, op. cit., pp 28-31.

then effectively took over the role of ribāṭs.⁴³ They converted that role of safeguarding the borders to becoming a breeding ground for Ṣūfis and Ṣūfī Orders to spread their message. That change brought about an atmosphere of dedication to learning that led to the sharp increase in shaykhs and students. Many of the shaykhs began establishing their own Orders according to their understanding and interpretation of Islam away from any opposition, which allowed them to have an exclusive sway on their disciples, and indoctrinate them the way, they wished.⁴⁴ Whenever the shaykh of an Order or zāwiya passes away, then he would be buried in the zāwiya of his ṭarīqa and his tomb becomes a shrine worthy of pilgrimage.⁴⁵ It, also, becomes a sanctuary open to the public for seclusion and hard work, to further their education or merely to be blessed in the presence of his tomb. This ultimately attracted people of different ethnic backgrounds who would be housed around the tomb, and that prompted, as a result, the need for amenities of life such as shops, clinic, and more homes which ultimately created a centre of population by time developed into a settlement increasingly growing in size.⁴⁶

⁴³Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 78.

⁴⁴Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 79.

⁴⁵Messina, *al-Mi ʿmār al-Islāmi fī Libya*, tr. by ʿAlī Ḥasanīn, pp 66-67.

Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 79-80.

⁴⁶Ibid.

The historical roots of al-Murābiṭīn

Al-Murābiṭīn are famous for magnanimity and sense of honour, also known for their stamina and ability to fight. This was perhaps of the Bedouin lifestyle many of them have always had enjoyed. They have also been known for the piety and religious devotion. They are sometimes known as Murābiṭīn Fātīḥa or Baraka (to bless others),⁴⁷ which is a sign of the religious role they have always played because of the social status they hold as people of good deeds.

There is an almost consensus amongst researchers in Libya that the first generation which constituted the infrastructure of al-Murābiṭīn are the descendants of the early Islamic Arab conquerors who came with commanders like ʿAbdullah ibn abu Sarḥ, ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ, Ruwayfiʿ al-Anṣārī and Zuhayr ibn Qays.⁴⁸

It has also been said that the reason they were named al-Murābiṭīn because of standing guards in ribāṭs along North Africa defending the Islamic State. This is perhaps one of the prime reasons that there are no Christians from west of Alexandria along the Maghrib to the Atlantic Ocean. The roots of al-Murābiṭīn can be traced to one of the following;

1. the Arab tribes of the Islamic conquest⁴⁹
2. the immigrant Arabs mostly of Banu Sulaym and Hilāl tribes⁵⁰
3. some of the Arabised Berber tribes⁵¹
4. al-Ashrāf – the descendants of the Prophet's household⁵²

Many historians concluded to saying that the first waves of al-Murābiṭīn's roots were Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula who came with the chief commander ʿAmr ibn al-

⁴⁷Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 65.

⁴⁸Mannāʿ, *al-Ansāb al-ʿArabiyya fī Libya*, pp 10, -13-14.

⁴⁹Al-Ṭāhir, *al-Mujtamaʿ al-Lībi; Dirāsāt Ijtimāʿiyya wa Anthrūbulujīyya*, p 107.

⁵⁰Mannāʿ, op. cit., p 13.

⁵¹Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., p 306.

Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 250.

‘Āṣ, and their number was around ten thousand.⁵³ They fused completely with others, namely the Berbers, and became known collectively as al-Murābiṭīn. People have not been able to trace their roots due to many factors namely the intermission of literacy by which they failed to document their lineage, the frequent movement of people from one place to another and the geographical vacuity between areas of population concentrations. Al-Murābiṭīn tribes, in particular, over the years had lost the uninterrupted sequence of their descent in the light of the above-mentioned points. Therefore, al-Murābiṭīn tribes who are of Arab origins were mostly from Banu Sulaym, Hilāl, Fizāra, Qurra, Ghasāsina, Jushm, Ghatafān, Rabī‘a, Aws and Khazraj. These tribes came to Libya with their families and lived along the Berbers and later with Andalusians in ribāts.⁵⁴ When the Arabs arrived in the region they were joined by the Arabised native Berbers from similar sub-tribal orders such as Liwāta, Zanāta and Hiwāra. The process of Arabisation was further substantiated by the leaders of the Almoravids and Almohads who were religious ‘Ulama, and bent on bridging the gap between Muslims of different ethnic denominations under their umbrella.⁵⁵ It is near impossible to tell who is Berber or Arab from amongst al-Murābiṭīn due to the complex lifestyle in ribāṭ and its subsequent assimilation. The only group amongst al-Murābiṭīn who has kept or memorised their lineage are al-Ashrāf. This was because they managed to keep records of their ancestors over the years for reasons would be explained in due course.

Al-Murābiṭīn have engraved their marks all over Libya with hallowed men. Their tombs have since become shrines that magnetised permanent housing-settlement, which later developed into big cities i.e. Benghazi.⁵⁶

Al-Tijānī⁵⁷ reported in his famous journey in 14th Century (8th H) that when Ṣaḥnūn ibn Sa‘īd, the famous Māliki scholar, returned from Ḥajj was asked if he saw any Godly men ? He said:

⁵²Op. cit., p 286.

⁵³Mannā‘, op. cit., p 13.

⁵⁴Al-Shayyāl, *A ʿlām al-Iskandariyya fī al-‘Aṣr al-Islāmi*, pp 51-52.

⁵⁵Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 66.

**“He saw in Tripoli fine men that al-Fadhīl ibn ‘Iyād⁵⁸
is not better than them”.⁵⁹**

Amongst those virtuous men was ‘Abd al-Wahāb al-Duwkālī buried in Z‘farān village nearer the town of Mislāta. He came from Morocco with his family and settled in Libya. It is said that he lived more than a hundred and thirty years and was prominent scholar.⁶⁰ The people often asked him for advice and religious guidance and cherished his appearance amidst them. ‘Abd al-Salām al-Asmar was one of many of his faithful students, who spent good seven years with Shaykh al-Duwkālī.⁶¹ Whenever the name of Zlīṭīn town is mentioned, it is usually coupled with the shrine of ‘Abd al-Salām al-Asmar al-Fītūrī al-Ḥasani and his famous zāwiya.⁶²

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Salām settled in Zlīṭīn after being embraced and sponsored by the tribe of Brahāma who gave him land where he built his zāwiya and was buried there when he was refused by the official Fuqahā’ (clergy) of Tripoli supported by the authority.⁶³

Also there was al-Shaykh Aḥmad al-Zarrūq who died and buried in Miṣrāta in 1493 (899H). It is thought that he was of Berber origin who came from Morocco and settled in Miṣrāta.⁶⁴ The people who have been living around his shrine originated from the Arab tribe of al-Ḥsūn who were bandits roaming the Sirt area. However, they repented on his hands and devoted their lives to serve his visitors, and as a result they have since been, with others who joint them, dubbed as Khudām al-Zarrūq (the

⁵⁶Peters, Emrys, *From particularism to universalism in the religion of the Cyrenaica Bedouin*, SOAS Pam. UVL A 356,676, p 9.

⁵⁷Al-Munjid fī al-Lughat wal-I‘lām, article: (*al-Tijānī*).

⁵⁸He was a great Moroccan scholar who authored many reputable books.

Cf. Al-Munjid fī al-Lughat wal-I‘lām, article: (*al-Tijānī*).

⁵⁹Al-Qaṭ‘ānī, *al-Quṭb al-Anwar*; ‘Abd al-Salām al-Asmar, pp 9-10.

⁶⁰Cf. *Al-Ma‘ālim al-Athariyya al-Dīniyya fī Libya*, p 22.

⁶¹Ibid.

Cf. Al-Qaṭ‘ānī, op. cit., 44-48.

⁶²Op. cit., pp 19-21.

⁶³Al-Barmūnī, *Tanqīḥ Rawḍat al-Azhār fī Manāqib Sīdi ‘Abd al-Salam al-Asmar*, pp 101-104, 112.

⁶⁴Khushaym, *Aḥmad al-Zarrūq wal-Zarūqiyya*, pp 21-22.

servants of al-Zarrūq).⁶⁵ Al-Shaykh ʿAlī al-Mahjūb, also came from Morocco, who has a great zāwiya in Miṣrāta named after him along his tomb-shrine.⁶⁶ These are only a few of so many shrines throughout Libya of the hallowed that were famous for their godly knowledge and piety, and left zāwiyas and centres of learning around their tombs.

There are many quarters within the city of Benghazi that are named after hallowed men such as Sīdi Khirībīsh, Sīdi Ḥusayn al-Fākhri, Sīdi Yūnis (one of Khirībīsh offspring), Sīdi ʿUbayd (offspring of ʿAbd al-Salām al-Asmar).⁶⁷ And in Tripoli there are al-Dihmāni zāwiya,⁶⁸ Sīdi Munīdhir, Sīdi ʿAbdullah Shʿab who built a mosque right on the coast to stand as a personal ribāṭ, and died in 857 (243H).⁶⁹

⁶⁵Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 263.

Al-Ṭayyib, *Mawsūʿat al-Qabāʾil al-ʿArabīyya*, vol. 1, p 894.

Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 319.

⁶⁶Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 261.

⁶⁷Op. cit., pp 312, 319.

⁶⁸Al- Zāwi, *A ʿlām Libya*, pp 74-75.

⁶⁹Al-Nāʾib al-Anṣārī, *Nafaḥāt al-Nasrīn wal-Rayḥān fīman kān biṭarāblus min al-A ʿyān*, pp 65-67, 69-70.

Al-Murābiṭīn al-Ashrāf

Al-Ashrāf derives its linguistic roots from the Arabic word Sharf meaning of noble forebears.⁷⁰ Some have no choice but to be born so, others acquire the title by doing godly work and then would be attributed to al-Ashrāf community by Intisāb (affiliation). Nevertheless, Over the years the two mixed and the line between them became very blur.

Al-Ashrāf, (classical form Shurafā' or colloquially Shurfa, sing. Sharīf) amongst al-Murābiṭīn affirm their lineage to the family of the Prophet's household, and they are soteriologically respected for that.⁷¹ Their descent is traced back to 'Alī ibn abu Ṭālib, the nephew and son in law of the Prophet, married to the Prophet's youngest and favourite daughter, Fāṭima, who bore him boys and girls, the famous of all are al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (Figure. 6).

There are other 'Alīd Ashrāf who are not the children of Fāṭima, and so are the descendants of Ja'far ibn abu Ṭālib and some others like banu 'Abbās.⁷² Moreover, since the fourth Hijri century (11th AD) al-Ashrāf were narrowed down and limited to the offspring of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.⁷³

The majority of al-Ashrāf of North Africa trace their lineage to al-Ḥasan i.e. Idrīsids.⁷⁴ Al-Ashrāf are the most influential amongst al-Murābiṭīn in Libya as a whole. Most of them are of postulated Idrīsīd ancestry whose founding father was Idrīs al-Aṣghar the son of Idrīs al-Akbar the founder of the Idrīsīd dynasty and State in North Africa.⁷⁵ Idrīs I (al-Akbar) fled al-Ḥijāz after suffering a prosecution culminating in a defeat on the hands of the 'Abbāsids resulted in taking refuge, and

⁷⁰Sālim, *Kitāb Multaqa al-Aṭrāf fi Ansāb wa Manāqib al-Ashrāf*, p 3.

⁷¹Bosworth, op. cit., p 39.

Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 11.

⁷²Sālim, op. cit.

⁷³Sālim, op. cit.

⁷⁴Bosworth, op. cit., p 46.

⁷⁵Op. cit, p 20.

settled in Morocco for good. ‘Abbāsīd Caliph, Hārūn al-Rashīd, tried to bring over Idrīs I, but to no avail.⁷⁶

However, Idrīs I managed to convince the Berbers to answer his Call and rally behind him by confirming him the leader of the newly founded State in 788 (172H). This new development infuriated Hārūn al-Rashīd,, and eventually managed to assassinate Idrīs I by poisoning him in a conspiracy involving one of Idrīs’s close associates in 793 (177H).⁷⁷ Most of Idrīs’s supporters remained loyal especially the Berbers until his wife had their baby boy who was named after his father Idrīs.⁷⁸ When Idrīs II reached the age of eleven was confirmed the Imām and succeeded his father in 802 (188H), after a gap filled by his father’s servant, Rāshīd al-Zabīdi, in running the State’s affairs.⁷⁹ By now, Idrīs II memorised the Qur’ān and became the strong leader of this burgeoning State and Founded the city of Fez which he made his capital. More and more Berbers were converted to his cause until his death in 828 (213H) leaving behind him twelve sons to succeed his throne.⁸⁰ However, His son, Muḥammad, succeeded him and divided the State amongst his brothers who were loyal to him. The last of the Idrīsīd rulers was ibn Kanūn (959-985), whose authority ceased and was taken over by the Fāṭimids.⁸¹

The overwhelming majority of al-Ashrāf in Libya claim to be the descendants of al-Imam al-Ḥasan through Idrīs (Figure. 6).⁸² However, there are also Ashrāf from Imām Ḥusayn’s branch of ‘Alīds⁸³ such as Awlād Mūsa, descendants of Imām Mūsa al-

⁷⁶Shinqāru, *Fitnat al-Sulṭa*, pp 98-99, 335.

⁷⁷Al-‘Alawī, *al-Igḥtiyāl al-Siyāsī fīl Islām*, pp 102- 105.

⁷⁸Al-Ṭayyib *al-Inṣāf fī Tārīkh al-Ashrāf*, pp 7-10.

⁷⁹Al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyin*, pp 406- 409.

⁸⁰Al-Qaṭ‘ānī, *al-‘Āris fī nasab al-Fwātīr min ‘Āl Bu Fāris*, pp 61-62.

⁸¹Ḥasan, *Tārīkh al-Islām al-Siyāsī*, Vol. 3, p 167.

Al-Zerekly, *al-A‘lām li Ashhar al-Rijāl wal-Nisā’ min al-‘Arab wal-Musta‘ribīn wal-Mustashriqīn*, Vol. 2, p 210.

⁸²Cf. al-Ḍa‘īfī, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf, *al-Shurfā’ fī al-Quṭr al-Lībī*, Jarīdat al-Nasb, 212 issue (Jan 1999-Morocco), Rābi‘at al-Shurfā’ al-Adārisya, p 9. [This is a highly doubtful document and could not be relied on. author].

⁸³Al-Qaṭ‘ānī, op. cit., p 55.

Kāzim.⁸⁴ It is said that the Gadhādhfa tribe in Libya are descendants of the “sainted” Qadhāf al-Dam whose descent is assumed to be of Mūsa al-Kāzim. Qadhāf al-Dam is buried in al-Kūre valley near Ghiryān, but his descendants live in the wasteland of Sirt.⁸⁵

The categorical love and respect of the Prophet’s household through His daughter Fāṭima and her husband ‘Alī is universal and agreed upon amongst exceptionally all Muslims.⁸⁶ This emanates primarily from Ḥadīth sources,⁸⁷ and the absolute observance by Muslims of the Prophet’s instructions especially when he said;

“I leave in your trust the Book of Allah and my household”,⁸⁸ “love me in the love of Allah and love my household, the way you love me”.⁸⁹

He also instructed Muslims to invoke Allah in prayers by reading:

" O Allah! Pray for Muḥammad and His household".⁹⁰

‘Umar ibn al-Kaṭṭāb once said:

"By you (the Prophet’s Household) Allah guided us, and brought from darkness to light".⁹¹

Thereupon, the influence of the Prophet’s family is exceedingly deep in the hearts and minds of the faithful. This influence manifests itself in many ways. For example,

⁸⁴The sixth infallible Imām of Shī‘ite twelvers, and his descendants are known in the East as al-Mūsawīyya.

Cf. Momen, *an introduction to Shī‘i Islam*, p 33.

⁸⁵Al-Ṭayyib, *Mawsū‘at al-Qabā’il al-‘Aarabiyya; Buḥuth Mīdāniyya wa Tārīkhiyya*, Vol. 1, pp 899-901.

⁸⁶Al-Shak‘a, *Islām bilā Madhāhib*, p 418.

⁸⁷Al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’*, p 149.

⁸⁸It was reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. by Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Bāqī (Lebanon), vol. 4, Ḥadīth no. 2408, p 1873.

⁸⁹It was reported in *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, ed. by Aḥmad Shākir et.al. (Lebanon), vol. 5, Ḥadīth no.3789, p 1873. M. N. al-Albānī pronounced it to be very weak. *Da‘if Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Ḥadīth no.792, p 509.

⁹⁰It was reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. by Muṣṭafa al-Bagha, 3rd edition (Lebanon-1987), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no. 3190, p 1233. M. N. al-albānī pronounced it to be sound in *Silsalat al-Aḥadīth al-Ṣaḥīḥa* (Saudi Arabia - 1995), vol. 3, Ḥadīth no. 1227, p 229.

⁹¹Abu Jarāda, Kamāl al-Dīn, *Bughyat al-Ṭalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab*, ed. by Suhayl Zakkār, vol. 4, p 1710.

names such as Muḥammad and ʿAlī are the most common in Libya in particular, and indeed in many parts of the Islamic world. If one has twin baby-boys they would be named al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. In Morocco, people would not use the name Fāṭima nakedly, but couple it with the honorific title of al-Zahrāʾ, to be said Fāṭima al-Zahrāʾ. Moreover, Muslims exaggerated their love for the Prophet's family to the extent that al-Ḥusayn is claimed to be buried in no less than four different countries in two different continents. There is a great mosque in Cairo named after al-Ḥusayn where he is assumed to be buried. The other tomb of al-Ḥusayn is in the heart of the Umayyad mosque in Damascus, even though only his head is thought to be buried there. Some claim that he was buried in al-Baqīʿ graveyard in Madīna nearer to his mother and brother al-Ḥasan. Whereas the majority agree that he is buried in that great shrine of Karbalāʾ in Iraq.⁹² This is all indicative of the consensual love of al-Ḥusayn, and that should surprise no one since the Prophet said;

**" Ḥusayn is from me, and I am from Ḥusayn. O Allah; love
whoever loves Ḥusayn ".⁹³**

Earlier than Ḥusayn, Muslims differed in dealing with his father ʿAlī. There were his early followers known as Shīʿites who loved him fanatically and fought with him. But when ʿAlī accepted arbitration at the battle of Ṣiffīn,⁹⁴ they denied him that and split from his ranks, and eventually assassinated him. These later became to be known as the Khawārij (Kharijites) or seceders (Figure. 4).⁹⁵ It is alleged that the Ibadite School flowed out from Kharijites, even though the Ibadis of Nafūsa and Zwāra in Libya emphatically deny any link, and wrote books to refute that claim.⁹⁶

⁹²Momen, op. cit., p 33.

⁹³It was reported in *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, ed. by Aḥmad Shākir et.al. (Lebanon), vol. 5, Ḥadīth no.3775, p 658.

⁹⁴Yahya-"The events of Siffīn in early Arab tradition" – The Islamic quarterly, no.2, pp 91-113, 1994.

⁹⁵Momen, *an introduction to Shīʿi Islam*, p 25.

⁹⁶ʿAlī Yahya Muʿammar (1919-1980), a Libyan clergy and writer of Berber background from Nālūt wrote a book in which he academically examined all the historic sources that dealt with Ibāḍiyya and argued their validity, and found them short on substance. He tried very hard to distance al-Ibāḍiyya from al-Khawārij. I must say after reading the book he has a case at least worth the contemplation. Cf. Muʿammar, *al-Ibāḍiyya fī Mawḳib al-Tārīkh*, Maṭābiʿ al-Nahḍah, Oman, 1989.

Other Shīʿites thought ʿAlī, and ʿAlī alone, deserved a special status of reverence and respect amongst the highest rank of the Prophet's companions. They bestowed upon him, and his two sons, infallibility, and restricted the religious and caliphal leadership, known as Imamate, in his descendants through al-Ḥusayn and claimed them to be infallible. This school of thought represented by the Ithnā-ʿAshariyya (twelevers) or Jaʿfariyya. Also, there was an ultra faction who went to the farthest extreme and pronounced ʿAlī to be God. There are still some of them living in Syria, Turkey and “Kurdistan” known as ʿAlawīs or Nuṣayriyya (Figure. 4).⁹⁷ Yet, some of Shīʿites like the Ṣafavids were very determined to spread their Daʿwa (message), and succeeded in converting Persia, after centuries of Sunnism, to Shīʿitism in 17th century (11th H).⁹⁸ Persia has since become a bastion of Shīʿitism and home for many Shīʿi centres of learning. It is also fair to say that in the Sunni world there is a strong ʿAlīd sentiment, particularly in the Maghrib and amongst Ṣūfis worldwide. In spite of the fact that the Idrīsids adopted the Sunni Māliki school of worship but retained and subsequently spread the love for the ʿAlīds in the region. This was a self-evident in the Ṣūfi Orders that dominated the Sunni world.

Al-Ashrāf have played, and still, an important role throughout the Islamic history and exert influence on all current schools of thoughts. They enjoy honour and unequal preferential status which was summarised by the words attributed to ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī when he said:

“We (the Prophet's family) were given six and excelled by the seventh. We were given knowledge, patience, tolerance, bravery, eloquence, the love of the faithful, and were preferred because the Prophet was from amongst us”.⁹⁹

and these virtues generally are often found in the character of al-Murābiṭīn in Libya.

⁹⁷Al-Shakʿa, op. cit., p 332.

⁹⁸Momen, op. cit., pp 111, 116-117, 125.

⁹⁹Al-Majlisi, Mulla Muḥammad Bāqir, *Bihār al-Anwār al-Jāmiʿa li-Durar Akhbār al-Aʿimma al-Abrār*, vol. 45, Riwaya 1, Bāb 39, p 134.

Also cf. *al-Ṭabrāni, al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, vol. 3, Ḥadīth no.2675, p 57.

Cf. *al-Ṭabrāni, al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ*, vol. 6, pp 327-328.

There has always been a strong and veiled link between Ṣūfism and Shī'itism.¹⁰⁰ The Ṣūfis consider themselves the personal vicegerents of the Prophet. They further believe that if there was not this supernatural caliphal link then disorder would prevail in the universe and destruction would be inflicted on every one.¹⁰¹

The examiners of family trees of Ṣūfī shaykhs of famous Orders would soon notice that the Prophet heads such trees. Therefore, most shaykhs made sure that a scalar chain of their shaykhs that ultimately link them to the prophetic tree is available for reference in order for blessing to be extended to those who are either disciples or seek affiliation to the Order.¹⁰²

The relation between the Orders' founders, and Ṣūfism in general, and Imām 'Alī, is one of paternalistic descent as claimed, also through the Imām's doctrinal and encyclopaedic knowledge. The overwhelming majority of Ṣūfī magnates throughout the Islamic world belong to the house of 'Alīd, but do not subscribe to the same theological or political views that the Shī'ites uphold. The Ṣūfis at large adhered to various Sunni schools, and managed to keep away from sectarianism that ripped the Islamic East.¹⁰³

So, Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlāni,¹⁰⁴ the Founder of Jīlāni (or Kīlāni) Order, which is regarded the mother of all "Arab" Orders, his Ḥasani descent (through al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī) is confirmed.¹⁰⁵ Shaykh Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī,¹⁰⁶ the founder of Rifā'iyya Order, was of Ḥusayni descent, this was traced to Mūsa al-Kāẓim to al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī. His forefathers immigrated to Andalusia and then returned to Iraq.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ 'Abd al-Khāliq- *al-Fikr al-Ṣūfī*, p 629-656.

¹⁰¹ Darnīqa, *al-Ṭuruq al-Ṣūfiyya wa Mashāykhīha fi Ṭarāblus*, p 21.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Op. cit., pp 21, 25, 27, 31.

¹⁰⁴ He was born in Jīlān -Iran in 1077 (470H), and died and buried in Baghdad-Iraq in 1165 (561H). A magnificent mosque built on his tomb, which is visited frequently.

¹⁰⁵ Al-Qādiri, *'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlāni*, pp 7-9.

¹⁰⁶ He was born and buried in southern Iraq 1118-1182 (512-578H).

¹⁰⁷ Darnīqa, op. cit., p 25.

Also, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Badawī¹⁰⁸ was Ḥusayni too,¹⁰⁹ and so was the Master of the Baktaṣī (also Baktāshiyya or Bektāshīs) Order as discussed in a previous chapter.¹¹⁰ Whereas ʿAlī abu al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī,¹¹¹ the shaykh of the Shādhiliya Order,¹¹² was of Ḥasani lineage. He was a student of ʿAbd al-Salām ibn Mushaysh al-Ḥasani,¹¹³ the claimed father of some Libyan tribes such as al-Brāʿasa, al-Ḥabbūn and al-Mashīshiya.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸He was born in Fez - Morocco in 1199 (596H), and died and buried in Ṭanṭa-Egypt in 1276 (675H).

¹⁰⁹Darnīqa, op. cit., p 31.

¹¹⁰*Al-Mawsūʿat al-Muyassara fī al-Adyān wa Madhāhib al-Muʿāṣira*, p 348.

¹¹¹He was born in Ghumāra-Morocco in 1196 (593H), and then died and buried in Upper Egypt in 1258 (656H).

¹¹²Darnīqa, op. cit., p 27.

¹¹³Trimingham, *the Sufi Orders of Islam*, pp 47-48.

¹¹⁴Al-Ṭayyib, *Mawsūʿat al-Qabāʾil al-ʿArabiyya*, vol. 1, p 907.

The spread of Ṣūfī Orders and their influence in Libyan society

Towards the end of 11th century (5thH), Ṣūfism (in Arabic taṣawwuf) became a communal practice directly linked to the common man in the street. At the same time its pyramidal summit remained, as ever, a monopoly of those learned who had ʿilm, intellectual and traditional knowledge, and Kashf (revelation), which literarily means the taking away of the veil.¹¹⁵ But more importantly Maʿrifa, Gnostics and Wisdom.¹¹⁶ Therefore, the number of Orders increased accompanying the increase in shaykhs. Some of these Orders were missionaries, others were bent on teaching the Qurʾān, Ḥadīth and general Islamic manners.¹¹⁷ They mostly passed off the world for the hereafter by fasting, praying and indulging in all kind of acts of worship that would elevate them to the purification of oneself. That process of purification encompassed a repetitive recitation of a Dhikr (a religious formula) and adjoined by chanting sometimes accompanied with music and dances, which was considered by some as unislamic.¹¹⁸

Most of the Ṣūfī Orders in Libya played an important role in the history of the region, especially when the Islamic military conquest was stopped. They surfaced in areas, which the Islamic conquerors did not or could not reach, such as the south of the great African Sahara: Chad, Niger, Mali, Nigeria and beyond.¹¹⁹ The ribāṭs and zāwiyas that were built by the Orders shaykhs became focal points of converting the heathen of black Africa. This was further aided by the fact that those Ṣūfis lived midst the common people and served them by setting examples of piety and dutifulness.¹²⁰

Shaykh al-Ṭarīqa (Head of the Order) succeeded in reviving those dead souls and reinvigorating the weak by defending their rights, and championing the cause of the

¹¹⁵Trimingham, *the Sufi Orders of Islam*, p 305.

¹¹⁶Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 5.

¹¹⁷Darnīqa, op. cit., p 7.

¹¹⁸Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp 3-4.

¹¹⁹Darnīqa, op. cit., p 7.

¹²⁰Ibid.

downtrodden. With this spirit and determination, Ṣūfis were able to spread the spiritual and moral message of Islam, and that made those “Libyan” Orders cherished amongst townsmen and nomads alike.¹²¹

It is true to say that Ṣūfis were not always pacifist worshipers, as they may often appear to be, but rather Mujāhidīn (warrior-monks)¹²² defending Islam and its borders,¹²³ and more importantly standing up to devious and oppressive Muslim rulers. It is also fair to say that Ṣūfis and Ṣūfism have always been part and parcel of the people and region’s history. This is a fact that all researchers agree upon, and no one else can deny.¹²⁴ Good illustration of this was Sulaymān ibn Yūsuf al-Fītūrī, founding father of al-ʿwasja section of the Sharīf tribe of al-Fwātīr, roamed the streets of Tripoli with approximately hundred Murābiṭs inciting people to Jihād against the Spanish invaders of Libya. Sulaymān ibn Yūsuf was killed along with one of his sons fighting the Spanish and were buried in Sīdi al-Shʿāb cemetery in Tripoli.¹²⁵ The other famous Libyan Shaykh was Muḥammad al-Ṣayyād buried and enshrined in his zāwiya in Hanshīyir outside Tripoli. He was dubbed al-Ṣayyād, which means a lion, much for his deterrence of the oppression and coercion of the Ottoman rulers of Libya.¹²⁶

The earliest of the Ṣūfī Orders which extensively spread in Libya was al-Qādiriyya, brought by Moroccan Shaykh Abu Madyan al-Maghribi who met its founder al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī in Makka. On Shaykh Abu Madyan return from Makka through Tripoli and Tunisia. He started preaching its message and recruited a number of disciples to join the Order in Tripoli, and later built the first Qādiriyya zāwiya in Tripoli in 13th century (7thH).¹²⁷ Whereas al-Rifāʿiyya did not spread as

¹²¹Muʿnis, *Aṭlas Tārīkh al-Islām*, p 184.

¹²²Brett, op. cit.

¹²³Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 66.

¹²⁴Al-Qaṭʿānī, *al-Quṭb al-Anwar*, pp 12-13.

¹²⁵Al-Ṭayyib, op. cit., p 912.

Al-Qaṭʿānī, *al-ʿArīs fī nasab al-Fwātīr min ʿĀl Bu Fāris*, p 71.

¹²⁶Al-Nāʾib al-Anṣārī, op. cit., p 111.

¹²⁷Al-Niyāl, *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Tārīkhiyya lil-Taṣawwūf al-Islāmi*, pp 321-322.

Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 82.

wide as other Orders due to the stiff competition it faced from others. Nonetheless, it managed to break into some of the big cities especially Darna. Its followers were infamous for the heretical acts that they often indulged in, along with others like the much disreputable followers of al-[°]Isāwiyya Order.¹²⁸ There was also al-Shādhiliyya, whose founder was nicknamed after the town of Shādhila near Tunis. It is one of the most followed and popular Orders in Egypt during the life and after the death of al-Shaykh [°]Alī abu al-Ḥasan ash-Shādhili himself. It even grew stronger on the hands of his loyal disciple and successor Abu al-[°]Abāss al-Mursī who is entombed in Alexandria.¹²⁹

Al-Shādhiliyya was known in Libya by various names, but all were derived from the mother-Order with Libyan specification and characteristics to a certain extent, and they are;

- 1) **Al-Zarrūqiyya** – its founder al-Shaykh Aḥmad al-Birnsi (Burunsī),¹³⁰ widely known as al-Zarrūq whose shrine lies in Miṣrāta.¹³¹ Al-shaykh fled persecution in his home country, Fez - Morocco, and arrived in Miṣrāta, and was warmly welcomed by Miṣrātans and officialdom. They accepted his call and built a zāwiya like the rest of Libyan cities and towns in order to be blessed and spread his message. Al-shaykh died in 1493 (899H) and was duly entombed in his zāwiya. His shrine since became a place of pilgrims and a centre of learning graduating many missionaries whom spread his message in all corners of Libya and, to certain degree, in the neighbouring countries.¹³²
- 2) **Al-[°]Arūsiyya** – founded by al-Shaykh Aḥmad ibn [°]Abdullah ibn [°]Arūs. He descended from the Berber tribe of Hiwāra,¹³³ and was born in Tunisia in 1347 (748H), and died in 1436 (868H).¹³⁴ He moved from Morocco, to Algeria, Tunisia, and to Libya. His order did not take roots in Libya on his hands, but it

¹²⁸Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 88-90.

¹²⁹Op. cit., pp 83-84.

¹³⁰Trimingham, *the Sufi Orders of Islam*, p 87.

¹³¹Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 85-86.

¹³²Al-Muntaṣir, *Tārīkh Misrāta mundh al-Fath al-Islāmi wa ḥatta Nihāyat al-[°]Ahd al-[°]Uthmāni*, (manuscript), pp 39-40.

¹³³Al-Qaṭ[°]āni, *al-Quṭb al-Anwar*, p 104.

was taken up by his disciple al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām al-Asmar who spread it widely.¹³⁵

- 3) **Al-Salāmiyya** – arose from the hermitage of al-ʿArūsiyya. Founded by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām ibn Salīm al-Asmar al-Fītūrī, the most famous Ṣūfī notable of all in Libya.¹³⁶ He was born in 1475 (880H) and died 1573 (981H). His shrine in Zlīṭīn has been one of the most visited in Libya. Sīdī ʿAbd al-Salām, as he is known in Libya, spent good part of his life learning and in pursuit of knowledge, which later distinguished him from the traditionalists. In his journey of learning, he roamed most of Tripolitania’s main towns and cities meeting scholars of different shades. He later sat down to teach and write, and produced many scholars who later became famous as a result of his long and famous poem dubbed al-Silisala al-Dhabīyya (the Golden Chain) in which some of his students’ names were mentioned in it.¹³⁷
- 4) **Al-Madaniyya** – took its name from Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Ḥamza Ṣāfir al-Madani who was born in Madina in 1780 (1194H). He eventually settled in Miṣrāta where he died in 1846 (1263).¹³⁸ His offspring still live at present around his zāwiya, which had since become an established feature of the city. Al-Madani has long been remembered for his stern stance in opposition to the unjust rulers of Libya in his time, especially with Yūsuf Pasha al-Qaramānli.¹³⁹ His successor, al-Shaykh Saʿīd al-Tabānī, followed in the footsteps of his late master, and went to Tunisia with some of their disciples to answer the call of Jihād, and were killed there.¹⁴⁰ Then the responsibility of running the affairs of the zāwiya fell upon the son of the Founder, Muḥammad al-Ṣāfir, who kept up his father’s spirit of teaching and added his imagination to it. He spread and expanded zāwiyas in North Africa, Ḥijāz and Turkey. He also worked in a positive and

¹³⁴ Al-Zerekly, op. cit., vol. 1, p 169.

¹³⁵ Al-Qaṭʿānī, op. cit., pp 105-106.

¹³⁶ Trimingham, *the Sufi Orders of Islam*, p 87.

¹³⁷ Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 86-87.

¹³⁸ Trimingham, *the Sufi Orders of Islam*, p 113.

¹³⁹ Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 87-88.

Al-Muntaṣir, op. cit., pp 41-42.

active manner on the Ottoman Sultan ʿAbd-al-Ḥamīd II initiative in uniting Muslims under one umbrella called al-Jāmiʿa al-Islāmiyya (Islamic league).¹⁴¹

5) **AL-ʿIsawiyya** – founded by Muḥammad ibn ʿIsā al-Miknāsi from the Sus region of Morocco. He taught and orchestrated the discipline of the Order exactly like that of the way he received his discipline from both Jazūliyya¹⁴² and Zarrūqiyya Orders. It seems from far the first to spread this Order’s teaching was al-Shaykh Yʿaqūb al-Khashāb, and then later by Muḥammad al-ʿAlam Bānūn al-Fāsi who also came from Morocco in 16th century (10thH), and founded the great zāwiya in Tripoli known as al-Zāwiya al-Kabīra. Whereas al-shaykh Yʿaqūb’s smaller zāwiya known as al-Zāwiya al-Ṣaghīra.¹⁴³ ʿIsawiyya Order was the subject of much criticism from ʿUlama for what was perceived as unislamic practices such as the piercing of their cheeks with skewers and stomachs with swords, eating smashed glass, nails and fire, and the movement of the body inducing convulsions.¹⁴⁴

6) **Al-Sanūsiyya** – founded by an Algerian of Idrīsid descent. Yet the Order which spread extensively and had the greatest influence on people in North Africa and the south of the Sahara was al-Sanūsiyya Order. It rose its shaykh to the throne to be a king on the first independent nation-state in the Maghrib. It also fought three great colonial powers; the British in Egypt, French in Chad and the Italians at home in Libya.

¹⁴⁰Al-Qaṭʿāni, op. cit., p 12.

¹⁴¹Al-Muntaṣir, op. cit., pp 42-44.

¹⁴²Trimingham, *the Sufi Orders of Islam*, p 84.

¹⁴³Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 88-89.

¹⁴⁴Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp 4-5.

However, unfortunately al-Sanūsiyya is not in itself the subject of our study, and duly could not be discussed at length here.¹⁴⁵ Though, I will definitely be referring to it in relation to the tribes and State and highlighting the lives of its men and work when appropriate to serve the overall purpose of the study.

¹⁴⁵Cf. Ziadeh, *Sanūsīyah, a study of a revivalist movement in Islam*.

Evans-Pritchard, *the Sanūsi of Cyrenaica*.

Evans-Pritchard, *the Place of the Sanūsiyya Order in the History of Islam*

The shared impact and influence between the Ṣūfi Orders and the Libyan society

The Ṣūfi Orders spread widely in the midst of the people of Libya, and sat deep in its society. This came as a result of the spiritual vacuum that official Islam has left represented by the State neglect and inefficiency of its religious institutions.¹⁴⁶ Those Orders came to serve as non-governmental organisations and pressure groups that influenced the State and the society, at the same time being influenced by them, particularly the public.

There were Orders that conditioned themselves to the social disposition of al-Ḥaḍūr (citizens) in towns and cities. Those Orders chiefly were ʿArūsiyya, ʿIsawiyya and Madaniyya especially in Tripolitania. Whereas the countryside, described by Libyans as Barr al-Bwadi (Bedouin's steppe country) remained largely ṭarīqa free, for the very simple reason that those ṭarīqas did not suit the Bedouin or their way of life. The Bedouin never liked those Orders' teachings or their practices at first. Thus the Bedouin remained outside the influence of those Orders even though they were ardent adherents of the shared and fundamental tenets. What is more, Bedouin never recognised the separation of religion and State. Even though Bedouin community was "semi -secularised"¹⁴⁷ by legislating for themselves from outside the norms of Islam, but this was never deliberate nor evolutionary, but rather out of spontaneously blind ignorance.

That left Bedouin exposed and lacking religious devoutness due to the deficit of pastors that Ṣūfi Orders would have provided. This remained the case until the appearance of the Sanūsiyya Order when its founder al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Sanūsi between 1837 and 1859 (1253-1276H)¹⁴⁸ succeeded in penetrating the mentality and culture of Bedouin population, and persuaded them of his message. His unique style and scholarship entitled him the recognition and title of a reformist and

¹⁴⁶Al-Dajāni, *al-Ḥaraka al-Sanūsiyya*, pp 20-23.

¹⁴⁷Evans-Pritchard, *the Sanūsi of Cyrenaica*, p 82.

¹⁴⁸Bosworth, *op. cit.*, pp 41-42

revivalist, in the sense that he reformed the Bedouin and revived their religious predisposition.¹⁴⁹

Šūfi Orders were quick in ascension in theory and practice. They moved forward from repeating their daily Dhiker to a mass revivalist movement. They transformed the tribal community to a level higher than what they were at in their past. But, it was not long before the very Šūfi current fell into the tribal entrapment. The whole Šūfi movement was pinned down by tribal negativity particularly their narrow mindedness and ossification. Consequently, Šūfism was forced to retreat backward, and wear the cloak of tribalistic “secularism”. This kind of secularism was epitomised in making Islam a mere collection of cultic practices that later contributed to the impotence that those Orders suffered from as a result, perhaps with exception of that was al-Sanūsiyya during the first and second generation of its leadership.

However, in spite of the much ignorance of real Islam that tribes were in, tribesmen remained astonishingly proud of their Islamic identity, and missionaries found them ever impenetrable. This was no surprise since Libya was the land of ribāt, Murābiṭīn and Šūfi Orders. Libya was always a fertile land for Šūfi Orders, and Libyans were hospitably receptive of their doctrine.

Teaching and learning was traditionally held in mosques, zāwiyas and to a lesser extent in schools. Equally the taught-subjects were in traditional skills such as reading and writing and the sciences of Qur’ān and other Islamic topics. In addition to that, there were seminars in history and Islamic thoughts at most. The richer city-families and tribes used to send their youngsters to pursue their education in famous places such as al-Azhar in Egypt or al-Zaytūna university-mosque in Tunisia, or further eastward to al-Shām or Turkey. These obviously were the Mālīki followers. However, the Berbers sent theirs either to the island of Djerba in Tunisia or the oasis of Mzāb in Algeria to study the Ibādī doctrine.¹⁵⁰ As for the overwhelming poorer members of the community, they were contented with learning in local zāwiyas on the hands of one of

¹⁴⁹Cf. Najem, Faraj, *Hiwarāt Tārīkhiyya*, al-Quds al-‘Arabi, (20 Oct to 28 Oct 2002 - London), especially my interviews with Aḥmad al-Dajāni and Nicola Ziadeh about the Sanūsiyya.

¹⁵⁰Khleifat, *al-Nuẓim al-Ijtimā‘iyya wal-Tarbawīyya ‘ind al-Ibādīyya fī Shamāl Ifriqiyya*, pp 31-34.

Mu‘ammar, *al-Ibādīyya fī Mawḳib al-Tārīkh*, pp 106-107.

Al-Ṭabāṭabā‘i, *al-Ibādīyya Tārīkhan wa-‘Aqīda*, pp 60-64.

the muraboutic shaykhs.¹⁵¹ The shaykh of zāwiya received food, water and accommodation, and in return he offered the tribe or the community the following;¹⁵²

- taught their children Qur'ān, Sunna and Islamic mannerism
- taught them how to read and write Arabic, and preach the word of Islam¹⁵³
- collect taxes, alms, votives, expiatory gifts and spend them on the poor and the needy
- settle disputes between people, especially tribes, and adjudicate on religious matters¹⁵⁴
- to guide people spiritually, and mobilise them, if and when, there is a Call for Jihād
- create and maintain long lasting peace and stability between the competing tribes
- feed the hungry and the poor, and house the homeless and wayfarers.¹⁵⁵

Those zāwiyas were built away from the influence of the central governments, and were situated on the routes of trading caravans. Zāwiyas, as explained earlier, consisted of mosques, schools, lodges, and stores for food and other commodities. Therefore, zāwiyas became pivotal for the whole Ṣūfi movement in the region and helped in the spread of their message as well as preparing their followers spiritually, systematically and militarily.¹⁵⁶

Ṣūfi Orders managed to live amongst the people of towns and cities particularly Tripoli, Benghazi, Miṣrāta, Darna and Zlīṭin, and those Orders inclined to reconciling the then state of affairs. Some of those Orders lost the essence of their message and were bent on acrobatic rituals twinned with some diabolical acts such as glass eating or body piercing.¹⁵⁷ Some of those alleged followers did not even observe the basic Islamic rituals such as the five daily prayers or refraining from alcohol drinking, they

¹⁵¹Hasan , Salaheddin, *the genesis of the political leadership of Libya 1952-1969: historical origins and development of its component elements* (unpub thesis), pp 11-15.

¹⁵²Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., p 314.

¹⁵³Al-Dajāni, op. cit., pp 238-239.

¹⁵⁴Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 66.

¹⁵⁵Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 78-80.

¹⁵⁶Al-Dajāni, op. cit., p 240.

even went further by introducing heresies.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, those “startling” shaykhs reduced the message of Islam and its exhaustiveness and made it look as if it was secularised by separating true Islam from life. This served as an inducement for dervishness to coexist with this rather undermined version of Islam within the parameters of the State that was totally unaware of what was happening to its citizens.¹⁵⁹

The corruption that surrounded those Orders infested the moral and behavioural system to the extent of adopting new commemoration and celebrating dates foreign to the local culture. These could well have been the remnants of the pre-Islamic non-Arab practices.¹⁶⁰ These islamically-estranged celebrations were epitomised by the spread of sanctified tombs throughout the country.¹⁶¹ Almost every city, village and *naja*^c (Bedouin camp) had a shrine of Murābiṭ who passed away there. This shrine served as a blessing-centre,¹⁶² and people would come to make *ziyārat* (pilgrimage) on set seasons usually towards the end of summer after finishing their harvest. The *ziyārat* is usually organised in which in it they seek blessing from the entombed saint by giving charities to the poor and needy who would have encamped around the shrine, as well as votives and expiatory gifts. The pilgrims make their supplication in front of the tomb and invoke the saint to answer their calls. Those calls range from healing the sick, return the loved ones who are away safely, to women give birth to baby boys. This environment normally raises the level of spirituality, and breeds tolerance, forgiveness and more importantly settling tribal feuds forever.¹⁶³

The *ziyārat* would naturally strengthen relations between kinship and generally bring people together in an atmosphere of goodness. It also helped people to temporarily break away from the stress of life, and it allowed some to take pleasure in some binge

¹⁵⁷Op. cit., pp 25-26.

¹⁵⁸Najem, Faraj, *al-Ṣūfiyya wal-taṣawwuf fi Libya*, Majallat Jeel Wa Risala, 3rd issue (May 1997 - London).

¹⁵⁹Al-Dajāni, op. cit.

¹⁶⁰Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., pp 148, 220-270.

¹⁶¹Peters, Emrys, *From particularism to universalism in the religion of the Cyrenaica Bedouin* – SOAS Pam. UVL A 356,676, p7.

¹⁶²Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., pp 170-176, 182-186.

¹⁶³Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., pp 46-47.

and joy. The children in these events would meet and play with their peers. Women on the other hand would compete in showing their cooking skills and general partying. As for young men, they would flex their muscles by wrestling, and horse-racing to show off their prowess, an activity known as mayz (from mayza ‘to differentiate’).¹⁶⁴ The older ones would engage in circles of Dhiker and God praising around the tomb which is shrouded in a cloth inscribed on it passages from the Qu’rān.¹⁶⁵ They also get involved in some bizarre acts such as charlatanism and conjuration. The commoners who believed dogmatically in the power of those sanctified Murābiṭīn and their eternal power named their children after them, this perhaps was a way of votive offering when they invoked them to help answer their calls.¹⁶⁶ Those names did not just become common in Libya, but in the neighbouring countries as well. These names had not just become initial names, but family and tribal names that did not need to be genealogical linked to the original source. Names such as al-Shaykhi, Murābiṭ, Rābṭi, Baraka, Sharīf, Darwish, Majdhūb, Maḥjūb, Firjāni, Sanūsi, ‘Isāwi, Madani, Qadhāfi, Khudām al-Zurrūq, Fītūrī, Wāfi, Miṣri, Ghumāri, Duwkālī and many more.

Amongst the many popular celebrated feasts (especially festivals of fast-breaking and sacrifice), Libyans celebrate the Prophet’s birthday and the day of ‘Ashūrā’ (10th of the holy month of Muḥarram, the day Imam Ḥusayn was martyred).¹⁶⁷

Also, every zāwiya has a particular date that celebrates, whether that day is the birthday of its founder-shaykh, or the day he died.¹⁶⁸ As for the birthday of the Prophet, children would light up their lamps and candles on the evening and rove the street repeating some of the religious chants hoping to gain gifts of sweets or anything pleasing. Whereas ‘Ashūrā’ is celebrated completely different from the Shī‘ites.¹⁶⁹ It

¹⁶⁴ Peters, Emrys, *From particularism to universalism in the religion of the Cyrenaica Bedouin* – SOAS Pam. UVL A 356,676, p 8.

¹⁶⁵ Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 66.

¹⁶⁶ Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 47.

¹⁶⁷ Op. cit., p 42.

Al-Marzūqi, *Ma‘a al-Badw fi Ḥallihim wa Tirḥālihīm*, pp 206-213.

¹⁶⁸ Al-Marzūqi, op. cit., p 164.

¹⁶⁹ Op. cit., pp 194-206.

has been transformed over the centuries to a day of joy and celebration rather than a day of stricken grief and lamentation like the way it is with the Shī'ī Muslims.¹⁷⁰

The beginning of 'Ashūrā' observance is regarded as one of the Shī'ites residues in the Maghrib that can be traced back to the days of the Fātimids dominance of the region.¹⁷¹ As recent as the nineteenth century when the people of Awjila used to go out in processions through the streets of their oasis chanting eulogies while men beat themselves rhythmically with palm-leaf stalks. The neighbouring Arab tribes (Zuwayya and Mjābra) described this as the day of "*Klibat al-Awjila*" (the Awājila's madness).¹⁷²

Further proof of the Shī'ites link, is what the Arabs in southern Tunisia and Tripolitania used to do when the girls and women used to get together in the night before the day of 'Ashūrā' by standing up in a circle performing a tragicomic dance. This was all done on an eulogising tune of repetitive folkloric and sobbing chants elegising Ḥusayn.¹⁷³

This style of eulogy remained the same till recent times, and that can be found when the famous Ghūma al-Maḥmūdi's maid elegised him in his fatal revolt against the Turks in 1856 (1274H).¹⁷⁴

The sum and substance of this style of eulogising the dead in Libya still carries on the same to the present day, admittedly to a lesser extent, at least amongst the older women, where women perform the dance repeating the rhythmical chant and slap their cheeks to bleeding. Nonetheless, these practises are rapidly disappearing in Libya.

Despite the fact that Libyans commemorate 'Ashūrā' every year, they do not know why they do so. They do not even know what happened on that day in the Islamic history, nor the calamity that was inflicted upon the Prophet's household. Therefore,

¹⁷⁰ Momen, op. cit., pp 240-241.

¹⁷¹ Al-Tāhir, op. cit., p 171.

¹⁷² I was on a visit to Awjila in Sept 2000, and I was reluctantly told about it in details, and was also told that it was no longer practised, and it is something that they do not like any more.

¹⁷³ Al-Marzūqi, op. cit., pp 195-197.

in Fazzān ‘Ashūrā’ used to be celebrated for three days amongst Tuaregs. This celebration is known locally as Sabyib, in which women and men garlanded themselves with palm leafs, and collectively dance on the moonlight in folkloric fashion, then they finish off their celebration by visiting the graves of their loved ones.¹⁷⁵

In view of that, Ṣūfi Orders and al-Murābiṭīn almost absorbed and took hold of the Libyan society and its way of life by subjecting it to their understanding and interpretations of Islamic text and history, and never allowed any form of elite or populace opposition.

Al-Murābiṭīn had particular influence over the common man through their invocation of God, as it is claimed. The laity feared that invocation and made sure they did not deserve the wrath of the Murābiṭīn, and went to whatever extent to win their gratification. Furthermore, whoever dared to deserve their wrath would be disowned and repudiated. The object of anger sometimes finds it impossible to live normal amidst people and becomes equally impossible to marry for example, because of this or that Murābiṭ invoked God against them. No one would simply risk the supposed Murābiṭ’s anathema. Therefore, those unfortunately ill-fated would be avoided by the masses as a result of that afflicted prayer on them, and would ultimately leave the town or country all together.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴Op. cit., pp 198-199.

¹⁷⁵Ibn Mūsa, op. cit., p 48.

¹⁷⁶Al-Marzūqi, op. cit., pp 162-163.

Al-Murābiṭs and their influence in State's politics

The political and social development led to the establishment of role distribution between the various principal players within Libyan society as a whole. Karāghla, as a result, became the civil servants and the politicians of the state. Whereas the Bedouin Arabs and the Berbers became the avid soldiers of the State, of course, that was so if the price was right. However, al-Murābiṭīn had the unequalled task of spiritual mobilisation, and what makes it operable, such as education and pedagogy.

In my opinion, the latter is the most influential and powerful due to the combination of the religious authority and the tribal prerogatives. That in due course gained al-Murābiṭīn economic benefits, tribal prominence, and political appointments, and left them alone in charge of any intertribal negotiation and diplomacy. For that reason al-Murābiṭīn were able to monopolise the notion of human development i.e. education, owing to their social status and their availability and readiness to act as spiritual guardians through mosques and their own zāwiyas, and inherit that to their children.

Al-Murābiṭīn were widely known for memorizing and learning the whole of the Qur'ān by heart in addition to many Ṣūfī Awrād (litanies compounded of strung-together Adhkār or remembrance formula)¹⁷⁷ in their zāwiyas. This was in times where the rest of Libyan society suffered from the triad of ignorance, poverty and disease.

However, al-Murābiṭīn had the highest percentage of those who could read and write in comparison with others, which in later times made it an exclusive profession of theirs.¹⁷⁸ Consequently, from amongst them stood out a number of ʿulama, shaykhs, teachers, orators, poets and paramedics. That further consolidated their role and social peculiarity putting them in the forefront of the society, and advanced their eligibility for leadership.

People got accustomed to believing in al-Murābiṭīn and in the alleged miracles of their saints.¹⁷⁹ Woe unto whoever doubts the saints' ability, for instance, to heal the sick, or answer the mendicant and the desperate as the myth has it. Till recent times,

¹⁷⁷Trimingham, op. cit., p 301.

¹⁷⁸Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 83.

elders believed firmly in the power of al-Murābiṭīn and their saints to the extent of treatment of sacredness and reverence when meeting a Murābiṭ, or of muraboutic origin. Furthermore, if there was a dispute needing an affirmative solution then they would go to the nearest Murābiṭ shrine in town and swear in his presence on what they do or say would be the truth. Amongst those Murābiṭs Sīdi ʿAbd al-Salām al-Asmar of Zlīṭīn is the most powerful and preferred. To the extent with some of the superstitious elders that if you swore in the name of Allah and refused to swear in the name of Sīdi X or Y, then they would seriously doubt your truthfulness.

Yet, whoever doubts or discredits the muraboutic supernatural omnipotence, or their ability to perform miracles, or even expresses some reservation about that, he or she for that matter would be exposed to reprimand and social isolation. They would even get accused of religious deviation and apostasy.¹⁸⁰ And if one approaches them in a civilised manner explaining to them that this dead man could never do anything for you except by the power and grace of God, then they would, with some disapproval, answer you back by claiming that these are the men of God. They dogmatically believe if one humbles him or herself and beg the holy entombed for whatever, then their supplication is accepted by God through them because there is no veil between God and his (Murābiṭīn) saints.¹⁸¹

This rather simple mentality of thinking saturated with blind belief in al-Murābiṭīn made them a soft target for greedy con men and charlatans. Those greedy men often camouflaged themselves in holiness wearing green or white turbans with their fingers counting the beads of praises manifesting their piety and righteousness, and claiming their lineage to this Murābiṭ or that great Ṣūfī, or belongs to a particular zāwiya.¹⁸² This would usually rain them a great deal of benefactions that in no time rank them amongst the affluent and subsequently the influential.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 65.

¹⁸⁰Al-Marzūqi, op. cit., pp 162-163.

¹⁸¹Ibid.

¹⁸²Ibid.

In this sort of fertile setting, the mastery of al-Murābiṭīn grew enormously between all layers of Libyan society, and they were given absolute reign over the common man and they nearly made it to the top. They had their sway over politicians and soldiers alike who genuinely feared their power of invocation. Hence, the state apparatus ensured that they do not get in the way of al-Murābiṭīn nor for their work to be jeopardised by their spiritual outburst. Therefore, by a way of quietening them the State went in so far as to please Murābiṭīn by exempting their zāwiyas from taxes, and did not bring them under the fold of the government. There were also Murābiṭīn tribes who were exempting from tax toll such as al-Masāmīr who lived between the Saʿādi tribes of al-Hāsa, ʿIbīdāt, Drusa, and Brāʿaṣa.¹⁸⁴

Whenever, the central government launched a military expedition, it beats the drums and gives flags to various groups and tribes. Of course al-Murābiṭīn stood in the forefront of everybody else and they usually got the green banners as a sign of their “sacred” preference in clear distinction with others who carried banners of different colours.¹⁸⁵ The governor or the commander of the armed forces would normally come before the chief Murābiṭ on the expedition and would ask him to bless them by reading al-Fātiḥa,¹⁸⁶ and invoke Allah to grant them victory. Al-Murābiṭīn would also ascertain to the soldiers the need to be steadfast and patient to achieve an outright victory and would do so by reading poems to arouse and remind them of the early glorious Muslims and their forefathers to elevate their spirits and zeal. Sadly the so-called discipline expedition against insurrectionist tribes were nothing but a killing spree against whoever opposed the rule of the central government.

These slaughterous campaigns used to take place against any one dared to challenge the authority of the Pasha anywhere in Libya. The most notorious of all were those against the tribes of Awlād Sulaymān in central and southern Libya. Also, al-Maḥāmīd in Tripolitania’s Jabal Nafusa,¹⁸⁷ and against al-Jawāzi in and around

¹⁸³Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 66.

¹⁸⁴Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa], tr. by I. Al-Mahdawi, p 73.

¹⁸⁵Al-Qaṭʿānī, *al-ʿAris fī nasab al-Fwātīr min ʿĀl Bu Fāris*, p 69.

Bu Lugma, *al-Hādi, Majallat al-Dirāsāt Lībiyya*, 1st issue, 3rd edition (1975 – Libya), p 124.

¹⁸⁶“the opener” - the chapter with which the Qurʾān opens. It is read for blessing.

¹⁸⁷Kamālī, *Wathāʾiq ʿan Nihāyat al-ʿAhd al-Qaramānalli*, tr. by M. Bazama, pp 45-67.

Benghazi which ultimately ended the entire tribe in the Upper Egypt after killing its chiefs in cold-blood.¹⁸⁸ Those calamitous campaigns used to inflict sufferings whether by indiscriminate murder and sweeping pillage or tribal cleansing in clear violation and legitimacy that gave rise to al-Murābiṭīn themselves. Al-Murābiṭīn never thought that was unislamic. They thought the State is based on Islam, and whatever it does it is her business and hers alone. Murābiṭīn also felt in need for that role of legitimising these acts so they could make some gains to reduce their poverty and spare themselves the misery or otherwise the State might turn against them.

Clearly, the State-Murābiṭīn relation was one of fear and mutual gains. The State and its soldiers feared them because of their spiritual endowment emanating from their position in the country. This fear could be traced to the days of the Baktāshiyya Order and its discipline of its Janissary soldiers through the program of spiritual mobilisation they underwent which ingrained in them the commitment to Islam and its elite.

At the time when the Spanish attacked Tripoli in 16th century about hundred Murābiṭs uprose in Tripolitania and Tunisia inciting Muslims in the city to take up arms and declare Jihād against the infidel invaders. Those Murābiṭs led more than forty thousands volunteers to fight the Spanish. Amongst those Murābiṭs was Sulaymān ibn Yūsuf al-Fītūrī and his son, both were killed as mentioned earlier in this chapter.¹⁸⁹

Al-Barmūnī reported in his book “Rawḍat al-Azhār” that Murād Agha arrested one of the saintly Murābiṭs and imprisoned him in a well after discovering that he assisted one of the Arab rebels and kept quiet about it. This very Murābiṭ invoked on him the curse of Sīdī ‘Abd al-Salām al-Asmar. And it was not long, as the legend has it, before the Agha was struck by illness and was not healed from it until they rested the stick of the Murābiṭ on his body.¹⁹⁰ One might question the authenticity of the story but could never compromise the power of al-Murābiṭīn on people.

Al-Murābiṭīn had always stood by the rulers whether they were Arabs, Ottomans or whatever as long as they professed Islam and worked within its parameters. If those rulers ever step out of line, then al-Murābiṭīn find themselves in confrontation with

¹⁸⁸Mannāʿ, *al-Ansāb al-‘Arabiyya fī Libya*, pp 93-101.

¹⁸⁹Rossi, op. cit., p 181.

them. This is what happened with the Turkish rulers of Tripolitania then, when it was reported that Sīdi ‘Abd al-Salām al-Asmar described them as “deadly poison” because of their cruelty. Another described them by saying “wherever a Turkish soldier puts his foot, destruction would prevail and no grass would grow”.¹⁹¹ The Moroccan traveller Abu al-Ḥasan al-Timkrūti who passed through Tripoli in 1589-1590 (998-999H) wrote “the people of Tripoli never felt comfortable with Ottoman soldiers especially those ones who robbed the country and unjustly treated its people, and confiscated land and homes. They even forced them to marry their daughters to their soldiers. The Tripolines wished they were under the ‘Alīd rule of the Sharīfs of Morocco instead of those mercenaries...”.¹⁹²

This tyrannical rule panicked people into either revolt or migration. It was unbearable for the majority to live in conditions of subjugation and pillage, and what made it worse was the fact that it was all done in the name of Islam, which was the deciding factor in the political theatre, and people of differing interests hijacked it. However, there is a consensus amongst observers that religion and politics were shoulder to shoulder in Libya. The characteristics of tyranny reached a peak where unjust rulers assumed the identity of al-Murābiṭīn and pretended to be dervishes to fool ordinary people for the purpose of deceit and duplicity. Thereby, when Khalīl Pasha went to inform Sharīf Dai, who was the ruler of Tripoli also an impassioned Ṣūfī, that he had to give up throne to Qāsim Pasha? The Dai refused and barracked him inside the castle. Then the janissaries had to trick him into surrender by dressing up one of the soldiers to look like Shaykh Sīdi al-Ṣayyād and then, in disguise, headed for the castle and begged the Dai to come down. Of course, the Dai came in a hurry thinking al-shaykh at the door. But he was stunned when he realised it was not al-shaykh but one of the Janissaries, who tore him to pieces.¹⁹³ When al-shaykh Sīdi al-Sayyād learnt of what happened in his name, he invoked the curse of Allah on them, and swore would

¹⁹⁰Op. cit., (F.N) pp 220-221.

¹⁹¹Op. cit., p 246.

¹⁹²Op. cit., pp 246-247.

¹⁹³Op. cit., p 266.

never enter the city of Tripoli as long as he lived, in condemnation of their evil deeds.¹⁹⁴

Sīdi Muḥammad al-Ṣayyād al-Yaḥiyyāwi died and was buried west of Tripoli, where he has a shrine in al-Hanshīyir attracting thousands of visitors each year. His shrine enjoys the right of assisting the anxious and offers protection and refuge.¹⁹⁵ His tomb turned into a sanctuary for political dissenters and escapees amongst others, particularly during the Qaramānlis reign. During the Qaramānli period Aḥmad Pasha was overthrown by his brother Yūsuf in 1795 (1209H), then Aḥmad got away and took refuge in Sīdi al-Ṣayyād shrine fleeing his brother's swords.¹⁹⁶ Nevertheless, later Yūsuf built a mosque on the shrine financed by his own funds, and asked his heirs to care for the sacred precinct. This reverence went on where most of the Qaramānlis sought the respect and support of al-shaykh's descents.

One of the roles al-Murābiṭīn played was to settle disputes. That is what happened with one of the many discords and revolts the country experienced in 1828 (1244H) in Jabal Nafūsa. Yūsuf Pasha was then forced to drag al-Murābiṭīn into helping him to quieten matters that were dangerously agitated. Yūsuf Pasha asked the muraboutic tribe of Awlād Bu Sayf to intervene to lessen the tension between people and the government and prevent bloodshed because of their religious weight.¹⁹⁷ However, Awlād Bu Sayf succeeded in sparing the lives of many and also negotiated the terms whereby Ghūma al-Muḥmudi was appointed the overall shaykh (chief) of Jabal Nafūsa, and his tribe of al-Nūayr (section of al-Maḥāmīd tribe) after the tragic murder of his brother Bilqāsim. Ghūma, as a result of Awlād Bu Sayf intervention, was empowered with plenipotentiary to act on behalf of the Pasha in Nafūsa and the surrounding areas.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴Op. cit., (F.N).

¹⁹⁵Op. cit., p 288.

¹⁹⁶Op. cit., p 361.

¹⁹⁷Op. cit., p 399.

¹⁹⁸Ibid.

Yūsuf Pasha wanted for himself a favoured position in the hearts of ʿulāma, shaykhs of Ṣūfī Orders and the chiefs of al-Murābiṭīn tribes. This was partly of his faith in them and their spiritual authority, but, also, to avert any potential harm they might cause him. Therefore, he maintained good contacts with them, and amongst those was al-Sayyid Muḥammad Zāfir al-Madani, Shaykh of al-Madaniyya Order. Yūsuf Pasha saw in him righteousness and standing, so he brought the shaykh closer to his court by receiving him in a splendour and lavish manner, and expressed his total embrace of his Order and doctrine. But this artificial relation did not last, especially when the palace's clergy were overwhelmed with professional jealousy, and in no time they kindled rancour and grudge between the two men. Al-Sayyid al-Madani left Tripoli and went to Miṣrāta, the city where Sīdi Zarrūq and Sīdi Maḥjūb rest, and settled there.¹⁹⁹

Afterwards al-Sayyid al-Madani confided to one of his acquaintances and said:

"Yūsuf Pasha from now and on would never succeed. His tree had been uprooted and thrown in the sun".

Aḥmad Beg al-Nā'ib al-Anṣārī commented on that in his book al-Minhal, and wrote:

"... and it was so as he [Madani] wished..."

In no time Yūsuf Pasha's rule was badly shaken, and his doomsday had arrived. He regretted that, but it was too late for regret.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹Al-Muntaṣir, op. cit., pp 41-42.

²⁰⁰Al-Nā'ib al-Anṣārī, *al-Minhal al-ʿAdhb fī Tārīkh Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, p 355.

Ending

Ribāṭ and Murābiṭīn are nomenclatures that had Libyan characteristics in terms of their linguistic and historic background that distinguished them from the rest of the region. However, there was a clear distinction between Ashrāf and Murābiṭīn despite the occasional overlapping. This manifested itself in the context of Ṣūfism and Ṣūfī Orders and their influence on the larger Libyan society and the State's politics. The strength and influence of al-Murābiṭīn, including al-Ashrāf, stems from Islam, therefore, they will continue to play a fundamental role in all Libya's walks of life as they have always done in the past.

Chapter 6

Immigration of Libyan tribes into the neighbouring countries and their influence there

Prelude

Throughout this research I was constantly reminded by many historians, whom I have had dialogues with on the history of Libya, to look into the tribal immigration into, and out of Libya. Their advice was to follow those who are of Libyan origins and chronicle what they have been through and have achieved.

Therefore, there has been a realisation of the importance of this, and need to look at the causes that led those tribes to flee the country voluntarily or by force. I will also try to live with them through some of their plights during the Qaramānli rule and its immediate sequence, and how they overcame that, and managed eventually to find their feet again, and went on to re-launch their lives in their newly found space in the neighbouring countries.

This chapter will endeavour to identify some of the Libyan tribes in Egypt, Tunisia and Chad, study their immigration and its causes, and exhibit some facts on the chronology of their moves and whereabouts. Also, the places they have settled in, and some of pivotal events they were involved in. This chapter is based on field-study conducted by others, along with my own research in some of the Arab countries that I have visited for the purpose of this study.

Therefore, with some pain, one could say that this area is vast and could not be covered by this research, but can comfortably say that we have hopefully highlighted the causes and the places where those immigrants are. So for others could follow from where we stop to produce even a better study.

Moreover, this study in this chapter endeavours to examine further the relation between religion, state and tribe by examining the effects of geography and how the Sanūsiyya movement shaped the politics as well as the socio-economic lives of every one concerned.

These are the topics of this chapter;

1. Tribes, geography and immigration
2. Causes of immigration to the neighbouring countries
3. Immigration and Sanūsiyya
4. Immigration to Egypt
5. Immigration to Tunisia
6. Immigration to Chad

Tribes, geography and immigration

Muslims regard immigration as one of the turning points and decisive events in human history. Lessons are often drawn from the immigration of the Prophet Muḥammad from Makka to Madīna, and for this reason, the Islamic calendar starts from that day the Prophet immigrated. Hence it marks the real beginning of the Islamic State and Community. Immigration, or Hijra, as it is known in Arabic, could sometimes be optional act that one could take voluntarily and at his own liberty. But sometimes people are compelled to flee danger as the early Muslims did when they fled their homes in Makka. Yet, people go far afield from their homes, but homes would never leave their conscience.

In the Islamic religious traditions; the eternal home of the believer is in heaven, because Eve and Adam, the parent of humanity, were expelled from it. Therefore, these earthly homes are only transitional for those believers who would ultimately resort to their eternal homes in paradise. With this theological understanding of home we find a number of attached meanings polarised in various contexts, to name a few; the state with its geographical sovereignty, the other is the recollection and nostalgia for one's home in the Diaspora.

Tribe, in Libya and everywhere else, had a primitive understanding of the concept of home-country whereby it does not exceed the territory, which it owns. Therefore, their home is their pasture and where their tents are pitched. With the extension of tribes living side-by-side and adjoining their camps the greater home, as we know it now as Libya, emerged. The nomenclature of Libya used to be the name of the whole of North Africa with exception of the banks of the Nile.¹ Just as the people of North Africa used to be known as Libyans, and they stood out with their white skin from the darker Africans and Egyptians.²

This geographical plot, Libya today, has known and experienced various names, expansions, and shrinkage over the years. The history of Libya goes back to more than two thousand years before Christ, and was celebrated by a few names such as

¹Nāji & Nūri, *Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr.by A. Iḥsān, pp 132-133.

²Bazama, *Libya Hadha al-Ism fī Judhūrih al-Tārīkhiyya*, pp 31-32, 89-90.

Lūbya,³ Barbary land, and Ṭarāblus al-Gharb, and finally Libya as we know it now (Map.1).⁴

The borders of Libya suffered disputes as a result of ebbs and flows in relations with the neighbouring countries. Tripolitania shrank to what roughly it is now, whereas in the past it expanded to encompass Gabès and Djerba in Tunisia.⁵ While Cyrenaica after been shrank, it surged to reach al-Ḥammām 60 km west of the Alexandria in Egypt.⁶ Tripolitania is physically separated from Cyrenaica by more than three hundred miles (five hundred kilometre) of dessert emptiness around Sirt, in which the white sand of the dessert meet the Mediterranean. This dessert of Sirt is regarded as one of the world's greatest natural partitions. To that effect, it has been said that journey from Tripoli to Tunisia is easier and shorter than to Cyrenaica, and the same is said about Cyrenaica.⁷ At the same time the plateau of al-Ḥamāda al-Ḥamra and the wasteland around the hills of al-Harūj al-Aswad⁸ are buffer zones between Fazzān and both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and the coast.⁹

It remains to be said, that Home deserves every sacrifice, and being nostalgic is a factor and cause for settlement. However, if Home lacks stability and becomes scarce in resources, and loses theory and practice of justice for all, then it becomes imperative and justified to immigrate as decreed by Islam.¹⁰

Thereupon, immigration was islamically not just permitted but encouraged those who need it. Furthermore, borders between Arabs and Muslims were not as clearly marked as they are now, particularly the tribal lands. An example of that is the land of the Tuareg, which is divided, into five main countries; Libya, Algeria, Mali, Niger, and

Cf. the new Oxford illustrated Dictionary (1976), article: (*Libya*).

³Bi'ayyu, *al-Mujmal fī Tārīkh Lūbya*, pp 1-9.

Cf. op. cit., (F.N) pp 1-2

⁴Al-Barghūthi, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, p 13.

Bazama, op. cit, pp 95-96.

⁵Bazama, *Sukkān Libya fīl Tārīkh*, p 173.

⁶Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fīl 'Ahd al-'Uthmāni al-Awwal*, pp 36-37.

Al-Barghūthi, op. cit., pp 90-91.

⁷Op. cit., p 15.

⁸Basically a collection of small hills made up of black stones, very difficult in nature, were used by the Mujāhidīn from al-Maghārba tribe as an impenetrable sanctuary from the Italians.

⁹Sharaf al-Dīn, *Mudkhal ila Tārīkh Ṭarāblus al-Ijtimā'i wal-Iqtisādi (1711-1835)*, p 239.

Nigeria. With that, the Tuareg have become partitioned into Arab north and African south, whereas they are the indigenous inhabitants of this area, and of Berber (Amazigh) origins.

The borders of Libya with its neighbours remained interpenetrated and unmarked until recent times (Map. 2). Particularly the dispute over the strip of Uzū, which was only arbitrated in April 1994 by the International court who ruled that Uzū belonged to Chad, and Libya eventually accepted the judgement. The other Libyan borders were drawn by the European colonial powers, such as the settlement of Libyan-Egyptian border that was drawn by the Italians and the British in 1935. This was after the re-marking of the Sāra triangle with Sudan in 1934. So was the agreement over the border between Algeria and Libya, which was decided between the French colonial authorities in Algeria and the government of the Kingdom of Libya in 1956.¹¹ Though the Muslim rulers of the region preceded everyone else in finalising the borders amongst each other. Yūsuf Pasha Qaramānli and Ḥamūda Pasha (1781-1813), the Bey of Tunis, decided on the borders between their countries in an amicable manner when Ḥammūda Pasha marked the borders between Tunisia and Tripolitania in 1806.¹² This was the first time that the Libyan borders were clearly marked which preceded all the colonial powers that dominated the region much later starting by the invasion of Algeria by France in 1830.

The geographical plot that Libya is made up of is far greater than its population density. Libya is mostly dry dessert (90%) “**that is sandy, scorched and shifting soil**” as often described by European travellers,¹³ obviously with exception of a few agricultural pockets in the form of oases and marshes (Map. 1). As to the coastal strip, it is primarily inhabited by Ḥuḍūr or Ḥaḍūr (city dwellers) in major cities and towns like Tripoli, Benghazi, Darna, Zwāra, Miṣrāta etc. Despite the fact that Libya has the longest coast on North Africa, about 1900 Kilometre, yet most Libyans live distanced from the beach. They would normally die of hunger as a result of draught

¹⁰ Al-Mīlani, *al-Waṭan wal-Muwāṭana wal-Waṭaniyya*, Majallat al-Maḥad, 3rd issue (2001), p 28.

¹¹ Ḥamdān, *al-Jumhuriyya al-ʿArabiyya al-Lībiyya*, pp 81-90.

¹² Juḥaydar, *Afāq wa Wathāʾiq fī Tārīkh Libya*, (F.N) p 179.

¹³ Cella, P, *Narrative of an expedition from Tripoli in Barbary to the western frontier of Egyptian 1817*, by the Bey of Tripoli, in letters to Dr. Viviani of Genoa, (tr. by A. Aufrere 1822), [author's preface], p vii.

and famine, and do not traditionally know how to subsist on food that the sea might provide them with. Till the present day traditional Libyan dishes suffer from deficiency in food based on what comes from the sea. Again, with the exception of certain groups living in major coastal cities and town, the overall population of Bedouin and southerners living in the dessert has never tasted any fish-dishes in their entire lives. This probably is to do with the Bedouin mentality that leans towards the dessert more than anything else. If one looks closely at the common-man architectural style and propensity will not fail to notice the inclination towards the Qibla (south and southeast) in the direction of the dessert. The city of Miṣrāta, for example, is remote from the seaport of Qaṣr Ḥamad which is regarded the outlet into the Mediterranean for the area. Also, if one scrutinises the residential expansion of Benghazi will notice its movement towards the Qibla to the expanse of Būʿaṭni and its surrounding areas.

The geography of Libya and its climate has imposed natural boundaries between its three main provinces (Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fazzān), just as those provinces have underwent different historical experiences of which widened the gap between them until the rise of the Qaramānlis who enforced unity in a one nation-state.¹⁴

Tripolitania has always had its ties with Tunisia and its southern part in particular more than Cyrenaica and Fazzān. Whereas Cyrenaica was always in terms its social and economic history, attached to Egypt and its tribesmen of the Western dessert more than Tripolitania and Fazzān. The latter was always linked to Africa to the extent that their skin colour became darker, so was their ethnic features that became predominantly African in most of the southern community.¹⁵ This was further substantiated when colonial Italy brutally occupied Libya and tribes took to the areas that knew better and felt more comfortable. Tripoline tribes went to Tunisia, the Cyrenaicans mostly went to Egypt, while the people of Fazzān sought refuge in Chad (Map. 2, 11).

The present Arab nation-states that sprang in the last two centuries partitioned and tore apart tribes and tribal alliances from each other. It is worth mentioning that some of those tribes, which are always on the move, had never had borders or any sort of confinement. Such tribes as the Arab al-Nwāiyl and Awlād ʿAlī or the Berber of the

¹⁴Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 239.

Tuareg or Tebu have suffered tremendous rupture and displacement. This rupture and displacement was not only confined to Libya but engulfed others like the tribes of Saudi Arabia. Some of those tribes within the Saudi kingdom were curtailed and left in the neighbouring countries such as Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Yemen and the sheikhdoms of the Gulf.¹⁶

One must note this breaking-up of families and communities is a worldwide phenomenon rather than a regional one. If one studies the history and geography of Europe, then would see its ever-inextricable problems that exceed anything in North Africa. Therefore, we should take some comfort that the greater Maghrib does not really suffer from Europe's problems such as variation in languages, religions, sectarianism etc. But rather enjoy the unity of all that in addition of the uniformity and homogeneity of ethnicity, history and destiny.

¹⁵Op. cit, p 240.

¹⁶Al-Zuwayy, *al-Bādiya al-Lībiyya*, p 278.

The causes of migration out of Libya

Libya's neighbours such as Egypt, Tunisia, Chad, Algeria, Malta and even as far afield as Turkey were and still an extension to Libya in terms of trade, and have blood relations in them as well as a sanctuary when conditions deteriorate in Libya. Nevertheless, Egypt, Tunisia, and Chad have played a pivotal role over the years in having an influence on inner-Libyan relations, whether among tribes at home, between tribes and the government in one hand or with the outside world on the other hand. Those countries had always offered a refuge to Libya's ruled and rulers alike when brutality grips the country. The most famous of all was the escape of 'Alī Pasha Qaramānli to Tunisia when the Caucasian mercenary, 'Alī Burghul¹⁷, artfully seized Tripoli and assumed power in 1793.¹⁸ Also, Aḥmad, the brother of Yūsuf Pasha Qaramānli, sought protection with Muḥammad al-Alfī of Egypt when fell out with his brother Yūsuf, and stayed there until his demise in 1811.¹⁹ Even 'Uthmān, the son of Yūsuf Pasha Qaramānli, fled to Egypt when he did not feel safe at home, he remained in Alexandria where he enjoyed personal security until he died there.²⁰

Bazama reported that al-Nā'ib in unprecedented manner in his chronicle wrote that Yūsuf Pasha Qaramānli in his final days with the ever-increasing revolt against their rule, and despite all sorts of concessions, sought help from the Tunisians.²¹ But, the rulers of Tunis saw it unwise to intervene in what was increasingly looked like a civil war due to the tribal involvement in it. Yūsuf Pasha had no choice but to abdicate himself and enthrone his son 'Alī as the new Pasha of Tripoli in August 1832.²²

Libya being what it is, overwhelmingly tribal, caused some sections of its tribes and families to settle in the neighbouring countries who later became representatives for their folks back home in those countries. This was not done deliberately but rather

¹⁷He was a Georgian renegade who embraced Islam, and went on to live in Algeria for a period of time where he acquired his nickname, al-Jazā'iri, from it. He was also known as al-Burghul because he fed his mercenaries Burghul (crushed wheat).

¹⁸Micacchi, *Ṭarāblus al-Gharb Taḥt Ḥukm Usrat al-Qaramānli* (tr. by Ṭ.Fawzi), pp 119-130.

Juḥaydar, op. cit., p 179.

¹⁹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-Qaramanāli*, p 218.

²⁰Al-Zā'idi, *Libya fil 'Ahd al-Qaramanāli*, pp 75-79.

²¹Kamāli, *Wathā'iq 'an Nihāyat al-'Ahd a-Qaramānli* (tr. by M. Bazama), pp 87-88.

fleeing prosecution, famine or economic hardship. Those kinfolk in the host countries served to receive the fleeing and offer refuge and assistance, if and when, required. Perhaps one of the causes of immigration was the reckless policies and practices by the politics of the government of the day and fanatic tribalism. Therefore, discord and tribal raids were widespread which invited, in return, vengeance that almost in some cases pushed the Bedouin society to the brink of utter devastation.²³

Over the years, Libyan immigrant communities were firmly established in the surrounding countries, and whenever tribesmen decided to immigrate they went straight into those communities who left Libya earlier on. By later times most Libyan tribes or families found some of them outside Libya, which made it considerably easier for them to settle there. Good example of that is Awlād Sulaymān in Chad, and other the Tripolitanian tribes which is impossible to count them or name them all in Tunisia, and the same with Cyrenaican tribes in Egypt. Those tribes, who were forced to settle outside, were always looking forward to going back to their homes in Libya.²⁴ However, some of them returned to their homes after Libya gained independence in 1951, and others still waiting while the rest have decided to live in those countries and felt good enough to be only of Libya descent.

Perhaps the biggest cause of immigration especially during the Qaramānli rule was the natural calamities the country witnessed. Such calamities as famine drought and lethal diseases brought death and destruction to Libya on a mass scale. There were four hard catastrophes that hit Libya especially in the western part of it. The first was the drought and the subsequent starvation that gripped Tripolitania from 1767 to 1771, which led to more than 40,000 Tripolitanians seeking refuge in Tunisia and Egypt.²⁵ The other devastating famine was in 1776 that almost wiped out the entire population. Shortly after that Tripolitania was scourged by more waves of drought, famine and diseases and followed by a killer plague that claimed many lives in 1785.

²²Al-Nā'ib, *al-Minhal al-‘Adhb fī Tārīkh Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, p 336.

²³Al-Zāwi, *A ʿlām Libya*, p 207.

²⁴Bazama, *op. cit.*, pp 255-256, 337-339.

Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-‘Uthmāni al-Thāni*, pp 96-97.

²⁵Feraud, *al-Hawliyyāt al-Lībiyya mundh al-Fath al-‘Arabi Ḥatta al-Ghazw al-Iṭālī* (tr. by M. al-Wāfi), p 324.

Perhaps the description of Miss Tully, the sister of Richard Tully, the British Consul in Tripoli,²⁶ in her book "Ten years' residence" is a powerful and accurate reflection of what was happening to the people of Tripoli during disasters in the summer of 1785, and the subsequent immigration which was the only way out of those lethal diseases, she wrote:

It is impossible to give you a just description of this place at present; the general horror that prevails cannot be described ... Tripoli is in, sinking under plague and famine ... The cries of the people for the loss of their friends are still as frequent as ever ... Women, whose persons have hitherto been veiled, are wandering about complete images of despair, with their hair loose and their baracans open, crying and wringing their hands and following their families. Though a great deal of their grief here by custom is expressed by action yet it is dreadful when it proceeds so truly from the heart as it does now, while all those we see are friends of the departed. No strangers are called in to add force to the funeral cries: the father, who bears his son today, carried his daughter yesterday, and his wife the day before: the rest of his family are at home languishing with plague, while his own mother, spared for the cruel satisfaction of following her offspring, still continues with her son her wretched daily walk. Since the beginning of this dreadful infection, which is only two months, three thousand persons have died in this town (nearly one-fourth of its inhabitants), and its victims are daily increasing.²⁷

²⁶Tully, *Ten years' residence at the court of Tripoli*, pp 27, 29.

²⁷Op. cit., pp 115-123.

This was occurring while Qaramānlis were unable to help, and not even prepared to give up some of their lavish lifestyle and its associated pleasures.²⁸

The country was also struck by a severe drought in 1792, and the situation got desperate to the extent people ate what is regarded islamically as prohibited or undesirable like animal carcasses. Tripolitarians ground dates' stones, usually eaten by their animals, and ate them to survive. But, other disasters, apart from the natural ones, gripped the country, were Libyan-made and inflicted detrimental social repercussions on tribes by expelling some of them, to leave the country in even more economic and political dire straits. The population of Tripolitania fell dramatically as a result of death and immigration, which meant drop in seasonal crops and animal reproduction, which both were the main pillars and the backbone of the country's national economy. This collapse meant a serious reduction in income and taxes. This left the country much more weakened, and the government in even worse position.²⁹

As a result of the economic chaos tribes such as al-Firjān, al-Qadhādhfa, al-Ṭbūl (section of Wrfalla tribe), al-ʿIbīdāt immigrated to Egypt in search for a better life.³⁰

As to the disasters bestowed by man on his fellow man were the inter-tribal unrests and the consequences that were brought about. Libya lost more of its citizens as a result of tribal inner-fighting than by famine and diseases. Bazama commented on those tribal insurrections and wrote:

Most history books reported the causes and motives of tribal wars as naive, whereas the actual fact Turkish and Qaramānli rulers of the country were politically behind the real causes. Those rulers could care less if the entire Libyan population was sacrificed just to maintain their gains and seats of power. They would not feel disgust in seeing their interests upheld at the expense of the torn-off limbs floating in its blood.³¹

²⁸Feraud, op. cit., pp 336-337.

²⁹Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 308.

³⁰Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 252.

³¹Bazama, *Benghazi ʿAbr al-Tārīkh*, p 266.

One of the most infamous catastrophic Tripolitanian tribal wars was between the tribes of al-Firjān of al-Dawūn area³² and Awlād Sulaymān that resulted in the expulsion of some of al-Firjān to Tunisia in 1767.³³ Also there were other disturbances around the area of al-Zāwiya al-Gharbiyya between the tribes of Wrishfāna and al-Nwāiyl, which claimed hundreds of lives from both sides in 1781. It started by a gang of 200 horsemen of Wrishfāna raiding camp of ten tents belonging to al-Nwāiyl, as the old Arabs used to do by a way of pillage.

Al-Nwāiyl's response was too reverberating by mobilising 400 horsemen and similar number of combatants on foot to avenge the ten pillaged tents. Indeed, al-Nwāiyl charged at Wrishfāna at Janzur that necessitated the intervention of al-Maḥāmīd tribe on behalf of their Wrishfāna confederates. This only made things even worse and hundreds of lives were wasted on both sides and increased the animosity and hatred between tribes in the region.³⁴

As for Cyrenaica, it witnessed many tragedies and expulsion of tribes. What happened to Awlād ʿAlī is still evident in the Cyrenaican collective memory. The tribe of Awlād ʿAlī used to live on parts of al-Jabal al-Akhḍar (Green Mountain) and around the city of Derna and on the plateau of al-Baṭnān.³⁵ Awlād ʿAlī were cleansed at gunpoint by the Ḥarābi tribes of the mountain, led by al-ʿIbīdāt, and pushed east of al-Sallūm well inside the Egyptian territories. The task was made easier by the assistance that al-ʿIbīdāt received from the Ottoman authority in Tripoli who had Awlād ʿAlī under suspicion for collaborating with the Mamluk authorities of Egypt.³⁶ The influence that Awlād ʿAlī enjoyed was the envy of many especially the rulers of Tripoli who decided to put an end to it. The response was swift in what is epically known as (Tajrīdat Ḥabīb) where the government in Tripoli mobilised the Arabs of Tripolitania from towns like Tājūra, Zlīṭin, Wrfalla and Miṣrāta to support Ḥabīb al-

³²Located nearer Tarhūna and mostly inhabited by the tribe of al-Firjān. Al-Firjān is one of the biggest and revered Murābiṭin tribes in Libya, and has branches in Tunisia and Egypt. It has also some of its sections living around Sirt and Cyrenaica where they are regarded amongst the "holiest".

³³Feraud, op. cit., p 324.

Micacchi, op. cit., pp 98-99.

Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-Qaramānli*, p 154.

³⁴Feraud, op. cit., p 331.

³⁵The Baṭnān area is mostly populated by Murābiṭin tribes of al-Manifa, al-Ḥubbūn, al-Qiṭʿān and al-Jirāra who are allied to the larger tribe of ʿIbīdāt.

³⁶Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 245.

‘Abaydī to avenge the killing of his father, ‘Abdel-Mawla al-’Abah, who was assassinated by Awlād ‘Alī. The military campaign started from Tripoli and marched eastward and eventually succeeded in driving Awlād ‘Alī out of Cyrenaica into Egypt after a great deal of bloodshed. The brighter side of that bloody campaign was the mixing of those Tripolitanian warriors with the larger population of Cyrenaica. There were intermarriages between the two, and eventually those Tripolitaniens were welcomed to settle for good in the city of Derna.³⁷ In doing so, they founded a mosaic community in Derna where the west of Libya meets the east into a matrimony along with Andalusians that made Derna a rare example in a largely Bedouin Libya. The Libyan writer, ‘Alī Muṣṭafa al-Muṣṭarī, described this in his writings and wrote:

Derna; the face of civilisation and struggle; is indeed worth the attention and study. There is no place [but Derna] where you find the skills of saddle-making unless there are cavalry and horsemen.³⁸

The Tajrīda still lives on in the memory and folklore of the people in the region, and serves as reminder to all, by narrating how tribal or governmental greed would lead to such misery, subjugation and immigration.³⁹

The defeat of Awlād ‘Alī was not easy at all, and if it had not been for the tribes of al-Ḥarābī and Tripoli’s sponsored Tripolitanian horsemen, al-‘Ibīdāt would not have achieved their aim in expelling their foes. Awlād ‘Alī fled east towards the Nile and drove the weaker tribes that were in their way east of the Nile and onto Upper Egypt. Awlād ‘Alī populated the strip between Sallūm and Alexandria.

The last to be expelled on a large scale was the influential Cyrenaican tribe of al-Jawāzī in 1817 orchestrated by the Pasha of Tripoli, Yūsuf al-Qaramānli, and his ‘Alāya alliance (tribes of ‘Awāqīr and Maghārba), and backed by the Ḥarābīs led by al-Brā‘aṣa. This was ignited by al-Jawāzī menace of their brethren, al-‘Awāqīr and al-Maghārba, between 1811 till 1812 in which al-Jawāzī drove their opponents into a

³⁷Najem, Faraj, *Fi Riḥāb Tajrīdat Ḥabīb*, Majallat Jeel Wa Risala, 2nd issue (Sept 1996), 3rd issue (May 1997), 4th issue (April 1998), 5th issue (Dec 1999).

³⁸Al-Muṣṭarī, *al-Ta‘ābir al-Sha‘biyya al-Lībiyya*, p 293.

³⁹Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., pp 252-253.

corner in the sanctuary of the much-revered Murābiṭ of Sīdi Khrībīsh. However, things got worse for al-°Awāqīr in particular, to the extent of starvation, and had to subsist on seaweed to survive.⁴⁰ This is known in Cyrenaican folklore as Khrībīsh siege, and it lasted for about five months.⁴¹ An Italian doctor, Paolo Della Cella, who accompanied the Pasha's army from Tripoli led by Yūsuf Pasha's own son Aḥmad Bey whom Della Cella was his personal doctor, reported that tragedy.⁴²

The Qaramānlis, again, viewed al-Jawāzi with suspicion exactly like Awlād °Alī, who both became an obstacle to the State's hegemony, and had to rid Cyrenaica of them. Aḥmad Bey invited the most eminent shaykhs of al-Jawāzi to the so-called al-Barānīs al-Ḥumr (red mantles) giving ceremony, which was regarded an occasion of a top state bestowal of honours upon loyal tribal shaykhs. More than forty shaykhs of al-Jawāzi attended in good faith the ceremony in al-Birka Palace in Benghazi to reconcile and seek forgiveness for the past. Aḥmad Bey was not really into reconciliation but rather revenge. Once he ensured all the shaykhs were firmly in the palace, he then gave his deadly orders to his eunuchs to butcher the shaykhs in cold blood. He murdered all his guests inside the palace and then commanded his troops on al-Jawāzi's tents with the help of al-Jawāzi's enemy tribes. The butchery did not spare men, women nor children, and those who managed to survive, fled into the interior then into Egypt. The end result was the mass deportation of al-Jawāzi from Cyrenaica in the holy month of Ramaḍān in 1817. Al-Jawāzi have since settled in Upper Egypt till the present day.⁴³

With the expulsion of al-Jawāzi the tribal balance of white Cyrenaica tipped in favour of °Alāya tribes who became the new masters of the land after being subjects to their Jawāzi's brethren for so long. The tribe of al-°Awāqīr and their urbanised confederates, known as al-Miṣratiyya of Benghazi, pledged allegiance to the

⁴⁰ Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* (Barqa) (tr. by I. al-Mahdawi), pp 63-65.

⁴¹ Bazama, *Benghazi °Abr al-Tārīkh*, pp 269-325.

⁴² Cella, Paolo, op. cit., *Majallat al-Dirāsāt Lībiyya* 1st issue (1975), (tr. by H. Bu Lugma), pp 113-141. Bazama, op. cit., pp 271-279.

⁴³ Mannā°, *al-Ansāb al-°Arabiyya fī Libya*, pp 98-101.

government, and by doing so they were granted and guaranteed supremacy in and around the plain of Benghazi area till the present day.⁴⁴

A Jāzwi⁴⁵ poet wrote about the atrocity that the “Turkish” Qaramānli and their ʿAwāqīr allies committed against his people, and reminding everyone that one day they would come back to Cyrenaica, he said:

**We bid farewell to you now Cyrenaica
But we shall comeback - God willing
We will never forgot who expelled us
The Turkish ruler - With him was al-ʿAwāqīr.⁴⁶**

Despite the natural barriers tribes manage to link the country together when geography and politics let them down. As it is widely claimed Libyan tribes, whether Berber or Arab, descend from the same supposed origin. It is even assumed that each race came from one father. What is commonly known as a fact; that every one was allied to someone else despite the bitter division and disagreement? The tribe of Awlād Sulaymān, for example, find in al-Jibārna tribes reliable partners when they are needed, and whenever Tripolitania suffers natural disasters, Cyrenaica was always there to offer relief to the extent Cyrenaica was dubbed: **“Cyrenaica would care for any loafer”⁴⁷**.

Amongst the first to settle in Benghazi along with the Andalusians and the Jews were Tripolitanian mercantilists from Tājūra, Zlīṭin, and Mislāta who were metaphorically known as al-Ṭwāhir at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Bazama describes their immigration to Benghazi as purely for economical reasons, and **“were attracted by**

⁴⁴Bazama, op. cit., p 270.

⁴⁵ refers to a member of al-Jawāzi tribe.

⁴⁶In this particular verse the poet states in an emphatic manner that one-day they would go back to their land in Cyrenaica. A book written by the late historian Muḥammad Mannāʿ furthered this, who happened to be a Jāzwi himself. In his book he dug the past and even named the 40 slain shaykhs in al-Birka palace. A friend of his told me that he thought the book would ignite a tribal rivalry that was buried along time ago.

⁴⁷Meaning that Cyrenaica fosters whoever comes to her, and provides him with an equal opportunity to live and to belong to her.

profit-making, and what made them settle there was its booming markets".⁴⁸

Traders later followed them from Miṣrāta who quickly dominated the market and the city and then expelled al-Ṭwāhir into exile to Derna.⁴⁹ This was preceded much earlier when Darghūt Pasha led a campaign to discipline the people of Tāwirghā and Miṣrāta in 1555, he found the people of Miṣrāta in particular had already left for Benghazi. Miṣrātans founded in Benghazi the first urbanised society in a largely Bedouin Cyrenaica.⁵⁰ They succeeded in business to the point of monopoly, and this gained them properties in a largely tribal territory, and brought them wealth that spilled over to revive the economy of the region and benefit others.⁵¹ For that reason they are credited with the development of both Benghazi's infra and super structures, and maintaining its economy. A sign of integration in Benghazi was the naming of streets and quarters of the city after Tripolitanian tribes and places especially from Miṣrāta such as al-Ṣabri⁵², Miṣrāta , Qaṣr Ḥamad etc.⁵³ The same thing was in Tripoli⁵⁴ as well, where there were areas for the tribes of al-Rqi'at and al-^ʿAlāwna and others.⁵⁵ Also the Arabs of Nafūsa Mountain had their own quarter in the southern part of Tripoli on the way to Ghiryān known as Ḥawmat Ghiryān. Whenever people descended from Ghiryān to Tripoli they came to their a little Ghiryān inside Tripoli and felt at home.⁵⁶ Even the Jews of Ghiryān had their little ghetto in Ḥawmat Ghiryān, which had links with the larger ghetto in the old city in the heart of Tripoli.⁵⁷ Tripolitanian ^ʿUlamā and Dā^ʿīs served the religious and administrative needs of Cyrenaica in a significant way. They were privileged in the sense that they were educated and knew Sharī^ʿa, which enabled them to do jobs such as teaching, judiciary

⁴⁸Bazama, op. cit., p 246.

⁴⁹Op. cit., pp 244-246.

⁵⁰Bergna, *Ṭarāblus (1510-1850)*, (tr. by K. al-Tallīsi), p 59.

⁵¹Evans-Pritchard, *the Sanūsi of Cyrenaica*, p 41.

⁵²The neighbourhood of al-Ṣabri along the eastern side of Benghazi's beach bought by al-Ṣabri family who gave their name to it. They originally came from Qaṣr Ḥamad-Miṣrāta, and found in this coastal area the climate and reminder of their home-territory of Qaṣr Ḥamad.

⁵³Bazama, op. cit., pp 255-256.

⁵⁴ElKabir, *Migrants in Tripoli; a case study of assimilation*, p 17.

⁵⁵Nāji & Nūri, op. cit., p 92.

⁵⁶Al-Tallīsi, *Ḥikāyat Madīnat Ṭarāblus lada al-Raḥḥāla*, p 195.

⁵⁷Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 24.

and administration that native Cyrenaicans could not do. Those required skills brought more of educated Tripolitarians to Cyrenaica, and the bond between the two became ever inseparable whether socially or systematically. This meant even closer ties between Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in terms of intermarriages, immigrations and even tribal alliances. However, the Bedouins of Cyrenaica recognised the positive contribution of the Tripolitarians and appreciated their presence. This was evident when the Bedouin exchanged the designation of “‘Arab al-Gharb”, meaning the Arabs from the West and particularly from “Miṣrāta”, to “al-Ḥuḍūr”, and extended it to all other Tripolitarians who made Cyrenaica their home. Moreover, the Ḥuḍūr of Derna were sometimes known as al-Dirnāwiyya, referring to all people of mixed background living in the city.

This recognition and such designations were extended even to the Murābiṭs of Awlād Shaykh of the Fwātīr tribe. The descendants of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Salām al-Gharīb, one of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Salām al-Asmer grand children, are known in Cyrenaica as “Awlād Shaykh Barqa” to assert their affiliation to Cyrenaica and distance themselves from other Awlād Shaykh. They adopted a Bedouin style of living, and were duly accepted as local Bedouin with its full tribal and political trappings.

Equally there are other Awlād Shaykh like those settled in Bani Walīd known as Awlād Shaykh Wrfalla.⁵⁸ The same can be said about Awlād Sīdi Faṭḥallah, Bi‘ayyu, and Bu Sha‘āla who are collectively known as Awlād Shaykh Miṣrāta, where they have exclusive quarters bearing their names. There are even Awlād Shaykh in Zlīṭin like Awlād Sīdi ‘Abd al-Samī‘. These are all branches of al-Fwātīr tribe but over the years became affiliated to their respective towns and became attached to the host community, and very often feel related to the tribes and families whom they share neighbourhood with, more than their blood relation else where. However, the number of Ḥuḍūr has increased especially in Benghazi and Derna either by reproduction or immigration until they became the overwhelming majority and a dominant force to be reckoned with.

There are also some sections of Cyrenaican tribes that have taken Tripolitania as home such as al-Barāghtha (‘Awāqīr) in Wrfalla tribe, and al-Rawājīḥ (Awlād

⁵⁸Agostini, op. cit., pp 643.

Ḥamad) in al-Qarabūli district.⁵⁹ But the overall number of Tripolitarians settled in Cyrenaica far exceeds those from the East settled in Tripolitania, and as a result some of those Tripolitarians joined some of Cyrenaica's strong tribes and became indivisible part of them such as Bal'aza, 'Amaym, and Qmāṭa in 'Awāqīr.⁶⁰ This was not just extended to the Arabs of the West but also to those Muslims who came to Libya under the auspices of the Ottoman Caliphate. Such people were the Cretans who fled their native hometown, Khānia, in the island of Crete to steer clear of prosecution from their Greek Christian brethren, and arrived in Cyrenaica in 1898.⁶¹ The largest number of them landed in the port of Sousa, which is under the control of Ḥasa tribe. Al-Ḥasa embraced the Cretans and registered them as their brethren and part of the tribe and dubbed them as "al-Ḥasa al-Ḥumr" – meaning the whiter-skinned Ḥasa because of their paler skin than the rest.

With the beginning of the twentieth century Jaghbūb - the Sanūsī founded oasis town - underwent transformation in its population distribution and diversity. A new community was in the making, consisting mainly of freed slaves and some of the Cyrenaican tribes along with Tripolitanian, Fazzānian and Mghribean families, and they were collectively known as Sanūsī Brothers.⁶² This was mostly the product of the tribal tendencies in winning more packs to protect their vast land and to deter any potential enemies. Those who join would enjoy the full rights of being part of this or that tribe coupled with duties like every one else.

⁵⁹ Al-Tallīsi, *Muḥjam Sukkān Libya*, pp 97, 178.

⁶⁰ Agostini, op. cit., pp 436, 441, 443, 463-464.

⁶¹ Op. cit., p 54.

⁶² Op. cit., pp 276, 521, 533, 567, 608.

Immigration and al-Sanūsiyya

The Sanūsi ṭarīqa, also, had many followers in the neighbouring countries exactly like the Libyan tribes did. There were about 47 Sanūsi zāwiyas in Egypt, 25 in the Arabian Peninsula including those in Makka and Madīna, more than 17 in al-Sūdān (especially in Chad), and about 6 Sanūsi zāwiyas in Tunisia. The Grand Sanūsi, al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Sanūsi, the founder of the Sanūsiyya Order, found in his immigration to Libya the substitute to his occupied country Algeria. He, also, found a fertile land for his ideology to grow and spread. But the more beneficiary were the Bedouin of Cyrenaica who were literally given the knowledge and expertise of an experienced Ṣūfī and Scholar in return for their acceptance and adherence of his teaching. The benefits he brought to the region were not just his, but also the wisdom and the aptitude of his Tripolitanian and Maghribean companions that uplifted the Bedouin and transformed Cyrenaica to the better.⁶³

There were other Ṣūfī ṭarīqas that dominated the spiritual lives of Libyan towns and cities such as al-ʿIsawiyya, al-Qadiriyya, al-Madaniyya and al-ʿArūsiyya.⁶⁴ However, the hinterland, particularly in Cyrenaica, remained ṭarīqa-free apart from the unexpected appearance of both al-Sayyid Zafīr al-Madnī (on behalf of al-Madaniyya), and The Grand Sanūsi⁶⁵ who was successful in penetrating the Bedouin society and their convictions.⁶⁶ This spectacular success drew the attention of the Egyptian historian, Muḥammad Fūʾād Shukrī, who wrote a book on the subject. In which he highlighted the paramount and the unprecedented influence al-Sanūsiyya exercised over the whole of Cyrenaica and its people. This influence was manifested by the powers of Shaykh ʿAbdullah al-Twātī, the head of Benghazi Sanūsi lodge, which covered the whole of Benghazi district. The shaykh's influence surpassed even Cyrenaica's Ottoman governor in 1884, and enjoyed ultimate arbitration and final word in practically all matters in the area. All senior Ottoman administrators worked

⁶³ Al-Ashhab, *al-Sanūsi al-Kabīr*, pp 56-69.

⁶⁴ Evans-Pritchard, *op. cit.*, p 5.

⁶⁵ The Grand Sanūsi, is an equivalent in Arabic to al-Sanūsi al-kabīr, and a title given usually to whoever happened to be heading the Sanūsi order, and must be of Sanūsi genealogical lineage. This to distinguish them from *Ikhwān al-Sanūsiyya* (Brothers of the Sanūsiyya), whether those in close circles or laymen. This title was handed down from the Founder, Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī to his son al-Mahdī to Aḥmad al-Sharīf to finally Idrīs al-Sanūsi.

hard to secure the blessing and the approval of the Sanūsīs. This goes back when the governor of Tripoli, ‘Alī al-Ashqar Pasha, predated his officials according to Shukri who wrote:

“He bestowed honours on the Grand Sanūsi , and relied on the tarīqa and its influence in governing the interior especially in Cyrenaica. The State, through the governor, recognised the Sanūsi’s leadership and principality”.

Sanūsiyya was exempted from all types of taxes, Shukri added:

“... historians reported that al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Sanūsī was soon granted a Firmān from Sultan ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd (1839-1861) regarding him as if he were an Emir of autonomous dominion in 1885 ... and from Jaghbūb, the Sanūsi’s influence grew even greater until he became the absolute master of the desert. This never affected or changed his relation with the State, on the contrary all Ottoman governors and officials, in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, paid court to him, and ensured his friendship until his death in 1859 ”.⁶⁷

Bazama adds to that by confirming Shukri’s reasoning, describing the Ottoman governor of Cyrenaica, ‘Alī Kamāli Pasha, who regarded himself as:

“first and foremost the servant of the Grand Sanūsi, and one of his followers, in addition to being an administrator and Ottoman ruler as second designation ”.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-Qaramanāli*, p 292.

⁶⁷Shukri, *al-Sanūsiyya Dīn wa Dawla*, pp 76-79.

⁶⁸Bazama, *Benghazi ‘Abr al-Tārīkh*, p 292.

This, in later times, developed further, and was manifested in the spiritual relation and partnership that prevailed between the Sanūsiyya and the Ottomans. This enabled the Grand Sanūsī to fuse his knowledge and expertise in the positiveness of the Bedouin, in a rather unfamiliar way, and transmuted almost every aspect of life in Libya and particularly in Cyrenaica. This appropriately confirmed Libya's position in the world map, and, in my opinion, laid the final brick in the structure of the Libyan identity project inaugurated by the Qaramānlis. Al-Sanūsiyya, also, ascertained the Libyan geographical, administrative and spiritual links in conjunction with the Islamic, regional and national dimensions.

Perhaps the instrumental starter-reason that made al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī settled in Cyrenaica, according to ʿAbd al-Mālik ibn ʿAlī that; al-Shaykh Bushnayyif al-Kizza, one of the ʿAwāqīr's unmatched tribal chiefs, fell sick and felt dying, and the story went on to say that the Grand Sanūsī was asked to see him. This was when al-Sayyid Sanūsī was in Benghazi and the contact was made with him by the Kizzas on the recommendation of Sīdī ʿAlī Khrībīsh, the much revered Murābiṭ in Benghazi. Indeed the Grand Sanūsī saw al-Shaykh Bushnayyif and read some Qurʾān on him, and prayed for him, and suddenly, as the story has it, al-shaykh woke up from his unconsciousness and his distended stomach came down. This excited al-ʿAwāqīr and quickly vibrated through the neighbouring Bedouin tribes and cities, and made them all believe somehow al-sayyid is a man of supernaturalism and certitude. Al-sayyid stayed in al-ʿAwāqīr's hospitality for about a month. His short-lived residence in al-ʿAwāqīr's camp was not only generously but also ceremoniously rejoiced where he received delegates from various tribal shaykhs of Cyrenaica who wanted to greet and thank him, and also to be blessed by his baraka. In the forefront of those were the shaykhs of most of the ʿAwāqīr, Brāʿaṣa and Maghārba. Those shaykhs, also, became convinced of the necessity of such a righteous man to guide them spiritually in Cyrenaica.⁶⁹ Shaykh Abu Bakr Ḥaddūth of the Brāʿaṣa tribe was very convinced that this sayyid must not slip away from them. Of course the man who was behind this was Shaykh ʿUmar al-

⁶⁹Ibn-ʿAlī, *al-Fawā'id al-Jaliyya fī Tārīkh al-ʿĀ'ila al-Sanūsiyya*, Vol. 1, pp 53-54.

Julghāf, Abu Bakr Ḥaddūth's cousin and his think-tank, and widely famous for being the Bedouin astute.⁷⁰

Some may ask why the Grand Sanūsi chose Cyrenaica to be the launching-base for his Call to "Reformation" ? A question which often puzzles researchers? The answer can only be embedded in the geography of Cyrenaica and its tribes. Cyrenaica is cut-off and secluded peninsula surrounded by dessert from the east, south and the west. The majority of its tribes dwell in Bedouin camps away from the Mediterranean coast. However, the tribal synthesis is mostly Arab and unadulterated Bedouin living in a homogeneous lifestyle. The tribal order, like the rest of Libya, is based on blood relations, group solidarity and common customs and traditions. These attributes very often moved the Bedouin as one bloc in fighting and making the necessary sacrifices. This helped them to dispense allegiance and commitment to the Sanūsi cause. Al-Sanūsiyya invested in Bedouin's loyalty and devotion, and understood the Bedouin proverb very well that says **"My brother and I against my cousin, and my cousin and I against the others"**, and succeeded in changing it into **"My brother, my cousin and I against others"**.

The interior of Cyrenaica did not have landlords, Pashas or even Beys. Bedouin are always associated with freedom, and Cyrenaica was largely free of the hierarchical dictate that some of the Arab countries had. It remained distanced from the centre of authorities in Tripoli and Benghazi, and the Ottoman authorities did not have much sway over their lives. Authority and power remained in the hands of the tribes and their shaykhs who were preoccupied with their tribesmen and their needs (Map. 9, 10). This perhaps explains the disciplinary campaigns that successive governments dispatched to the hinterland from time to time to collect due taxes. This often ended in blood bath.⁷¹

The other question often asked why the Grand Sanūsi settled in al-Jabal al-Akhḍar and built his first Libyan zāwiya there instead of the spacious white Cyrenaica, which was dominated only by the two ʿAlāya tribes whereas the mountain is divided amongst the five Ḥarābi tribes (Figure. 2)? The answer could be found in the fact that the Ḥarābis were under the tribal sheikhdом of one strong man, that was Abu Bakr Ḥaddūth. A plot of land was given to the Grand Sanūsi by al-Ḥaddūth family outbidding al-

⁷⁰Al-Ashhab, *Barqa al-ʿArabiyya*, p 141.

⁷¹Al-Ṭāhir, *al-Mujtamaʿ al-Lībi*, p 244.

Julghāfs despite the fact that both of Ṭamiya, the powerful branch of al-Brāʿaṣa.⁷² The zāwiya was eventually built on that plot, dubbed the mother of all (Sanūsi) zāwiyas nearer to the holy shrine of the Prophet's companion Ruwayfīʿ al-Anṣārī.⁷³ In an act of consolidating his ties further with other tribes, al-Sayyid Sanūsi especially honoured al-Shaykh ʿAbdullah Bu Swayḥil al-Maryami, one of al-ʿIbīdāt chief Shaykhs, by visiting him at his residence. However, the tribes of White Cyrenaica, and in particular ʿAwāqīr, had many competing leaders unlike those of al-Ḥarābi and al-Brāʿaṣa in particular who were under one leadership. The best description of the state of al-ʿAwāqīr's leadership was a sneer by one of their shaykh, ʿAbd al-Salām al-Kizza, to his guest, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Jalīl Sayf al-Naṣr of Awlād Sulaymān. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām best described al-ʿAwāqīr's inner rivalry, and his inability to unite them under his command, by telling his guest **"I am a male camel amongst many male camels, whereas you are (Sayf al-Naṣr) a male camel amongst she-camels"**. What he meant was that al-ʿAwāqīr were troublesome to be led by one man. This was even problematic, to say the least, during the resistance to Italy's occupation of Cyrenaica, whereas most tribes were under one man. Al-ʿAwāqīr had numerous leaders commanding various sections and very often were not on good terms with each other apart from the hatred that inadvertently united them against the Italians. Sdaydi, one of the three branches of al-ʿAwāqīr,⁷⁴ was led by three rival shaykhs, ʿAbd al-Salām al-Kizza, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-ʿAbbār, and the third bloc led by Shaykh Sulaymān Ragrag around al-Abyār area south of Benghazi. There were also other leaders like those of Briyake al-Luwāṭi and ʿUmar al-Aṣfar.⁷⁵

The circumstances that facilitated the settlement of the Grand Sanūsi in al-Jabal al-Akhḍar area has similarities, to a certain extent, to those of al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām al-Asmar al-Fītūri in so far as the quest of spirituality and tribal support. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām was homeless and had no tribal backing and went on seeking peace and

⁷²Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-Qaramanāli*, (F.N) pp 75-76.

For the various familial sections of al-Brāʿaṣa tribe; cf. Bazama, op. cit., p 224.

⁷³Ibn-ʿAlī, op. cit., pp 54-55.

⁷⁴Mannaʿ, op.cit., pp 116-117.

⁷⁵Al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf realised the various ʿAwāqīr competing leaderships during the resistance of the Italian occupation, and put an end to that by appointing al-Guja ʿAbdullah – from Chad – to lead them, which he did successfully. For more;

Cf. al-Shilmāni, *Shayʿ an Baʿd Rijāl ʿUmar al-Mukhtār*, p 49.

security in many places in Libya, and in as far as Jabal Zaghuan in Tunisia. It is worth noting that some Ṣūfīs have mystical bond with Jabal Zaghuan. The Ṣūfīs of Libya have inherited a narration saying “**all Saints of Allah worshipped Him in (Jabal Zaghuan) at least for an hour**”.⁷⁶ Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām was evicted from Zlīṭīn seven times, and moved along the coast to Tripoli, and headed south towards Jabal Ghiryān where he was warmly received by the tribes of Sīdi al-Sāʿidi (of al-Swāʿdiyya) and Awlād Bu Salāma in al-Qwasīm district. Then, he felt compelled to move into the castle of Suf-l-jīn in Bani Walīd where he spent seven years. Afterwards, he moved on again to Tāwriḡha whom he loved its people, and nearly built his zāwiya there in return for the kindness and humility they showed him. He left after that for Miṣrāta where he met similar kindness, but moved finally to Zlīṭīn where he stayed until his death. If it had not being for the tribe of Barāhma who embraced al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām and offered him shelter and protection he would not have been able to stay in Zlīṭīn.⁷⁷ Barāhma carved out a plot of land of their territory and gave it to al-shaykh who erected his famous zāwiya on it. When he passed away he was buried in it in 1573.⁷⁸ The Shaykh’s zāwiya, as it is known in Zlīṭīn, has since become a distinguished seat of learning of general Islamic studies, and the oldest centre of Qur’ānic memorisation in Libya, also a focal point for the propagation of al-ʿArūsiyya tarīqa. Subsequently, Zlīṭīn’s ʿUlamā provided the Sanūsi movement with all support, scholars such as al-Sayyid ʿImrān ibn Baraka al-Fītūri, and al-Shaykh ʿUmar Muḥammad al-Ashhab from tribe of Awlād Ghayth.⁷⁹ Al-Sayyid ʿUmrān was the personal tutor of al-Sayyid al-Mahdi and the father of al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf’s mother. The Shaykh’s zāwiya went on to be an Islamic college affiliated to al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Sanūsi university in the city of Bayḍa in 1957. Now it is an independent academic entity known as al-Asmariyya university of Zlīṭīn.⁸⁰

What is important is the fact that the Grand Sanūsi’s mission was badly needed by the Bedouin who were searching for a spiritual guidance in a land infested with ignorance instead of moral and spiritual values. The other notable significance was that Cyrenaica

⁷⁶Al-Qaṭʿāni, *al-Quṭb al-Anwar*; ʿAbd al-Salām al-Asmar, pp 54-61.

⁷⁷Al-Barmūni, *Tanqīḡ Rawḡat al-Azhār fī Manāqib Sīdi ʿAbd al-Salam al-Asmar*, pp 101-104, 112.

⁷⁸Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 215-217.

⁷⁹Al-Ashhab, *al-Sanūsi al-Kabīr*, pp 60, 65-66.

⁸⁰Khafāji, *Qiṣṣat al-Adab fī Libya*, pp 78-79.

absorbed immigrants from everywhere including the Maghrib, and the famous Maghribean of all was the very Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Sanūsi. However, Cyrenaicans were never reluctant to reassert that the final word is in the hand of its tribes no matter. That is precisely what al-Shaykh Sulaymān Ragrag ascertained to al-Sayyid Idrīs (grandson of the Grand Sanūsi) when they disagreed on the arrangement of the Cyrenaicans Emirate in 1949. When al-Sayyid Idrīs wanted to demonstrate his leadership in Cyrenaica, and his legitimacy of being the one and only outright leader in the land. At the time Ragrag, who was known for his outspokenness, angrily and abruptly poked Emir Idrīs and told him **“Cyrenaica was not brought to us from Algeria in your grand fathers’ saddlebag”**. In other words your forefathers are not original Cyrenaican tribesmen, and it is us [Bedouin Cyrenaican tribesmen] who decide here.⁸¹

It is worth mentioning when al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Sanūsi left his home of al-Wasiyṭa near Mistghānim in Algeria, he went to establish his first zāwiya ever on the mountain of Abū Qubays in Makka in 1837 (1253H),⁸² then came to settle in al-Jabal al-Akhḍar and build his zāwiya in al-Bayḍa in 1842 (1257H). This was the nucleus of an Islamic revivalist movement that led to the creation of an independent state, a century after his death, headed by a king who is one of his grand sons. The Grand Sanūsi shifted from the mountain into the desert oasis of al-Jaghbūb where he died soon after, and where his intellectual and administrative contribution are to be traced. Before the arrival of the Grand Sanūsi, Jaghbūb was an infamous oasis lacked everything even its water was a mixture of bitterness and salt.⁸³ Despite all that, Jaghbūb was turned into a spiritual and political capital of the Sanūsi movement, and a fine seat of learning if it only continued along the lines of al-Azhar of Egypt, Zaytūna of Tunisia and al Qarawiyyin of Fez.

The Grand Sanūsi saw the way to stabilise those Bedouin is to reform them by putting an end to their feuds and hatred of each other which cost a great deal of lives and

⁸¹This story was confirmed to me by many elderly sources whom I interviewed for this research. Sadly, no historian documented it - perhaps avoiding sensitivity.

⁸²Al-Dajāni, *al-Ḥaraka al-Sanūsiyya, Nash'atuha wa Numuwuwuha fil Qarn al-Tāsi* ʿAshar, pp 261,282-285.

Ibn ʿAlī, op. cit., pp 8-9.

⁸³Al-Ashhab, *al-Sanūsi al-Kabīr*, p 45.

capital, and in order to do that he built a zāwiya for each tribe. Those zāwiyas served the purpose in being centres of learning, sanctuary and dispute arbitration that could only have helped the government, which lost influence and tax revenues in Cyrenaica's interior. The Sanūsīs erected a zāwiya for almost every Cyrenaican tribe, on its land, constructed by the tribe's own men and resources, and with the help of Sanūsi Ikhwān who would usually supervise it and serve the community (Map. 9, 10). The zāwiyas won a sacrosanct status and was a red line that could not be overstepped. Therefore, whoever seeks a refuge in it, will be safe, and no fighting in its precinct, and no weapons to be used in it or even raising one's own voice in dispute or singing. The ruling was strictly in accordance with the Sharī'a, bearing in mind the traditions and customs of the Bedouin that conform with Sharī'a. This was well received by the Bedouin population who believed it to be for their own benefit in this life and in the hereafter. If a tribe was big and had many sections such as the tribe of 'Ibīdāt, then a number of zāwiyas would be built to serve them all.⁸⁴

The Bedouin unusually accepted the Sanūsi authority and leadership for various reasons; the obvious one was that the movement addressed the simple Bedouin man personally, and served his needs of spiritual guidance, peace and stability. However, the most important underlying reason, in my opinion, was the fact that the Sanūsīs were never meant to be, nor part of, the local tribal domineering rivalry game. In another word, the Sanūsīs did not belong to the tribes quarrelling for supremacy in the region, neither they wished to be. They were Ashrāf (of the Prophet's descent) and had no tribe of their own to compete with others, which qualified them to belong to everyone without any loss of composure. So, they did not have any personal nor tribal ambitions, but their agenda was to serve Islam and all Muslims. This was agreeable with the Bedouin who were killing each for trivial things, whereas they saw the Sanūsīs as noble descendants, and spiritually apt, possess the wisdom and knowledge to lead them. More importantly they saw in the Sanūsiyya an umbrella that provides the Muslim brotherhood they needed. The need for such an Order to govern the life of the Bedouin reached its peak when al-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Sanūsi went to Ḥijāz and sent for his two sons, al-Sayyid al-Mahdi and al-Sayyid al-Sharīf, to join him. This sent a shivering wave down the spine of the wise Bedouin shaykhs. Al-Sayyid and his sons' absence caused a concern to the notables of Cyrenaica's tribal shaykhs who

⁸⁴Al-Ashhab, op. cit., pp 26-28.

feared for the peace and stability that the movement was spreading amongst them. Therefore, they sent a delegation followed by another calling upon al-Sayyid to come back immediately. The judicious of tribes felt the Sanūsi's achievement was at stake, and the alternative was the return to the days of ignorance, vengeance and expulsion. Cyrenaicans quickly dispatched some of their senior shaykhs such as Shaykh ʿUmar al-Julghāf on behalf of al-Brāʿaṣa, Shaykh ʿAlī Lāṭiyush representing al-Maghārba, and Shaykh Bushnayyif al-Kizza of al-ʿAwāqīr who was over hundred years old.⁸⁵ Indeed, the Grand Sanūsi heeded their call and returned to Cyrenaica to make, with his sons, a history for Libya.⁸⁶

One of the remarkable characteristics of al-Sanūsiyya was its Bedouin attribution. It started in a Bedouin culture, on Bedouin geography, manned and corroborated by Bedouin. The Bedouin community embraced al-Sanūsiyya who addressed their needs that have long been neglected by the State. It must be said that if it had not been for the Bedouin tribes, particularly al-Brāʿaṣa,⁸⁷ then al-Sanūsiyya would not have established its ideology and movement in tribal Cyrenaica. Somehow the tribes saw benefits in al-Sanūsiyya that they did not see in other ṭarīqas, thus they rallied around it, and put their tribal zeal, solidarity, and brotherhood at the Order's disposal. The British anthropologist, Evans-Pritchard, studied al-Sanūsiyya and the tribes in Cyrenaica and presented his research in a book entitled "the Sanūsis of Cyrenaica" in which he highlighted the Bedouinism connection with al-Sanūsiyya, he wrote:

The Sanūsiyya became dominant because it shunned the towns and sought its converts among the Bedouin and built its centres within the tribes. The Sanūsiyya Brotherhood was founded on a Bedouin Brotherhood".⁸⁸

Thus, al-Sanūsiyya spread fast among the Bedouin tribes of Cyrenaica and to a lesser degree in the rest of Northern Africa, across the Sahara into Africa, and in the Arabian

⁸⁵ Al-Ashhab, *Barqa al-ʿArabiyya*, p 167.

⁸⁶ Al-Ashhab, *al-Sanūsi al-Kabīr*, p 43.

⁸⁷ Bu Bakr Ḥaddūth and ʿUmar Julghāf stood out amongst others and on behalf of all the Sʿādi tribes of Cyrenaica to care and provide for the Grand Sanūsi.

⁸⁸ Evans-Pritchard, *op. cit.*, p 89.

Peninsula. Al-Sanūsiyya returned the courtesy the Bedouin bestowed upon it, and established most of its zāwiyas in Cyrenaica, and the Egyptian western desert, which are historically extensions of each other.

With this position in the hinterland, al-Sanūsiyya kept itself at an arm's length from urban life and its defects that further entrenched its isolation with the Bedouin population from towns and cities to the professional jealousy of other ṭarīqas who failed miserably in penetrating the interior. Despite the avoidance of the general centralised life of Muslims, the Sanūsīs looked forward to reforming the entire Islamic world starting by the Bedouin of Cyrenaica, and furthermore, took on the responsibility to fight off the approaching European colonial dangers. This meant more seclusion for the Order into the desert with the Bedouin far from outside influence.⁸⁹ This union between the globalisation of Sanūsi Call on one hand, and the Bedouin arena on the other, was reflected on the places of birth and burial of Sanūsi leaders. Al-Sayyid al-Mahdi was born in al-Jabal al-Akhḍar of Cyrenaica, died in Chad and buried in Kufra in south Cyrenaica, whereas al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf was born in al-Jaghbūb, died and buried in Madīna in Saudi Arabia, and al-Sayyid Idrīs was born in al-Jaghbūb, died in Egypt and buried in Madīna too. We must not forget The Grand Sanūsi himself who was born in Algeria, died and buried in Jaghbūb. This combination of contrast was destined to disharmony. Therefore, in 1951 when the Libyan independence was announced, the Sanūsi Bedouin style of management hindered the Order from going along with the politics of the newly created a secular modern world. This ultimately resulted in a divorce between al-Sanūsiyya and the State politics, and while the State went ahead in progression, al-Sanūsiyya went in the opposite direction, and reduced its role to religious education and blessing of its followers. This divorce was because of the western-educated bureaucrats directing the Sanūsi-led kingdom using mostly western tools of administration, whereas al-Sanūsiyya derived its legitimacy from the traditional Islamic school of governance. Therefore, the political and military headquarters, and seats of cultural radiation moved from Jaghbūb and Kufra to Tripoli and Benghazi.

Berbers are the most who governed Libya since the advent of Islam. Whether they belonged to Ṣanhāja , Khazrūn, Almohads, Hafside or Rustamids, or even

⁸⁹Al-Murja, *Ṣaḥwat al-Rajul al-Mariḍ*, p 359.

Fātimids.⁹⁰ After that the Ottoman ruled, and their authority was broken up by the Qaramānlis led by Aḥmad Pasha whose rule extended for 34 long years, though, Aḥmad Pasha's appointment was confirmed by the Turkish Sultan, Aḥmad Khan III 1703-1730 (1115-1143H), to be effected. Libya, with its three provinces, was then collectively and officially known as Ṭarāblus al-Gharb. Aḥmad Pasha died in 1745 and left the dominion to be inherited by his sons as successors. He was the first in Libya to be designated as Amīr al-Mu'minīn within the Ottoman Caliphate. His descendants carried this title after him until Tripolitania's tribes ended their rule.⁹¹

Aḥmad Pasha is considered to be the founding father of modern Libya,⁹² which was later firmly consolidated by his strong grandson, Yūsuf Pasha, who defined the country as an Arab and Islamic entity leaving behind his Turkish roots. Yūsuf's rule covered all the coast and deep into the south in Fazzān creating a union and administrative centralised system that ensured the Qaramānlis' survival for about 124 years despite the revolts and insurrections in the interior and main towns. However, Libya enjoyed an irregular status within the Ottoman fold so that it had the independence to run its foreign and internal affairs, at the same time it was part of the Caliphate land owed its allegiance, even though nominal, to Istanbul.⁹³

Over the last five centuries there were a number of immigration waves as a result of famine poverty, diseases or politicised expulsion.⁹⁴ Some of the heavy weight tribes had to immigrate because of different calamities and economic recessions the area underwent,⁹⁵ and the magnitude of such immigration made some people affirm that the Libyan descendants living outside are far more than those who live inside Libya at present. So, immigration went mainly to Egypt, Tunisia and Bilād al-Sūdān namely Chad and to a lesser extent Niger, Mali and Arab Sudan. Those of Libyan descents mixed with the natives in some cases beyond recognition.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Al-Zāwī, *Wulāt Ṭarāblus min Bidāyat al-Fath al-ʿArabi ila Nihāyat al-ʿAhd al-Turkī*, pp 77, 83, 103, 113.

⁹¹ Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Ayāla al-Tūnusiyya 1861-1881*, pp 32-33.

⁹² Al-Zā'idi, op. cit., pp 27-34.

⁹³ Bazama, *al-Diblumāsiyya al-Lībiyya fil-Qarn al-Thāmin ʿAshar*, pp 28-32.

⁹⁴ Micacchi, op. cit., pp 89-99.

⁹⁵ ʿIṭīwa, *Rihlat al-Alf ʿĀm maʿa Qabā'il Awlād ʿAlī*, pp 3-4.

⁹⁶ Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 248.

However, the immigration from Tripolitania to Tunisia was more frequent than to other countries. This was due to the density of the population in Tripolitania, which was greater than those of Cyrenaica and Fazzān, as well as the geographical proximity to Tunisia. But the settlements in Egypt were far more expansive in terms of its spread and the clusters they established in either the western desert or along the Nile, however, the lesser of all immigrations was to Chad in particular. There were, also, fewer families and individuals who went to Syria, Palestine, and Turkey, and remained minor in their size and influence.⁹⁷ As for Malta, it was a temporary place of refuge for those who were either rich or senior politicians (Map. 2). This was due to its Catholic extreme devotion to the point of fanaticism that in turn expressed spite at various levels to anything Islamic.

Despite the suffering, losses and disruption that most tribes endured because of expulsion, they managed effectively to preserve their identity and tribal structure in their new homes in the Diaspora. They also manage to adjust in the new environment, and deal with its political, economic and social influencing factors. Those Libyans in diaspora, also, preserved their collective tribal memory, and the relation with the motherland, including their tribal homes. They meant not to forget the past, and worked hard to ingrain that into the minds and psyches of the successive generations. They used, from time to time, various techniques such as story-telling, poetry and prose to tell of their past glories and their longing to their homes back in Libya. This tribal legacy will stay imprinted in the minds of many, and would be passed forward to the newer generation to keep it alive as long as they live in the Diaspora.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Al-Zāwī, *Jihād al-Abṭāl Fi Diyār al-Hijra*, p 13.

⁹⁸ Al-Ṭayyib, *Mawsūʿat al-Qabāʾil al-ʿArabīyya*, Vol.1, p 19.

Immigration to Egypt

In Egypt live many tribes of Libyan origins such as Awlād °Alī, al-Jawāzi, al-Jibāliyya, Khudra (section of al-Brā°aṣa), al-Fwāyīd, al-Hanādi, al-Bhāja, al-Jimī°āt, al-Firjān, al-Qiṭ°ān, al-Rimāḥ, al-Ḥabbūn, al-Fwākhir, Awlād Shaykh and other Arabs who are collectively known as °Urbān or Bedouin (Map. 13). These tribes arrived in Egypt at different times under different circumstances. One of the first folk sources referring to their presence in Egypt is the Bedouin poet °Unṣīl - from Khudra section of al-Brā°aṣa tribe - when he stopped in front of the tomb of Imām al-Ḥusayn in Karbalā to learn of the Imām's plight and how he was betrayed by the Arab tribes of Iraq. He was saddened by Ḥusayn's story, and said a poem which is roughly translated as:

**I wish I was with two thousand horsemen
and reach you [Ḥusayn] before they do
Those horsemen made up of al-Rimāḥ, al-Jawāzi and
al-Fwāyīd, and I am in the forefront in defending you.⁹⁹**

In the above verses the poet clearly referred to the tribe of al-Rimāḥ that left Libya around the 15th century, ninth Hijri.¹⁰⁰ He also mentioned the tribes of al-Jawāzi and al-Fwāyīd who immigrated to Egypt at the end of the eighteenth - early nineteenth century, and they all now settled in Egypt. From amongst those tribes there were fine men who took part in the evolvement of Egypt to its modern status. A good example is al-Bāsil family of al-Rimāḥ tribe, who is sometimes known as al-Barāghīth. From the Bāsils were the distinguished brothers, Ḥamad Pasha al-Bāsil and °Abdal-Sattār Beg al-Bāsil. Ḥamad Pasha (1871-1940) was one of al-Wafd party founders and permanent in the party's Lajna al-Ta'sisīyya [Polit-Bureau] led by Sa°d Zaghlūl, whom both were exiled to Malta.¹⁰¹ He was a poet laureate and wrote a book about Bedouin culture, and was a very proud Bedouin all the way, and accordingly dressed up as a Bedouin. He was dubbed the Shaykh of al-Rimāḥ.¹⁰² At the same time as °Abdal-Sattār Beg al-Bāsil

⁹⁹Jibrīl, *Tajrīdat Ḥabīb*, pp 54-57.

¹⁰⁰Al-Ḥabbūnī, *Qabā'il al-'Arab fī Barqa wal-Ṣaḥrā' al-Gharbiyya*, p 108.

¹⁰¹Al-Zerekly, *al-A'ṭām*, Vol. 2, p 273.

¹⁰²Al-Qashāt, *A'ṭām min al-Ṣaḥrā'*, p 18.

Al-Zerekly, op. cit., p 273.

was a prominent senator and one of the senior members of the Liberal Constitutionalists Party in Egypt.

The Bāsils became well known for their support of the Libyan cause and the refugees who fled the Italian colonial campaign against Libya from 1911 till 1932. They opened their homes, farms, estates, and even their famous palace in Fayyūm for those beleaguered Libyans.¹⁰³

There was also the learned Shaykh, ʿĪsā ʿAbd al-Jalīl, Azhar from al-Rimāḥ, graduate with the highest degree, he was appointed, by a royal decree, to the post of dean of the Arabic department in 1947 at al-Azhar university. He became later a member of the religious judgement and edict issue (fatwā) committee known as Lajnat al-Iftā' at al-Azhar al-Sharīf. He left behind him a number of books on various Islamic themes.¹⁰⁴

Amongst the many Libyan tribes that rarely received attention by historians is al-Jibāliyya.¹⁰⁵ This is an Arab tribe, and unrelated to the Berber Jibāliyya who live on Jabal Nafūsa. The tribe acquired its name from their forefather who al-Shaykh Aḥmad al-Zarrūq prayed for him to be a Jabal - like mountain - in his standing. After his birth, he was named Muḥammad but the Arabs insisted on calling him al-Jibālī in reference to the good omen about him given by the shaykh before his birth. Al-Jibāliyya are derived from al-ʿAyāiyda who is a part of the larger Tripolitanian tribe of Swālim (Awlād Salim) who lived along the coast from eastern Tripolitania to al-Jabal al-Akhḍar in Cyrenaica around the 17th century.¹⁰⁶ They were infamous for the roughness, and all the Arabs adhered to their tribal law and order, and the Ottoman rulers befriended them to the extent of flattery and hypocrisy to avoid any trouble they might cause them. There was also a popular intent to keep away al-Jibāliyya from standing in the way between the central government and its influence in Cyrenaica and its tribes. Al-Jibāliyya went along with that type of politicking as far as the central government was concerned, but they opened internal fronts with the neighbouring tribes such as Awlād Sulaymān and al-Jihama that led to feuding and confrontation between the two camps. Awlād Sulaymān and Jihāma sought assistance from their confederates, al-

¹⁰³ Ben-Halim, *Ṣafahāt Maṭwiyya min Tārīkh Libya al-Siyāsi*, pp 23-25.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Ḥabbūni, op. cit., pp 108-109.

¹⁰⁵ Al-Ṭayyib, op. cit., p 963.

¹⁰⁶ Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni al-Awwal*, pp 326-328, 399-401.

Maḥāmīd tribe, who eventually helped them to topple al-Jibāliyya and expelled them to Upper Egypt, and finally settled in Fayyūm. Shaykh al-Zāwī described al-Jibāliyya;

They are still known as al-Jibālī family (singular of Jibāliyya), and are cherished and famous for their power and affluence. They are in the forefront of the noble Arabs of Egypt, and counted amongst those Arab families of strength and ability.¹⁰⁷

The tribe of al-Jawāzi mastered the husbandry of original Arabian horse reproduction in Egypt as well as importing camels and cattle from Cyrenaica to major cities and towns in Egypt. They also had a famous encounter with the governor of Egypt, Muḥammad Saʿīd Pasha, the youngest of Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha's sons in 1854. This was a long story known as “Umar al-Miṣri and the Maghribean Fezzes” when the Pasha wanted to set Awlād ʿAlī against Jawāzi, and the followed events of treachery and killing. As for the famous tribe of al-Fwāyīd in al-Minya in Upper Egypt, they are also eminent men in notability and prosperity, and in the lead was al-Kīshār family, one of the very few celebrated families with ranks and titles in Egypt. The Kīshārs are also the maternal uncles of al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām al-Kizza, one of the great Cyrenaican resistance leaders against the Italians. After the execution of al-Shaykh ʿUmar al-Mukhtār and the collapse of the Bedouin led resistance, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Salām took refuge in Minya where the Kīshārs received him with utmost generosity and assistance until his death in 1940.¹⁰⁸ The famous of the Kīshārs was Lamlūm Bey al-Saʿdi who was commissioned many times by the Egyptian government, and the Ottoman authorities in Benghazi to reconcile the Cyrenaican tribes. Also, Muḥammad ʿAbdullah Lamlūm, member of the Egyptian constitutional committee in early 1950's, and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm al-Miṣri one of the founders of the Bank of Egypt.¹⁰⁹ There was also ʿAlyā the daughter of ʿAbd al-Qādir Pasha, one of the Lamlūm women and the grand daughter of Lamlūm Bey al-Saʿdi, who became prominent when she married

¹⁰⁷Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tidhkār fī man malaka Ṭarābul wa ma kāna biha min al-Akḥbār*, (F.N) by al-Zāwī, pp 240-247.

¹⁰⁸Al-Zāwī, *A Ṭām Libya*, p 221.

¹⁰⁹Al-Ḥabbūnī, *op. cit.*, pp 106-107.

King Idrīs of Libya 1955. The announcement was made in the Libyan embassy in Cairo in the presence of President ʿAbd al-Nasser of Egypt.¹¹⁰

Thus, those Libyans found in Egyptian cities such as Alexandria, Fayyūm and Minya the replacement for Cyrenaica's steppes, towns and cities like Benghazi and Derna. In Alexandria, for example, there is a market known as Sūq al-Maghāriba in reference to Libyans whom sometimes called Maghāriba, meaning people of the Maghrib. In the Sūq there are streets called Zanqat al-Sittāt (Ladies Lane), and Zuqāq al-Maghāriba until the present day. The word Zanqat is a Maghribean word for street that Libyans spread in Egypt and Zuqāq Arabic for street as well. In this very market the best of Libyan men traditional costume are tailored - known as Kaṭ Malif¹¹¹ - it is also known for its fine quality as "Alexandrian embroidery" as a designer label.

Those tribes live on the outskirts of Alexandria all the way to the hill of Sallūm on the Libyan-Egyptian border. They also live in al-Buḥayra, the Oasis of Sīwa, Daqahliyya, Manūfiyya, al-Sharqiyya, al-Gharbiyya and al-Giza. They also went south in what is known locally as al-Ṣaʿīd (Upper Egypt) and settled in Fayyūm, Bani Suwayf, al-Minya, Asyūṭ and other places throughout Egypt.¹¹² It is worth noting that those tribes are concentrated in the countryside and the desert away from large cities such as Cairo and Alexandria to the extent that those big towns were free of any Sanūsi zāwiyas with the exception of a single zāwiya in Cairo. The obvious reason behind that, was the Bedouin inability to adapt to urban life. Egypt granted them absolute liberty to colonise the Western desert and reach the water of the Nile to quench their thirst and their animals'.

Those tribes formed autonomous societies in villages, estates and najʿs (camps) populating the entire coastal strip from the Alexandria to the western borders, and into the South in Upper Egypt.¹¹³ Those places such as al-Ḍabʿa, al-ʿAlamain, al-Ḥammām,

¹¹⁰De Candole, *the life and times of King Idrīs of Libya*, p 126.

¹¹¹These are parts of Libyan traditions that originated from Turkey. Kaṭ Malif consists of Zubūn (jacket), Farmala (waistcoat) and Sirwāl (trousers). This costume is beautifully made of silk and gold platted threads for those who could afford it from the rich and powerful during the ottoman rule.

Cf. Shalābi - *Albisa ʿala Mashjab al-Turāth*, p 33.

Al-Muṣrātī, *al-Ṣilāt Bayn Libya wa Turkīya; al-Tārīkhiyya wa al-Ijtimāʿiyya*, pp 235, 238.

¹¹²Iʿṭaiwa, op. cit., p 11.

¹¹³Al-Zāwī, *Jihād al-Abṭāl Fi Diyār al-Hijra*, pp 11-13.

Sīdi Barrāni, Burj al-^ʿArab, al-^ʿĀmriyya,¹¹⁴ and in the south in Dilinjāt, Kafr al-Zayyāt, and Fayyūm.¹¹⁵

Those tribesmen are distinguished by their Bedouin style of living and manner from the rest of Egypt's mainstream. There are naj^ʿs exclusively for particular tribes such as naj^ʿ for Awlād Shaykh and another for al-Qiṭ^ʿān and so on. They also preserved their Bedouin dress and accent, and still use Libyan Bedouin names such as Ḥamad, I^ʿṭaiwa, Amrāji^ʿ, Bu ^ʿAb^ʿāb, Iḥmāida. Also, the way they compose poetry is not different from that of Cyrenaica's.

There is some truth in the assumption that the Libyans who live outside Libya are more in numbers than those who live inside it. Since the number of Awlād ^ʿAlī in Egypt, according to the general secretary of Maṭrūḥ municipality and one of the ^ʿAlīs, is more than two millions in that country. I^ʿṭaiwa wrote a book to that effect in 1982,¹¹⁶ and claimed Awlād ^ʿAlī are the biggest Arab tribe in Egypt amongst the other tribes that eventually ended up in Egypt. In addition to that was al-Jawāzi tribe, which was the second biggest tribe in Cyrenaica, and it was too expelled to Egypt, with exception of few families who either assimilated in other tribes in Libya, or went and settled in Algeria or even Morocco.¹¹⁷ But if all the sums from Egypt and Tunisia, and Chad that we know very little about, are added up, then the case suggesting that there are more Libyans outside is then proven. However, there is a confusion as well as a number of unanswered questions about the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of Awlād ^ʿAlī as much as their State loyalty. When I was in Egypt I asked some of them to which State, Libya or Egypt, they felt they belonged to ? The subliminal answer the majority gave me that; they are neither Libyans nor Egyptians, but Bedouin Arabs live in Egypt. They do not identify themselves with any of the States, but the identity they feel comfortable with is that they are Bedouin Arabs lived in Cyrenaica in the past, and now are living homelike in Egypt.

The mass exile of Awlād ^ʿAlī remains vividly imprinted in the minds of the tribes of Cyrenaica and the Western desert. One of the very few citations recalling the episode is

¹¹⁴I^ʿṭaiwa, op. cit., p 189.

¹¹⁵Al-Ḥabbūni, op. cit., pp 84.

¹¹⁶I^ʿṭaiwa, op. cit., p 47.

the folkloric tale of Tajrīdat Ḥabīb. This mass movement of Awlād ʿAlī is unprecedented since the immigration of the Berber tribe of Zuwayla from Fazzān to Egypt in 10 AD century.¹¹⁸ Zuwayla is still commemorated in Cairo by two tall minarets and a gate named after it, and still known locally as Bāb Zuwayla till nowadays.¹¹⁹ It is also fair to say the Tajrīda was epical where fantasy was interwoven with truth beyond recognition.

The immigration of Awlād ʿAlī became like an epical fairytale coated with folkloric literature in which fiction overrode facts,¹²⁰ and by time became Cyrenaica's equivalent to the Story of Abū Zayd al-Hilālī. However, this Tajrīda remains one-sided story, mostly told by the victorious, namely al-ʿIbīdāt tribe and their Bedouin confederates, which casts some doubts over its credibility. The Tajrīda, also, failed to mention the chronology, the role played by the Tripolitanian government and tribes as well as the Ḥuḍūr with very few dispersed exceptions.¹²¹ There still no agreement on the chronology of al-Tajrīda, the Cyrenaican historian Bazama thought al-Tajrīda took place in 1633.¹²² Whereas Iʿṭaiwa in his study of his tribe, Awlād ʿAlī, thought the date was around 1670.¹²³ Anyhow, the Tajrīda with its all shortcomings remains our only source recounting the catastrophe that one of the biggest Libyan tribes suffered since 14 AD century.

Libyans who eventually settled in Egypt stayed distanced from the internal politics of the country until Napoleon invasion of Egypt. This brought them in contact with the Egyptian national movement of resistance in two major ways.

The first Libyan tribal involvement against the French was led by al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Mahdi, the leader of Awlād ʿAlī in al-Buḥayra. Al-Mahdi with his tribesmen took an active part in the popular resistance in Damanhūr, Sanhūr, and al-Raḥmanīyya in al-Buḥayra vicinity at the start of the French campaign from

¹¹⁷Mannāʿ, op. cit., p 93-115.

¹¹⁸Op. cit., p 546.

¹¹⁹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthamāni al-Awal*, pp 78-79.

¹²⁰Op. cit., p 305.

¹²¹Op. cit., p 302.

¹²²Op. cit., p 309.

¹²³Iʿṭaiwa, op. cit., p 13.

Alexandria in July 1789. Alexandria's population was then only 8,000, whereas the French invaders were more than 36,000 equipped with the latest European weaponry. The heavy responsibility was left to the mayor of Alexandria, al-Sayyid Muḥammad Karīm, to stir up resistance. He particularly called upon the Bedouin tribes of Awlād ʿAlī, al-Jimīʿāt and al-Hanādi and titillated their Islamic sensitivity and aroused their Arab zeal to heed the nation's call to fight the enemies of Allah and Egypt. The tribes quickly organised their ranks, as they are used to, and along with the Fillaḥin (Egyptian Peasantry), and engaged the French in many places in which they killed hundreds of their soldiers seriously hindering the French march on Cairo.¹²⁴

The second Libyan tribal involvement was when the tribes of al-Jabal al-Akhḍar in Cyrenaica learnt of the French plans to land their troops in Derna. Apparently this was a conspiracy, in February of 1801, between Yūsuf Pasha and Napoleon to discharge French troops to Egypt through the port of Derna across the Libyan desert. But, the Bedouin tribes blocked the French effort.¹²⁵

After the defeat of the French, the prominence of the tribes and the role they played became evident to everyone especially to those who were competing for power and influence. Awlād ʿAlī stood out amongst all, and its leader, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Mahdi, was hugely respected, and became accordingly prominent in the political arena, to the extent of having the honour alongside al-Sayyid ʿUmar Makram, who was Naqīb al-Ashrāf¹²⁶ in Egypt, and ʿAbdullah al-Sharqāwi in agreeing and appointing Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha (al-Kabīr) governor of Egypt in 1805.¹²⁷

Awlād ʿAlī helped Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha (1770-1849) in establishing himself and strengthening his grip on Egypt. They played part in rooting out the Pasha's opponents especially in the slaughter of the Mamluks in the infamous Cairo castle, and the subsequent pursuit of those who survived into Lower and Upper Egypt. Those Mamluks were very much hated for their extortion of Fellaḥin, and their policy of heavy taxes they used to levy.¹²⁸

¹²⁴Al-Fardi, *Qabā'il Awlād ʿAlī wal-Hamla al-Farnsiyya ʿala Miṣr*, pp 3-5.

¹²⁵Al-Fardi, op. cit., p 104.

¹²⁶It means that he was the head of those who claim descent to the Prophet Muḥammad.

¹²⁷Al-Fardi, op. cit., p 9.

¹²⁸Al-Zerekly, op. cit., vol. 6, pp 298-299.

Therefore, Awlād ʿAlī's alignment to Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha had the greatest impact on him and on the establishment of the ʿAlīd¹²⁹ ruling dynasty in Egypt.¹³⁰ The relation between the Pasha and Awlād ʿAlī was further strengthened when they helped him in his warfare. In return for the favours Awlād ʿAlī provided Muḥammad ʿAlī with, he gave them the go-ahead in the area, and they managed to evict al-Hanādi tribe to al-Sharqiyya, and later to al-Shām. That enabled Awlād ʿAlī to control two thirds of al-Buḥayra and enjoy unrivalled supremacy in the area.¹³¹ Awlād ʿAlī became strong and that threatened the rulers who sought their strength to prop up their regimes. Therefore the rulers of Egypt laid traps for Awlād ʿAlī and others to weaken them but the results were not as they wished. There was, also, what became known as the Arab revolt after the death of Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha. During the reign of Saʿīd Pasha particularly in 1864, the government tried conspicuously to inflame the relation between Awlād ʿAlī and al-Jawāzi to the brink of tribal war between the two, but all attempts fell flat.¹³² The end result was; "if you can not beat them - join them", and soon most decision making officials realised that those tribes are not easily shaken, and can indeed be very useful. The father himself, Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Kabīr, knew how important those Bedouin could be. He showed their shaykhs his gratitude, and conscripted their youngsters in his army which was regarded a goodwill gesture. They contributed to the offensive campaign in al-Ḥijāz under the leadership of his elder son Ṭūsūn, and later with his other son Ibrāhīm in al-Shām and Anatolia in Turkey. Those Libyan tribesmen under the Egyptian banners fought in Greece, and defeated Prince Saʿud al-Kabīr, and after him his son ʿAbdullah and his Wahhābi men in Ḥijāz and Najd in 1811 (1226H).¹³³ They even went deep south into Africa to Bilād al-Sūdān and al-Nuba, and the neighbouring equatorial countries.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ʿAlid; in reference to their Albanian founder, Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha, and has nothing to do with Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

¹³⁰Iʿtaiwa, op. cit., p 218.

¹³¹Al-Fardi, op. cit., p 135.

Iʿtaiwa, op. cit., p 222-224.

¹³²Iʿtaiwa, op. cit., p 226-231.

¹³³Al-Ghazāl, *al-Mamlakah al-ʿArabiyya al-Saʿūdiyya*, pp 75-85.

¹³⁴A-Ashhab, *al-Mahdi al-Sanūsi*, pp 57-59.

There are some sources affirm that Aḥmad ʿUrābi Pasha wrote to the Bedouin tribes of Cyrenaica and Egypt seeking their help against the British in 1882. The Lebanese historian, Nicola Ziadeh, and the Sanūsi historian, al-Ashhab, both claimed that amongst those ʿUrābi Pasha wrote to, was the father of the latter. That apparently caused some consternation to the British, who quickly asked their Consul to check with Tripoli about the authenticity of the reports talking about 5000 tribesmen ready to cross into Egypt from Cyrenaica to help ʿUrābi. It added that those men were ready for their marshal signal from al-Sayyid al-Mahdi al-Sanūsi. Al-Dajāni, in his thesis on the Sanūsi movement, cast some doubts and thought;

**“al-Mahdi did not try to help him [ʿUrābi], because he
was not convinced of the benefits of his revolution”.¹³⁵**

This was not the only time that the Sanūsi leadership refuses to extend help to Muslims. They refused the Ottomans in their war against Caesarean Russia in the years 1876-78. They also refused to help al-Mahdi of the Sudan in his fight against the British in 1883. The Sanūsīs basically were neither convinced of the outcome of those wars, nor of the men who were managing the Islamic side.¹³⁶

It is also worth mentioning al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Khalīl Jāwish (1876-1929) born in Alexandria. He was the son of the great Egyptian reformist literary man, al-Shaykh Khalīl Jāwish, originally from Yadr tribe of Miṣrāta, whose fathers came early to Egypt and settled there.¹³⁷ ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jāwish graduated from al-Azhar, and later chosen to be Professor of Arabic Literature in Cambridge University. He Subsequently came back to Egypt and supported Mustafa Kāmil’s political stance. Jāwish Helped in founding the National Party, that the present ruling party of Egypt claims to have inherited its legacy and political philosophy. He also became the editor-in-chief of the party’s newspaper, al-Liwā’ (standard), in 1908.¹³⁸ He joined Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Ḥarb, one of the Muslim fervent civil leaders in Egypt, in setting up the famous Muslim Youth Association that cared about Muslims worldwide.

¹³⁵ Al-Dajāni, op. cit., pp 200-202.

¹³⁶ Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 23.

¹³⁷ Khafāji, op. cit., p 97.

¹³⁸ Al-Zerekly, op. cit., vol. 4, p 17.

Al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was a great orator and powerful communicator, who often inflamed passions in the street. He was an ardent defendant of Islamic issues, and supported Jihād in Libya against the Fascists. He was also one of the closest adviser and associates of al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf al-Sanūsi, until his death in Cairo in 1929.

Immigration to Tunisia

The contact between Libya and Tunisia was the closest and more alternating than with the other neighbours. Libyans always adored the beauty of Tunisia, and the Island of Djerba¹³⁹ in particular. One of the very historians who wrote about the history of Djerba was Abu Rawwās who originally came from Jabal Nafūsa in Libya. The extent of Tunisia's abundance and beauty fascinated Libyans and became a dream for some of them to thrive for, and became part of the Tripolitanian proverb and example setting.¹⁴⁰

Tunisia had known immigration from Libya since early days, and its current increased with both Berbers pushed eastward with the advent of Islam from Libya, and later with the influx of the Hilālic and Sulaymi tribes (Map. 4). Such Berber tribes was Hiwāra who was pushed by the Arab tribal advance from its home around Qṣūr Bani Khīyār ending up in the area between Sfax and Gabès in Tunisia.¹⁴¹ The immigration followed on intermittently during the Ottoman period between 1551-1911,¹⁴² until every major town and city in Tunisia had at least a family of Libyan origin (Map. 15), especially those areas where the fertile land and water were of plentiful supply.¹⁴³ There was also a Tunisian immigration, including Andalusians and Jews, to Libya, and mostly were merchants who settled in Benghazi and Darna in 19th century.¹⁴⁴ There were also tribes and sections of tribes that came from Tunisia and melted in the Libyan tribal society like al-Jallāsi in Tarhūna, whose name is derived from the great Tunisian tribe of al-Jallāsi.¹⁴⁵ One could not forget Libya's national poet, Aḥmad Rafīq al-Mahdawi, whose grand father was the Tunisian Consul in Benghazi during the second period of the Ottomans.¹⁴⁶

Tunisian names are common use in Libya, and are indicative of Tunisian places such as al-Mahdawi, al-Mistīri, al-Benzirti, al-Gābsi, al-Tūnsi, al-Jirbi, al-Qaraqni, al-Ḥami, al-

¹³⁹We will use the local spelling, which is usually French in the case of Tunisia and Chad as well, when it is possible, otherwise diacritics will be employed.

¹⁴⁰Al-Muṣraṭi, *al-Ta'ābir al-Sha'biyya al-Lībiyya*, pp 296-297.

¹⁴¹Al-Zāwi, *Muḥjam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 278.

¹⁴²Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Ayāla al-Tūnusiyya (1861-1881)*, p 29.

¹⁴³Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Bilād al-Tūnusiyya (1911-1957)*, p 37.

¹⁴⁴Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Ayāla al-Tūnusiyya (1861-1881)*, p 121.

¹⁴⁵Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* (Ṭarāblus al-Gharb) (tr. by K. al-Tallīsi), p 176.

¹⁴⁶Juḥaydar, op. cit., p 183.

Jeridi, Zaghwān al-Maṭmāṭi al-Sūsi, al-Qumūdi¹⁴⁷, and so on. But the greater influence was that of Tripolitarians in Tunisia to the extent tribes and complete families differing in numbers settled in Tunisia more frequently than those of Cyrenaicans in Egypt. There are tribes and literally thousands of families are split along the borderline between Tunisia and Libya. Tribes like al-Nwāiyl and al-Marāzīq, for example, are portioned between Libya and the rest in Tunisia.¹⁴⁸ There are even larger percentages of certain families who had shifted to Tunisia like almost 80% of the inhabitants of al-Aṣābi'a area in Jabal Nafūsa.¹⁴⁹ This can be said about the rest of the inhabitants of Jabal Nafūsa, Arabs and Berber alike, who all have had some representatives in Tunisia. As a matter of fact the area of Kikla in Nafūsa comes first in the exports of immigrants to Tunisia and followed by the Berber areas of Kābāw and Yīfrin.¹⁵⁰

The Libyans have kept their identity and tribal structure like everywhere else when they are in bigger numbers. One notable characteristic is the regional titles that the tribal leaderships, localised sheikhdом, have adopted to indicate to the areas where they came from. Such sheikhdом names as al-Ṭarābulsiyya, referring to Tripolitanian, sheikhdом of al-Ghdāmsiyya, from Ghdāmis, and the sheikhdом of al-Fzāzna for those who came from Fazzān.¹⁵¹

Th other notable characteristic is the fact that those Libyans gave their exclusively Libyan names to places in Tunisia, and their names became Tunisian surnames on their own rite. Those Libyan names are household Tunisian until the present day, such as al-Ṭarābulsi, al-Tarhūni, al-Wirfilli, al-Ghriyāni, al-Firjāni, al-Rayyāni, al-Ghidāmsi, al-Miṣrāti, al-Zlīṭni, al-Qmāṭi, al-Kikli, al-Riqī'i, al-Zwāri, al-Yīfrani, al-Wirshfāni amongst other names that entered the Tunisian structure of appellation. Yet, there are complete areas and neighborhoods in Tunisian towns and cities that carry Libyan places and tribes' names such as Wrfalla, referring to the tribe of Wrfalla. This area part of the municipality of Testour about five kilometers east of al-Sulūqiyya, as well as the area of Tarhūna, referring to the Libyan tribe of Tarhūna south of the city al-

¹⁴⁷There is an area in Sīdi Bu Zayd in Tunisia called Qmūda, and there is also a tribe in west of Tripoli called Gmāmda from the word Qmūda.

¹⁴⁸Bilqāsim, op. cit., pp 17, 44.

¹⁴⁹Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Bilād al-Tūnusiyya (1911-1957)*, p 26.

Agostini, op. cit., p 451.

¹⁵⁰Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., pp 74-75.

¹⁵¹Bilqāsim, op. cit., p 9.

Fahş by ten kilometers. There is also Jabbānat al-Maḥāmīd, a cemetery where the tribe of al-Maḥāmīd bury their dead, as well as Wādi al-Ṭarābulsiyya, that valley extends from the mountain versant of Buqarnayn towards Hammām al-Anf (Hammam Lif).

Perhaps the most famous of all is Ḥawmat al-Ṭarābulsiyya in the city of al-Monastir. This is a Tripolitanian quarter for those who have settled in Monastir, and witnessed the birth of the most famous Tunisian of Libyan origin, the late president al-Ḥabīb Bourguiba (1903-2000), the founder of modern Tunisia. His family, Bourguiba, were entrusted with the sheikdom of the Tripolitaniens in Monastir. The family goes back with its roots to al-Drādfa tribe of Mişrāta.¹⁵² His grandfather immigrated via sea to Tunisia in 1795 fleeing the Qaramānli duress and politics of greed.¹⁵³

The second man of importance after Bourguiba from 1956 till 1970, was al-Bahi al-Adgham, whose tribe of Mişrātan origins as well, and specifically of Yadr of al-Karāghla tribe. Al-Adgham was one the Destour party distinguished members and leaders, his struggle for Tunisia was crowned with its independence in 20th of March 1956. After the independence he served in the cabinet in various posts, the most notable was the post of the Prime Minister until 1969.

There were other families marked their presence in the literary and political arena of Tunisia. The ibn Milād family is one of al-Maḥāmīd tribe originating from the town of Şurmān in Tripolitania. There was, also, al-Zlīṭni family in Djerba and Tunis,¹⁵⁴ which goes back as long as 15th AD century. One of their notables was al-Shaykh Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Zlīṭni, who was the Imām and the main preacher of al-Zaytūna Mosque-University until his death in 1406 (808H).¹⁵⁵ There was also ‘Alī al-Zlīṭni, one of Tunisia’s national leaders against the French colonial presence in the country. He was dubbed “the leader of the national partisan struggle” where he played a pivotal role in agitating demonstrations, and organized secret resistance throughout Tunisia between 1952-1954. When the noose was tightened around their moves, he found in Libya, which he fled to, enough space to carry on training his men, some of whom were later

¹⁵²Agostini, op. cit., p 267.

For more look it up in al-Sa‘īd’s book “Bourguiba”, pp 33-34, in which he narrated the various sources of the origin of the Bourguiba family in Mişrāta. He said that they could be of either Albanian or Jewish origin. We think the family of a native blood - most likely of an Arabised Berber.

¹⁵³Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Ayāla al-Tūnusiyya (1861-1881)*, pp 49-51.

Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Bilād al-Tūnusiyya (1911-1957)*, pp 60-64.

¹⁵⁴Op. cit., pp 66-72.

killed in Tunisia's battle of liberation. ʿAlī al-Zlīṭni also oversaw the establishment of the first military college, and was known for his bias towards Ṣāliḥ ibn Yūsuf¹⁵⁶ in opposing Bourguiba, and was a firm believer in a complete and unconditional independence of Tunisia without any bargaining or half-measured solutions to Tunisia's national question.¹⁵⁷ Another distinguished of the Zlīṭni family was Muḥammad Lūṭfi al-Zlīṭni who successfully concluded a doctoral thesis on the great Arab poet "al-Mutanabbi" in a record time between 1975-1977 at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

Some of the famous neighborhoods in Tunis with Libyan denotation are the quarters of al-Ghdāmsiyya, and Nahj al-Fzāzna near Bāb Swiqa in the capital. Those two clearly received over those years immigrants as well as visitors from Ghdāmis and Fazzān back in Libya.¹⁵⁸ In the area of al-Naḍūr, previously known as al-Jibībbīna, in Zaghouan province, there is the quarter of al-Ṣibiyʿyya populated by Libyans who came from the previously mentioned al-Aṣabiʿa. A few meters only separate the quarter of al-Ṣibiyʿyya from al-Ḥumr on the opposite block, and al-Ḥumr refers to the native Tunisians in the area.

The other Tunisian institution that saw waves of Libyans, over the centuries, has been the Mosque-University of al-Zaytūna¹⁵⁹ as has been al-Azhar university and its famous "Riwāq al-Maghāraba" Maghribean dormitory. But the most famous Libyan learner of al-Zaytūna was al-Shaykh Sulaymān al-Bārūni from the town of Jādū, and the leader of the Berbers in Jabal Nafūsa. He was a close friend and studied along al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Thaʿālibi, one of Tunisia's well-known dignitaries, in 1886.¹⁶⁰

Al-Shaykh al-Bārūni is celebrated for his good sense of politics and scholarship as well as for his immense wisdom, and his steadfast fierceness in the struggle against the Italian invaders of Libya. As a result he immigrated to a number of countries seeking refuge, amongst was Iraq and the Sultanate of Oman. He served the Sultan of Oman,

¹⁵⁵ Al-Zāwī, *A ʿlām Libya*, p 333.

¹⁵⁶ He was an archrival to Bourguiba, and some accused the latter directly in orchestrating the assassination of Ṣāliḥ ibn Yūsuf in Germany in 1961.

¹⁵⁷ Bilqāsim, op. cit., pp 71-72.

¹⁵⁸ Op. cit., p 51.

¹⁵⁹ Sometimes spelled Zitouna or even Ezzitouna which means an olive.

Sa'īd Ibn 'Āl-Taymūr, and was one of his personal advisors. Sadly, al-Bārūnī fell sick when he was with the Sultan on a State visit to India and died in Bombay in 1940.¹⁶¹ His remains were returned in a State funeral to Tripoli in 1973.

One of the great causes of immigration to Tunisia was the lack of political stability that Tunisia enjoyed at the same time Libya suffered from under the Qaramānli rule. We must not always lose sight of the fact that the Libyan-Tunisian border was not well defined nor respect it for that reason, for both states to be geographically defined.¹⁶² It is the contrary, both states were inextricably linked to one another socially and economically more than the link between, for example, Tripolitania with Cyrenaica. Another reason encouraged Tripolitarians to go west to Tunisia was the spread of lethal diseases that took the lives of more than half of Tunisia's population in 1865 (1282H).¹⁶³ Numerous fields were laid empty and waste in Tunisia's hinterland that in turn necessitated the import of Tripolitanian labour to revitalise the land because of their proximity and acquaintance with the weather and countryside of Tunisia. The geographical proximity between the two countries as well as the availability of many unemployed Tripolitarians, and the Ottoman pursuit for taxes from the poor who were suffering drought and famine made people go to Tunisia in large number.¹⁶⁴ Parts of some of those tribes who went to Tunisia were from the tribes of Tarhūna, Maḥāmīd, Zintān, Wrfalla, 'Alāwna, 'Ijlāt, Blā'za, 'Alālga, Mzāwgha, Mrāghna, Firjān, Brakāt, Rgī'āt, al-Aṣabi'a, Awlād Misallam, Ryayina, Jbāliyya, Wrishfāna, Miṣrātans, Zlīṭniyya (including 'Amāyim, Fwātīr, Awlād Shaykh, Barāhma, Awlād Ghayth and Karāghla), and from Cyrenaica were some 'Ibīdāt and 'Urfa in addition to al-Fzāzna and others.¹⁶⁵

Those Libyans spread out in Tunisia from the northern coast to the inner south in places such as Tunis, Qayrawān (Kairouan), Sūs (Sousse), Bijāya (Béjà), Silyāna (Siliana), Jirba (Djerba), Qābis (Gabès), Qafṣa (Gafsa), Ṣfāqis (Sfax), Jarjīs (Zarzis),

¹⁶⁰Bilqāsim, op. cit., p 91.

¹⁶¹Al-Zāwi, op. cit., pp 158-160.

¹⁶²Nāji & Nūri, op. cit., pp 235-236.

¹⁶³Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Ayāla al-Tūnusiyya (1861-1881)*, p 51.

¹⁶⁴Nāji & Nūri, op. cit., pp 81-84.

¹⁶⁵Bilqāsim, op. cit., p 48.

Zaghwān (Zaghuan), Qrumbālya (Grombalia), Nābul (Nabeul), Qlibia (Kèlibia), Hammām al-Anif (Hammam Lif), Qriqna (Kerkenna), Mahdiyya (Mahdia), Munastīr (Monastir), Ben Qirdān (Ben Gardane), Benzirt (Bizerte) and others.¹⁶⁶ The extent of the Libyan spread and density was to the point that four main groups shared the city of Gabès. The first quarter was for the locals, the second for those who came from the interior, the third was populated by the Libyans known locally as al-Ṭarābulsiyya, whereas the fourth group was for the Turks and others.

The Libyan tribes in Libya referred to collectively as al-Qabā'il, and in Cyrenaica they add the word Bādiya in front of the Qabā'il to distinguish the Bedouin tribes from the Ḥuḍūr tribes that dwell in the cities. In Egypt, they are known as al-ʿArab or ʿUrbān, whereas in al-Shām often referred to as the Maghribeans along with the rest of the people from the Maghrib. However, Libyan tribes are called in Tunisia al-ʿUrūsh al-Ṭarābulsiyya. The word ʿUrūsh is a Tunisian term for tribes, or sometimes refers to sections of tribes.¹⁶⁷ Tribalism was one of the bonding factors between Libyans and Tunisians, so was Islam with its Maghribean Māliki and the Ibāḍite schools as well as the common ground of Berbero-Arabism.

Libyans had no trouble in assimilating in the broader Tunisian society, and were influenced by the variables whether political, economic and social that Tunisia experienced. The Libyans did many jobs but mostly in the field of either farming or pasture, and yet proved once more that they still possess the skills in breeding pedigreed Arabian horses just like their brothers did in Egypt. That brought them the attention of the Tunisian Ministry of War who bought lots of their horses and employed in the combative forces.¹⁶⁸ That in turn drafted them into the lines of ʿAskar al-Mizārqiyya,¹⁶⁹ which means cavaliers, where lots of young Tripolitanian tribesmen joined the force that the Tunisian State heavily relied on for levying taxes or in wars. Although, there were some Tripolitarians who declined the service like Tarhūna, al-Firjān, al-Mzāwgha because of their religious affiliation and services to their respective

¹⁶⁶Op. cit., p 35.

¹⁶⁷Op. cit., pp 46-49.

¹⁶⁸Op. cit., p 95.

¹⁶⁹This word is derived from al-Mizrāq which means a spear. Another word for those men serving the State in its endeavour in levying taxes or disciplining those who oppose it for some prerogatives.

Cf. Juḥaydar, op. cit., pp (N.F) 244-245.

Bughni, *Abḥāth fī Tārīkh Libya al-Ḥadīth wal-Muʿāṣir*, pp 31-32.

zāwiyas which firstly opposed the work which was essentially contradictory to their beliefs, and secondly the financial returns were not worth the risks.¹⁷⁰

Anyhow, that increased the Tripolitanian ability to fight and their importance in their new homeland. This, subsequently, enabled them to join in with the country-people of Tunisia in their uprising headed by ‘Alī ibn Ghadhāhum in 1864. That uprising expressed the popular feeling in resenting the circumstances they were under due to the 100% increase in Taxes. These were the very same circumstances they were under in Libya and made them seek refuge in Tunisia, so they stood up with their fellow Tunisians until the government retracted and withdrew the tax increases. This sense of patriotism and responsibility made them even more dutiful in the fight against the French along with their Tunisian brothers in 1881.¹⁷¹

The Libyan immigrants played a vital role in the economic life of Tunisia. They were employed in the southern area where the Phosphate was mined. They made up about 50% of the mining population, whereas the Tunisians were only 40%, and Algerians were 10% of the total workforce under the French management.¹⁷² They, also, did other jobs like bakery that the people from Kikla were famous for, owning and running Bakeries in Tunisia as well as Libya.¹⁷³ Despite the strength of the religious institutions especially the schools in Zaytūna and Djerba and their influence in the academic formation of many Libyan scholars, Libyan zāwiyas played part and were visibly very active in Tunisia. Those zāwiyas spread and in the forefront were Sanūsi zāwiyas, and other zāwiyas such as Sīdi Shāyib al-Dhir‘ān, Bu ‘Āisha and Awlād al-Mirghani.¹⁷⁴

In conclusion, Tripolitania and Tunisia were similar in so many ways, which made it sometimes impossible to differentiate between anything Tripolitanian from Tunisian. The national costume of Libya and Tunisia are more or less the same especially ladies' wardrobe.¹⁷⁵ Also, both countries share “couscos” the national dish with other Maghribean countries, and the Andalusian music in Tunisia and Libya more or less sounds the same, and slightly different from that of Algeria and Morocco. As for the

¹⁷⁰Bilqāsim, op. cit., p 96.

¹⁷¹Op. cit., pp 104-108.

Adham, *Thawrat Ghūma al-Mahmūdi*, (1835-1858), p 43.

¹⁷²Bilqāsim, op. cit., p 33.

¹⁷³Op. cit, p 55.

¹⁷⁴Op. cit, pp 109, 113, 114.

accent spoken in Tripolitania and particularly southern Tunisia is identical, and so is proverb and poem versification.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., p 228.

¹⁷⁶Bilqāsim, op. cit., p 112.

Immigration to Chad

Chad was a further choice for Libyans to go south to, for a variety of reasons like the plentiful supply of water, pasture and its climate that proved congenial to Libyans (Map. 14). However, the most important reason for Libyans to go to Chad was its impregnability for the rulers of Tripoli, if and when, they decide to chase their enemies. The other reason was the prevalent weaknesses amongst the Sultans of Chad.

Immigration to Chad started in masses when the revolt led by ‘Abd al-Jalīl Sayf al-Naṣr was quashed, and Sayf al-Naṣr himself was killed in 1842. That ultimately led to hasty dispersion of Sayf al-Naṣr’s tribe, Awlād Sulaymān, and their confederates of al-Manāṣīr¹⁷⁷ who fought with them the Ottoman authority.¹⁷⁸ The tribes that immigrated as a result to Chad along with Awlād Sulaymān were Wrfalla, al-Ḥasāūna, al-Qadhādhfa and especially al-Ri‘īdāt (section of al-Maghārba) who all settled down near the lake of Chad in Kanem.¹⁷⁹

Libyan tribes interacted positively with the host communities of Chad; after all, Islam is the common denominator between the two neighbours. Both benefited from each other intellectually, culturally and politico-economically in an Islamic relish. Most people of Chad embraced Islam and followed the Māliki School of jurisprudence like those in North Africa. Subsequently, Arabic has become the language of learning as well as the medium for day-to-day business amongst the common people.¹⁸⁰ One further attestation of stability and settlement of Libyans in Chad was the alliance of the first wave of immigrants of Awlād Sulaymān with the local tribe of Qadiwa, but in no time Libyans had become stronger and self-reliant and did away with such alliances.¹⁸¹

The extent of Arabic and Islamic influence that Libyan tribes spread in Chad was to

¹⁷⁷It refers to those various tribes who supported the tribal leadership of Awlād Sulaymān led by Sayf al-Naṣr family in their insurrection against the central authority of Tripoli.

¹⁷⁸Cordell, D. D, *the Awlad Sulayman of Libya and Chad; Power and Adaptation in the Sahara and Sahel*, Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 19, issue no. .2 (1985), p 326.

¹⁷⁹Al-Ḥindīri, *Taṭawwūr Al-Ḥayāt al-Siyāsiyya fī Tshād*, pp 20-21.

Al-Ḥindīri, *al-‘Ilāqāt al-Lībiyya al-Tshādiyya (1842-1975)*, pp 17-32.

¹⁸⁰It is said that more than 70% of the population speak Arabic.

¹⁸¹Al-Ḥindīri, *Taṭawwūr Al-Ḥayāt al-Siyāsiyya fī Tshād*, p 24.

giving Arabic names to towns and places such as Om Zoer, Bhar Salamat, Bir Alali, Ouadi Kandor, Ouadi Haddad, Bhar Ghazal and others.¹⁸²

Libyans clustered around the lake of Chad, and that in itself presented them as a force to be reckoned with, and the Sultans of Kanem and Ouadai were amongst those who recognised their tribal strength and courage, and wished to recruit them to their service. The first was al-Shaykh ʿUmar ibn Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Kānīmī (1835-1880), the leader of Borno, who made an alliance with Libyan tribes and gave them in return weapons and ammunition to deter his archrival and foe, the Sultan of Ouadai (1858-1874), if he ever to threaten the trade of Borno (Map. 5). Those tribesmen succeeded by force in making the Sultan of Ouadai comply with their wishes, and convinced him in recognising their sovereignty over Kanem. The Sultan of Ouadai wanted to bring the Libyans on his side too by offering all sorts of bribes and promises, but failed miserably.¹⁸³ The tribes went from strength to strength and became a domineering force in the region of Kanem until the advance of French colonial campaign headed by colonel Joulland in 1899. The French march to penetrate the interior of Chad was critically impeded when the Libyans, united in opposition, with Chad's tribes of Tuaregs and al-Gurʿān.

One of the mementoes that Chad will remember with appreciation is the firm stand al-Shaykh Ghayth ʿAbd al-Jalīl Sayf al-Naṣr took in the face of the French Christian incursion into Chad, in a localised resistance was dubbed as Ḥarb al-Anṣār (the supported-coalition war). Al-Shaykh Ghayth was a descendant of a Libyan warrior-family famous for its readiness to fight anywhere anytime, and contributed to many wars inside Libya and outside, that few could compete with them. His grandfather was one of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Jalīl Sayf al-Naṣr¹⁸⁴ men and cousins who were sent by Yūsuf Pasha al-Qaramānli to rescue al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Kānīmī in Kanem in 1826 (1242H). It is also said that al-Kānīmī himself was from the town of Traghīn in Fazzān, and was one of its revered Islamic scholars came to Kanem to spread the word of Islam amongst the pagans. He later established himself there and proclaimed a

¹⁸²Al-Ḥindīri, op. cit, p 25.

¹⁸³Al-Ḥindīri, *al-ʿIlāqāt al-Lībiyya al-Tshādiyya (1842-1975)*, p 24.

¹⁸⁴Al-Ashhab, *Barqa al-ʿArabiyya*, (F.N) p 242.

protectorate over the Kanem region that gave him his name. The sultanate of Kanem lasted for about eight decades in which his sons inherited reign after him.¹⁸⁵

After Shaykh ʿAbd al-Jalīl Sayf al-Naṣr victorious return from Kanem, he made the most of his influence amongst tribes of Tripolitania, and led an insurrection to overthrow Yūsuf Pasha. Sayf al-Naṣr eventually succeeded in playing a major part in the collapse of the Qaramānli State after seizing much of Tripolitania and Fazzān and leaving the government bogged down in Tripoli. However, after the removal of the Qaramānli dynasty and the fall of Libya as a whole to the direct Ottoman rule from Istanbul, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Jalīl Sayf al-Naṣr continued his rebellion against the Ottoman Turks who succeeded the Qaramānlis. He slowly started losing influence and support of the tribes and eventually was pinned down in the valley of Sūf-I-jīn in Bani Walīd area where he was captured after the battle of Qārrah and was brutally killed by the Ottoman soldiers in 1842 (1258H). His head was cut off and sent to Tripoli to terrorise the population into submission. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Jalīl is also associated with the infamous feedbag known in Libyan folklore as “Mikhlāt ʿAbd al-Jalīl”¹⁸⁶, in setting an example for those who commit acts of treachery or betrayal.¹⁸⁷

The Libyans in Chad believed in the concept of religious duty, which required them to defend the land of Islam wherever that might be. Moreover, the French tried to persuade Shaykh Ghayth Sayf al-Naṣr to meet up, and put an end to the hostile resistance the French faced from the Libyan tribes in the region. Shaykh Ghayth refused even to meet them, and instead organised and led the lines of al-Mujāhidīn with other tribal and Sanūsi leaders in the region such as al-Shaykh al-Barāni al-Sāʿīdi, al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Thini al-Ghidāmsi and al-Shaykh Fuḍayl Bukhrays al-Kizza. Those leaders were in the forefront of five thousand fighters mostly from the tribes of al-Zuwayya and Awlād Sulaymān and their alliances of Wrfalla, al-Maghārba, and al-Qadhādhfa, and from Chad were al-Tuaregs and al-Gurʿān. At the end, the stand-off culminated in a bloody confrontation in Bir Alali in 1901 when the Mujāhidīn fought

¹⁸⁵Al-Barghūthi, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, pp 445-446.

¹⁸⁶It was a bag in which he carried the letters of support he received from Tripolitanian tribal chiefs, who later betrayed him. When the Ottoman authorities found the bag and those ominous letters, those chiefs were rounded up and executed. The whole episode became an infamous example used in Tripolitania.

¹⁸⁷Al-Zāwi, *ʿĀlām Libya*, pp 191-193.

the French with passion and strove hard for martyrdom. One of those very martyrs was al-Shaykh Ghayth Sayf al-Naṣr himself.¹⁸⁸ Just from the tribe of al-Zuwayya there were about sixty, out of hundred martyrs, headed by one of their shaykhs called Bu Bakr Bu Quwṭiyyin whose mother when heard of his fall uttered trilling cries of joy instead of the usual wailing, and sang her happiness for his martyrdom.¹⁸⁹

The Mujāhidīn carried on their fight and had their ups and downs, but what encouraged them was the attention and the help they received from their fellow tribesmen and Sanūsi fighters in Libya. One of those rescue despatches brought them al-Sayyid al-Mahdi al-Sanūsi himself, the leader of al-Sanūsiyya Order, in 1898 until his sudden death in 1902. His arrival attached greater importance to the struggle in Chad against the French, which in due course slowed down the rapid colonisation of sub-Saharan Africa. Al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf succeeded his uncle, al-Sayyid al-Mahdi, after his death, but continued the flame of resistance with more vigour and passion.¹⁹⁰ The other big rescue was that of the Bahīj section of al-Maghārba tribe who were led by one of their zealot shaykhs called Mustafa Bu Ṭayghān in 1899.¹⁹¹ This squad of fine Bahīji kinsmen numbered more than seventy came all the way from Cyrenaica across the Sahara into Chad and most of them were killed in 1907.¹⁹²

More than a thousand men ranging from senior Sanūsi brothers, and an entourage of tribal chiefs and laymen accompanied al-Sayyid al-Mahdi when he decided to leave Kufra for Gru (Gouro). Those senior Sanūsi brothers were headed by Aḥmad al-Rifī (al-Mahdi's special advisor), Ḥasan Biskri, al-Sanūsi al-Ashhab, Mustafa Maḥjūb, Muḥammad al-Thini al-Ghidāmsi, Muḥammad al-Dirdifi, al-ʿAlami al-Ghumāri, and Aḥmad al-Busayfi,¹⁹³ and other Khawāss (inner circle).

However, the rest were his Bedouin entourage from the tribe of Zuwayya of al-Kufra and the smaller near-by oases. Zuwayya was al-Mahdi's most loyal tribal followers in the desert and were the vanguards of the Sanūsiyya Order in the desert. They were also famous for their sheer courage and horsemanship, and their oasis was the movement's

¹⁸⁸ Al-Ḥindīri, *al-ʿIlāqāt al-Lībiyya al-Tshādiyya (1842-1975)*, pp 78-82.

¹⁸⁹ Al-Ashhab, op. cit., (F.N) p 242.

¹⁹⁰ Al-Ḥindīri, op. cit., p 25.

¹⁹¹ Al-Sāḥli & al-Kubti, *Dīwān al-Shiʿr al-Shaʿbi*, p 334.

¹⁹² Al-Ashhab, op. cit., p 243.

¹⁹³ Al-Ashhab, *al-Mahdi Sanūsi*, pp 70-71.

capital as well as the desert outpost, and still contains the remains of al-Sayyid al-Mahdi. This was not a coincidence that al-Mahdi decided to settle specifically amongst al-Zuwayya, and neither was he disappointed by his decision. Their adherence and loyalties to the Order made him move his headquarter from Jaghbūb to live amongst them in Kufra. They heeded his call to forgive and forget all the ill feelings and wrangling they had between themselves, and with others like al-Tebu. Also, they were very hospitable to the Sanūsiyya at which they ceded third of the properties of palm trees and land to become a Sanūsi trust and at the movement disposal.¹⁹⁴ Al-Zuwayya's commitment to the movement, and al-Madī's heart-felt move towards them transformed completely, they became a tribe with an Islamic weight as well as Bedouin. The blood of their men that was shed in the desert for the cause of Islam and Libya elevated them to the prominence of traditional superior tribes of northern Cyrenaica. In our view the battle of Kufra between al-Zuwayya led Mujāhidīn and the Italians was the battle of honour in the entire Cyrenaican Jihād against the fascists. In 1931 when the Italians decided to take Kufra in order to neutralise the Sanūsi led struggle; al-Zuwayya tribesmen decided to defend their oasis by whatever was available. In fact, they had very a little available apart from their bare bodies after along drawn struggle with the enemies since 1911. They did just that by tying their legs so they could not quit and sat firm in the face of the marching tanks, which went over their bodies alive quashing their bones to death. In the forefront were the tribal chiefs such as al-Shaykh Sulaymān Bu Maṭāri and al-Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAbidiyya. The latter left behind him a son, ʿAlī Pasha al-ʿĀbidiyya, who fled to Jordan and settled with other local Bedouin on a road intersection known in Arabic as al-Mufraq. The settlement grew and became by a royal decree a municipality, and ʿAlī Pasha al-ʿĀbidiyya became its first mayor. The main street of the town is now named al-ʿĀbidiyya Street in commemoration of his contribution to the town.

Anyhow, there were many of al-Zuwayya shaykhs who faithfully served al-Sanūsiyya in Libya and others who were waiting for them in Chad such as al-Shaykh ʿAbdullah al-Ṭuwayr who was killed fighting the French there in 1906. His son, Muḥammad,

¹⁹⁴Al-Ṣalābi, *al-Ḥaraka al-Sanūsiyya fi Libya*, 2nd Part, p 73.

became a member of Chad's national parliament.¹⁹⁵ There was also al-Shaykh Bu ʿAqila al-Zuwayy, and al-Shaykh al-Sāʿidi al-Barāni who was killed by the French in northern Chad in 1907. His son carried on the fight with al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf in Egypt against the British, and later returned to join al-Shaykh ʿUmar al-Mukhtār in the national government of Ajdābiya.¹⁹⁶

There were other tribesmen who accompanied al-Sayyid al-Mahdi on his journey to Chad, and from al-Brāʿaṣa tribe was al-Shaykh Māziq Bu Bakr Ḥaddūth, the grand father of the famous Cyrenaican governor Ḥusayn Māziq.¹⁹⁷ Amongst the Brāʿaṣa there was their famous poet, Muḥammad Bu Farwa, the father of al-Sifaṭ, one the Brāʿaṣa famous resistance leader, as well as al-Shaykh ʿAbdallah Ḥafālīsh and al-Shaykh ʿAbdurabbih Buḥintisha. There was also Jādallah Znayn one of al-Mahdi's procession desert pilots. As for the tribe of al-ʿAwāqīr there was al-Shaykh al-Fuḍayl Bu Khrays al-Kizza and al-Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Kizza. There were also representatives from the ʿIbīdāt tribe such as al-Shaykh Muḥammad Bu Zayd and al-Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAqila, and from al-Maghārba tribe were al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Hādi al-Barāni and al-Shaykh Mustafa Bu Ṭayghān, and from the Drusa tribe was al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Karīm Mūsa. From the tribe of al-Mnifa was the Libyan symbol of Jihād against the colonial Italians, al-Shaykh ʿUmar al-Mukhtār, and also the poet, al-Shaykh Rajab Bu Ḥuwaysh, renowned for his poem about the catastrophic al-ʿAqilla concentration camps held by the Italians for the families of Mujāhidīn. Al-Mjābra tribe was also involved by some of its shaykhs such as al-Ḥājj Ftayta al-Majbari and al-Ḥājj ʿAbdullah al-Bishāri, and representing the Jirrār tribe was al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Mahdi al-Jirrāri, and many others.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵Al-Qashāt, op. cit., p 112.

¹⁹⁶Op. cit., pp 50-52.

¹⁹⁷Najem, F, *Ḥusayn Māziq* (unpublished study).

¹⁹⁸Al-Ḥindīri, op. cit., p 79.

Al-Ashhab, *Barqa al-ʿArabiyya; Ams wal Yawm*, pp 239-240.

Ending

When those Libyan tribes had sensible and acceptable leaderships either from amongst themselves or their fellow Arabs or Muslims, they proved their effectiveness and sense of responsibility at home and abroad. They have also affirmed their utter devotion to Islam and Muslims wherever they might be. According to the Egyptian scholar, Muḥammad Khafāji, the struggle for the freedom of Libya was;

A struggle that acquired the Arab and Islamic nation glory, pride, and self-esteem. This was marked by the Mujāhidīn in Arab Libya with heroism, fearlessness, sacrifice and death defiance in defending the sacred homeland.¹⁹⁹

Those Libyan tribesmen still represent a vinculum between Libya in general and their tribal homeland of origin in particular, and the countries they live in. Therefore, in my view, they should closely be studied, and monitor the development in their social, economic, political and intellectual life. In doing so, we should look at ways of investing in them and their potentials for the benefit of everyone concerned on all sides of the borders. But, they must be invited to do that, and cheered to play the role in bridging and linking the split societies over the borders to energise the present brotherly relations and better trade exchange (Map. 5). This should be all in the context of the much-desired economic and political integration to avoid any likely regional crises that might arise from such situation.

¹⁹⁹Khafāji, op. cit., pp 78-79.

Chapter 7

Tribe and tribalism in Libya

Prelude

After examining the general historical background and the roots that make up the Libyan society and its shades; it is time now to examine the synthesis of Libyan tribe, and the concept of tribalism and its effects on the history, society and demography of Libya. There is, also, a need to look at the tribal evolution from merely an innate organisation of day-to-day life to becoming the decider in the direction of Libya as a State in the Qaramānli period in particular

Some experts noticed that tribe has constituents that enable it to live independently from the central authority of the State, if it chooses so.¹ However, the State had always tried not to allow tribes to live free of its spell and often tried hard using whatever means to make the tribes on the side of its government and tribal representatives.

So, tribe is an organisation of different people united in their need for existence, in addition to the traditional pattern of kinship by reproduction evolving into smaller familial clusters that ultimately break away and make bigger units known as sections or even tribes. These groupings are purely for economic and social necessities. This coexistence sometimes faced undesirable politics that threw tribe under constraints either from other neighbouring tribes or from the central authority, or the two.

This chapter aims to look at tribe and its composition, life and its influence on the politics of the region. Also it looks at the tribal infrastructure and superstructure, and its means of influence whether economic or political by examining the various factors that make the tribe as social institution.

Thus, this chapter will deal with the following topics;

1. The arrival of Arab tribes and their dispersion in Libya
2. Al-Murābiṭīn and Sa'ādi tribes of Cyrenaica
3. The economies of Libyan tribes
4. Libyan tribes between the Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr

¹Al-ʿAbda, *al-Badāwa wal-Ḥaḍāra*, p 46.

The arrival of Arab tribes and their dispersion in Libya

The onset of tribe goes back to the early days of humanity, and Islamic sources confirm that, when the Qur'ān states;

We created you from a single (pair) of a female and male, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other.²

That precisely affirmed the notion of tribe and its oldness, which preceded the existence of the Arabs. Also, the phenomenon of tribe is not confined to the land of the Arabs nor it is a Bedouin peculiarity, but rather a human property.

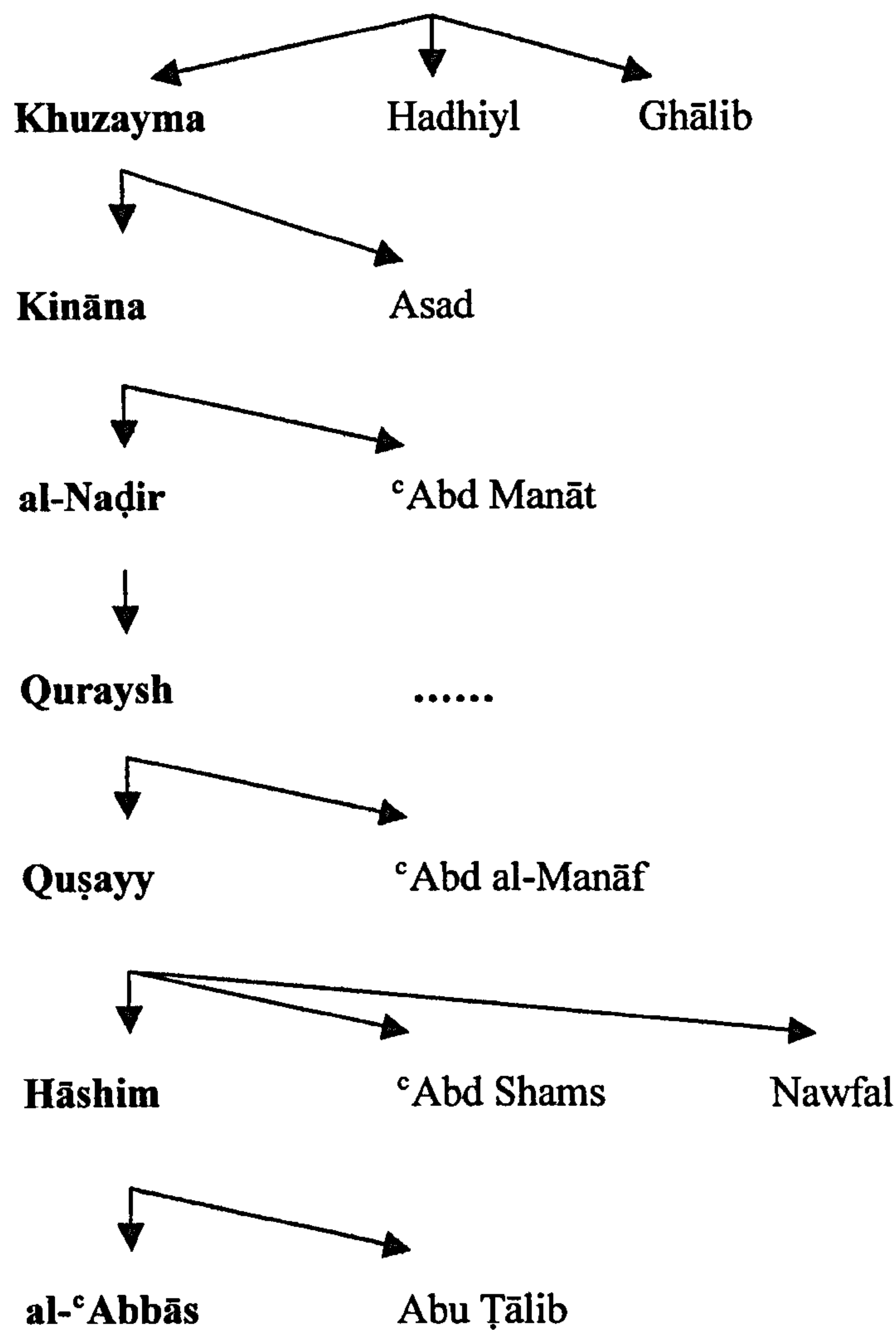
There were tribes that spread in Europe of Hindu-European origins, and Scotland was dominated by Gaelic tribes merited by different clothing patterns known as tartans³ as recent as the retreat of the tribal system from Europe only five centuries ago. There are also tribes in Africa distinguished by multitude of traditions, habits and religions and still controls the societal fabric and general life of Africa, and dictates the economic and political destiny of Africans.

Tribe in Arabia had special flavour emanating from the mosaic that makes Arabism, and it is known in Arabic as Qabīla, (plural; Qabā'il). Nevertheless, Arabic tribe remains a product of human mingling like everywhere else, and the need to cohabit in a very austere environment with other Bedouin in the desert. The Arabs in the old days divided themselves into six descending layers starting from the largest, which combines every one else, to the smallest which often represented a family, and they are: Sha'ib, Qabīla, 'Imāra, Baṭn, Fakhdh, and Faṣīla. To illustrate that by using tribal Arab names it would appear like the following; Khuzayma is a Sha'ib, Kināna is a Qabīla, Quraysh is a 'Imāra, Quṣayy is a Baṭn, Hāshim is a Fakhdh, and al-'Abbās is a Faṣīla.⁴

²Sūrah 49, verse 13.

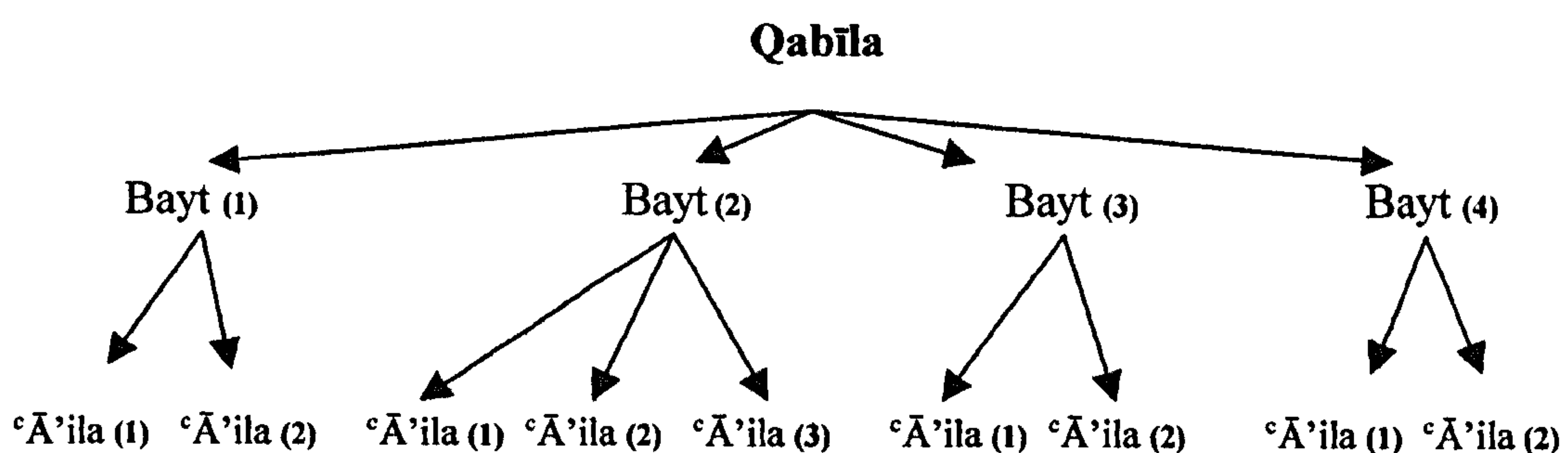
³Cf. Britannica encyclopaedia, article: (*Tartan*).

⁴Mu'nis, *Aṭlas Tārīkh al-Islām*, pp 81-85.



However, This above classification has been epitomised by Qabīla, and used for any cluster of individuals under an umbrella calling themselves Qabīla (tribe), whether this cluster by blood or alliance or clients.

The above classification and branching was even further epitomised in Libya into Qabīla (tribe), and then Bayt(s) (sections) and into smaller ʿĀʾila(s) (families) to look like the following;⁵



This Libyan tribalistic hierarchical sequence (Qabīla- Bayt- °Ā'ila) is somewhat closer to the Islamic sequence as it was reported in one of the Prophet's sayings;

... He (God) then made them into tribes, and put me in the best tribe, then He made them into sections, and placed me in the best section and of the best ancestry.⁶

The section (Bayt) is made of a number of families (°Ā'ila), and they all make up a tribe (Qabīla) as widely synopsised in Libya, and the paternalistic sequencing and patriarchy are unconditioned in this case. Whereas a family (°Ā'ila) that with other families make up a section, and often families are homogeneous in their descent and blood relatedness, and all refer back to one patriarchy.⁷

However, a tribe in Libya, some times with others, attribute themselves to one patriarch and assume their existence to him, and from that mother-tribe branches many mini tribes or sub-tribes depending on the size as we saw with al-Sa°ādis of Cyrenaica. Tribe is often broken into sections as in the case al-°Awāqīr tribe, which has three semi-independent sections; Ibrāhīm, Muṭāwi° and Sdaydi. Each section is, in turn, subdivided into families like al-Barāghitha⁸ of Ibrāhīm of al-°Awāqīr. Al-Barāghitha then branches into a number of families such as al-Rubayḍāt, al-°Unayzāt, al-Quṭayṭāt, Kuwayri and Bin Zurayq.⁹ Al-Barāghitha are known for their large numbers, and the education of their individuals who make them one of the very few educated tribesmen who could easily outnumber the educated elite of any Ḥuḍūr family.

⁵Evans-Pritchard, *the Sanūsi of Cyrenaica*, p 103.

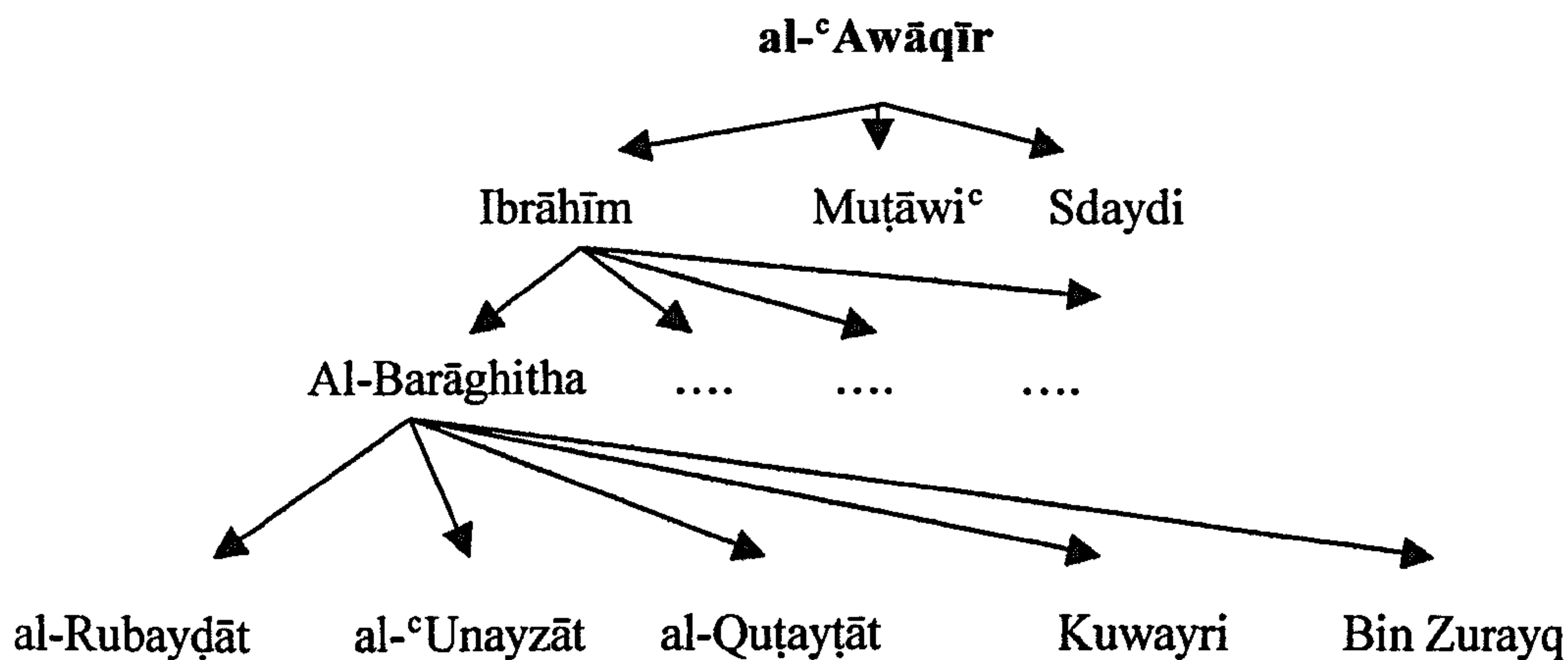
⁶It was narrated in *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Ḥadīth no. 3608, vol. 5 p 584.

M. N. al-Albāni authenticated and verified it in *al-Mishkāt* no. 5689.

⁷Al-Ḥabbūni, *Qabā'il al-'Arab fi Barqa wal-Ṣahrā' al-Gharbiyya*, p 5.

⁸Very often al-Barāghitha is mistaken for being an independent tribe because of its large size and influence, but in fact it customarily known in Cyrenaica as part of al-°Awāqīr pack.

⁹Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* (Barqa) (tr. by I. al-Mahdawi), p 433.



Al-Barāghitha's power stems from the land they occupy from Tūkra in the east all the way to Qimīnis in the west encircling the city of Benghazi and the plain including Bnīna where Benghazi international airport is located. Part of al-Barāghitha has joined Bani Walīd in exile where they are still known as al-Barāghitha amongst Wrfalla al-Lawṭiyyīn in al-Maʿātīq.¹⁰

The tribes that occupy good geographical and strategic location usually reap the economic benefits of such location, and consolidate their political standing in the area. Such standing could only attract more recruits to join the tribe and allies that would only add to their prosperity and status.

If we to return to the section of Ibrāhīm in ʿAwāqīr tribe we would observe that Ibrāhīm section is qualified to be a tribe on its own rite. We would even go further saying that even al-Barāghitha amongst Ibrāhīm is capable of being an independent tribe. This is due to its numbers, land, and the literacy and fine qualifications of its men that give it the highest percentage of the educated and well positioned amongst both the Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr. Sadly, al-Barāghitha historically lacked the charismatic leaderships that other ʿAwāqīr families enjoyed such as al-Kizzas and al-ʿAbbārs.

The Arabs divided themselves into tribal blocks and used blood relatedness as a tying knot. However, this very concept of blood-relatedness became with time an "assumed" purity in reference to this or that tribe depending on who joined first, or was found in the tribe, and the longer one has been in the tribe, the "purer" and the "original" they are

¹⁰Op. cit., p 443.

Al-Marzūqī, *ʿAbd al-Nabi Bil-Khayr*, p 52.

supposed to be. Colonel Agostini made a note of this phenomenon in his book (*Le popolazioni della Tripoli* 1916), when he noticed that;

the tribal composition lost the concept of homogeneous racial sequencing, and the whole concept turned into an organisational structure and some sort of social bonding between the various tribes of Libya. This is ascertained by the variety of origins of many sections and families who intermingled in tribes beyond recognition.¹¹

Agostini went on elaborating that the tree of tribal genealogy in Libya in fact represents a cluster of variety of ethnicities brought together by sheer needs for coexistence, and then bonded by good neighbouring.¹² This sounds logical explanation to the tribal phenomenon, and many Libyans are assembled under a particular umbrella given a particular name i.e. the tribes of Wrfalla in Tripolitania, and ʿAwāqīr in Cyrenaica are in fact made up of spectrum of ethnic backgrounds. They all gathered for the need to cohabit foregoing their origins whether they were Berbers or Arabs or others and patterned the structure of their tribe as they went along. So, most Libyans converged into a given tribe melting the Arab with the Arabised, and making Arabic the tongue of everyone in the tribe under the auspices of Islam and Arabism, bearing in mind Arabism has since become only a tongue and no more.¹³

With the advent of the Arab tribes into North Africa especially after the influx of Hilāl and Sulaym (Map. 4), the whole area underwent dramatic ethnic, cultural and linguistic changes that Libya bore the brunt of it. This change did not affect only the people in the region but also places. Since the Arab conquest of Libya historical cities such as Barce, Sabratha, and Shrūs have vanished,¹⁴ and Libyan tribes shifted to Tunisia,¹⁵ Algeria and crossing Morocco into Spain such as the Berber Tribe of Zanāta, and some of the Hilālic

¹¹Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* (Ṭarāblus al-Gharb) (tr. by K. al-Tallīsi), p 14.

¹²Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* (Barqa) (tr. by I. al-Mahdawi), p 30.

¹³Ibn Taymiyya, *Iqtidāʾ al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaḳīm: al-ʿArab wal-Luḡa al-ʿArabiyya*, pp 162-169.

¹⁴Kamālī, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. bin Yunūs, p 25.

Al-Ṭāhir, *al-Mujtamaʿ al-Lībi*, pp 58-59.

¹⁵Kamālī, op. cit., p 27.

and other tribes who have settled in Tunisia.¹⁶ Those Arab tribes brought to the region with them their tongue as a replacement to the varied Berber dialects, which strengthened the position of Islam in the area and sped up the process of Arabisation of the indigenous. It was not just the language the Arabs brought, but also their traditions, habits and Bedouin zeal. They also ingrained in the region the cultural legacy and history of their ancestors back in the Arabian Peninsula as well as their ancient Arab poetry, proverbs and parables.¹⁷

Cyrenaica was the first province in Libya to experience such a change due to its geographical location as the Eastern gate to the Maghrib. As a result its Berber population suffered enormously by leaving Cyrenaica to the invading Arabs who practically replaced everything from the language to ethnicity. That is why Cyrenaica is regarded the most Arab of all Libya because of the immigrant Arab tribes that seeded their language, blood and Bedouin traditions of their ancestors in it. This explains how Cyrenaican tribes of Arab stock still preserve their accent and vocabulary, poetry and their claimed genealogical descent to pre-Islam Arabs.¹⁸

Libyans, whether Berbers or Arabs, dwelled in habitation plots near to each other which in time reduced tension between the two communities and played part in repealing walls of differences especially in the centuries after the great Hilālic immigration. The new setting forced intermingling and new kind of brotherhood based on religion among all those who lived in there. Libyans went further by expanding the concept of brotherhood and Libyanised it by bringing people into the fold of a particular named tribe, combining Islamic brotherhood with blood kinship in a tribalised manner known locally as al-Muwākhāh (tribal brotherhood). To officiate Muwākhāh amongst tribes, tribesmen used what they called the system of al-Mukātabah (registering) in which people who get together and unite, would then become officially registered as brothers. That in turn entailed them rights as well as impose upon them obligations to the tribe they registered with as brothers in Islam and blood".

This was an opportunity to those disadvantaged and smaller tribes to ally themselves with the powerful and affluent ones, in order to have some sort of security in a world

¹⁶Al-Zāwī, *Tārīkh al-Fath al-‘Arabi fī Libya*, pp 294-298.

¹⁷Watt, *al-Badw*, p 120.

¹⁸Al-Zuwayy, *al-Bādiya al-Lībiyya*, pp 47-48.
Evans-Pritchard, *op. cit.*, pp 46-47.

stricken with raids and pillage. This system of Muwākhāh and Mukātabah made some tribes greater, like the case of Wrfalla and ʿAwāqīr who grew both larger and powerful due to tribal mergers and alliances. Also, within Cyrenaica the alliance of Murābiṭīn with Saʿādi tribes made the latter a lot stronger as a result. This cohabitation is usually separated by only a hundred or hundred and fifty meters in some cases like the situation in Jabal Nafūsa between the Berbers and the Arabs in al-Rhībat area.¹⁹

The Arabs and the Berbers had many things in common and similar characteristics that eased the tension and facilitated their mix. However, religion and the State were the de facto instrument in the stabilisation and settlement of tribes. Al-Qalʿa (Castle) which means the palace of governance, the Mosque or zāwiya and the tomb of Murābiṭ and al-Wali al-Ṣāliḥ (holy man) were the nucleus for such settlement and foundations of towns and cities in Libya as well as wells, valleys like Sūf-I-jīn. Also, markets played a pivotal role in attracting people to settle around them like Sūq al-Juʿma that Tripoli grew to incorporate it into its fold. That kind of human grouping around such places made life more bearable and the area more receptive of more immigrants to be easily absorbed, and over time tore all sorts of psychological and social barriers amongst those dwellers.²⁰

The Maghrib, that was a Berber home and tongue, influenced the Arab tribes particularly those who settled in Libya.²¹ Despite much of the Arabisation of the Berbers in Libya, the Arabs, in return, embraced some Berbero names e.g. Sāsi, Sūf, adjectives e.g. Bakūsh (dumb). They also adopted Berber costumes especially women's, and dishes such as Bāzīn, Zummīta, and preserved places' names e.g. Zlīṭīn, Miṣrāta.

Despite all the above, the Arab tribe in Libya unconsciously retained its Bedouin characteristics and lifestyle closer to that of the Arabs in the early days of Islam. The Libyan Arabs lived a life very akin and resembling in its content, mentality, style and mode to the Bedouin of the Arabian Peninsula in the first three centuries of Islam.

¹⁹Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., p 48.

²⁰Op. cit., pp 48-50.

²¹Agostini, op. cit., pp 33-35.

Al-Zāwī, *Muḥam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 329.

Resemblance was in vocabularies, eloquence, poetry, loyalty, hospitality, and basically a life of simplicity nearer to austerity than minimalism.²²

Moreover, the most important is the Arabs attachment to the land that Libyans call Waṭan,²³ and sometimes Timmah,²⁴ to the extent that this sentimental attachment became evidently in Libya a cause for survival. The old Arabs in Arabia used to take a hand-full of their soil from where they used to pitch the tents to remind them of home by either sniffing its smell, or even blending a little of it with water and drank it to reduce their homesickness and nostalgia.²⁵

The Bedouin tribes in Libya own long stretches of land larger in size than some European countries put together. Al-Zintān tribe, for example, and their confederates in the Qibla area, which is known locally as al-Ẓahr, south of Jabal Nafūsa in al-Ḥamāda al-Ḥamra that separates Fazzān from Tripolitania, live on 450 km land-wide. It is almost nearer to half of Jordan's size, and larger than Switzerland, this in addition to the other land al-Zintān owns elsewhere.²⁶

Tribes in Libya, Arab as well as Berber, have political leniency, Ṣūfī affiliation, and tribal bias with local and regional connections. Despite all that, those tribes preserved their allegiance to Islam in the broadest sense, and committed their existence to its essence. However, Bedouin Libyans were infamous for their zeal and Bedouin extremism with a variety of dimensions such as land, clan, race, language, ṭarīqa and also their narrow vested interests. That often puts them on a collision course with each other and the State, like what happened with Awlād ʿAlī, al-Maḥāmīd and al-Jawāzi who were forced out of the country as a result. Sometimes inner-tribal conflicts like that of al-Khaḍra, a section of al-Brāʿaṣa, who fled to Egypt after the pressure from their brothers. Others like Awlād Sulaymān, Wrfalla and Mjābra fled State prosecution or economic deprivation and had to go in search for a safe heaven, pasture and trade in as

²²Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 4.

Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., p 240.

²³Ziadah, *Sanūsiyya: Islamic revivalist movement*, p 14.

Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 55.

²⁴Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 252.

²⁵Al-Mīlāni, F, *al-Waṭan wal-Muwāṭana wal-Waṭaniyya*, Majallat al-Maʿhad, 3rd issue (2001), pp 24-26.

²⁶Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit, p 28.

Al-Zuwayy, op. cit, p 264.

far as Chad amongst other places, but the common denominator amongst all of them remains nostalgia, and the love they have for their lands in Libya.

Libyans stuck to their inherited way of organising their society by living mostly in tribes, and in established families especially amongst villagers and city dwellers during the Qaramānlis. However, the Bedouin continued with their lifestyle of moving freely from one place to another with their animals. The Libyan way of making living varied from community to another, the urbanised (peasantry and city dwellers) lived on either trade or farming whereas the Bedouin subsisted by mobile sustenance following the rain. Therefore, Libyans had different lives for different seasons closely linked to "ecology", and environmental conditions i.e. rain, pasture and draught.²⁷ This brought about social and economical closeness that regulated the relation between tribe and environment, between tribe and another, and between the tribe and its tribesmen.²⁸ Tribe, also, associated its members firmly with community through their tribe, and made such association a source of pride and honour with the total commitment to one's tribe and its code of conduct and behaviour.²⁹ Clearly, as a result of such geographical and tribal circumstances different ways of living were dictated, ranging from Bedouin to sedentary which in turn necessitated variable economic systems to cope with such variable environments. In Jabal Nafūsa area, for example, where al-Jufāra plain north of the versant, the mountain itself, then Qibla area situated south of the mountain versant, made people of that area live a life of sedentary in some seasons and on the move during the tillage and harvest seasons.³⁰

Most of the Arabs lived away from urbanised areas and preferred a life in the hinterland with their animals. That life was very similar to that of their Bedouin ancestors, and at times perpetrated raids and pillage foregoing scarcity of resources and hardship, and at the same time sending a message to others that do not raid us, we raid too, and take

²⁷Al-Zuwayy, op. cit, p 252.

²⁸Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., p 13.

²⁹Op. cit, p 235.

³⁰Op. cit, p 30.

revenge at any cost.³¹ The diaries of travellers are full of such raids especially the Maghribian pilgrims to Makkah via Libya who told of such adventures.

The tribes in Libya divided the country amongst themselves very often overlapping each other even into the neighbouring countries, and the ownership of such land remained collective. In other words, the whole tribe or a whole section of the tribe, if it was too big like the tribe of al-^cIbīdāt, would then own the land, and could not be monopolised by individuals in this or that tribe or section.³²

Those tribes became in due course like mini emirates with land, borders and leaderships.³³ Tribes, also, had their own economies and resources independent of the central authorities relying mostly on their livestock that deserved them sovereignty and strength. That put tribes under the spot light of importance, and made the successive governments attract them to join the disciplinary and military campaigns against those who threaten the State or refuse to pay their dues. This autonomy enabled the immigrant Arab tribes in re-designing their social structure to adjust to indigenous Libyan environment that they found themselves in since the 11th century AD. That also enabled them to absorb the native Libyans into their ranks to protect the newly acquired fertile land and its water resources from raids and acts of vengeance by the neighbouring tribes. This expansion obligated on them improvisation of new laws and practices to regulate the relations between various parties involved. Some tribes found themselves moving thousands of kilometres away from their land either temporarily or indefinitely fleeing wars or draughts, or to graze their animals.³⁴

Those immigrant Arab tribes retained many of their ancestral characteristics such as bravery, stamina, perseverance, revenge-taking, and protecting the weak and challenging the strong especially those unjust rulers and governments.³⁵ They have, also, been known for their adherence to Islam, despite their inadvertent ignorance, and never apostatised nor wavered their support for its manifestation. They accepted Islam's full authority both spiritually and politically, and appointed themselves defenders of its Call and hallowed men.

³¹Watt, op. cit., p 134.

³²Al-Zuwayy, op. cit, p 265.

³³Op. cit, p 279.

³⁴Op. cit, p 280.

³⁵Watt, op. cit, p 136.

The tribes of al-Murābiṭīn and al-Saʿādi of Cyrenaica

The relation between al-Murābiṭīn and al-Saʿādi generated over the years a great deal of interests amongst scholars and intrigued observers alike more than anything else in any other areas in Libya (Map. 9, 10). This relation is unparalleled in the Arab world to my knowledge, and could not be compared to the feudal system in other countries. Some have claimed that this tribal classification of Murābiṭīn and Saʿādis goes back to the year 1653 (1064H), when the notables of the two parties agreed to form an alliance.³⁶

This coalition was based on brotherhood with imperatives to coexist and defend one another. This is similar to what sovereign states do when they sign a treaty of common defence despite their difference in size, resources and strength. However, it is thought that initiation of such alliance goes back to an earlier date, and development of this alliance started with the aftermath of the Arab Hilālic and Sulaymi immigration into Libya. The presence of the tribes of Ribāṭ followed the Islamic conquest of the region in 7th AD century as laid open in the chapter dedicated to al-Murābiṭīn. This system of reciprocity between Saʿādis and Murābiṭīn laid down and regulated a relation between the two, in which the Saʿādis were the masters because of their exclusive ownership of the land, and the Murābiṭīn as their clients. To illustrate it further, it could be said that the two parties' relation was of some similarities to the feudal system in Egypt and Lebanon.³⁷

All the tribes of Cyrenaica belong to either the Saʿādi or Murābiṭīn bloc, with the exception of some of those who live in oases such as al-Awājila in Awjila or the Tebu of al-Kufra, and the Ḥuḍūr in Benghazi and Derna, and other non-Arab dwellers such as the Jews and some European expatriates.³⁸ So, the strength of al-Saʿādis stems from their ownership of the land, and the large numbers of their men in addition to their assumed genealogy and blood ties that made them more unified and fortified bloc than al-Murābiṭīn to certain extent.

Saʿādis trace their roots to Siʿda, the Berber paternal mother of their forefathers, even though sources are far from certain of the authenticity of such claim. But, their claim

³⁶Al-Ḥabbūni, op. cit., p 61.

³⁷Dakrūb, *al-Sulṭa wal-Qarāba wal-Ṭāʾifa ʿind al-Mawārīna*, pp 64-65.

has earned the Sa[°]adis an inheritable right to be worthy of brotherhood and unity in the face of any external threat posed to their domination. As for the Murābiṭīn, who have no similar bond, and had no murābiṭīc version of Si[°]da. Therefore, they did not have the assumed blood relatedness to combine them like Sa[°]adis, and that in turn weakened their stance and resolve to stand as one unified family of tribes based on patriarchy like the Sa[°]adis. The lack of paternal link among the Murābiṭīn made them vulnerable fronting the Sa[°]adis who exploited that to their advantage to consolidate their ownership of land, and having the final say on matters of decisiveness nature.³⁹ The lack of an established descent amongst the Murābiṭīn especially those who are not part of al-Ashrāf genealogy has been a source of controversy and perplexity. This is evidently manifested in the Murābiṭīn tribe of al-Fwākhir, for example. Folkloric sources put this tribe on opposing sides. Some claim that al-Fwākhir are the descendants of Ya[°]qūb al-Fītūrī, the offspring of ʿAlī ibn abu Ṭālib. Ya[°]qūb is known locally in Libya as "Ya[°]qūb al-Sakhān" one of the seven sons of Sulaymān al-Fītūrī the famous founder father of al-Fwātīr tribe.⁴⁰ This was despite the fact that there is not any link or even a place for al-Fwākhir in the Fwātīr's tree. Neither is there any proof of any link between Ya[°]qūb al-Sakhān and al-Fwākhir. Others go in the opposite direction in saying that al-Fwākhir are Arabised Berbers belonging to the tribe of Ṣanhāja. Surely this claim is weak as far as the composition of al-Fwākhir and its Bedouin characteristics are self-evident. Al-Fwākhir are Arabian in their characteristics and mentality like other ʿUrbāns living anywhere else. They prefer the living of nomads roaming the hinterland and beyond in the desert with their animals in places such as al-Ẓahr al-Abyaḍ, Bisāwnū, Intlāt and al-Bisāṭ south of Jabal al-Akhḍar deep into the southern Cyrenaican oases.⁴¹ The articulation of their Arabic tongue and eloquence make al-Fwākhir one of the very few Arab tribes that produced more Bedouin Arab poets almost to the extent of monopoly. A good example is the Armayla family that leads al-Fwākhir and indeed the rest of Cyrenaican Bedouin in poetry in the 19th and 20th Century AD. Especially men like

³⁸Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-ʿUthmāni al-Awwal*, p 95.

³⁹Op. cit, p 97.

⁴⁰Al-Ṭayyib, *Mawsūʿat al-Qabāʾil al-ʿArabīyya*, vol.1, p 897.

⁴¹Mannāʿ, *al-Ansāb al-ʿArabīyya fī Libya*, p 35.

Khālīd Armayla whom after his death was succeeded by his nephew, Aḥmad Armayla, to hold, as some claim, the position of the Prince of Poets in Cyrenaica.⁴²

With the same cause and effect one could unequivocally see the contradiction in the genealogy in most tribes of Libya especially in Tripolitania i.e. the tribe of Awlād Bu Sayf in the area of Mizda. Awlād Bu Sayf claim their lineage from ‘Alī ibn abu Ṭālib and his wife Fāṭima al-Zahrā’, at the same time other genealogists suggest that they are Arabised mixture of Hiwāra and Ṣanhāja.⁴³ Obviously none of these genealogical opinions could be safely accepted because of their many contradictions. To illustrate this, look at al-Fwātīr who no one could doubt their Arab origins, and possess one of the most authentic family trees in Libya that links them to the ‘Alīds through the Idrisids of the Maghrib. Yet some cast doubts over that, and attribute them to the Arabs of Banu Hilāl, who are not Hāshmites, not even Qurayshites.⁴⁴

In case of al-Fwātīr, their name (Fītūri or al-Fwātīr) etymologically evolved from Faytūra or Faytūr which is derived from the Berber word Afītūr or Tāfiturt meaning the residue of olives’ peels after being pressed.⁴⁵ The Arabs adopted the word from the Berbers in the Maghrib and used it along with many other Arabised indigenous words and nomenclatures.

Faytūra is a metonymy given to the little boy called Khalīfa ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz whose mother threw him into the residue, known locally as Faytūra, after being raided by the ‘Urbān tribe of Awlād Sa‘īd al-Makhzūmi in Tripoli. This is the prevalent premise about the origin of their surname, and as the story goes on, this very same mother threw her second child, Yūsuf, the brother of Khalīfa, in attempt to save him as well from the raiders, into a Boxthorn⁴⁶ tree known as al-‘Awsaj.⁴⁷ The two boys survived as a result of the caring action of their mother. Khalīfa who was thrown in the Faytūra went on to be known al-Fītūri so were his offspring after him. As for his brother Yūsuf, became

⁴²Agostini, op. cit., pp 565-572.

⁴³Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], (tr. by K. al-Tallīsi), pp 480, 482-483.

⁴⁴Op. cit., p 210.

⁴⁵The word Faytūra or Faytūr does not exist in any Arabic lexicon, and could only be found in Berbers dialect.

Cf. Delheur, *Dictionnaire Mozabite-Francais* (Selaḥ-Paris, 1984), p 56.

Delheur, *Dictionnaire Ouargli-Francais* (Selaḥ-Paris, 1987), p 88.

⁴⁶This tree which is also known as matrimony vine, and locally known as ‘Awsaja or ‘Awza as well as

known as al-^cAwsaji, and to him belongs the tribe of al-^cAwāsijah in the city of al-Zāwiya. Shaykh al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad al-Zāwi, a descendant of al-^cAwāsijah (Map. 8), commented on the above mentioned story in regards to his lineage, and wrote;

**This is not worth the paper written on, let alone if
someone conceives its authenticity or be it envisaged by
the wise.⁴⁸**

The Sa^cādi tribes were primarily composed of three strong sections; al-Salāma [Awlād Salām], al-^cAqāqira [Awlād ^cAqqār], al-Barāghīth [Awlād Barghūth].⁴⁹ Following much intra-fighting among the Sa^cādi brothers, as well as the mass expulsion, particularly, of Awlād ^cAlī to Egypt, Cyrenaica was dominated by splintered sections that later formed independent tribes. Those tribes were later reincarnated into three major tribal groups; Awlād Ḥarb, known as Ḥarābi, Awlād Jibrīl known as Jabārna, and Awlād Shaybūn known as Shīyābīn, bringing their total to thirteen tribes and they are all known as Sa^cādis of Cyrenaica to distinguish them from others particularly al-Murābiṭīn, and they are as follows; al-^cIbīdāt, al-Ḥāsa, al-Drusa, Awlād Fāyd, Awlād Ḥamad as well as their maternal brothers al-Brā^caṣa, are known as al-Ḥarābi. As for the Jabārna they consist of al-^cAwāqīr, al-Maghārba, al-Jawāzi, al-^cRībāt and al-Mjābra. While both al-^cUrfa and al-^cAbīd constitute al-Shīyābīn (Figure. 2).⁵⁰

Over the centuries Sa^cādis enjoyed absolute supremacy and domination over Murābiṭīn in Cyrenaica and the Western desert of Egypt. Sa^cādis pelt one another with leadership of Cyrenaica, and that in turn ignited a rivalry and internal fighting, which ultimately led to the undermining of their position of leadership. Nevertheless, the Murābiṭīn remained weaker in all stances against Sa^cādis, even when they had to immigrate to Egypt with the Sa^cādis. Furthermore, Murābiṭīn stayed in the social status they were in Cyrenaica under the leadership and mastery of al- Sa^cādis in terms of land ownership and tribal eminence.

⁴⁷Al-Qaṭ^cāni, *al- 'Āris fī Nasab al-Fwātīr min 'Āl Bū Fāris*, pp 65-66.

⁴⁸Al-Zāwi, *op. cit*, p 231.

⁴⁹Bazama, *op. cit*, p 110-111.

⁵⁰*Ibid*.

Currently, there are about twenty-four Murābiṭīn tribes, the largest of them is al-Zuwayya tribe.⁵¹ The position of Murābiṭīn has more or less remained the same until the beginning of the twentieth century when Italy occupied Libya. At that time al-Murābiṭīn stood out in their chivalrous resistance, which in due course tipped the balance of tribal eminence and leadership in their favour. The Murābiṭīn, since, became a force to be reckoned with, to the extent the leadership of resistance and the command of the holy Jihād against European colonisers, fell on them, and the most famous Murābiṭ of all is al-Shaykh ʿUmar al-Mukhtār, of the Murābiṭ tribe of al-Mnifa. This new development altered the Cyrenaican scene and introduced a new arrangement into the region as to raise the status of al-Murābiṭīn to the level of authority on merit and deservedness.

The Saʿādis agreed on some sort of genealogy and a tree of their descent and was duly accepted by the people of the region. Meanwhile, the Murābiṭīn tribes remained politically and economically weak because much of the land remained in the hands of the Saʿādis and that preserved the Murābiṭīn's dependence and reliance on al-Saʿādis. Therefore, Murābiṭīn remained divided, but it is not known when and how that division came about, and were put into two categories; Murābiṭīn Ṣidqān or ʿAṣā (stick), and Murābiṭīn Baraka. Ṣidqān is an interpolated word for Aṣdiqā' meaning friends and confederates. A metaphorical term given to the relationship tying Murābiṭīn to Saʿādis, in which Murābiṭīn pay a tribute known as Ṣadqa to whichever Saʿādi tribe they are attached to. In return the Saʿādi tribe i.e. al-ʿIbīdāt, would bring them under their umbrella of protection, and open their allotted land to the paying-Murābiṭīn for use. Some sources suggest that Murābiṭīn Ṣidqān or ʿAṣā include some natives such as the Berber tribes of Hiwāra and Liwāta, who were in due course Arabised, and melted in the midst of the Arab Murābiṭīn. When the ancestors of al-Saʿādis conquered the land, the Berbers were amongst those who were overwhelmed by them. However, if Murābiṭīn refuse to pay, then, they would expose themselves to the Saʿādis' punishment by ʿAṣā "stick".⁵²

The term "Murābiṭīn of Baraka" is usually used in reference to the descendants of the holy and revered men, Maghribean pilgrims as well as al-Ashrāf i.e. the Prophet's

⁵¹Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa] (tr. by I. al-Mahdawi), p 7.

descendants. This last category of Murābiṭīn were usually exempted from taxes especially during the Qaramānli rule in return for their blessing and playing spiritual as well as arbitration between those in dispute.⁵³

Moreover, there are exceptions to the overall tribal landscape as far as the Saʿādis-Murābiṭīn roles are concerned. The descent of the strong “Saʿādi” tribe of al-Brāʿaṣa and their supposed role as a natural result of that descent has always contradicted their tribal stance in Cyrenaica. Al-Brāʿaṣa genealogically are not Saʿādi, their genealogy supposedly goes back to Muḥammad Barʿās, a descendant of a Moroccan Murābiṭ-Sharīf, ʿAbd al-Salām ibn Mushaysh al-Idrīsī.⁵⁴ Ibn Mushaysh, as he is widely known, was a charismatic Murābiṭ with great influence in northern Morocco, he was killed and buried in ʿArūs on the summit of al-ʿalm mountain in Tiṭwān near Tangier in 1225 (622H).⁵⁵ As the story has it, and in spite of its defects, these two Moroccan pilgrims, the descendant of Ibn Mushaysh and his wife Ṭalīḥa went through Cyrenaica,⁵⁶ as all pilgrims from the West do. Ṭalīḥa was apparently heavily pregnant and could not go any further, her husband deposited her in the safety of Ḥamad al-Ḥarbāwi. Her husband never came back and later she married Ḥamad al-Ḥarbāwi whose children from her were later known as Awlād Ḥamad. Al-Shaykh Ḥamad raised his children along with his stepson, Barʿās, from the Moroccan pilgrim, but Barʿās’s offspring dominated their half brothers from Ḥamad, and as it has been reported by folklore that they were all known as al-Brāʿaṣa who later dominated the area and became a principal tribe amongst the Saʿādis.

Al-Brāʿaṣa did not adopt the path that al-Murābiṭīn mastered, nor did they behaved like al-Ashrāf and other holy men in the region. They did not read the Qurʾān well or ill as the Murābiṭīn would normally do.⁵⁷ They do not even have a single Mausoleum or a tomb of revered person that belongs to them, even the whereabouts of Barʿās’s burial

⁵²Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-ʿIbar wa Dīwān al-Mubtadaʾ wal-Khabar fī Ayyām al-ʿArab wal-ʿAjam wal-Barbar*, (Vol. 6), pp 288-289.

⁵³Agostini, op. cit., pp 68-74.

⁵⁴Al-Ṭayyib, op. cit., pp 904-905.

⁵⁵Al-Zerekly, *al-Aʿlām*, vol. 4, p 9.

⁵⁶Al-Ṭayyib, op. cit., p 970.

⁵⁷Cella, *Narrative of an expedition from Tripoli in Barbary to the western frontier of Egyptian 1817*, by the Bey of Tripoli, in letters to Dr. Viviani of Genoa, (tr. by A. Aufrere 1822), p18.

place is unknown, and no one seemed to be curious. Whereas the sons of another Moroccan pilgrims, Sīdi Khrībīsh in Benghazi or Sīdi Nūḥ of al-Masāmīr tribe in al-Jabal al-Akhḍar are both well known, since their stories are almost identical with Bar[°]ās's.⁵⁸ Al-Brā[°]aṣa never knew any behaviour to do with dervishes or their acts, nor did others ever seek them for blessings or similar Ṣūfī rituals like other Murābiṭīn. The most obvious about al-Brā[°]aṣa is their control of land by force, and dominating the neighbouring tribes to the point of subjugating al-Jabal al-Akhḍar - by contrast, this is unmurābiṭ.

However, al-Brā[°]aṣa men have been famous for their bravery and hospitality, and the most famous of them all was Shaykh Abu Bakr Ḥaddūth, also known as Bākīr Bey. He was the leader of all the Ḥarābī tribes on the mountain, and stood out for his toughness and brutality in his time in power. He saw the end of the Qaramānli State and the beginning of the second Ottoman rule of Libya, and was unrivalled and unmatched by other tribal leaders in al-Jabal.⁵⁹

The question that still persists is; Why al-Brā[°]aṣa did not take the safe and quite path of al-Murābiṭīn ? Why did they take the trouble to head the sheikhdом and leadership of the mountain amongst Sa[°]ādīs ? Why did they just keep themselves away from any spiritual conduct or practice, with exception of only one man, throughout their history. This much revered man was al-Shaykh Bu Sayf Miqarrab Ḥaddūth, a Ṣūfī, scholar, poet and committed Sanūsī, who was one of the finest scholars of al-Sanūsīyya's brothers.⁶⁰

Furthermore, There are tribes and sections of tribes that have benefited from the dual identity and belonging in Cyrenaica. To confine this duality to al-Murābiṭīn and al-Sa[°]ādī, the Najm [Najem] tribe is a classical example, on one hand they are regarded as Murābiṭīn-Ashrāf, and on the other hand are equally known as part of the bigger Sa[°]ādī tribe of al-[°]Awāqīr. Najm got their Ashrāf connection through Sīdi Khrībīsh, the son of a Moroccan pilgrim whose link to the [°]Alids is uncertain, but was looked after by one of al-[°]Awāqīr shaykhs⁶¹ when his father never made it back to them in Cyrenaica from

⁵⁸Agostini, op. cit., pp 635-636.

⁵⁹Hamilton, *Jawlāt fī Shamāl Ifriqiyya sanat 1852-1853*, trans. M. al-Ṣuway[°]i, p77.

⁶⁰Al-Zāwī, *A lām Libya*, pp 419-420.

⁶¹Shaykh Ḥusayn Ibsīṭah who married Khrībīsh's mother and bore him a son named Ghrībīl. Both Najm, the descendants of Khrībīsh, and Ghrībīl became part of Sdaydi of al-[°]Awāqīr tribe.

Ḥajj. As a result Khrībīsh and his descendants qualified to be part of Sdaydi section of al-‘Awāqīr’s.⁶² This twofold belonging benefited Najm family immensely in terms of equality, rights, possessions and duties as part of the Sa‘ādi pack. Simultaneously, as part of the Murābiṭīn lineage, the Najms exercised their status to bless, to be exempted from levies, and the tomb- shrines of their holy deadened to be visited. Their shrines are scattered in and outside Benghazi explaining the stages of evolution from Ḥuḍūr to Bedouin that the Najms have been through.

Amongst the famous shrines of the Najm’s include; Sīdi Khalīfa, Sīdi Yunūs, Sīdi ‘Abdullah named after him a cemetery in Bnīna where Benghazi international airport is. In addition to Sīdi Sa‘īd who is buried and known in the city’s old quarter. They are all the descendants of Khrībīsh who is buried in the heart of Benghazi, and its historic lighthouse that was erected at a stone’s throw from his shrine.⁶³ Khrībīsh is one of the very early people who lived in the city since its recent revitalisation that lasted until now. Benghazi was then known as Kuwayt al-Milḥ⁶⁴ before the appearance of al-Shaykh Ghāzi whom the city was renamed after in the sixteenth century (10H) before it developed to what it is now.⁶⁵

The village of Sīdi Khalīfa is located by the Mediterranean coast about 18km east of Benghazi along the coast. Sīdi Khalīfa used to be owned exclusively by al-Māḍi, part of Sdaydi section of al-‘Awāqīr’s, and the village was at that time known as ‘Irq al-Rubu‘, others said Ḥanzala. On the arrival of al-Murābiṭ, Sīdi Khalīfa, who became some sort of patron, and after his death in it, the Village since has been renamed after him. Seemingly the rest of the Najms followed suit where they were met with al-Māḍi’s utmost hospitality and kindness. As time passed the Najms intermingled with al-Māḍi in marriages and shared ownership of the land. With that, Najms have moved from the life of Ḥuḍūr to confirm their Bedouin style of living and identity as ‘Awāqīr for years to come.

This duality of belonging was never problematic to either Najm or to the larger ‘Awāqīr as far as identity is concerned, or to which camp allegiance should be declared. This

Cf. Agostini, op. cit., pp 479-481.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Bazama, *Benghazi ‘Abr al-Tārīkh*, pp 328-329.

⁶⁴Kuwayt comes from Kuwt - local word for village - al-Milḥ is salt. The area was big marshes land where salt is collected and sold, and apparently was a source of living for the locals then.

sometimes seems to be difficult to explain how one could combine two contradictions, at the same time explains the coexistence of, and the role-distribution between Murābiṭīn and Saʿādis. I surveyed a number of responsible members of al-Najm to find out whether they prefer to be seen and treated as Ashrāf or as ʿAwāqīr. Their overwhelming response was ʿAwāqīr due to their wealth of the attached benefits and tribal weight.

The Saʿādis always needed al-Murābiṭīn as much as al-Murābiṭīn needed them or even more. This extent reached its height to the point of Saʿādis fighting each other over who should have the biggest number of Murābiṭīn to assemble to their side.⁶⁶ This was obvious for the simple reason that when a particular Saʿādi tribe wanted to extend its influence and authority would seek the help of al-Murābiṭīn to do that. At the same time al-Murābiṭīn, in return, would be allowed to invest in Saʿādi territory. This land usually Saʿādis could not populate, or difficult to protect from the neighbouring raiding tribes, so the Murābiṭīn would willingly do that in the name of the Saʿādis.

The most famous of all raids in Cyrenaican modern history, was during the reign of Yūsuf Pasha al-Qaramānli in 1811 (1227H) and the consequent famous battle of Zughba where the Murābiṭīn fought for the Saʿādis against some Tripolitanian tribesmen. It is also known as the "War of Şaff" which basically meant that the Tripolitanian tribes stood on one Şaff (side) dubbed Şaff al-Gharb (Western side), and the Cyrenaicans stood on the opposing side known as Şaff al-Sharq (Eastern side). In this war, the Tripolitanian tribes such as al-Ḥsūn, al-Firjān al-Mʿadān and al-Zuwāwāt encroached into Cyrenaica and were stopped by the Saʿādis who were mostly ʿAlāya-Jabārna tribes (ʿAwāqīr and Maghārba) in the decisive battle of Zughba. The ʿAlāya won the battle and the war due to the substantial support received from their confederates such as the Ḥarābis (al-Brāʿaṣa and al-Drusa) and Murābiṭīn (al-Zuwayya and al-Qbāyil).⁶⁷

The Saʿādis have always had a mixed feeling towards the Murābiṭīn in the sense that they need them but at the same time feared the mystical power because of their holiness and the noble descent of their ancestors. They feared and respected them because they needed their blessings, prayers and provided them with amulets. At the same time

⁶⁵Bazama, op. cit, p 242.

⁶⁶Agostini, op. cit., p 623.

⁶⁷Al-Ashhab, *Barqa al-ʿArabiyya*, p 117.

Sa[°]adis looked down on Murābiṭīn and saw them as inferior tribes in spite of the spiritual and arbitration role that was confined to them, and which they skilfully played between all tribes in Cyrenaica. However, the fact remains that the Sa[°]adi Bedouin see the Murābiṭīn of all shades with curious mixture of respect and condescension, no matter how noble the ancestors were, or many miracles they perform.⁶⁸ Therefore, the Murābiṭīn would have to come second to Sa[°]adis who see themselves as freer and masters in the land they own that occasionally presented an obstacle from time to time, hindering intermarriages between the two sides.⁶⁹

It is not just the Sa[°]adis who see Murābiṭīn as inferior, it is the other way around as well. Murābiṭīn see themselves more of a noble ancestors than Sa[°]adis, especially if one of their ancestors had a great shrine like Sīdi X or Sīdi Y who offered blessings and amulets to the Bedouin Sa[°]adis. Sa[°]adis revered and feared Murābiṭs to the point of naming their children after them by a way of blessing and good omen. Such names as al-Sanūsi, al-Fitūrī, al-Firjāni, where as it is a rarity to find Murābiṭs naming their children after Sa[°]adis for the same reason.

⁶⁸Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 83.

⁶⁹Ibid.

The Economies of Libyan tribes

The environment ordains the economy of the region where draught, and scarcity of both water and greenery enabled the Great Sahara of 90% of the total area of Libya. That compelled the people of the region to lead a life of Bedouin where they are on the move most of the time to protect their economy and preserve their lives from decline or even perdition.⁷⁰ There was also an element of history and ancestral legacy where the Arabs of Libya preserved the lifestyle of their forefathers in preferring such living in the desert with their animals that constituted their only source of income and wealth. The tribal system, reinforced in the Great Sahara, was a mechanism to acclimatise with the harsh desert environment. Such harshness needed every effort by the tribe to stand together in the face of the desert in order to survive.⁷¹

The desert and its shifting sands from the south towards the coast in the north created greenable geographical plots occupied by particular grazing tribes as well as some settlement pockets, and separated Tripolitania from Cyrenaica, and the two from Fazzān. Those shifting sands, with their golden ridges and white dunes, cut Libya mainly in two halves when they reached the Bay of Sirt with Fazzān nearer to both and sub-Sahara.⁷² The climactic and geographical conditions almost deepened the differences and borders between Libya's three provinces, if it had not been for moving tribes of Libya. Hence the three provinces underwent different historical experiences from each other because of the geography of the region. However, Tripolitani-ans were always known for their susceptibility to whatever happens in Tunisia due to the geographical proximity with it. This does not mean that Tunisia dictated the conduct of Tripolitania's life by political means or military intervention. In fact it was the social and politico-economic ties that banded the two together. By the same token Egypt had equally influenced the life of tribes in Cyrenaica. Whereas the people of Fazzān stayed distanced in the heart of the Sahara and their destiny was more or less decided by their own tribal chiefs and local Sultans away from the spell of the central authority of Tripoli.⁷³ However, Fazzān connected the markets of interior Africa with those in North

⁷⁰Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 43.

⁷¹Al-Khūri, *Madhāhib al-Anthrūbūlūjia wa 'Abqariyyat Ibn Khaldūn*, p 72.

⁷²Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 44.

⁷³Al-Nayhūm, *Tārīkhuna*, vol. 5, pp 204-213.

Africa and beyond the northern and eastern flanks of the Mediterranean.⁷⁴ In spite of lack of rain, the two mountains, Nafūsa and al-Akhḍar, had more seasonal rain than the rest of Libya. However, that was not enough to rely on, due to the irregular rain intervals that opened the way for draught and barrenness to grip the country from time to time, and threaten the region's agriculture and livestock.⁷⁵

This severe ecology entrenched Bedouin life on Libyans and furnished the need to acclimatise in the desert despite its harshness. However, there were Libyans who lived a life of sedentary in pockets in the desert such as the oases of Ghadāmis, Ujalah, Jalū, Sūkana and Marāda. The oases inhabitants could not be exactly described as Bedouin because their life was geared towards farming and trade across the Sahara as well as serving and guiding the trading caravans (Map.5).

Bedouin and Ḥaḍūr had different economy-structures and market forces as far as labour, production and distribution were concerned. It remains to be said that the Ḥaḍūr economy relied heavily on Bedouin production whereas Bedouin did not need much of the Ḥaḍūr production which was not perceived as a necessity but a luxury that Bedouin did easily without.

The Bedouin economy consisted mainly of their livestock, and precisely sheep, therefore, they were on the move all the time in search of pasture and water, and had no obstacles or restriction whatsoever in moving from one place to another, unlike the Ḥaḍūr who could not move as easily. It is also fair to say that the Bedouin enjoyed moving around with their animals, and this was reflected in their songs;

"The Bedouin's delight is in continuous [daily] travel".

Tripoli and to a certain extent Benghazi have been known as the nerve centres of the political authority for hosting the administrative as well as judicial institutions. Both cities attracted business and regulated the flow of trade and jobs on a restricted scale. The Libyan economy was so limited and had smaller production levels because of the

⁷⁴Sharaf al-Dīn, *Mudkhal ila Tārīkh Ṭarāblus al-Ijtimā'i wal-Iqtisādi (1711-1835)*, pp 239-242.

⁷⁵Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 45.

internal austere consumption and the lack of international demand for Libyan produce.⁷⁶

Therefore, Libyan Bedouin main jobs were mostly pasturage, serving and guiding caravans through the desert, and serving in the armed forces in protecting the State from internal and external threats. However, Libyan Ḥaḍūr were disposed to learning, civil services and business in the city markets. Bedouin resented the idea of bargaining as a trading tool, this possibly had to do with the their genetic makeup that they inherited from their Arab ancestry. Bedouin do not like to sit in one place for along time to make a living, they are people who are always on the move. They do not like bargaining over trivial things such as tea, sugar or oil, they see in that a blemish on their Arab generosity and sense of honour. At the same, they see no problem in murdering someone who cut through their plantation or graze animals there without their permission. One might ask what a paradox?

Firstly, tribes wholly depended on their animals, which is the backbone of their austere economy, which could fittingly be described as; the economy of subsistence. Secondly, tribes also relied on seasonal farming specifically barely and wheat.⁷⁷ Pasturage produce is not only for Bedouin use but rather for the Ḥaḍūr as well, who had increased in numbers as a result of Bedouin urbanisation, but also some of that produce found its way out as an export to foreign countries. Produce such as cattle and its derivatives (fleece, meat, milk, butter and ghee), and also honey, wax and all sorts of dates⁷⁸ were firstly sent to the local markets, mainly Tripoli, Benghazi and Miṣrāta, and the surplus would had been exported to Egypt, Tunisia, Turkey, Malta and Greece.⁷⁹ One of the biggest cattle markets was in Benghazi.

After the collapse of the Qaramānli rule and the relative quietness that followed, the economy revived, and animal farming flourished, as Bedouin felt safer especially with the spread of al-Sanūsiyya and its domination of the region. In 1901, the area of al-ʿUjaylāt produced around 100,000 sheep, and approximately 8000 goats, in 1908 the Cyrenaican exports to Egypt were nearly 34,000 sheep, 20,000 cows, and the same area

⁷⁶Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 19.

⁷⁷Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 192.

⁷⁸Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 98.

⁷⁹Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 94.

used to export about 700 cows to Malta every week.⁸⁰ Berber sheep was the pride of Libyan exports, known for its quality particularly its fatty tail and wool especially those reared in Cyrenaica and its southern rims. As for the inner part of the desert where greenery is less, the climate is suitable for grazing camels that could drink salty water and eat prickly vegetation. Camels graze in Ḥaṭāya (sing. Ḥaṭiyya) which are little patches in the desert, where water is not far away from the surface and in there grows vegetation that camels normally eat, the most famous of those Ḥaṭāya are al-Ṣaḥābi, al-Khafāji and Tagrīft.⁸¹

Cultivation of grains that does not require man-induced irrigation particularly wheat and barely comes second after animal reproduction which Bedouin call Muwāla, to describe raising sheep, and Kasb to camels. When the rain falls and with it begins the season of seed-time at the end of autumn and the beginning of winter (from September to November) all Bedouin tribes and some of the Ḥaḍūr families, who invest in Bedouin land, rush to plough the land using their primitive devices, and animals.⁸² There are also other crops of lesser importance e.g. Dukhan (millet) in areas such as Bani Walīd, Tarhūna and al-Dāwūn, but come second after wheat and barley in the valley of Sūf-l-jīn and Targhlāt.⁸³

However, dates and their derivatives remain a major source of income and constitute the livelihood of many southerners in the Fazzān area, and oases of Cyrenaica, at the same time olive and olive-pressing is a major source of income in Jabal Nafūsa. Spring follows after the season of seed-time which is regarded the best of all seasons not only for its tempered weather but also known for the abundance of dairy products and honey. In spring the grazing would be at its best, and witness the sale of lambs after being separated from their mothers in process known as Muwāza. These sales usually earn Bedouin the necessary cash that enables them to buy some necessities such as lamps, knives, shaving razors, perfumes. They would also buy some foodstuff they could not produce themselves or was not available in their areas such as tea and sugar.⁸⁴ Bedouin

⁸⁰Al-Nayhūm, op. cit., p 203.

⁸¹Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., pp 60-61.

⁸²Op. cit, p 197.

⁸³Op. cit, p 262.

⁸⁴Op. cit, p 195.

would also pay off their debts and put the surplus in saving-deposits with well-known wholesalers in big towns and cities they found trustworthy.

The markets where such goods bought and sold are often situated around the castle or palace of government, or a Murābiṭ mausoleum, since such places play part in settling disputes either by official or spiritual means.⁸⁵ Amongst famous markets in Tripoli are Sūq al-Jum'ā (Friday market), Sūq al-Thulathā' (Tuesday market), Turks and the Arabs markets, as well as the Hay market known as Sūq al-Ḥashīsh.⁸⁶

Few tribes dominated the caravan trade in the desert and in the forefront was the tribes of al-Zuwayya and al-Mjābra in Cyrenaica, and Awlād Sulaymān and Tureg as well as the Tebu in the middle and south of the country. Towards the end of Yūsuf Pasha al-Qaramānli's rule (1795-1832), al-Zuwayya moved on and controlled - at the expense of the Tebu - most of the southern Cyrenaican oases such as al-Kufra, Tazirbū, Bzayma, Ribyāna and Hawwāri.⁸⁷ This made the trade routes in a chain of known and secure stations, and that reduced dramatically the risk of any tribal raids.

However, that chain of stations connected Tunisia with Egypt via Libya, and Libya with al-Sūdān. In the Qaramānli days, travellers from Tunisia heading for Egypt, would go through Libyan places such as Burj al-Milḥ, Zwāra, Zāwiya, Zuwāgha, Janzūr, and then Qarqārish to enter the city of Tripoli.⁸⁸ But if they decide to carry on east towards Egypt, then they would leave Tripoli from al-Manshiyya to Tājūra, al-Misayyid valley, al-Raml valley, Sāhl al-Aḥāmid, Mislāta, Zlīṭin, Miṣrāta, Tāwirghā, Sabkhāt al-ʿUwaynāt, Buwayrāt al-Ḥusūn, al-Zaʿfarān, Miʿaṭan al-Aḥmar, Sirt, al-Yahūdiyya, Ajdābiya, Ṣaʿda, Slūq, al-Tamīmi, ʿAyn Ghazāla, Muqarrab, ʿAqaba al-Ṣaghīra, before reaching the Egyptian western desert.⁸⁹

Those stations provided all sorts of services for the caravans included food, drink and fodder provisions, guides, guards, or camels. That in turn created jobs and generated more wealth by the exchange of trade between the East and West and linking the desert with the coast. Slaves, dates and ostrich feathers reached the coastal markets from the south, and in exchange they received clothes, jewellery, medicine and weapons. The central authority of Tripoli or its representative in the region noticed the importance of

⁸⁵Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 92.

⁸⁶Op. cit., pp 29, 36-37.

⁸⁷Al-Zā'idi, *Libya fil ʿAhd al-Qaramānli*, p 81.

⁸⁸Sharaf al-Dīn, op. cit., p 61.

⁸⁹Ibid.

such trade that changed the economic and political life of the south. However, the most dramatic and noticeable change was in the fabric of the southern society and its ethnic make-up. Amongst the Libyan tribes of the south prevailed the darker skin colour men and women with Arab facial features, and that was because of the intermarriages and slavery that the south experienced over the centuries as a result of such contacts.⁹⁰ The Arabs and the Berbers of the south used to marry Africans and own African slaves especially women as domestic servants. Over the years, a generation of mixed race was visible in the region in addition to the slaves who were emancipated and later tribalised by joining the master's tribe after their Islamisation and Arabisation.

This new breed of Libyans represent a cultural asset with their melody known as *Mirziqāwi*, that came from Murzuq in the Fazzān, excelled over *Ma'lūf* (Andalusian music) and became the most popular folklore and "pop" music in all of Libya. An old Libyan proverb illustrates the Arabised African influence and often referred to them as *Fazzāni*. It says;

"the Beauty is Tunisian and the Singing is Fazzāni".⁹¹

In addition to the darker skin and ivory amongst many that Libya was enriched with, the African names became Libyan household, such as *al-Sūdāni* and *al-Birnāwi*, and these are but examples of the impact that Africa had on all walks of life of Libyan society. The caravan trade cross the desert transformed the region in general, and Fazzān in particular, influencing the political, economic and social life of almost all Libyans.⁹²

Libyans generally had primitive industries if compared with Europeans', however; they managed to barter some of their produce for copper, fabric, textiles, timber, weapons and gunpowder particularly from Italian states.⁹³ Bedouin had very little trading with the outside world, but the Jews of Tripoli shared with the political Arab elite the monopoly on the business of imports and exports. The Jews managed to obtain preferential deals and credits from their fellow Italian Jewish businessmen more than their fellow Muslim countrymen did. According to some statistics in 1783 during the reign of Yūsuf Pasha *al-Qaramānli*, there were about 14,000 inhabitants of Tripoli, one quarter of which were

⁹⁰Wright, J, *Murzuk and the Saharan Trade in the 19th Century*, Libyan Studies, vol. 29 (1998), pp 89-95.

⁹¹Al-Mušrāti, *al-Ta'ābir al-Sha'biyya al-Lībiyya*, p 296.

⁹²Al-Ṭāhir, *al-Mujtama' al-Lībi*, p 251.

⁹³Sharaf al-Dīn, *op. cit.*, p 106

Jews. Most of the Jews of Tripoli lived in their exclusive Jewish ghetto known in Tripoli as *Hārat al-Yahūd*, situated inside the castle.⁹⁴ As for Benghazi, the Jews did not have a ghetto, and the answer might be found in what the Italian traveler, Paolo Della Cella, mentioned in one of his famous letters that the Jews were more than half of the population of Benghazi in 1817.⁹⁵ Clearly that figure is slightly exaggerated, since Benghazi was during that particular period subjected to a state-sponsored terror that drove out many of the city's inhabitants.

The Jews are well known for their business vitality and their distinguished aptitude in making money. It is also fair to say that the Jews were not allowed to participate in the politics of the country, and consequently they devoted their energy to trade which brought them a great deal of affluence as well as jealousy and sometimes trouble from Tripoli's authorities and inhabitants. Affluence was not just confined to the Jews of Tripoli, but also to their brethren in Benghazi, Darna and *Miṣrāta*. *Al-Ḥashā'ishi*, a Tunisian Traveller, visited Benghazi in 1894 and found the majority of traders in Benghazi were Jews, and so were the traders of *Miṣrāta*.⁹⁶ This Jewish domination of trade in Benghazi seemed to be reasonable since most of Cyrenaican Bedouin lived as herders outside the city on hoof following their animals. Traders from *Miṣrātans* tribes and families had not yet developed into a large business community in Benghazi when *al-Ḥashā'ishi* passed through it. However, *Miṣrātans* grew in numbers and influence, and soon after overtook the Jews in business and affluence. *Miṣrātans* still dominate and enjoy Business to the present-day (Map. 12).

The Qaramānli State was no exception in relying on taxes and other tolls levied on city dwellers, tribes and caravans in addition to the spoils used to get from corsairs and other sea taxes imposed on European ships. It is needless to say that the Qaramānlis were not really interested in islamically legitimising the act of piracy, though, many Muslim scholars in Libya and abroad thought acting against the enemies' ships and their subjugation is a form of *Jihād* against the infidels at sea.⁹⁷ That coincided with the wishes of the Qaramānlis whose concern was mainly to fill their burse.

⁹⁴Op. cit., p 25.

⁹⁵Evans-Pritchard, *the Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, p 41.

⁹⁶*Al-Ḥashā'ishi, Jalā' al-Karb 'an Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, ed. al-Muṣrāti, pp 88-89, 103.

⁹⁷Bergna, *Ṭarāblus (1510-1850)*, tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 12.

However, tribes remained the prime source for taxation, in return the state almost offered them nothing. There had never been any investment or any form of expenditure on the infrastructure where those tribes dwelled for the taxes they paid. The only gratitude or recognition the state offered the tribes and their shaykhs was confirming their sheikhdом in their lands and the honour of having al-Barānīs al-Ḥumr (red mantles) as a mark of nobility. Tribes reluctantly paid their dues in order to retain their influence, and some of them often refused and ended up fighting the government and its local taxmen.⁹⁸ The most famous of such tax-wars between the government and tribes was the war of al-Mīri led by Shaykh Abu Bakr Ḥaddūth al-Brāʿaṣi, the leader of the Ḥarābi tribes and al-Jabal al-Akhḍar. He was, at first, known favourably to the authorities as Bākīr Bey, the Prince of the mountain,⁹⁹ who grew powerful for their liking, and later refused to pay the new toll called al-Mīri. He led a huge insurrection on the mountain leading the Ḥarābi tribes, spearheaded by his own Brāʿaṣa tribesmen, and their Murābiṭīn confederates. That rebellion cost the state dearly, especially in terms of tax returns and standing, and was brutally put down, Ḥaddūth was captured and imprisoned first in Tripoli and later in Benghazi. Ḥaddūth lost power and influence and died lonely in Benghazi in 1870, and was buried in Sīdi Ḥasayn cemetery in Benghazi.¹⁰⁰

However, the uprising that caught the imagination of everyone in Libya and became an epical tale was of al-Shaykh Ghūma al-Maḥmūdi in Jabal Nafūsa and southern Tunisia. He rebelled against the Ottomans, but was caught and imprisoned for twelve years in Turkey. He managed to break out from his jail and returned to Nafūsa to inflame feelings of his tribe, al-Maḥmīd, and the neighbouring Arab and Berber tribes against the Qaramānlis and later the Turks. His revolt lasted for about twenty-five years, the longest during the Ottoman 360 years of rule in Libya, to fall eventually dead in unequal battle in 1858. He was shut dead by the Turks in a place called al-Qaṭār in the Awāl valley near the village of Darj close to Ghadāmis.¹⁰¹ Ghūma al-Maḥmūdi is still seen as an outstanding example of bravery and astuteness. He is amongst very few whom were recognised and appreciated by most Libyan tribes and some Tunisians, and is

⁹⁸Graziani, *Barqa al-Hādi'ah*, tr. by I. ibn ʿĀmir, p 270.

⁹⁹Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-Qaramānli*, pp 256-257, 265.

¹⁰⁰Agostini, op. cit., p 294.

¹⁰¹Al-Qashāt, *A ʿlām min al-Ṣaḥrāʾ*, pp 134-137.

ceremoniously sang by most folklore poets. His influence to mobilise the tribes to revolt was not just in Libya, it surpassed the borders into Tunisia, and his call was heeded by Tunisians of Nifzāwa, Bani Yazīd and Maṭmāṭa. They mixed his life story with some myths and imagination especially when he took on the forces of the Tunisian government and defeated them in 1858.¹⁰²

¹⁰²Bilqāsim, *al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Ayāla al-Tūnusiyya (1861-1881)*, pp 106-107.

Libyan tribes between the Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr

Libyan society is roughly divided into two communal blocs on the basis of lifestyle, priorities and means of living; Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr (Ḥaḍar in Arabic). These two do not necessarily fancy each others' lives. Each sometimes find the life of its counterpart impossible to lead,¹⁰³ as Evans-Pritchard puts it;

Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr are separate communities. They are strangers to each other who meet but do not mix.¹⁰⁴

However, the discrepancy of such a living might have physically distanced them from each other, but they have dogmatically a great deal in common. They share the religion in its Māliki exposition, language, moral constitution, history, destiny, and the cultural legacy on this particular geographical plot in this region (Libya). The two, thereupon, had to play a reciprocal role to complement each other, help one another to live in peace and harmony, and have shown respect for each other.

However, the Bedouin, Bwādi as they are known in Arabic, are distinguished from the Ḥaḍar, who are known in Libyan dialect as Ḥuḍūr,¹⁰⁵ by their Ḥamiyya and ʿAṣabiyya (tribal solidarity and devotion). This esprit de corps is almost very weak, to say the least, amongst Ḥuḍūr or those Bedouin who have been urbanised, and departed from the life of Bedouin to that of al-Ḥuḍūr. The tribal fanaticism is very often born out of sheer ignorance of Islam, which they believe in very strongly, to the extent one of them said: "**nujāhid wa naṣūm**", we fight and fast, as if Islam consists only of these two tenets out of the established five. This is clearly a manifestation of their stamina and ability take on what hardship or trouble may come.¹⁰⁶

If one firstly looks at al-Ḥuḍūr and the sedentary people of oases, they all live in cities, towns and villages. Their homes usually made up of tree branches, and palm fronds plastered by local clay. There were also hutches that made of fronds and all sorts of straws called Zarāyib (sing. Zarība), and most of them lacked the sophistication or the

¹⁰³Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 50.

¹⁰⁴Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp 41, 43-44.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 63.

mosaic that homes in the rest of the Maghrib had. This had to be the result of the absence of any proper town planning by the Qaramānli authorities. However, those homes implied that there was a community - even though they make up a minority - that lived a life of sedentary abode.¹⁰⁷ On the other side, there were the Bedouin who were on the hoof all the time between various settlements along with animals that constituted their livelihood. The Bedouin zigzagged between towns and oases passing steppes, climbing mountains and crossing the Sahara from the Djrīd in Tunisia to the bank of the Nile, and deep south into Africa to the lake of Chad.

Furthermore, some of the Bedouin seasonally took shelter in caves especially on Jabal Nafūsa in places such as Ghiryān and Nālūt.¹⁰⁸ There are also caves on Jabal al-Akhḍar's versants where Cyrenaican Bedouin used to live in, and dubbed Ma^ʿāliq. Some of Nafūsa Inhabitants built homes underground like those in the Zintān area known as Dawāmis (sing. Dāmūs), or Ḥīshān Ḥafr (sing. Ḥūsh) in Ghiryān, and these basically consisted of a single large room dug underground, and smaller rooms would be drilled on the sides of that large one. These were similar to al-Ghīrān (sing. Ghār) meaning caves that the Berbers and the Jews lived in during the Qaramānli rule.¹⁰⁹ This kind of habitation was new to the Arabs, but was learnt from the Berbers. People carried on living in such caves until the beginning of the nineteenth century, and constituted about 75% of inhabited homes in Ghiryān.¹¹⁰

Another difference between the Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr is that the latter is made up of many ethnicities and mixed background living in semi-tribal or familial blocs in cities, towns, villages and oases. What it is meant by semi-tribal is that people live in clusters described in Libyan vocabularies as tribe, such as al-Karāghla, Shuwaykhāt and al-Ahāli. Ḥuḍūr also lack strong sense of ^ʿAṣabiyya (tribal solidarity and devotion) that Bedouin mentality is based upon. Much of those sedentary are of Must^ʿrib (Arabised) stock mainly Berbers known locally as al-Ahāli,¹¹¹ or al-Qabā'il (al-Qabā'il refers to

¹⁰⁷ Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., p 47.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., pp 31-46.

Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], (tr. by K. al-Tallīsi), p 427.

¹⁰⁹ Tully, *Ten year's residence at the court of Tripoli*, p 56.

Cf., Goldberg, *Cave dwellers and citrus growers*,

¹¹⁰ Al-Zāwi, *Muṣam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, p 244.

¹¹¹ Op. cit., p 171.

those families that carry al-Qabā'ili surname in Tripolitania).¹¹² Some of those Arabised along with some urbanized Arabs in addition to those who came within the Ottoman fold went through the process of re-tribalisation and Karāghlization, which also involved Andalusians, and Europeans such as Italian, Spanish, Maltese and Serbian renegades who embraced Islam and became Libyan Arabs. All those people found in Libya a safe heaven, and as time passed became equal citizens living in tribal and familial based communities.¹¹³

Al-Badw, al-Badāwa and al-Bādiya are different words for Bedouin, and Libyans sometimes use them in obscurity, but they all mean Bedouin. Al-Badw are the people, al-Bādiya is the place and al-Badāwa is the lifestyle and description of Bedouin who live a life in al-Bādiya (Bedouin country).¹¹⁴ Bedouin remained largely 'Urbān that most of them trace their origins to the tribes of Hilāl and Sulaym with a considerable number of al-Murābiṭīn who had some Berber elements that dissolved in them and were made Bedouin in an Arabian fashion. What is important is the fact that they all developed a zeal for their tribal entity, and insisted on the dimensions of Islam and Arabism. Ibn Khaldūn describes that;

"as a mixture of tribal 'Aṣabiyya with religious as well as ethnic".¹¹⁵

Bedouin or as often and collectively referred to as 'Urbān, are supposedly pure Arabs, which lacked exactness, but remained tribal and took pride in their Arab roots and lifestyle.¹¹⁶

Bedouin encampments dwell in tribe-based community, and are homogenous in their blood relatedness unlike al-Ḥudūr. This tribal homogeneity is sometimes artificially synthesised as in the case with some of the bigger tribes such as Wrfalla in Tripolitania¹¹⁷ and al-'Awāqīr in Cyrenaica.¹¹⁸ However, the artificial composition of

¹¹²Al-Tallīsi, *Mu ʿjam Sukkān Libya*, p 301.

¹¹³Al-Zuwayy, op. cit., p 254.

¹¹⁴Op. cit., p 46.

¹¹⁵Al-Khūri, *Madhāhib al-Anthrūbūlūjia wa 'Abqariyyat Ibn Khaldūn*, p 37.

¹¹⁶Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp 48-49.

¹¹⁷Al-Marzūqi, *'Abd al-Nabi Bil-Khayr*, pp 47-53.

¹¹⁸Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Barqa] (tr. by I. al-Mahdawi), p 423.

tribes was a human necessity and instinct of survival in harsh environment, which was austere and dominated by tribes who lived the austerity and managed to overcome their sense of being feeble. Therefore, all but very few had to gather under tribal umbrellas and appellation and embraced an Arab tribal designation such as al-Ḥasāūna, or Berber like Wrfalla, or even Turkish like al-Karāghla or any other tribal title for that matter. One of the most successful tribalisation is that of the tribe of al-Mjābra, whose name was derived from al-Tajābur, meaning literally fraternal coalition between families of different backgrounds to constitute a tribe called al-Mjābra. In doing so, they moved from a life of Bedouin to a sedentary settlement in the oasis of Jalū, and to farm and trade across the Trans-Sahara and spread their name - al-Mjābra (sing. al-Majbari) - in places that transcended the border of Libya.¹¹⁹

The tribe of al-ʿAwāqīr, for example, is a classic case of coalition between people of different tribal and familial backgrounds dominated by Arab blood, developed ʿAṣabiyya for their tribe, and occupied a large plot of land stretching along the coast and the plain around Benghazi city.¹²⁰ Al-ʿAwāqīr has played a pivotal role in the history of Cyrenaica especially in pushing the rivals, al-Jawāzi tribe, into Egypt in order to dominate much of White Cyrenaica.¹²¹ However, the most noticeable of al-ʿAwāqīr due to its diversity is the section of Sdaydi that consists of so many people from so many backgrounds who have very, if non, little blood relation among themselves. In spite of all that Sdaydi has produced some of the finest and charismatic leaders that al-ʿAwāqīr as whole take pride in, and the most famous Bayt of Sdaydi for producing such men is al-Kizza.¹²²

Usually every tribe would ensure that it carves a viable plot of land suitable for either seasonal farming or pasture with enough supply of water for people and animals alike. Otherwise would settle around a mausoleum of Murābiṭ or archaeological remains or at an intersection where the trading caravans use as a route. However there were times when the supply of Murābiṭ were up to the level of demand, in this case then the tribe would import a live Murābiṭ from somewhere else to serve their spiritual needs as well

¹¹⁹Bazama, *Wāḥāt al-Janūb al-Barqi*, (F.N) p 119.

¹²⁰Al-Tallīsi, op. cit, pp 275-276.

¹²¹Cyrenaica is usually divided into two main parts. One is al-Jabal (Green Mountain) where most of al-Ḥarābi tribes live. From al-Irkāb (the mountain versant) all the way to the desert of Sirt is known as White Cyrenaica dominated mostly by al-ʿAwāqīr and the brothers of Maghārba tribe.

as their children's education. Once the Murābiṭ dies they would convert his tomb into a shrine exactly as Wrfalla did with Sīdi Muḥammad Mubārak al-Fītūrī in Bani Walīd area. Sīdi Muḥammad Mubārak was the son of Sīdi ʿAbd al-Salām al-Asmar, whose tribe, al-Fwātīr, who some of them still come from Zlīṭin on every visiting season and pay homage to al-Mubārak at Bani Walīd. Wrfalla then returns the courtesy by going to Zlīṭin to visit them and seek blessing from the shrine of Sīdi ʿAbd al-Salām al-Asmar.¹²³

So, those were the conditions needed by people in a given tribe to settle down on a plot of land with known borders, often called Waṭan,¹²⁴ because they did not really believe in the State nor its political borders, and could never exchange their own land for a State. That helped the various tribal entities stay put and together for hundreds of years, and in doing so, they preserved their culture and heritage despite the calamities some of them went through.¹²⁵

The city dwellers, Ḥuḍūr, are known for their engagement in the economy and politics, and State management, and for that, they laid the infra and superstructure of the country by their active economic participation. They were the most prosperous sector of the population. They built industries such as textiles, homes and mosques, and exported salt,¹²⁶ and some farming in oases and other fertile land around their cities and towns. They also served the State especially the Qaramānlis by levying taxes and other dues that benefited the State at the same time benefited them by raising their status amongst the tribal population. As a result, the Ḥuḍūr developed a growing sense of responsibility towards Libya as a country, and came into contact with Bedouin whose sense of responsibility and citizenship was only confined to their tribal lands. They also managed to invest such contacts with the government and the larger hinterland population to benefit materially and exchange brotherly sentiment with tribes living on the periphery of Libya's national politics. Those contacts, once in a while, brought Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr even closer in matrimony something that rarely happens between the two. Some of these famous marriages like that of al-Kizza with

¹²²Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 61.

¹²³Al-Marzūqi, op. cit., p 47.

¹²⁴Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p 55.

¹²⁵Op. cit., p 46.

¹²⁶Bulugma, *Benghazi through the ages*, pp 20, 28, 51.

the two. Some of these famous marriages like that of al-Kizza with al-Kikhiya women, and the most famous of all was that of Aḥmad al-Qaramānli, Yūsuf Pasha al-Qaramānli's brother, with Khaddūja, the daughter of ʿUmūra Lamlūm al-Jāzwi, one of al-Jawāzi tribe influential men.¹²⁷ That was an obvious display of marriages between influential classes of Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr.

Moreover, Ḥuḍūr see no problem in affiliating themselves to the cities or villages they live in or immigrated from. Some of them used towns' names as their surnames such as al-Zlīṭini, al-Miṣrāti, al-Ghdāmsi, and al-Awjali, whereas it is rare to find a Bedouin who is named after a town. Bedouin wherever they go carry their tribal names with them even if they were born and lived in cities and towns. So, the hard-working and diligent characteristics of Ḥuḍūr in cities made them distinguished, and that in turn drew the attention of many political and social observers. Muḥammad Mannāʿ was born in Benghazi and grew up with many of them especially Miṣrātans (Map. 12), noticed their industriousness and the way they rebuilt Benghazi and made it the capital city of eastern Libya, and also their economic domination of the city. Mannāʿ commented on Miṣrātans, and wrote in his famous work on Libyan genealogies;

"It seems that the people of Miṣrātan origins are the most hard-working of all citizens in Libya. They are known for their diligence and effort-making that made them excel over other citizens in trade and the transportation of goods ...".¹²⁸

This sense of citizenship and responsibility, in my opinion, emanates from their indigenous origins, in other words, the Berber nativity of many of them who were Arabised over the years and transposed their origins with Islam and Arabism beyond recognition. Ismāʿīl Kamālī¹²⁹ wrote;

¹²⁷Bazama, *Tārīkh Barqa fil ʿAhd al-Qaramānli*, p 215.

¹²⁸Mannāʿ, *al-Ansāb al-ʿArabiyya fi Libya*, p 289.

¹²⁹Kamālī was a prominent Libyan scholar of Albanian origin, not Turkish as al-Zāwi assumed in Book of *A ʿlām Libya*. He knew Tripolitania well, and contributed heavily to Agostini's work on the population of Libya. He worked for the Italian colonial authorities to save Libya from their ravage. He was praised immensely for that by al-Zāwi in his *A ʿlām* pp 107-110.

***Only Hiwārah of Miṣrāta, who occupy the land towards Sirt and Cyrenaica, is still strong and numerous and very few of them pay tribute to the Arabs [tribes], and in the days of Ibn Khaldūn [14-15th century] they were engaged in trade with Egypt, Tunisia and al-Sūdān. Nowadays [19-20th century], the majority of people of Tripoli, Tājūra, Janzūr, Wrfalla, Tarhūna, Mislāta, Khums, Miṣrāta, Tāwirghā and Fazzān descended from the tribe of Hiwārah, but non of them admit to that. This was because of the humiliation that shrouded Hiwārah by the Arab presence in their land, and carried on the dishonour along with the rest of the Berbers of Tripolitania and Tunisia and the abashment of paying taxes to the State and their Arab lords.**

The name of Hiwārah remained in Bedouin usage to describe the local inhabitants of Tripoli and Khums as the sellers of eggs. There is nothing the Bedouin detest more than trade which they find tasteless. In the opinion of Tripolitanian Bedouin only the Jews and the Berbers are engaged in commerce who do not find it embarrassing. ¹³⁰

The relation between the Bedouin and Ḥuḍūr is one of ebb and flow governed by spontaneity exactly like the relation that dominated the Arab and Berber neighbours in the region. They all had shared interests to interact with one another in one country and one destiny under the auspices of Islam as the religion of them all. However, there were the odd skirmishes here and there, but not on the scale, for instance, amongst the Bedouin tribes and their sections or families, which sometimes forced them to live separately. In other instances, some tribes had to flee the country like what happened

¹³⁰Kamāli, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. Bin Yunūs, p 23.

with Awlād ‘Alī, Awlād Sulaymān, Jibāliyya, Maḥāmīd, Jawāzi and others. To look closer at home, al-Riyāyna tribe of Jabal Nafūsa is a classic example, to what happened to its sections when they could not live together. Riyāyna are Arabs, known locally as Ahl al-‘Ayn, and they all follow the school of Imām Mālik, yet they live in four separate quarters. It is thought the reason that they lived separately because of their different Arab genealogical backgrounds. Awlād Jābir and Awlād ‘Umar originally came from the eastern coast of Tripoli. As for Awlād ‘Inān came from Awlād Shibl, and al-‘Āybiyya came from another area on the coast. Even though their forefathers have settled in this area in the last seven centuries. However, this situation is an odd one, and yet the sense of relation, Mosque, the government offices along with the local market remains the meeting point and the common ground for contact.¹³¹

¹³¹ Al-Ṭāhir, op. cit., pp 47-48.

Agostini, *Sukkān Liḥya* [Ṭarāblus al-Gharb], (tr. by K. al-Tallīsi), p 477.

Ending

When the Arab tribes dispersed in Libya they reshaped the demographic composition and influenced the lives and politics of the region. This influence penetrated deep into the tribal infrastructure and superstructure and marked the distinction between the Bedouin and Ḥaḍūr of Libya. They also rearranged the relation between the superior tribes i.e. Saʿādi tribes and their Murābiṭīn clients particularly in Cyrenaica to complement each other. Tribes especially Bedouin from amongst had an economy that made them free of the ruler's spell during the Qaramānli rule which in due time brought the wrath of the State upon them causing them to suffer alienation as a result of their independence.

Conclusion

Conclusion

To sum up by a way of conclusion; the pre-Islamic Libyans were tentatively dubbed Berbers and tenuously recognised as one ethnic community despite the fact that they are inhomogeneous in their dialects, religion and lifestyle.

There were many opinions about the origins of Berbers, or Amazigh, as they like to be known, which contributed to the uncertainty about their genesis. One of those opinions was the assumption that they were of “Arab” origins that paved the way for their association with the conquering Arabs in 643 (24H) leading to a comprehensive transformation of Libya. However, I am more inclined to the opinion suggesting the Berbers are mixture of every one else in the region. Moreover, when Islam became firmly established in the region, Berbers put behind them all sorts of conflicting opinions about the origins, and joint the great Islamic march, and many of their tribes played immeasurably different roles in the history of Islam at different times that influenced events and people of the region.

North Africa in general, and Libya in particular, was transformed as a result of the influx of Arab tribes, particularly the tribes of Hilāl and Sulaym, into Berber land. That ignited a process of dramatic change altered not only the ethnicity but also the culture and language in favour of the Arabs over others. Despite the strong Arab camp the Berbers always went on to being the rulers of the region after their Islamisation e.g. Banu Khazrūn, Berber family of Zanāta tribe, ruled Libya longer than any other Arab tribe.

The close contact between Arabs and Berbers sat off a process of mutual influence, and the consequence was many Berbers were Arabised by various means of inducement and pressure applied on them. But, in fairness, inducement and incitation to become an Arab exceedingly outweighed pressure. Moreover, Berbers and Arabs interacted with one another and created a new social structure that upheld Islam and endorsed Arabism.

Having a panoramic view on the successive periods of Islamic rules there was clearly a very little room, if any, for discrimination or racial extremism, which helped the acceleration of the process of Arabisation in the region. Being an

Arab speaker made the repercussions, detriments and indemnities of the political fall-outs throughout the political history of Islam less harmful on those who were Muslims and Arabised, and definitely made those infamous “Arabangers” against non-Arabs avoidable. It was evidently the dynamic nature of Islam and its impact that played a crucial role in Arabising Berbers by voluntary means in most circumstances, and at the same time preserving the remaining ethnic (Berbers) and religious (Jews) communities who wished to remain so. Therefore, the integration of the majority Berbers and Arabs amongst others made tribes in Libya less blood-related and not on the whole of pure cognation but more of a social umbrella stipulated by Islam and Arabic.

The Muslim Turks progressed gradually within the Arab-dominated caliphal structure to reach the zenith of the Islamic State and that coincided with the Spanish Reconquista, and the ultimate expulsion of Muslims from Spain, which led to the fleeing of some of those beleaguered to Libya. Those rather highly cultured Andalusians were eventually absorbed into the main city-dwellers society - mostly in Tripoli, Benghazi and Darna. Muslims in Spain fashioned a highly civilised and lavish life-style to the envy of many Europeans and eastern Muslims alike, and when they came to North Africa they brought it with them and embossed it on the places where they settled in. They also inflamed feelings amongst Muslims against those who expelled them from the homes in the Iberian Peninsula, and that brought in the Ottoman Turks as the new defenders of Muslims in the Mediterranean. This facilitated an interaction between the Ottoman soldiers with the locals that led to the “Karaghilization” of many Berbers and some Arabs.

Those events changed Libya dramatically and introduced yet more ethnicities that by time were tribalised in a Libyan fashion to form al-Karāghla tribe and have, until the present-day, overshadowed Libyan life. More importantly, the echo of Karaghilization laid the foundation of the first Libyan State post-Islamisation in its history.

The transmutation of Ottoman Janissaries into an Arab speaking tribe known as Karāghla emerged from the fermentation of Ottoman soldiers with local Libyans and the drafting of mainly Berbers, Arabised and Arabs into the ranks of Ottoman soldiery with the active blessing of the local tribal shaykhs. Karāghla went on to dominate the affairs of the State and subjects alike. As a result, there has been an erroneous belief that all Ottoman soldiers were of Turkish origins, consequently, Karāghla are the product of Turkish soldiers marrying local women. Therefore, one of the misnomers in Libya's history has been the assumption that the Karāghla are of Turkish ancestry who have no paternal roots in Libya. But this emerged untrue, and was conclusively refuted as was set out to be one of the key questions of this research.

The study also revealed the degree of fusion amongst people of different backgrounds within the authority of the State, and proved that many of the Ottoman rulers of Libya who overwhelmingly were not locals nor were they ethnically Turks, with exception of Qaramānlis, yet they still felt and behaved like Tripolitarians, and were accepted as such by Libyans. Likewise most of the Karāghla are of Libyan origins adopting Arabism under the auspices of Islam with its indigenous interpretations.

Moreover, Ribāṭ and Murābiṭīn are nomenclatures that had Libyan characteristics in terms of their linguistic and historic backgrounds that distinguished them from the rest of other tribal groupings in the region. However, the study clarifies the distinction between Murābiṭīn and Murābiṭūn, not just in intonation but denotation and historical experiences as well. So was the difference between the ʿAlīd Ashrāf who are supposedly of the Prophet's decent and al-Murābiṭīn who were loose confraternity despite the occasional overlapping. This manifested itself in the context of Ṣūfism and the origins of the founders of Ṣūfī Orders and the influence of Ṣūfī Shaykhs on the larger Libyan society and the State's politics.

The belonging to either Ashrāf or Murābiṭīn results in certain social nobility like reverence and respect by State and citizens alike with attached State's economical prerogatives like exemption from its taxes. This in due course attracted some to join this rather noble and self-esteeming club by proclaiming to be of an ʿAlīd ancestry by all means including fabrication, to enjoy eminence and avoid taxes and State's aggression. However, some who claim to be of ʿAlīd descent like al-Brāʿaṣa tribe did not really behave godly like what they are supposed to be, which cast doubts over their assumed descent. As a matter of fact, al-Brāʿaṣa joined the greater pack of Saʿādi tribes who descended from the Sulaymīd line instead of Ashrāf or Murābiṭīn. They, also, have had no sanctified men from amongst themselves, and certainly did not claim nor behave so like the rest of Murābiṭīn. In fact Brāʿaṣa behaved the opposite of Murābiṭīn, and even had some Murābiṭīn of their own, like the rest of Saʿādi tribes who behaved masterly by having vulnerable Murābiṭīn within their fold of protection. This again corroborated the belief that tribes in Libya are not necessarily blood related.

It is worth noting that the influence of Murābiṭs was so decisive to the extent that most towns and neighborhoods needed to have their sanctified Murābiṭ tombs or a Zāwiya to viably thrive. Benghazi, the second biggest Libyan city, was built around a Moroccan Murābiṭ, Sīdī Ghāzi, where its name, Benghazi, derived from. This also led to the question of Shīʿism in a predominantly Māliki land and touched upon the relation between Shīʿism and Ṣūfism and their residue in some Libyan Ṣūfī practices. The strength and influence of Murābiṭīn, including al-Ashrāf in the forefront, stems from Islam, therefore, they will continue to play a fundamental role in all Libya's walks of life as they have always done in the past.

Immigration into Libya was a decisive factor in reshaping the country and its tribal landscape, so was the immigration out of it. The causes of immigration from Libya ranged from drought and famine to State negligence and tax

overburdens; to state-sponsored disciplinary campaigns against disobedient tribes to inter-tribal wars.

The authorities in Libya did not just nurture and sponsor some tribes but in some cases disciplined other tribes who threatened their interests, and had to expel them to maintain such influence and stature. Those deportees were too many to count but amongst them were the tribes of Zuwayla, Awlād ʿAlī, Awlād Sulaymān, Rimāḥ, Hanādi, Fwāyīd, Jawāzi, Jibāliyya to name a few. It said that Libyans and those of Libyan origins are to be found in every major town and city in Tunisia for example. Others reckon that the numbers of those of Libyan descendants in Egypt far outnumber the present total population of Libya.

Sanūsiyya was founded by an Algerian immigrant who found refuge in Cyrenaica, and with Bedouin partnership managed to spread his teaching deep into Sub-Saharan Africa and along the southern flank of the Mediterranean. This revealed the readiness of Libyan tribes to embrace any sensible and acceptable leadership either from amongst themselves, or their fellow Arabs or Muslims, proving their pragmatism and effectiveness at home and abroad with their utter devotion affirmed to Islam and Muslims wherever they might be.

It is demonstrated from this study that those tribes played various roles at various times, and their role varied in size, intensity and significance. Some of their names reached the highest of political status like that of the Bourguiba family whose one of its offspring, al-Ḥabīb Bourguiba, founded modern Tunisia. Equally, King Idrīs of an Algerian descent, and the grandson of the founder of the Sanūsi Order founded post-colonial Libya. Nowadays those Libyan tribesmen still represent a vinculum between Libya in general and their tribal homeland of origin in particular, and indeed in the countries they live. The people of Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Niger and Chad who live on the borderlines with Libya are tribally correlated to Libyans in blood and problems, especially over some of the controversial borders between those countries and

Libya - because of the tribal presence i.e. Tuaregs - are still vehemently contested.

When the Arab tribes dispersed in Libya they reshaped the native demographic composition and influenced the lives and politics of the region. This influence penetrated deep into the tribal infrastructure and superstructure and further underlined the distinction between Bedouin and Ḥaḍūr in Libya. Bedouin consisted largely of Arabs with some Berbers who were originally nomads but over time they were Arabised and joined the Arab tribal camp. However, there are Bedouin tribes who are suspected of being of Berber origins i.e. al-Fwākhir, but as demonstrated they could only be Arabs for the reason revealed in the study, the same is said about some other Arab tribes who are originally Berbers, and vice versa.

The division and sub-divisions of Libyan tribes is to some extent different from the arrangement in the eastern part of the Arab world, but Libya's tribal make-up conforms more to the Islamic Arab description as provided for by the sayings and traditions of the Prophet known in Arabic as Aḥādīth. The clustering of tribes was necessitated by many factors namely the need for cohabitation by a system known locally in Libya as Muwākhāh. To officiate Muwākhāh amongst tribes, prominent shaykhs applied what they called the system of al-Mukātabah (registering) in which people who get together and unite under a particular tribe, would then become officially registered as brothers. That in turn entailed them rights as well as imposed upon them obligations to the tribe they registered with as brothers in Islam and blood.

The immigrant Arabs of Hilāl and Sulaym also rearranged the relation between their superior tribes, i.e. Sa'ādi tribes, and their Murābiṭīn, or clients particularly in Cyrenaica, to complement each other. Sa'ādis owned the land and Murābiṭīn tied themselves to them, but served the spiritual needs of the

Saʿādis as well as acted as arbitrators between the Saʿādis themselves in a strictly bedouin setting.

Tribes lived different lifestyles; some pitched their tents in the desert other on mountain versants like those on Jabal al-Khaḍar of Cyrenaica. Others (Arabs, Berbers and Jews) dwelled in caves on the mountain of Nafūsa, therefore, the tribal economy varied amongst Libyans who thrived to remain free of the ruler's spell during the Qaramānli rule which in due time brought the wrath of the State upon them causing them to suffer alienation as a result of such independence as proven.

In a nutshell, Libyans in their well-defined nation-state can be described as Arabic speaking Muslims made up of all sorts of nearby ethnicities but chiefly of Berbero-Arab stock with certainly Arab inclination, ethos and sense of tribalism firmly established by the end of the Qaramānli epoch.

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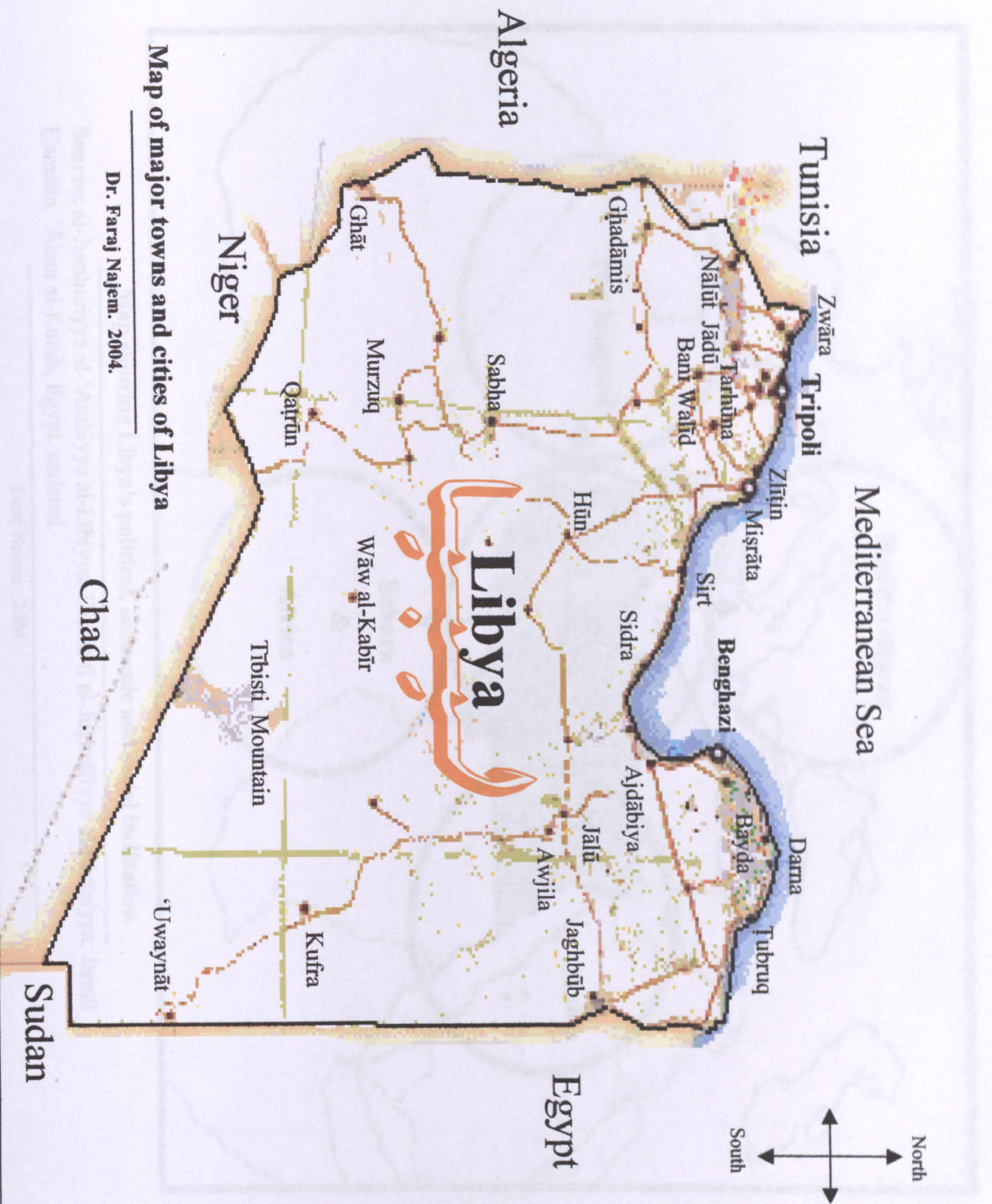
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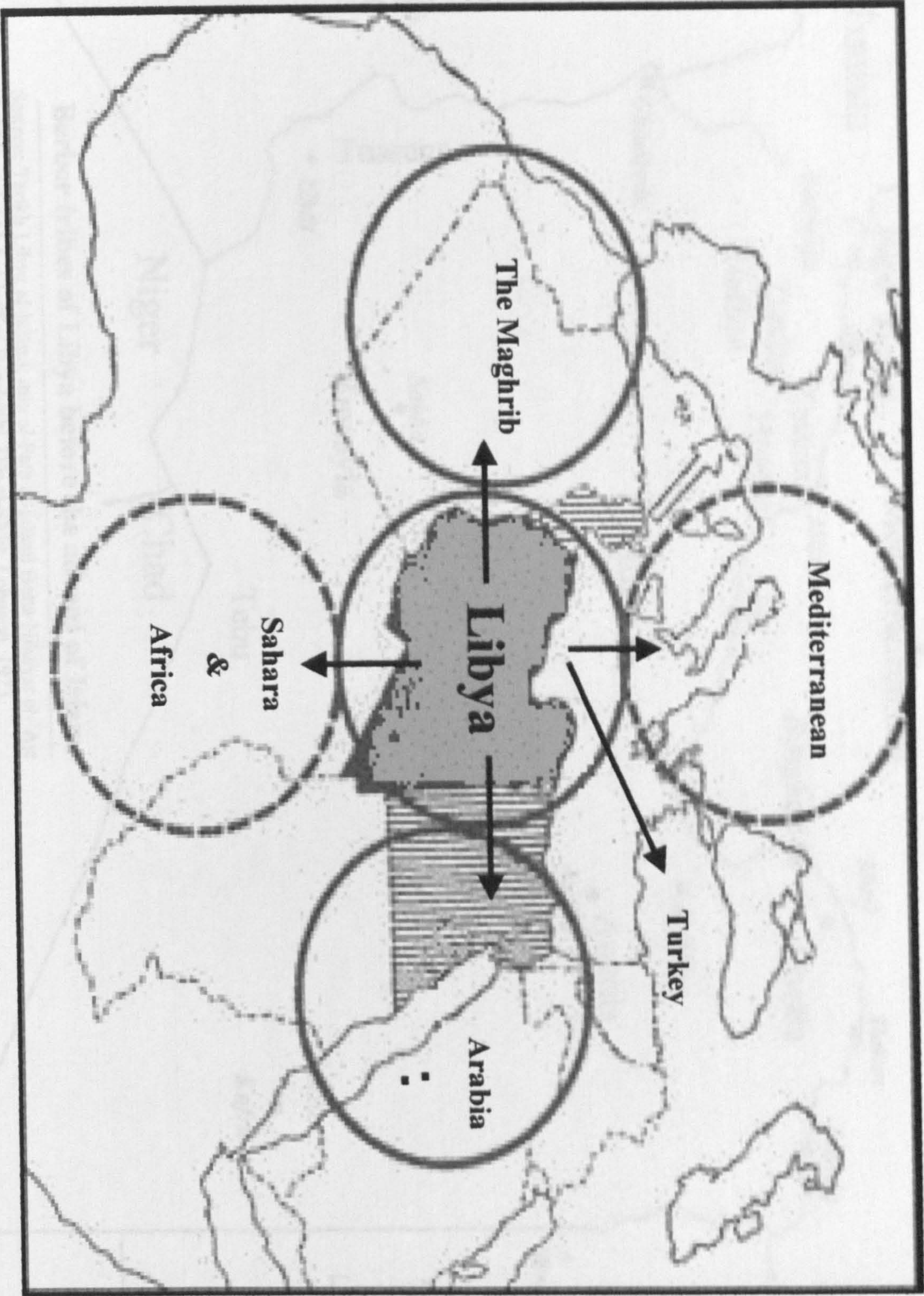
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Maps



Map of major towns and cities of Libya

Dr. Faraj Najem. 2004.

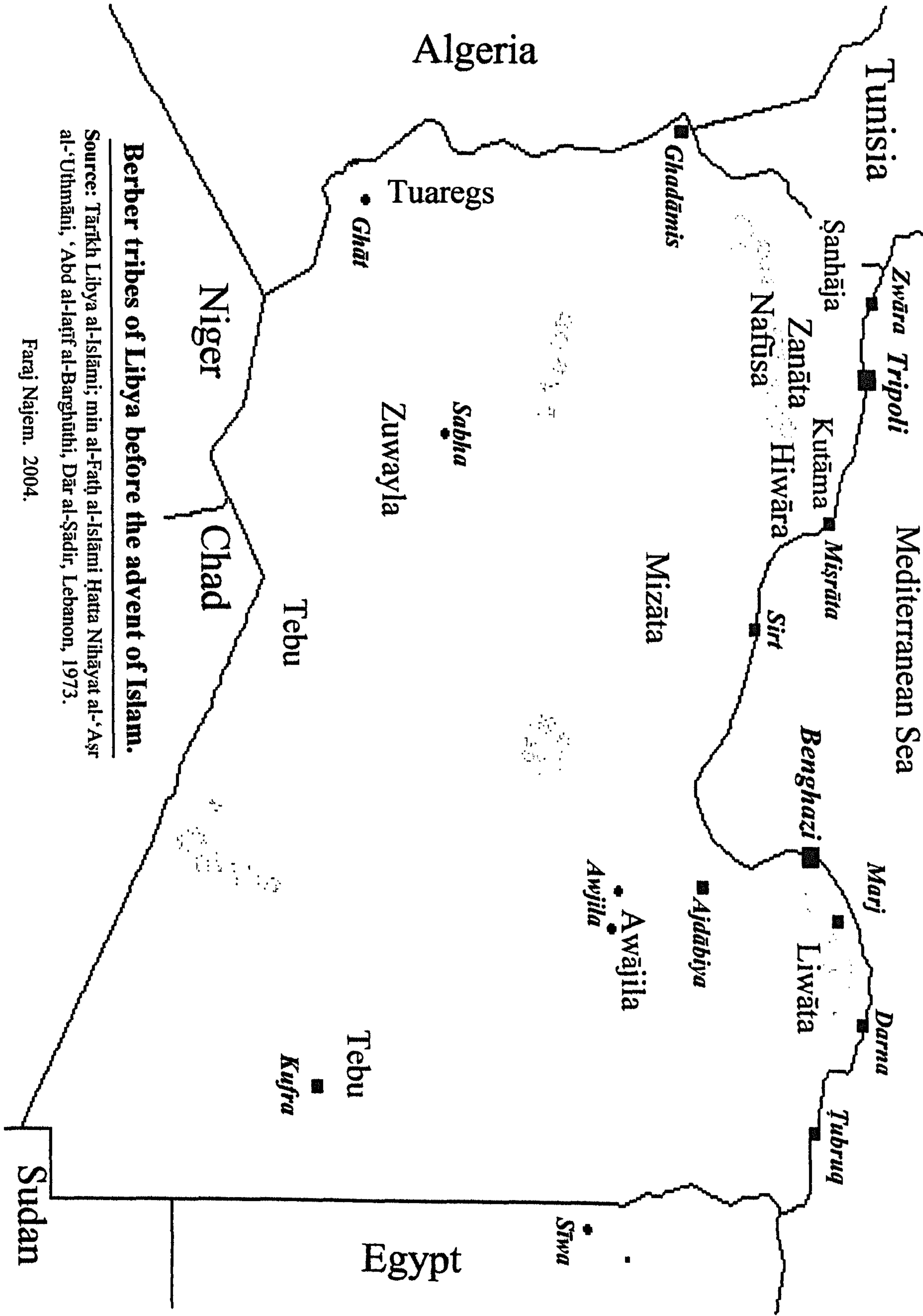


Map showing Libya's political, economic and social inclination

Source: al-Jumhuriyya al-'Arabiyya al-Lībiyya, Dirāsa fī al-Jughrāfiyya al-Siyāsiyya, Jamāl Hamdān, 'Ālam al-Kutub, Egypt, undated.

Faraj Najem. 2004.

Map 3



Berber tribes of Libya before the advent of Islam.

Source: Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi; min al-Fatḥ al-Islāmi Ḥatta Nihāyat al-‘Asr al-‘Uthmāni, ‘Abd al-Jaṭīf al-Barghūthi, Dār al-Ṣādir, Lebanon, 1973.

Faraj Najem. 2004.

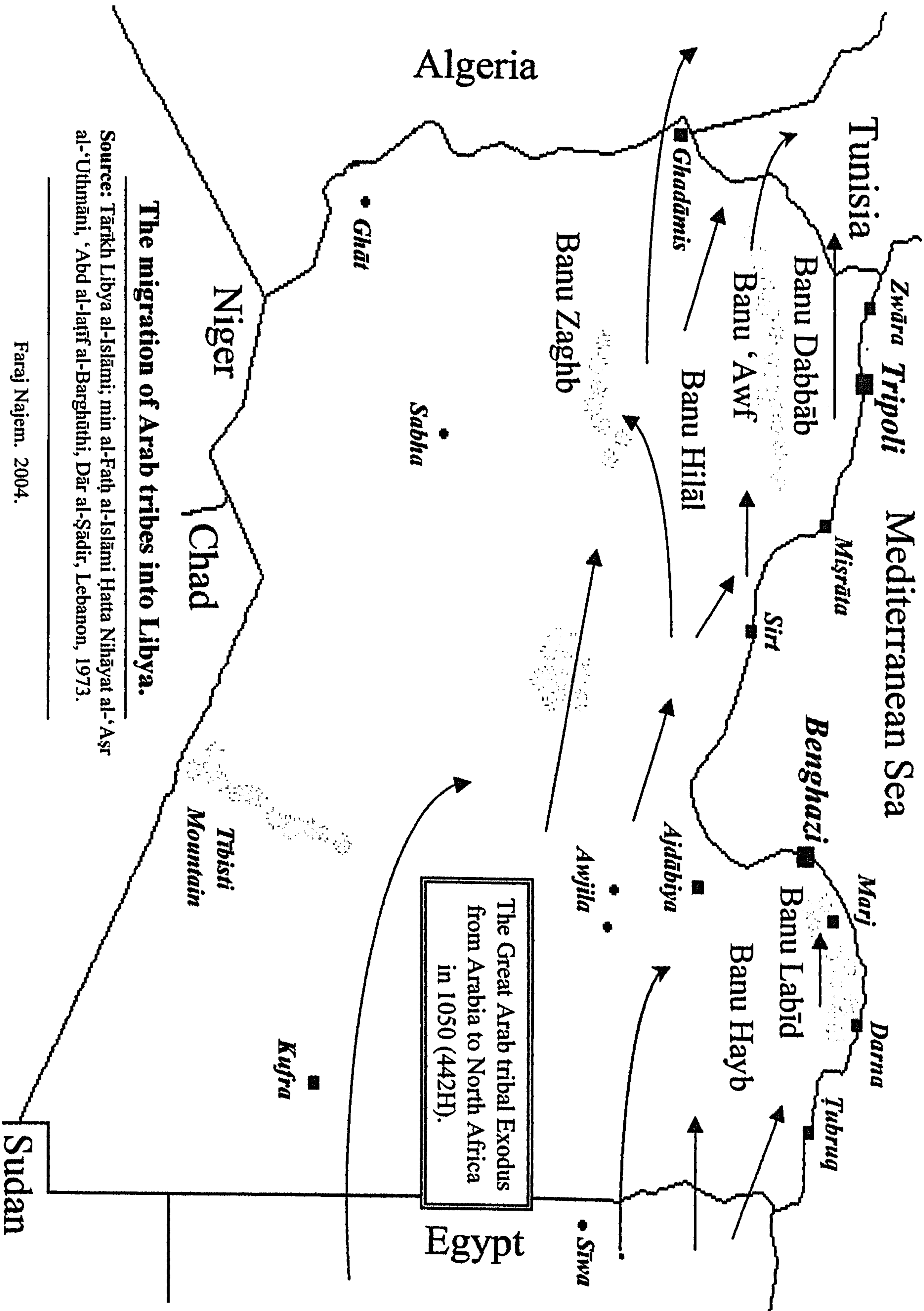
Sudan

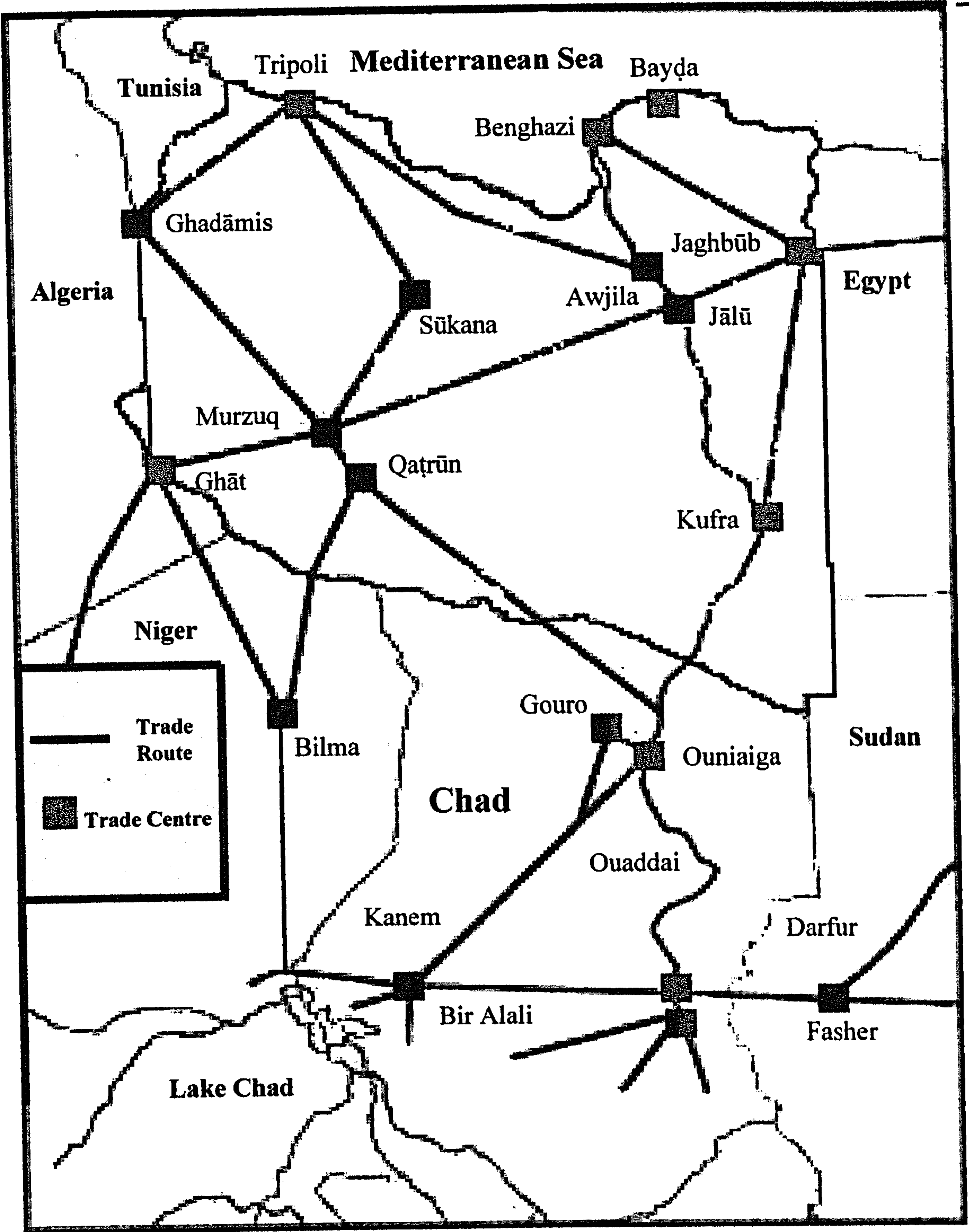
Egypt

Algeria

Tunisia

Mediterranean Sea

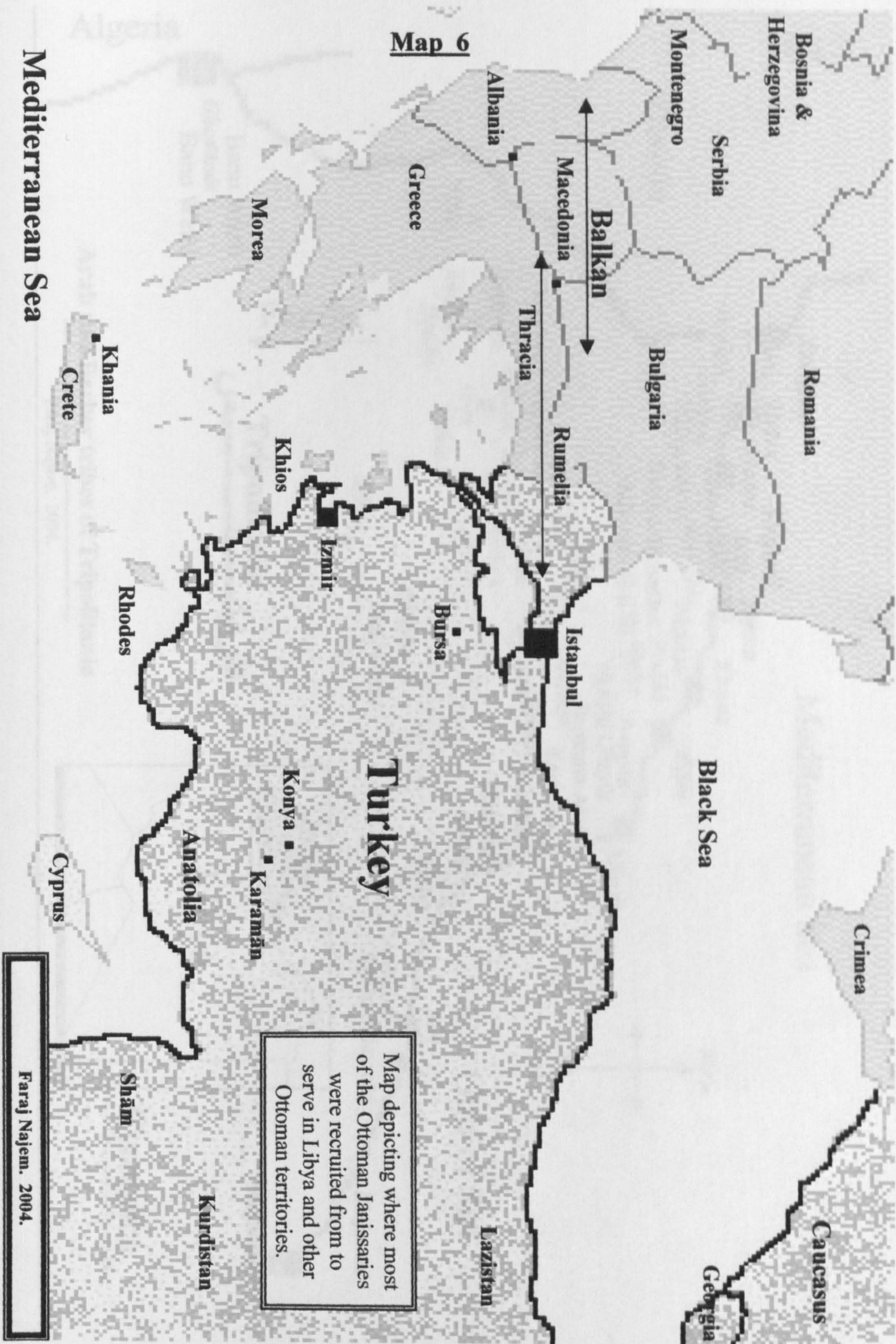


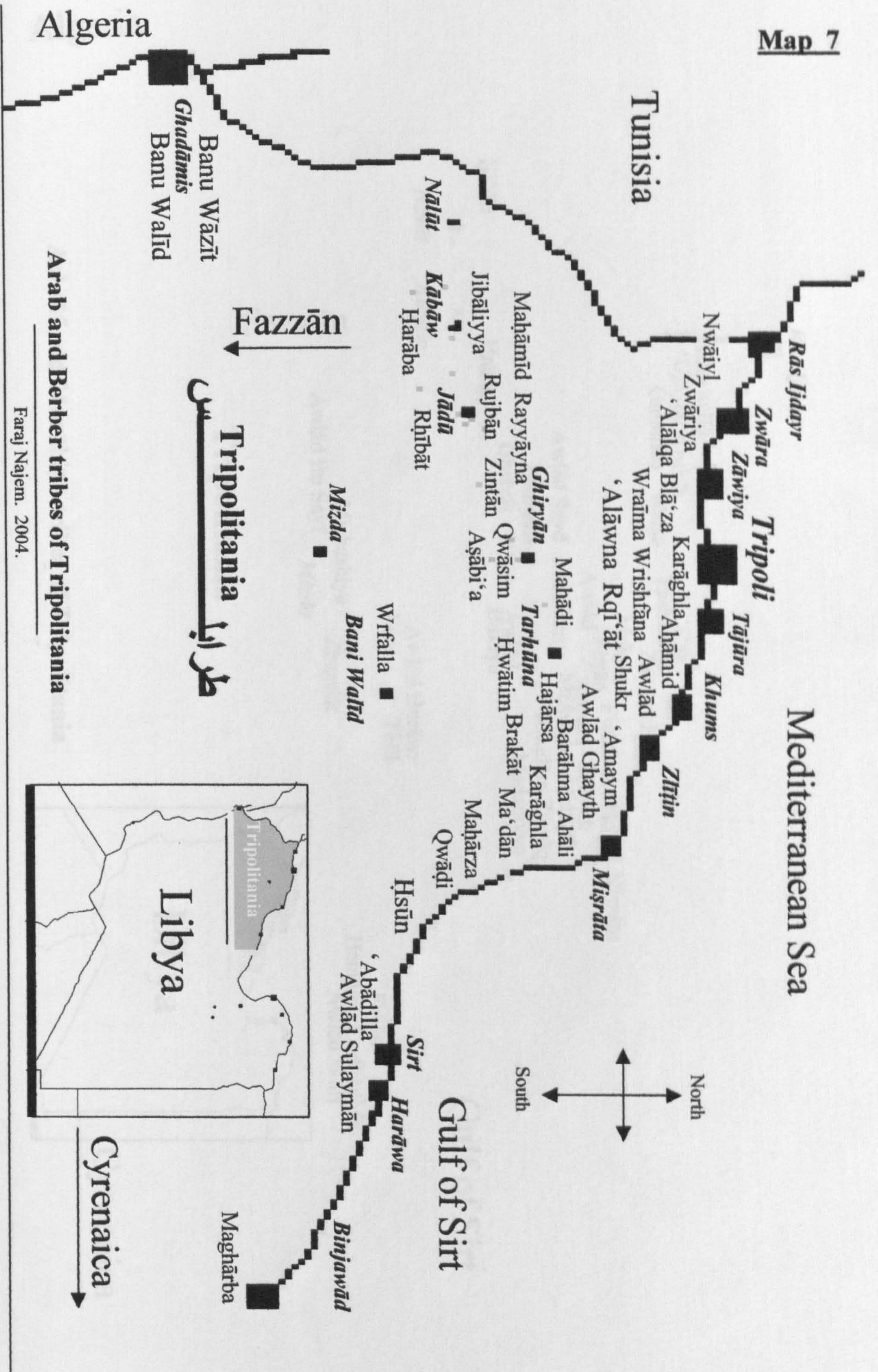


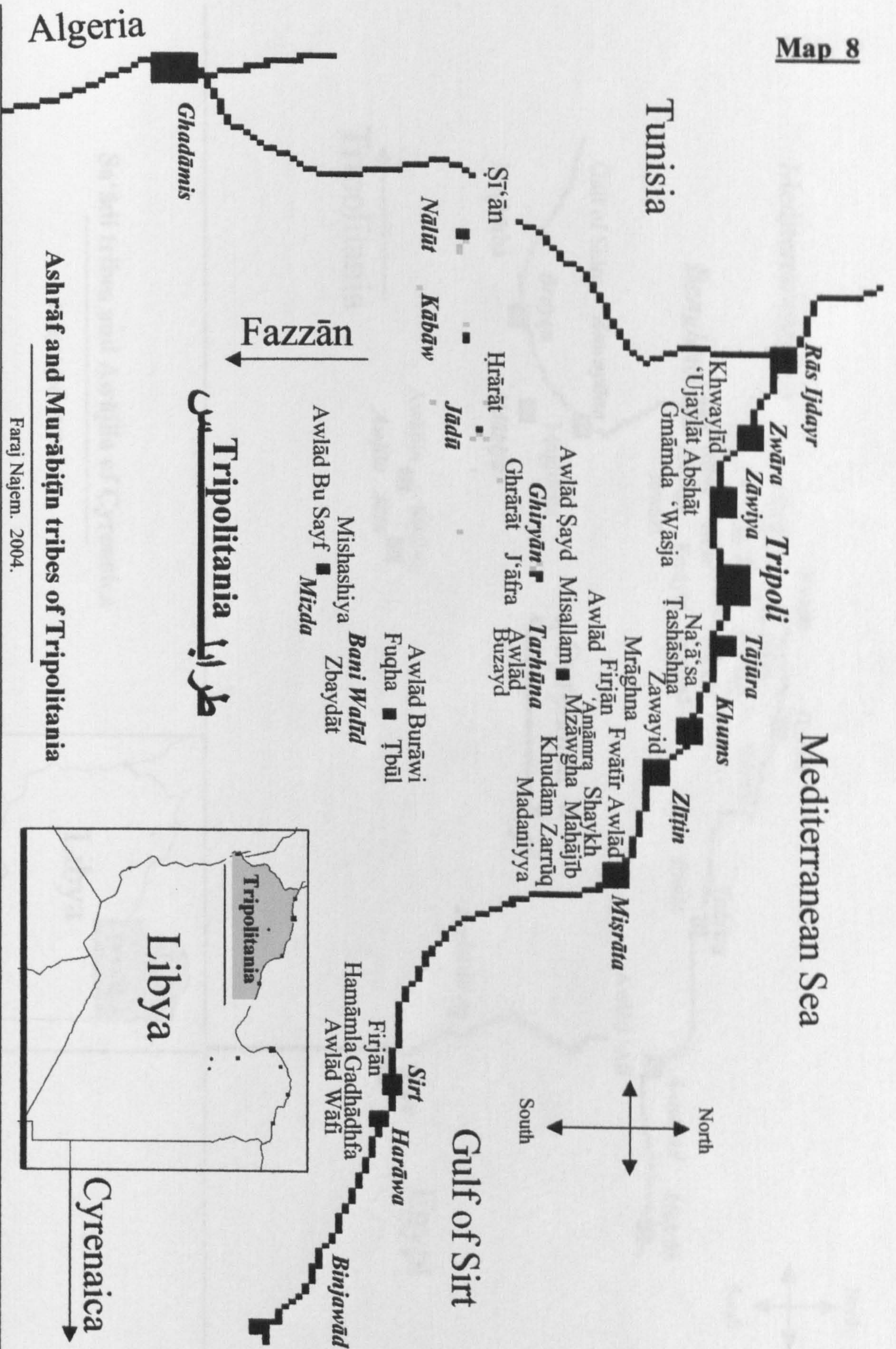
Trade Routes through Libya in 19th Century

Source: Eastern Libya, Wadai (Ouaddai) and the Sanusiyya: a Tariqa and a Trade Routes, Dennis D. Cordell, *Journal of African History*, vol. 18, no. 2, 1972.

Faraj Najem. 2004.



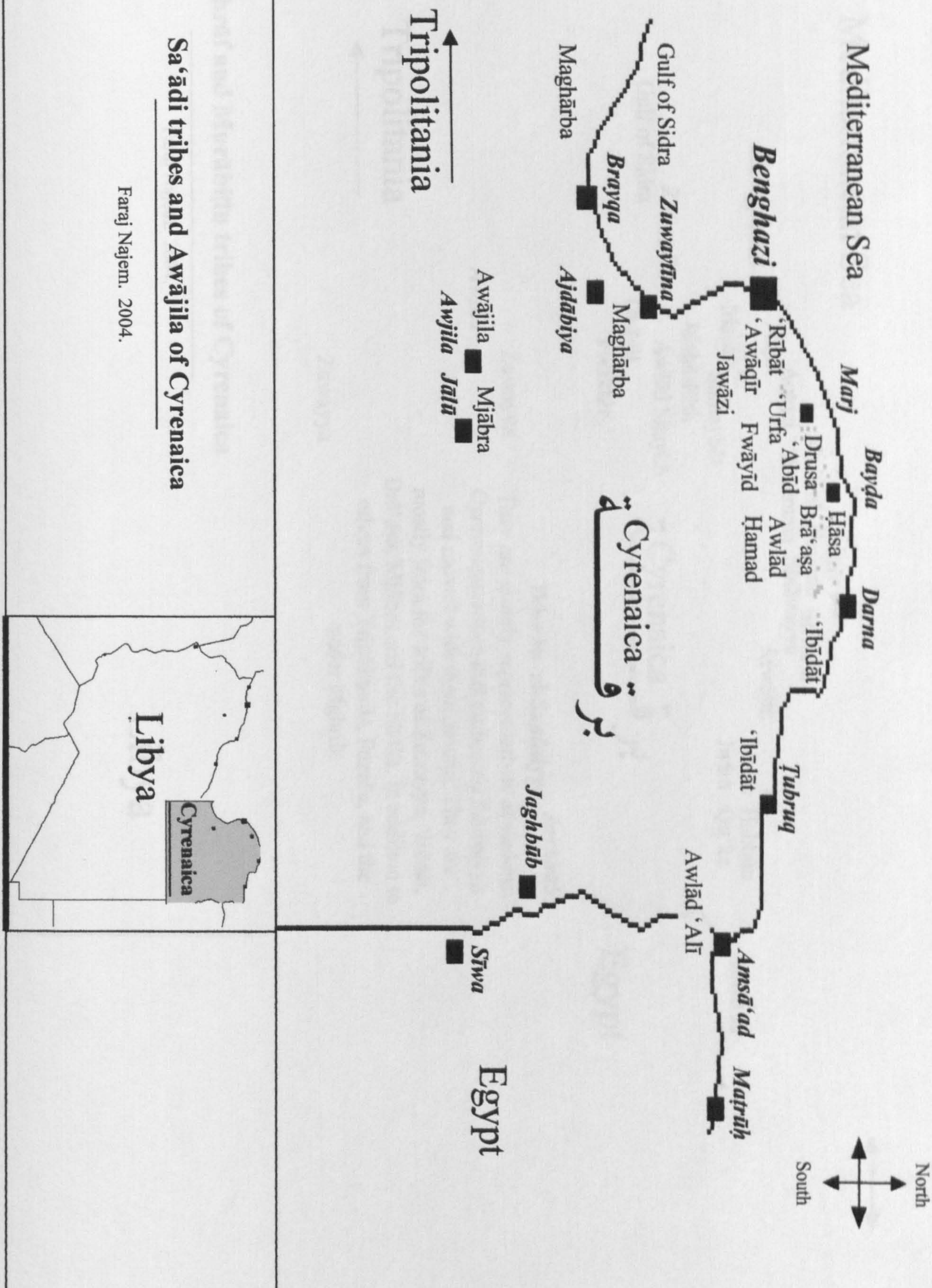




Ashrāf and Murābiṭān tribes of Tripolitania

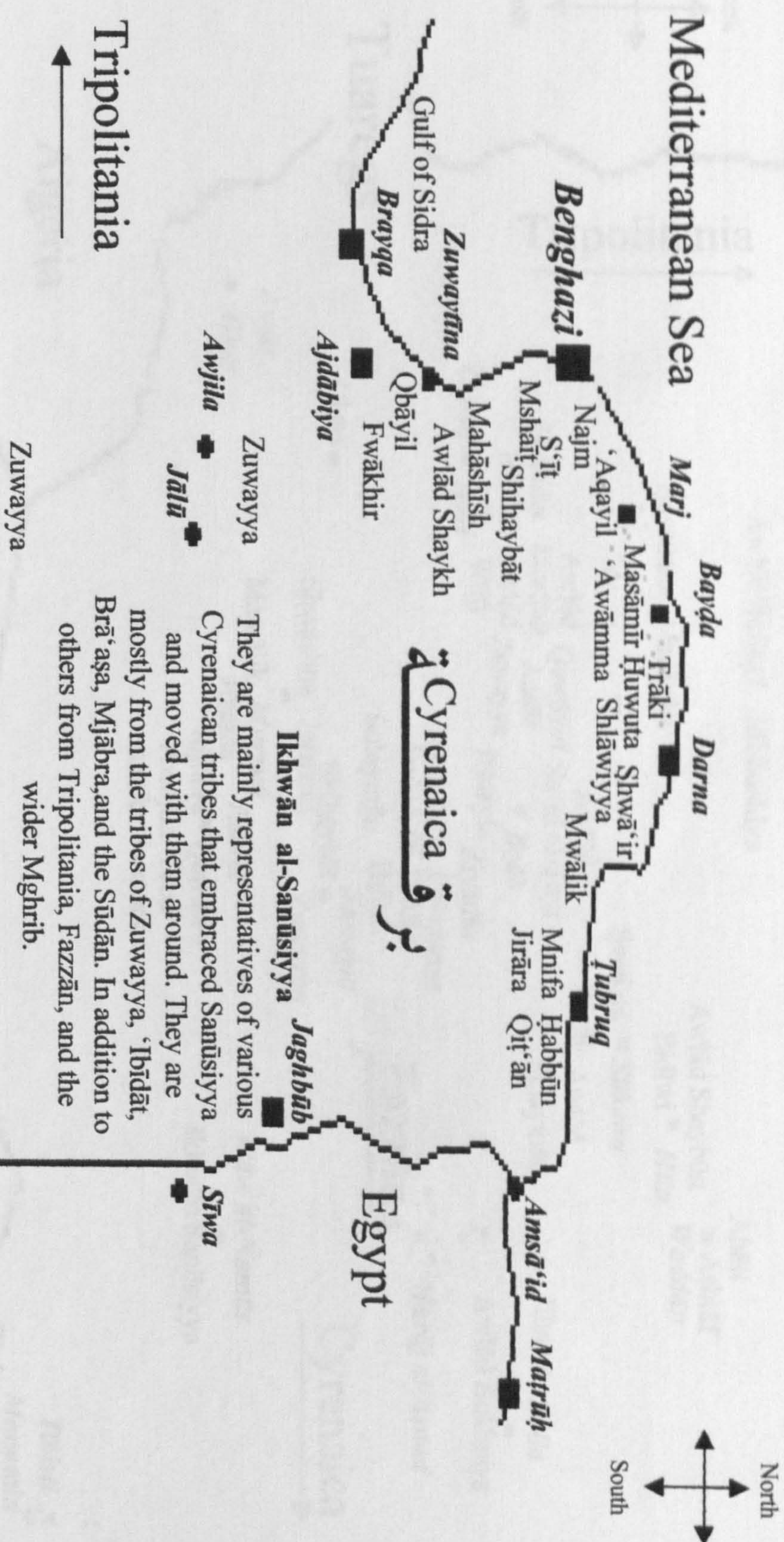
Faraj Najem. 2004.

Map 9



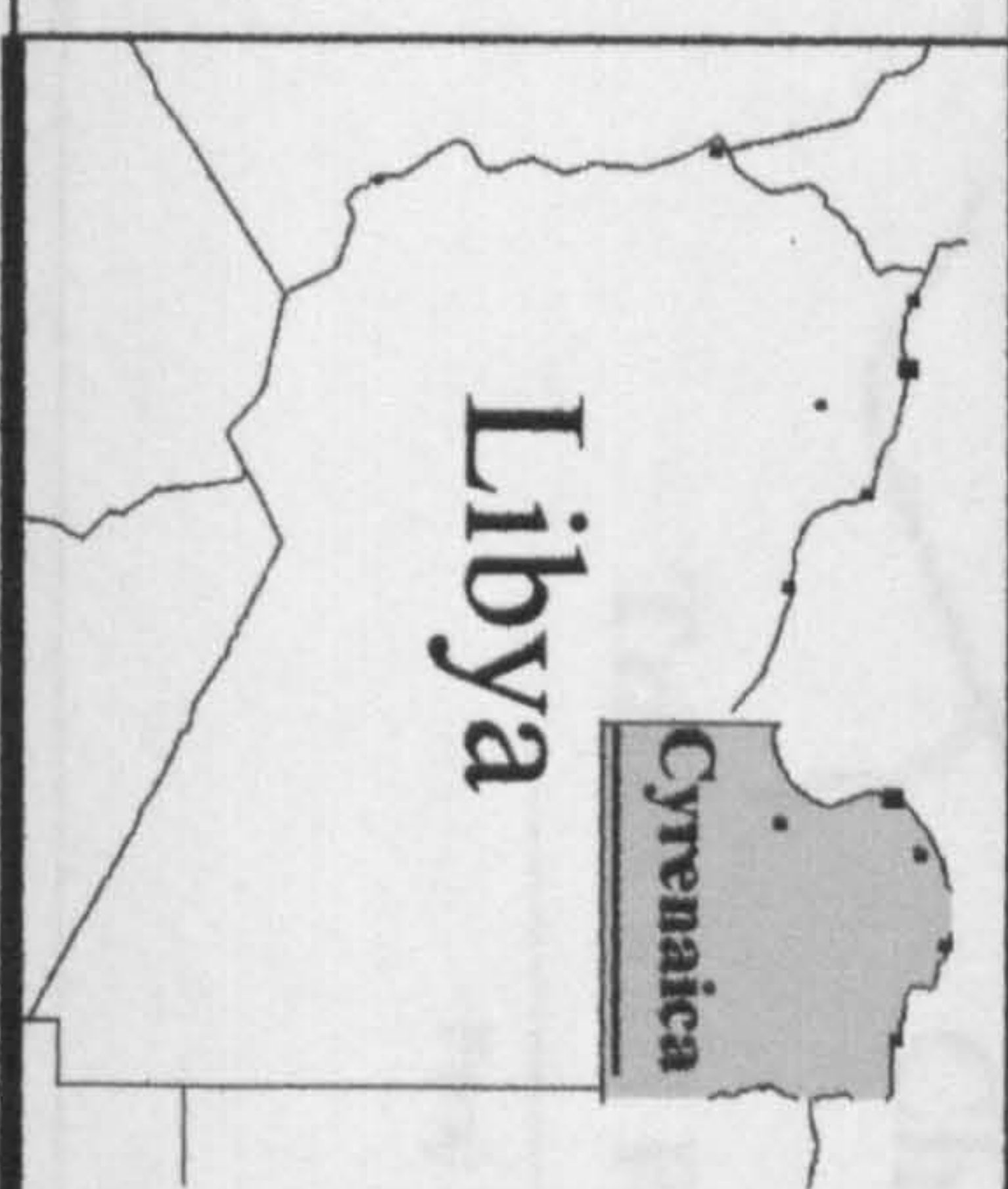
Sa'adi tribes and Awajila of Cyrenaica

Faraj Najem. 2004.

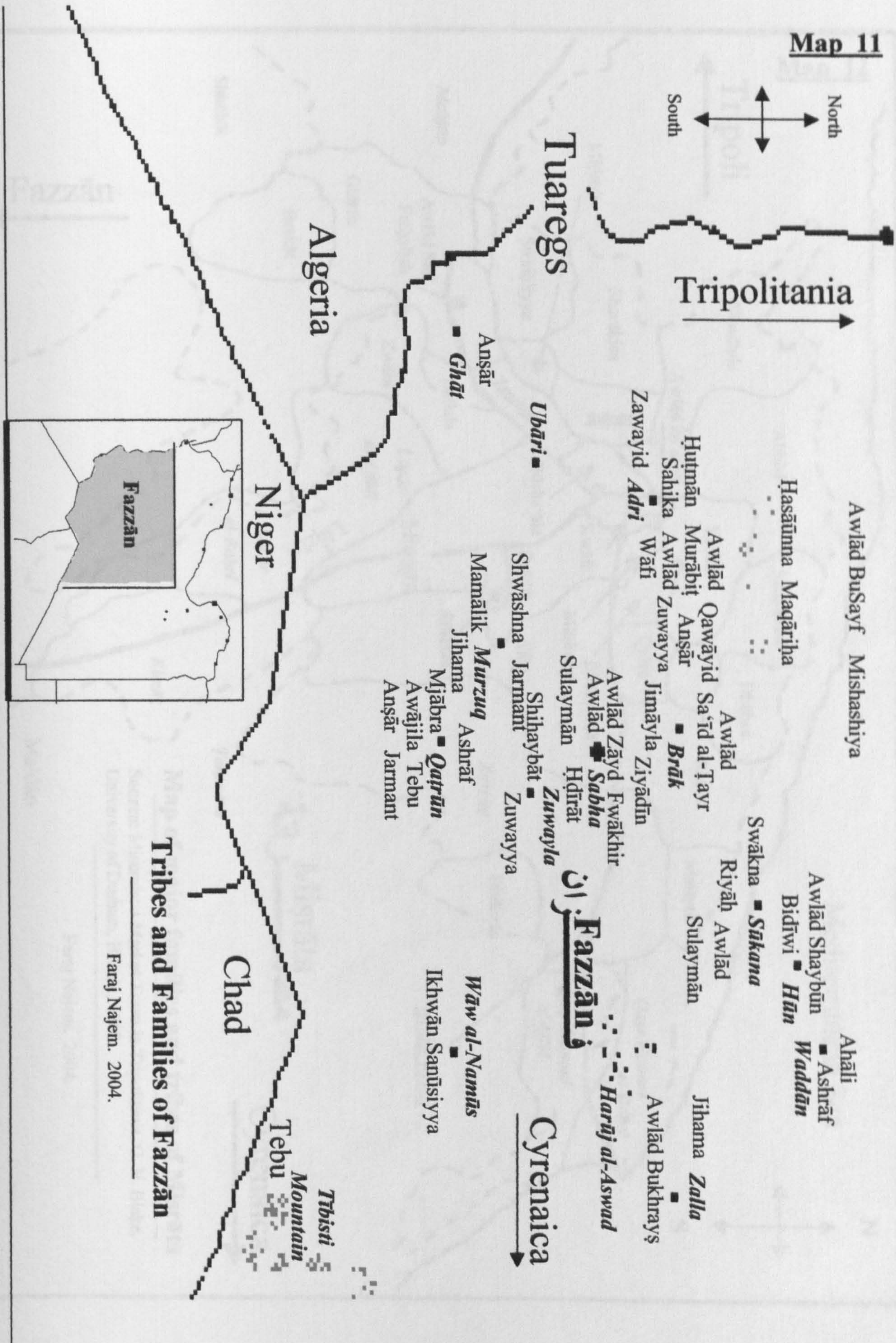


Ashrāf and Murābiṭīn tribes of Cyrenaica

Faraj Najem. 2004.

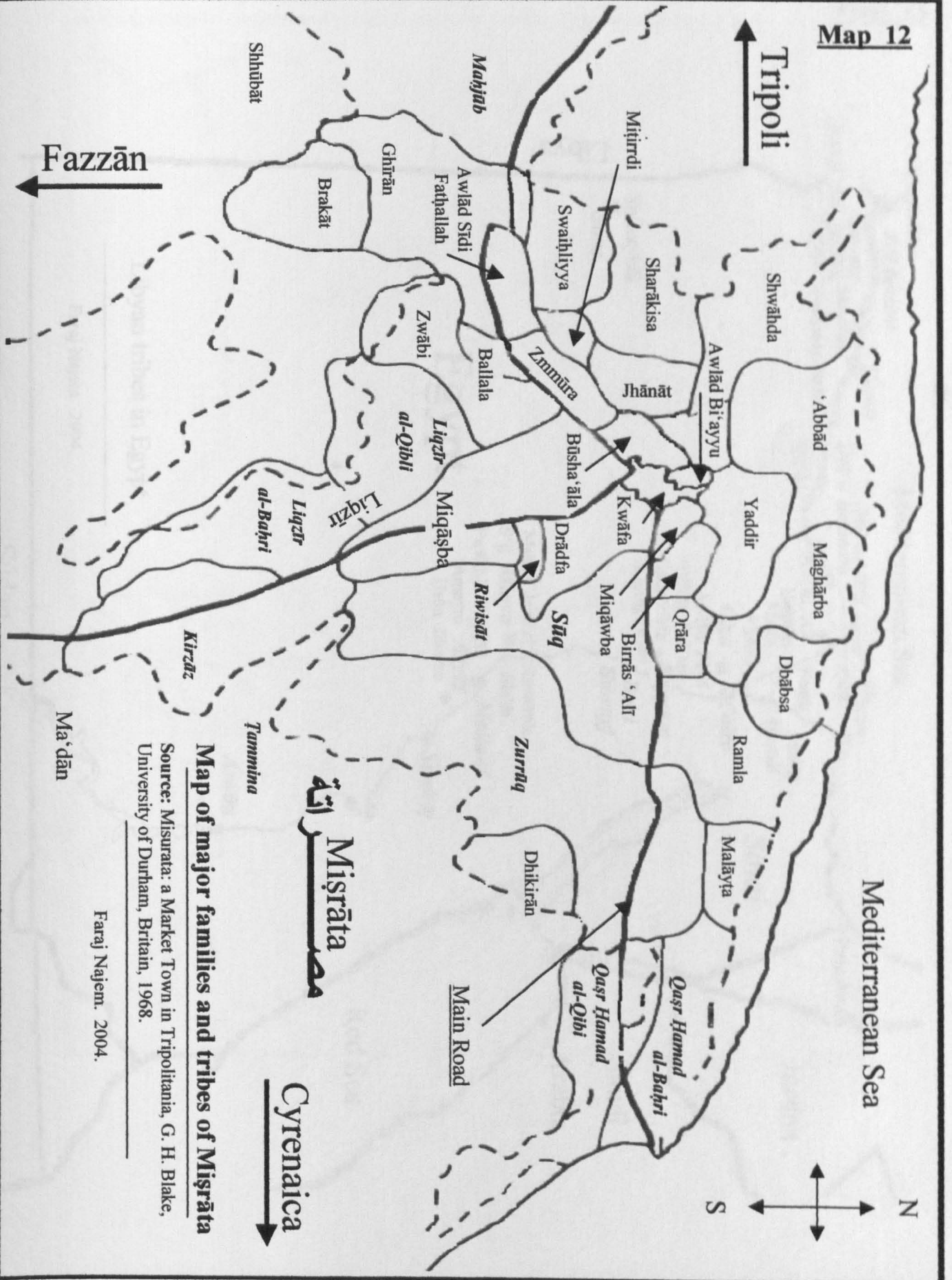


Map 11



Faraj Najem. 2004.

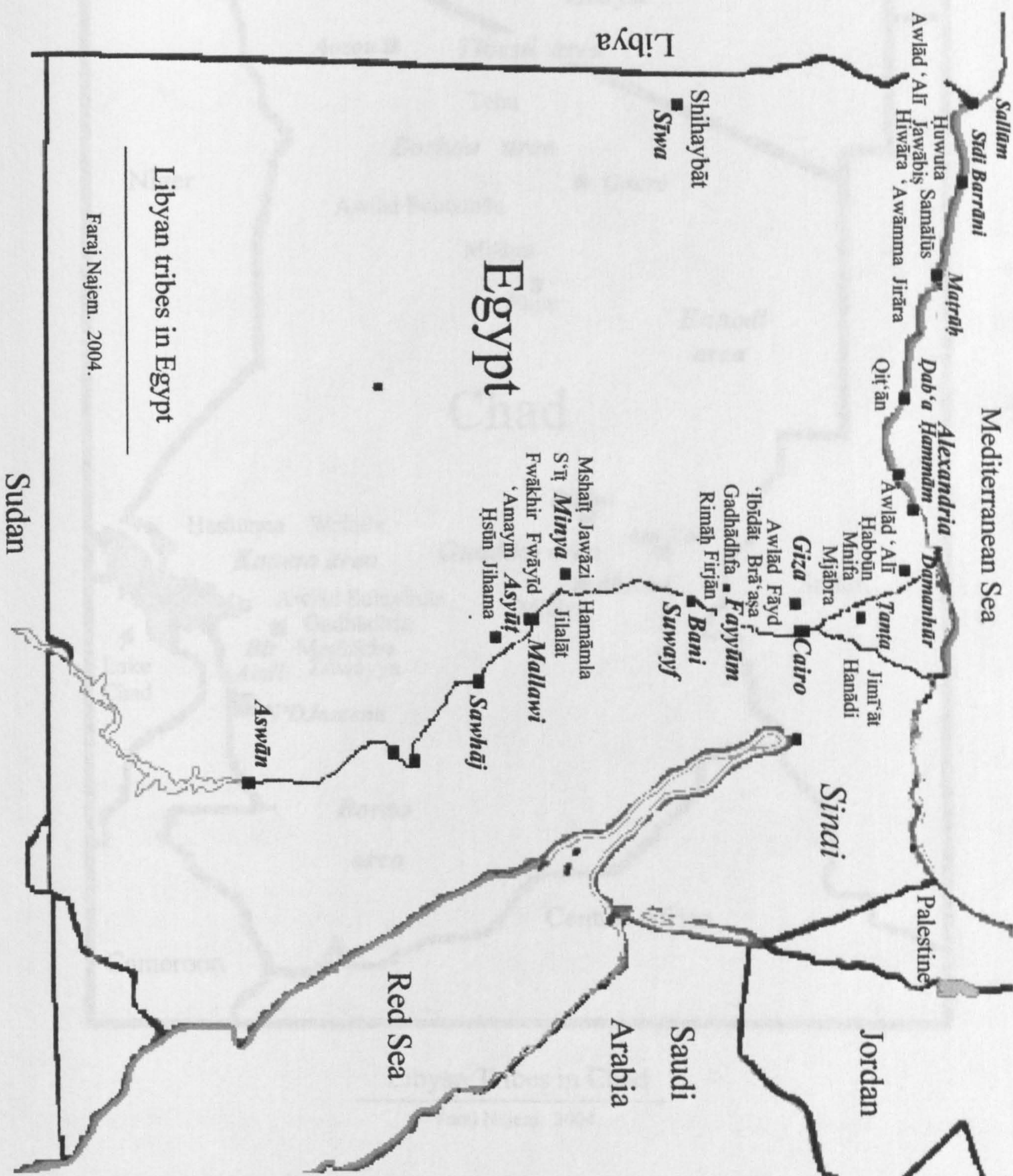
Map 12



Map of major families and tribes of Miṣrāta

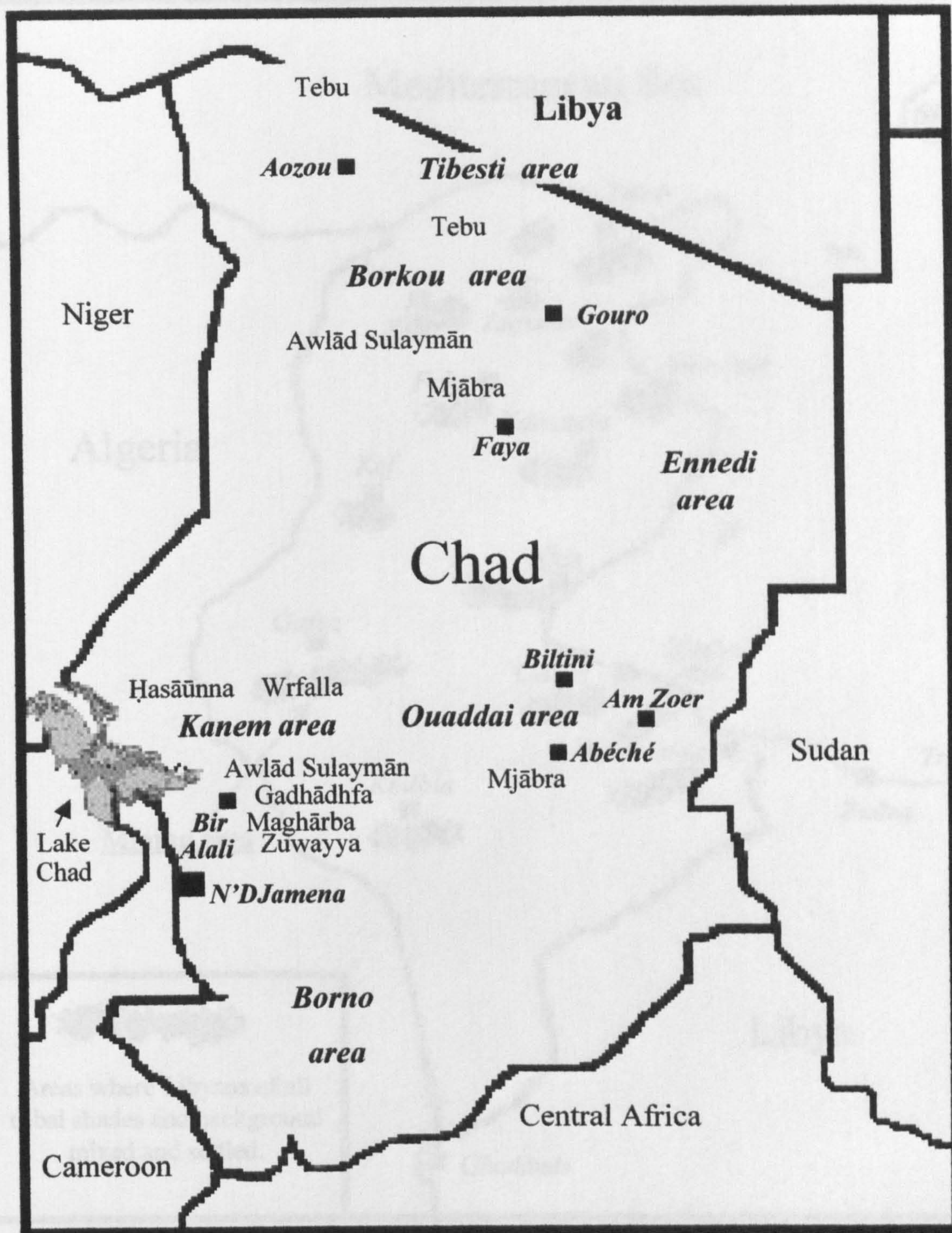
Source: Misurata: a Market Town in Tripolitania, G. H. Blake, University of Durham, Britain, 1968.

Faraj Najem. 2004.



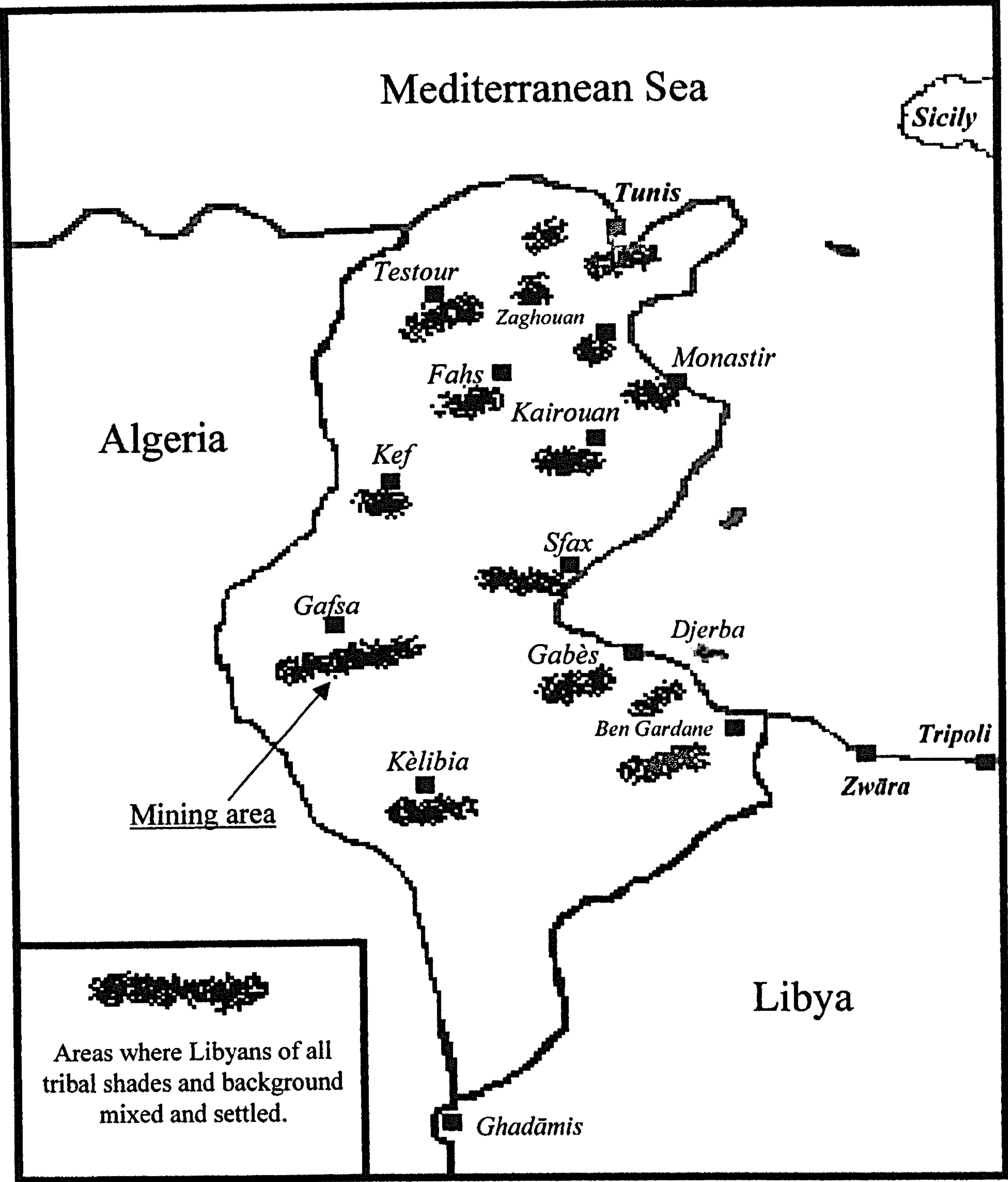
Libyan tribes in Egypt

Faraj Najem. 2004.



Libyan Tribes in Chad

Faraj Najem. 2004.



Libyan tribes in Tunisia.

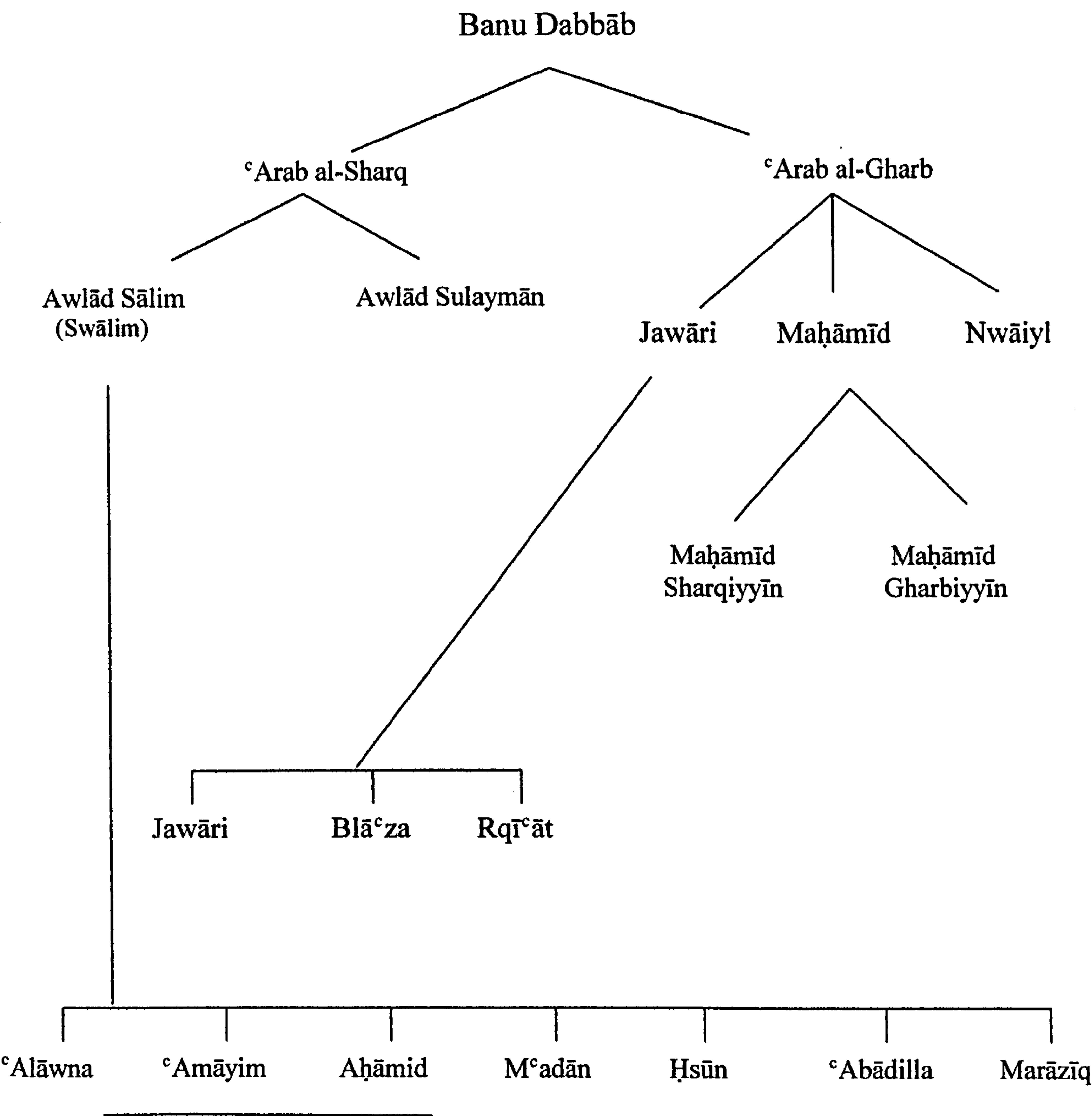
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Source; al-Muhājirūn al-Lībiyyūn bil-Bilād al-Tūnusiyya (1911-1957), Ibrāhīm Aḥmad Bilqāsim, Mu'ssasāt 'Abd al-Karīm bin 'Abdullah, Tunisia, 1992.

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Tribal and familial trees

The main Arab tribes of Tripolitania



Cf. Agostini, *Sukkān Libya* [Ṭarāblus], tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, p 380.

Kamāli, *Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb*, tr. by Ḥ. bin Yunūs, pp 42, 55.

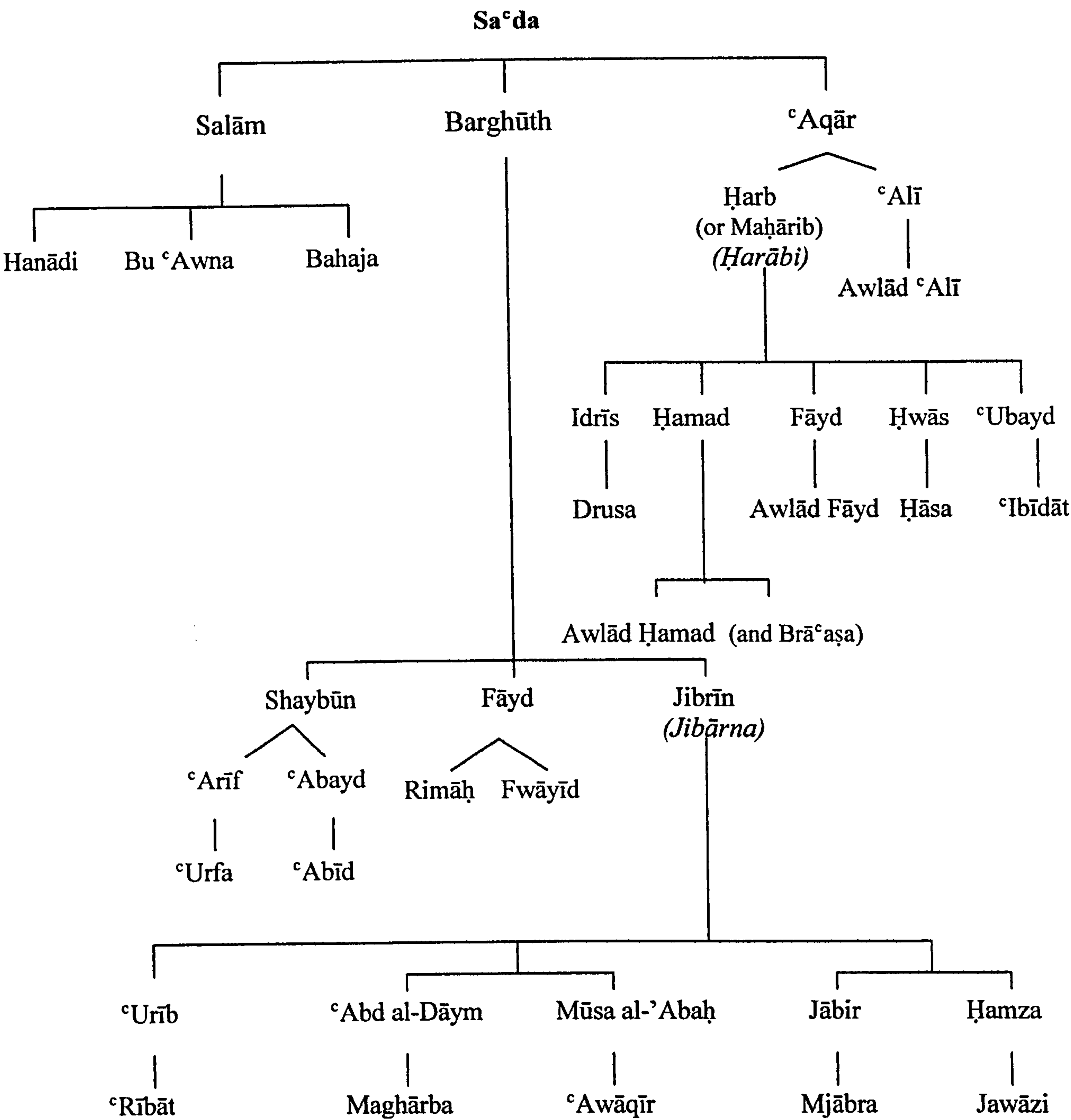
Al-Tallīsi, *Mu°jam Sukkān Libya*, p 336.

Al-Zāwi, *Mu°jam al-Buldān al-Lībiyya*, pp 108, 155-171.

Al-Zāwi, *A°lām Libya*, p 307.

Al-Barghūthi, *Tārīkh Libya al-Islāmi*, p 342.

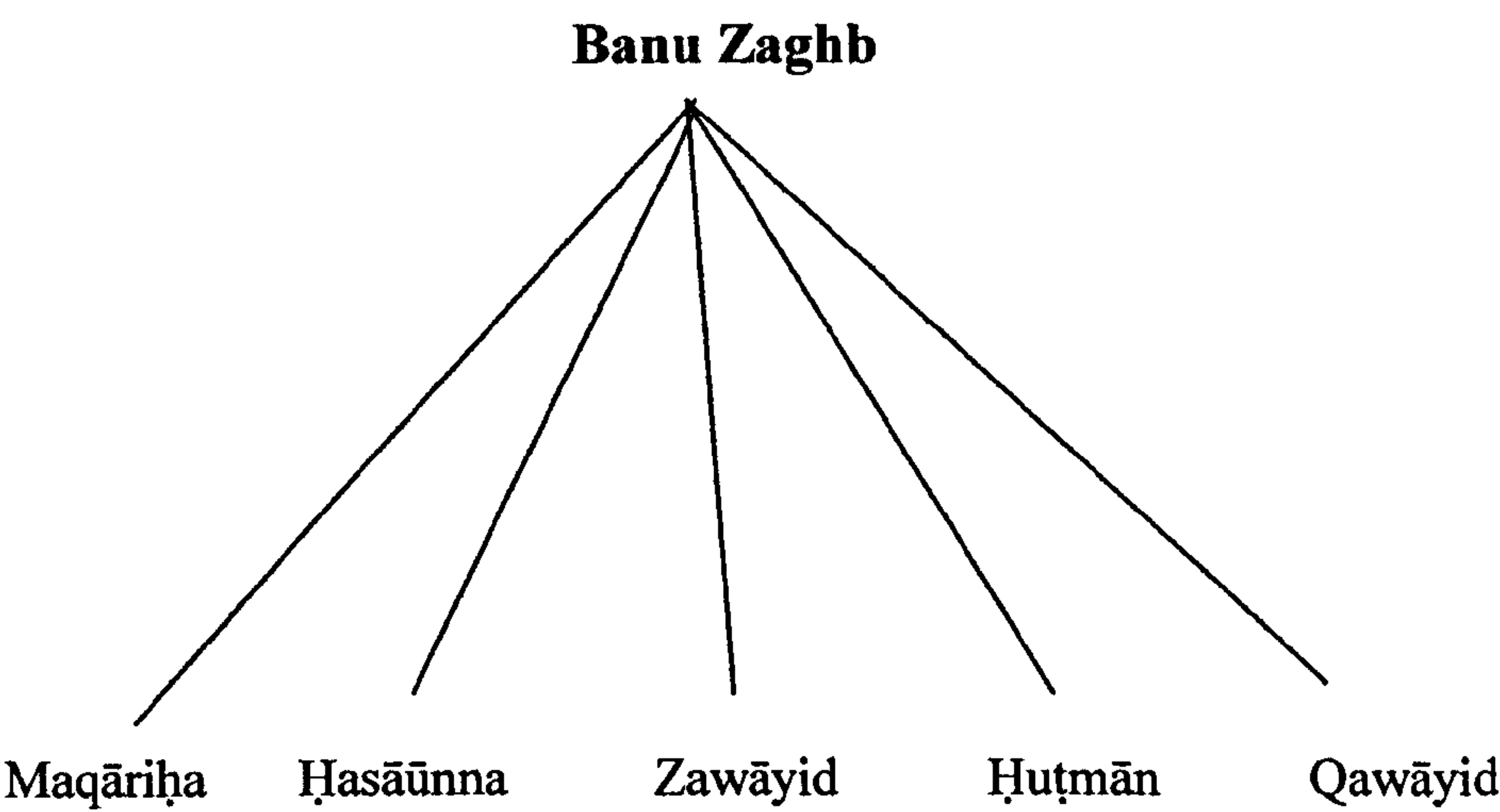
The Sa[°]adi tribes of Cyrenaica



Cf. Bazama, Tārīkh Barqa fil [°]Ahd al-[°]Uthmāni al-Awwal, pp 110-111.

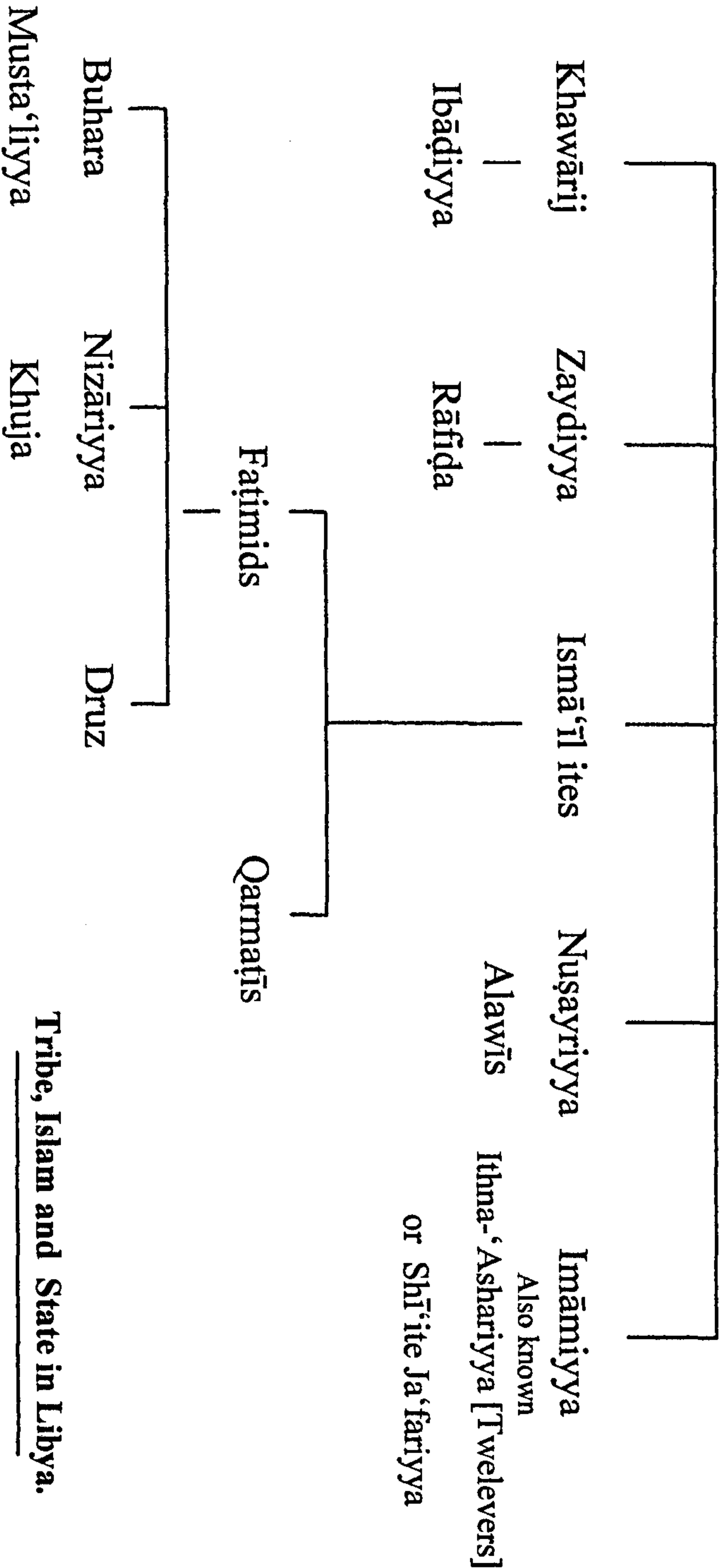
Evans-Pritchard, the Sanusi of Cyrenaica, pp 48-49.

The Arab tribes of Fazzān



Cf. Kamāli, Sukkān Ṭarāblus al-Gharb, tr. by Ḥ. bin Yunūs, p 55.

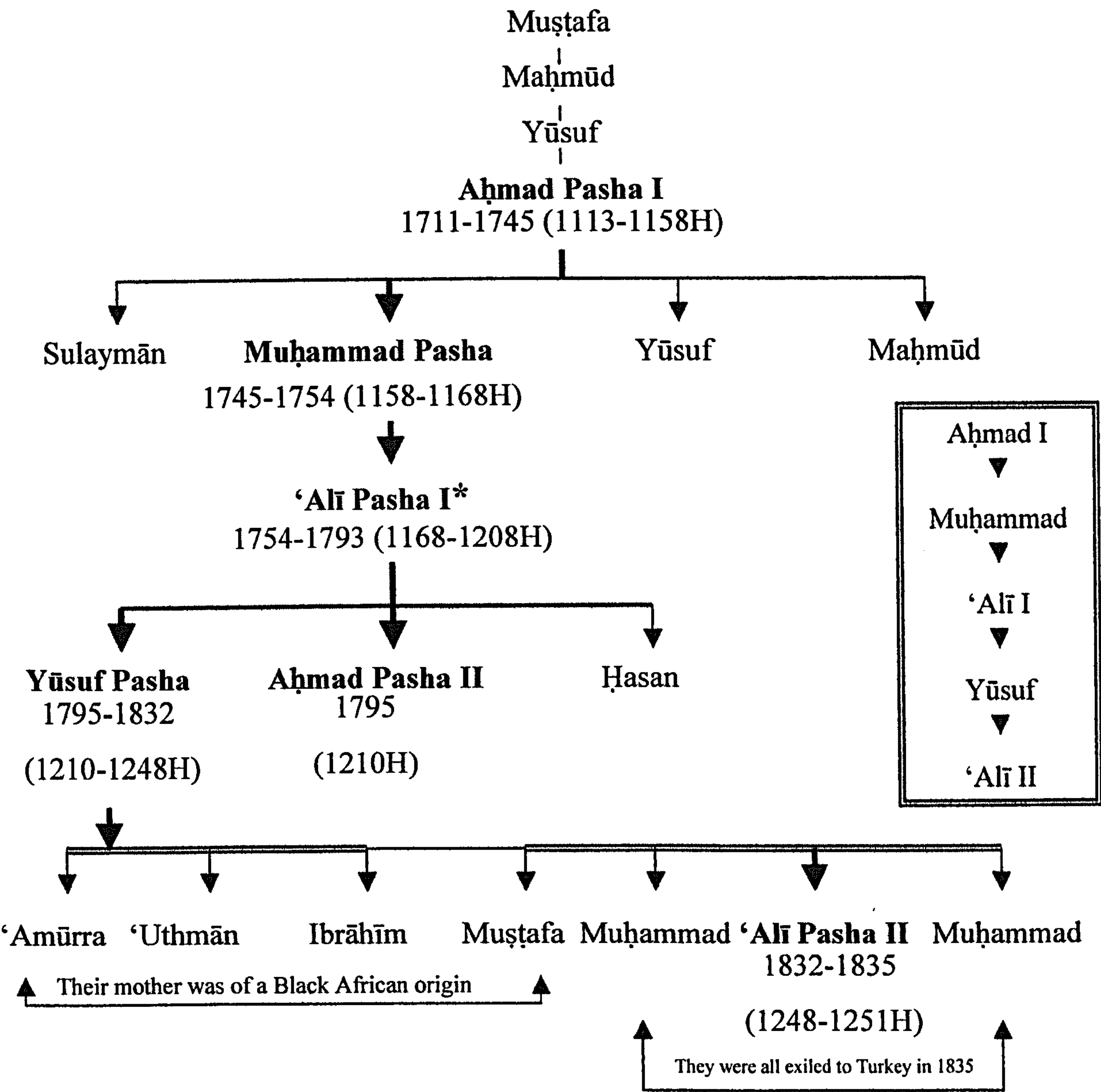
The Sects that emerged from the followers of
‘Alī ibn abi Ṭālib and his descent.



Tribes, Islam and State in Libya.
Faraj Najem. 2004

Cf. The Place of the Sanūsiyya Order in the History of Islam, E. Evans-Pritchard, Unknown publisher, Britain, undated.

Qaramānli Family Tree

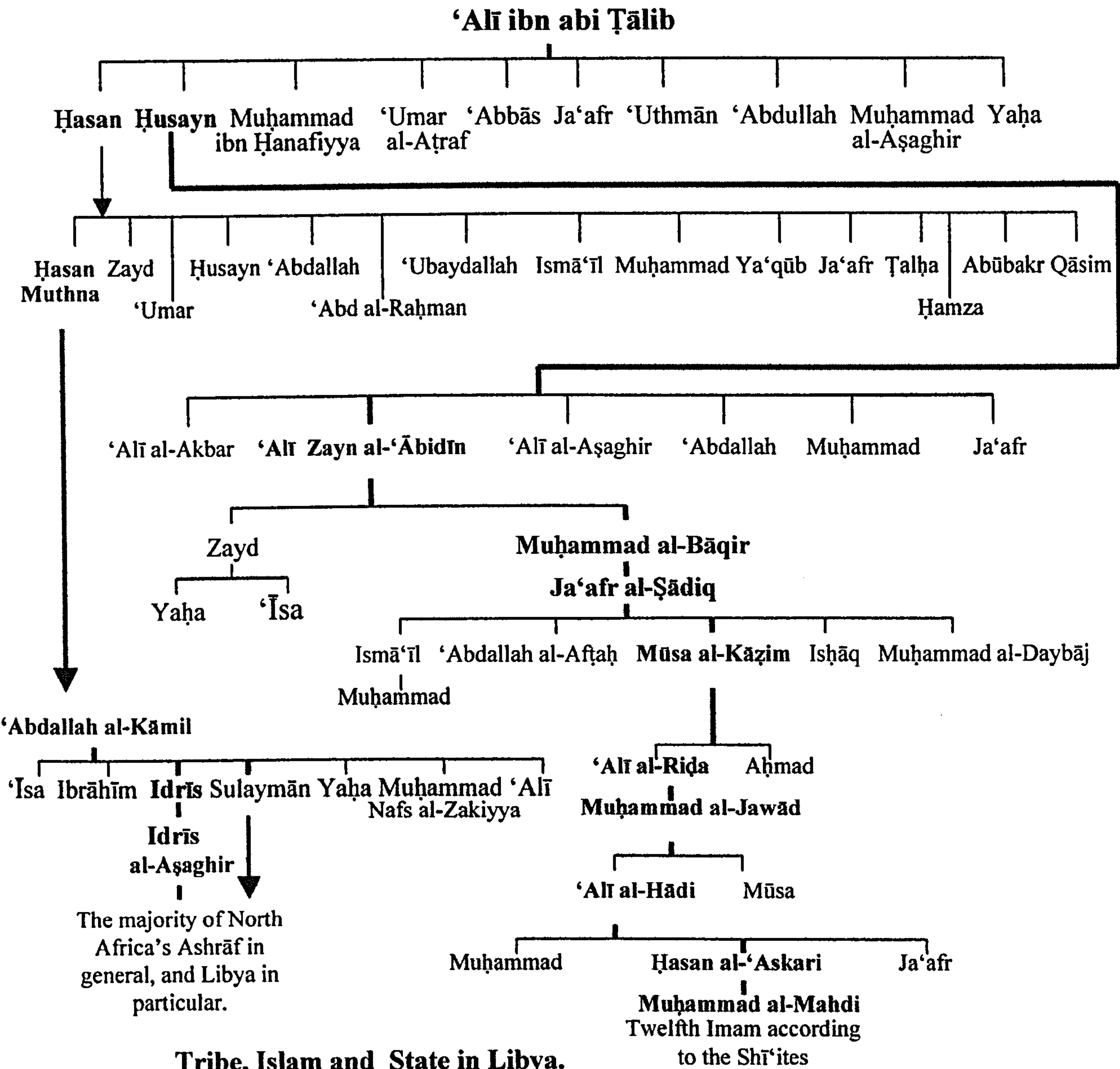


Source: Libya mundhu al-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabi Ḥatta 1911, Ettore Rossi, tr. by K. al-Tallīsi, al-Dār al-‘Arabiyya lil-kitāb, Libya 1973.

* NB: ‘Alī Burghul al-Jazā’iri [Non-Qaramānli] ruled Tripoli after ‘Alī Pasha I from 1793-1795.

The ‘Alids Tree

Ashrāf – also known as ‘Alids - are those who descend from al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn the sons of ‘Alī ibn abi Ṭālib and his wife Fāṭma al-Zahrā’ the Prophet’s daughter.



Faraj Najem. 2004

Source: Al-‘Āris fi nasab al-Fwāṭir min ‘Al Bu Fāris, Aḥmad, al-Qaṭṭāni, Maktabat Miknās, Libya, 1993.
Al-Durūs al-Bahiyya fi Mujmal Aḥwāl al-Rasūl wal-‘Itra al-Nabawiyya, Ḥasan Lawsāni, Manshūrāt Lawsān, Lebanon, 1993.
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Kitāb Multaqa al-Aṭrāf fi Ansāb wa Manāqib al-Ashrāf, Muḥammad I. M. Sālim, unknown publisher, Egypt, 1997.

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°Abādilla	العبادلة	Brakāt	بركات
°Abīd	العبيد	Burāwi	بو راوي
Abshāt	الابشات	Drusa	الدرسة
°Agār	الاهالي	Firjān	الفرجان
Ahāli	الاحامد	Fwākhir	الفواخر
Aḥāmid	العلاقة	Fwātīr	الفواتير
°Alālqa	العلاونة	Fwāyīd	الفوايد
°Alāwna	العلايا	Ghrārāt	الغرارات
°Alāya	الاماخر	Gadhādhfa	القذاذفة
Amājir	العمامرة	Gmām̄da	القمامدة
°Amāmra	العمام	Ḥabbūn	الحبون
°Amaym	الانصار	Hajārsa	المحارس
Anṣār	العقائل	Hamāmla	المماملة
°Aqayil	الاشراف	Hanādi	الهنادي
Ashrāf	الاولاحلة	Ḥarāba	الحرابة
Awājila	العومة	Ḥarābi	الحرابي
°Awām̄ma		Ḥāsa	الحاسة
°Awāqīr	العواقير	Ḥasānna	الحسانة
Awlād °Alī	اولاد علي	Ḥasāūnna	الحساونة
Awlād Bu Sayf	اولاد بوسيف	Ḥdīrāt	الحضيرات
Awlād Ghayth	اولاد غيث	Hiwāra	هواره
Awlād Ḥamad	اولاد حمد	Ḥrārāt	حارات
Awlād Khrays	اولاد خريس	Ḥsūn	الحسون
Awlād Misallam	اولاد مسلم	Ḥuṭmān	الحطمان
Awlād Murābiṭ	اولاد مرابط	Ḥuwuta	الحوته
Awlād Mūsa	اولاد موسى	Ḥwātim	الحواتم
Awlād Ṣayd	اولاد الصيد	°Ibīdāt	العبيدات
Awlād Sa°īd Ṭayr	اولاد سعيد الطير	J°āfra	الجعافرة
Awlād Shaybūn	اولاد شيبون	Jarmant	الجرمنة
Awlād Shaykh	اولاد شيخ	Jawābiṣ	الجوابيص
Awlād Shukr	اولاد شكر	Jawāri	الجواري
Awlād Sulaymān	اولاد سليمان	Jawāzi	الجوازي
Awlād Wāfi	اولاد وافي	Jibāliyya	الجبالية
Awlād Zāyd	اولاد زايد	Jibārna	الجبارنة
°Ayāiyda	العيادة	Jihama	الجهمة
Banu Walīd	بنو وليد	Jimāyla	الجمائلة
Banu Wāzīt	بنو وازيت	Jimī°āt	الجميعات
Barāghitha	براغثة	Jirāra	الجرارة
Barāghīth	براغيث	Jwāshi	الجواشي
Barāhma	براهمة	Karāghla	الكراغلة
Bidīwi	بديوي	Khudām Zarrūq	خدام الزروق
Blā°za	بلاعزة	Khwaylīd	خويلد
Brā°aṣa	براعصة	Kutāma	كتامة
		Liwāta	لواته

Mjābra	المجبرة	Ṣī°ān	الصيعان
Mnifa	المنفة	S°īṭ	السعيط
Mrāghna	المراغنة	Shlāwiyya	الشلاوية
Mshaīṭ	المشيط	Shwā°ir	الشواعر
Murābiṭīn	المرابطين	Swākna	السواكنة
Mwālik	الموالك	Swālim	السوالم
Mzāwgha	المزاوغة	Shwāshna	الشواشنة
Na°ā°sa	النعاسة	Ṭashāshna	الطشاشنة
Nafūsa	نفوسة	Taureg	الطوارق
Najm	نجم	Ṭbūl	الطبول
Nwāiyīl	النوايل	Tebu	التبو
Qawāyid	القوايد	Trāki	التراكي
Qbāyil	القبائل	Ṭwāhir	الطواهر
Qit°ān	القطعان	°Ujāylāt	العجيلات
Qmāṭa	القماطة	°Urfa	العرفة
Qwāḍi	القواضي	°Wāsja	العواسجة
Qwāsim	القواسم	Wraīma	الوريمة
Rayyāyna	الريانة	Wrfalla	الورشفانة
Rḥībāt	الرحيبات	Wrishfāna	اليدر
°Rībāt	العريبات	Yadir	الزهاوي
Rimāḥ	الرماح	Zahāwi	الزناتة
Riyāḥ	الرياح	Zanāta	الزوايد
Rqī°āt	الرقيعات	Zawayid	الزبيدات
Rujbān	الرجبان	Zbaydāt	الزنتان
Sa°ādi	السعادي	Zintān	الزيادين
Sahika	السهكة	Ziyādīn	الزويلة
Samālūs	السمالوس	Zuwayla	الزوية
Ṣanhāja	الصنهاجة	Zuwayya	الزوارية
Sanūsiyya	السنوسية	Zwāriya	
Sarāḥna	السراحنة		
Ṣawāni°	الصوانع		
Shihaybāt	الشهيبات		

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Adri	ادري	Mislāta	مسلاتة
Ajdābiya	اجدايبيا	Miṣrāta	مصراتة
Ajkharrā	احخرة	Mizda	مزدة
Amsā ^c ad	امساعد	Msūs	مسوس
Aṣābi ^c a	الاصابعة	Murzuq	مرزق
Awjila	اوجلة	Nālūt	نالوت
^c Azīziyya	العزيزية	Nawāḥi al-Arb ^c a	النواحي الاربعة
Barqa (Cyrenaica)	برقة	Qarqārish	قرقارش
Bayḍa	البيضاء	Qatrūn	قطرون
Benghazi	بنغازي	Sabha	سبها
Binjawād	بن جواد	Sabkhat ^c Uwaynāt	سبخة العوينات
Brāk	براك	Sāhl	الساحل
Brayqa	بريقة	Ṣaḥrā'	الصحراء
Buwayrāt Ḥsūn	بويرات الحسنون		
		Sīlīn	سيلين
Darj	الدرج	Sirt	سرت
Derna (Darna)	درنة	Sīwa	سيوة
Fazzān	فزان	Sūf-l-jīn	سوفالجين
Ghadāmis	غدامس	Sūkana	سوكنة
Ghāt	غات	Ṣurmān	صرمان
Ghiryān	غريان	Tājūra	تاجوراء
Harāwa	هراوة		
Harūj al-Aswad	هروج الاسود	Ṭarāblus al-Gharb	طرابلس الغرب
Hūn	هون	Tarhūna	ترهونة
		Tāwirghā	تاورغاء
Jabal al-Akhḍar	الجبل الاخضر	Trāghin	تراغن
Jabal Nafūsa	جبل نفوسة	Ṭubruq	طبرق
Jādū	جادو	Ubāri	اوباري
Jaghbūb	جغبوب	Waddān	ودان
Jālū	جالو	Wāw al-Kabīr	واو الكبير
Jānit	جانيت	Wāw al-Namūs	واو الناموس
Janzūr	جنزور	Yīfrin	يفرن
Jufāra	جفارة		
Jufra	جفرة	Za ^c farān	الزعفران
		Zalla	زلة
Kābāw	كاباو	Zāwiya	الزاوية
Khalīj Sidra	خليج السدرة	Zlīṭin	زليطن
Khums	الخمس	Zuwāgha	زواغة
Kufra	الكفرة	Zuwayla	زويلة
Manshiyya	المنشبة	Zuwaytīna	زويتينة
Marāda	مرادة	Zwāra	زواراة
Marj	المرج		

Appendix

Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set
International Organization for Standardization
Международная организация по стандартизации

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Action: For consideration by JTC1/SC2/WG2

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Encoding the Tifinagh script in the UCS is not as straightforward a prospect as one might hope – partly due to the many variants of the Tifinagh used in different parts of the Berber world, as well as the historical script, variously called Numidian, Libyan, or Punic, which can be identified with Tifinagh.

A unified character set for such a script could be based on glyphs regardless of their sounds (as Unified Canadian Aboriginal Syllabics (which is used for many languages) has been), or it could be based on the underlying letter entities and let various fonts deal with the myriad of forms. It is this latter approach which is followed here – because it results in a smaller character set ultimately more useful for lexical work, transliteration into Latin and Arabic scripts, etc.

On the following page a unification repertoire is given, with a notional name based on the names found in Faulmann 1880. The names should be verified. In the columns following, the ancient forms of the script are given, on the left, with traditional modern forms in the centre and the newly-invented forms the right. Arabic equivalents given in the last column are from Tifawt 199x. Signs given in parentheses are extrapolated from the original charts.

In 1994 a revision of the alphabet was proposed, based on modern analysis of Amazigh phonology, which has attained some status and currency among Berbers, certainly on the internet. However, there seems to be more than one version of this new alphabet, or at least of its glyphs, which again is an argument for a letter-based and not a glyph-based repertoire for encoding.

Because there are numerous abecedaries available, it seems clear that alphabetic order of Tifinagh is still very much indeterminate (some of the alphabets are clearly based on Latin alphabetical order, others on traditional Semitic ordering. In this proposal I suggest that traditional order be used (following O'Connor 1996) and that new characters be added to the end of the alphabet. I have no great confidence in the widespreadness or standardization of Latin-based sort orders for this script. At the same time, the order given here for the neo-Tifinagh characters, and indeed their identification at all (I had to guess from a number of fonts with little documentation) is very much in question.

Modern Tifinagh on the internet has LTR directionality. Traditionally it had RTL and TTB directionality. The glyphs here are RTL.

This is an exploratory proposal and should be reviewed by as many experts as possible.

	Ancient Berber		Tifinagh			Neo-Tifinagh				
	Libyan Faulmann 1880	Berber O'Connor 1996	Tamasheq Faulmann 1880	Tifinigh O'Connor 1996	Tifinagh Tamazgha 1996	Neo-Tif. Tamazgha 1996	Neo-Tif. Tifawt 199x	Neo-Tif. Hellingman 1995	Neo-Tif. Afus Deg Wifus 199x	
TIGHERIT		•	(•)	•	•	•	•	•	•	ⵉ
YEB	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEJ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ		ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YED	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YAH		(≡)	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	≡	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YAW	ⵉ = ÷	=	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	=	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEZ		—	#	#	#	#	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEZH	(H)	H	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	ⵉ
YEZZ		ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YAKH		ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YADD	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ E ⵉ	E	E	E	E	E	ⵉ
ILY	ⵉ	Z	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEK	ⵉ ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEL	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEM	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEN	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YES	ⵉ ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YESS		ⵉ ⵉ ⵉ				ⵉ		ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEGH		≡ ÷	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEF	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YAQ		(III)	≡	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YEG			ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YER	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YESH	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YET	+	+ ×	+	+	+	×	×	+	+	ⵉ
YETT	(ⵉ)	ⵉ			ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ
YU						ⵉ		ⵉ	ⵉ	
YE							÷	÷	÷	ⵉ
YI						...	Σ	Σ	Σ	
YO									ⵉ	
YAHH							ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	
YERR						ⵉ				
YECH						ⵉ		ⵉ	ⵉ	
YEP							ⵉ		ⵉ	
YEV							ⵉ	ⵉ	ⵉ	
LABIALIZER			ⵉ	ⵉ	BT		ⵉ			
YETH			ⵉ	ⵉ	JT				ⵉ	
YEKK			ⵉ	ⵉ	ZT				ⵉ	
YEDH			ⵉ	ⵉ	LT				ⵉ	
AIN			ⵉ	ⵉ	MT			ⵉ		
YEDZH			ⵉ	ⵉ	NT			ⵉ		
YEDD			ⵉ	ⵉ	ST			ⵉ		
YETS			ⵉ	ⵉ	GT			ⵉ		
			ⵉ	ⵉ	RT					
			ⵉ	ⵉ	SHT					
			ⵉ	ⵉ	NK					
			/		LN					

End.

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