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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FREE VERSE IN
ARABIC AND KURDISH : THE LITERARY
CAREERS OF AL-SAYYĀB AND GŌRĀN.

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Faculty of Arts in the University of Glasgow.

September, 1985.

To the memory of my eldest brother

Kāka Gharīb

To my wife and my son Dijwār.

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ABSTRACT

This study comprises, to the best of our knowledge, the first attempt to examine the modern poetry of Iraq, in both Arabic and Kurdish. The development of poetry in both languages has been to some extent parallel and to some extent quite different. In both, poets have revolted against classical forms, and the twentieth century has seen a progression from the Classical, through the Romantic period into Realism and Social Realism. The two principal figures in the two literatures in Iraq, Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb in Arabic, and Gōrān in Kurdish, had, to a considerable degree, similar careers. Both were pioneers in their respective fields, although particularly in the case of al-Sayyāb, there has been some dispute as to his real position. Both devoted a substantial part of their lives to communism, and both eventually grew disillusioned with this political philosophy.

However, their experimentation with Free Verse (Shi^cr ḥurr) and their establishing it as the most important modern medium in the literatures of both languages were, without doubt, their most significant contributions, and it is on these aspects of their poetry that this study concentrates.

The chapters of the thesis deal with:

1. The historical roots of the Shi^cr ḥurr movement in Iraq.
2. The beginning of modern Kurdish Poetry in Iraq.
3. Metre and rhyme in Kurdish poetry.

4. A comparison between al-Sayyāb and Gōrān.
5. The influence of European literature on Al-Syyāb and Gōrān.
6. Myth and symbol in the poetry of Al-Sayyāb and Gōrān.
7. Politics and Poetry.

TABLE OF KURDISH TRANSLITERATION

| | | | |
|---|----|------------------|---|
| ء | o | ت | v |
| ا | a | ق | q |
| ا | a | ك | k |
| ب | b | گ | g |
| پ | p | ل | l |
| ت | t | ل | l |
| ع | e | م | m |
| ح | ch | ن | n |
| ه | h | ر | r |
| خ | x | و | w |
| د | d | و | u |
| ر | r | وو | ü |
| ر | r | و | o |
| ز | z | ی | y |
| ج | j | ی | i |
| س | s | ی | e |
| ش | sh | | i |
| ع | c | Neutral vowel | |
| غ | gh | not representing | |
| ف | f | in writing | |

CHAPTER ONE - THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE SHI^CR ḤURR MOVEMENT
IN IRAQ

In investigating Shi^Cr ḥurr, it is clearly of the greatest importance to discover precisely what is meant by the term. Unfortunately scholars and literary critics differ as to the precise definition of this kind of poetry, and they refer to it by different terms: al-Shi^Cr al-ḥurr, used by Nāzik al-Malā'ika, al-Shi^Cr al-jadīd, used by al-Nuwayhi, in the title of his book Qaḍīyat al-shi^Cr al-jadīd, al-Shi^Cr al-ḥadīth, used by many poets; al-Shi^Cr al-talīq, used by Niqūlā Fayyād; al-Shi^Cr al-mursal, used by other poets, among them al-Zahāwī; Shi^Cr al-taf^Cīla, used by ^CIzz al-Dīn Amīn.

Amīn al-Rayḥānī (1876-1940), who followed Walt Whitman, says in the second volume of his Rayḥāniyyāt (1923) that the term Shi^Cr ḥurr is a literal translation of the Western terms 'Vers libre' in French, and 'Free Verse' in English:

"This type of new verse is called in French 'Vers libre' and in English 'Free Verse', that is al-Shi^Cr al-ḥurr or rather al-Muṭlaq. It is the latest stage at which poetic development has arrived among the Europeans, especially among the English and Americans. Milton and Shakespeare liberated English poetry from the chains of rhyme while the American Walt Whitman liberated it from the chains of prosody such as conventional

measures and the common metres. Nevertheless, this free verse has a new and special measure and the poem may come in various and different metres"⁽¹⁾.

Obviously, Shi^Cr ḥurr differs from metrical patterns of the Classical poetry which is mostly constructed on the system of two corresponding units (Shaṭr: usually translated hemistich) in each of which there are either two feet as in hazaj and muḍārī^C, three feet as in kāmil and sarī^C, or four feet as in mutaqārib and basit⁽²⁾. Shi^Cr ḥurr, however, is constructed on a single unit that varies in length, and whose metre varies from one verse to another⁽³⁾. The link between the Classical Arabic metres and Shi^Cr ḥurr is to be found in the feet that in both the foot (taf^Cīla) is the real basis of metre. Thus, Arabic, Shi^Cr ḥurr strictly adheres to the Khalīlian system of metres. Nāzik al-Mala'ika states that the traditional Arabic poetic forms apply equally to Shi^Cr ḥurr:

"The fact is that Shi^Cr ḥurr follows the Arabic metrical rules, adhering fully to them. Its novelty lies only in the fact that it combines full lines with half-lines or parts of lines. This is proved if we take any good Shi^Cr ḥurr poem and separate the half-lines from the parts of lines; we will end by having two poems in the Arabic style, without anything strange to them"⁽⁴⁾

This does not affect the reality of Shi^cr ḥurr as poetry or its status as an innovative linguistic art (fann lughawī badi^c); for there are to be found in it restrictions imposed by the metre employed, in that this is founded on the taf^cīla, as a prosodical base for a poem. Furthermore, deviation from Khalīl's system of prosody does not prevent a poem being categorized as "poetry".⁽⁵⁾ There is perhaps a precedent for the use of a freer form of verse even as early as the end of the 8th Century. Some poems were composed at that time based on one single foot. According to Ibn Rashīq the pioneer of this kind of poetry was Salm al-Khāsir (d. 802 A.D.) who used to compete with Marwān ibn Abī Ḥafṣa in eulogising the Caliph and the Barmakids. He was also a good friend of Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī and Abū al-^cAtāhiya.⁽⁶⁾ An example of his poetry is this short urjūza in praise of the Caliph al-Hādī:

| | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| موسى الطير | غيت بكره | ثم انهمر | ألوى المرز |
| كم العسر | ثم اليسر | وكم قدره | ثم غفره |
| عدل السيرة | باقى الأثر | خير دأثره | نفع وضره |
| خير البشر | فرغ مضره | بدء بدءه | والفخره (7) |

This sequence, as it stands, is majzū' (ie. a foot is omitted from each verse). Two alternative arrangements are possible: we may read it as mashṭūr (ie. with three feet in each shaṭr, but still rhyming), thus:

موسى الطير غيت بكره ثم انهمر

الوى المرر كم اعتمر ثم اليسر
وكم قدر ثم غفر عدل السير
بأقى الأثر خير وأمر نفع وضر
خير البشر فرع وضر بدر بدر
والفتخر ..

Or as masdūs (i.e. with only one foot in each unit), thus:

موسى المظر
غيت بكر
ثم انهمر
الوى المرر
كم اعتمر
ثم اليسر
وكم قدر
ثم غفر ...

^cUmar Farrūkh says that these lines can be arranged as Shi^cr ḥurr⁽⁸⁾:

موسى المظر غيت بكر ثم انهمر
الوى المرر
كم اعتمر ثم اليسر
وكم قدر ثم غفر عدل السير
بأقى الأثر
خير وأمر نفع وضر
خير البشر فرع وضر بدر بدر
والفتخر ..

It is perhaps tempting to see in the Muwashshah an ancestor of Shi^cr ḥurr. This verse-form is certainly considered to have exercised a considerable influence on a number of the Mahjarī poets. Jayyusi, however, deals with the matter in a definitive way:

"The influence of this form (muwashshahāt) on free verse is limited to the fact that the revival of the art of muwashshahāt in modern times was a link in the chain of experimentation with the form of the Arabic poem, for the muwashshahāt provided an example of the possibility of having Shaṭrs of different lengths in the same poem. But the muwashshah...is not a free form of verse. In fact, it can well be said that it is even more restricted than the two hemistich form in its rigidity and elaborate composition, and when comparing it, from a prosodical point of view, with modern verse, one must remember its fixed and often intricate pattern. Another point to stress here is the connection and dependence of the muwashshah on music. What at first sight would appear to the casual observer to have been a great revolution in poetic form was in fact nothing more

than the diligent attempts by the muwashshaḥ poet to apply Arabic words to certain tunes.... The muwashshaḥ will be found basically different in several points. Firstly, a great many muwashshaḥāt deviate from the metres known to the Arabs, while free verse does not. Secondly, the classical type of muwashshaḥ is directly dependent on music, whereas free verse is completely divorced from singing. Thirdly, it had to conform to a great number of conditions, whereas free verse enjoys a freedom unprecedented in the history of Arabic poetry. Fourthly, the muwashshaḥ, thanks to its dependence a fixed pattern and on music, was given to themes more suited to the spirit of merriment and leisure, and much frivolity dominates most muwashshaḥāt. Free verse on the other hand, represents a movement towards a greater seriousness in subject matter and has been linked, right from the beginning, with the modern experience of the Arab individual and nation, in its most crucial and tragic aspects"⁽⁹⁾

There is, however, another early literary phenomenon that deserves serious consideration as a fore-runner of Shi^cr ḥurr. This is band, a form which emerged in Iraq in the 11th Century A.H. This is a type of poetry very close to Shi^cr ḥurr, although written in prose form; the dominant metres are hazaj and ramal, as being buḥūr mufrada or ṣāfiya, that is, based on the repetition of the same taf^cīla throughout. Its units are of various lengths, since the foot constitutes its basis rather than the hemishich (shatr). Many poets and literary critics have refused to regard it as a type of poetry at all⁽¹⁰⁾. According to Khulūsī, it lies between poetry and prose, although tending rather towards poetry⁽¹¹⁾. According to Jayyusi:

"In the band the writer does not commit himself to a pre-defined number of feet (tafā^cīl) as in the traditional metres of the two hemistic form, or in other classical verse from such as al-muwashshaḥ, but gives himself the freedom to vary the number of these feet between each unit".⁽¹²⁾

Yūsuf^c Izz al-Dīn, referring to it in the magazine Yaqīn of 16th April 1922, says:

In its first volume this magazine published samples of Iraqi band. Ibn Durayd tried to eradicate it, but he failed. This magazine

has established that it is of Iraqi origin. It has also mentioned that al-Akhras, al-^cAshārā, Muḥammad Sa^cīd al-Ḥillī and Ibn al-Khalifa were fond of employing it. It published in the volume referred to a sample of Ibn al-Khalifa:

أُهِمَّ اللّائِمُ فِي الحُبِّ ،
دَع اللّومَ عَن الصَّبِّ ،
فَلو كُنْتُ تَرى الحَاجِبِي الرُّنْحُ ،
فَوَيْبِ الأَعْيُنِ الدُّعْبُجُ ،
أَو الحَدِّ الشَّقِيْبِي ،
أَو الرِّبِيعِ الرَّحِيْبِي ،
أَو القَدِّ الرَّشِيْقِي ،
الذِّي قَد شَهِبَ الفِصْنَ اعْتَدَالًا و انْعَاطَا .. (١٣)

Nāzik al-Malā'ika, in Qaḍāyā al-shi^cr al-mu^cāṣir (1962), discussed the question of whether the Iraqi poets of Shi^cr ḥurr had imitated the style of band. Her ultimate verdict was that they had not:

"When I first started composing Shi^cr ḥurr in 1947, I knew only the name of band. I had never read band before 1953. No wonder, because band was never mentioned in literary books which we read or studied. None of the literary figures outside Iraq had heard of it, until the publication of this book (Qaḍāyā) in 1962....

I very much doubt whether Badr al-Sayyāb, who graduated from the English department, would have heard of it by 1946, because I myself, regardless of my thorough knowledge of Arabic tradition, heard about it only after 1953. Therefore, Shi^C_r ḥurr is in no way the son of band regardless of the overlapping between them..... Moreover, band is a mere development of the metres of Arabic poetry. Though it added to these metres, it did not violate them."⁽¹⁴⁾

Even in the same work, however, a certain ambivalence of attitude appears:

"There is a great similarity between Shi^C_r ḥurr and band. In fact, band is shi^C_r ḥurr because:

1. It depends on the taf^C_īla rather than the hemistich.
2. Their units are of various lengths.
3. They have different rhymes which the poet can vary at will"⁽¹⁵⁾.

Thus she appears to argue that Shi^C_r ḥurr originated in the 11th century A.H. The principal difference between the two, it seems to me, is the basic dependence of Shi^C_r ḥurr on one metre, while band employs a mixture of two. All the same, it is not unknown for practitioners of Shi^C_r

ḥurr to employ more than one metre in the same poem. For example, Fu'ād Rafqa in his poem al-Qaṣīda al-dā'i^ca, which was published in Shi^cr (1958), used three metres, hazaj, ramal and rajaz⁽¹⁶⁾, and al-Sayyāb, in his poem Jaykūr ummī, also used three metres, Khafīf, ramal and rajaz:

تلك أمي ، وإن أجهتها كسيما
لوعماً أزهارها والماء فيها ، والترابا
ونافضاً ، بمقلتي ، أعشاشها والغابا :
تلك أطيار الغد الزرقاء والغبراء يعبرن السطوحها
أو ينشرون في بويب الجناحين : كزهر يفتح الأوفوا .
لها هنا ، عند الضحى ، كان اللقاء
وكانت الشمس على سفاهها تكسر الأطيافا
وتسفع الضياء .
كيف أسي ، أوجب تلك الدروب المضر فيها وأطرق الأبوابا ؟
أطلب الماء فتأتيني من الفخار جرّه ... (17)

Muhammad Hasan al-A^crajī sees no connection between the two:

"In spite of the suitability of band as a new musical form, in that it was based on a system involving individual feet rather than an extended metre, and it adopted the principle of Saj^c in varying the lengths of the units, destroying the monorhyme, no-one continued to employ it or to develop it in the period of the Nahḍa (revival). It remained in the same state as it had appeared and did not have any influence on the music of Arabic poetry"⁽¹⁸⁾

Jayyusi is non-committal:

"The metrical freedom achieved in the bands is the same freedom enjoyed by the modern Free-verse poet... the band is the first sustained through inadvertent experiment which liberated metre. Any modern poet claiming precedence in this attempt ignores their early experiment. In fact, acknowledge of these bands would have saved the poet experimentalists before the late 'forties much laborious effort. But it is extremely difficult to know how well bands were known by the more fortunate Iraqi poets who finally succeeded in establishing free verse"⁽¹⁹⁾.

The question of the possible or probable influence of band, however, while interesting, must still remain speculative. As we approach the twentieth century, we come to considerably firmer ground. According to Anwar al-Jundī, Muṭṭran's plea, in the magazine al-Majalla in 1900, for the liberation of poetry from the restrictions of the classical forms, influenced by contemporary European literary movements in general and that of French in particular, can be regarded as the first of its kind for the renewal of Arabic poetry⁽²⁰⁾. It is generally accepted that it was Muṭṭrān whom the Dīwān and Apollo schools in Egypt were following:

"Muṭṭrān brought about a revolution in Arabic poetry and established a school of followers and admirers who continued his methods of treating new themes of epic, dramatic and romantic poetry under the influence of Western literature.... His approach has spread throughout most of the Arab countries up to the present day. In Egypt his followers included Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī, Mukhtār al-Wakīl, Ṣāliḥ Jawdat, Ibrāhīm Nājī, ^cAli Maḥmūd Ṭāhā, Ḥasan Kāmil al-Ṣayrafī and Muḥammad ^cAbd al-Muṭṭī al-Himsharī.... (21)

Abū Shādī (1892-1955), himself one of the pioneers of modern Arabic poetry, had no doubt of the importance of the achievement of Muṭṭrān:

"The development of al-Shi^cr al-mursal (blank verse), al-Shi^cr al-ḥurr, everything we have achieved through our liberation movement in composition, and the humanistic and universal subjects which we now deal with, are but a natural development of the message of Muṭṭrān" (22).

However, both ^cAbbās Maḥmūd al-^cAqqād (1889-1964) and ^cAbd al-Raḥmān Shukrī (1886-1958) who, with ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Māzinī (1880-1949), established the Dīwān School, denied Muṭṭrān's influence on their work. ^cAqqād claimed:

".... Muṭrān is a poet who belongs to the generation of Aḥmad Shawqī and Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm. He had no influence on the Egyptian poets who came after him. These poets were well acquainted with ancient Arabic poets and were in strong contact with European literatures, particularly English literature. Thus they were able to learn their language from ancient Arabic poets and the new trends of poetry from the European poets. Muṭrān does not represent a link in either of these cases. Unlike Muṭrān, the new poets were readers of English..... and in their criticism they did not look to French criticism or follow Musset, Lamartine and other French poets who were regarded as the masters of eloquence in the formative years of Muṭrān"⁽²³⁾.

Traces of Muṭrān's influence of the Dīwān school are, in fact, obvious in the first Dīwān of ^CAbd al-Raḥmān Shukrī, Ḍaw' al-fajir (1909), in which he wrote a poem entitled Kalimāt al-^Cawātif, subtitled Qaṣīda min al-shi^C_r al-mursal⁽²⁴⁾. He was, however, not the first Arab poet to attempt Shi^C_r mursal :

"Under the impact of the West, some Arab poets tried to introduce new poetic

diction, metaphors, and themes, and to find new forms and music which suited them, in order to be able to avoid what they considered the enslaving style, and the sonorous and declamatory tone of classical Arab poetry.... Many critics tried to discover who had been the first Arab poet to use unrhymed verse in modern Arabic literature. In an article written by Durrīnī Khashaba in al-Risāla, entitled 'al-Shi^cr al-mursal and our poets who experimented with it', the writer said that he could not decide whether the first poet in Egypt and the Arab world to start writing in Shi^cr mursal had been ^cAbd al-Raḥmān Shukrī or Muḥammad Farīd Abū Ḥadīd... Al-^cAqqād tried to answer this difficult question and emphasized that the three poets Tawfīq al-Bakrī (1870-1932) in his poem Dhāt al-qawāfī, Jamīl Ṣidqī al-Zahāwī in a poem in al-Mu'ayyad, and ^cAbd al-Raḥmān Shukrī in his poems in al-Jarīda were the first to try their hand at it... In my opinion the first experiment in blank verse in modern Arabic literature took place before the

opening of the twentieth century, when these experiments were proceeding. This was by Rizq Allah Ḥassūn (1825-1880) in his versified translation of the eighteenth chapter of the Book of Job in his *Ash^Cār al-hi^Cr* in 1869.... Al-Zahāwī can be accepted as the first poet in the twentieth century who tried to introduce 'blank verse' into Arabic literature. Twice at least, al-Zahāwī declared himself to be the first poet to write *Shi^Cr mursal*. In 1922 he said of rhyme in Arabic poetry... "I am the first to reject it"; and in his introduction to his *Ba^Cd alf ^Cām* 'After a thousand years', in *al-Hilāl* in 1927, he said of the poem,.....'it is in blank verse, which I introduced into Arabic poetry, freeing it from the chain of rhymes'.

However in the second article he referred to a poem published in *al-Mu'ayyad* before 1908 as the first poem which he wrote in *Shi^Cr mursal*. It seems that al-Zahāwī is referring to his poem entitled *al-Shi^Cr al-mursal* which he included in his anthology *al-Kalim al-manzūm*..... (25).

Whatever may be the case with Arabic literature in general, it seems, at any rate, reasonably certain that

al-Zahāwī was the first Iraqi poet to attempt Shi^Cr mursal.
Abbās Tawfīq argued that al-Zahāwī not only revolted against the restrictions of the rhyme but also that he was dissatisfied with the monotony of the Khalīlian system of metrics in general. He advocated that this system should be developed, in the sense of creating new metres which should emerge and spring up from the vernacular and everyday language. To al-Zahāwī the classical metres were capable of conveying the feeling and emotions of classical poets adequately because they were the outcome of their own native and everyday language⁽²⁶⁾. However, Tawfīq concluded that the classical metres did not suit the modern Arabic language nor the feelings and emotions of modern poets. In fact, he maintained that strict adherence to the classical metres had a negative effect on modern poetry⁽²⁷⁾. al-Zahāwī produced an immature type of Shi^Cr mursal, in which he adhered to the two-hemistich lines:

Al-Zahāwī was not aware of the possibility of the run-on line. The enjambement, one of the main techniques of English 'blank verse', was still unfamiliar to him because in classical poetry *tadmīn* is forbidden. His advocacy of blank verse reveals his conventional attitudes, and his misunderstanding of its nature... he rejected the organic unity of the poem which other poets tried to introduce into Arabic poetry"⁽²⁸⁾.

The greater success of the Egyptian poets who followed al-Zāhāwī's attempt at Shi^Cr mursal in this genre may be attributed to the influence of Western literature on them, which enabled them to reach a better understanding of its techniques⁽²⁹⁾. It should be pointed out that al-Zahāwī was influenced in his new approach by the new Turkish literary movement of the 1860's, which in turn was much affected by European, particularly French literature and culture⁽³⁰⁾. Al-Zahāwī spent two years in Istanbul (1896-98), during which he met many distinguished Turkish poets such as ^CAbd al-Ḥaqq Ḥāmid (1851-1937), Tawfīq Fikrat (1867-1917) and Muḥammad Ra'ūf (1875-1931), who were deeply influenced by French vers libre⁽³¹⁾. At the same time, he was influenced by Syrian and Lebanese poets who also revolted against the classical forms of Arabic poetry⁽³²⁾. It is likely that he knew Sulayman al-Bustānī's translation of the Iliad, in which he had used a monorhyme at the beginning and had then employed various different forms of Western prosody, including blank verse⁽³³⁾.

In addition to Shi^Cr mursal, which clearly has a place in the ancestry of Shi^Cr ḥurr, we should also consider Shi^Cr manthūr, which is

"Poetry organised to the cadence of speech and image patterns rather than according to a regular metrical scheme"⁽³⁴⁾

Shi^cr manthūr is without metre, and is usually rhymeless, but may employ rhyme sometimes as a decoration⁽³⁵⁾. Some literary critics consider that Shi^cr manthūr differs from the prose poem⁽³⁶⁾, because whilst Shi^cr manthūr is written in lines, the prose poem is written like any ordinary prose writing, having no distinctive layout, but depending for its effect on variation of short and long sentences as units and on variation of rhythm from one sentence to another:

"There is a marked difference in rhythm between al-Shi^cr al-manthūr and the prose poem, especially noticeable when the two are read aloud. The sentence is also varied according to the mood"⁽³⁷⁾.

Most authorities consider that the first attempts to write Shi^cr manthūr in Arabic were those of the Lebanese poet Amīn al-Rayḥānī, whose name was one of the first to become well-known in the Mahjar group. His first experiment in this new type of verse was a short prose poem al-Ḥayāt wa-l-mawt, which he published in al-Hilāl, vol. 2, October 1905. Jurjī Zaidān, the editor wrote an interesting introduction to al-Rayḥānī's poem, which he referred to as being in Shi^cr manthūr⁽³⁸⁾. Many Arab critics have held the view that the influence of al-Rayḥānī's attempt at Shi^cr manthūr can be traced in many modern Arabic poets in a number of ways:" in the unity of theme; the division of the piece into shorter or longer stanzas; the use of short sentences, repetitive phrases and invocations, and of images, and metaphors taken from nature."⁽³⁹⁾ It was not until 1911

that this poetic experiment reached Iraq, where it was received with little initial enthusiasm, owing, no doubt, to Iraq's isolation from Western culture⁽⁴⁰⁾. Nevertheless, a number of Iraqi poets were subsequently influenced by al-Rayḥānī. This poem by Wilyam Dayyāb Ni^cma, which was published in the newspaper Ṣadā Bābil (1911) under the title Shi^cr manthūr, expresses feelings that seem to have been fairly widely shared:

ليس ما نجمله يجعلنا جهلاء
بل ما ندعيه
ليس ما نرائى به يجعلنا ودعاء
بل ما نقصده
ليس ما ننشروه يجعلنا أدباء
بل ما نفعله
ليس ما نعمله يجعلنا أتقياء
بل ما نرتاضه (41)

Literary activity in Iraq did not remain stagnant for very long. The visit of al-Rayḥānī in 1922 brought new life to it, and Iraqi poets began to experiment more generally with Shi^cr manthūr and its techniques. According to Yūsuf ^cIzz al-Dīn, al-Rayḥānī's visit to Iraq can be regarded as providing the greatest impetus of modern times to Iraq's cultural development⁽⁴²⁾. Rufā'il Buṭṭī (d.1956) was perhaps one of those who were most deeply influenced by al-Rayḥānī. In an article published in al-Ḥurriyya, he said:

"The master Amīn al-Rayḥānī followed the method of the American poet Walt Whitman in the liberation of poetry from the chains of metre and rhyme. He originated the style of Shi^cr manthūr in Arabic, and many poets imitated his method, particularly those in the Mahjar. In the time of Dr. Niqūlā Fayyāḍ..... he started a new intellectual movement which created a new style in Arabic poetry"⁽⁴³⁾

Yūsuf ^cIzz al-Dīn gives several examples of Shi^cr mursal, Shi^cr manthūr and Shi^cr ḥurr published in Iraqi magazines and newspapers during the period between 1911 and 1945. Among these he quotes two which were published in the magazine al-Ṣaḥīfa, vols. 3 and 4, 6-21, February 1925. One was entitled Ayyatuḥa l-fatāt, by "Samīr al-Kawākib", who was probably Muḥammad Basīm al-Dhayyāb⁽⁴⁴⁾. The Second, entitled Ishtakā, by the same poet, was clearly a close imitation of Nasīb ^cArīdās poem al-Nihāya:

كفنه .
وامكنوه
لمرة الاحمر العمير .
فهو شيب ميت ليس يفير
التي منها :
اشتكى : اشتكى لكن الى من اشتكى ؟
اخبري : اخبريني انت يا نفس اخبري !

واجبرى : واجبرى قلبي الأسير المشتكى

أشتكى للريح لبيت في السحر ؟
لرعود السمب ، أم قطر المطر ؟
لحرير الماء وانفصان الشجر ؟

أم لأمواج البحار الهائجة
فأتركي : أتركيني بين أعراني أتركي
أشتكى : أشتكى لكن الى من أشتكى

كلها تشكو : فتفريد الطيور (45)

The structure and method of al-Nihāya were also imitated by other poets. Among them we may mention Anwar Shā'ūl, whose poem, published in the newspaper al-^cIrāq (1929), under the title Min ughniyātī lahā, employs the same metre (ramal) as ^cArīḍa's poem, there are some differences between the pattern of this poem and that of Arīḍa's:

Anwar Shā'ūl informed me (Moreh) that in the first couplet he was influenced both by Nasīb ^cArīḍa's poem, and by his unconventional attitude in developing new forms" (46)

The following example illustrates this:

اسمعي
انصيني
اسفيني بالوداد
قبليما يصحو فؤاد
أكبى في القلب حبا
مائفاً مثل العسل
مكراً مثل الأمل

ولتكوني مثالها قد كنت أو سوف أكون
مثلاً للعالمين
وإذا ما غبت يوماً فليكن طيفي بجانبك
باسماً أعلى ابتسام
ناتراً زهر السلام
عازفاً لمن الغزاة
منشداً : يا هبذا لو تخلف الروح بقرتك (47)

The newspaper al-Istīqlāl in 1926 published a poem by Abū Salmā which was described as Shi^cr mursal:

نسمة الصبح اذا زرت الشام
سحرا
فاغشعي و الهدى الى ربي السلام
عظرا
والثمي تربتها فهي ندي
قد غدت من دم أبنائها روي
هي أرض الجيد مثوى الشمم
يا أخلاي قفوا و اكوا الربوع علنا (48)

Again, during the period 6-18 May 1930 Istiqlāl published four poems, namely: Ilā fatāt al-sharq by Madḥat which he designated as shi^Cr mursal, and three by Khidr Ṣālih, Jihādī fī bilādī, which he designated as Shi^Cr mursal, Tafānī wa-l-mamāt and Ḥabībatī wa-l-ḥubb, which he designated as naẓm ḥurr.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Some poets did not pay much attention to these experiments, arguing that the Arab ear and taste were not used to unrhymed verse, and claiming that rhyme was an essential element⁽⁵⁰⁾.

The early experiments are merely the harbinger of the more sophisticated shi^Cr ḥurr which, coming into prominence in 1946-7, quickly came to dominate Arab poetry. The efforts of the Mahjar, Dīwān and Apollo schools were immature compared with those of the Iraqi practitioners of Shi^Cr ḥurr such as al-Malā'ika, al-Sayyāb, al-Bayyātī, al-Ḥaydarī, ^CAbd al-Wāḥid, al-Ḥillī and Mardān. According to al-Malā'ika, those who wrote Shi^Cr ḥurr before 1947 did so accidentally, without being in a position to explain the importance of what they were doing⁽⁵¹⁾. Without doubt, she was the one who effectively established this genre. In an interview about its pioneers, she said, somewhat extravagantly:

"When in 1947 I composed the poem al-Kūlīrā, which was the first free poem in [Arabic poetry], my father, the literary historian Ṣādiq al-Malā'ika, made fun of it and ridiculed it, forecasting that no Arab reader would accept it. I defiantly

replied that this poem of mine would turn a new page in Arabic poetry, because I felt that I had discovered a splendid new poetic style of great significance... At that time, I did not realise the ground work of this form had been laid by a group of poets, each of whom had composed one poem. For this reason I wrote my article entitled "Ḥarakat al-shi^cr al-ḥurr fī l-^cIrāq", published in the Lebanese magazine al-Adīb in 1954, in which I stated that Shi^cr ḥurr was born in Iraq, from where it spread to the rest of the Arab countries.... This theory, perhaps, remained acceptable until it became clear to all of us that the Shi^cr ḥurr form had roots that extended to earlier Arab poets. The experiments of those colleagues, however, did not attract any poet to employ it in his poems, or cause any excitement. No one praised the attempt and no one was infuriated by it. These attempts passed away like a rose swept away by a stream, leaving no trace. My free poems which appeared in my collection Shazāyā wa ramād, published in 1949,

attracted attention immediately and caused furious arguments in the newspapers. In fact, soon after its publication, young poets began to respond to my call and to publish their first free poems, many of them dedicating them to "Nāzik al-Malā'ika". This establishes the fact that they heard of Shi^Cr ḥurr from me, not from any of my predecessors. In addition, to this, even if I was anticipated in Shi^Cr ḥurr by the 'groundwork' that I have spoken of, I was, at any rate, the first to call officially for its use, in the introduction to Shazāyā wa ramād. This was the call which caused excitement and attracted attention to Shi^Cr ḥurr"⁽⁵²⁾.

It was her poem, and one by al-Sayyāb, published almost simultaneously, that astonished the critics and laid the corner-stone of Shi^Cr ḥurr in Arabic. In Qaḍāyā al-shi^Cr al-mu^Cāṣir, she claims al-Kūlirā as the first example of Shi^Cr ḥurr in Arabic poetry. She composed it on 27th October 1947 and had it published by the Beirut magazine al-Urūba on 1st December 1947. It reached Baghdad on the same day⁽⁵³⁾. The date of its composition is stated in several places, particularly her article Ḥarakat al-shi^Cr al-ḥurr, her book Qaḍāyā al-shi^Cr al-mu^Cāṣir and the introduction to this by ^CAbd al-Hādī Maḥbūba. The circumstances of

its composition are mentioned in a footnote to the poem, which is repeated in the first chapter of Qaḍāyā entitled Bidāyat al-Shi^cr al-ḥurr wa zurūfuhu:

"I composed that poem (al-Kūlīrā) to express my deep concern for Egypt which was stricken by a cholera epidemic. I wrote it to depict the pounding of the horses' hooves as they pull the carts full of the dead in the Egyptian countryside. In order to express myself emphatically and effectively I discovered shi^cr ḥurr"⁽⁵⁴⁾.

Al-Malā'ika has tried to show that she was the original pioneer of Shi^cr ḥurr in the Arab world and to deprive other poets of this title. While we may accept her influential role in the formation of this genre of verse, we should not, at the same time, ignore the role of other poets who participated significantly in its development. There are some who deny that the poem is in Shi^cr ḥurr at all:

طلع الفجر
اصنع الى وقع خطى الماشين
في صمت الفجر ، اصنع ، انظر ركب الباكين
عشرة اموات عشرونا
لا تحسن اصنع للباكينا
اسمع صوت الطفل المسكين
موتى ، موتى ، ضاع العدد
موتى ، موتى ، لم يسوع غدر

في كل مكان جسد يندب محزون
لا لحظة اخلاذ لا صحت
لهذا ما فعلت كف الموت
الموت الموت الموت
تشكو البشرية تشكو ما يرتكب الموت (55)

In this extract we notice that al-Malā'ika employs a single foot (taf^cīla) of Khabab (fa^clun). Thus, the first line contains two feet, the second four, the third six, the fourth, fifth sixth, seventh and eighth four, the tenth, eleventh four, the twelfth three^{and} the thirteenth six . She also feels free to change the rhyme according to the sense; so, in the second stanza of the poem; a, bb, cc, b, dd, b, eeee.

In the very same month as in which al-Kūlīrā was published, al-Sayyāb published his first Dīwān Azhār dhābila (Withered flowers). A poem in this collection entitled Hal kāna ḥubban (was it love?) was as al-Sayyāb himself describes it in a footnote, a new attempt at verse which has varying rhymes and metres, as in most Western poetry particularly the English⁽⁵⁶⁾. The Dīwān was published in Egypt in 1947 and reached Iraq in December of that year. It seems that this poem was written two months before the date of publication. When he later published his Dīwān Azhār wa asāṭīr (Beirut n.d.), he again included Hal kāna ḥubban, which he dated 29 November 1946; this is compatible with the date suggested above. Here is the second stanza of the poem:

العيون المور، لو أصبح نظراً في شرابي
جفت الأقداحُ في ايدي صحابي
دون أن يحظين حتى بالحباب
لهيئتي، يا كأس، من جافتك السكرى، مكانا
تندقي فيه، يوماً، ثفتانا
في خفوق و التراب
وابتعاد شاع في آفاده نطلُّ اقتراب (57)

This irregular poem is composed in the ramal metre. It consists of four stanzas, like al-Malā'ika's, though in al-Sayyāb's poem the line-lengths and the rhyme scheme are different in each stanza, while al-Malā'ika uses the same pattern of both. The first line of the extract consists of four feet, the second of three, the third of three, the fourth of four, the fifth of three, the sixth of two and the seventh of four. The poem consists of four stanzas with variations in rhyme as follows:

Stanza 1: aaa, bb, aa

Stanza 2: bb, c, aa, ac

Stanza 3: b, cc, aaaa

Stanza 4: aaa, d, b.

Nājī^c Allūsh states, rather strongly, in his introduction to al-Sayyāb's Dīwān vol. 1:

"A thorough study of the poem indicates that al-Sayyāb did his best to follow a varied pattern but failed to achieve this"⁽³⁸⁾

Thus he asserts that al-Kūlīrā is closer to Shi^cr ḥurr than Hal kāna ḥubban, but that the poems that al-Sayyāb wrote from 1948 are more representative of this genre than those of al-Malā'ika⁽⁵⁹⁾.

Rufā'il Buṭṭī, however, commented in the introduction to al-Sayyāb's Azhar dhābila:

"Al-Sayyāb is attempting a new form in his poem Hal kāna ḥubban?. He is using various metres and changing rhyme, imitating European poetry. We hope that he carries on in this way"⁽⁶⁰⁾.

Al-Sayyab himself described this poem in the introduction to his second Dīwān, Asāṭīr:

"I observed through my readings in English poetry that there is a beat (darba) which is equivalent to our foot (taf^cīla), and the hemistic (shaṭr) or the verse (bayt) which consists of similar kinds of beat in the rest of the verse, but it varies in number in some poems - I found that it is possible to keep the harmony of music in the poem, in spite of the diversity of the music of verses, by using the metre which has integral feet on condition that the number of feet changes from verse to verse. My

first experiment of this kind was in the poem Hal kāna ḥubban contained in my first collection Azhār dhābila. This type of music was received with approval by several young poets, among them the outstanding poetess Nāzik al-Malā'ika"⁽⁶¹⁾

Ṣalāḥ ^CAbd al-Ṣabbūr commented on the poem:

"This poem was the starting point that paved the way for contemporary Arab poets. Badr's ambition is the reason for his success as well as failure... he has the right to claim the title of pioneer of the new literary movement without dispute"⁽⁶²⁾

However, concerning the question as to who the pioneer of Shi^Cr ḥurr in modern Arabic was, al-sayyāb himself wrote an article entitled Ia^Clīqān (two comments) published in al-Ādāb (1954) in which he mentions the attempt of ^CAlī Aḥmad Bākathīr (d.1969) to translate Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet in verse. This was published in Cairo in 1946, ten years after he had translated it, according to what he says in his preface. He referred to his translation as a mixture of Shi^Cr mursal and Shi^Cr ḥurr⁽⁶³⁾. In the same article, al-Sayyāb discusses al-Malā'ika's article Ḥarakat al-shi^Cr al-ḥurr fī l-^CIrāq, which he represents as misleading for the history of the development of Shi^Cr ḥurr:

"Miss Nāzik claims that the newspapers published no Shi^Cr ḥurr between the

time of the publication both of my Dīwān Azhār dhābila and of her poem al-Kūlīrā which is not shi^cr ḥurr - and the publication of her Dīwān Shazāyā wa ramād. This is not true. I myself published during that time no less than five poems in Shi^cr ḥurr in the Baghdadi and Najafī newspapers. Also Buland al-Ḥaydarī (b.1926) published one more poem in the magazine al-Adīb. It is a fact that no one can ignore that the contemporary Arab poets who have written in Shi^cr ḥurr have not followed in the steps of Nāzik or Bākathīr, but in the steps of the present writer"⁽⁶⁴⁾.

He suggests that al-Kūlīrā is, in fact, a type of muwashshah⁽⁶⁵⁾. Moreh agrees:

"It is true that Nāzik al-Malā'ika's first experiment in her al-Kūlīrā was not free verse.... It seems to me that this is the type of strophic verse known in English as monostrophic ode..... In fact this form is far from free".⁽⁶⁶⁾

Various literary critics have offered varying opinions concerning the identity of the pioneer of Shi^cr ḥurr. According to Iḥsān^c Abbās:

"The two qaṣīdas that have been described as being the beginning of the new departure in poetry, that is Nāzik's qaṣīda "al-kūlīrā" and al-Sayyab's "Hal kāna ḥubban", cannot be taken as a strong indication of anything except a partial change in structure. The first is a musical trot for that dreadful cortege that death portrays, and an external description of the achieving of the arousal of fear - without the ability to do so - by means of the selection of scenes through which an attempt is made to portray the horror of calamity. The point of departure of the second is an attempt to define the concept of love, whether it is lamentation and similing, or the fluttering of the ribs at meeting.. were it not for a minute difference between the various units, this qaṣīda would never be mentioned in the history of modern poetry"⁽⁶⁷⁾.

Elsewhere, ^cAbbās supports Nāzik's claim:

"Al-Sayyāb composed one poem before 1948 in which he claimed to have discovered a new form (of poetry). This qaṣīda, however, diverges only in trifling

respects from the ancient form, and it did not greatly inspire anyone, while Nāzik, in 1949, published a Dīwān most of which followed this new form; in it was an attempt to embark upon novelties and variation within this very form. It also had a precise critical introduction... Al-Sayyāb's introduction to his Dīwān Asāṭīr (1950), on the other hand, represents a childish confusion and superficiality of understanding of English poetry... Al-Sayyāb is deceiving himself when he claims to have been the one to have originated a style in which others have imitated him"⁽⁶⁸⁾.

On the other hand, Yūsuf al-Ṣā'igh says that al-Malā'ika preceded al-Sayyāb in her claim to be using Shi^Cr ḥurr, which she was encouraged to do by European poetry⁽⁶⁹⁾. It does not greatly matter whether al-Sayyāb or al-Malā'ika was the first poet to introduce shir^Cr ḥurr into Arabic literature. What does matter is that both of them developed a pattern of verse structure for shi^Cr ḥurr, without regular metre and usually without rhyme, and that their invention of a new model was greatly influenced, indirectly, by European culture through their reading of the Mahjar, Dīwān and Apollo School, and directly, by their study of English literature.

However, the question which poses itself here is this: can we regard this poetical experiment in Iraq as the real beginning of Shi^Cr ḥurr for the whole of the Arab world? Argument on this subject is lively. According to Jalāl al-Khayyāṭ, Egyptian poets were pioneers in Shi^Cr ḥurr and Shi^Cr mursal in the early twenties⁷⁰). Similarly, the Iraqi poet Kāẓim Jawād believes that al-Malā'ika was not the first Arab poet to write Shi^Cr ḥurr, and that there were many poets who employed it before her, such as Nasīb^C Arīḍa, Khalīl Shaybūb and al-Sayyāb⁽⁷¹⁾. Moreh has made a comprehensive investigation of the development of Shi^Cr ḥurr in the Arab world. He mentions several poets who used this type of versification in the period from 1924 to 1947, among whom are Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī (1892-1955), Khalīl Shaybūb (1892-1951), Abū Ḥadīd (1893-1967), Niqūlā⁻ Fayyāḍ (1874-1958), Maḥmūd Ḥasan Ismā^Cīl (b. 1910), Anwar Shā'ūl (b. 1904), Bākathīr (1910-1969), al-Sayyāb (1926-1964), al-Malā'ika (b.1923)⁽⁷²⁾. Salmā Jayyusī, on the other hand, does consider that the movement of Shi^Cr ḥurr began formally in Iraq with the publication of the second Dīwān of al-Sayyāb Asāṭīr (1950), although she is not unaware of the various experiments earlier in the century⁽⁷³⁾.

Al-Zubaidī attributes the beginning of Shi^Cr ḥurr to Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī in his significant work al-Shafaq al-bākī in 1926⁽⁷⁴⁾.

Similar forms were also used by Lewis ^CAwad (b. 1915) in some of the poems which were published in his collection "Plutoland and other poems from the poetry of the Elite" (Cairo, 1947):

"It is clear from the dates of ^CAwad's poems that they were written several years before both al-Malā'ika and al-Sayyāb wrote their two isolated poems which appeared in 1947 and were considered as the earliest compositions of the free verse poets.

Without exaggerating the importance of such precedence in time in discussing the emergence of a movement whose origins are too complex to be traced back to a given point in time and place, it is evident that, historically, ^CAwad's work lies at the root of the movement". (75)

Nāzik al-Malā'ika acknowledges that there are many poems in Shi^Cr ḥurr which had been published by 1935; she does not reproduce any of these poems, but she gives the names of some of the poets such as ^CAlī Aḥmad Bākathīr, Muḥammad Faṛīd Abū Ḥadīd, Maḥmūd Ḥasan Ismā^Cīl, ^CArār and Lewis ^CAwad⁽⁷⁶⁾. She also found a poem written in Shi^Cr ḥurr by Badi^C Ḥaqqī which was published before her and al-Sayyāb's first experiments. She quotes an extract from this poem in her Qaḍāyā:

أَيَّ نَسْمَةٍ
حَلَوَةُ الْمَفْرُوحِ عَلَيْهِ
تَسْمَعُ الْأُورَانَ فِي لَيْلٍ وَرَحْمَةٍ
تَهْرُوْنَ الرَّعْشَةَ فِي طَيَّابَتِ نَفْسِهِ
وَأَنَا فِي الْفَأَبِ أُبْكِي
أَمَلًا ضَاعَ وَحَلْمًا وَ مَوَاعِيدَ ظَلَمِلِهِ
وَالنَّفَى قَدْ لَهْرَبَتْ مِنْ صَفْوَةِ الْفَضْلِ الْخَيْلَةَ
فَأَمْحَى النُّورَ وَهَامَ الظَّلْمَ بِحَاكِي
بَعْضَ وَ سَوَاسِي وَ اَوْلَاهِي الْبَخِيلَةَ (77)

Yūsuf ^cIzz al-Dīn refers to another poem, entitled Ba^cda mawtī, which was published in the supplement to the newspaper al-^cIraq, no. 350, 2nd July 1921, which the poet designated al-Naẓm al-ṭalīq. The author (B.N.) of this poem seems to have been afraid that people would not like his poem and so refrained from putting his name on it. As quoted by Yūsuf ^cIzz al-Dīn, it runs as follows:

اَتْرَكُوا نَفْسِي مَلَكِ الرَّهْبِ بِحَاكِي إِلَى
هَفْرَتِي
لَوْ بِحَاكِي إِلَيْهَا
وَبِوَارِنِي فِيهَا
إِنَّ
حَمَلَ الرَّهْمِ إِلَى
طَوْلِ عَمْرِي
بَسِيسْتِنِي الْمَنِيهِ
أَنَا اَدْرِي
فَاتْرَكُوهُ ، لِيَتِمَّ فَعْلُهُ نَحْوِي وَلَا
تَرْجُرُوهُ
بَعْدَ مَوْتِي (78)

Al-Malā'ika accepts this poem as a forerunner of Shi^cr ḥurr (79). It probably had, however, no real influence on other poets of the time (80).

According to al-Malā'ika, at all events, none of the poems that were published before 1947 satisfy the conditions for being accepted as shi^cr ḥurr. She lists these:

1. The poet should have devised a new form and rhyme scheme that would have an impression on the public.
2. He should have prefaced his work with an explanation its prosodic basis that would encourage other poets to imitate him.
3. His work should have been received with strong enthusiasm by the literary public, who should have been stimulated to express their positive or negative attitudes to it.
4. Other poets should have immediately accepted his new form and begun to imitate him, not only in his own homeland, but in the whole of the Arab world (81).

This is a quite extraordinary statement. Many of the experiments that preceded al-Malā'ika and al-Sayyāb exhibit a substantial understanding of this form. The influence exerted by a work is hardly a criterion for its eligibility to be considered as belonging to a particular genre.

Haddāra beleives that psychological and social reasons were the main factors in the popularity of Shi^Cr ḥurr. He claims that the Arabs, having shaken off the foreign domination that they had suffered for centuries and having obtained some degree of freedom, saw a less rigid style of poetry as an appropriate medium for the expression of the feelings that this new situation evoked⁽⁸²⁾.

Most of the Iraqi poets of the Shi^Cr ḥurr movement proper were young, in a phase of life characterised by the building up of hopes and desires. The leftist parties provided them with a framework into which they could set the problems of Iraq and the Arabs in general. Social realism was making a considerable appeal⁽⁸³⁾. A freer verse form may make it easier for the poet to move from the romantic world to the realistic world⁽⁸⁴⁾. Above all, though, it is in these young poet's growing awareness of modern European poetry, particularly English and American, that we should look for the principal impetus for the taking off of this movement at this particular time.

"Human values needed to be released and expressed in modern terms and a stronger relationship with the inner experience of the nation, the whole Arab nation, had to be established. It so happened that these foreign fields were mostly the English-speaking countries, and so it was poets like T.S. Eliot rather than

St. John Perse who were henceforward to have the greatest influence in Iraq after 1948 where some of the most progressive talents in the Arab world were now reaching maturity"⁽⁸⁵⁾.

" But although he has been perhaps the greatest single influence on poetry, he was by no means the only one, whether in England or elsewhere, from whom the younger poets learnt a method or derived an inspiration."⁽⁸⁶⁾ The numerous influences that are evident in much of al-Sayyāb's work are discussed elsewhere. Similar influences are apparent in al-Malā'ika from the time of the publication of her first Dīwān, Āshiqat al-layl (1947). She comments in the introduction to her collected poems, vol. 1 (1971):

"At that time, I used to read English poetry a lot. I was impressed by its long poems and I wished for us to have something similar."⁽⁸⁷⁾

^cAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī had a similar experience:

"I will never forget how I was impressed by the writing and poetry of Auden, to which we had access before that of Eliot"⁽⁸⁸⁾.

The Iraqi press also played an important part in launching the movement. Papers, such as al-Ra'y al-^camm, al-Siyāsa, Ṣawṭ al-ahālī, al-Ḥikma, al-Amānī, Venus, al-Wamīd, al-Kalām, al-Inqilāb, and magazines, such as

^cAṭārid and al-Majalla⁽⁸⁸⁾, the number of which had steadily increased, both raised the level of their reader's awareness of foreign literary trends and provided an outlet for their native writers. After the Second World War, a number of foreign magazines became available in Iraq, such as the Egyptian monthly scientific and literary magazine al-Hilāl, and the weekly literary magazine al-Risāla, the Lebanese al-Adīb and the Syrian al-Jarīq⁽⁹⁰⁾.

In the fifties there was even an Iraqi opposition press. Papers such as Ṣadā al-ahālī, al-Istiqlāl, al-Jabha, al-Waṭaniyya and al-Bilād had a considerable intellectual and ideological impact. These too provided an outlet for aspiring poets. Furthermore, from the fifties onwards, many Iraqi scholars who had been to the West in the thirties and forties to study began to return home and to play an influential role in the cultural and literary life of Iraq.⁽⁹¹⁾ Among these were: ^cAbd al-Fattāḥ Ibrāhīm, Salīm Ṭāhā, Qāsim Ḥasan, Ibrāhīm Kubba, ^cAlī Jawād Ṭāhir, Shākir Khaṣbāk, Ṣafā' Khulūsī and Khālīd al-Jādir.

All these factors, not all of which al-Malā'ika mentions in Qaḍāyā al-shi^cr al-mu^cāṣir, worked together to produce the appearance of this literary phenomenon in Iraq.

CHAPTER TWO - THE BEGINNING OF MODERN KURDISH POETRY IN IRAQ

This chapter is intended to give some account of the conditions in which Kurdish poets have produced their works. However, even the most summary account of this topic is a matter of great difficulty. This is mainly because of sheer lack of information.

Considerable obscurity shrouds the earliest period of Kurdish literature. In spite of claims that remnants remain of poetry from as early as the 4th Century B.C., Thomas Bois's summary of the situation may be taken, for our present purposes, as adequate:

"The origins of Kurdish literature are obscure and uncertain. Indeed, historians cannot always agree on the dates of some poets. In general, Kurdish authors tend to date works far back into the past, a chronology which cannot always be proved. It is the same regarding the authorship of some poems. For example, according to Mr. Socin, the epic of Dimdim is by Mela Ahmed of Batê (1417-1495), which is impossible, since the events to which it refers took place as late as 1608. Similarly Fekiyê Teyran cannot have lived between 1307 and 1375, since he is the author of an elegy on the death of his master Melayê Cizrî who died in 1481. Again it is very difficult to agree that Elî Jermukî, the Kurdish

Ronsard, is of the XIth century. This is something which is unknown to many historians, and those who do refer to it only repeat one another. Only a serious study of the poet's vocabulary and style can clinch the question. But the original texts were lost at the time of the bombings of Berlin. And then some Kurdish editors have no hesitation in bringing up to date the texts of ancient authors in order to make them more comprehensible to modern readers, and by this very achievement preclude any critical study. Although the four Mystical Quatrains of Baba Tahir of Hamadan are in a mixed and archaic language, the Kurds consider them as belonging to their literature, something in the way that the Chansons de Gestes form part of French Literature. But a real course of training is essential if they are to be a read to advantage. What is certain is that some Gorani poets, like Sheik Ahmed Tekhti (towards 1640), and Sheik Mustafa Besarani (1641-1702) and others besides were of his school.

Whatever else may be in doubt, the classical age of Kurdish literature begins in the XVth Century with a whole galaxy of excellent poets. At their head and clearly outclassing them, comes Sheik Ahmed Nishani better known

by the name of the Mullah of Jezireh (1407-1481), whose mystical Diwan, very difficult to be understood by the uninitiated, treats of themes from Persian Sufism. Following him and of his school, there are Mela Ahmed of Batê already mentioned, famous for his Mewlud, often republished, Elî Herîri (1426-1495) and Mir Mauhamed of Muks or Fekiyê Teyran, known for his "History of the Sheik of Sinna" and his "History of the Black Charger". After an eclipse of more than a century, a new star shone forth in the firmament of Kurdish literature: Ahmed Khani (1650-1706), originally of Hakkari. He is the author of what might well be called the Kurdish national epic, Memozin, in which he deals with the theme of Memê Alan adapting it to conform with the classic literary rules and with the spirit of Islam. His disciple, Ismail of Beyazid (1654-1709), as well as numerous ghazel compiled a Kurdish-Arabic-Persian lexicon in verse, entitled "The Rose Garden", Gulzar. Siyapush is the pseudonym of another poet, his contemporary. The XVIIth century is not particularly brilliant, but one can, however, mention the Hakkari Sherif Khan of Julamerg (1688-1748), Murad of Beyazid, (1736-1778), and the Mullah of Erivas, who in 1790 wrote

a medical treatise, perhaps unique of its kind in the Kurdish tongue. At the same period there was a blossoming of religious verse in the Gorani language with Khananê Qubadi (1700-1750) and his Sdewatname, and the lyric poet Mahzuni (1783)⁽¹⁾

What concerns us here is the process of modernisation that Kurdish poetry has undergone in recent years, and a number of questions connected with this, namely, the date of the beginning of modern Kurdish poetry, the identity of the real pioneer in this field and the nature of this modernisation: did it comprehend both form and content, as with modern Arabic poetry? Thus, it is necessary to review briefly the progress of Kurdish poetry from its classical period, which lasts until c. 1920, through its Romantic period from c. 1920 to the Second World War, to its so-called Realist/Social-Realist period, from the Second World War to the 1960s.

- The First Period:

It would be a fruitless effort to talk about modern Kurdish poetry without special reference to the outstanding classical Kurdish poets such as Nālî (1797-1855), Sālîm (^CAbd al-Raḥmān Şāḥibqirān, 1800-1866), Kurdî (1809-1849), Mawlawî (1806-1882), Maḥwî (1830-1904), and Ḥācî Qādirî Kōyî (1815-1892), without whom such poets as Pīramêrd (Ḥācî Tawfîq, 1867-1950), Shaykh Nurî Shaykh Şāliḥ (1896-1958), ^CAbdullah Gōrān (1904-1962), Aḥmad Mukhtār Cāff (1897-1935),

Fā'iq Bêkas (1905-1948), Rashīd Najīb, Zêwar (1908-1952), Dildār (1918-1948), would never have appeared.

Not only does each nation have its own distinguished literature, but within each nation each period differs from the one which precedes it and the one which follows it. A look at the form and content of contemporary Kurdish poetry or novels, for instance, shows that there is a quite clear-cut distinction between them and these of the previous periods. As already indicated, Classical Kurdish poetry developed primarily under the impact of Arabic, and later of Persian literature. In fact it may be said that the traces of this influence in Kurdish go as far back as the 9th Century A.D., when the poet Bābārōx Hamadānī (d.841 A.D.) wrote the first piece of poetry known to have been written in the Kurdish language⁽²⁾. The syllabic verse-forms, which are thought to be of considerable antiquity, remained in use after the Arab conquest of Kurdistan for many years, though only very exceptionally in classical poetry (e.g. Mulla Parêshān, Faqe Tayrān). Gradually, these forms were abandoned under the influence of Arabic poetry, and Arabic prosody was adopted in their place. Only comparatively few Arabic metres, however, seem to have been commonly used, Sarī^c, Khafīf, Hazaj, Ramal and Muḡārī^c. Rhyme in classical Kurdish poetry also follows Arabic and Persian models, with the typical Arabic monorhyme, or more commonly the Persian Mathnawī, which is more convenient, and less monotonous, for longer poems. We also find Khumāsī, Tarjī^c band and Mustazād. In addition, the Rubā^cī is of frequent occurrence,

with varying rhyme - schemes: aaab, abab, aaba, aaaa. All the forms, themes, techniques and conventions of classical Arabic and Persian poetry were known to Classical Kurdish poetry. The content, as well as the form, was virtually identical.

Within this static literary tradition, it may be said that a burgeoning took place in the nineteenth century. The names of Nālī, Mawlawi, Sālim, Maḥwī, Kurdī and Kōyī stand out as supreme practitioners in what, by this period had become a highly polished and melodious medium. The themes remain much the same as they have always been: encomium, religious themes and ghazal, which is also used to express metaphorically the passionate devotion of the mystic. Thomas Bois may again be cited here:

"With the XIXth century and up until the First World War there are poets in plenty. Two trends can be discerned. First, the religious and mystical current which continues this tradition in the writings of many sheiks and mullahs desirous of conveying their mystical teaching through the verses of their Diwan, not without a great deal of repetition and imitation. The influence of the classical Persian poets is manifest. Such are Mawlana Khalid (1777-1821) who introduces the Order of Nakshbendi to Kurdistan, Sheik Marûf Nuri (1755-1837)

with his twenty volumes of religious works, Mullah Khalil of Seert (towards 1830), Mullah Yehya Mizûri, the counsellor Mir Kor of Rowanduz (1826-1889), Nuredîn Bifirkî (died in 1846) and Evdereham Akhtepi (1884), who imitated Khani and wrote in praise of the prophet and Kurdistan. There is too a whole group of Sheiks of Sulaymaniyah: Salem (1845-1909) who bewails the misery of life in the world here below, the Nakshbendi Mahwi (1830-1904), an exponent of Sufi theories, in which is imitated Herik or Mullah Salih (1851-1904). In Iran the poets were very prolific, Seyi Vako (1808-1881), for example, with his 20,000 verses; a polyglot like Fatah Jibarû (1806-1876) who wrote in four languages: Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish and Persian; innovators like Mullah Rehin Tewagozi, called Mewlewi (1806-1882), who introduced new ideas and the first to compose stanzas of alternative rhymes.... A second trend becomes apparent in the XIXth century. Lyricism blossoms forth and patriotism

makes its appearance for good and all. We may mention briefly Shah Pirto of Hakkari (1810); Muhamed Agha Jaff at the same period, known for his "Elegy of Love and Friendship" Kurdi (Mustafa Sahibkiran 1809-1849); Salim (Abdirahman Sahibkiran (1800-1866; Mifti Zehawi (1792-1890), who was a master in many kinds; Wafa'i (Mirza Rahim 1836-1892); the subtle Edeb (Evdelah Beg Mishbah 1859-1912) are both renowned for their lyrical, mystical and patriotic verses. Nali (Mela Khizer) of Shahrizor (1797-1855) extolled his fatherland of Kurdistan, and the agnostic Haji Kadir Koyi (1815-1892) is full of the reactions, inspired in him by the progress of science, against the intellectual torpor of the mullahs and sheiks and the lack of adaptability of the latter to modern life"⁽³⁾

These classical poets nevertheless reveal certain romantic traits in their poetry, particularly Mawlawī, who may be regarded as the first Kurdish poet to give a realistic and

lively picture of the beautiful and constantly changing natural scenery of Kurdistan. These earlier romantics, however, did not revolt against the Classical forms of Arabic poetry. There is a case for maintaining that the seeds of Romanticism were sown in Kurdish literature independently of European.

- The Second Period:

After the First World War, the spirit of the self-determination of peoples, as proclaimed by the British Government, prevailed in the minds of Kurdish intellectuals. On the 14th of September, 1922, Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Ḥafīd initiated the independence movement with the publication of the proclamation of independence, with the help of the British. In November of the same year he proclaimed himself King of Kurdistan⁽⁴⁾. Soon, two newspapers Bāngī Kurdistan (Call of Kurdistan) and Rōjī Kurdistan (Sun of Kurdistan) began to publish works with literary pretensions. They still emphasised encomium, love and nature as the standard subjects of poetry; at the same time, however, they did introduce a certain note of realism. It was only natural that Kurdish poetry should follow the political current, and the younger Kurdish poets found that they had things to say that could not be expressed within the framework of Classical poetry. However, Classical forms were not immediately jettisoned; at first, the new features that distinguish this period were grafted on to them. Much of this poetry is nationalistic in theme; both this type

of theme and the manner of expressing it were inspired largely by foreign example. It is now that a Kurdish national consciousness, as opposed to a merely local and tribal consciousness, really appears for the first time.

It is clear, too, that it was largely foreign influence that produced a new conception of nature in many of the poets of this period - nature either from a purely aesthetic point of view, or as serving as an object-lesson for humanity. This influence was, by and large, Romanticism, discovered, at this time, only at second hand, in its Turkish guise. In Turkey it had found many exponents, such as those associated with the journal Servet-i Fünûn (The treasurer of the Arts), founded in 1891, including Abd al-Ḥaqq Ḥamid (1852-1937), Tawfīq Fikrat (1867-1915), Muḥammad Ra'ūf (1875-1931), and Aḥmad Ḥikmat⁽⁵⁾.

Though there were many Kurdish poets who were influenced by, and contributed to, this Romantic movement, what concerns us here is those who may be regarded as having been fully committed to it, and who succeeded in constructing a native Kurdish Romantic poetry. These were Gōrān, Shaykh Nūrī Shaykh Ṣāliḥ, Pīramêrd, Dilzār, Dildār, Bêkas, Baxtiyār Zêwar, and later Aḥmad Hardī, Kāmarān, and M.Ḥ. Barzancī, all of whom developed their Romanticism in both form and content and used images from nature in a metaphorical fashion. As has been mentioned, most of these poets at first filled their poetry with patriotic sentiments and expressions of indignation at

the injustices perpetrated by the regime. Like other poets, these Kurdish poets set out deliberately to break with the past, its forms, rigid metres, rhymes and scansion. They advocated the revival of the traditional national metres, Hījā; this, however, as we have already mentioned, did not occur immediately, and there was no abrupt break with Classicism. The metres and vocabulary of Classical poetry continued for some time to exist side by side with the revived Hījā and the more colloquial diction that was being introduced. Gōrān comments:

"In composing our poems we used the metres sarī^c, khafīf, hazaj, and we used zawāḥif and ilal^c. We changed the unity of the rhyme, and we believed in the organic unity of the poem rather than the unity of each single verse."⁽⁶⁾

The actual birth of this new movement in Kurdish poetry may be considered to have occurred when Shayk Nūrī Shaykh Ṣāliḥ published his first article on traditional metres in the newspaper Jiyān in 1926. Next came Gōrān, who experimented with the new forms in his poems published in the 1930's and afterwards. These were the two principal pioneers of the new literary movement, which had two salient characteristics; a more colloquial style, divorced from the classical Arabic-Persian style, and a content that was influenced by ideas imported from abroad. Their break with classicism was occasioned largely by their coming in contact with

what was then known as the new movement in Turkish literature, particularly represented by the Ūdaba-i Fecri Ati school.

This is confirmed by Gōrān:

"Bahasht u yādgār (Paradise and Remembrance) is a collection of poetry from my Dīwān entirely concerned with the subjects of beauty and love. Some of them were composed about twenty-five, or perhaps more, years ago.... Many of the old poems [Yādgārī Kōn - old memories] were written in [Arabic] prosody, and in an old form of Kurdish, in which there is an admixture of foreign languages [Arabic, Persian, Turkish]. They are either in a classical style, like that of Nālī and Sālīm or in a style like that of M. Nūrī [Shaykh Nūrī Shaykh Ṣāliḥ] and his friends, which they took over from recent Ottoman Turkish writers, during the period 1920-1930, when they were reviving Kurdish poetry in the district of Sulaimānīyah".⁽⁷⁾

Writers and poets particularly Shaykh Nūrī, Rashīd Najīb, and myself were influenced by Turkish literature and wrote in the same style as one another. It was only Shaykh Nūrī who published his poems; I did not. Meanwhile, there appeared a new Turkish school of poetry called Udabā Fajrī Ātī (Fecri Ati) whose pioneers were Tawfīq Fikrat and Jalāl Sāhir. Another Turkish writer

also appeared, ^CAbd al-Ḥaqq Ḥāmid; he did not belong to the same group, but we were still influenced by him as well. Thus we all based ourselves on a common source.

However, we may regard Shaykh Nūrī as the real founder of this school because: 1 - he published a great deal. 2 - the publication of his works undoubtedly greatly influenced Kurdish literature."⁽⁸⁾

From this we may conclude:

1- Modern Turkish literature was the main source for the modernisation of Kurdish literature.

2- The real founder of the new school was Shaykh Nūrī. Shaykh Ṣālih, who is generally regarded by Kurdish critics as the leading poet of the twenties, and by his admirers as unrivalled. Though it would be churlish to deny that Shaykh Nūrī was the founder of this school, it is clear from his published poems that he did not continue in this style. He and his fellows, Rashīd Najīb, Rafīq Ḥilmī Bag and ^CAbd al-Raḥmān Bag Nifūs gradually reverted to composing poetry in the classical manner, and so their new literary experiment quickly faded away. It was Gōrān who continued and developed the new style. This can be seen in the poems that he wrote between 1925 and 1937, while he was teaching outside Sulaimāniyah. In these he liberates Kurdish poetry from its total dependence on Arabic and Persian poetry and gives it an identity of its own, in

both form, i.e. metre and rhyme and vocabulary, by substituting Kurdish elements for Arabic and Persian:

"I made constant efforts in this direction..

I took the Hījā metres and used them."⁽⁹⁾

From the beginning of the present century, Western literature, and particularly English romantic poetry, gradually came to be known in the Middle East. The most notable proponent of the English Romantics was undoubtedly Gōrān. He did not, like many of his contemporaries, primarily aim to imitate Turkish poetry. In his early poems, particularly those whose subjects are love and natural beauty, there is a sense of the permanent brooding presence of nature, awaiting its interpreter. This emerges very clearly in his first Dīwān Bahasht u yādgār (Paradise and Remembrance). It was perhaps because of this aspect of his work then Pīramêrd in 1935 called him: the hope of our literary future⁽¹⁰⁾. We should not, in fact, lose sight of the contributions in this field of Pīramêrd himself, who has been ungratefully ignored by Kurdish writers and critics. A glance at his Dīwān makes it clear that he had a romantic tendency from the very beginning of his poetic career. One may well feel that romantic traits dominate his philosophical, political and gnomic poems. At the same time, he tried to liberate Kurdish poetry from the domination of classical forms. ^cIzz al-Dīn Muṣṭafā Rasūl considers:

"The basis of his creativity was romantic imagination; romanticism is evident even in

his early poetic works and he succeeded in freeing himself from the chains of classical form. Pīramêrd even tackled classical subjects in a romantic spirit. He expressed his own ideas in a romantic way, freeing himself from the slavery of classical prosody and form, employing, at the same time, his own distinguished style which he derived from the metres of folk poetry "Hijā".⁽¹¹⁾

Pīramêrd was older than the other Kurdish poets just mentioned. He completed his advanced military and legal studies in Istanbul, under the Ottoman Empire, and he held a number of official appointments, the last of which was that of Governor of the district of Amasya in Turkey. After the First World War, he returned to Iraq, where he spent the remainder of his life working in journalism and literature. He was the founder and editor-in-chief of the newspaper Jīn (life), which was published continuously for thirty nine years until it was closed down on 8th of April, 1963⁽¹²⁾. He had a good command of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, and he kept in touch with Turkish poets while he was in Istanbul. It seems quite probable that he thus received an early exposure to European Romanticism, through the medium of Turkish translations, a number of which were already in circulation.

- The third period:

This period is called the Realist or Social-Realist period by many Kurdish critics. It dates from the outbreak

of the Second World War, at which time, dissatisfaction with the idealistic stance of Romanticism was leading many writers to adopt Realism. The seeds of Realism had gradually sprouted in Europe until it became perhaps the dominant feature of nineteenth century literature⁽¹³⁾. Realist novelists and playwrights regarded the social and political circumstances in which they found themselves as the main sources from which to draw their material. Most of their characters, therefore, were either from the petty bourgeois or working class. According to Muḥammad Ghunaymī Hilāl, although Socialist Realism differs philosophically from Capitalist Realism, it overlaps with it in many respects. He believes that while Capitalist Realism limits itself to a description of problems as it perceives them, regardless of how horrifying they may be, Socialist Realism advocates that writers should suggest remedies for solving them.⁽¹⁴⁾

Kurdish literature now began seriously to concern itself with the struggle of the people and their hopes, and also began to reflect the conflict between the various literary movements that existed in Europe. Romanticism ebbed away, giving place to Realism. The poets of this period were inspired by social and political principles. They all adopted one ideology, namely the unity of the struggle of the deprived masses against the great repressive powers of the world, although they were divided into two distinct groups, the Nationalistic and the Communists. At the end of the war, however, the Socialists and Communists

confronted the democratic Nationalists, and much bitter opposition was provoked. Gōrān's imprisonment in 1951 was perhaps the most obvious example of Nationalist reaction. At all events, Kurdish poets in general were turning away from the Romantic preoccupation with their own sensibilities towards a more objective apprehension of the outside world. The political poetry of ^cAbd al-Wāḥid Nūrī (1904-1944) was a healthy beginning for Kurdish Social Realist literature. Dilzār, Hardī, Dīlan, ^cA.H.B., Qadrī Cān, Ma^crūf Barzancī and Gōrān, all regarded him as an example. (15)

The young poets tended to concentrate on particular social problems. For instance, Baxtiyār Zêwar (1908-1952) devoted a number of his poems to the Kurdish farmers, who revolted many times against the feudalist regime, in an attempt to liberate themselves and their land:

کێنگه‌ی وولات بو میر و به‌گ ناکه‌م
بیشم کوژن، زه‌وی خۆم جی ناهه‌م
توو نه‌وه شه‌نم، ئه‌لتونه، شه‌وین هه‌م
زۆردار واز ده‌ینی، به‌سه‌کی ده‌ی سه‌مه‌م
گه‌نم و جۆی خۆم ناده‌م به‌که‌ن به‌عه‌مار
گرانی پی ساز به‌که‌ن سه‌رماه‌یدار

(I6)

I will not plough the soil of the land for either Emir or Bey;
I will not leave my land, even though they kill me.
I sow seeds; my furrow is gold.
If the tyrant leaves me alone, I will smile with gratification.
I will not give my wheat and barley for them to put in their stores,
For the rich to use in time of famine.

And again:

مئی نہ ستیڑی پر سنگدار
رئی نیشاندہ ری ریبوار
مئی حاد پیکہی شہ و گارم
من پست و شو بیدارم
گوئی بگو لہ حادارم
تی بگو لہ نازارم
نم عمر دہی تو تہ سینی
پر ہلائیہ و خود بینی
ہر تارہ و تور بہ سر
بی بار بو ، بی یارہ تدر
کچی پیادی خاوهن زہ پ
بی بہ زہ پی ، بی خبر (17)

O bright star !
A guide for the traveller,
O friend of my nights !
I am silent, and sleepless at night.
Hear my cry !
Understand my pain !
This earth that you see
is full of shouting and selfishness.
Only the poor and unfortunate
are helpless and unaided,
While the rich
are pitiless and ignorant.

Similarly, Ahmad Hardī (born 1922), who advocated that land should be possessed by the farmers, made common cause with all who fought feudalism in the world. According

to him, freedom would only be actualized if farmers owned their lands and liberated themselves from the dominance of feudalism. Hardī regarded Imperialism, reaction, and feudalism as the main enemies of freedom. Hence, real freedom could only be achieved by eradicating these three enemies, through patriotic resolution. His Āzādī Xuwāī Kurdīn 'êma (we are the freedom of the spirit of the Kurds) provides as good example of his attitude:

ئازادی خوی کوردین ئێمه
شورای پۆلاد و بێردین ئێمه
پشتی جوتیاری زه‌بوین
ئالای به‌رزى چون یک بوین

ئاغا و به‌گزادانی زۆردار
جهرده‌ی گیانی گه‌لی هه‌زار
خوین خۆری ئێم نیشتمان
ئالای ده‌ستی بیگانان
روژی خۆی گیانیان ده‌ردینین
توڵی گه‌لیان ئی ئه‌ستین (18)

We are the freedom of the spirit of the Kurds;
We are a rampart of steel and rock;
We are the support of the weak peasant;
We have the same high banner;

The tyrannical Agha and chiefs,

Are robbers of the life of the poor people;
They suck the blood of this land;
They are a tool in the hands of the foreigner;
We shall kill them when the time comes;
We shall take revenge for the people.

Thus, much modern Kurdish poetry has been devoted to depicting the miseries and hardships of farmers in villages under the arbitrary power of the feudalists. That the emphasis has been on this class, rather than on an urban proletariat, is attributable to the essentially agricultural nature of Iraqi society. This theme is repeated many times in modern poetry. Another example is to be found in Yūnus Ra'ūfs' Tutnawān (Tobacco farmers), in which he represents the miserable situation of the struggling farmer, who works day and night for his feudalist master:

که پرینکی دارگه ز ، ناپێک دامه زراو
به پوشس دگه لای چرود سه رگهیراو
بو پارێزگاری خۆره تاو تووز
به چینهکی شپه سێ ده وره ی دراو
کوینجا که دوتی : سه لاهه ت نهی
وه کوێزایی چاد ، ده ملی شکیاو
کوا توتن ، کوانی رسته یی وشکت
کوانی چارداخت ، هه ی که ران باوگاو (I9)

A hut of tamarisk wood, crudely constructed,
Thickly roofed with grass and leaves,
for protection from the strong sunlight and the dust,
Surrounded by a torn screen of reeds.
The boss says: Bad luck to you !
May you go blind and break your neck !
Where is the tobacco, where are the dried strings (of tobacco)?
Where is your hut, you son of a bitch ?

A certain amount of attention, however, was also paid to other workers. For example, his La binī bīrā (at the bottom of the well), Gōrān depicts the miserable life of a worker in the oil fields. Here, rather than describing a predicament from outside, Gōrān assumes the persona of the worker himself, in order to present an impressionistic tableau:

دهك قرژانگ و دهك مشك و مار
بم كونه دا هاتوومه خوار
بچنگك ، بپني ، بپاچ ، ببدان ..
هه تته كه نم بو خوم زيندان !
تا هه لكه نم بروتر نه چم
هري قور ب س ر كور و بچم !
بو پره نجبي من بو بيان نه ده م
نيكي و شكيان ناگاته ده م !

بري پره نجبي عومري دريتر
گشك كرده لاي ناروق ندريتر
كرده م برده ي كومپاني بوو :
هم پره نجم چوو ، هم ندرتم چوو ! (20)

Like a crab, a mouse or a snake,
I am crawling down this hole
With hand, with foot, with mattock, with tooth,
I dig a dungeon for myself,
The more I dig, the deeper I go.
Alas for the mud splashing my son and daughter
Through the labour that I expend for them !
Not even a dry morsel of food reaches their mouths.

— — —
The fruit of labour of a long life
has all gone to one who has not sweated.
I did the work and the company reaped the benefit.
Both my toil and my oil have gone.

Another example is his treatment of unemployment among the working class, in which the new concepts which figure in his poems at this period appear to be fully represented. His poem Nāḷaī bēkār (the cry of the unemployed person) depicts the life of a farmer who is forced to desert his land because of the tyranny of the feudalist, and goes to the town, in search of a job, without success. At that time there were no laws to protect the rights of workers or farmers, but only tribal laws to protect the interests of the feudalists and capitalists⁽²¹⁾. Gōrān felt the pain of such predicaments deeply, and in this poem in particular he attempted to mirror reality:

تا هیزی بزودتن له له شما به گور بود ،

من کور بودم بو ئاغا و ئاغا بادکی کور بود ؛
له (ماندونه بوون) ی سدرایشم واق ویر بود ،
عماری له بیری ته قدام پر - پر بود ...
«نامه خوا!» و «ناظرین!» سدری تی شیوانم ،
دستوزی بو ئاغا نه وه ندهی ره تانم ؛
تا رادهی شو پیری شک تیی که یاندم !
پکم که دت .. نه خوشی له ششی تیک شکانم !
نه خوشی نادجی بودم ؛ بی شوربا ، بی درمان ،
بو زمان تهر کردن «نه ختیک ئاو!» نه منالان ،
هر گویم که دت بادکی کور (نک ئیستا ، هسی جاران !)
قیراندی ؛ بو نایسن فرینی دن له کولان !

فرمانی ، نهی کوسل ! فرمانی .. فرمانی ..
بو دودی بی کاری چاره ییک ، دهرمانی ،
زور شره له چرخ بیسته ما ئینسانی
بی ئیش بی و سکی خوی حمل لووشی بو نانی !... (22)

As long as the strength to move actively was in my body
I was a son to the Agha and the Agha was the father of the son;
He was astonished at my tiredlessness in my work,
His storehouse was quite full - with the fruits of my labour.
"Bravo " and "well done" confused me,
Loyalty to the Agha drove me on
until I became thoroughly worn out.
I became a wreck.... illness broke my body.
I lay sick in bed without soup or medicine.

Another prominent figure is Muhammad Husayn Burzancī (born 1923) who, from his earliest poetic attempts, has waged war on Romanticism and espoused Realism and Socialist Realism. In his Ay kōrpalaī hajār (oh, poor child), he expresses the struggle of the people to attain prosperity and equality:

بلین کوانی له زینا
له نایینا ، له دنیا
زه هریش بی له خواردنا
هر چۆن بی له مردنا
به ششی نیمی بهش خوارد
نیمی ده به دهرد کوارد
کوانی مافی برسیان
کوا به گویره ی نیش نریان (24)

Say where in life
in ritual, in religion
is poison itself in eating
Whatever is in dying
We are deprived of our portion
We are vagabonds
Where is the right of the hungry ?
Where is the life proportionate to the work ?

After the war, poetic, and general literary activity increased, in both the Socialist and Nationalist schools. Factors that contributed to this included the downfall of

Fascism, the development of the patriotic movement in Iraq, enthusiasm for democracy, and wider opportunities for education. At the same time, foreign literature became more generally accessible. As a result of these various influences, Gōrān, at this time, was developing a new perception of the purpose of his writings and growing closer and closer to Socialist Realism; his Romanticism had rapidly withered during the war. A new sense of internationalism is evident in his poetry, almost from the very beginning of the war. In Diyārī Xuwāī sharr (the gift of the god of evil). He describes the inhuman and horrifying sufferings that Hitler is inflicting upon mankind. He urges all the struggling people of the world to unite in an effort to stop this horrible war. He uses the image of the god of evil to connote Nazism:

دیاری خواهی شرر په نجه و نازار ،
سه رگی له شکر ، ویرانی شار ؛
بو دایک : تا قانه کوشتن ،
بو کور پری ناز ؛ هه تیو خستن !

په لامارده ، ده ست و برد که ،
بگره ، بیره ، بدره ، ورد که ؛
قدلا ، ته لهن ، شورا ، سه نگر ؛
هیلوان ، نینان ، شاری ، عه سکر ،
ژن ، پیاو ، پیر ، جوان ، ده ست ، تاج ، سنگ ، سر ...
پنی شیل که هدر چیت دیته بهر ! (25)

The gift of the god of evil is suffering and pain;
The death of an army, the destruction of a city;
For the mother: the killing of her only child;
For the beloved infant: making him an orphan.

Attack ! hurry !
Seize ! cut ! tear ! shred in pieces !
Fort, fence, rampart and trench;
Animal, human, civilian and soldier;
Woman, man, old, beautiful, hand, foot, chest and head.....
Carry on, whatever may happen to you !

For the first three decades following the war, it is safe to say that the majority of Kurdish poets were Socialist and Internationalist, deeply committed to the peace movement and principles of justice, humanity, and democratic equality. At the same time, they contrived also to see these issues as they applied, in particular, to their own nation. Poets like Kāmarān, Dīlān, Hardī, Kākaī Fallāḥ, ^cA.Ḥ.B. , all concentrated on these themes. In 1954, Gōrān wrote a poem entitled Paul Robeson in which he denounced the U.S. Government's attitude towards the singer, who was prevented from visiting the Soviet Union and other Socialist Countries:

ئەو بلبلی ئاشتی خوازی ، پۆل روپسن !
ئەو شیتانی لە خویندنت ئۆترسن
دەسیان گرتی ، نیازیان هەبوو ئاوازه

قدردانه کن له گونچکده دنياي تازه ..
هر نه گير بويان له پوژر ... ناچار بودن
پرتي فرينت لي بيهستن بو در چون !
مهوشيتاندي سازد که مان نه شکين ،
بلبل نه گرن ، پيري بالي در دينن ،
نايه لن بي ، بو گلاني روزه لات
هسته بلي ، تيرکده مهاگري خدبات

بمانگه يتي و به نماوازه ي وهك هه نگوين
له ناوامانا بخوتني بو : ناشتي د ژين !
دا بخوتني که سپي و زهره له گل پيش
گويت بو شل کن وهك يهك دل و وهك يهك لهش ! (26)

O peace-loving nightingale - Paul Robeson !

Those madmen fear your singing.

They have gagged you; they intended to forbid the song
to the ears of a fresh world.

They did not succeed then.... they were obliged to
block your flight to escape.

Those madmen break a violin,

They trap a nightingale, they clip the feathers of its wing.

They do not allow you to come to the Eastern nations,
to sing, to stimulate the fire of the struggle.

Come to us, and with a song like honey
Sing among us for peace and life.
Sing ! until white and yellow together with black
listen attentively to you, like one heart and one body.

Dīlān wrote a poem entitled Min insānim (I am a human being), in which he presented the love of man for his fellows, defending the rights of the struggling masses, regardless of their race or colour. He associated his own sufferings and hopes with those of the Africans and the Chinese. Humanity, he claimed, had but a single problem and purpose:

به لایم ... منی کورد ئینسانم
وه کو تو ئی برای به شمم
خاوه نی نزکو و هه ستانم
هه چه نده ئیتا دا به شمم !
منیش وه کو تو ئینسانم
ئیی (کاکه) ئی برای زه ردم
دوستی گه لانی جیهانم
رۆژی مهیدان و نه برردم ... ! (27)

But..... I, a Kurd, am a human being
Like you, O my black brother.
I have sobs and feelings
Although I am now divided,
I myself am a human being like you,
O Kāka (big brother), o my yellow brother !

I am a friend of the nations of the world;

I am a hero of battle and combat.

It is noticeable that, during this period, the use of myth and symbol, which had been foreshadowed, to a limited extent, and in an unsophisticated way, in pre-war poetry, increased very greatly. The myths and symbols that predominated were those of Kurdish folklore, with a certain admixture, on the part of those who had been exposed to European literature, of those of Greece and Rome. We shall discuss the whole subject in a separate chapter. This tendency in Kurdish poetry came to quite an abrupt end in the 1970s. It has, generally, been replaced by a predominantly nationalist poetry.

CHAPTER THREE - METRE AND RHYME IN KURDISH POETRY

The earliest form of metre that we know of in Kurdish poetry was - like that of Turkish - a simple regularity in the number of syllables in each line. This was, and is called Hījā (alphabet). Newer terms are either birga (syllable) or panca (finger-alluding, of course, to the method of counting the syllables). The ictus coincided with the natural stress of the words. This was used both for folk-poetry and for the earliest examples of more sophisticated poetry. After the Muslim conquest, Kurdish, like the other languages that came within the sphere of Islam, adopted the Arabic metres and verse-forms wholesale. Nevertheless, the traditional syllabic forms survived, side by side with the foreign forms, at least for a while. For instance, the poet Bābārōx Hamadānī (d. 841 A.D.), who may be considered as the first nationalist poet in Kurdish literature, satirized the Abbasid caliphate in syllabic verse⁽¹⁾, and Bāba Tāhir Hamadānī (^CUryān), 935-1010) composed his rubā^Cīs in this form. However, the Arabic forms were used exclusively from about the 11th Century until the beginning of the 1920s, when they were gradually again supplanted by the revived native forms. A parallel step towards the emancipation of the Kurds from the domination of Arabic took place in the language itself. Classical Kurdish poetry contains a great many Arabic and Persian words and phrases. In the following extracts from poems by Malāī Cazīrī (1407-1481) and Shukrī Fazlī, more than half of the vocabulary is Arabic or Persian:

« د اقلیمی سخن میرم ، دشمنی جهانگیرم ! »
(2) « وتعلو سوكب العشاقى اعلامى و راياتى ! »

Regionally I am the lord of language, poetically
I am the world-conquerer.

My standards and banners fly above the procession
of lovers.

مردم من همیشه را ندانند
(3) « متى اضع العمامة تعرفونى »

Do not blame me, for I did not know how things were.

When I put off my turban, you will know me.

Early in the 20th Century, when Kurdish unity and strength reached its highest point, and Sulaimāniyah became the political and cultural capital of Kurdistan, Kurdish, like Turkish, and later Persian, attempted to purge itself of its foreign elements. To a considerable extent this was successful, although a substantial quantity of Arabic and Persian words still remain, not always immediately recognisable in their adapted form; in some cases, the foreign term is considered to be more literary (or learned) than the native synonym, in others, a satisfactory synonym has not been found (or coined). An attempt has also been made to substitute the Latin script for Arabic, this has not been particularly successful, and the modified Arabo-Persian orthography is still in general use.

The nationalist revolutionary fervour of Shaykh Maḥmūd, in the twenties, is reflected in the contemporary efforts to reform Kurdish poetry. The pioneers in this were certainly Shaykh Nūrī, Gōrān, Pīramērd, ^cAlī Kamāl Bāpīr and Rashīd Najīb, although the revival of the traditional Kurdish verse-forms has as yet been little studied, and there is considerable difference of opinion concerning its course. According to ^cIzz al-Dīn Muṣṭafā Rasūl, this revival may be attributed to the influence on the poets mentioned above of the Turkish Romantic poets, such as Tawfīq Fikrat (1867-1915)⁽⁴⁾ Similarly, Dilshād ^cAlī asserts:

"It is a well established fact that Kurdish poetry up to the appearance of Romanticism in Kurdish literature, between the First and Second world wars, was influenced by Persian literature, from which it took the rules of Arabic prosody. After the First World War, however, Kurdish literature was influenced greatly by Turkish poets. This influence stimulated Kurdish poets to abandon Arabic prosody and begin to use native Kurdish metres"⁽⁵⁾

As a result of the twenty-five articles which Shaykh Nūrī published in 1926-27 in the newspaper Jīyān (life), Kāmil Ḥasan al-Baṣīr considers him to have been the principal innovator, uninfluenced by anyone at all, and merely

"following the laws of historical and scientific development at that time".⁽⁶⁾ Gōrān, on the other hand, in commenting on his own use of traditional forms in the introduction to his first Dīwān Bahasht u yādgar (Paradise and Remembrance), appears to stake a claim for himself:

"I found it absolutely necessary to use native metres in my work, because they are truly representative of our identity and language."⁽⁷⁾

Rafīq Ḥilmī Bag accepts this claim:

"Gōrān is one of the greatest Kurdish poets; he laid down new guidelines for the composition of Kurdish poetry for other Kurdish poets to follow"⁽⁸⁾

as does Kākāī Fallāḥ:

"The poet's instinctive talent and personal poetic experience realized that he should use these traditional metres. Gōrān was convinced that the content of the new poem demanded these metres"⁽⁹⁾

In examining this question we should not forget Mawlawī (1806-1882), who composed most of his poems using the traditional Hījā metres, particularly the ten-syllable form. Ḥusayn ^cAlī Shānōf asserts that his works were not widely known⁽¹⁰⁾, but there is evidence, as we have seen in

Chapter 2, that a number of those who popularised the traditional verse-forms in the 20th Century were acquainted with him.

While still writing in the Classical (Arabic) metres, the modern poets tended to confine themselves to the simpler ones: hazaj, the basic element of which is mafā^Cīlun ـــــــــــــــــ, repeated three times in each miṣrā^C; ramal, fā^Cīlātun ـــــــــــــــــ, repeated three times in each miṣrā^C; basīt, mustaf^Cīlun ـــــــــــــــــ, alternating with fa^Cīlun ـــــــــــــــــ; muḍārī^C, mafā^Cīlun, fā^Cīlātun, mafā^Cīlun ـــــــــــــــــ, ـــــــــــــــــ, ـــــــــــــــــ. In Arabic, hazaj and ramal have six taf^Cīla in each bayt, but in Kurdish and Persian they have eight taf^Cīla, as, for example, in a line of hazaj by Hācī Qādirī Koyī (1817-1897):

له وه ختی خوی همدو شا بوون ، سه را پایان فرود شا بوون
له به خشین حاتم طائی ، له سه را دوست می میدان (II)

At one time they were all kings, fortunate from head to
toe (completely),
In seniority, they were like Ḥātm Ṭā'ī - in bravery,
they were like Rōstam the warrior.

له وه ختی / خوی / هه / موو / شا / بوون / سه / را / پیا / یان / خرو / شا / بوون
ـــــــــــــــــ ـــــــــــــــــ ـــــــــــــــــ ـــــــــــــــــ
mafā^Cīlun mafā^Cīlun mafā^Cīlun mafā^Cīlun

له به خشین / حاتم / طائی / له / سه / را / دوست / می / میدان
ـــــــــــــــــ ـــــــــــــــــ ـــــــــــــــــ ـــــــــــــــــ
mafā^Cīlun mafā^Cīlun mafā^Cīlun mafā^Cīlun

Arabic prosody was applied to Kurdish in much the same way as it was to Persian. The metres that were used were the ones that most allowed the natural stresses of the word and the sentence to coincide with the metrical stresses. Here are some examples:

سه رنجی ری نه ده م ریکا هه مووی شیوهی نهوی تیا به
 ده کو دنیا له ناو جوانی نه دا توایسته وه وایه (I2)

I look at the road, and I find her form everywhere on it,
 As though the world had dissolved in her beauty.

سه /رن/جی/ری/شه /ده/م/ری/گا/هه/موو/شی/وه/ی/شه/وی/تیا/به
 ب - - - ب - - - ب - - - ب - - - ب
 mafā^cil mafā^cilun mafā^cilun mafā^cilun
 وه/کو/دنیا/له/نا/جوانی/نه/وا/توا/بی/ته/وه/وا/یه
 ب - - - ب - - - ب - - - ب - - - ب
 mafā^cil mafā^cilun mafā^cilun mafā^cilun

Each misrā^c contains four taf^cīla, each consisting of one short and three long syllables . In the final foot of the second shaṭr, a naturally short syllable appears to be lengthened in a stressed position.

هه موو روژی له بهر سهیری بتی نه د بهرن د بالایه
 له سه ری یا نه وه ستم من هتا کو نادای پیم دایه (I3)

Everyday, in order to look at her beautiful form,
 I will stand in her way till I become weary.

هه/موو/روژی/له/به/ر/سه/ی/ری/ب/تی/شه/و/به/ژ/نو/با/لایه
 ب - - - ب - - - ب - - - ب - - - ب

maf^Culāt mafā^Cilūn mafa^Cilūn mafā^Cilun

له / سه / ری / یا / شه / وه / س / تم / من / هه / تا / کو / ئا / وی / پی / م / د / ا / یه

ب - - - - - ب - - - - - ب - - - - - ب
maf^Culāt mafā^Cilun mafa^Cilun mafā^Cilun

In the final foot of each shaṭr, a naturally long syllable appears to be shortened in an unstressed position.

له تر سی ته لعتت روژ هر ده کوو شیت
به رود زه ری هلا ت د که دته کیوان (I4)

In fear of your appearance, the sun, like a madman,
Runs away, pale-faced towards the mountains.

له / تر / سی / ته / ل / ع / ت / ت / رو / ژ / هر / ده / کو / و / ش / ی / ت

- - - - - ب - - - - - ب - - - - - ب
fa^Culun mafā^Cilun mafa^Cilun

به / رو / و / زه / ری / دی / هه / لا / تو / که / و / ته / کی / و / ان

- - - - - ب - - - - - ب - - - - - ب
fa^Culun mafā^Cilun mafa^Cilun

In view of the fact that the natural word stresses and the metrical stresses do not, in fact, always coincide in these examples, it would be possible to argue that the poets still retained some memory of the traditional syllabic verse-forms. On the other hand, it is well-known that a certain conflict of word stress and ictus is considered desirable in many forms of poetry, so this argument should

probably not be given too much weight.

In rhyme, as in metre, classical Kurdish poetry followed Arabic and Persian models. In the qaṣīda and the ghazal, monorhyme was used. The rubā^ci form, however, introduced by Bābā Tāhir ^cUryān, was perhaps the most popular verse-form until modern times. Bābā Ṭāhir ^cUryān's rubā^c iyyāt differed somewhat from the well-known Persian forms, and have a wider variety of rhyme-schemes. The mathnawī form also established itself, as in Persian poetry, as being both a convenient medium for longer poems, such as epic and didactic poems, and a form more suited to an Indo-European language than the monorhymed qaṣīda. Modern poets, like Pīramêrd, and Gōrān himself, in his earlier period, also composed poems in the mathnawī form:

له ژیر میزه را مه لای نود شتاوه ،
پریشی بو ستر سنگ پرش و بلاوه ،
قیافهت پر پودت دهك كتنی كوون ،
زمانی شیرین ، سیجای نهفتی مۆن ،
بازی پوچی چش به شیعرو نوده ب ،
به لام شیوهی زووی عه جدم و عه زه ب ..
بو میوان بیی مایه تی مه لا
له کوپری شه و ا ؛ مه لایه و مه لا !
توو مه لاد شیعرو فلسفه فدی ئیسلام
گوئی راگرتنی تاد تاوی عه و ام
به بی زیادد کم دینینه پیش چاد :
سه ربخی کوپران له نامه ی نود ساراو ! .. (I5)

Beneath a spreading turban see the bowed Mulla,
His beard unkempt scattered over his breast,
His face all wrinkled like an ancient tome,
His tongue full of sweetness, his aspect glum,
A hawk unhooded in verse and letters
Though in the old fashion of Persian and Arab.
If for the guest there be a source of consolation
In the evening circle it is the Mulla, the Mulla -
Thou and the Mulla and verse and doctrine of Islam.
The fitful attention of the common herd
Exactly demonstrates, neither more nor less,
The degree of the heed of the blind for the scripture.

Another essentially Persian verse-form that was used, to some extent, during the 19th Century, was the mustazād, which is "formed by adding to each mişra^c or hemistich in a piece of verse a short line called the Ziyāda or 'complement', which may be either read or omitted, the poem making equally good sense in either case"⁽¹⁶⁾. The following example is by Nālī:

« نئی تازه جدوان پیرم د افتاده کرد تو دم
تا ماهه عیالتم »
« دهستی بهره دهستی شکستم که لده من چو دم
قوربانی وه فائتم »
« تو یوسفی نه د حوسنی لسه ر میسری جنانی
من پیرم د فانی »
« له کولبی نه عزانه نه زیندوم د نه مردوم
صدر دا به نه ماتم » (I7)

Oh fresh young (girl), I am old, and I have become decrepit,
For the remainder of my life.

Give your hand to my broken hand, for I am lost,

May I be a sacrifice to your faithfulness.

You are the beautiful Joseph (Yūsuf) in the Egypt of the heart,
I am old and fading away.

In this cell of sorrows I am neither alive nor dead,

Thus, I wait for you.

The ziyādas of these four shaṭrs, when put together,
constitute an independent mathnawī bayt:

تا ماره حیاتم ، قوربانی وه فاتم
من پریم د فانی ، هه و ابته ماتم

Modern Kurdish poetry, as has already been implied, has drawn aside from both its classical heritage and from modern Arabic poetry, and has revived the traditional syllabic metres. The part played in this revival this by Shaykh Nūrī and Gōrān, in the 1920s, has been of the utmost significance for all subsequent Kurdish poetry. Traditionally, the range of the number of syllables possible in a shaṭr was considered to be from five to sixteen, although not all numbers were used. In modern times the most frequently used version has been the ten-syllable, which is regarded by ^cIzz al-Dīn Muṣṭafā Rasūl as the native metre: (18)

بنجینی مزگوت نیشته ناو چم ،
رود بره و قیبله ، پشت له جه هه نم !

مزگرتی کاتی چیشته نگادی چوئل :
دهك مردوو كفتی بی دهنگی به كوئل !
سووره چناری لقی و پوئپ درئز
سیئر نه کا بو خدی برده نوئز !
جار جار نیامی ته نیای گوئشی حدوز :
سه رسنگ ماچ نه کا پریشی به وه نهوز ! (I9)

The mosque's foundations sink into the stream,
Its face towards Mecca, its back turned on hell,
The empty mosque of breakfast time
Like a corpse wrapped in the shroud of silence.
A plane with spreading bough and branch
Casts its shade for a nap on the smooth prayer-flags.
Now and then the Imam, alone at the corner of the cistern,
Nods for his beard to kiss his breast.

I0 = بناچی/نه ی/من/گه و/ت/نیش/تو/ته/ناو/چه م
I0 = پرو/به/اره و/قیب/له/پشت/له/جه/هه/نه م
I0 = مز/گه و/تی/کا/تی/چیش/ته/ن/گا/وی/چوئل
I0 = وه/ك/مر/دوو/كف/نی/بی/ده/ن/گی/به/كوئل
I0 = سوو/ره/چه/نا/ری/ل/قو/پو/پاد/رئز
I0 = سیئر/نه/ره/کا/بو/خه/وی/به/ره/ده/نوئز
I0 = جار/جار/نیامی/ته/نیای/گوئشی/چه/وز
I0 = سه/رسنگ/ماچ/نه/کا/پریشی/به/وه/نه/وز

The eight-syllable version has been the next most popular:

تازہ بویت بہ مدلی قدس
بوچیمہ نامہ نیتر بہس
نامہ دی من تو لہو کورہ
داگیر کہم دلی زور پرہ (20)

You have just become a cage-bird,
What use are your letters to me now ! Enough !
I do not wish to take you from that boy whose
heart is so anxious.

8 = تازہ / بویت / بہ / مدلی / قدس
8 = بوچیمہ / نامہ / نیتر / بہس
8 = نامہ / دی / من / تو / لہو / کورہ
8 = دا / گیر / کہم / دلی / زور / پرہ

Apart from these, the seven-syllable, eleven-syllable
and five-syllable versions have enjoyed some favour:

نہ توئی کچی جوان
نہی گوئی باخی نریان (21)

Is it you, beautiful girl,
Rose of the garden of life ?

7 = نہ / توئی / کچی / جوان
7 = نہی / گوئی / باخی / نریان

قول و مدچک ساف و سپی وک شودشہ ،
سہر پہنچہ کان باقوتیک بون بہ درشہ ،
بیلینہ سہر چاد : چاوٹیک .. بیلیم چ چاوٹیک ؟
کانی سیر ، رہریای عیشوہ ، گیر داوٹیک ، (22)

Her arms and wrists are smooth and white as crystal,
The tips of her fingers are ruby-like in their gleaming.
Let us come to her eyes - eyes do I say! What eyes ?
A magic spring, a sea of coyness, a whirlpool.

قو/نو/مه/چه/ك/سا/فو/س/پی/وه/ك/شو/شه = II
سه/ر/په/ن/چه/كان/یا/قو/تیک/بوون/به/وور/شه = II
بیی/نه/سه/ر/چاو/چاو/ویک/ب/لیم/چ/چا/ویک = II
کانی/سی/حر/ده/ر/بیای/عیش/وه/گیژ/دا/ویک = II

کوانی زولنی رهش ؟
کولمی نال دگهش ؟ (23)

Where is the black tress,

The red delightful cheek ?

کوا/نی/زول/فی/په/ش = 5

کول/می/شا/نو/گه/ش = 5

Rarely, twelve-syllable and six-syllable versions
have also been used.

When the syllable metres were first revived, the shaṭrs
of each poem were invariable of the same length. It was
Gōrān who took the experimental step, now common in
contemporary poetry, of using shaṭrs, or perhaps we should
now say lines, of varying numbers of syllables. For
example:

له/ژیئر/شاس/مانی/شی/نا = 7 له/ژیئر/شاس/مانی/شی/نا ،
له/پال/لووت/که/ی/به/ف/ری/نا = 7 له/پال/لووت/که/ی/به/ف/ری/نا ،

کور/دس/تان/گه/پرام = 5
دو/لاو/دو/ل/پپ/وام = 5
نە/لە/شا/رو/نە/لە/دی = 7
نە/م/دی/کە/س = 3
و/ه/ك/تو/جوان/بی = 4
تو/ی/تو/بە/س = 3
کچه/کور/دی/ک/دل/پپی/شاد/بی = 7
و/ه/ك/فریشتە/و/په/ری/زاد/بی = 7
نە/ب/ار/ی/کی/نە/گۆش/تن = 7
نە/ک/چو/لە/ی/نە/شا/ژن = 7
نە/زۆر/چاو/په/شی = 5
نە/ئێج/گار/گه/شی = 5
بە/لام/بە/نی/گای/شیرین = 7
نە/م/دی/کە/س = 3
و/ه/ك/تو/بە/تین = 4
تو/ی/تو/بە/س = 3

کوردستان گرام ،
دۆلاو دۆل پیوام ؛

نە لە شارو نە لە دی :
نە مەدی کەس
و/ه/ك/تو/جوان/بی !
تو/یت و بەس
کچه کوردیک دل پی شاد بی ،
و/ه/ك/فریشتە و پەریزاد بی !

نە بارکی ، نە گۆشتن ،
نە کچو لێ ، نە شانن ،
نە زۆر چاو پەشی
نە ئێجگار گەشی
بە لام بە نیگای شیرین :
نە مەدی کەس
و/ه/ك/تو/بە تین ..
تو/یت و بەس ! (24)

Under the blue sky,
Beside the snowy peaks,
I wandered Kurdistan;
I measured it from valley to valley,

But neither in town nor in village,
Did I see anyone
as beautiful as you;
You are the only one.
A Kurdish girl, in whom the heart delights,
Like an angel and the daughter of a fairy,

Neither thin nor fat,
Neither a flapper nor a matron,
Her eyes not too black,
Not too light,
But with a sweet glance.
I did not see anyone
as striking as you;
You are the only one.

| | |
|---|--|
| سه / ره / تاي / هه / موو / پيا / ي / زي = 8 | سه ره تاي هموو پاي زي |
| وه / خ / تي / پۆل / پۆل / شه / وه / مه / لا / نه / ي = 8 | وه ختي پۆل پۆل نه وه لاني |
| به / دو / اي / عه / ش / ق / ك / ره / مه / سير / دا = 8 | به دو اي عه ش ق ك ره مه سير دا |
| پو / وه / و / با / شوور / كوچ / شه / كه / نو = 8 | پروه و باشوور كوچ نه كنه و |
| جي / مان / دي / لن = 4 | جيمان ديلن |
| شه / و / رو / ژا / نه = 4 | نه و رو ژا نه |
| له / ناو / با / خ / چه / ي / عا / ژه / له / كا / ني / با / كوور / دا = I2 | له ناو با خ چه ي عا ژه له كا ني با كوور دا |
| سه / رنج / ب / ده / ن = 4 | سه رنج بدن |
| شه / بي / نن / و / ا / عا / وه / لي / شه / و / با / ل / دا / نه = I2 | شه بينن وا : ناوه لي نه و بالندانه |
| زين / دا / نه / به / كان = 5 | زيندانه كان |
| زي / زو / ما / تن = 4 | زي زو ماتن (25) |

At the beginning of each autumn,
When those birds migrate, flock by flock,
Towards the south, drawn by desire for their
warmer winter habitat,
And they leave us -
In those days,
In the north - the zoological gardens -
Look !
You will see the friends of those birds
imprisoned,
Anxious and downcast.

It may be noted, in passing, that in modern poetry a number of lines can consist of only 3 or 4 syllables; the classical prosodists considered that such short lines could not be used. At the same time as introducing irregularity in the number of syllables in each line, irregularity of rhyme, not unnaturally, also appeared. Gōrān's poem, above, consists of seven stanzas, with the following rhyme-scheme:

Stanza 1: aa bb
Stanza 2: cd cd cc
Stanza 3: ee ff ed ed ff
Stanza 4: gg bb cd cd bb
Stanza 5: hh bb fd fd bb
Stanza 6: dd bb cd cd
Stanza 7: bb ii ee cd cd cc.

Clearly, metres that depend only on syllable-counts, regardless of the quantity of the vowels involved, are much easier to manipulate than complicated quantitative metres. The motives for their revival were probably largely nationalistic; once revived, however, they seem not to have presented the necessary challenge to the poet's ingenuity, or, perhaps, to have offered sufficient variety. It was, one may guess, for these reasons that the irregular patterns were introduced under the influence, to be sure, both of European and modern Arabic poetry.

CHAPTER FOUR - A COMPARISON BETWEEN AL-SAYYĀB AND GŌRĀN

The similarities between modern Arabic and Kurdish literature are striking. The geographical and historical circumstances which earlier influenced the two literatures may have been different, but in more recent centuries the same social and political problems have confronted both peoples.

Both al-Sayyāb and Gōrān witnessed important cultural developments, as well as developments in the technological, social, political and ideological fields. There was social and political uprising against backwardness, imperialism, tyrannical regimes, and social repression. Young people started to revolt against traditional values. There was a spiritual leap which led to a growing national consciousness. All these factors had a great influence on the Iraqi people, both Arabs and Kurds. After the Second World War, Iraq witnessed social, economic, political and ideological changes. There were also radical developments in literary movements, from classical to romanticism, then from romanticism to realism and thence to social-realism. In the hands of some talented young poets, this latter managed to achieve a balance between the objective and the subjective, opening up new horizons in the world of literature in general and poetry in particular. These developments inevitably came about as the result of their experiences of life at this time. It would be too much to suggest that social, economic, political, cultural and ideological factors directly

affected poetry, because these are autonomous worlds. However, since it is axiomatic that poets are more sensitive than other people, they may be supposed to be more aware of the effects of these factors. The Second World War brought about great changes in the map and inflicted tragedy and hardship on many parts of the world, including Iraq. The young generation of Iraqis was brought face to face with unprecedented problems. The majority of poets used their pens as weapons in the battle for liberation and change. The comment of Muḥammad al-Tunjī, concerning al-Sayyāb, is relevant here:

"Al-Sayyāb appeared in an environment and at a time in which poets had started to adopt a new approach to literature. He was one of the revolutionary poets who devoted their poetry to the cause of the people. He shared their yearnings, their struggle and took part in the cleansing of the pollution, inflicted by the tyranny of tiem, which had tarnished society"⁽¹⁾.

In the previous chapters an account has been given of how Arab and Kurdish poets attempted to change both the form and content of Arabic and Kurdish poetry, and it is clear that among the principal pioneers in this attempt Gōrān and al-Sayyāb occupy a prominent position. The backgrounds of both were similar, as far as the social and

political circumstances of the north and south of Iraq were concerned, even if their physical surroundings were very different. Their poetry concentrated on similar themes: the beauties of nature, the beauty of women, and the struggle of the oppressed masses. Even their poetic development followed a similar pattern: al-Sayyāb started composing poetry when he was seven years old and reached his poetic maturity at the age of twenty when he published his first *Dīwān*, Azhār dhābila (Withered flowers) in 1947; Gōrān also started composing poetry in his early youth and attained his poetic maturity by the late twenties. Both were also influenced by their acquaintance with Turkish and English literature, and both made translations, of prose and poetry, into Arabic and Kurdish respectively. The primary influence on both of European literature, particularly in their earlier periods, was of Romanticism. This is evident, in al-Sayyāb's poetry, even in his first collection, and certainly in his first experiments with Shi^cr ḥurr; in Gōrān's case, it is equally detectable in the works that he produced from the thirties onwards.

Both came to employ myths and symbols in their poetry, and both were influential in introducing the extensive use of these elements in the poetry of their respective languages.

At the end of the Second World War, both turned in their writings to a whole-hearted expression of the Communist ideology. Both suffered loss of employment, imprisonment and exile. Both eventually became disillusioned with

Communism (in the case of Gōrān, only at the very end of his life) and reverted to Nationalist views.

Badr Shākīr al-Sayyāb

Near the Shaṭṭ al-^CArab, to the south-east of Baṣra, is located the district of Abu l-Khaṣīb. It comprises many villages, among them Jaykūr, about three Km from Abu l-Khaṣīb itself, with a population, according to Nājī ^CAllūsh, of somewhere between five and twelve hundred. Most of the inhabitants of Jaykūr are members of the al-Sayyāb family (the name means "green dates"). When Karīma in 1925 married her cousin Shākīr they moved from Jaykūr to al-Baqī^C, where they lived in the house of ^CAbd al-Jabbār Marzūq al-Sayyāb, the father of Shākīr, ^CAbd al-Qādir and ^CAbd al-Majīd, and a man of some standing in the community.

In 1925 or 1926 Karīma gave birth to Badr. In 1932 she died while giving birth to her fourth daughter. Badr was to refer frequently in his poetry to the effect that this ~~early~~ loss had upon him. It was not long after her death, in 1935, that his father decided to remarry. The orphaned Badr went to live with his grandmother, Amīna.

There was neither a government nor private school in Jaykūr. Therefore, al-Sayyāb was obliged to go to school in the nearby village of Bāb Sulaymān. Unfortunatley, this village school provided only four years of teaching, and he had to transfer to the al-Maḥmūdiyya School in Abū l-Khaṣīb, to complete the last two years of his primary education. In 1938, he completed his primary studies and started his

secondary education in Baṣra, where he lived with his other grandmother. When he graduated in 1943 he went to Baghdad and joined the Dār al-mu^Callimīn al-^Cālīya. There, he was admitted as a student in the Arabic Department, but he later transferred to the English Department.

In 1945 he joined the Iraqi Communist Party and remained a member for eight years. He was dismissed by the college authorities on the 2nd January, 1946, because he had formented strike action by the students at the end of 1945. He returned to Baghdad, however, after the summer vacation, to participate in the demonstrations and riots that were going on in protest at the British attitude towards Palestine. He was arrested, together with many other demonstrators and imprisoned for some weeks. His dismissal was eventually commuted to one year's suspension, in view of his poetic ability and the fact that he had committed no other breach of discipline during his three years.

After five years' study in Baghdad, he obtained his B.A. in English Language and Literature - and he was subsequently appointed as a teacher - at the al-Ramādī Secondary School. However, his membership of the Communist Party caused him to lose this post after only three and a half months, on 25th January, 1949. He was further prohibited from teaching for ten years. On returning to Baṣra he was arrested and imprisoned. After leaving prison in 1949, he obtained various jobs, both in Baṣra and in Baghdad, with the Iraqi Datē Company and the Iraqi Oil Company in Baṣra

and finally, in 1951, through the help of some friends, with the Directorate of General Imports in Baghdad. On 22nd November 1952, he participated in the huge demonstration in Baghdad, led by the students of the College of Pharmacy, which led to the resignation of the government of Nūrī al-Sa^cīd. The organizers of these demonstrations made a number of demands; the abrogation of the 1930 Treaty of Portsmouth, free elections, respect for the law, freedom, and a limitation on the amount of land any individual could possess. The ruling regime, however, agreed to none of these demands; on the contrary, they made a large wide number of arrests in Baghdad. Al-Sayyāb fled to Iran to escape arrest. From there he went to Kuwait, where he remained for some time. He subsequently, however, returned to Baghdad, to work on the newspaper al-Difā^c whose editor-in-chief was Sādiq al-Bassām. Later, on 23rd December, 1953 he was re-appointed to the Directorate of General Imports. In the years between 1951 and 1954 he composed four great masterpieces, which were regarded as new departure in Arabic poetry: Fajr al-salām (1951), Ḥaffār al-qubūr (1952), al-Mūmis al-^camyā' (1954), al-Asliḥa wa-l-aṭfāl (1954).

In 1955 he married a girl from Abū l-Khaṣīb called Iqbāl Ḥāhā ^cAbd al-Jalīl, who had graduated from Dār al-mu^callimāt two years previously. Although she was not related to his family, her sister had married his uncle ^cAbd al-Qādir.

In September, 1958, he was re-appointed as a teacher

at the al-A^Czamiyya Secondary School in Baghdad; on 20th November, 1959, however, he was transferred to the Directorate of General Commerce.

At the end of 1960, he thought of going back to Jaykūr, and he began work in the Directorate of General Ports in Ma^Cqal, also becoming an editor of the Journal al-Mawānī'. At this time, he began to suffer from disease, in addition to political repression; he had bad pains in the lower part of his back, and it became hard for him to move his right leg. From then on, the concept of death dominated his world. He had earlier written much about death, but it had then been to him a symbol of sacrifice, life-giving and fertility. In his last days, he loved death, because it was his sole hope of release from his ceaseless terrible pain, in the hospitals of Baghdad, Beirut, London, Paris and Rome. As one example of this outlook, we may cite one of his last poems:

تحياني، بلاردي، عظام
سفينة كسيرة نطفو على المياه ؟
لها ت الردي ، أريدك أنام
بين قبور الهلي المعتره
وراء ليل المقبره
رصاصه الرحمة يا الله !

--- --- --- ---
نبأى آمال اعشى اذن

وَأَدَّبُ حَيًّا بَيْنَ أَحْيَاءِ
لَوْلَا خَافَةَ أَنْ يَبْقَى بِنِي
عَدَلَ السَّمَاءِ لَعْنَتَ آبَائِي
وَلَعْنَتَ مَا نَسَلُوا وَمَا وَلَدُوا
مَنْ بِالْأَسْبَابِ وَمَنْ أَوْلَادُ

موت بجي كأنه بنته

ويعس آلهم فينهمها « (2)

In the spring of 1964 he was sent to the al-Amīrī Hospital in Kuwait, where he remained for about six months. His disease was diagnosed as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. Finally, on 24th December, 1964, he died there; his body was taken to Baṣra and it was buried in the cemetery of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī in Zubayr.

Gōrān

Gōrān was ^cAbdullāh Bag son of Sulaymān Bag son of ^cAbdullāh Bag. He was born in 1904 or 1905 in the district of Halabca which is part of Sulaimāniyah. He was of the family of Bagzādāi Mīrān Bagī from the area of Marīwān. Both his father and grandfather were poets. His grandfather, according to Rafīq Hilmī Bag, achieved fame as a poet of his tribal Dīwān (council) in both Kurdish and Persian. ^cUthmān Pāshā, the chieftain of the Cāff tribe gave him the title of Kātibī Fārsī (Persian writer), and appointed him tutor to his sons. After his death, his son Sulaymān Bag took over this position, having also impressed ^cUthmān Pāshā with his poetry.

Sulaymān Bag had three sons, ^CAlī Bag, Muḥammad Bag and ^CAbdullāh Bag, and one daughter, Shamsa Khān. ^CAlī Bag and Shamsa Khān died young. The name Gōrān refers to a famous Iraqi Kurdish tribe. The reason why he called himself by this name is uncertain. According to Rafīq Ḥilmī, in the summer of 1930 Rashīd Najīb published some of Gōrān's poems in Jīyān (life) and perhaps gave him this pen-name then. Ḥusayn ^CAlī Shānōf believed that the poet called himself by this name in an attempt to reconcile his own tribe, Caff, with the tribe Gōrān, with whom it had always been at enmity.

In 1919 the family left Halabca, when it was occupied by the British, and settled in the area of Biyāra near Halabca. They returned, however, later that year. Gōrān's father died in 1919, and at the end of the year his brother, Muhammad Bag, sent Gōrān to al-Madrassa al-^Cllmiyya in Kirkuk. He spent only three years there, for in 1921 his brother Muhammad Bag was killed, and in 1922 he was obliged to leave school and return to Halabca. The next three years he passed in considerable hardship and poverty. In 1925, however, he was appointed as a teacher in Halabca, through the help of some kind-hearted friends, and he remained in this job until 1937. Then, having become disenchanted with teaching, because of the chaotic state of education and the low standard of living enjoyed by the profession, he succeeded, with some difficulty in getting a position in the Directorate of Construction in Sulaimāniyah.

In September 1942, he went with a group of friends to Jaffa, where he was appointed Director of the Kurdish Department in the radio station established by the British to broadcast anti-Nazi propoganda in the Middle East. He remained there until the end of March, 1945, when he returned to Iraq and worked as an accountant in Erbil. In 1951, he was imprisoned for the first time, for having publshied a poem praising North Korea, entitled Lāwkī sur bō Kōreāī āzā (the red tune to brave Korea). When he left prison in 1952, he was appointed editor-in-chief of the Kurdish newspaper Jīn in Sulaimāniyah. He used this newspaper as an organ for anti-imperialist and pro-peace views. He did not remain long in this position, however, because followers of Pīramêrd who had established the newspaper in 1924, assumed control and forced him to relinquish the editorship, in 1954. On 17th November, 1954 he was again sentenced to one year's imprisonment and one year's exile, for an offence similar to that for which he had previously been imprisoned. He spent his imprisonment in the prisons of Sulaimāniyah, Kirkuk, Kūt, Ba^Cquba and Nugra Salmān, and passed his exile in Badra near Kūt. When he was set free, on 22nd September, 1956, he attempted to find a job in Sulaimāniyah, but without success. He went to Baghdad, where he became a foreman in a construction company. No sooner had he got this job, however, than he found himself in front of the military court at Kirkuk, on political charges, the nature of which cannot now be discovered. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment or the payment of a fine of one thousand dinars.

Being too poor to afford the fine, he was sent to prison, where he remained until the outbreak of the Revolution; of 14th July, 1958. On his release, he visited the Soviet Union as a member of the Iraqi peace delegation. At the beginning of 1959 he was appointed editor-in-chief of the magazine Shafaq in Sulaimānīyah. He held this post until mid-1960, when he was dismissed for being absent without permission, having participated in the Second Conference of the Teachers of Kurdistan in Shaqlāwa. Shortly after this he left Sulaimānīyah and was appointed a lecturer in the Kurdish Department of the College of Arts in Baghdad University. At the same time, he became a member of the editorial board of the newspaper Āzādī (Freedom).

In summer 1962, he visited the Soviet Union for the second time, this time for medical treatment, since he was suffering from cancer of the stomach. He remained there for about three months, and then returned to Iraq. He died in Sulaimānīyah on 18th November 1962. He was buried in the cemetery of Saywān in Sulaimānīyah.

It is a very difficult matter to trace the early development of Iraqi poets before the Second World War. In the first place, many of their early poetic attempts remained unpublished and were often not preserved. Secondly, when they were published, the dates of their publication are frequently difficult to ascertain, so that it is impossible to establish to what stage of the poet's careers they are to be ascribed. Thirdly, we learn from their

own accounts that they commonly rewrote and modified their work for a considerable time before publishing. Certainly, al-Sayyāb says that he did this on a number of occasions. Gōrān, on the other hand, apparently was not in the habit of altering his poems, once composed. He says in the introduction to his first Dīwān Bahasht u yādgār (Paradise and Remembrance).

"When I first collected my early poems in Vol.1, and got them ready for publication, I could have changed many traditional, weak and stilted expressions. I thought of changing them for genuine Kurdish expressions, so as almost to recompose the whole poem.... but I refrained from doing so lest scholars and literary critics investigating the development of Kurdish literature should miss the early stages of the development of the Kurdish literary language. Therefore, I realised that the disadvantages of making such modifications were greater than the advantages. So I preferred to leave the style of the poems for the readers as I first wrote them."⁽³⁾

However, most of our poets were less spontaneous, and their poems were worked over. Some, not satisfied with altering themselves, would get other poets too to revise them, even with respect to the rhymes and metres. Much of our two poets' early work, then, is lost, and it is often

impossible to establish a date for that which survives. Something, however, can be said, about their earlier productions. Al-Sayyāb apparently began to compose poetry while still a pupil at primary school. According to Muḥammad ^cAlī Ismā^cīl, a friend of him from his early years:

"When al-Sayyāb was in the primary school he used to recite poetry. He composed a poem in which he described the battle of al-Qādisiyya. This poem so impressed al-Sayyāb's teacher that he carried him round on his shoulders encouraging him to recite the poem"⁽⁴⁾.

It was at this time that al-Sayyāb, as Nājī ^cAllūsh tells us, issued a newspaper, in his own handwriting, called Jaykūr, the place of publication of which was the house of ^cAbd al-Jabbār Marzūq al-Sayyāb. He distributed copies of this newspaper to his young friends⁽⁵⁾. One of the most important elements in literature during the thirties was still religion. As a youth, al-Sayyāb was a frequent visitor at the small mosque in his village. He often used to attend the instruction of the Shaykhs and theologians in his mosque before and after prayer. He would listen attentively, and perhaps sadly to the epics of the Shī^cī imams,⁽⁶⁾ such as the tragedy of Karbalā'. When he was at the secondary school in Basra, he was impressed by the piety of his teacher, Muḥammad Yūsuf, and he continued to go to the mosque to pray regularly, with his friend Muḥammad

^cAlī Ismā^cīl⁽⁷⁾. Further, ^cAbd al-Laṭīf al-Sayyāb claims that he still remembers some religious verse that al-Sayyāb composed during that period⁽⁸⁾. Unfortunately, I have not had access to any poems of this kind, and I have been unable to find any trace of religious themes in his very early poetic experiments. Certainly, such themes appear in his later poetry, but they are used as symbols for very different ideas, as we shall see, and not as direct expressions of religious feeling. Any religious poetry that he may have composed in his youth he must have discarded, either because he was later ashamed of having written any such thing, or simply because it was not of a sufficiently high standard to be worth preserving. What we do find evident in his youthful work is a great love of nature. Very early in his career he began to compose poetry, in both colloquial and standard Arabic, celebrating the beauty of nature in Jaykūr:

"I composed the first poem while I was in the first year of my primary school in colloquial language , and I composed the first poem in standard Arabic while I was in the fifth year of my primary school. I called it Waṭanī (my country)."⁽⁹⁾

It is hardly surprising that this poem has not survived, because al-Sayyāb himself says that it was full of grammatical mistakes⁽¹⁰⁾ and that he then knew nothing of the form and structure of Arabic poetry.

According to Iḥsān ^CAbbās, while al-Sayyāb was at secondary school, he composed a nostalgic poem about Jaykūr⁽¹¹⁾. I have been able to discover nothing about this poem, and it is unlikely that ^CAbbās has seen it, since he does not quote from it or give the date of its composition. It is certain, however, that al-Sayyāb composed some of the poems in which he described Jaykūr in the years 1942 and 1943, for example, Yawm al-safar (1942), Dhikrayāt al-rīf (1943), al-Dhikrā (1943), Tanahhudāt (1943), Taḥiyyat al-qarya (1943).

In addition, Iḥsān ^CAbbās relates that, at this time, while al-Sayyāb was sharing accommodation with Muḥammad ^CAlī Ismā^Cīl, they used to go to Abū l-Khaṣīb, which inspired him to compose a poem⁽¹²⁾. The following extracts will exemplify the type of poetry that he was writing at this period:

لذع الدوام ازالهر الدّمل
فزدوت كما يزوي منا المقل
كانت تعير النهر همرتها
فنيضي في الموج كالشّقل
كانت تعير النهر حلتها
فيسير في وشي من اللل
كم زينت بالأسس لبتة
بقلاّ المرجان ، و العبل
واليوم اطفئ نورها وخبيا
نظانها لم تند أو تمل ..
واليوم اصبح عقدها بدداً
فرايت جيب النهر في عطل

ولكم مررت بزهره ذلبت
فبليت ، حين بكيتها ، أملي
وسقيتها بالراحين كما
تسقي السحابة ترابه الطلل (I3)

Al-Sayyāb was fond of this poem and often used to recite it to his friends and acquaintances. However, he was not satisfied with it and added some more verses to it in 1944⁽¹⁴⁾:

لرجوت - لو دامت غضارتها -
وصل التي وعدت فلم تصل
قد كان وسك ذبولها أجلا
للحلقى فنجعت بالأجل
ولكنت آمل ان أقبها
واعب خمرة حسنها النحل
أما وقد ذلبت ، فلا أمل
لي باللقاء فكيف بالقبول (I5)

It seems clear from the second volume of al-Sayyāb's *Dīwān*, particularly the chapter al-Bawākīr (first fruits), that he began systematically to write poetry in 1941. He does not mention the date of composition of some of these bawākīr, but we can confidently ascribe them to the years 1941 to 1944⁽¹⁶⁾. The first dated poem (1941) that we have, Alā al-shāṭi' (on the bank), may serve as an example of this period of his work:

على الشاطئ أحملي
وفي حلكة أيامي
طوالها المروج يا حبيب
غدا نجم الهوى نجيب

عزاءٌ قلبي الدامي
وذا الفجر بأنواره
رمى الليل واطيافه
مدا الطير بأوكاره
وفي غمرة أوهامي
وفي تغطية آلامي
بكي محبوبه القلب
عزاءٌ قلبي الدامي
وعن بعد سرى زورق
وذا قلبي هوى مجروح
فهل فيه التي أهدى
عسى أن يجد السلوى
ومن آهات انغامي
أنتني رمية الرامي
رضى الزورق يارباً
عزاءٌ قلبي الدامي (I7)

The next few years were fertile ones, his poetry became more mature and his talent bloomed. During this time he was in touch with Khālid al-Shawwāf, M. ^cAlī Ismā^cīl, Muḥī al-Dīn Ismā^cīl, Ṣāliḥ Fādīl, Muḥammad Nūrī Salmān, ^cAbd al-Raḥmān al-Rammāḥ, who were interested in poetry, prose fiction and modern culture in general; at the same time, poetry conferences were held at the Secondary School, in which these young poets used to indulge in good-natured competition⁽¹⁸⁾.

Obviously, too, the social and political consequences of the Second World War, and the horror of the war itself, had an effect on al-Sayyāb. He was too young yet to adopt

any specific philosophical or ideological outlook, but he was deeply concerned, in a youthfully nationalistic way, about Rashīd ^CĀlī al-Gaylānī's uprising of 1941, in which he demanded independence for Iraq from the British Government. When the uprising was suppressed and its leaders sentenced to death, he wrote an elegiac poem about them. The romantic tendency of this poem may be thought to display the influence of the Dīwān, Mahjar and Apollo schools:

شَهِيدَ الْعَمَلِ لَنْ يَسْمَعَ الدُّعْوَى نَادِيَهُ
وَلَيْسَ يَرَى بِأَكْبَرِهِ مِنْ قَدِ بِيَعَاتِيهِ
طَوَاهِ الرَّدَى فَالْكُلُوبُ لِلْمَجْدِ مَا تَمَّ
مَشَارِقَهُ سُسُودَهُ وَفُغَارِيهِ
فَتَى قَادِ أَيْتَامِ الْجِهَادِ إِلَى الْعَمَلِ
وَقَدْ هَطَمَتْ بِأَسْسِ الْعَدُوِّ كِتَابِيَهُ
فَتَى لَعْنَهُ أَنْ يَبْلُغَ الْعِزَّ مَوْطِنَهُ
غَدَا كُلِّ بَاغِيٍّ دُونَ خَوْفِ يَوْمَاتِيهِ
فَتَى يَعْزِفُ الْأَعْدَاءُ فَتَكْفَهُ بَيْنِيهِ
قَدْ فَتَحَتْ فَتْحًا مَبِينًا مَضَارِيهِ
فَتَى مَا حَفِيَ ذَنْبًا هَوَى أَنْ تَنْفِي
حَسَامًا بُوْجِ الْعِظَامِ مَا لَا جَانِيَهُ
إِذْ ذَكَرُوا نِيَّ هَجَفَلِ الْمَرْبِ «يُونَسًا»
مَتَى الْمَوْتِ لِلْأَعْدَادِ هَمْرًا مَبِينًا

رُحْمِدِ وَيَا نَفْسَ الزَّعِيمِ لَوَّمِ

يَعِيَتْ بِهَا عَبْدُ الْإِلَهِ وَصَاحِبُهُ (I9)

It was during this period that Arabic Romanticism, which between the wars had been little more than a blind imitation of English Romanticism, began to associate itself with human suffering in the world, and the aspiration of the Arabs. This was something that happened rather later in Iraq than in some other Arab countries, and it happened there precisely as a result of the leadership of such poets as al-Bayyātī, Nāzik al-Malā'ika, Mardān, Būland al-Ḥaydarī and al-Sayyāb himself. These poets, who did a great deal to develop romanticism in Arabic poetry, were as has been suggested, at least partly influenced by the earlier experiments of the Dīwān, Mahjar and Apollo schools. In al-Sayyāb's case, in addition to this undeniable influence, we may suggest a number of more personal circumstances that stimulated the Romantic tendencies latent in him:

First, the war, which clearly had the general effect of rousing Iraq from its lethargy. ^cAbd al-Ḥamīd Jīdā's assertion that the war had no effect on Iraqi poets, who were affected solely by the innovations of their Egyptian and Lebanese counterparts, ⁽²⁰⁾ can hardly be substantiated. It appears to be based on a misunderstanding of ^cAlī ^cAbbās ^cAlwān's remark:

"The Iraqi Romantic poets during the time between the two world wars were more imitating the Egyptian and Mahjar poets than European Romantics" ⁽²¹⁾.

Second, the early loss of his mother (his father seems not long to have survived her). This was a deprivation that he felt very keenly throughout his life. In the introduction to Asāṭīr (1950) he says:

"I lost my mother while I was very young. Thus, I grew up deprived of woman's love and kindness. During all my life, I have been searching for a particular woman who can fill this gap. I have always been dreaming of having a family in which I could find comfort and content. Also I have the feeling that I will not live long"⁽²²⁾.

In an early poem, he speaks of the loneliness that he suffers as a result of the loss of his parents:

فِي الْبَيْتِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْأَقْرَبِينَ أُرْبُ ، وَإِنْ كَانَ لَا يَعْقِلُ
أَبِي ... مِنْ قَدِ هَجَرْتَنِي النِّسَاءُ
وَأُمِّي ... طَوَّاهَا الرَّدَى الْمَعْبُولُ
وَمَا لِي مِنَ الدَّهْرِ إِلَّا رِضَاكَ
فَرِحْمَاكَ فَالدَّهْرُ لَا يَعْدِلُ .. (23)

Furthermore, it would seem that his grandmother, who adopted al-Sayyāb, died when he was fifteen or sixteen years old. Her death shocked al-Sayyāb, and he wrote in a letter to his friend Khālid al-Shawwāf dated 23rd November 1942:

"Are tyrannical fate and time now satisfied,
with the death of my grandmother, at the end
of this summer of 1942 ? I have now been
deprived of the last heart that bears
love and kindness towards me". (24)

He composed this elegy for her, Rithā' jaddatī (1942):

اسلمتني أبرد العضا للشجونِ إذ قضي من بردني لسكوني
ورى برمه بقية آملني فخرت صريعة من عيوني
ودعت أذنه توالي أنفامي وآبت إلى الفناء طوفي
حبتي ..

وهي كل ما خلف الدهر من الحب والحنى والظنون
درجاتٍ بدأ فالهمني الصغر وخفت أنواره لطيني
قد فقدت الأم المنون فأنستني صباب الأم الرؤوم
المنون

أياها القبر كن عليها رحيماً كلما ربت السيامى بلين ..
أياها القلب لكل تلام شمالي والتي تفعل الذنوب عيني ؟
لا تمنني فليست قد علم الله أردت القضاء له يا سيني
ولم الموت والزمان الذي يسلب ما ترجيه غير صني

آه لو لم تعوديني على العطف وآه لو لم أكن أو تكوني .. (25)

Third, not unconnected with the second, his constant
quest for a woman's love. Like so many poets, with their
sensitivity and highly cultivated emotions, he was unsuccess-
ful in this respect. ^cAlī ^cIzzat says:

"Women greatly dominated al-Sayyāb's world. Actually, he was obsessed by them. He was always engaged in a ceaseless search for love, but all in vain".⁽²⁶⁾

In fact, he fell in love with many women. Perhaps the first was a girl from his own village whom he met while in the last grade of secondary school⁽²⁷⁾. He told his friend Khālid al-Shawwāf about his love for the shepherdess Hāla in a letter, dated 9th March, 1943, with which he enclosed a poem entitled Marīḍa, dated 15th January, 1943:

مریفة؟ لك بري يا - كويل - ولي
مریفة؟ لم ينلك الداء واحد
والقلوب التي ضلّت مقاصدها
فالروح مطلق عاد الداء وانفدها (28)

This girl made a great impression on al-Sayyāb, inspiring him to compose a number of poems celebrating her beauty and tenderness, and expressing his passionate longing for her. These can be easily seen in Hamas al-hānī, Dhikrayāt al-rīf, Ughniyat al-rā^cī.

When he went to Baghdad, he fell in love again, this time with Labība, his fellow-student in the college; she was seven years older than him and he called her Dhāt al-mandīl al-aḥmar. He affirms his love for her in many poems such as Khayāluki, Arāhā ghadan, Ughrūda and Fī l-masā'. Unfortunately, Labība rejected his love and married another

man. Nevertheless, he still remembers her in Aḥibbīnī, which he wrote on 19th March, 1963, twenty years after her leaving him:

ظلالٌ عن ملامحتك : آه نلتك باعنتني بما أفون
لأجل المال ، ثم صحا فطلقها وخلاها .
وتلك .. لونها في الصبر أكبر أم لأن المسك أغراها
باني غير كفاء ، خلفتني كلما شرب العذى وروى
وفتح برعم شلتها وسميت رباها ؟
وأسس رأيتها في موقف للباصد تنظر
فباعدت الخطى ونأيت عنها ؛ لا أريد القرب منها ،
لها الوديات ؟ ثم عرفتها : احسبت ان المسك ينصر
على زمن تحطم مور بابل منه ، والعنقاء
رماد منه لا يذكى بعث فهو يستمر ؟
وتلك مكان في غمازتها يفتح السمر
عيون الفلّ واللبّاب ، عافيتني الى قصر وسياره .
إلى زوج تغير منه حاله ، فهو في الحارة (29)

After Labība's departure, al-Sayyāb fell in love with Daisy al-Amīr, whom he used to call al-Ughūwāna and Dhāt al-ghamāzatayn. Once again, he celebrated his love for her in many poems such as Dīwān shi^cr, Awdat al-dīwān, al-Warda al-manthūra, Maqta^c bi-lā^c unwān. Later, again he appears to have fallen in love with the poetess Lamī^ca^c Abbās Imāra, a Sabian, who admired his poetry. However, they could not get married⁽³⁰⁾. This quest for women's love did not cease even after his marriage to Iqbāl, though

he claimed that women had no longer any place in his poetic horizons⁽³¹⁾. This was clearly not the case; his poems written after his marriage, no less than those written before, clearly indicate that women were always his main source of inspiration. Even during the last days of his life he did not desist from expressing his passionate longings for them, although those he has loved had left him without bidding him farewell. As we have indicated, he was somewhat unfortunate in this respect:

رما من عادتي نكران ما ضيَّ الذي كانا ،
وكنك .. كل من احببت قبلك ما اُهبوني
ولا عطفنا عليَّ ؛ عشقت سبباً كن احيانا
تُرف بهودهن عليَّ ، تحملني إلى الصبيح
بفائن من عطر نهودهن ، اغوص في بحر من الأوهام والوجد
فالتقط الحمار أظنك فيه الدرَّ ، ثم تظلني وحدي (32)

Fourth, his early physical environment. He was born and brought up amidst some of the most beautiful countryside in the South of Iraq, which he celebrated in many lyrical poems; he became particularly renowned for his poetry of this kind, not least for than in which he immortalized the natural beauties of Basra. The best examples occur in his *Dīwān Azhār dhābila* and *Asāṭīr*, in which Romantic features are prominent. In these, lyrical and sententious elements are interwoven in an imagery so disciplined that many Arab poets have called them "inspired". The image

of the village of Jaykūr and the natural beauty of Basra are over and over again uniquely sketched, as he recalled them while in Baghdad. His Tammuzite period did not represent a complete break with Romanticism. To him nature was always endowed with vital characteristics, as may be clearly seen in his Dīwān Unshūdat al-maṭar. An example from his romantic period is to be found in his poem Dhikrayāt al-rīf, composed on 9th April, 1943:

عدتني ليالي الصيف من ذا يعيدها
سوى الوهم والذكرى لأهوان هائر
فيا هذا لي جلسة نوره جالط
الوذ به إن مسني ظلم جائر
أراقب منه المرح يسرى بزور
بدت فيه من تعذ اليها شعري
يسير بمخاضيك في الفجر أمبها
ذراعي مشوره مدتا في الدياجر
كأن رشاش الماء - يعلو - أزهرا
نثرن عليها من أليف مسامر
تردح عنها بالشرع نسائم
ويرتادها ضوء النجوم الزواهر
سها النجم افلاكا له حين شامها
فتابها في انقه كل دائر
ومن حولها مدمج تضي كراته
وتعكس من ألوانها كل باهر
تغيرها الأسراج كالطاهر خطمت
وكالقلب اعياه العساف المقادر (33)

Fifth, a general sense of loneliness and depression, aggravated by economic and political circumstances. The result of these is perhaps best encapsulated in Gharīb alā l-Khalīj, written in 1953, when he was a refuge in Kuwait:

وعلى الرمال ، على الخليج
جلس الغريب ، يسرع البصر المحير في الخليج
رهبة عمدة الضياء بما يصعد من نسيج
« أعلى من العباب يهدر رغبة ومن الضجيج
صوت تغر في قرارة نفسي الشطى : عراق ،
كالمه يصعد ، كالسحابة ، كالموع الى العيون
الريح تصرف بي : عراق ،
والمدج يعول بي : عراق ، عراق ، ليس هو عراق !
البحر أوسع ما يكون وانت أبعث ما تكون
والبحر دونك يا عراق .
بالأسس حين مررت بالمقهي ، سمعتك يا عراق ...
وكنت دورة ابطوانه
هي دورة الأفلاك من عمري ، تكور لي زمانه (34)

As with so many Romantics, self-centredness is perhaps the most noticeable characteristic of al-Sayyāb during his Romantic period. He was never entirely free from this, but clearly, in moving towards Realism and Social Realism, he became more aware of and concerned with social and political problems in general, both those of Iraq and the Arab countries and also of the world at large. It is

perfectly possible, however, to regard such commitment in a writer, particularly one with a history such as his, as merely a developed aspect, an extension in a sense, of this self-centredness. Only too often, it is the writer's reaction to the injustices and atrocities that he denounces that is the subject of real concern to him.

For Gōrān's part, he was born into the world of poetry⁽³⁵⁾. As has been mentioned, he too started to compose poetry when he was very young. His father used to give him instruction on its construction, explain its obscurities and compare different poems for him⁽³⁶⁾. He induced him to read and study the classics of both Kurdish and Persian literature. Before he started at primary school, Gōrān had already learnt the whole of the Qur'ān by heart; eventually he became a religious student in the Pāshā mosque at Halabca. A little later he was for some time known as Faqê (theological student) ^cAbdullāh⁽³⁷⁾. According to Kamāl Mīrāwdalī, Gōrān began to write poetry when he was only six years old; when he disagreed with his fellows, he would use poetic turns of phrase to make fun of them⁽³⁸⁾. From his autobiography, which he sent to Ḥusayn ^cAlī Shānōf in the Soviet Union, it is clear that Gōrān began to write poetry while he was a pupil at primary school. Shānōf elaborates:

"Gōrān mentioned that while he was at primary school he started to compose

love-poems, in the manner of classical Kurdish poetry. He used to recite them to his father, who was impressed by them and encouraged his son to continue to compose them"⁽³⁹⁾.

Rafīq Hilmī Bag says:

"When Gōrān was twelve or thirteen years old he began to read and comprehend Persian and Kurdish poems. At that time, he started to compose poems similar to Classical ones"⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Gōrān himself said that the first poem he composed constituted four or five verses, of which he could remember only two; these he did not wish to write down⁽⁴¹⁾, because at the time that he composed them, he had had no poetical experience. No one, as far as is known, has ever heard or seen anything of this poem.

Again, Rafīq Hilmī says that the first love-poem which Gōrān composed, at the age of twelve, consisted of seven verses. Gōrān, however, preserved only two of these, which Hilmī published in the second volume of his work Shi^cr u adabiyāti kurdī (1956), and reprinted in the first volume of Gōrān's Dīwān (1980):

له تاوی فیرۆتی یارم دلم دانیم په ریشانه
وه کوو ره جنوونی هدی وتیلی که ژوو ده شت و بیابانم (42)

Because of my beloved leaving me, my heart is constantly distracted;
Like the madman of a tribe, I wonder through hills, plains and deserts.

His early poetic experiments were no more than simple imitations of classical Persian, Turkish and Kurdish poetry, as we discover from the collection Yādgarī kōn (old memories). In one of these poems Aī shawqī galāwêj (O the brightness of the Sirius), an early work, he says:

ئەمى شەوقى گەلاوێژى بە بیان نوورى نىگا هەت !

--- --- --- --- ---

ئەمى عىففە تەگەت داغى حەسەد بو دلى جىبرىل ،
هەر بو هەوس و عىشوە يە خو لارە کولاهەت !
چون مەحکەمى ئە شوق نە دا حەق بە جە مالت ؟
خەزەمى لەبى مە عەصومە ئىفادەت گەوا هەت !
وەک بلبەگەمى نە جەمى نە زەل و یردەم ئەمى یار :
بو ئەو گوێ و خەلقى ئەکا حەمەدى ئىلا هەت !
بى ئە شوقى هەواى پايزە بو قەلبى نەسرەم ،
ئەمى پەوژى بە هەر مەرحەمەتى تىنى پەنا هەت
ئىداری يەگەم فەلەتەتى شەد بەردى قەرارى ،
توو زەلقى پە شىو دە رنجە سا چىهەرى ما هەت ! (43)

O the brightness of the Sirius of the morning-light of your glance !

-- -- -- --

O your purity that makes Gabriel's heart burn with jealousy !

Your headress inclines only to affection and playfulness.

How can the court of love not give your beauty its rights !

The smile of your sinless lips is the giving of your testimony.

O beloved, I supplicate, like the nightingale of the dawn of eternity,
for that flower which your praise of God creates.

Lovelessness is the wind of autumn to my anxious heart,

O sun of spring ! (I ask for) the favour of your hidden heat.

The darkness of the night took away the stability of my wakefulness,

Show your disordered tresses like the face of the moon.

His poetic talent began really to show itself in the twenties, at a time when radical developments, in both form and content, were beginning to take place in Kurdish literature. These developments were due largely to the impact that foreign literature, both in translation and in the original, was having. Gōrān entered on his Romantic period, without immediately, however, abandoning all the Classical conventions. Some of his earlier Romantic poems, which are subjective and sentimental, reaching the heights and depths of emotion, are nevertheless composed in the manner of Ottoman poetry, for example Madaniyyat (Civilisation):

مەدەنییەت : گوێی بە هاری هەبات ،
مەدەنییەت : هەدای نەشۆ نوما ،
مەدەنییەت : دەسپێدنی ئیجیبا ،
بۆ هەموو مێلەت و عومومی ولات !
مەدەنییەت ، ئە لکتێک ، قەدەر
ئەو ضیا بە خشی حالی نەدەو بە شەر !
قەدومی کوردی هەژاری بێچارە
دوێنی تەبەیی جەهالەت ، هادار !
ماندوو ، سرودە غەرقی تووز و غوبار
طەس ئەکا ئەم موحیطی ئە سەراره (44)

Civilization: the flower of life's spring;
Civilization: the air of growth and increase;
Civilization: the means of revival
for all nations and all countries.
Civilization: electricity, moon;
O you who shed light on the condition of the human race !
The miserable helpless Kurdish people
is the deprived vagabond of ignorance; help !
It is tired, dead, sunk in dust and mist.
It enfolds this comprehender of secrets.

It was really only after the publication of his Yādgārī kōn (old memories) that he divorced himself completely from the classical style.

Circumstances seem also to have accelerated his taking up with Romanticism. Born into a qasi-feudalist and educated family, of a tribe that played an influential political and social role in Kurdish Society, his life early on suffered a complete reversal, with the sudden death of his father, the killing of his brother, and his unwilling departure from Halabca, in search of his livelihood. Although deeply affected by this, he did not despair; he was a strong-willed person and thrived on challenges:

"These black days will never hold me back
from my course in life"⁽⁴⁵⁾.

In the thirties, his Romanticism was developed both by his attachment to the English Romantics and by his discovery of the dynamic Turkish poetry. Throughout the period, though, it was largely dominated by enthusiasm and hope for his country; see, for example, Shahīd (The martyr), Bō Halō Bag (For Halō Bag), Bō Maḥmūd Jawdat (For Maḥmūd Jawdat), Lāwānawāī sara rē (Lamentation on the highway):

هزارو نو صدو سی بود ، شششی سلیول که پوژر هلهات :
غریوی ویستی حدق که دته ناد شاری سیمانی ؛
(هلو بگت) س د جوانی پر دلی بود بو وه وطن نادات ،
له پیش جه معنکه وه تا بر سدا رودی هلهتی هانی .
له گول یارانی س پوت ؛ «سئی حوکومدت ! تانکری ته ثبیت
حوقوقی کوره واری ، نایه دی کورد سینیجا باتت ؛
سوانی بانگ کران د تو به قووه ت ده دریان س گریت :
ده نی د قانانج پرستن ، هیچ نه بی پی یان موبالانت !

بلن بهد بودکی تازه ی یهک شه وهم گر هاته سر نه عشتم ،
نه نی خوی بو وه وطن کوشت و له ریئی عه شقی منا نه ژیا . .
وه ظیفم بود له پینادی ولا تنکا سرم به خشم :
که توئی پر و وره کرد بو من له دادینی چیاو که ژیا . . . (47)

It was the sixth of September, 1930 when the sun rose:
Voices demanding rights arose within the city of Sulaimānīyah,
Halō Bag - that youth's heart was full of yearning for his homeland;
In front of the crowds he made an attack on the Sarā (square).
He and his comrades said: O Government ! until you confirm
the rights of the Kurdish nation, the Kurds do not want your elections.
Those whom you have invited and strongly protected
are worthless and selfseeking and have no regard for you.

- - - - -
Tell my new bride of one night, if she comes to my bier -
Do not say that I sacrificed my life for my country and did
not live for my love.
It was my duty to give my head for the sake of my country,
which nurtured you for me at the foot of mountain and hill.

Unlike al-Sayyāb, he lived through both world wars;
it was, however, the second that affected him, too, more
deeply.

For the most part, however, Gōrān was a poet of
nature and women. His most important poetry celebrates
the beauty of women, upon whom he lavished his Romantic
feelings and poetic talent. He was prepared to pursue love,
wherever it might be, regardless of set-backs:

له هج باخيت گوتنگي سدرم ديبی ،
بوئ چودم هزار درك له پيم چه قيبی ! (48)

If ever I have seen a red flower in any garden,
I have gone to it, even though a thousand thorns have pricked my feet.

His Romantic poem Bō gawra kichêk (to the eldest girl) indicates that Gōrān first fell in love in his early youth. His first marriage was not a love-match. It would seem that his mother forced him to marry one of his relatives⁽⁴⁹⁾. Aji Gōrān has related an earlier disappointment:

"Before his first marriage, Gōrān fell in love with an aristocratic girl. His relationship with her was very strong. Unfortunately, his financial problems and the tragic circumstances that had befallen him were obstacles that kept him from his loved one. The pain of this remained in his heart from that time until he poured it out in a poem Būkêkī nākām (Disappointed bride), which he composed in 1951".⁽⁵⁰⁾

The following excerpt from this poem substantiates Aji Gōrān's statement:

له ژيړ تاداي سورمه چنا هره جواني دي ،
(کچي جو د تيار !) به ره و کوشکي ناغا که دته پري ...
کوشکي ناغا گچ کاري به ، نايينه به زده ،
کهس نازاني به ژماره ، په بخره ي چه زده !
هر دزو فواره ي هر دوشی هر پر مه ي ، باغچه د چيمه ني
به سره نايچي هر گينه هر دوزي و گوئي ده گه ني ! ...

جوانی لادی پی پروتی وه کوه تنلی وه نه وشه
به نماد ریشم د به نالتوونی نیم کو شک و حدوشه :
له توتی سر تا بیری پی پرداخت د پو شته ؛
سوار کراوه ، شوخ و نازدار وه کو فریشته ..
خراوه ته ری بو پردهی نه تلوس دگورودون ،
بو باضلی مانغای پیش چاو به چل چرا رودون

کچی جدتیار بو به هشتی ژین د دلداری ،
(51) لگن کوری شوان به ستبوی پیمانی یاری !

Under the bridal veil of Sūrmachin (red-gold material), the
most beautiful girl of the village,
the farmer's daughter, is leaving for the Agha's Palace.
The Agha's palace is plastered with gypsum and decorated
with mirrors;

No-one knows how many windows it has.

Marble cisterns, fountains and courtyards, gardens and meadows
whose greenness and rare flowers are never at an end.

The beautiful rustic girl, naked like a single violet,

In the silk and gold of this palace and courtyard:

Elegant and well-dressed from the crown of her head to the
soles of her feet,

Mounted, merry and bright, like an angel.

She is leaving for the curtains of Satin and Gūrūn ,
to the arms of Agha, facing the brilliant chandeliers.

The farmer's daughter, to a paradise of life and love -
although she had made compact of love with the shepherd's son.

Gōrān does not mention the name of any woman for whom he composed poetry, so we do not know for whom he wrote: Āfrat u cuwānī (woman and beauty), Āwātī durī (Distant hope), Bastaī dildār (Song of love), Halbastī Pashīmānī (Verse of regret). According to Dīlān the following verses refer to a girl who worked in a bookshop in Jaffa, with whom Gōrān fell in love:⁽⁵²⁾

هر چن زکرم ، نه خدیالی پیی دهستم ،
بوم ناخریته ناد چوار حیوهی هدلبهستم ! (53)

بلام نه دهی پیی ورودشاندم دهستم ،
نه دکتیبی شیعهیه داته دهستم ! (54)

Whatever I do, that image has intoxicated me.
I cannot put it inside the frame of my verse.

The thing that excited my emotions
was that book of poetry which you handed me.

This, however, is as close as we ever came to discovering the identities of the objects of his passion.

Gōrān was brought up in Hawrāmān which is famous for its natural beauty, its rivers, mountains, snows and green plains. He was greatly fascinated by these phenomena, and he devoted many of his poems to the celebration of nature. Excellent examples are provided by the two famous poems in which he immortalizes the natural beauty of Hawrāmān and Qaradagh:

کومدہ شاخیک سہخت و گوردن کوش ،
تاسمانی شنی گرتوۃ بادوش ؛
سہرپوشی لودتکی بہ فری زور سپی ،
بہ دارستان رہش ناو دؤٹی کپی ...
جودگی نماو کان تیایا قہتیس ماو ؛
ہر سہرپون ناکن پیچی شاخ تہواد .
ہادارو ہاژہی کف چہرینی چہم
بؤ تہ نیایی شدو لاپہ لاپہی خدم !
توولہ پیتی باریک ، تووناد توون پشکن
پریوار نڈخاتہ نڈتیشہی بی بن ...
ناورینگا تہق تہق ، لاریئ بہردی نل
کہ ہیشتا گوردون پتی ندادوہ تل ! (55)

A mountain mass, wild and definat,
Has gathered blue heaven in its embrace;
The mantle of its peak very white snow,
Dark with forest its silent dales.
Waters imprisoned in their runnels
Flow on, nor cease their windings round the hills;
The roar and hiss of foam, the shrill song of the brook,
Lullabies for grief in the solitude of night.
The narrow footpath, feeling its way from tunnel to tunnel,
Throws the wayfarer into anxiety without end;
On the track rocky stairways, on the side great boulders
That heaven has not yet sent rolling down.

سوار بودین ، که دتینه بناری سیوان ،
پردوی دنیا پرورناک ، بیانی زور جوان !
شینایی رهشتی (تکیه) د بره و خوار
پارا و بود چه شنی نه گگریجی نازدار !
گولّه بره بژدهی تمش زهردی چاو کال ،
مل کچ و ستا بود : سرگرمی خدیال !
له سر قبره کان داری نه رخهوان ،
وله بودکی تارا سوزی نمان دامان (56)

We mounted and left for the foot of Saywān.

The face of the world bright and the morning most beautiful.

The green plain of Takya, and downwards from there,
was fresh like the side-locks of the beloved.

The sunflowers, golden-haired with light-brown eyes,
were standing with bent heads, intent on their imaginings,

Over the grave the judas trees

were like veiled brides in long green dresses.

Like al-Sayyāb, Gōrān was essentially subjective and self-centred in his early work. His turning towards wider issues may perhaps be said to begin in 1932, with his poem Shahīd (the martyr), which he wrote in commemoration of the events of 6th September, when the Kurds in Sulaimāniyah rejected the false elections of the ruling regime. Later, at the beginning of the war, he became deeply involved in internationalist politics, which he afterwards wished to

apply to the Iraqi situation. After he joined the Iraqi Communist Party, in the fifties, he used his poetry to preach peace and love among the people of the world. However, his political activities and their connection with his poetry are discussed in greater detail elsewhere.

It may perhaps be remarked, in passing, that al-Sayyāb's Romantic period was of shorter duration than that of Gōrān. The Romantic phase in Iraq, in general, although of considerable significance, was not long-lived:

"In Iraq the Romantic period was very short.

The new poets started in imitation of the existing romantic schools and themselves, quite suddenly, abandoned the Romantic style and in response to the changing situation after the war al-Sayyāb and al-Bayyātī created the basis of the neo-classical school in Iraq with a new poetry which was to sweep aside the already moribund Romantic school".⁽⁵⁷⁾

CHAPTER FIVE - THE INFLUENCE OF EUROPEAN LITERATURE ON AL-SAYYĀB AND GŪRĀN

It is a well established fact that a learned poet cannot avoid the influence of both local and international literature on him. Ample studies have been made of this topic, and it is beyond the scope of the present research to go into it fully. It suffices to quote the Arabic version of Kalīla Wa-Dimna (Pañchatantra) which has been translated into many languages⁽¹⁾. To highlight this point further, it is worthwhile quoting La Fontaine's (1621-1695) comment in his introduction to the second volume of his fables, which appeared in 1678, ten years after the first collection⁽²⁾. The fables of the second volume are regarded as some of the finest manifestations of the art of the Seventeenth Century; he took the greater part of the subjects of those from a fresh source of inspiration, the Indian philosopher Pilpay or Bidpay, the original of Kalīla Wa-Dimna⁽³⁾. This can be illustrated by the works of La Fontaine himself:

"Pour peu que le lecteur y prenne garde,
il le reconnaîtra lui-même; ainsi je ne
tiens pas qu'il soit nécessaire d'en
étaler ici raisons, non plus que de dire
ou j'ai puisé ces derniers sujets.
Seulement je dirai, par reconnaissance,
que j'en dois la plus grande partie a
Pilpay, sage Indien."⁽⁴⁾

It seems that La Fontaine had access to this book, after the appearance of his first volume in 1668,⁽⁵⁾ when it was translated into French (1644) by David Shahid of Isfahān, and edited and commented on by Gilbert Gaumen⁽⁶⁾.

The same can also be said about Alf layla wa-layla (The thousand and one nights). This book, which was translated into many languages, had a great effect on many famous poets and literacy men such as Tennyson, Voltaire, Montesquieu⁽⁷⁾. It was first translated into French by Antoine Galland at the beginning of the eighteenth century and published in 12 volumes (Paris) between 1704-1717. During the eighteenth century this French translation was re-translated into many other European languages⁽⁸⁾. In the nineteenth century, the work was translated into many European languages directly from the Arabic text⁽⁹⁾.

Another example is the epic of Mam u Zīn by the Kurdish poet Aḥmadī Xānī (1650-1706). This epic, which goes back as far as the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries⁽¹⁰⁾, had some influence in the East and in the Soviet Union. It was translated into Russian by M.B. Rodinco in 1962, and into Arabic prose by al-Shaykh Muḥammad Sa^cīd Ramaḍān al-Būṭī. It is from this epic that the Syrian poet Aḥmad Sulaymān al-Aḥmad derived his novel in verse Mam u Zīn⁽¹¹⁾. It should be said that this epic contains 2661 verses. It relates the love-story of the princess Zīn, the sister of the ruler of Bōtān, and of Mam, the son of one of the latter's subjects⁽¹²⁾.

Influences of European literature are quite evident

in Arabic and Kurdish literature in the twentieth century. This is partly due to the rise of the Romantic movement at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries in Europe, which greatly affected Arabic trends of thought as Arab poets began to read European literature in general, both in the original and in translation. English literature, for instance, inspired both Arabic and Kurdish poets, who did their best to imitate its style, images, and artistic techniques. It should be emphasised that Arab poets were principally influenced by the stylistic and artistic techniques of European literatures, rather than by their philosophical or intellectual trends. However, in 1920-1921 the Arab immigrant poets of North America established a society called al-Rābīṭa al-qalamiyya (the pen association), whose founders were Gibrān Khalil Gibrān (1883-1931), Amin al-Rayḥānī (1876-1940), Mīkhā'īl Nu^Cayma (b.1889), Nasīb^CArīda (1887-1946) and Ilyā Abū Māḍī (1890-1957). The precepts of this society included the renunciation of classicism, belief in the prevailing of humanity over nationalism, the expression of deep religious feeling and the use of dynamic techniques to convey their ideas⁽¹³⁾. Later, between 1932-1933, Arab immigrant poets in South America established their own society al-^CUṣba al-Andalusiyya, which advocated the revival of Andalusian literature, Arab nationalism, and devotion to classical Arab techniques of poetry⁽¹⁴⁾. The pioneers of this society were Fawzī al-Ma^Clūf (1889-1930), Shafīq al-Ma^Clūf (b.1905), Ilyās Farḥāt (b. 1893), Rashīd Salīm al-Khūrī (b. 1887)⁽¹⁵⁾. Nonetheless, according to^CUmar Farrūkh, these poets had neither a deep and broad

education, nor a rich Arabic vocabulary which would enable them to write poetry worth considering.⁽¹⁶⁾ However, they were influenced by, and imitated, European and American literature which was quite new to them. Their experiments were confined to those of style, and they tried to reproduce the involuted subjectivity of English Romanticism. Partly as a result of the immense influence of European literature and particularly English, the Apollo School was established in Egypt in 1932 by Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī (1892-1954) who was the most daring Arab poet to experiment with poetic form, being a close student of the development of contemporary English and American poetry⁽¹⁷⁾. One may feel that F.T. Palgrave's The Golden Treasury (1861) should be regarded as one of the principal sources on which most of the Arab and Kurdish poets depended. It was the main anthology which introduced English poetry, and it was a text book in many Arab colleges.

Similar influences soon made themselves felt in Iraq, and many Iraqi poets such as al-Sayyāb, al-Bayyātī, al-Malā'īka and Gōrān, were affected by them, both in style and subject matter. In the forties a new literary trend was initiated in Arabic poetry in Iraq which was characterized mainly by the abandonment of the restrictions of classical poetry and the imitation of European romantic poets. There can be little doubt that what most attracted Iraq's first modern poets was the fact that poets of contemporary literature in the West could be counted important in their

societies; in addition, of course, a number of the ideas of the modern European poets - social justice, political persuasion, the stream of consciousness and the rest, had a great attraction; realist drama, too, which contrasted completely with the Romantic, had a profound effect. However, I cannot better summarize this matter than in the words of Moreh:

"The influence of Western poetry on Arabic poetry from 1947 until the present day has been more profound and revolutionary than in the whole period from the second quarter of the nineteenth century until 1947. The reason is that in the earlier period it was the subject matter of poetry that was influenced; the effect on form and technique was not great or decisive. The works of the great Western poets, starting with Shakespeare and the English, French, Russian and German Romantics, were translated into Arabic and influenced Arabic poetry, but their impact was restricted to subject-matter, i.e. the ideas and content, to the rhetorical and metaphorical forms, and the depth of the sentiments expressed. This led to the use of expressive poetic images, to personification, to expressing ideas through narrative poetry,

to striving towards an organic unity of idea and sentiment, and to borrowing ideas from life (proverbs, metaphors, etc.)."(18)

The effort of European literature on Kurdish has been less than that on Arabic. It seems that Gōrān was the first Kurdish poet who was influenced by European literature and particularly English. This conclusion, however, has to be taken with caution because we have little information to rely on, apart from two important articles by ^CUmar Barzancī Gōrān u adabī Inglīzī (Gōrān and the English literature), which he published in the Journal Rōjī Kurdistān (Sun of Kurdistan) - 1976-1978 -, and one by Kamāl Mīrāwdalī (Mamand) Sirūsht u cuwānī la shi^Crī Gōrān (Nature and beauty in Gōrān's poetry), which he published in the Journal Nusarī Kurd (The Kurdish writer) - 1973 - .

Before attempting to investigate the effect of European, and particularly English literature, on Gōrān and al-Sayyāb, we may perhaps cite Darwīsh al-Jundī, in al-Ramziyya fī al-adab al-^CArabī, concerning the reasons for, and the results of, the connection of the East with European cultures. According to him, there were six reasons for this connection, of which we shall mention only the three that seem most important:

1. Colonialism:

At the end of the eighteenth century Napoleon led his campaign of invasion against Egypt. From that time,

onwards, the East was opened up to the West and was exposed to an unfamiliar culture under the influence of French and British colonialism. This eventually led, among many other results, to the appearance of many patriotic poets in Iraq and other Arab countries⁽¹⁹⁾. It seems that the British Government in Iraq granted the Iraqis a limited freedom, which the latter exploited to its utmost to express their repressed views⁽²⁰⁾. Thus, the British encouraged education in Iraq and established the Directorate of Education Dā'irat al-ma^cārif⁽²¹⁾.

2. Scientific scholarship

In 1826 Muḥammad ^cAlī sent the first Egyptian scientific mission to France⁽²²⁾. Subsequently, students from other Arab countries habitually studied in the West; when they returned home they brought with them Western culture, and some of them even started preaching Western ideology⁽²³⁾. It is of interest to note that no Kurdish students were sent abroad except Gōrān, Rafīq Chālāk and Ramzī Qazāz, who were sent to Palestine in the forties. It is not known under whose auspices they were sent.

3. Translation:

In Egypt Rifā^ca al-Ṭaḥṭāwī recommended the establishment of a school for translation and languages, which was approved by Muḥammad ^cAlī. Soon, Arabic, English, French, Italian, Turkish and Persian were being taught in this school⁽²⁴⁾. The impact of this activity in Egypt can be found also in Beirut, which was the centre of translation in the Levant; there the American University started teaching all topics in

Arabic, which obliged its teaching staff to translate their works into Arabic⁽²⁵⁾. In Iraq, from the thirties onwards, translation into Arabic was very active, and many European masterpieces were translated, such as The Mother by Gorky, some of Chekhov's short stories and Nāzīm Hikmat's work⁽²⁶⁾.

There are possible other factors that Darwīsh al-Jundī did not consider:

1. The fact that both Gōrān and al-Sayyāb lived in the most beautiful parts of Iraq made them in harmony with English romantic poets, who loved and celebrated nature in their poems. It would, of course, be absurd to suggest that any poet who lives in beautiful natural surroundings should necessarily be influenced by European literature; there are many Arab and Kurdish poets who have enjoyed living in such surroundings without being influenced by any European poet. Gōrān and Al-Sayyāb, however, were at the same time educated enough to have access to European literature, which both enabled them to enrich and cultivate their poetic talent, and drew their attention to the rich resources of nature; it thus suggested to them both a fertile new field on which to exercise their poetic imagination and the means to give artistic expression to the results. Wordsworth (1770-1850) was famous for his deliberate choice of precise and expressive words to depict the beauties and the majesty of nature. To him it was a symbol of permanence and profound tranquility. Thus, he used it to ridicule the ephemeral inanities of human society⁽²⁷⁾. Byron's (1788-1824) and

Shelley's (1792-1816) consciousness of nature was not dissimilar⁽²⁸⁾, but their poetic power lies more in the impassioned lyricism which sustains their magnificent odes and in the lucidity of the didactic and analytical material of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812) an Epipsychidion or The Triumph of life⁽²⁹⁾. Gōrān and al-Sayyāb assimilated their Romantic approaches to nature, and thereby contributed strongly to the technical development of Iraqi poetry. While classical poets concerned themselves with the depiction of the beauty of nature through the employment of flowery rhetorical devices, Gōrān and al-Sayyāb went back to the essence of nature, which inspired them to formulate genuine ideas and images.

2. It is impossible to separate education from any form of human activity in an advanced society. Poetry, which is a means of expression, is strongly associated with education, knowledge and awareness, i.e., it is associated with all the characteristics of a society of which the poet is part and parcel. Further, the great poet should be aware of the fact that talent alone is not sufficient to create genuine poetry. His education, knowledge, assimilation of tradition and awareness of the various influential factors on society all work together to make a creative and authentic poet. Al-Sayyāb was quite aware of this fact when he said:

"The time during which people used to think that education is not necessary for a genuine poet has gone forever. Talent is no longer enough to create poets such as Edith Sitwell and T.S. Eliot"⁽³⁰⁾.

Before starting at the Dār al-mu^callimīn al-^cāliya , apart from composing poetry, al-Sayyāb did his best to read and comprehend as many different kinds of literature and arts as possible. This point can be illustrated by the words of Iḥsān ^cAbbās:

"Reading - after the writing of poetry - was his second occupation. The evidence indicated that his cultural scope widened and began to influence his thinking and his comparative judgements. He knew Ibn al-Rumī, or at least he knew some of his poems which he admired, in particular his elegy on al-Bustān, the singing girl..... He read in the Dīwān of Miḥyār al-Daylamī, and he memorized much of the poetry that Ibn Qutayba included in his Kitāb al-shi^cr wa-l-shu^carā'. He also read Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī Muḥammad's book on Shelley and tried to understand some of his poems in their original English". (31)

It was during this period that al-Sayyāb became fascinated by Shelley and Keats; at the same time, he adored Le Lac by Lamartine (1790-1869), which was translated into Arabic by the Egyptian poet ^cAlī Maḥmūd Ṭāhā (32).

Al-Sayyāb himself says:

"It was through ^cAlī Maḥmūd Ṭāhā and Aḥmad Ḥaṣan al-Zaiyyāt's translation of the works of Alfred De Vigny, De Musset, and Percy Shelley

that I became fascinated by Western literature which I started to imitate. Meanwhile, I tried to read English poetry, though I had to consult an English dictionary twenty or thirty times in each poem"⁽³³⁾.

When Al-Sayyāb came to Baghdad for the first time in 1943 to join Dār al-mu^callimīn al-^cāliya, he thought of Baghdad as a symbol of ambiguity, magic, imagination and dreams. Soon he became acquainted with literary men and found himself in the midst of the world of literature.⁽³⁴⁾ In Baghdad, at that time, clubs, cafes, newspapers were all devoted to literature, and al-Sayyāb became a member of this literary society⁽³⁵⁾. According to Ihsān ^cAbbās, he used to accompany his friend Khālid al-Shawwāf to the society of Muslim Youth (Jam^cdiyyat al-^{sh}ubbān al-muslimīn)⁽³⁶⁾. Once, in al-Zahāwīs' cafe, he met for the first time the critic Nājī al-^cUbaydī, who was the editor of the newspaper al-Ittiḥād, and who published al-Sayyāb's first poetic work in his newspaper. During this period, al-Sayyāb spent most of his time either in the college or in the cafes. One of his friends describes him as follows:

"Often we saw him in the Mubārak Cafe, sipping tea, and reading the Dīwān of al-Mutanabbī, Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī. He was so fond of the poetry of Abū Tammām that he used to memorize his long poems, analyze their images, and live their atmosphere"⁽³⁷⁾.

When he joined the Iraqi Communist Party in 1945, he found a psychological and intellectual satisfaction. It should not be understood, however, that his membership of the party actually created his poetic talent. It seems that the party furnished the poet in his early poetic experiments with accumulated and rich experience on various levels.

As has been mentioned, al-Sayyāb was deeply influenced by a number of classical and modern Arab poets such as al-Mutanabbī, Abū Tammām, al-Buḥturī, Aḥmad Shawqī, Ilyas Abū Shabaka, al-Jawāhirī and ^CAlī Maḥmūd Ṭāhā. This last fascinated him for a time, making him think of widening his poetic knowledge by reading European literature:

"I had been under the influence of the Egyptian poet ^CAlī Maḥmūd Ṭāhā al-Muhandis (1902-1949) for a long time. It was this poet who opened new horizons in my life when I started reading his translations. This stimulated me to learn English so as to read international literature"⁽³⁸⁾.

His specialization in English language and literature in Dār al-mu^Callimīn al-^Cāliya made him more familiar with English poetry. Under the influence of English Romantics and symbolists, he discarded the classical Arabic forms in favour of new style poetry in the Western manner. Concerning his reading, he said in a letter to his friend Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā dated 15.10.1963:

"Among my reading were Taras Bulba by Gogol, To Have and Have Not by Ernest Hemingway, Lady Chatterley's Lover by D.H. Lawrence, Letters from the House of the Dead and White Nights by Dostoevsky. In addition I read some Chinese and Soviet novels, and various other works"⁽³⁹⁾.

Like al-Sayyāb, Gōrān was an educated man. He became famous for his contribution to the language. His mastery of Kurdish has already been referred to, and his poetic diction is considered a model which contemporary Kurdish poets aspire to imitate. The influence of classical Kurdish poetry on his early work is even greater than that of classical Arabic poetry on that of al-Sayyāb. Yādgarī kōn (old memories), for instance, is a close imitation of classical Kurdish poets such as Nālī, Sālīm, Mahwī, Kurdī, Mawlawī. However, he soon gave up his imitation of classical poetry, and abandoned its heavily Arabized and Persicized vocabulary, doing his best to use Kurdish words only; he wrote many interesting articles on this subject.⁽⁴⁰⁾

He wrote mostly in the Sōrānī dialect, although he introduced items of vocabulary from other dialects. Gōrān's interest was not restricted to his native language; while he was very young, he managed to acquire a good knowledge of Turkish and Persian as well. This enabled him to translate a lot of Persian and Turkish poetry, which he did in a very free manner, departing from the metrical forms and

rhymes of the originals. This can be easily seen in the following poems; Xayyām (from Persian), Pirsyārêkī Nāsir Xosraw (A question of Nāsir Khosraw - from Persian), Āhangī Mughān (Mughān concert - from Persian), Tarci^C bandêkī banā-wbāng (The famous Tarci^C band - from Persian), Dāstānī Hayās u Ābidīn (the epic of Hayās and Ābidīn - from Persian), Hêzī gal (the people's power - from Persian), Xabātī gal (the people's struggle - from Persian), Bit (Idol - from Persian), Harwak Karam (like Karam - from Turkish), Hawrakān tēaparīn (a cloud will pass - from Turkish), Insānī gawra (a great human being - from Turkish).

He was not satisfied with knowing these languages and literatures; he wished always to learn more:

"At that time, while I was fond of Persian and Turkish literature.... Modern Arabic poetry and English poetry were spreading... I adopted the theory of Art for Art's sake and started reading the poetic works of those who advocated this literary trend, such as Jōhn Keats and Oscar Wilde."⁽⁴¹⁾

Attention should be drawn to the fact that Gōrān, at the beginning, had access to English literature only through Turkish into which the works of Shelley, Keats, Byron, Oscar Wilde, Robert Herrick, Wordsworth and Coleridge were translated⁽⁴²⁾. Gōrān had no formal instruction in English at school, but while he was a student in Halabca, the learned

poet Aḥmad Mukhtār Bagī Cāff (1897-1935), who had a good command of English, began to teach it to him⁽⁴³⁾. This gave him a foothold in English culture, and opened new vistas in front of him, both in the original and in translation:

"At the beginning I read some of Shelley and Byron's work which was translated into Turkish. But after the downfall of the Ottoman Empire, and the developing of my individual ambition, I started reading English literature in the original"⁽⁴⁴⁾.

3. It should not surprise us to find that both poets were fond of travel, which introduced an exotic note into their works; it is by this trait that they are linked with many other literary men and poets. To an educated literary man travel is not a mere interest, or a means of earning a living, but a means of discovery which enables him to find what he has been searching for. Al-Sayyāb's travels to Iran, Kuwait, Syrian, Lebanon, Rome, London, and Paris enriched his poetic and intellectual experiences, opened new horizons to him, and made him for the first time familiar with the worlds of freedom and democracy. His love for freedom was not limited to political freedom, but embraced freedom of literature as well. During his time abroad he was enabled to meet the most outstanding modern Arab and European poets and writers, such as Mīkhā'il Nu^Cayma, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, Maḥmūd Amīn al-^CĀlim, Yūsuf al-Khāl, Adūnis (^CAlī Aḥmad Sa^Cīd),

Unsī al-Hājǧ, Muṣṭafā Badawī, Jabrā I. Jabrā, Salmā Jayyusi, Simon Jargy, Bint al-Shāṭi', Paolo Minganti, Ignazio Silone, Stephen Spender, Martino Moreno and Luc Norin. It seems that the latter strongly affected him, and gradually a great and lasting friendship formed itself between them. There is extant a letter from al-Sayyāb to Simon Jargy, which displays the enthusiasms with which he regarded her:

"I miss you, but honestly I miss her more. She is my poetess, friend, princess of my imagination and poetry. I could not write even one verse after the two poems (Layla fī Bārīs and Aḥibbīnī) which I composed in Paris... I would attribute this to the atmosphere that dried up the spring of my poetry."⁽⁴⁵⁾

It was Norin's promise to visit al-Sayyāb in Iraq and even to visit his own village, Jaykūr, that inspired the composition of Layla fī Bārīs:

وذهبتِ فانسحب الضياء ،
احسست بالليل الشنائي الحزين ، وبالبكاء
ينثال كالسلاسل من أنفوح تخطمه الغيوم .
احسست وفزع الليل في باريس ، وانفتحت الهواء
بالفرهقات من البغايا ... آه ! ترتفع النجوم

وذهبتِ فانسحب الضياء .
لو صحَّ وعدك يا صديقه ،
لو صحَّ وعدك . آه لانبعثت وفيه

من قبلها ، ولعاد عمري في السنين الى الورا .
تأتين انت الى العراق ؟
أمد من قلبي طريقه
فأشفي عليه . كأنما صبغت عليه من السماء (46)

Gōrān's travels took him to Jaffa, Tel Aviv, the Soviet Union, China and North Korea. In 1942, he went to Jaffa, where he was appointed the director of the Kurdish Department of the broadcasting station in the Middle East which was established by the British government. He was already strongly imbued with his principles of nationalism and patriotism and we can see the beginnings of his inclinations towards Communism in his celebrating the heroic victories of the Red Army against the troops of Fascism, even though he was not yet a member of the Iraqi Communist Party. In Jaffa he had the opportunity of meeting a number of English literary figures, and it is likely that he acquired most of his English at that time⁽⁴⁷⁾.

In 1958, he visited the Soviet Union as one of the representatives of the Iraqi Society for peace. Ḥusayn *Alī Shānōf says of this visit:

"The big cities of Russia such as Baku were happy to welcome Gōrān into their bosom. Then he went to China and Korea. Later he came back to Iraq through Moscow. This trip left the poet with some very magnificent memories which he expressed in the poems he

composed in Baku and Moscow. During this trip, he was elected an active member of the society of International Peace"⁽⁴⁸⁾.

4. There is no need to examine in great detail the events that occurred during the two poet's lifetimes. It is sufficient to suggest that a number of political and social factors affected both of them. As young people they witnessed the devastating effects of the two World Wars, at the end of the Second of which Iraq was pregnant with Marxism. Both men adopted Marxism and became zealous advocates of its principles, though, in fact, only for a short period. The poetry of both, during that era, is full of symbols and myths. According to Boullata, the major function of al-Sayyāb's imagery is to symbolize his vision of the predicament of civilization in the Arab world⁽⁴⁹⁾. Iraq in the fifties was reduced to the most abject condition, a prey to poverty, frustration, paralysis, depression and destruction. The country was full of police agents, many families were homeless, disease and death were rife among workers and peasants, and innocent people were thrown into prison⁽⁵⁰⁾. Therefore, as many critics believe, Gōrān and al-Sayyāb used myths and symbols in their work to express their pent-up feelings and at the same time to disguise their real intentions from the monarchist regime.

There has been an intensive debate during this century about the influence on modern Arab poets of European literature, and comparative critical studies have been made

in an attempt to demonstrate to what precise extent they were influenced by it. Some attribute this undeniable, but unquantifiable, influence exclusively to the advance of education. Others believe that it has depended mainly on the individual poet's taste and feeling and his evaluation of the aesthetic, artistic and literary values of a certain piece of art⁽⁵¹⁾. It is needless to emphasize that it is beyond the scope of this thesis to make a comprehensive comparative study between the whole poetical corpus of al-Sayyāb and Gōrān and the whole of English poetry. It is reasonable, therefore, to concentrate on certain particularly influential English poets, and try to demonstrate their effect on these two poets.

From the early twenties, the same revolution that had occurred in European literature at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century began to occur in Kurdish and Arabic literature. A comparison of the earlier poetical works of Gōrān and al-Sayyāb, particularly those which celebrate the beauty of nature and of women, and those which exhibit their philosophies, with Romantic European poetry reveals considerable similarities, and suggests a decisive influence.

Before joining the English Department in Dār al-mu^callimīn al-^cāliya, al-Sayyāb used to read avidly the available translations of Victor Hugo (1802-1885), Lamartine (1790-1869), Alfred de Musset (1810-1857), Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863), Baudelaire (1821-1867), Edmond Rostand (1868-1918)

and Paul Valéry (1887-1945). This may explain why he dedicated the following poems to the spirits of Wordsworth and Baudelaire: Dhubūl azāhir al-difla, Jadwal jaffa mā'uhu, al-^CAysh al-mahjūr, Amīr shaṭṭ al-^CArab, Majrā naẓīr al-qīffatayn, Bayna al-rūḥ wa-l-jasad. In 1944, he sent the last poem to ^CAlī Maḥmūd Ṭāhā, so that he might write an introduction to it, but he died before he could do so⁽⁵²⁾. He became familiar with Baudelaire through the translations of the works of the latter into Arabic. He read some of *Les Fleurs du Mal* and some of the biography of the poet. He immediately wrote Bayna al-rūḥ wa-l-jasad, which depicts sinful, physical love, while disapproving of it⁽⁵³⁾.

His second collection to be published was Asāṭīr (1950), which brought him even more fame than his first, Azhār dhābila (1947). Most of the poems of this collection were in the manner of English Romantic poetry, particularly that of Shelley and Keats. He had even translated an extract from Keat's "Bright star!", which he interpolated in his poem Dhikrā liqā' (1948):

وتحمد يمينك نحو الكتاب كن ينشد السورة الضائعة
فتبكي مع العبقري المريض وقد خاطب النجمة الساطعة

» تمنيت يا كوكب

ثباتا كهذا - انام
على صدرها في الظلام

وأنتى كما تغرب " (54)

There can be no doubt that the phrase al-^cAbqarī
al-marīḍ (the sick genius) denotes Keats, who died young.

When the time came for him to leave college (1948),
al-Sayyāb resolved, perhaps influenced largely by Keats'
example, to devote himself to poetry. In Ri'a tatamazzaq,
composed at this time, we find many echoes of Keats'
Ode to a Nightingale:

الداء يُبجِ راحتِي، ويطغى الغد .. في خيالي
ويشعل أنفاسي، ويطبقها كأنفاس الذبابة
تهتز في رؤيتي يرقص فيها أوج الزوال
مشدودتين إلى ظلام القبر بالدم والسعال ..

كم ليلقة ناديت باسمك أيها الموت الرهيب
وددت لا طلع الشروق علي إن مال الغروب
بالأوس كنت أرى دجلك أحب من خفقات آل
راقصين آمال الظماء .. قبلها الدم واللهيب !
بالأوس كنت أصبح : خذني في الظلام إلى ذراعك
واعبرني الأوجاع يطربهن ظل من شرعك
خذني إلى كهف تهوم حوله ریح الشمال .. (55)

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk;

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,

To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy !
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain -
To thy high requiem become a sod⁽⁵⁶⁾.

Keat's influence on al-Sayyāb is abundantly clear, but we have some evidence that he also knew Shelley's work. There are reminiscences of Shelley throughout his earlier work, but perhaps the clearest references are to be seen in Itbi^cīnī written in 1948; compare:

اتبعيني
فأضحي رانت به الذكرى على هطلي بمسيرة
هالم الأغرور بالبحيم الوصيد
و شرع يتوارى ، و « اتبعيني »
لمسة في الزرقة الوهنى .. و ظل
من جناح يضمحل
في بقايا ناعسات من يكون
في بقايا من يكون
في يكون !
لهذه الأغرور يفساها خيال ؛
لهذه الأغرور لا يسيرها إلا ملول
تعكس الأمواج ، في شبه انطفاء ،
لون المهاجر في الشط الكئيب ،
في صباح و مساء ؛
و اهاطير بكاري .. في دروب ،
في دروب الطفا الماضي مداها .
و طواها .

فَاتَّبِعِينِي ... اتَّبِعِينِي .
اتَّبِعِينِي .. ها هي الشَّطَّانُ يعلوها ذهل
ناصلُ الألوآن ، كاطلم القديم
عادت الذكرى به - ساج كأشباح نجوم
نسي الصبحُ بناها و الأمول
في هوارٍ .. ، بين جفون !
في وجوم الشاطئِ الطالي ، كعينيكَ ، انظارُ
و ظلال تصبغ الريح ... و ليل دنهار
صفحة زرقاء تجلد ، في برود
و ابتسام غامض ، تهلّ الزمان
للغراغ المتعب الباكي على الشط الوحيد . (57)

with Prometheus Unbound:

ASIA.

Thine eyes are like the deep, blue, boundless heaven
contracted to two circles underneath
Their long, fine lashes; dark, far, measureless,
Orb within orb, and line through line inwoven.

PANTHEA.

Why lookest thou as if a spirit passed ?

ASIA

There is a change: beyond their inmost depth
I see a shade, a shape: 'tis He, arrayed
In the soft light of his own smile, which spread
Like radiance from the cloud-surrounded moon.
Prometheus, it is thine ! depart not yet !
Say not those smiles that we shall meet again
Within that bright pavilion which their beams

Shall build on the waste world ? The dream is told
What shape is that between us ? Its rude hair
Roughens the wind that lifts it, its regard
Is wild and quick, yet tis a thing of air
For through its grey robe gleams the golden dew
Whose stars the noon has quenched not.

DREAM.

Follow ! Follow !

PANTHEA

It is mine other dream.

ASIA

It disappears.

PANTHEA

It passes now into my mind. Methought

- - - - -

Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,
We heard: O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW, FOLLOW ME !
And then I said: "Panthea, look on me."
But in the depth of those beloved eyes
Still I saw, FOLLOW, FOLLOW !

ECHO.

Follow, Follow!

PANTHEA.

The crags, this clear spring morning, mock
our voices
As they were spirit-tongued.

ASIA.

It is some being

Around the crags. What fine clear sounds! O, list!

- - - - -

ECHOES.

O, Follow, Follow,
As our voice recedeth
Through the caverns hollow,
Where the forest spreadeth;. (58).

Iḥsān ^cAbbās and Lewis ^cAwad remark that al-Sayyāb's early poetry is more or less an unthinking imitation of these English poets, with little or no personal experience making itself felt in it (59). Almost certainly, al-Sayyāb did not really understand the intentions of the poets whom he imitated at this stage; this would perhaps account for the poor opinion that is held of his imitative work. We may look upon this period as a natural stage in any poet's development: one that should not be taken too seriously. An example of his work on this time is his poem Ahwā' (Desires) in which he incorporated an adaptation of some lines of John Lyly (1554-1606):

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| صباها به ، يلعبان الورق | وبالحب والغارة المستعب |
| فألقي سهام الهوى والحنق | وكيف استكان الاله الصغير |
| (60) وورد الخرد ، ونور الحدق | رهان ، رمي فيه غمازته |

Cupid and my Campaspe play'd
At cards for kisses; Cupid paid:
He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,

His mother's doves, and team of sparrows;
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none know how);
With these, the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple of his chin;⁽⁶¹⁾.

During his Realist and Social-Realist period, al-Sayyāb seems to have been influenced by Stephen Spender (b. 1909), W.E. Henley (1849-1903), W.H. Davies (1871-1940), Rupert Brooke (1887-1915) and Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849). At about the same time, he was also greatly influenced by T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) and Edith Sitwell (1887-1964). After the Second World War, the poetic influence of Eliot became widespread in literary circles in the Arab world, particularly in the wake of al-Sayyāb. It is not hard to explain why the modern poet whom the Arabs found most congenial was Eliot. Commenting on this, Nazeer El-Azma says:

"The disciples of Eliot's poetic ideology and technique are many in various parts of the world. In this regard the Arab poet is no exception..... Eliot's poetry, and more specifically "The Waste Land" and the works which followed or developed its theme, have been received by the Arabic intelligentsia as not only an expression of the decaying spirit of the West but also as a torch to illuminate the decay of their own... It can be seen that "The Waste Land" has left its mark

on al-Sayyāb's major themes. Remarkably he employed not only the Eliotic theme but also his images, monologue and even his poetic vocabulary. And while Eliot from a religious standpoint elevated his vision to the tragic level of a cultural crisis, al-Sayyāb's vision was framed by the political, social and economic conditions of his environment."⁽⁶²⁾

The attractiveness of Eliot's poetry to a world-wide audience may perhaps be attributed to his command of many languages, his wide general knowledge and his employment of historical motifs from early religions. It is relevant here to consider this great poem. According to B.C. Southam:

"Eliot's immediate Waste Land is the world, as he saw it, after the First World War. The 'waste' is not, however, that of war's devastation and bloodshed, but the emotional and, spiritual sterility of Western man, the 'waste' of our civilization. Eliot does not regard this as a single moment in history, particular to the West in the twentieth century, and the poem is organized to present an inclusive, comparative vision, a perspective in history in which (by succinct allusions and references) twentieth-century forms of

belief and disbelief, of culture and of life, are kept in a continuous and critical relationship with those of the past. The theme of the poem is the salvation of the Waste Land, not as a certainty but a possibility; of emotional, spiritual and intellectual vitality to be regained. Eliot develops this theme drawing upon related patterns in nature, myth and religion; the cycle of the seasons; the ancient fertility myths of Egypt, India and Greece, in which the God must die to be reborn, to bring fertility to the soil and potency to the people; a pattern known to us again in the life, death and resurrection of Christ⁽⁶³⁾.

It seems that the reasons that stimulated al-Sayyāb and his fellows on the one hand, and Eliot on the other, to employ symbols and myths in their works, were very similar. Both used these myths to find a solution for the crisis of the contemporary individual and re-assess the values of humanity for their time, which was full of cultural predicaments⁽⁶⁴⁾. The rapid technological development in the West brought about unhealthy human relationships which, naturally, had their effects on literature. Modern Iraqi poets imitated and absorbed Eliot's dissatisfaction with the outcome of Western industrialization. At the beginning of this influence, al-Sayyāb had neither Eliot's

cultural depth nor his politico-religious attitude. But it may be suggested that "the Waste Land", as far as al-Sayyāb's ideology and technique were concerned must have helped in shedding light on the loss of his civilization, and the decay of the Arab culture⁽⁶⁵⁾. The same symbols, Adonis, Tammuz, Attis, Osiris, Aphrodite, etc., which took a firm hold on Eliot's poetry, can be found in much of al-Sayyāb's Tammuzite poetry. For instance, in his poem Unshūdat al-maṭar (1953), he depicted the complete sterility, of the Iraqi people by his use of the image of drought, which has, as Jayyusi: describes it , "the aridity of Arab life after the 1948 disaster in Palestine and the aridity of the land in the fertility myths, saved from complete waste only by death and the spilling of blood, analogous to the falling of rain over a parched land."⁽⁶⁶⁾ He trusted that the thunder, lightning and heavy rain over the mountains would overcome the aridity, and would carpet the earth with greenery, implying thereby his belief in general revolution, national resurrection and the victory of the people:

كشوة الطفل اذا خاف من القمر !
كأن أقواس السحاب تشرب الفيوم
وقطرةً ففطرةً تزدوب في المطر ...
وكرر الأطفال في عرائش الكروم ،
ودغدعت صمت العصافير على الشجر
انسودة المطر ...
طر ...
طر ...

مطر ...
تثائب المساء ، و الفيوم ما تزال
تسبح ما تسبح من دموعها الثقال .
كأن طفلاً بات يهذي قبل أن ينام :
بأن أمه - التي أفاوز منذ عام

مطر ...
مطر ...
مطر ...
وكم ذرفنا ليلة الرحيل ، من دموع
ثم اعتلنا - خوف أن نلام - بالمطر ...
مطر ...
مطر ...

ومنذ أن كنا صفراً ، كانت السماء
تغم في الشتاء
ويطرد المطر ،
وكل عام - حين يعشب النرى - نجوع
ما مر عام و العراق ليس فيه جوع .
مطر .. (67)

The repetition of the word maṭar (rain) in this poem can be paralleled in Eliot's poem "the Waste Land:"

If there were water

And no rock

If there were rock

And also water

And water

A spring

A pool among the rock

If there were the sound of water only
Not the cicada
And dry grass singing
But sound of water over a rock
Where the hermit-thrush sings in the pine trees
Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop
But there is no water
- - - - -
In a flash of lightning. Then a damp gust
Bringing rain⁶⁸⁾.

Certainly al-Sayyāb mentions more than once his admiration for Eliot and the latter's influence on him:

"We must mention in this respect, the great influence that the great poet T.S. Eliot, and particularly his poem "The Waste Land", has had on committed poetry, both good and bad, in modern Arabic literature... but there is also another group of young Arab poets who have read and understood Eliot and have been influenced equally by his spirit and technique"⁽⁶⁹⁾.

Al-Sayyāb here implies that he has severed his relationship with the Iraqi Communist party. While still a member, he felt obliged to excuse his admiration for Eliot:

"I admire Thomas Eliot ... I have been influenced by his style only, because I completely disagree with his philosophy and attitudes towards life".⁽⁷⁰⁾

Eliot's influence on him became much greater after his leaving the Iraqi Communist party, although his impact upon him did not last long. This is demonstrated in his long poem "Min ru'yā Fu-Kāy", in which he describes the vision of Fu-Kāy, a clerk in the Jesuit mission in Hiroshima who went mad following the horror of the atomic explosion and was treated at the Red Cross Hospital, where he was just a number: (71)

لهيائي .. كونفاي ، كونفاي
ما زال ناقوس أبيض يعلو المساء
بأنجع الرئاء :
« لهيائي .. كونفاي ، كونفاي »
فيفزع الصغار في الدروب
وتخفى القلوب
وتفلو الدور بيكين و سنفهاي
من رجع : كونفاي ، كونفاي . !
فلتترقي و طفلك الوليد ،
ليجمع الحديد بالحديد
والفحم والنحاس بالنضار
والعالم القديم بالحديد
آلهة الحديد والنحاس والدمار ،
ابوك رائد المحيط ، نام في القرار :
من مقلته لؤلؤ يبيعه التجار (72)

Al-Sayyāb comments in a footnote on the last two lines that Eliot took them from Shakespeare's The Tempest and used them to symbolize "life through death", whereas in the context

in which he himself used them, the meaning was different. (73)

Returning to 1948, we find that al-Sayyāb borrowed freely from Eliot. His poem Fī l-sūq al-qadīm, which is the first important poem to display irregular rhyme and metre, has the freshness and originality of Eliot's Preludes (1909), especially the first section. It is perhaps helpful to compare the two passages:

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps
And then the lighting of the lamps (74).

الليل ، والسوق القديم
خفتت به الأصوات إلا غمضات العابرين
وفطى الغريب وما تبث الريح من نغم حزين
في ذلك الليل البهيم .
الليل ، والسوق القديم ، وغمضات العابرين ؛
والنور تصدح الصباح المزاني في شحوب ،

- مثل الضباب على الطريق -
من كل حانوت عتيق ،
بين الوجوه الشاهبات ، كأنه نغم يذوب
في ذلك السور القديم .

الليل ، والسور القديم ، وعفصات العابرين ،
وخطى الغريب .

وأنت ايها السمور ستوقدين
في المذبح المجهول ، في الليل الذي لن تعرفيه ،
تلقيين ضوءك في ارتخاء مثل امساء الحزيف
- عقل تموج به السنابل تحت اضواء الغروب
تتجمع الغرابان فيه - (75)

According to ^cAbd al-Riḍā ^cAlī, Eliot's Journey of the Magi, which Al-Sayyāb translated into Arabic in his work Qaṣā'id mukhtāra min al-shi'r al-ālamī al-ḥadīth, inspired him a great deal; he refers to it and imitates its structure in many of his poems⁽⁷⁶⁾. On this subject, ^cAbd al-jabbār ^cAbbās says:

"The poem Qāfilat al-ḍiyā^c , in which al-Sayyāb imitated the structure of the Journey of the Magi, which he translated in his selection of international poetry, shows that it was very dear to him."⁽⁷⁷⁾

Let us , again, compare a passage from Eliot's poem with various passages from al-Sayyāb:

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death ? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

فهل استوقف الطلوات ؟ اصبرغ : دد أئها الأئسان
أئي ، يا أنت ، يا قابيل .. فخذ بيدك على الغمة !
اغني ، خفف الألام عني واطرد الأهمزان « ؟

يا ربُّ الأوبى قد أعيا به الداء
في غربته دونما مالٍ ولا حكن ،
يدعوك في الدُّجن
يدعوك في ظلمت الموت : العباء
ناد الفؤاد بها ، فارحمه إن كنتنا .

لهيات ان يذكر الموت وقد نهضوا
به رقة الموت كم مص الدماء بها دود ومد بسالم البلج ديجورا!
اني سأشفي ، سأشفي كل ما جرحها
قلبي ، وعري عظامي نهري راعشة و الليل مقور . (79)

وأسير ... أسير على قدمي ! ! ...
لرُكبانِ الدربِ إلى القبرِ
الظلمةِ والدودِ الفُرّاسِ بألفِ نهمِ (80)

أليسَ كيفي أيتها الآله
إن الغناء غايّة الحياة

لهاث الردى ، اريد ان أنام
بين قبور اهلي المبعثره (81)

--- والحياة كالفضاء (82)

Al-Sayyāb used the theme of "Birth and Death", while wavering between hope and despair, during the final three years of his life. In general, however, he was giving expression to his desire for an end to his life of suffering.

There are many other clear indications of the influence of Eliot on al-Sayyāb. For example, he inserted the title "The Waste Land" in his poem Ilā ḥasna'al-qaṣr:

فلتسبب (الأرض الخراب) على منا النجم الحزين
صبارها .. أنا ستملاً عالم الغد يا سميع (83)

In a footnote to this poem, he states that the phrase "The Waste Land" is a quotation from "the English reactionary poet T.S. Eliot".⁽⁸⁴⁾ Clearly, he wrote this poem before leaving the Iraqi Communist Party. Later, i.e. after leaving the party, he removed it from his collection Asāṭir (1950), and for a while he rejected Eliot until he eventually

decided that he could adopt his use of myth and symbol in his own poetry without being tainted by his attitudes.

In a study of the literary influences undergone by al-Sayyāb we should not neglect Edith Sitwell. In many places, the influence of Sitwell is very plain. He imitated her images of fear, horror, destruction and the inhuman treatment of people by the "Iron World"⁽⁸⁵⁾. Her influence can be partly attributed to his desire to find another source of inspiration than Eliot, who was already being imitated heavily by ^cAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī⁽⁸⁶⁾. He became acquainted with her poetry while he was in his final years of study; in other words, he read her work at the same time as reading those of Shelley, Keats, Byron and Eliot⁽⁸⁷⁾. He quotes and imitates her widely in his own works. Her poem Still Falls the Rain, for example, greatly influenced his best poems, such as Min ru'ya Fu-Kāy (1955), Ughniya fī shahr Āb (1956), al-Masīḥ ba^cd al-ṣulb (1957), al-Nahr wa-l-mawt (1957), Madīna bi-lā maṭar (1958), Madīnat al-Sindibād (1960). Here are some representative passages:

STILL falls the Rain -

Dark as the world of man, black as our loss -

Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails

Upon the cross

Still falls the Rain

With a sound like the pulse of the heart that is

changed to the hammer-beat

In the Potter's field, and the sound of the impious feet

On the Tomb;

Still falls the rain

In the field of blood where the small hopes breed
and the human brain

Nurtures its greed, that worm with the brow of Cain

Still falls the Rain

At the feet of the Starved Man hung upon the Cross .

Christ that each day, each night, nails there, have mercy

On us -

Still falls the Rain

Still falls the Blood from the Starved Man's wounded side:

He bars in His Heart all wounds - those of the light
that died, (88)

The same ideas and language are used in several of al-Sayyāb's poems; Christ appears mostly as a symbol of a heroic nature⁽⁸⁹⁾, whose streaming blood brings fertility to the earth:

بِدمَا أَنزَلُونِي ، سَمِعْتَ الرِّيحَ
فِي نَوَاحٍ طَوِيلٍ تَسْفُفُ النَّخِيلَ ،
وَالْحَطَى وَهِيَ تَنَاقَى . اذِنِ فَالْجِرَاعُ
وَالصَّلِيبُ الَّذِي سَمَّرُونِي عَلَيْهِ طَوَالَ الأَصِيلِ
لَمْ تَحْتَمِي . وَانصَبْتُ : كَانَ العَوِيلُ
يَعْبُرُ السَّهْلَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ المَدِينَةِ

يَلْبَسُ الدَّفْءُ قَلْبِي ، نِيَجْرِي دَمِي فِي ثَرَاهَا .
قَلْبِي الشَّمْسُ إِذْ تَنْبُضُ الشَّمْسُ نَوْرًا ،

قلبي الأرض ، تنيف قحماً ، وزهراً ، و ماءً نخبيراً ،
قلبي الماء ، قلبي لهد السنبل'
موتة البعث : يمينا بمن يأكل
في العجين الذي يستدير (90)

فسمّ النهار حيث سمروه

غداً يصيب المسيح في المراوح (91)

من الذي يحمل عبء الصليب
في ذلك الليل الطويل الرهيب !

من ينزل المصلوب عن لوحه ؟

من يطرد العقبان عن جرحه ؟

من يرفع الظلمات عن صبحه ؟

وسيدل الأشرار بالغار ؟ (92)

Not only the ideas, but also the symbols and the structure, are analogous. It is clear that "Min ru'ya Fu-Kāy, is a close imitation, if not an actual translation - as the poet admits in a footnote - of Sitwell's Lullaby:

THOUGH the world has slipped and gone,
Sounds my loud discordant cry
Like the steel bird's song on high;
'Still one thing is left - the Bone !'
Then out danced the Babioun.

In wolfish pelt she'd hide thy bones
To shield thee from the world's long cold,
And down on all fours shouldst thou crawl

For thus from no height **canst** than thou fall -

Do, do.

She'd give no hands; there's naught to hold

And naught to make; there's dust to sift,

But no food for the hands to lift.

Do, do. (93).

ورغم أن العالم استمرّ و اندثر
ما زال طائر الحديد يذرع السماء ،
وفي قرارة المحيط يعقد القرى
الهاب طفلك اليتيم - حيث لا غناء
إلا صراخ « البائسون » : « زادك الثرى ،
فازمفا على الأربع ... فالخفيف والعلاء
سنان و الحياة كالغناء ! » (94)

Further the image of Iā'ir al-ḥadīd (the Steel Bird) can also be found in his poem Marthiyat Jaykūr (1955):

يا صليب المسيح ألقاك ظلأ
فوز « جيكور » طائر من حديد
يا نطل كظلمة القبر في اللون ، وكالقبر في ابتلاع الحدود

لا عليك السلام يا عمر تعبان بن عيسى و كنت بين الفهود
انت أبيت كل روح من الماضي ، و هودت آله من حديد (95)

From the fifties, we find that al-Sayyāb is already seeking for the key to the depiction of hardship and death. In this regard, he alludes to Sitwell's The Shadow of Cain in his poems Fajr al-salām (1950), Marḥā Ghaylān (1957) and al-Mabghā (1960):

And through the works of Death,
The dust's aridity, is heard the sound
Of mounting saps like monstrous bull-voices of
unseen fearful mimes: (96)

أهسست .. ماذا ؟ صوت ناعوره
أم صيحة النشغ الذي في الجذور (97)

.....
...، اسمع من شوارعها الحزينه
ورود البزاعم وهو كبير أو يمين ندى السباح
و النشغ في الشجرات يهص ، و السنابل في الرياح (98)

A more detailed investigation of this influence cannot be pursued here; it suffices to say that there are a number of books and articles that refer to the influence on al-Sayyāb of European, in particular English literature; the reader is particularly referred to Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb-Dirāsa fī ḥayātihī wa shi^crih by Iḥsān^cAbbās, al-Baḥth^c an ma^cnā by ^cAbd al-Wāḥid Lu'Lu'a, al-Thawra wa-l-adab by Lewis^cAwad, "The Tammuzi Movement and the Influence of T.S. Eliot on Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb" by Nazeer El-Azma, al-Sayyāb by ^cAbd al-Jabbār^cAbbās.

Gōrān, for his part, brought to the new Kurdish poetry the mature poetic experience that he found in the English poets, as well as learning from them techniques that had never before been applied to it:

"Gōrān learned from English metaphysical poets the form and the use of the stanza, and the use of various rhymes" (99)

As a result of his readings in English poetry, he concerned himself with new themes, which necessitated new methods; a new approach and a new spirit both appeared in his work as he matured. He came to appreciate that Kurdish could be used as it had never been used before, and that it was a practicable vehicle for a serious and committed modernism. He endeavoured to express his concern and understanding for the political and social problems of his nation, and indeed the personal grief that he felt at these problems, by means of the techniques that he discovered in this alien literature. In his poem Bō bulbul (to a Nightingale), he contrasts the hopelessness of his own situation with that of the nightingale and tells the bird of all his suffering and grief:

ئەي بەلدارى ئىسك سووك ،
بەبلى دە نووك بچووك ،
باغچە بە باغچە ئە فەرى ؛
وچا ئىكى لى ئە گرى ؛
كام سەرچەل دلت گرتى ..
دەنگى لى هە ئە بەرى ؛
كام ئادا زە شەرىنە ،
رود تاكى و ئە شەئى ئىرىنە ،
بە چوار دە وریا ئە پزىنى ،
دنىا پى ئە ئە كە ئىتىنى ...
لەوگە رودە پىچكۆلانە
ئەم ئە غمە بەرزو جوانە

چون دیتہ دہر ! چون نہ رزئی ؟
داگیان نہ سستی ، هوش نہ مزی ؟

سینس لای خوم همیشه
شیرم کرده به پیشه ،
دهك تو ، به لام نرم و نه و ؛
به کم پروزه ، دوهم شه و ؛
شیری من کامیان چابی
نه جابی فرمینك نابی ؛
هدر خرد و ، هدر هدنا ،
یاده و ، نه ندیشه و ، اتا ...
شیری تو ، گشت نمودن ،
ناوی سرچادهی پروونه ،
سر بهست نه پروا و خوری دتی ؛
نمیان له کوئی ، نه د له کوئی ! (100)

O, lovely bird,
Small-beaked nightingale
Flying from garden to garden,
taking a rest -
Which branch do you prefer ?
You raise your voice
What a sweet song,
light and lively!
Spreading it all around,
You make everybody smile.

How can this clear and beautiful song
Issue forth and spread
from that small throat,
Filling the body, draining the senses ?

- - - - -

I too myself, have always
composed poetry as a trade
like you, but of the two
the first is day, the second is night.
The best of my poems
is not without tears;
It is only grief and sighs;
it is memory, apprehension and longing.
But your poems, every one,
are the clear water of the spring,
which freely flows and chuckles.
How can we compare them ?

The concept and arrangement of this poem at least partially overlaps with those of Shelley's To a Skylark. This is an undated poem in Gōrān's collection, but ^cUmar Barzancī asserts that "Goran read Shelley's poem before the Second World War and it inspired him to write an emotional piece of poetry similar to that of Shelley"⁽¹⁰¹⁾. To demonstrate the effect of Shelley's poem on Gōrān, we may compare the following passages with the above poem:

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.
In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightning,
Thou dost float and run;

Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

- - -

- - -

All the earth and air,
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed
What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee ?
From rainbow clouds there flow out
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody. (102)

Another poem of Gōrān's early period, entitled Bō gulī Lāwlāw (to convolvulus), is deeply influenced by Robert Herrick's (1591-1674) poem To Daffodils. It should be stated that Gōrān commented on his poem in a footnote that its basic conception derives from English poetry, without mentioning the actual poet or poem. It embodies a philosophy of acceptance in which death is always the path which everyone will tread:

به کون گریان له چاوم دئی، گوئی لادلادی په نگاد په ننگ !
له برچی سیس نئی دا زود؟ چی یہ سببی تراکانت؟
هسو تاونیکه پدژ ه لہا تودہ، بوچی وہا بی دہ ننگ
نئی کیئی؟ توخا، نئی گوئی، صبر .. دہ ستم بہ دامانت !
صبر تو بی خدا! تاونیکی تر پادہ ستم، تا عومرم
وہ کوو پدژ چی چلی زستان له هوری مہینت تاوا بی !
میش هادری نئی گوئی لادلاد میش نمرم !
میش خیلقت، وہ کوو تو، دانہ بی زورم لگول چا بی ! (I03)

Floods of tears come from my eyes, o multicoloured convolvulus !
Why are you so weak so early ? What are the causes of your fading ?
The sun has only just risen, why are you silently fading ?
For God's sake, O flower, patience. I implore you !
Patience, for God's sake ! Wait a little longer until my life,
Like a midwinter day, sets from the cloud of suffering.
I am a companion of your journey, o convolvulus, I too shall die.
My nature, like yours, is not kind to me.

Compare Herrick's lines:

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising Sun
Has not attain'd his noon
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.
We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a Spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you, or any thing
We die..... (104).

In the first stanza Gōrān shows signs of inventiveness, but in the second he is clearly imitating Herrick; parts of the poem, one feels, are virtually a translation of the English.

In comparing the beauty of a woman with that of nature, he realized that the beauty of the former outweighed that of the latter. He thought that the beauty of nature had no value without the beauty of women. The following verses from his poem Āfrat u cuwānī (Woman and beauty), in which the spirit of romanticism is abundantly evident, illustrate this:

به آسمان زده دستیزم دیوه ،
له باغچه ی به هارگولم چنیه ،
شومنی دره خت له پردهم پزاره ،
له زهرده ی زور کول سدرنجم داده ،
په لکه زیریندی پاشس بارانی زور ،
چهارده توره به رامبر به خور ،
هتادی نوروز ، مانگی جو دره
زور هاتون و چون به پرور و بشو ..

رمانه همود جوان ، شیرین ،
پرورش که ره وهی شه قامی ژنین !
به لام تبعه ت هرگزاد هرگز
بی پرودناکی به بی بزهی نمازیز ؛ (I05)

I have seen the star in the sky

I have picked the flower in the garden of spring.

The dew of the trees has splashed my face.

I have watched the evening sunlight fading.

The rainbow after heavy rain

Curving opposite the sun.

The sun of Nawrōz (March) and the month of the barley harvest (May)

Have come and gone often with day and night.

All these are beautiful and sweet

Making bright the road of life

But nature is never, never,

Bright without the smile of the beloved.

The idea recurs in Shelley's Love's philosophy. Gōrān, however, sought to combine the ecstasies of romantic love with a restricted description of women, i.e. he ended his poem with an expression of platonic love without sensual undertones, unlike Shelley:

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven,
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea -
What are these kissings worth
If thou kiss not me ?⁽¹⁰⁶⁾

Another of Gōrān's poems, Aī Galāwēj (Oh, Sirius), is full of images which overlap with those that the English Romantic poets often use, though, Kamāl Mīrāwdalī claims that he was influenced, in writing it, by the Metaphysical poets as well as by the Romantics. Mīrāwdalī's assertion should be treated with caution, for he contradicts himself later by saying that Gōrān was influenced by Shelley only in writing his poem⁽¹⁰⁷⁾. Probably Mīrāwdalī would be hard put to it to say which Metaphysical poets exerted the influence that he claims to identify. As far as Shelley's influence here is concerned, he translates an extract from a poem of his which he does not identify in his article Sirusht u cūwānī la shi^crī Gōrān (Nature and Beauty in Gōrān's poetry). Investigation shows that the spirit and

philosophy of Gōrān's poem at least partially overlap with those that are evident in Shelley's To Night:

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey ,
Star - inwrought !
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand -
Come, long-sought !

- - - - -
Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon -
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon,
I ask of thee, beloved Night
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon ! (108).

دلّم واگیزر ئدا گەرداوی یە ئس و نائوسیدی پە شس
مە گەر تو ئیئیتە ئیئەتدەم ، گە لادێژ ، ئی ستارە ی گەش !
مە گەر تو ، ئی گە لادێژ ، ئی بزە ی لێوی سە مر گاهان ،
مە گەر تو بێسەرە دینی قوڵی ئیشی قەلبی بی سامان !
لە چادی تو دە پر شنگی ئەگاتە پوچی بە دەبە خستم ،
ئەگەر سستی تە سە للی تاشەوی دواپی سەری سە ختم !
دە سائی شاستارە ، ئی گە لادێژی گەش و تابان ،
کە لەجاتی بە ئەگریت بە شو چادی شەوی گریان !.. (109)

My heart is turning in the whirlpool of despair and black hopelessness
Perhaps you, Sirius, can help me, O bright star.
Perhaps you, O Sirius, the smile on the lips of dawn,
Perhaps you can clam the seething of the pain of my poor heart.
A ray from your eyes reaches my unfortunate spirit.
It intoxicates and makes replete my heavy head until the next night.
So, O King of stars, Oh bright and shining one
When you appear with your tresses, wash the eye of the night
of weeping !

Gōrān was influenced by the poem entitled Life of the little-known Anna Letitia Barbauld (1743-1825) in writing his poem Giyān (soul); the concepts of both poems are very close, but Gōrān's remains Kurdish in character:

نازانم تو چیت ئی گیان ؟
یاری نازداری تریان ،
هیزی لاش جود لاندنم ،
هوئی گرم دسارد چه شتتم ،
تینی دلهی پر جو شتم ،
بزوتینی بیرو هوشتم ،
هادی پی هه همیشه ی عومرم :
له دساره بودم تا ئه مررم !
نازانم تو چیت ؟ من چیم ؟
تو من نیت ؟ یا من تو نیم ؟
تو دن ئی بی ، لاش ئه مرئ ؟
لاش به یادگار ته برئ
جی دیلی تا زه مانی ؟

به لأم ، ئی گیان ، تو کوانی
به لگی مان و نه ماننت :
تدبرت یا نادنیشاننت ! .. (IIIO)

I do not know what you are O soul !

The charming friend of life;

The force that moves my body;

The cause of my feeling warm or cold;

The heat of my excited heart;

The swayer of my mind and feelings;

The constant companion of my life

From my birth to my death.

I do not know what you are, or who I am.

Are you not I ? or am I not you ?

You disappear; the body dies;

The body is in the memorial of the grave.

It remains until it is time.

But, O soul, where is the evidence

for your existence or non-existence ?

Where is your grave or your address ?

Life ! I know not what thou art,

But know that thou and I must part;

And when, or how, or where we met

I own to me a secret yet.

Life ! We've been long together

Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;

'Tis hard to part when friends are dear -
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
- Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time,
Say not good Night - but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning. (III)

Before putting an end to this chapter, it might be useful to emphasize that one single poem of al-Sayyāb's may show the influence of many poems and poets. It is thus very difficult to isolate the effect of any particular poet or poem upon him. For example, in his poem al-Mūmis al-amyā:

كسبون « ميدوزا » تحجر كل قلب بالضعيفه ،
وكانها نذر تبشر أهل « بابل » بالحرير

من أي عس في المقابر دفن اسفع كالغراب ؟
« قابيل » أخف دم الجريمة بالأناظر والشغوف

من كغلاء العابرون !
احفاد « أوريب » الضدير ودارثوه المبهرون .
(هوكست) أرطلة كأسس ، وباب « طيبة » ما يزال
يلقي « ابو الهول » الركب عليه من رعب ظلال

زبد السواطن و الحمار
تربقبا ميلاد « افروسيه » ليل او نهارا

« فارست » في انما قهن يعيد أغنية حزينه

الحال ، شيطان المدينة ، ربُّ « فادومت » الجريد (II2)

he alludes to many poets, both Arab and European. One must disagree with ^cAbd al-Wāḥid Lu'Lu'a's assertion that this poem is a vivid example of al-Sayyāb's imitation of Eliot's use of myths and symbols⁽¹¹³⁾. As will be mentioned in the next chapter, Eliot was by no means the only poet to use myth and symbol extensively in his work. Many critics have concluded that al-Sayyāb's admiration of Sitwell can be attributed to her fondness for using religious myths and symbols such as those of Cain, Abel and Christ. It is difficult, then, to maintain that al-Sayyāb in this poem imitated only Eliot:

"Images from Sitwell slipped into al-Sayyāb's poetry, often repeating themselves... Lorca's influence on his poetry is seen in several elements, but is more subtle than that of Edith Sitwell by whom the poet was profoundly and irrevocably influenced. Lorca gave him several of his images.." (114)

Further, it is also difficult to conclude that al-Sayyāb's use of popular songs and colloquial language in al-Mūmis al-^camyā' and Marthiyat Jaykūr was taken from The Waste Land.

^cAbd al-Ridā ^cAlī claimed that the following stanza by al-Sayyāb derived from this source: (115)

Weialala leia

Wellala leialala (116)

خورس :
شَيْخِ اسْمِ اللَّهِ .. تَرَلَلَا
قَدْ شَابَ تَرَلَّ تَرَلَّ تَرَلَّ تَرَلَّ ... وَمَا هَلَّا
تَرَلَّ .. الْعَيْدِ تَرَلَلَا
تَرَلَلَا . عَرَّسَ « صَادِي »
زَغَرْدَنَ تَرَلَّ تَرَلَلَا
النَّوْبَ مِنَ الرِّيزِ ... تَرَلَلَا (II7)

It is also, surely, somewhat far-fetched to suppose that he borrowed the idea of the repetition of a whole line, with slight changes, so that these lines from Fī l-sūq al-qadīm derive from The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock:

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes.
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes. (118)

تَلْفَيْنِ ضَوْءُكَ فِي ارْتِمَاءٍ مِثْلِ اسْمَاءِ الْحَرْفِ

تَلْفَيْنِ ضَوْءُكَ فِي ارْتِمَاءٍ مِثْلِ أَوْرَاقِهِ الْحَرْفِ (II9)

It is more plausible to suggest that he drew on many sources, as it occurred to him, or even sometimes unconsciously.

Min ru'yā Fu-Kāy, which is perhaps the most perfect of his productions, is full of allusions to Shakespeare, Lorca and Sitwell⁽¹²⁰⁾. What does emerge, however, is that of al-Sayyāb shows the influence of a far greater range of English, and European, poets than does Gōrān. Influences from, among other, the Metaphysicals, the Romantics, the Victorians and the Moderns can be detected in his work.

Gōrān, on the other hand, may be said to have been influenced really only by the Metaphysicals (and that to a very limited extent) and the Romantics.

MYTH AND SYMBOL IN THE POETRY OF AL-SAYYĀB AND GŌRĀN

In the previous chapter we discussed the effect of European literature on the poetry of the two poets. We shall now discuss the function of myths and symbols in their works.

Myth and symbol tend to become confused and certainly to overlap. A brief differentiation (although perhaps only one out of many possible differentiations) may be of use.

"Symbols are like signs, in that they denote things, but they go farther in evoking a whole range of emotions and associations; signs denote, whereas symbols connote. Myths are explorations of, stories about, comments, on, the human condition, or a problem within it, such as: why do men die ? Why are people divided into two sexes ? They are generally expressed in terms (a) that are narrative and (b) that have to do with the supernatural - the gods. They are, therefore, at their simplest stories about Gods, who are, of course, projections of human psychic and psychological realities."⁽¹⁾

Towards the end of the 19th Century, a number of European writers and poets sought to establish a school

of "symbolism", as a reaction against Parnassian poetry, the Realist theatre and the Naturalist novel. Their basic idea was to employ symbols to express the mystery of existence; this, at any rate, is what emerges from the manifesto published by Morens in Le Figaro of 18 September, 1886.⁽²⁾ Several Arab critics have touched on the employment of myth and symbol in Modern Arabic poetry. As far as Kurdish is concerned, however, nothing has been written on this subject save for one interesting article by Karīm Shārazā in the journal Rōjī Kurdistan (Sun of Kurdistan), entitled Karasaī afsāna la shi^cri hāwcharxī Kurdīmāndā (Mythological devices in the poetry of contemporary Kurdish poets).

From the beginning of the forties myth and symbol have figured prominently in both Arabic and Kurdish poetry, principally in that written by young poets. This was, in part, because of the demands made by the new social and political climate for new methods of stating human values in literature.

This climate is summed up by Mōreh:

"The use of mythology and symbols in modern poetry is essential, because the modern world is a world without poetry, a world which extols the material above the spiritual. It is difficult to convey such reality without descending to the level of prose.

Symbols and legends save the poet from direct statement and add freshness to his poetry."⁽³⁾

Thus, the modern poet, in an attempt to harmonize his internal peaceful, serene and tranquil world with the antagonistic outside world, resorts to the employment of myths in his poetry, due to the fact that in spite of separation in both space and time, human beings meet one another in the common matrix of mythology, from which primitive human society, by means of reference to the miraculous and the supernatural, has handed down a potent reminder of man's ability to imitate and to create.⁽⁴⁾

It is hardly surprising that al-Sayyāb was no exception in employing myths and symbols in his poetry. In this matter, he was fully aware of the strong affinities between mythology and poetry in the contemporary world of destruction. He grew up in the stagnation that preceded the Second World War in Iraq, when poetry concerned itself largely with matters of everyday life, without, however, challenging in any real way the dominant traditional religious and nationalistic outlook. As a poet, he remarked that the most important element in modern poetry was its recourse to myths and symbols:

"The need for symbols and myths has never been as urgent as it is today. For we live in a world that has no

poetry about it - I mean that the values that are dominant in it are non-poetic, the final word in it is for matter not for the spirit. The things that the poet was able to say and make part of himself have begun to break down one by one or to withdraw to the margin of life. Therefore direct expression of what is non poetic will not be poetry. So what is the poet to do ? He has returned to myths, to legends, which still retain their warmth because they are not part of his world; he has returned to them to use them as symbols and to build up from them worlds with which to defy the logic of gold and steel. On the other hand, he has started to create new myths - although his attempts at creating this type of myth are few so far⁽⁵⁾..... Presently, the poet undergoes his own crucial crisis, he lives in a world that produces nothing save deteriorating, decaying relationships among human beings which in their turn, have a negative destructive effect upon his existence and humanity.....The

myth is a warm harbour for the poet
and an abundant source that inspires
him. This is why I have often resorted
to it."⁽⁶⁾

The influence of European literature in this sphere, too, is quite apparent in Arabic poetry; here, as in other respects, much imitative work was produced. In the fifties, a number of Arab poets were much affected by the two chapters of Vol. 4 of The Golden Bough that were translated into Arabic by Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, in 1954. These chapters, which deal with the fertility myths of Adonis and Tammūz, were published in the Journal al-Fuṣūl al-arba^ca, under the title "Adonis". They were later published as a book, with the same title.⁽⁷⁾ Another event which affected modern Arabic poetry was the publication of al-Baṭal fī l-adab wa-l-aṣāṭīr, (1959) by Shukrī^c Ayyād.

Al-Sayyāb, as already indicated, continued his acquisition of knowledge and education, through ~~his~~ wide reading, up to the time of his death. His works give ample evidence of his considerable culture and scholarship. European culture, and particularly English, had a great impact on him, both in the literary and the political spheres.

Social and political conditions, during the Second World War and for a decade afterwards, were bad throughout most of the world, and al-Sayyāb, like many others,

suffered an individual psychological crisis that impelled him to associate himself in his poetry with the suffering masses. In this association, myth and symbol played an even more important role. He was, it seems, creating a dream world that would compensate by its balance the disharmony of the real world⁽⁸⁾. Symbols he saw as a means of expressing the happiness repressed within an individual by the circumstances of life.

The theme of "sacrifice" (taḍḥiya) is a dominant, perhaps the dominant, one in his work, virtually throughout his career, expressed in terms of different myths and symbols. This theme can be traced back to his childhood and early adolescence, with their background of Shi'ite enthusiasm. The stories of the death of al-Ḥusayn b. ^cAlī and his followers, and the marāthī commemorating this, profoundly affected him, as a sensitive and emotional youth. His first poetic attempts were on purely Islamic themes, and very much in line with the sentiments that the magazine al-Risāla - - an important organ in the thirties of Muslim fundamentalism, Arab nationalism and anti-liberalism -- was fostering. He was, in fact, still writing religiously - orientated poetry as late as 1948, when his Khiṭāb ilā l-Yazīd appeared.⁽⁹⁾ Later, the theme of sacrifice, although still making use of the same figures and stories, has increasingly a political and social, rather than a spiritual connotation.^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās considers that there was a second source for the "sacrifice" theme in al-Sayyāb's poetry, namely, the elegies that form a substantial part of the pre-Islamic poetry.⁽¹⁰⁾

This is certainly a possibility, although one might perhaps question whether the theme of "sacrifice" is to be found in very many of these. Indeed, if one is seeking for this theme in classical Arabic literature, the poetry of the Khawārij, and perhaps even the story and poetry of al-Hallāj, might seem more fruitful sources. Undoubtedly, al-Sayyāb read a quantity of classical Arabic literature; such influence as it had on him is necessarily of a later date than that of his Shi'ite upbringing.

Unquestionably, folk-tales and folk-lore that he was familiar with from his childhood, as well as those that he came across later, also count as one of his most important sources, and one on which he was to draw throughout his life. For example, in Manzil al-Aqnān (1963), he recalls, still with fear, the Jinn that used to terrify him in his childhood.

وكم ألم طويتَ وكم سُقِيتَ بجمعٍ جاري !؟
وكم مهد تهزل هز فيك : كم موت و صياد
ونارٍ أوقدت في ليلة القمّ الشتائية !!
يدندن حولها القصاص : « يحكى ان جنية ... »
فيرتجف الشيخ ويصمت الأطفال في دلمسٍ و اخلاص
كأن زئير آلاف الأسود يرنّ في واد
وقد ضلوا ميارى فيه ، ثمّ ترنّ أغنيته :
« أتى قمر الزمان ... » ودندن القصاص ! « جنية » (II)

As an example of his use of folk-tales to express, either by quotation or illusion, his concern with the problems of the world in general, and the Arab world in particular, the following may be cited:

أُعود فأقطع سلمنا وثبا
لأضمتك يا أهد الشوق
يا نور الرفا يهدي القلب اذا تاهها
يا قصة عنتر اذ تروى حول التنور فأهملها
مأهنت عبيرك في نفسي
ينثال ويقرع كالجرس (I2)

أن يكتب الله لي العود الى العراق
فسوف ألتئم الثرى ، اعانوه الشجر ،
أصبح بالبشر :
« يا ارج الجنة ، يا اخوة ، يا رفاة
المسك البهري حباب أرض واه واه
ولندك الحديد والقنفر ،
نما رأى أهسن عيشاً منه في العراق .» (I3)

وهربت حول سورها الطويل
اعد بالخطى مداه (مثل سندباد
يسير حول بيضة الرخ) ولا يكاد
يعود حيث ابتدا ... (I4)

It was not until 1954 that he began properly to understand the use of myth in poetry. Before that he employed it more as a decoration than as an essential element; it amounted to no more than simile, metaphor or metonymy. For example, as late as 1953 he was introducing names like Medusa, Oedipus, Apollo, Babylon, Cain, into al-Mūmis al-^cāmyār almost for their own sake:

اللَّيْلِ يَطْبَعُ مَرَّةً أُخْرَى ، فَتَشْرِبُ الْمَرْيَةَ
وَالْعَابِرُونَ ، إِلَى الْقَرَارَةِ .. مِثْلَ اغْنِيَةِ حَزِينِهِ .
وَتَفْتَحَتْ ، كَأَزَاهِرِ الدَّفْلِيِّ ، مَصَابِيحَ الطَّرِيقِ ،
كَعَبِيُونَ « مِيدُونَا » ، تَحْجَرُ كُلَّ قَلْبٍ بِالضَغِينَةِ ،
وَكَأَنَّهَا نَذْرٌ تَبْشُرُ أَهْلَ « بَابِلِ » بِالطَّرِيقِ

مَنْ أَيْ عَمَسَ فِي الْمَقَابِرِ دَفًّا أَسْفَعُ كَالْفَرَابِ ؟
« قَابِلِ » أَخْفَ دَمَ الْجُرْمَةِ بِالْأَزَاهِرِ وَالشَّفَرِ
وَعِبَا تَشَاءُ مِنَ الطُّورِ أَوْ ابْتِسَامَاتِ النِّسَاءِ

مَنْ هَذَلِكَ الْعَابِرُونَ ؟
أَهْفَادُ « أُودَيْبِ » الضَّمِيرِ وَوَارِثُوهُ الْمَجْهُرُونَ .
(جوكست) أُرْمَلَةُ كَأَمْسِ ، وَبَابِ « طَيْبَةِ » مَا نِزَالِ
يَلْقَى « أَبُو الرَّهْوَلِ » الرَّكْهَيْبِ عَلَيْهِ ، مِنْ رَعْبِ ظِلَالِ

يَا مَنْ يَرِيدُ مِنَ الْبَغَايَا مَا يَرِيدُ مِنَ الْعِزَارَى
(مَا نَظَلَ بِحَلْمِ ، مِنْذُ كَانَ ، بِهِ وَنِزْعِ فِي الصَّحَارَى
زَيْدِ الشَّرَاطِئِ وَالْمَحَارِ
مَتَرَقِبًا مِيلَادِ « أُفْرُودَيْتِ » لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا (I5)

His use of symbols at this period was also somewhat primitive. Those that pervade his later work, the spring, the rain, the wind, the thunder, the village, the ear of corn, the red anemones, the wild boar, and so on, are already present, but are used for crude political allusions, and are introduced more for their aesthetic embellishment than for their psychological implications.

It was after 1954 that western culture made its first real impact on him,, setting him on the path that he was to follow with such distinction, and enabling him to make his own artistic contribution. It was at this time that his "Tammuzite" period began, and, as with the other "Tammuzite poets", the immediate inspiration for this is not difficult to trace. It was in this year that his friend Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā published his translation of the two chapters of The Golden Bough, referred to above, which was avidly devoured by the young Arab intellectuals:

.... the influence on him[al-Sayyāb] of Sir James Frazer's "The Golden Bough" and of Jessie Weston's "From Ritual to Romance and possibly of other books of mythology made it possible for him to enter that period of his literary life that may be called "Tammuzite" in which the myth of Tammūz plays, after 1954, the main part in his imagery, symbolising his vision of the civilization predicament of the Arab world...⁽¹⁶⁾ It is by mere chance that Badr read this myth in two chapters from a volume of "the Golden Bough" by James Frazer (these two chapters were published in a Bagdādī magazine at the end of 1954). The

moment Badr read these two chapters he found in them his long lost treasure of which he made use later on, for rather *more* than six years and which enabled him to write the most deep and beautiful poetry." (17)

The "Tammuzite School", if such it may be called, since it really existed as a number of individuals, all of whom were similarly inspired, grew up largely as a direct result of Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā's translation, although, as we shall see, there may have been a residual consciousness of the ancient near-eastern mythology in the minds of the modern inhabitants of the regions. It is perhaps worth citing Frazer's summary of the Tammūz and related cults:

Under the names of Osiris, Adonis, Tammuz, Attis, and Dionysus, the Egyptians, Syrians, Babylonians, Phrygians, and Greeks represented the decay and revival of vegetation with rites which, as the ancients themselves recognised, were substantially the same, and which find their parallels in the spring and midsummer customs of our European peasantry The worship of Adonis was practised by the Semitic people of Syria, from whom it was borrowed by the Greeks

as early at least as the fifth century before Christ. The name Adonis is the Phoenician Adon, "lord". He was said to have been a fair youth, beloved by Aphrodite (the Semitic Astarte), but slain by a boar in his youthful prime. His death was annually lamented with a bitter wailing, chiefly by women; images of him, dressed to resemble corpses, were carried out as to burial and then thrown into the sea or into springs; and in some places his revival was celebrated on the following day. But the ceremonies varied somewhat both in the manner and the season of their celebration in different places".⁽¹⁸⁾

That Al-Sayyāb was actually influenced by From Ritual to Romance, as well as by The Golden Bough, might appear implausible but is, in fact, quite possible. 'Isa Boullāṭa tells us:

"Jabrā I. Jabrā told me in an interview (Baghdad January 10, 1967) that al-Sayyāb borrowed from him "From Ritual to Romance" and never returned it"⁽¹⁹⁾

The inspiration derived from these two works by

Western poets was considerable. Eliot's preface to his notes on The Waste Land is well-known:

"Not only the title, but the plan and a good deal of the incidental symbolism of the poem were suggested by Miss Jessie L. Weston's book on the Grail legend: From Ritual to Romance (Cambridge). Indeed, so deeply am I indebted, Miss Weston's book will elucidate the difficulties of the poem much better than my notes can do; and I recommend it (apart from the great interest of the book itself) to any who think such elucidation of the poem worth the trouble. To another work of anthropology I am indebted in general, one which has influenced our generation profoundly; I mean the Golden Bough; I have used especially the two volumes Adonis, Attis, Osiris. Anyone who is acquainted with these works will immediately recognise in the poem certain references to vegetation ceremonies."⁽²⁰⁾

It would be interesting to know if al-Sayyāb read The Waste Land before reading The Golden Bough or the other way round. We have no direct evidence in the matter, and

it seems probable that he read both at about the same time. One would like to be able to say that he derived, quite independently, the same inspiration from The Golden Bough and From Ritual to Romance as Eliot had before him. The probabilities are against this, however; Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā almost certainly made his translation, in the first place, in order to make available an important source for the understanding of The Waste Land - - this is suggested by the fact that he possessed a copy of From Ritual to Romance - and al-Sayyāb would probably have come to it in the knowledge that it provided much of the imagery for the poem. The same is likely to be true of the other "Tammuzite Poets". It would, then, be unrealistic to imagine that "Tammuzite poetry" in general, and that of al-Sayyāb in particular, was anything but imitative in origin, regardless of any additional inspiration that it may have acquired, from any source, afterwards.

At all events, 1954 was a crucial year in al-Sayyāb's poetical development. In it he composed the first poem in which he made a sophisticated use of mythological and symbolical motifs, Unshūdat al-maṭar, and shortly afterwards he began in a serious way to investigate the works of a number of the most important modern Western poets, and to apply to his own poetry the significance that they found in the ancient myths of Adonis, Tammuz and the like. His writing at this time was concerned largely with the themes of life and death, of life springing from earth and returning to it⁽²¹⁾. Rain.

indeed, played a most important part in his poetry from this time, connoting goodness, fertility, happiness, rebirth, and so on. It could be argued, however, that it is in Unshūdat al-matar itself that he succeeds best in his use of this symbol; certainly it must be counted as among the best-known and most popular of his poems:

أَكَادُ أَسْمَعُ النَّخِيلَ يَشْرَبُ الْمَطَرَ
وَأَسْمَعُ الْقَرْيَ تَتَّقُ ، وَ الْمَهَاجِرِينَ
يَصَارِعُونَ بِالْمَجَازِفِ وَالْقُلُوعِ ،
عَوَاصِفِ الْخَلِيجِ ، وَالرَّعُودِ ، فَتَشْدِينِ :

» مطر ...

مطر ...

مطر ...

وَفِي الْمَرَاةِ جُوعٌ

وَنَيْثُ الْفَلَاحِ فِيهِ مَوْسِمُ الْحَصَادِ

لَتَشْبَعُ الْفَرَبَانُ وَالْجَرَادُ

وَتَطْمِنُ السَّوَّانُ وَالْحَجْرُ

رَحْمٌ تَدُورُ فِي الْحَقُولِ ... هَوْلَهَا بَشَرٌ

مطر ...

مطر ...

مطر ...

فِي كُلِّ قَطْرَةٍ مِنَ الْمَطَرِ

صَمَاءٌ أَوْ صَفَاءٌ مِنْ أَجْنَةِ الزَّهْرِ .

وَكُلُّ دَمْعَةٍ مِنَ الْجِيَاعِ وَالْعُرَاةِ

وَكُلُّ قَطْرَةٍ تَرَانٍ مِنْ دَمِ الْعَبِيدِ

فَرَبِي ابْتِسَامٌ فِي أَنْظَارِ مَبْسُومِ جَمِيدِ

أوحى لهما تَوَدَّدت على نهم الوليد
في عالم الغد الفتي ، داهب الحياة !
مطر ...
مطر ...
مطر ...
سيعشب الغراء بالمطر ... » (22)

A good deal has been written, in a general way, about the influence of Eliot, and of The Waste Land in particular, on the poetry of al-Sayyāb . What is particularly remarkable, however, is his adaptation of the imagery and language in which Eliot voiced his political view to his own very different political hopes for the Arab world in general and Iraq in particular. Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, in the article in which he discussed the influence of Eliot on a number of Arab poets, says:

"Contrary to what most people think "The Waste Land" is not quite a poem of despair. For its final significance comes with what the thunder said: Datta, Dayadhvaw, Damyata - Give, Sympathise, Control. It is a meaning akin to love and sacrifice, a meaning that has often been lost on the critics of new Arabic poetry, but not on the poets themselves. For them, love and sacrifice shall bring fertility to the land, though they may both come in light-

ning and thunder that rend the temple's veil. The Cross thus came into Arabic poetry as a symbol of great immediacy, and Christ and Tammuz were made one, and the poet was identified with them, as seen in the poetry of Badr al-Sayyāb."⁽²³⁾

Eliot is not, however, as has been indicated, the only important poet in English to make use of mythological themes. It may, indeed, be suggested that al-Sayyāb was more strongly influenced by Edith Sitwell than by him or by anyone else. She makes use particularly of Biblical mythology: the story of Cain and Abel, for example. This is a story that al-Sayyāb too makes use of. Abel is regarded as the first of a series of sacrifices which is still continuing, in ever-increasing numbers. Thus the myth can encapsulate the continuous existence of conflict, whether in the form of global war or in that of inter-party conflict in a country⁽²⁴⁾. Many instances may be found:

الخالطين على الكواهل ، من مجاعات السنين
اثام كل الخاطئين
النازفين بر دماء
السائرين الى وراء
كي يذنبوا « هابيل » وهو على الصليب كام طين ؟
« قابيل ، أين أخوك ؟ أين أخوك ؟ »
جمعت السماء
أعادها لتصبح ، كورت النجوم الى نداء :

« قابيل ، أين اخوك ؟ »

- « يرقد في خيام اللاجئين (25) »

الموت في البيوت يولد ،
يولد قابيلُ لكي ينتزع المياه
من رحم الأرض ومن منابع المياه ،
فيظلم الغدُ
وتجرح النساء في الجازر (26)

« قابيلُ » بارء وان صارت مجارته
سيفاً ، وان عاد ناراً سيفه الخدم
وردد « لهابيل » ما قضاه بارئه
عن خلقه ، ثم ردت باسمه الأممُ
واليوم ، في حين دنت الدين غارمه
الابقايا وكادت تخلص الذمم
وكاد يرجع للدنيا بشاقتها
ما قرنته الضحايا وهي تنبسم (27)

As has been seen, al-Sayyāb was caused great psychological stress throughout his short life by the political and social upheavals around him. He was, in fact, one of the most inclined of modern poets to see the world as a place of terrifying uncertainty and to link the events that took place in it directly with his own suffering in his own society. To denote this, he found the image of Christ, whose anxieties and sufferings he saw as partially overlapping his own, a particularly expressive one. This

is not to say, however, that Christ, in his poetry, is invariably a symbol of the suffering that mankind endures in this world. In Dīwān unshūdat al-maṭar (1960), for example, Christ appears about thirty times, to symbolize sacrifice for one's country and for one's society⁽²⁸⁾. Christ thus becomes the archetypal revolutionary, implying also, perhaps, that the revolutionary, the individual fighting for his own and his fellow's freedom, is the god of the modern age.

For example:

من ليلك الصيفي طلاً فيه عطرُك يا عرار؟
بين القرى المترهبات خطاي والمدن الغريبة
غنيت تربتك الحبيبه ،
رملتها فأنا المسيح بجرُّ في المنفى صليبه (29)

ليت المسيح الذي دأبى بسرِّعته
من باع مشواه ، راء فيك عن كتب :
فهم نواقيسك النكلى ، و دامية
فيك الأناجيل ، والموتى بلا صلب
والحابس الماء عن جرمك هملاً
عبء الصليبين : من همى ومن غشِب

من أيّ عبءٍ على روحي وسماري
من أعين ، في صليب تحت أساري ،
تأنيك أساري ؟ (30)

فَخَيْلٌ لِلْبَيْعِ أَنَّ كَاهِلَ الْمَسِيحِ
انْزاعٌ عَنْ مَدْفَنِهِ الْحَجْرِ
فَسَارَ يَبْعَثُ الْحَيَاةَ فِي الضَّرْعِ
وَيَبْرُئُ الذُّبْرَانَ أَوْ يَجِدُ الْبَحْرَ؟ (31)

« بابا ... » كَأَنَّ يَدَ الْمَسِيحِ
فِيهَا ، كَأَنَّ جَاهِمَ الْمَوْقِ تَبْرَعُمُ فِي الضَّرْعِ . (32)

In addition to any other influences that may be postulated for this period of al-Sayyāb's production, it should be said that the influence of a number of Egyptian poets is also evident, especially of those belonging to the Dīwān and Apollo schools. The most notable of those are al-Māzinī, al-^CAqqād, Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī, ^CAlī Maḥmud Ṭāhā, and Ilya Abū Mādī, all of whom are regarded as symbolists, and all of whom al-Sayyāb had greatly admired from youth⁽³³⁾.

The most prominent feature of al-Sayyāb's poetry at this period is that the symbols that he had formerly used in a decorative way, come to have specific referents of great significance to him and to be given more particular identities. The generic symbol of "the village" is replaced by that of "Jaykūr", his native village; the generic symbols of "the river", "water" and "shells" are replaced by that of "Buwayb", the small river that runs through Jaykūr. With these constant symbols, now with different, and varying, connotations, are mingled those of the mother,

the earth, the dream, the eye of memory, the lost paradise, and the love. These are all linked with the story of Tammūz. The wild boar now invariably signifies the killer of Tammūz. At the same time, the Christian imagery, Christ himself, the cross, the crucifixion and the resurrection, takes on a more general significance, that of death, the grave and the Day of Judgement, but within the Tammuz story. For his preoccupation with this story, the following verses may be taken as typical:

تموز لهذا ، أنيس
لهذا ، ولهذا الربيع ،
يا خبزنا يا أنيس ،
(34) انبت لنا الحب وأهي اليبس .

تموز يموت على الأنور
وتفور دماه مع الشفور
في الكهف المعتم ، والظلماء

تموز يموت و مرجانه
كالغابة تربض بردانه ..
وتقول - ونجذله النفس :
« الليل ، الخنزير الشرس ،
(35) الليل ثقاء ! »

تاب الخنزير يسق بيدي
ويفوس لظاه الى كبدى ،
و دي يتدفق ، ينساب :
لم يند ثقاتن أو تمها

لكن ماها .
« عشتار » .. وتخفون اثوابُ
وتترف ميالي اعشابُ
من نعلٍ يخفون كالبرص
كالبرص الخلب ينساب . (36)

عشتار على ساق الشجرة
صلبها ، دقوا سمارا
في بيت الميلاد - الرحم .
عشتار بحفصة مستتره
تدعى لتسور الأوطار (37)

He has been accused of simply importing, often incorrectly, from European literature, the mythological apparatus that he used in his Tammuzite poetry⁽³⁸⁾. It is difficult to show, in view of the undoubtedly great influence of this kind that he underwent, that this is not entirely true. ^cAbd al-Halīm, at least, has no doubts about the matter:

"Some writers give the impression that his (al-Sayyāb) mythological imagery was imported. This is not so, the key motifs (Ashtar and Tammuz for instance) are based on early Babylonian and Syrian culture which still subsists in the consciousness of the Arab of Iraq and Syria in the same way that the myth of Osiris subsists in the minds of

Egyptians, furthermore, most of the Biblical figures and images are also part of general Arab culture and only in his treatment of the messiah figure does he take an interpretation different from that of Islam, and of his figure it can be said that poetic necessity requires a tragic hero who accepts suffering and is resurrected."⁽³⁹⁾

Is it, in fact, true that these earlier myths subsisted in the minds of the modern inhabitants of the Middle East, before they were revived by the European interest in them that we have alluded to? It is extremely difficult to tell, now that the revival has taken place. As far as one can see, the tendency has been for Islamic material to replace all earlier Semitic mythology, except in specifically Jewish or Christian contexts. Even the biblical stories are familiar to Muslims generally only in the forms in which they are alluded to in the Qur'ān. Nonetheless, it is perfectly possible that there was, and is, some memory of the old myths surviving, presumably in an oral tradition, on which the poets of the early and mid-twentieth century were able to draw, independently of the Western re-incorporation. It might be argued, for example, that the names of the months in eastern Arabic were evidence for something of the sort. What one can say, at all events, is that there is no continuous literary tradition for such

myths, so that, unless a popular tradition can be shown to exist, the presumption must be in favour of their having been largely brought to the attention of the poets who used them by Western influence.

Whatever may be the case here, there is no doubt that al-Sayyāb has owed a considerable amount of his popularity to his ability to fuse with the Greek, Roman and early Middle-Eastern material that he exploited other material that he took from unquestionably eastern sources, from allusions in the Qur'án, such as Iram Dhāt Al-^CImād, ^CĀd, Thamūd, Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj and the versions of the stories associated with Job, Jesus, Joseph and Zulaykha, Adam, Noah and Muḥammad, and from secular sources, whether pre-Islamic or later, such as the stories of ^CAntara and ^CAbla, Sindbad, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Abū Zayd al-Hilālī, all of which he infused with his own modern connotations:

«يأجوج» يفرد فيه ، من جنود ، أظافره الطويله
ويضج جنوده الأصم ، وكف « مأجوج » الثقله
تهوي ، كأغنف ما تكون ، على جلامده الضخام ،
والسور بان لا تئيل .. و سوف يبقى ألف عام ،
لكن (إن - شاء - الإله)
- طفلك كذلك سمياه - (40)

وإن صاح أيربُ كان الفداء :
ذلك الحمد يا رامياً بالقدر
ويا كاتباً ، بعد ذاك ، السفاة ! « (4I)

على جوار الظلم الأسهب
اسریتُ عبر التلال
الهرب منها ، من ذراها الطوال ،
من سوتها المكتظ بالباثسين ،
من صجها المتعب
من ليلها النابج و العابرین ،
من نورها الغريب ، (42)

لهذا حرائي حاكت العنكبوت
خبطاً الى بابه
يهدي اليّ الناس بني اموت
و النور في غابه (43)

محمد النبيّ في « حراء » قيده
فسمّ النهار حيث سموره .
غداً يصطب المسبح في العراء ، (44)

There are three distinct phases in al-Sayyāb's poetical development, which may be represented as follows:

1. The pre-Tammuzite phase: During this phase he employed any myths that he came across, quite indiscriminately. There was certainly no particular myth that had more significance for him than the rest, that he used persistently. In most cases, he used this apparatus in an unsophisticated manner, as an embellishment, rather than as something to give greater weight and more economical expression to his sentiments. Even his later poetry was not, in fact,

altogether free from this fault. Good examples, among his early work, are provided by his two collections Azhār and Asāṭir, and al-Mūmis al-^Cāmyā' also contains some rather unsatisfactory writing.

2. The Tammuzite phase: During this phase, as well as exploiting the actual material concerning Tammuz, and other near-eastern myths of a similar kind, he also discovered the value of Christian mythology, which he used freely. Greek mythology, and even some Chinese, also figured in his work at this time.

3. The final phase: During this phase he became less interested in the Tammūz myth, and he began to concentrate on stories that he felt had more connection with his own life and character, notably those of Sindbad and Ulysses. His use of myth in general, however, declined, and he came more and more to express himself in direct language. One figure that did persist in his poetry, however, was Job (Ayyūb), in whose predicament he saw his own; until late in his career, he continued to speak in this persona.⁽⁴⁵⁾

By far the most powerful and extensively employed myth in his work, though is that of Tammūz (Adonis, Attis, Osiris - he does not really distinguish between them, and uses the names indiscriminately, according to aspects of the stories associated with them that he finds convenient); it appealed to him, as it did to the other "Tammuzites": Jabrā Ibrahīm Jabrā, Khalil Ḥawī, ^CAlī Aḥmad Sa īd ("Adunis") and Yūsuf al-Khāl, principally because it

"represents the hope of the Arab poets for a new world to come after the death of the old. The end of the worn-out old world which no longer suits modern life can only take place through its death and the rebirth of a new, powerful and young world which follows as the death of Adonis is followed by his resurrection."⁽⁴⁶⁾

The majority of his Tammuzite poems do indeed employ these myths, as symbolic of hope, in the context of the suffering of the Arab peoples. They can be seen as representing hope for the springing up of revolution and those who struggle to bring it about:

مرحى جليش الأمة العربية انتزع الوثاق !
يا اخوتي بالله ، بالدم ، بالمروبة ، بالرجاء ،
لستوا فقد صدع الطغاة و برد الليل الضياء !
فلتجرسوها ثورة عربية صحو « الرفاق »
منها وفرّ الظالمون

لأن « تموز » استعاره

من بعد ما سرى العليل جناه ، فانبعث العراق (47)

Isis, who is sometimes merged with Astarte, connotes the loyalty of woman to her husband in circumstances of political upheaval. The two meet, for example, in Sarbarus fī Bābil:

واقبلت إلهة الحصاد ،
رفيقة الزهور والمياه والطيوب ،
عشتار ربة الشمال والجنوب ،
تسيرني السهول والولهاد
تسيرني الدروب
تلقت منها طم صومز از انشتر ،
تاسمه ني حلة كأنه الثمر . (48)

It should not be overlooked, however, that there is frequently, as there must be with all poets, a personal, as well as a political or public, dimension in al-Sayyāb's poetry; this applies equally to his use of the Tammūz myth and its associated symbolism. Moreh sees this particularly in Marhā Ghaylān:

"The same symbol (Tammūz) is also used on a personal level to represent hope and happiness. Al-Sayyāb did in Marhā Ghaylān, where the voice of his child Ghaylān, calling him, resembles the fertility of the valleys of Iraq brought about by Astarte or return of Tammūz with corn ears. The poet himself is Ba'l streaming with the water of his villages river Buwayb, bringing fertility to the earth. Despair, fertility and death prevail in the land when Astarte is without Ba'l." (49)

In fact, both dimensions appear to be present in this poem, as also in Madina bi-lā maṭar (1958), in which he speaks of his imprisonment and torture using the imagery of the aridity and desolation that prevailed in Iraq at that time ;

مدینتنا تؤرق لیلها ناراً بدلاً لهرب .
تحمُّ دروبها والدور ، ثم تزول حماها
ويصعبها الغروب بكل ما حملته من سحب
فتوئلك أن تطير حرارة ويهب موتاها :
« صحا من نومه الطيني تحت عرائش العنب .
صحا تموز ، عاد لبابل الحضراء يرعاهها . »
وتوئلك ان تدق طبول بابل ، ثم نفيشها
صغير الريح في أبراجها وأنين مرضاها .
وفي غرفات عشتار .
تظل بجامر الفخار خاريت بدلاً نار ،
ويرتفع الدعاء ، كأن كل حناجر القصب
من المستنقعات تصيح :
« لا كهنة من القعب
تؤوب إلهة الدم ، خبز بابل ، شمس آذار .

وسار صفا - بابل يحملون سلال صبا -
وفاكهة من الفخار ، قرباناً لعشتار -
ويشعل غاطف البرق
يطل من ظلال الماء والحضراء والنار ،

وابرقت السماء كأن زنبقه من النار
تفتح نور بابل نفسها . واطفاء وادنيا ، (50)

Other poems that exemplify his various use of these myths are: Ru'yā^c Ām 1956, Ughniya fī shahr Āb, Min ru'yā Fu-kāy, Tammūz Jaykūr, Madīnat al-Sindbād.

The cultural background of Gōrān, in his turn, is important in connection with the direction he took in his poetic utterance. He was, naturally, familiar with the works of the Classical Kurdish poets, Nālī, Sālīm, Maḥwī, Kurdī, Mawlawī, etc. Although he quickly broke away from composition in the style that they had employed, their influence on him may perhaps be seen in his use of language, and particularly in his relish for simile and metaphor.

The most lasting and important early influence on him, however, was probably his exposure to Kurdish folklore, stories, songs, proverbs, riddles, and so on, which, at the time when he was growing up, was experiencing something of a revival, and was being taken up by the literary intelligensia as a symbol of their aspirations in a number of directions. As an example of his adaptation of the folk riddles, of which he composed some four hundred, the following may be cited. (The solution is: a radio):

بیستم سنووتی ته خته
ته یوت : سیمر ته ته !
ریم بده و گویم بو شل که ،
« پیح » له دهنگی بلبیل که !
به هزار دهنگ و زمان
ته لیم ، ته خوینم جوان جوان (5I)

I have heard a wooden box

Say, "Here is magic".

Stop and listen intently to me !
Throw out the song of the nightingale !
In a thousand voices and languages
I speak and sing very beautifully.

Kurdish folktales are concerned to a great extent with the constant conflict between good and evil, exemplified by that between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman⁽⁵²⁾. Such stories usually involve a poor hero who succeeds in overcoming and killing the demon who is oppressing the people. It is not difficult to see how such stories can be exploited politically, whether the revolution that is envisaged is a nationalistic or a socialistic one. The festival of Nawrōz, in particular, the festival that marks the end of the winter, and on which the Kurds celebrate the victory of Kāwa over the tyrant Zuḥāk (Ajdahāk), figures frequently in Gōrān's poetry as a political symbol.

He was the first poet almost explicitly to apply this legend to the contemporary situation as he saw it, to attack the regime of Nurī al-Sa^cīd, fusing the nobility of the Kurdish hero's struggle with the struggle of the Iraqi people against their oppressors. In Zindānī Ajdahāk (the prison of Ajdahāk), Zuḥāk's new robe symbolises the new regime; the serpents are reaction and imperialism:

ئێژده هاك ! زیندانت قهلا - قهلا یه ؛
دیواری کۆنکرتیت ، ده رگای پهلایه .
ئێژده هاك ! کون بیره ، سهخته زیندانت ،

ناپردوشی به برین به ندی گرانت !

نژده هاك ! نئی دیوی له (بیر) زراو چود ،
نئی ناشتای مارانت به میشك كردود !

هر نژگری ، نژکوژی ، نژدهی له گوردن ،
میشك ده رخوارد نژدهی به ماری نوسن ...
تا رژیك ، نژ و خوینی به ناهق پرشتت ،
نژو بیرهی وات زانی ئیجگاری كوشتت ،
تاو نژدهن تنووری ده ماری كاوه ،
نژو چهكوش وه شینزی پۆله كوژراوه
نژخرژی و نژجوشی و كوژسلی یك نژخا ،
هر هلساو نژبینی زیندانت پروخا ! (53)

Ajdahāk (Dragon) ! Your dungeon extends to the lowest depths.

Its walls are of concrete, the doors are of steel.

Ajdahāk ! Your dungeon is impenetrable and solid,

Your heavy fetters cannot be filyed through

Ajdahāk ! O demon in the terrified mind !

O your snakes have not yet eaten brains.

You just seize, kill and behead;

You feed the brains to the greedy snakes.....

Until, one day, after you have shed that blood unjustly,

And believed that you have killed that mind forever,

They will heat the furnace of Kāwa's feelings,

That blacksmith whose only son was killed,

He will stir up and unite society;

As soon as he awakes, you will see your dungeon destroyed.

In all, Gōrān wrote four political poems with the name of the festival actually in the title: Nawrōz , Nawrōz akam (I celebrate Nawrōz), Nawrōzi 61 (Nawrōz of 1961) and Cajnī Nawrōz (The Feast of Nawrōz); in addition, he wrote one act of an opera libretto, Anjāmī Ajdahāk (The end of Ajdahāk), anticipating a musical score by Qādir Dīlān which never materialised.

It is interesting, incidentally, to notice that it is to this festival, and the story of Kāwa that al-Sayyāb had recourse, in his one foray into the area of Indo-Iranian mythology, with Waḥy al-Nayruz (1948):

مرت على القمة البيضاء صالحة
عنها الجليد ، فملى السمع أنهار
في كل نهر ترى ظلاً تحف به
التيابح (كاوا) ويزلهو حوله الفار
يا تهب (كاوا) هل الحداد كيف لهوى
صرح على الساعده المقتول نهار؟

تبرين ، يا جبل الأحرار ، ما عظمت
عن حقها الضائع المسلوب أحرار
كاوا كيعرب .. ظلوم بيداً
الى اخيه ، فما ان يهدر النار (54)

The other principal story that Gōrān employed in this way was that of Ahriman and his bodyguard Akoman, notably in his poems Diyāri Xuwāī sharr (The gift of the god of Evil) and Lāukī sur bō Koreaī āzā (The red tune to brave Korea):

خوای شہر ، گوناھ ، ستم ، تاوان ،
شہرہ منی گدرہی دیوان .

خدت توند بگرہ ، نی نیستیمار !
شہرہ منی جدرہ نمازار .. (55)

The god of evil, sin, cruelty, guilt,
Ahriman, the chief of demons.

Keeps you strong, O Imperialism !

The Ahriman of oppression and pain

As well as purely Kurdish motifs, he also assimilated a good deal of material from Persian sources. Much of his mythology belongs, of course, to the common Indo-Iranian stock, and it is not always easy to specify its exact provenance. In the fifties, however, he certainly translated a quantity of Persian poetry, and it can be seen from his introduction to some of these poems, Pirsyarekī Nāsir Xosraw , Āhangī Mughān , and Tarjī^c bandêkī banāubāng , that he was intensely conscious of the Persian heritage.

Another potent influence on Gōrān was the new Turkish poetry, which was making use of its folk heritage, and also the myths of the ancient World. Nāzım Hikmet (1902-63),

some of whose poems he translated into Kurdish, in particular, appears to have affected him, both in his use of folk material and in the form in which he wrote his later work. Inevitably, some have seen the influence of Eliot and Sitwell in his work. Karīm Shārazā, for instance, asserts:

"The immortal poet Gōrān benefited a lot from T.S. Eliot and Edith Sitwell's use of myths and symbols in their works which gave it a deep psychological insight. Gōrān, however, did not imitate their own use of myths, but he imitated their stylistic approach. In other words, Gōrān got his myths from the treasure of Kurdish folklore"⁽⁵⁶⁾

Shêrkō Bêkas, however, does not agree:

"It is clear that European literature had largely influenced the use of myths by Arabic poets such as al-Sayyāb and al-Bayyātī. The English poet T.S. Eliot had great influence on al-Sayyāb's poetry and he opened wide horizons for him. But I do not trace any influence of Eliot on Gōrān."⁽⁵⁷⁾

It is not, in fact, the case that Gōrān's mythology is entirely Kurdish (or Indo-Iranian) in origin. We find references, in his poetry of the thirties, to figures from Classical mythology, such as Cupid, Zeus and Venus,

perfunctory as these references may be:

ماخوڏا (كيووبيڊ) دياريني جواني
بوڙيان ئوڊي، يان بوڙ قورباني (58)

ئوڊي گوره کچي (زه دوس)
خوشکه جوانه کي (تيفوس) (59)

Does Cupid - the gift of beauty -

Want to live or to sacrifice himself ? ...

- - - - -

O eldest daughter of Zeus,

Beautiful sister of Venus !

We have seen, in the previous chapter that he read a certain amount of Western literature in the twenties and thirties, including some of the Romantics. If any source is needed for his use of these figures, it is quite probable that Keats, Byron or Shelley can provide it, although he does not in any way follow any of these in the manner in which he used them. There is no evidence to suggest that he read, or even had access to, Eliot or Sitwell. Thus, Shārazā's assertion that he imitated their stylistic approach is difficult to sustain, especially in view of Bēka's comment. The simplest assumption is that, after playing, in an ornamental way, with a few allusions to classical mythology, he virtually created his own approach to the Kurdish and Indo-Iranian fables, perhaps seeing himself, in so doing, as continuing, or reviving, the tradition of folk-poetry, in a more literary context.

In his earlier poetry, Gōrān employed imagery largely taken from nature, as in Āfrat u cuwānī (The woman and beauty):

کام نه ستیره گش ، کام گوئی کتوی
نانه وهك كولهی ؟ گوئی سهکی ؟ لیوی ؟
کام پرشی نهگا به پرشی چادی ؟
برزانگی ؟ بروی ؟ نهگرچی خادی ؟
کام برزی جوانه وهك به رزی بالایی ؟
کام تیشك نهگاته تیشکی نیونیکای ! (60)

What bright star, what wild rose
is red like her cheeks, nipples and lips ?
What blackness can attain the blackness of her eyes,
her eye-lashes, her eye-brows, her soft tresses ?
What loftiness is as beautiful as the loftiness of her stature ?
What brightness can attain the brightness of her glances ?

Natural beauty he associated with woman; he loved nature, as long as woman was present, and he celebrated her beauty in terms of nature. The red flower, for example, is a constant symbol of a beautiful woman; the thorn is a symbol of the envious ones who stand between him and her:

نه مانم گشت لا جوان بوه و لا جوانه ،
به لام هرگیز تنیا جوانی نه مانه
بوئی نه شکانوم توینیتی و ناره زووی دل ،
هرگر پاره مهلی برسیم چلاو چل !
له هرچ باخیک گوئیکی سوورم دیبی ،
بوئی چورم هزار درک له پیتم چه قیبتی ! (61)

All these were beautiful to me and they still are,
But the beauty of these alone never
quenched my thirst or the desire of my heart.
My hungry bird has always been searching from branch to branch !
If ever I have seen a red flower in any garden,
I have gone to it, even though a thousand thorns have pricked
my feet.

By extension from purely physical beauty, he saw a kind of super-beauty latent in human nature, in the nature of woman in particular, a beauty that was greater than that of nature itself.

Thus, as his poetry became less personal, the connotations of his nature symbolism changed. First, before he became a communist, he associated himself more and more with the hardships and aspirations of his people, and began to think of beauty in terms of their freedom and progress. It was natural, therefore, for him to adopt the symbolism that he had used to connote physical and moral beauty to connote this new, more abstract beauty. So, in Qāla mird (Qadir died), for example, which appears to date from the thirties, the falling of the yellow leaves, the orchard and the tears stand for the martyrdom of the hero, the withering hopes of his people and their grief:

عاسمانی شینی ئیلودی قمر زهره ،
نازانی تینودی فرمیتیک پرودی هررد ؟
نازانی کزه ی هناسی بی تین ،
چند گل لایکی زهردی بو هانین :
به پهنگی فرمیتیک لی یان نودا بود ،
قاله مرد ، هدی داخ ، باخ به ره لالا بود ؟

شا غونچہی خدلفی تانی جوانی ،
بود بہ دافی دل گہلا پڑیانی ؟! ...
عاسمان سا بگری بہ بی حیوانی ،
فرشیک بریزہ : تک تک ، نہ سپایی ! (62)

O blue sky of golden-haired September,
Do you not know that the face of the earth is thirsty for tears ?
Do you not know that the cold breeze
has brought us some yellow leaves ?
On which is written in colour of tears :
Qāla [Qādir] is dead, O sorrow, the orchard is empty !
The biggest bud, in the height of beauty,
has brought heart-ache, now that its petals have fallen,
Now, O sky weep without hope;
Pour out your tears quietly drop by drop.

Later, he adopted his nature symbolism again, making it of internationalist, rather than nationalist, application. Beauty now meant for him the happiness of mankind, both individually and collectively, that was to be achieved through the people's struggle for freedom, peace, international co-operation and the eradication of reaction. In Iir u Kawān (Bow and Arrow - 1962), for example, we find him employing the same kind of symbolism in this context:

نہ دئاسمانہ شیندی ژورور سدر
کوتری سپی تیا خول نہ دا
بہ بی خدتر ،
مشردهی گول بہ بلبل نہ دا .

زگره مری کما سعانی شین
بالی به یاغ نه بی بو نین ،
له صیج باغچه و به هارنیکا
له جیتی دیرک گول نایینین ،
گول نایینین ! ... (63)

That blue sky overhead,
Where the white pigeon circles round
in safety,
Gives good news of the rose to the nightingale.

If the wings of the birds of the blue sky
were not flags for life,
In no garden and in no spring
would we see flowers instead of thorns,
would we see flowers.....

Other symbols that he employs are taken from Kurdish, or again general Indo-Iranian, folk-lore. Supernatural figures, the Dêw (demon), the Drinc (goblin) and the Parî (fairy), are introduced, side by side with animal figures that are of great antiquity in these cultures, the snake, the jackal, the lion, the wolf, the leopard.

With both poets, it seems fairly clear that it was partly political involvement, both with the internal politics of Iraq and with internationalist politics, that encouraged them to express themselves in terms of myth and symbol. Certainly, by doing so, they were able to disguise to some extent, the nature of their message, which, if

clearly articulated, would have brought upon both of them even greater troubles than those that they in fact experienced. Al-Sayyāb is quite explicit on this

"My first motive in this respect was political. When I wanted to resist the royal Sa^cīdī regime with poetry, I used myths to veil my intentions, for the myrmidons of Nurī al-Sa^cīd understood no myths. I also used them for the same purpose in the regime of Qāsim. In my poem entitled Sarbarus fī Bābil , I satirized Qāsim and his regime severely and his myrmidons did not realize that. I also satirized that regime severely in my other poem, Madīnat al-Sindbād. When I wanted to depict the failure of the original aims of the July revolution, I replaced the Babylonian name of Tammūz by the Greek name of Adonis who is his counterpart.... I have almost stopped using any myths in my poetry now, except for the mention of two mythical personages and what pertains to them, namely, the Arab Sinbad and the Greek Odysseus". (64)

Whatever other considerations are present, however, for a poet aesthetic reasons must always be paramount. ^cAbd al-Mun^cim al-Zubaidī remarks that al-Sayyāb was quite aware

of the intimate relationship between myth and poetry, and that he knew very well that myth had always been used as a poetic tool.⁽⁶⁵⁾ It may also be suggested that both poets felt that this was not only the most appropriate medium, for a number of reasons, for the transmission of their message, but also the best way of objectivizing their poetry, of removing, as far as possible, the personal, subjective element, and of giving it a more universal significance.

There is a suggestion, by ^cAbd al-Riḍā ^cAlī, that al-Sayyāb somehow discovered myth in his final phase as a compensation for the ideology that he had forfeited by abandoning the Communist Party⁽⁶⁶⁾. If this is to be taken at its face value, it is peculiarly unconvincing, in view of the fact that throughout his connection with the party he had employed myth, from the earliest crude attempts, through his Tammuzite phase, to his more eastern development. If what is meant is that he found that the particular figures of Job, and perhaps those of Sindbād and Odysseus, functioned in this way, this is perhaps more plausible, although al-Sayyāb's own statement, just quoted, seems to contradict it.

It is puzzling that Shêrkō Bêkas should find Gōrān's use of myth and symbol superficial:

"Gōrān regarded symbol and myth as the cornerstone on which his poems were built, although he makes use of them only as tokens for the embellishment of his poetry".⁽⁶⁹⁾

unless he is perhaps referring merely to the use of Classical allusions in his very early work (see above, p. 219).

Gōrañ's use of myth is, in fact, much more restricted than that of al-Sayyāb. Like him, he used it to some extent for the sake of expediency, to express radical political ideas in terms that would not automatically expose him to persecution by the repressive regime that he opposed. Undoubtedly, however, he also found a genuine aesthetic and poetic satisfaction in the application of the heroic fables of his childhood to a contemporary, and wider, context; it is scarcely conceivable otherwise that a poet of his artistic integrity would have employed them, and, in fact, he succeeds in integrating them completely into his poetry.

CHAPTER SEVEN - POETRY AND POLITICS

Al-Sayyāb says:

ويا مرعب الظالمين الطفلة
ويا خير من جاز درب الحياة
سمعناك في اغنيات الرعاة
وفي لثغة الطفلة الرهاقة
وفي السوسن الغض والسنبل
رأيناك والغابة الوارفة
وفي نظرة المطفل
ربين الدواليب في المعمل
وفي الدون كالنور ملء الحياة
وفي زند ملاحه الاجهدل
وفي تونس تدفع الثأرين
ضحوك المحيا اغتر الجبين
وحيت اشتهى الكادح العاقل
لك الورد والزنبوع الاحمر
نخاب الردى .. غمرك الراحل
فأنت الملايين انت الوري
وانت السلام الذي نشهد (I)

Gōrān says:

من نه و ديلم له زينداني تاريكا
هتاوى بير رودناك نه كا بهر چاوم ؛
به ناو هزار حدقدي داوى باريكا
قدنى زنجير نه بچرنيئي هنگاوم !
من نه و ديلم له پشت شووراي پولاوه
نما سوئ هيواي گه شم هدرگيز دن ناکم ؛

من سر بازي ناما بنجيم : پيروزه ،
فيدا گاري پرتيگايه کم : بي گرده ،
په بنجيك نه ده م په بنجي پياوي دلسوزه ،
له پتي يه گا بي باس نه مرم : پرتي سرده ! ... (2)

I am that prisoner in a dark dungeon;
The sun of thought illuminates my face.
In the thousand links of the fine snare,
My step will break the heavy chain.
I am that prisoner behind the steel ramparts;
I never lose the horizon of bright hope.

- - - - -

I am the soldier of a cause which is sacred.
I am the self-sacrificing volunteer of a way which is pure.
I strive - the striving of a faithful man.
I will die in a fearless manner which is the manner of a man.

They both devoted the best part of their lives to the ideology expressed in these poems. They sought to make their poems flaming torches, lighting the way for the masses, on the road towards the elimination of backwardness and Imperialism. They believed that the struggling and repressed classes would follow their lead, and they were confident that their struggle would eventually be successful. We should not forget that both come from these poorer classes. The revolutionary poet is naturally optimistic about the happy and promising future of the working class. He is the product of the hardships, aspirations, sufferings and difficult social and

historical circumstances of his own society.

A glance at the political works of Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb and ^cAbdullā Gōrān during the monarchical regime shows them to be genuine representatives of their people. They believed that the individual in Iraq was treated inhumanly, and they exerted themselves to eliminate repression, and aggression, so as to achieve a healthy society in which a free individual might live in peace and comfort. They combined a national with an international outlook, as exemplified in the lines of al-Sayyāb:

« حمد .. يد »
لمن كل لهذا الحريد !
لقتيد سئليوى على معصم ،
ونصل على حامة أو وريد ،
وتقل على الباب دون العبيد ،
وناعورة نذغتراف الدم .
« رصا .. ص »
لمن كل لهذا الرصاص ؟
لأطفال كورثية البائسين ،
دعمال مرصليا الجائعين ،
وابناء بغداد والآخريين (3)

Most of the poetry of both was the outcome of their own experience of life, and they directed it towards increasing the awareness of the people, so as to enable them to distinguish between good and evil and friend and foe. Here, for instance, is Gōrān, in Bō sarbāzī cumhurīmān (To the soldier of our republic):

پرؤ ئه ی لاو ،
وهك كوپری پیاو ،
بهرگی خاکی بکوره بهر ،
له قوبه به ی ئاسمان بسوو سهر !
وتینه ی شیر ی چش بنوینه ،
دئی دوژمن دا خور پینه ،
دوژمنی گهل
هیی گشت جیمان ،
که ئه گیرتی چاوی بو هل ،
تاگر هه ئسیتی له خهران ،
تاگشت ئبنان
بئی سهر کا وهك قوچی قوربان ! (4)

O youth, go

Like sons of a man !

Wear the khaki clothes.

Rub your heads on the dome of the sky.

Accustom yourselves to the example of the lion.

Make the heart of the enemy pound (with fear),

the enemy of the people,

of all the world,

whose eyes seek (always) an opportunity,

to set fire to the harvest,

and decapitate every human being,

like sacrificial rams.

And al-Sayyāb, in al-Asliḥa wa-l-aṭfāl (weapons and children):

لأن الطغاة

يريدون ألا تتم الحياة

مدالها ، وألا يحس العبيد
بأن الرغيف الذي يأكلون
أمرٌ من العلقم
وان الشراب الذي يشربون
أجاجٌ بطعم الدم
وأنّ الحياة الحياة انقاص ،
وان ينكروا ما تراه العيون :
فلا بيدٍ في سهول العراق ، (5)

They both saw themselves during this period, as fully associated with the masses in their social struggle. This was, to them, the purpose of poetry; it should be written in full awareness of the needs and aspirations of the people, and should have an effect on current awareness and attitudes. At the same time, it should positively stimulate revolutionary activity, in order more effectively to influence the social, political and economic structure of society. Both had complete confidence in the people and the principles of the party. Perhaps the most distinguished characteristic of their poetry of social struggle is this confidence that it displays in the people as a dynamic power in the movement of history⁽⁶⁾.

However the question that poses itself here is that of the precise ideological standpoint that they adopted and were determined to struggle for. It appears, quite simply, to be Communism. Before going deeper into this question, we should examine their formal political affiliations. As far

as Al-Sayyāb is concerned, we have a certain amount of information concerning his membership of the Iraqi Communist Party, drawn from what he himself said and wrote. Gōrān, on the other hand, said nothing about his membership of the party. It may be that the political situation prevented him from ever making it public, even in the Kurdish press. This seems unlikely because the Revolution of 14th of July 1958 gave the experts of the younger generation an opportunity to put their ideas into practice;⁽⁷⁾ it was brought about by both young Arabs and Kurds, and ^cAbd al-Karīm Qāsīm offered to co-operate with some of the Kurdish leaders, as co-partners with the Arabs, within the framework of Iraqi unity⁽⁸⁾. Following the victory of this revolution, Kurdish literature in general began to develop at a great speed. Commenting on this, Majid Khadduri says:

"Young Kurds very soon became active in Baghdad and many of them who had been sympathetic with the Communist movement either joined the Communist party or co-operated with it. To these, Kurdish nationalism and communism were not irreconcilable. A monthly magazine called Hīwa (hope), published under the auspices of the Kurdish Club, openly interpreted Kurdish nationalism in Marxist terminology. But very soon other papers appeared, such as

Khabāt (effort): which the Kurdish Democratic party have been publishing off and on, since 1958 - and there was lively interest in the Kurdish language and culture"⁽⁹⁾

Kurdish literary critics, as well, have failed to shed any light on his joining the party. In discussing the matter, I will depend mainly on the following sources:

1. The poems that allude to his commitment to this ideology.
2. My own interviews with a number of Kurdish poets and literary critics.
3. The work of Ḥusayn ^CAlī Shānōf, in particular his Chapter "Socialist ideas".

When Al-Sayyāb came to Baghdad to join the Dār al-mu^Callimin al-^Caliya, the King's government was still trying to catch its breath after the political uprising of Rashīd ^CAlī al-Gaylānī (1941), the leaders of whose movement had been put to death⁽¹⁰⁾. Feudalism, which was supported by the king and his government, was exploiting both the farmers and their lands. The hunger and poverty which were prevalent in the years following the Second World War were such as to stimulate any individual to try to find a solution to them. Though al-Sayyāb was neither a politician nor a member of any political party, he was very upset by the execution of the leaders of Rashīd ^CAlī al-Gaylānī's uprising, Yūnus al-Sab^Cawī, Fahmī Sa^Cīd and Maḥmūd Salmān, on 5th May 1942⁽¹¹⁾.

He composed a poem "Shuhadā' al-ḥurriyya" (The martyrs of freedom) to commemorate this:

لقد باع للعُرب النفوس ثلاثه
فقرّوا ودمعي لا تقرّ غواربه
فأه على من ودّع الصحب واغترى
على «يونس» فليطوّر الدع حاجبه
وأه على نسر الصيغ جناحه
وكم ملأت أفوه المراء عصائبه
لئن غيبوا جثمان «محمود» في الثرى
نما غيبوا الجود الذي هو كاسبه
ولهنفي على «نهمي» وما كان خطبه
يهون وان لانت لديه مشاربه
شهير رأى الطغيان يفزو بفرده
فهبّا وقاد الغزم جنداً بحاربه
اليسنور من يحيى الديار بسيفه
وتقدرو على كسب المعالي ركائبه
رجال أباة عاهدوا الله انهم
ضامون حتى يرجع الحق غاصبه
أراوه عبير الأنكليز دماء لهم
فيا ويلهم من تخاف هوالبه (I2)

At that time, al-Sayyāb was a simple and quite a young man. His horizons were limited to those of his village, its suburbs, and what he had seen of the city of Basra⁽¹³⁾. He was alone and an outsider. Often he sought solitude in the coffee houses of Ibrāhīm^c Arab and Mubārak, accompanied by some books, most of them the Dīwānsof classical

Arab poets⁽¹⁴⁾. He continued to lead this kind of life until almost the end of the war, without becoming a member of any political party.

Maḥmūd al-^cAbṭa comments on this phase of his life:

"He was quiet and mild-tempered ... he was so calm that when we used to argue, and divide into two camps, some of us supporting the Allies and Democracy and others exalting Nazism and Hitler, when the dispute became intense.... he would excuse himself and go to the hall of residence of the institute...."⁽¹⁵⁾

Al-Sayyāb at that time was, no doubt, a typical example of the Arab countryman who comes for the first time to a big city like Baghdad, beginning a new phase of his development. He was quiet, defensive and an outsider. Nevertheless, sometimes he made remarks that suggest that he had some relationship with the Iraqi Communist Party before 1945. For example:

"We used to spread propaganda for Russia and Communism, side by side with propaganda for the Nazis: "The Axis will achieve victory over the Allies, and Russia will be triumphant. Communism will dominate Iraq. What good news for the poor and hungry farmers !"⁽¹⁶⁾.

Iḥsān ^cAbbās says that al-Sayyāb never mentioned the date of his joining the Iraqi Communist Party:

"I asked his brother, Muṣṭafā, about this subject, but he was unable to tell me anything. Badr however, mentioned that he had worked in the party for eight years. He started to lose interest in it after the movement of Muṣaddiq. If this is true, then late 1944 or the beginning of 1945 was the date of his joining this party"⁽¹⁷⁾.

Furthermore, when al-Sayyāb published his collection of articles Kūntu shuyū^ciyyan (I was a Communist) in the Iraqi newspaper al-Ḥurriya, 16th of August 1959, he mentioned the occasion of his joining the party, though without specifying the date:

"My youngest uncle, ^cAbd al-Majīd al-Sayyāb, used to have a friend of Iranian origin who paid frequent visits to the village (Jaykūr) and was fond of the literature of Jabrān Khalīl Jabrān and May Ziyāda. He also used to talk about Democracy, Communism, and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The conversation of ^cAlwān, who was killed later, in the prison of Kut, was so

impressive and influential, that we agreed with everything he used to say. On a certain day, we heard him talk about the secret activities of the Iraqi Communist Party, and about its great leader Fahd, whose real name and identity were unknown. On a certain Friday, he invited us to his house and gave us application forms for the Communist Party, one for my uncle ^cAbd al-Majīd, another for ^cAbd al-Dā'im Nāṣir, and a third for me. We adopted pseudonyms for secrecy's sake. Then I became not only a Communist, but a member of the Iraqi Communist Party"⁽¹⁸⁾

Doubtless, al-Sayyāb was a member of the Communist Party when he was dismissed from the College in 1946. The college used to keep the students under surveillance, and it is likely that he was dismissed because he was accused of being a Communist⁽¹⁹⁾.

Nāji ^cAllūsh claims that Muḥammad ^cAli al-Zarqā, who was a good friend of al-Sayyāb's, said that al-Sayyāb did not join the Communist Party till 1945, when al-Zarqā left Baghdad. At that time al-Sayyāb used to attend its meetings. Moreover, al-Zarqā adds that al-Sayyāb was hesitating between accepting and rejecting its ideas. Meanwhile, he was in close touch with the founders of the party⁽²⁰⁾.

At all events, he joined the Iraqi Communist Party and devoted himself to its principles. He participated, for example, in the demonstration that denounced the Treaty of Portsmouth, signed by Ṣāliḥ Jabr's government with Britain⁽²¹⁾. According to Longrigg:

"The Treaty was in fact agreed and initiated on 12 January 1948, and was signed at Portsmouth by the Iraqi deputation and Ernest Bevin on the 15th"⁽²²⁾.

This demonstration led to a popular uprising; the Treaty was abandoned and Ṣāliḥ Jabr was forced to resign:⁽²³⁾
According to Laqueur:

"On January 16 the students went on strike; demonstrations continued throughout the week. There was a clash with the police on January 20 in which four demonstrators and seven policemen were killed. The main riots took place on January 27, when about thirty people (among them fifteen students) were killed, and about 300 wounded. On the same evening, Ṣāliḥ Jabr, the Prime Minister, handed in his resignation. The new government of Muḥammad as-Ṣadr was more acceptable to the left (the Portsmouth Treaty was not confirmed); though Kāmil al-Jādarjī

expressed his appreciation to the new Prime Minister, he did not join the government. The country slowly calmed down."⁽²⁴⁾

As far as Gōrān is concerned, we have already indicated that his political poems have nothing to do with the Iraqi Communist Party. His poems of the thirties and forties were dominated by nationalistic and patriotic themes. It is quite possible to suggest that Gōrān was not a politician at that time. Dīlān remarks:

"Gōrān, from his early poetic attempts until 1951, was the poet of Woman, the beauty of Woman and the nature of Kurdistan."⁽²⁵⁾

A good example of Gōrān's poetry of this period is his collections of poems: Bahasht u yādgār (Paradise and Remembrance), and Firmêsk u hunar (Tears and Art). Nothing that has been said so far would imply that Gōrān was in any way lacking in patriotic sentiment. On the contrary, martyrs such as Halō Bag and Maḥmūd Jawdat, who sacrificed themselves for their country, greatly inspired him, and he composed two great poems to immortalize them.

We do not possess any document either which pinpoints the exact date of Gōrān's joining the Iraqi Communist Party. It is of interest to quote what Ḥusayn ^cAlī Shānōf says about this matter:

"He was fully aware of the importance of unity among the oppressed peoples of the

world in opposing imperialism. He had learned from the Socialist World the dynamic power of Marxist - Leninist ideas. After the thirties he managed to have access to some of the Classic Communist books. By the time of the war of liberation in Korea, Gōrān was an advocate of most of Marx's theories"⁽²⁶⁾

We should not leave out of account the long time that Gōrān spent in the villages of Kurdistan, during which he witnessed the ceaseless rebellion of the peasants against the feudalists. He also witnessed how the puppet government won the support of feudalist families by promising them good posts and positions in that government. He saw how the chieftains (Āghāwāt) used to burn disobedient farmer's flour. All of this made him seethe with anger and resentment. Therefore, from 1935 onwards, he depicted in some of his poetry the life of shepherds, farmers and workers, their hopes, ideas, hardships and suffering. At first he alluded to these things by means of symbols, but later, owing to the strong resistance and insistence on change that manifested itself in society, he became more direct in his statements⁽²⁷⁾. There is the additional fact that his cousin, ^cAbd al-Wāḥid Nūrī, an influential figure in the Iraqi Communist Party, greatly affected his views. But for their enstrangement as a consequence of certain family problems, it is likely that Gōrān would have committed himself fully earlier than he

did; as it was, it was during the period while he was working in Jaffa and Tel-Aviv that he became properly aware of Marxist ideas. (28)

According to Dīlān:

"During his first imprisonment, in 1951, Gōrān asked the lawyers of the Kurdish Democratic Party to defend him, but they all washed their hands of him. Inside the prison he met various marxists; they influenced him, and he resolved to carry on his way towards Socialism" (29)

Ajī Gōrān confirms this:

"Gōrān's first imprisonment, in 1951-1952, caused the seeds of his ideas to germinate. After that he fought to realise these ideas" (30)

A thorough reading of Gōrān's poems also shows that he probably joined the Iraqi Communist Party during his first imprisonment. This may be illustrated by his poem La bandīxāna (In Prison) composed while he was in prison:

نا، بو کوردیک کفره ئیتا کوردستان دتن،
چەرچی یه کانی ئیتیمارم لی ئه بنه دوشمن !

ئیتان د خه لقی ئه و دیو ئه م چوار دیواره
له بابتی جوی شیلراوه، هه ستیمان، دیاره !

ئەوان چەشنى فرىشتەن دىگەردىپاكن ،
دنيا ھەر بۇ ئەوان خولقا ئەۋەندە چاكن !
بۇيان ھىيە بە پىي دلخواز بخون ، بنوشن ،
سەربەست بىرىن ، بەختيارى نىك نىك بنوشن ،

ئەي تريفى مانگى سىپى دەركى دەلاقە ،
باپس نىبى ، خوت مەدە لەم كوردى عىراقە ! (31)

No. To say 'Kurdistan' now is blasphemy for a Kurd.
The puppets of Imperialism are becoming my enemies.

Now, I and the people who are on the other side of these four walls,
are kneaded together on various subjects, our feelings **are clear**.

They are like angels, stainless and pure.

The world was created just for them, so pure are they.

May they eat and drink according to their desire,

and live in freedom, drinking happiness glass after glass !

O brightness of the white moon, outside the small window !

Do not become soiled ! do not approach this Kurd of Iraq.

This, in itself, does not prove that he was a member of the party. During this period or a little earlier many poets such as Fā'iq Bêkas (1904-1948), Pîramêrd(1867-1950), Zêwar (1875-1948), Yûnus Ra'ûf (1918-1948), who were

interested in the young and deeply moved by their plight, composed poems on similar themes, which greatly affected the rising generation, although they were not Communists. We need more evidence than this to prove Gōrān's actual affiliation to the party. Ḥusayn ^cAlī Shānōf instances other poems, allegedly composed by Gōrān during his imprisonment, which exhibit Socialist and Marxist ideology. He claims:

"It seems that most of the poems that he wrote in the diaries of his imprisonment.. were composed while he was in Prison. These poems: Bastaī nabaz (The indomitable tune), Kurdustan, Aī lāwī Kurd (Oh, Kurdish Youth), La bandīxāna (in prison),.... Ancāmī yārān (Lover's fate), ^cArzuḥāl (Petition), La binī bīrā (At the bottom of the well), etc., were full of the concepts of humanitarianism, Marxism, Socialism, and the yearning of the people for security, as well as the struggle for a lasting peace, and other aims of the masses. All of these subjects embellish the poetry of Gōrān and establish him on the path of Socialist Realism"⁽³²⁾.

More to the point, however, is Dīlān's statement that when Gōrān left prison in 1952 he joined the Committee for peace (Lajnat al-ṣalām) in Sulaimāniyah, the other members

of which were Dīlān, ^cUmar Āshtī, Mullā Kamāl and Hamawandi, who had also been arrested and imprisoned by the government. This advanced Gōrān within the party so that he became a full member⁽³³⁾. Ajī Gōrān remarks that Gōrān established himself in the party and became an active member of it, and that he was given the name Hūshyār (conscious); he used to be called in the party, as well as in literary circles, "Comrade Hūshyār"⁽³⁴⁾.

^cIzz al-Dīn Muṣṭafā Rasūl says:

"In May 1953, while I was in prison, I heard of the death of the great leader, Joseph Stalin. It is right to call that day a day of lamentation... at that time we were released from prison... and I said to Gōrān : "Sir, everyone is composing poems in honour of Stalin". He replied: "My brother, the death of Stalin shocked the world; I was shocked and wept bitterly, but my tears did not become poetry",⁽³⁵⁾

An appropriate concluding quotation is the following of Kākāī Fallāḥ:

"In 1950-55, I was a member of the Central Committee of Iraqi Communist Party. On a certain day in 1955, Salām ^cĀdil, who was the secretary of the

Central Committee of this party, come to my house in Baghdad and said: "An old man has been released from prison". I asked who this was ? He replied: "Mr Gōrān". He added that Gōrān was now staying at a hotel on the Karkh side close to the clinic of Dr. Nazīha al-Dulaymi, who was a Marxist herself. I asked ^cĀdil about Gōrān's position in the party. He replied that he had been re-elected as a member at the last meeting of the party. He added: "I would like you to contact Gōrān during his stay in Baghdad"; and he gave me the code word. I was delighted to meet Gōrān because I had not seen him before. I went there and found Gōrān waiting for me. I have known him since that time⁽³⁶⁾".

Without doubt, Marxist-Leninist philosophy greatly affected the poetical works of Gōrān and he composed many poems which celebrate his philosophy, such as: Rēgāī Lenin (The Way of Lenin), Mōskōī cuwān (A beauty of Moscow), Mōskōī Āyār (The May of Moscow), Bō lāwān (To Youth), Iir u Kawān (Bow and Arrow), Bêshkaī mināl (The cradle of the baby), Chīrōkī birāyatī (The story of brotherhood).

No philosophy or ideology can create a poet, but it

may illumine his path. The advancement of Socialism and the struggle against reaction are great human purposes, but they do not make a poet out of a human being. This is true of Gōrān, who was a great poet even before joining the Iraqi Communist party, a fact that some people try to deny.

There may be many different reasons for a person's joining a political party. ^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās sees these as being social and psychological in the case of al-Sayyāb:

"Al-Sayyab's awareness of social desolation was not the only, or even the most important reason that led him to join [the Iraqi Communist Party]. It is possible that such awareness grew after his joining. We may perhaps say that after he had lost his mother and found no firm, fixed emotional relationships in his surroundings he found himself driven by an irresistible force - being in the prime of his youth and strength - towards a desire that his relationships with others should take on a distinct stamp of conflict, mingled with a complex succession of indignation, dissatisfaction, and enmity... At that time, joining [a political organization] was a refuge for a large number of people from a youth that endured numerous privations, which without doubt had social roots. The deprived,

however, did not join directly because of their awareness of these roots, but in order to forget thereby their deprivation and to allow their individual anger a fair justification for its regarding one type of emotion as a great and just matter"⁽³⁷⁾

Iḥsān ^cAbbās sees them rather differently:

"It is quite possible to suggest that political and social dissatisfaction were not the main factors that led the poet to join the Communist party. He was attracted by curiosity; by the romance; by the cloak and dagger image of the party; his admiration for the character of Aḥmad ^cAlwān; his readiness to follow the uncle of ^cAbd al-Majīd, (as Muṣṭafā says) who had a great influence on him although he was younger than him. All this combined to make it attractive to him to join (the Iraqi Communist Party) and take up the new slogan"⁽³⁸⁾.

The political situation in Iraq during the Second World War seemed to be sinking further into stagnation⁽³⁹⁾. At the end of the war, while most of the patriotic and nationalist organizations were declining, the Communist movement was active. Many leading literary figures in Iraq

were linked by the Socialist and Communist ideology.

"In this atmosphere of ferment, bubbling up from below, there was a general trend towards the left; and, as successive governments had been telling the people for many years that the "left", social and political reform, individual freedom, Socialism, and Communism were all synonymous, the various Communist and pro-Communist groups now cashed in on the situation"⁽⁴⁰⁾

Aside from this, the victory of the Soviet Union in the war encouraged a large number of people to embrace its political ideology. Moreover, the nature of Iraqi society was characterized by repression and hardship; this, as well as the non-existence of any well organized political parties, led the masses to embrace Marxism as the only alternative for the provision of an organized programme, such as had been adopted by the Iraqi Communist Party Congress in 1945⁽⁴¹⁾. Yūsuf al-Şā'igh claimed that the main stimulus behind the adoption of such ideas by Iraqi poets and writers was Iraq's internal and external political situation⁽⁴²⁾.

According to Laqueur:

"The Iraqi Communist Party was from the very beginning a student's party: most of the students were young, single, did not

have to support families; full of nationalist fervour, they joined the party and spread its teaching among the workers, without any difficulty. Many of the students came from leading families"⁽⁴³⁾

However, Iraqi poets and writers found in Marxism the solution to many questions that life posed to young people; they realised that it was by Marxism that they could eradicate imperialism, reaction and repression; it was Marxism that set free the talents of human beings from their fetters. This was the mirage that led Gōrān and al-Sayyāb and their generation to accept the Communist ideology. However, according to Laqueur:

"The Iraqi Communists have revealed in the course of their history an unusual degree of incompetence and disunity, lack of purpose and direction, and a marked deficiency of political acumen and experience. But it looks as if they may mend their ways sooner than the rulers of the country. Their inefficiency has been the main safeguard of the West for a number of years -it would be unwise to expect it to remain so for ever"⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Another factor in the adherence of al-Sayyāb and his fellows to this ideology was probably the influence of

the Western Communist and progressive writers such as Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893-1930), Boris Pasternak (1890-1960), Paul Eluard (1892-1952), Louis Aragon (1897-), Pablo Neruda (1904-73), Lorca (1894-1936), Nāzīm Ḥikmat (1902-1963), not merely in the field of poetry but in that of literature generally⁽⁴⁵⁾.

Al-Sayyāb's poetical works during the period in which he was a member of the Iraqi Communist Party are characterised by a preoccupation with human problems, whether they are to be found in his own society or elsewhere; those he was concerned with were children, peasants, women, workers and the oppressed. For instance, in al-Asliḥa wa-l-aṭfāl (1953) he says:

ولهمس النواعير، والزارعون ،
وفي كل عقل - كنبض الحياة -
تهزّ المحارث قلب الثرى
وتبني القرى :

ومن يفهم الأرض أن الصغار
يضيقون بالحفرة الباردة ؟

وأن يتكروا ما تراه العيون :
فلا بيد في مهول المرار ،
ولا صبية في الضحى يلعبون
ولا همس طاهونة من بعيد ،
ولا يطرق الباب ساعي البريد

سلام على العالم الأرحب ،
على الحقل ، والدار ، والمكتب ،
على معلمٍ للدمى والنسيج ،
على العنق والظائر الأرحب ،

سلام لباريس « روبسبير »
و « الوار » والفاية الخاطه
وعشاقها في المساء الأخير
تذريهم قوة ظالمه (46)

Even after his leaving the party, the ideology which led him to join it is still apparent in his work. Among the most obvious examples of this are the following poems: Marthiyat Jaykūr (1955), Min ru'yā Fū-Kāy (1955), Ughniya fī shahr Āb (1956), al-Nahr wa-l-mawt (1957), Madīna bi-lā maṭar (1958).

It is not certain either, what al-Sayyāb's reasons for leaving the party were. It may be that Yūsuf al-Ṣā'igh's remarks apply to him:

"Joining a political party causes some problems; for example obeying orders and consulting the interest of the majority puts an individual in a position of conflict with his own personal interest. This conflict will make an individual either give up his commitment to this

party, or completely subordinate himself to the general interest of the community and forget his own. It is hard to choose between these two extremes. All this will influence the young poet. What makes the task harder is that the consequences joining a party may lead to imprisonment and torture. Without doubt, thinking about these consequences and facing them requires a deep faith in the principles of such a party and its aims... Most of these young people join the party for personal and emotional motives that are not enough to endure such pressure"⁽⁴⁷⁾.

It may be that he was discouraged in the first place by the execution of the party leaders, Fahd, al-Shabībī, Zakī Muḥammad Basīm and Yahūdā Ibrāhīm Ṣādiq, in February 1949, for their inspiring, from their imprisonment, the riots of January 1948⁽⁴⁸⁾. The party had operated with great difficulty since it was established in 1934; this blow, the culmination of Nūrī al-Sa^cid's campaign against it, was a thoroughly dispiriting set-back⁽⁴⁹⁾. At all events, he was dismissed from his teaching post at this time, and it is clear that he came under considerable psychological pressure, owing to his political affiliation; when he returned to his village in 1949 he found that his uncle

^cAbd al-Majīd had been sentenced to five years imprisonment. After a very short time, he himself was arrested and brought before the military court in Baghdad, from which, however, he was allowed to go free against a payment made by his father of what was formally bail but was in fact unredeemed⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Another likely reason for his eventually leaving the party is that the Soviet Union recognized the establishment of the State of Israel in Palestine. Al-Sayyāb, as an adherent of Marxist-Leninist ideology, did not deny the right of the Jewish people to live in Palestine; he acknowledged their right to self-determination:

"Do you want to establish a purely Arab government in Palestine like that of Nūrī al-Sa^cīd, the instrument of Imperialism'.. what mistake have those poor Jews living in Palestine committed that we should throw them in the sea and then establish a purely Arab state instead?"⁽⁵¹⁾

When the Soviet Union recognized the establishment of Israel in Palestine, however, he began to have second thoughts about it. Originally the Soviet Union had promised to support a democratic state in Palestine that would be ruled by both Arabs and Jews. In the event, it completely disregarded this promise. Eventually, some of the Palestinian Arabs were expelled from their homeland and regarded the Soviet Union as partly responsible for this⁽⁵²⁾. The Iraqi

Communist Party, like all others, was obliged to follow Moscow's line, which was incompatible with al-Sayyab's own feelings. Another reason, perhaps the principal one, for his defection was his general volatility of character, which manifested itself not only in his attitude towards the Communists, but also later in his attitude towards ^CAbd al-Karīm Qāsim. Lewis ^CAwaḍ says that when Qāsim established a good relationship with the Communist Party, al-Sayyāb criticised him bitterly and joined the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, but when Qāsim washed his hands of the Communists, al-Sayyāb began to support him. He continued paying lip-service to Qāsim until his downfall in February 1963, and he composed about twenty poems in his praise. However, two weeks after his fall, while he was in London, he attacked him in a poem entitled Qaṣīda ilā al^CIrāq al-thā'ir, which he published in the journal al-Ādāb ⁽⁵³⁾. However, he did not immediately break with the Communist Party even after the recognition of Israel by the Sōviet Union and the set-back of the Iraqi Communist Party, in 1949. In November, 1952, the students of the College of Pharmacy in Baghdad demonstrated against the King's government. Al-Sayyāb played an influential role in this demonstration. Afterwards, fearing arrest, he fled to Iran and then to Kuwait ⁽⁵⁴⁾. It was during his exile, on this occasion that he began to reconsider his political commitment. One immediate reason for this was his realisation that he loved his homeland and was homesick for it. This emerges from a poem that he wrote while in Kuwait, Gharīb ^Calā l-Khalīj (1953):

بين الصيون الأجنبية ،
بين احتقار ، وانتهاز ، وازورار .. أو « خطيه » ،
والموت ألهون من « خطيه » ،
من ذلك الاثقال تعصره الصيون الأجنبية
قطرات مائه .. معدنية !
فلتنظفي ، يا انت ، يا قطرات ، يا دم ، يا .. نقود ،
يا ربح ، يا إبراً تخيط لي الشراع - متى اعود
الى المراه ؟ متى اعود ؟
يا لعة الأمواج رنخهت بمراف يرو
بي الخليج ، ويا كواكب الكبيرة .. يا نقود !
ليت السفائن لا تقاضى اكبيرها عن جفار
أو ليت ان الأرض كالأفوه العريض ، بلا جبار !

متى اعود ؟ متى اعود

وانت تأكل اذ تجوع ؟ وانت تنفوس ما يجود
به الكرام ، على الطعام ؟
لبكيت على المراه
فما لديك سوى الدرع

وسوى انتظارك ، دون جدوى ، للرياح وللقلوع (55)

The second immediate reason was his experiencing an instance of Communist intolerance, although of a comparatively trivial kind, directed at himself. He was severely criticised by some of his comrades in exile for reading a book that was irrelevant to the principles of Communism, namely, D.H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover (56)

Having adopted communism because he thought it would provide people with the freedom they had long aspired to, he was greatly annoyed by his comrades:

"If Nāzīm Hikmat were to stand with Pablo Neruda on his head, Aragon on his head, and Konstantin Semeonov on Aragon's head, all of them together would not reach to Shakespeare's ankle"⁽⁵⁷⁾.

It is interesting to note that while he was in exile the Communists started to forget his contribution to the party, and turned their attention rather to ^cAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī. Iḥsān ^cAbbās alleges that al-Sayyāb was jealous to find his political and literary position usurped by another poet during his absence⁽⁵⁸⁾. By this time he was close to breaking his connection altogether:

"Nothing bound me to the Communists but one weak thread; the least mistake that they made was sufficient to break this thread between us"⁽⁵⁹⁾.

The publication of al-Mūmis al-^camyā', in al-Ithaqāfa al-jadīda (1953) caused considerable agitation in literary circles, especially left-wing ones. It foreshadows his imminent break with Communism:

ما زلت أعرف كل ذاك ، فحربوني يا بكاري !
من ضامع العربية السمراء لا يلقي خساراً .

كالقمح لوزك يا ابنة العرب ،
كالعجبر بين عرائس العنب
أو كالفراة ، على ملامحه
دعة الثرى وضراوة الذهب .
لا تتركوني .. فالضمي نسبي :
من فاتح ، ومجاهد ، ونبي !
عربية أنا : أمتي دهرها
خير الرماء .. كما يقول أبي .
في موضع الارجاس من جسمي ، وفي الثرى المذال
تجرى رماء الفاتحين . فلوثولها ، يا رجال
اواه من جنس الرجال ... فأمسس عاث بها الجنود (60)

We do not know precisely when al-Sayyāb left the party, but it seems certain that he had done so by the time of his marriage, in 1955. After this, at any rate, there is no further suggestion of his having anything to do with it. In 1956, he published "Selected Poems from Modern World Poetry", which included, as well as poems by some of those whom he had admired in his Communist days, poems also by such poets as Eliot, Sitwell, Pound and Spender. As his reputation as a poet grew in the Arab World during this period, he did not abandon themes concerned with the broader interests of humanity in general, but new themes that display a growing interest in, and sympathy for, Arab Nationalism also became apparent in his work. We can see this in such poems as: Qāfilat al-ḍiyā^c (1956), Risāla min maqbara (1956), Būr Sa^cīd (1956), Fī al-Maghrib al-^cArabī (1956), Ilā Jamīla

Būhayrid (1959). Arab nationalist ideology received a considerable boost after the Second World War, especially as a result of the loss of Palestine and the general movement towards decolonisation⁽⁶¹⁾. The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, which was established in Syria in 1947 and held its first congress in the same year, generally developed branches in other Arab countries, including Iraq. This party represented an important development in the Nationalist ideology, being formed to work for Arab unity and national revival, in order to procure for the Arab world an influential position⁽⁶²⁾. According to a number of critics, al-Sayyāb joined the Ba'ath party after his break with the Iraqi Communist Party, but again we are not told exactly when.

Gōrān, on the other hand, did not break with the Iraqi Communist Party until he travelled to the Soviet Union for medical treatment. He appears not to have been discouraged by imprisonment, or torture, the set-back of January 1948, loss of jobs or the ruthless attitude of ^cAbd al-Karīm Qāsīm to Communists. Under the influence of Socialist and Communist ideology, Gōrān modified his poetic style, abandoning the forms that he had previously employed. He now referred back to his new ideology in everything, not least, of course, in his writing, which he made completely into a political instrument. His principal themes became those of universal peace among nations and sympathy with the sufferings of the oppressed. However, in his internationalism, he did not entirely neglect his own people;

he could still distinguish national wretchedness in the
broaden background of universal suffering. The following
poem exemplifies this:

ئەمى نەتە دەى كوردى برسى !
عەرب ، هيندى ، هەر كەس ، هەر چى !
ئەم قەوما دەى كۆريا پەندە ،
بۆ گەشت گەلى دىل و بەندە .
پە زمانى وە لە ئا و پە وان ،
پە وە لە پە و ئى پەرى ئاسمان ..
تەيمان ئەگە پە نەيتە دۆژمەن ،
جانە دەرى دەرو نەوسن ! (63)

O hungry Kurdish nation !

Arab, Indian, whoever, whatever !

This calamity of Korea is an admonition,
for every people that is imprisoned and enslaved.

In language like running water,

clear as the sun of the face of the heaven,

They indicate to us our enemies,

who are ravening and rapacious beasts.

Even in his last poem, which he composed during his
stay in Moscow, he demonstrates a strong commitment to the
party. In Bō lāwān (to youth), which he composed in
Summer 1962 while he was in Moscow, he asked young people
from all over the world to unite and fight for peace:

ئەمى لاوان !
هەر ئىبەن :

بہ ہمارے زینے نینان ،

ہمدیون :

ناغای سببینی زریان !

ناغای (نہ مرؤ - داگیر کر)

نہ بی زور باش بزائی

ناقوانی :

بو شہر نیوہ باتہ ہر !

برا ، برا ناکوشٹی ،

خوبنی دایلس نامرئی

بانو چہ کی پی پانہ

فری دہ نہ بن دہریا ،

تا دنیا

داخذہ کی ہیرو شیا

سایزہ ہیں نہ دلہا !

تائینان ،

لہ سیبری ماشتی یا ،

دہستی بچیتہ فرمان ، (64)

O youth,

You only

are the spring of human life.

You only

are the masters of future life.

The master who occupies today
Should know well
that he cannot
Send you to war.
Let brother not kill brother
or drink his mother's blood.
The weapons which they have,
let them throw to the bottom of the sea,
in order that the world,
may have the sorrow for Hiroshima healed in its heart,
until mankind,
in the shadow of peace,
may set to work.

Ḥusayn ^cAlī Shānōf says that while Gōrān was in hospital in Moscow and his health was deteriorating, he composed his last poem Īr u kawān (Bow and Arrow). What engaged his enthusiasm more and more was what was broadcast on the air concerning the movement for peace and the struggle to realise it. He forgot his pain in his efforts to translate his overflowing feelings into undying verse⁽⁶⁵⁾. It appears that he devoted himself to Marxist-Leninist ideology even when he was very sick in Moscow. It is very noticeable that the poems that he wrote from the fifties on display considerable weaknesses; it is thought he composed them principally on account of his commitment to the Communist party. This, however, is not to say that they entirely lack

artistic merit, although it would be difficult to agree with Shānōf's description of them as "undying". There is a great difference in linguistic and artistic quality between the poems that he composed to celebrate the beauty of women and of nature in Kurdistan, and the political poems, particularly those that are characterised by Marxist-Leninist ideology, most of which he composed while he was in the Soviet Union.

Concerning his relationship with the Communist Party at the time of his second journey to the Soviet Union for medical treatment, Dīlān says;

"When Gōrān was sent back to Sulaimānīyah from the Soviet Union without medical treatment, a certain man came and said to me: "Gōrān has been sent back home without treatment and his health is deteriorating. He is staying now in the house of Hōgir, in the district of Iskān. He wants to see you. He says that he would like to see Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Dilān." In fact, I could not go that day to visit him. Again he sent another person to me. Then I went to see him with ʿUmar Āshtī. There was no doubt that he was very sick. He said: "I am dying. It was a good idea to bring ʿUmar Āshtī with you. They have sent me back from Moscow without medical treatment, in handcuffs, only because I defended the Kurdish people". I asked how that was. He replied: "While

I was in hospital, I composed many poems to celebrate the great history of Kurdistan. I handed over these poems to some faithful friends to be translated and published. When they published them I noticed that they had omitted all reference to "Kurd" and "Kurdistan" and inserted instead "Iraqi" and "Iraq" I asked how they dared change my poetry. They replied: "we do not want to upset ^cAbd al-Karīm Qāsim". I was saddened by this and wrote several letters to officials in the Soviet Union, but in vain. Even private visits to me by Kurdish students were prohibited. One night they came unexpectedly, handcuffed me and deported me to Iraq without medical treatment. I wish now that I had written all the years in praise of Qirga (a small village very close to Sulaimāniyah) rather than in praise of the Iraqi Communist Party"⁽⁶⁶⁾

It seems clear from this account that Gōrān became disillusioned with Communism shortly before his death. We do not know if, on account of his experiences, he actually took the step of breaking with the party, or if the last words quoted above merely reflect a passing, quite under-

standable, annoyance. More important, perhaps we know nothing of the poems to which he refers, on account of which he was deported from Russia. He implies that they were of a more explicitly nationalist tone than those that he had been accustomed to write, and they would perhaps throw some light on his final political sympathies. Clearly, they were never published in Iraq; if they had been, presumably Muḥammad Mullā ^cAbd al-Karīm al-Mudarris would have included them in the Collected poems of Gōrān (1980). It is possible that they survive, in their altered form, and in Russian translation, and that some idea of the originals might be reconstructed. The likelihood of their coming into the hands of anyone who would recognise them for what they were, however, must be considered remote.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. Al-Rayḥānī (vol. 2), p. 182.
2. Al-Malā'ika (a), p.74.
3. Ibid., pp. 77-78.
4. Ibid., p. 146.
5. A.M. al-Gludhāmī, p. 159.
6. Ibn Rashīq (vol.1), p. 160. See also Ibn Jinnī (vol.2), pp. 263-264; Brockelmann(vol.2), p.22.
7. Ibn Rashīq (vol.1), p.160. See also Ibn Jinnī (vol2), pp. 263-264.
8. Farrūkh, pp. 68-70.
9. Jayyusi (vol. 2), pp. 556-557.
10. Al-Dujaīlī, pp. . Cf also al-Malā'ika(a) , p.170; Jayyusi (a. vol.2), p.554; Khulūsī, p.400.
11. Khulūsī, p. 400.
12. Jayyusi,(a. vol.2), p. 551.
13. Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (a), pp. 228-229. See also Khulūṣī pp. 391-393; al-Dujailī, p.67.
14. Al-Malā'ika (a), pp. 13-14, 197.
15. Ibid, p.12.
16. F. Rafqa. Quoted also by al-Malā'ika (a), pp. 167-168.

على وجهي رمال الشك أصوات
بلا معنى . رمال تشرب الغيم المروي
عند آفاقي فلا ذكرى أغنيها ولا ...

17. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1) p. 659. For another example of the different metres employed in Shi^cr hurr see the verses in al-Fannān by Abū Shādī:

تفتش في لب الوجود مقبراً عن (الفكرة) العظمى به أولياء
ترجم اسمى معاني البقاء
وتثبت بالفن سر (الحياة)
وكل معنى يرفق لديك في (الفن) هي
إذا تأملت شيئاً قبست منه (الجمال)
وصنعت كعبس في فنك المتلاهي!
تبت فينا العباده
تبت فينا جلال لا انقضاء له!

See Abū Shādī (b), pp. 535-536.

In this extract, four different metres are used.

The first line is in ṭawīl, the second and third in mutaqārib, the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh in mujtathth, and the eighth in basīṭ.

18. Al-A^crajī, p. 31.
19. Jayyusi (a. vol.2), p.556.
20. Al-Jundī, p. 145, Cf. also Brugman, pp. 56-61;
R. Nakhla, pp. 617-625; Muṭrān (b) pp. 44-48.
21. Moreh, p. 64. See also Muṭrān(a'), pp. 10-12; al-
^cAqqād (a), pp. 199-200.
22. Abū Shādī (a'), p. 117.
23. Al-^cAqqād (a'), p. 200. I have used al-Zubaidi's trans-
lation, p.44.
24. Shukrī, pp. 85-94.
25. Moreh, pp. 126-130. Cf. also Brugman, p.192, al-Hilālī,
p. 41; M. Ṣabrī, pp. 3-15; al-Zahāwī (b), p.913.
26. ^cAbbās Tawfīq, p. 27.
27. Ibid.
28. Moreh, p. 134. See also Jayyusi (a. vol.1), p.159.

29. Moreh, p. 138.
30. D. Marshall Lang, pp. 163-174. Cf. also A. Tawfīq, p. 219; Brugman, p. 192; al-Hilālī, p. 41.
31. Moreh, p. 136, See also Marshall Lang, pp. 163-174.
32. Moreh, p. 136. See also A. Tawfīq, p. 224.
33. Moreh, p. 136. See also al-Zahāwī, (c), p. 1083.
34. The new Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. VIII, p. 244.
35. Jayyusi (a. vol.2), pp. 630-631.
36. The term 'prose poem' (al-Qaṣīda al-nathriyya) was already in use by the sixties. For more detail see al-Malā'ika (a), p. 213.
37. Jayyusi (a. vol.2), p.632.
38. Al-Hilāl (9), pp. 97-98.
39. Jayyusi (q. vol.1), p. 90.
40. A. Tawfīq, p. 231.
41. Ṣada Bābil, vol. 88, May 8, 1911. Quoted also by Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (q), p. 218.
42. Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (q), p. 221.
43. See Majallat al-ḥurriyya, July 15, 1924. Under the influence of al-Rayḥānī, Rufā'il Buṭṭī composed a poem to celebrate his visit. In this he imitated al-Rayḥāni's style as in the following verses, which were published in Al-Zanbiqa, 1st October, 1922:

مکان معروف و ان عشت بغير مكان
و ذکرای لا تبیح الأذهان
و ان تجاهل بوجودی کثیر من بنی الانسان

و سوف يعرفني رفاقي
متى رفعوا الفسادة عن أعينهم يعلمون
أننى وإياهم في الجواهر متفقون
وإن اختلفنا في الأعراض
في ذلك اليوم لا أعشوق الطبيعة وحدي
بل أعشقها وإخواني موية و نسير في سبيلها معا
نفوز بالحياة الحقه الحياة الخالدة
حياة الحب والسلام
حياة الحقية والثام

Quoted also by Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (a), p. 222.

44. Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (a), p. 232.

45. Al-Ṣaḥīfa, vol. 4, February 1925. Quoted also
by Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (a), pp. 231-232. Compare Nasīb
^cAriḍa's al-Nihāya :

كفنه
وادفنه
اسكنه
لهوة اللحد العميق
واذهبوا لا تندبوه
فهو شعب ميت ليس يفين
ولنتاجر
في المهاجر
ولنفاخر
بمزايانا الحسان

ما علينا ان نضى السبب جميعاً . أدر لساننا في أمان
ربِّ غار
ربِّ غار
ربِّ نار
حركت قلب الجبان
كلها فينا ، ولكن لم تحرك ساكننا الا اللسان

46. Moreh, p. 119.
47. A. Shā'ūl, pp.1-5. Quoted also by Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (a), p. 236.
48. Istiqlāl, no. 820, 1926. Quoted also by Y. ^cIzz al-Dīn (a), 232.
49. See Istiqlāl, no. 1473, 1474, 1477, 1480 - 1930.
50. For a more detailed discussion, see A. Tawfīq, pp.233-243; al-Zahāwī (a), p. 1; al-Zahāwī (d), p.1; al-Ruṣāfī (a), pp. 11-90; Adīb Baṣrī, p. 4; I.A. al-Zahāwī, p. 3.
51. Al-Malā'ika (a), pp. 16-17.
52. Al-Ḥamāṣī, pp. 219-20.
53. Al-Malā'ika (a), p.36.
54. Ibid., p. 35.
55. Al-Malā'ika (b. vol.2), pp. 137-138.
56. Al-Sayyāb (9), p. 69.
57. Al-Sayyāb (a), pp. 68-69. See also Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 101-102.
58. N. ^cAllūsh (b. vol.1)
59. Ibid., p.
60. Al-Sayyāb (a).

61. Al-Sayyāb (b), p.6.
62. S.A. Şabbūr, pp. 44-45.
63. Bākathīr, pp. 3-11.
64. Al-Sayyāb (e), p.69.
65. Ibid.
66. Moreh, p. 203.
67. Iḥsān ^CAbbās (b), p.35.
68. Iḥsān ^CAbbās (a), p. 135.
69. Y. al-Şā'igh, p. 34.
70. J. Khayyāt(a), p. 58.
71. See al-Adīb, vol. 2, no.4, 1954, pp. 67-69.
72. Moreh, pp. 161-205.
73. Jayyusi, (a. vol.2), p.558.
74. Al-Zubaidi (b), p.17.
75. M. Khouri, p. 139.
76. Al-Malā'ika, (a), p.14.
77. Ibid., pp. 14-15.
78. Y. ^CIzz al-Dīn (a), p. 219. In various sources I have found some fragments of Shi^Cr ḥurr which were published at the very beginning of this century. However, I have pointed out the most obvious instances. In 1970, al-Hīlāl, vol. 9-10 published two short articles by the editor Fāruq Shūsha, which described the early experiments in Shi^Cr ḥurr of Khalīl Shaybūb and Maḥmūd Ḥasan Ismā^Cīl. Shaybūb's poem al-Shirā^C, which he designated Qaṣīda min al-shi^Cr al-munṭaliq, was published in Apollo, vol. 3, 1932:

هلست ذات سماء مرسله بصرى
الى هذه الافاق ولهي بواسم
وتوقد النار في عزمي وفي فكري
عواطف صدى ، انهن مضارم

هدأ البحر رهيباً يملأ العين جهلا
وصفا الأفق ومالت شمس ترنو دللا
وبدا فيه شراع
كخيال من بعيد يتمشى
في بساط ما تج من نسج عشب
أو حمام لم يجد في الروض عشا
فهو في خوف و رعب
انه غيمة سرت في سماء
قد صفت زرقعتها

Ismā'īl's poem Ma'tam al-ṭabī'a , which he designated
Marthiyya min al-ṣhi'r al-ḥurr, was published in
Apollo Vol. 6, 1933:

في نزوع يتلهى بالنغم
صارخا ما دلهاه
من فناء وعدم
انه يبكي سمات الشاعرية !

وخرير النهر في الوادي كأنغام النواح
وسسيل الماء من جفت البطاح
أدمع الكون وعبرات الطبيعة
كل طير ناع فيها .. ناعيا
كل غصن مال فيها .. راثيا
كل نبع مال فيها .. باكيا

Another experiment in Shi^Cr ḥurr can be found in Abū Shādī's al-Fannān, written in 1926, Munāẓara, (1928).

See al-Shafaq al-bākī (1926), p. 535; Mukhtārāt waḥy al-^Cām (1928), p. 44.

Moreh mentions another experiment in Shi^Cr ḥurr by Fu'ād al-Khashin entitled Anā lawlāki published in al-Adīb, vol.V, no.10, October 1946. Moreh states that the poetic form of this poem is freer than al-Sayyāb's Hal kāna ḥubban. See pp. 206-207.

Apart from these attempts, it is interesting to note that there are many critics who have held the view that the first example of Shi^Cr ḥurr in modern Arabic poetry was al-Sayyāb's Fī l-sūq al-qadīm published in al-Nafīr, November 1948. This poem, Jayyusi argues, was the first effectively to utilize Shi^Cr ḥurr on a large scale, in a subtle combination of form and content. See p. 560.

79. Al-Malā'ika (a), p. 15.

80. Moreh, p. 205.

81. Al-Malā'ika (a), p. 16.

82. Haddāra, p. 88. See also Lewis ^CAwad (a), pp.49-50.

83. Jayyusi (a. vol. 2), p. 577.

84. Al-Malā'ika (a), p. 41.

85. Jayyusi (a. vol.2), p. 564.

86. J.I. Jabrā (b), p. 85.

87. Al-Malā'ika (b), p. 6.

88. Al-Bayyātī (b), p. 13.
89. F. Buṭṭī; pp. 120-121. See also ^CA. Tawfīq, p.51;
Y. al-Ṣā'igh, p. 15.
90. Y. a.-Ṣā'igh, pp. 27-28. See also ^CA. Tawfīq, p.51.
91. Ibid.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Bois Thomas, pp. 122-123.
2. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p.57.
3. Bois Thomas, pp. 123-125.
4. See C.J. Edmonds, pp. 301-305; Bois Thomas, pp.150-151; Arfa, pp. 111-119; Bāngī Kurdistān, nos.1-15, 1922-1923; Rōjī Kurdistān, nos. 5-14, 1922; Ghassemlou, p.64.
5. Marshall Lang, p. 160; Martin S. Smith, p.1097; A. Lūjinsil, pp. 253-270.
6. Gōrān (b).
7. See Gōrān's introduction to his Dīwān Bahasht u yādgar (1950), reprinted in Dīwān Gōrān, p.3.
8. Gōrān (b).
9. Ibid.
10. Pīramērd (a), p.130. Quoted also by ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p.108.
11. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p. 90.
12. It started publication in 1924 in Baghdad. See ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p.86.
13. Najīb al-^cAqīqī, p.100.
14. M. Ghunaymī Hilāl, p. 397.
15. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), pp. 218-219.
16. Baxtiyār Zêwar, Galāwêj, no. 33, 1948.
17. See Kākaī Fallāḥ, pp. 92-93.
18. Hardī (b), p.23.
19. See Kākaī Fallāḥ, p. 115.
20. Gōrān (a), p. 272.

21. Ibrāhīm Kubba, p.28. See also Laqueur, p.173; Y.
^cIzz al-Dīn (b), pp. 225-234.
22. Gōrān (a), p.199.
23. Salām, pp. 36-42.
24. See Kākaī Fallāḥ, pp. 176-177.
25. Gōrān (a), pp. 196-197.
26. Ibid., p. 278.
27. Dīlān, p.116.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p. 57.
2. ^cAla al-Dīn Sujādī (b), p. 63.
3. Sujādī (a), p. 156.
4. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p. 199.
5. Dilshād ^cAlī, p. 50.
6. K. Ḥ. al-Baṣīr, p. 37.
7. Gōrān (a), p. 3.
8. Rafīq Ḥilmī, p. 149.
9. K. Fallāḥ, p. 34.
10. Shānōf, p. 173.
11. M. Mulla ^cAbd al-Karīm (b), p. 59.
12. Hardī (a), p. 17.
13. Quoted by Kāmarān Mukrī.
14. Nālī. Quoted by Sujādī (a) p. 77.
15. Gōrān (a), pp. 130-131.
16. Gibb, p. 88.
17. Quoted by Sujādī (a), pp. 145-146.
18. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p. 199. See also Shānōf, pp. 173-174.
19. Gōrān (a), p. 135.
20. Kāmarān. Quoted by K. Fallāḥ, p. 241.
21. ^cA.H. B. Quoted by K. Fallāḥ, p. 173.
22. Gōrān (a), p. 35.
23. Ibid., p. 13.
24. Ibid, p. 28.
25. Shêrkō Bêkas, p. 58.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. M. al-Tunjī, p. 55.
2. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 706-714
3. Gōrān (c), p.4, reprinted in Dīwān Gōrān, p. 4.
4. Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.28. See also S. Jargy, p.18, Boullata (a), p.22.
5. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), p. 23.
6. ^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās, p. 105.
7. Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p. 38.
8. Ibid.
9. S. Jargy, p.18. See also Boullaṭa (a), pp.22,23; Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.28.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), pp. 279-280.
14. Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p. 28.
15. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), p.280.
16. See ^cAllūsh (b. vol.2), p.91.
17. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), pp.105-106.
18. Boullaṭa (a), p.29. See also Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.31; ^cAllūsh (b. vol.2), p.27.
19. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), pp. 108-111.
20. ^cAbd al-Ḥamīd Jīda, p. 177.
21. ^cAlī ^cAbbās ^cAlwān, p. 410.
22. Al-Sayyāb (b), p.6.

23. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), p.151.
24. M. al-Sāmarā'ī, p.11.
25. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), p.104.
26. ^cAlī ^cIzzat, p.40.
27. Ḥasan Tawfīq, p.51. See also Boullaṭa (a), p.27;
Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.42.
28. M. al-Sāmarā'ī, p.20. See also Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.42.
29. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p.640.
30. N. ^cAllūsh (b. vol.2), p.41. See also al-Sayyāb (b),
p.18; Boullaṭa (a), pp.53-54.
31. M. al-^cAbṭa (a), p.83.
32. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 639.
33. Ibid (d. vol.2), p.128.
34. Ibid. (d. vol.1), pp. 317-318.
35. See the half verse of Gōrān's poem La bandīxāna,
p.217.
36. K. Mīrawdālī (b), p.20.
37. M. M. ^cAbd al-Karīm (a), p.546.
38. Mīrawdālī (b), p.20.
39. Shānōf, p.19.
40. R. Ḥilmī, p.149.
41. Ibid.
42. Gōrān (a), p.541. See R. Ḥilmī, p.151.
43. Ibid; p.65.
44. Ibid; p.71.
45. R. Ḥilmī, p.149.
46. Gōrān (a), p.230.
47. Ibid; p.265.

48. Ibid; p.48.
49. K. Mīrāwdalī (b), p.39.
50. Interview with A. Gōrān in Sulaimāniyah 1983. A comprehensive reading of this poem convinced me that this girl was descended from a farming family and not aristocratic, as Ajī Gōrān claimed.
51. Gōrān (a), p.58.
52. Interview with Dīlān in Sulaimāniyah, 1983.
53. Gōrān (a), p.121.
54. Ibid; p.49.
55. Ibid; p.137.
56. Ibid; pp.127-128.
57. ^cAbd al-Ḥalīm, pp.69-70.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Badī^C M. Jum^Ca, pp. 153-168. cf. also Muḥammad G. L. Hilāl, pp. 190-193; Najīb al-^CAqīqī, p.260.
2. Agnes Ethel Mackay, p. 203.
3. J.J. Crandville, p. XXII. See also Agnes E. Mackay, pp. 126-127.
4. La Fontaine.
5. J.J. Crandville, p. XXII. See also M. Sutherland, p.77.
6. A.E. Mackay, p.205. See also Philip A. Wadsworth, p.179.
7. Najīb al-^CAqīqī, p.261.
8. M. Gh. Hilāl, p.222. Cf. also S.H. Steinbery (vol.1), pp. 38-40; Suzān Iskandar, p.90; M.A. ^CAṭiya, pp.43-62.
9. Ibid.
10. Bois Thomas, p. 119. See also ^CIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p.64.
11. ^CIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p.64. See also A.S. al-Aḥmad (a).
12. ^CIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), pp. 64-65. See also M. Xaznadār (b), pp. 59-91.
13. Jayyusi (a. vol.1), p. 86.
14. Brugman, p. 106. See also Jayyusi (a. vol.1), pp. 72-84.
15. Jayyusi (a. vol.1), pp. 72-84.
16. ^CUmar Farrūkh, p. 136.
17. M. ^CA. M. Khaffājī (a. vol.2), pp.1-35. See also J. Brugman, pp. 151-158; ^CAbd al-^CAzīz al-Dasūqī (b).
18. Moreh, p. 216.
19. D. al-Jundī, pp.366-367. Cf. also A. al-Jundī, pp. 66-72; ^CĀṭif Mustafā, pp.76-80.

20. Y. ^CIzz al-Dīn (b), p. 173.
21. H. A. Foster, pp. 15-20.
22. D. al-Jundī , pp. 379-380.
23. Yūsuf al-Ṣā'igh, p. 28.
24. D. al-Jundi, pp. 381-389. Cf. also ^CĀṭif M., pp.76-80;
J. Brugman, pp. 18-24.
25. D.al-Jundī, pp. 383-384.
26. Yūsuf al-Ṣā'igh, p. 15.
27. Emile Legonis, pp. 1-17. cf. also C.E. Vulliamy,
pp. 28-44; W.E. Peck, pp. 29-40; K.N. Cameron, pp.
1-36; S.H. Steinberg (vol. 3), p. 759.
28. Ṣāliḥ M. Sharīda, pp. 7-35.
29. Laurie Magnus, pp. 443-449.
30. Khidr al-Walī , p. 19.
31. Iḥsān ^CAbbās (a), pp. 71-72.
32. Ibid., p.72.
33. Simon Jargy, pp.18-19. Cf. also M. al-Sāmarā'ī (al-
Sayyāb's letter to Khālid al-Shawwāf dated 11.7.1944),p.27.
34. M. al-Sāmarā'i, p. 27. see also ^CAbbās (a), p. 49.
35. M. al-^CAbṭa (a), pp. 8-9. See also I. ^CAbbās (a), p.49.
36. M. al-Sāmarā'i, p.27. See also Ḥasan Tawfīq, p.64.
37. M. al-^CAbṭa (a), p.8. See also Boullaṭa (a), p.34.
38. M. al-Sāmarā'ī, p. 27. See also Khidr al-Walī, p.13;
S. Jargy, p.18-19.
39. M. al-Sāmarā'ī, p. 183.
40. Gōrān (b). See also newspaper Āzādī (1960), no.49,
50, 79.

41. Gōrān (b).
42. ʿUmar Barzancī (no. 42), p.40.
43. Interview with Kākāī Fallāḥ in Sulaimānīyah 1983.
44. M. Xaznadār (a), p. 199.
45. M. al-Sāmarā'ī, p. 158. See also S. Jargy, p.133.
46. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 621-622.
47. Interview with ʿUmar Barzanjī in Sulaimānīyah 1983.
48. Shānōf, pp. 17-18.
49. Boullaṭa (b), p. 110.
50. Yūsuf ʿIzz al-Dīn (b), pp. 203-241.
51. ʿĀṭif Muṣṭafā, pp. 76-80. See also A. al-Jundī, pp.66-72.
52. Boullaṭa (a), p.37.
53. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (a), p. 85.
54. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p.84. Compare with Keats'
" BRIGHT star ! would I were steadfast as thou art-
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with external lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremit." See Keats, p.475.
55. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 42-42.
56. Keats, pp. 257-259.
57. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 38-40.
58. Shelley (vol. 2), pp. 190-193.
59. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (a), pp. 68-69, 250-266. See also L. ʿAwad,
p.47.
60. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 20.
61. The Golden Treasury, p.31.
62. N. El-Azma, pp. 672-674.

63. B.C. Southam, p. 69.
64. ^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās, p. 188.
65. N. El-Azma, p. 673.
66. Jayyusi (a. vol.2), p. 724.
67. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol. 1), pp. 477-480.
68. T.S. Eliot, pp. 74-75.
69. Al-Sayyāb (h), p. 248.
70. M. al-^cAbṭa (a), p. 82.
71. Al-Sayyāb, (d. vol.1), p. 361. See also Boullaṭa (a),p.82.
72. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 356.
73. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 356.
74. Eliot, p. 21.
75. Al-Sayyāb, (d. vol.1), pp. 21-24.
76. ^cAbd al-Riḍā ^cAlī (a), p. 72.
77. ^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās, p. 206.
78. Eliot, p. 108.
79. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 255-259.
80. Ibid., p. 692.
81. Ibid., p. 706.
82. Ibid., p. 358.
83. Al-Sayyāb (b), p. 93.
84. Ibid. Clear evidence for what has been said about Eliot's influence on al-Sayyab can also be found in a few other examples. The following verses from Malāl (1948), Risāla min maqbara (1956) and Madīna bi-lā maṭar, (1958):

84. Cont'd

p.86

وَأَكِيلُ بِالرِّقْدَاعِ مَا عَائِي ...

... أَصْبِحُ

هَتَّى تَنْتَهِيَ الْقُبُورُ

p.389

من رجع صوتي ، وهو رمل وريح :

p.487

سحابٌ سرعاتٌ مبرقاتٌ دون أطار

Seem to be very much affected by Eliot's The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, The Hollow Men and the Wasteland :

I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;

Our dried voices, when

We whisper together

Are quiet and meaningless

As wind in dry grass.

There is not even silence in the mountains

But dry sterile thunder without rain.

85. M. al-^cAbṭa (a), p. 82. cf. also Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.254;

^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās, p.78; Khidr al-Walī, p.14.

86. Iḥsān ^cĀbbas (a), p. 254.

87. ^cAbd al-Ridā ^cAlī (a), p. 72.

88. Sitwell, p. 272.

89. N. El-Azma, pp. 676-677.

90. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 457-458.

91. Ibid,, p.468.

92. Ibid., p. 423.
93. Sitwell, pp. 274-275.
94. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol. 1), p. 358.
95. Ibid., pp. 403-407.
96. Sitwell, p. 372.
97. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol. 1), p. 452.
98. Ibid., p. 326.
99. K. Mirāwdali (a), p. 81.
100. Gōrān (a), pp. 103-104.
101. ^cUmar Barzanci (no. 42), p. 43.
102. Shelley (vol. 2), pp. 299-301.
103. Gōrān (a), p. 223.
104. R. Herrick, p. 125.
105. Gōrān (a), pp. 9-10.
106. Shelley (vol. 4), pp. 24-25.
107. K. Mirāwdali (b), pp. 26-28.
108. Shelley (vol. 4), pp. 70-71.
109. Gōrān (a), p. 173.
110. Ibid., p. 228.
111. Barbauld (vol. 1), p. 261.
112. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 509-542.
113. ^cAbd al-Wāḥid Lu'Lu'a (a), p. 210.
114. Jayyusi (a. vol.2), pp. 691-692.
115. ^cAbd al-Riḍā ^cAlī (a), p. 71. See also Lu'Lu'a (a),
pp. 211-212.
116. Eliot, p. 72.
117. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 406.

118. Eliot, p. 11.

119. Al Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 24.

120. Moreh, p. 241.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. Interview with Dr. N. Wyatt in Glasgow University, Department of Religion, 1983.
2. See the Encyclopedia Britannica.
3. Moreh, p. 246.
4. Anas Dāwūd, p.3.
5. Al-Sayyāb, see Majallat Shi^cr, Beirut, "Akhbār wa qaḍāya!" Summer, No.3, 1957, p.112. Quoted also by ^cIsa Boullāṭa (b), p. 111.
6. Al-Sayyāb, see Khidr al-Walī , p. 19.
7. Jabrā I. Jabrā (c).
8. Nabila al-Lajamī, p. 218.
9. ^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās, pp. 104-105.
10. Ibid.
11. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 279.
12. Ibid, p. 152.
13. Ibid, p. 301.
14. Ibid, pp. 604-605.
15. Ibid, pp. 509-514.
16. ^cIsa Boullāṭa (b), p.112.
17. Jabrā I. Jabrā (a), p. 19.
18. James Frazer, pp. 115-116.
19. ^cIsa Boullāṭa (b), p. 112.
20. T. S. Eliot, p. 78.
21. Khālida Sa^cīd, p. 134.
22. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol 1), pp. 478-480.

23. Jabrā I. Jabrā (b), p. 84.
24. ^cAbd al-Riḍā ^cAlī (a), p. 60.
25. Al-sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 368.
26. Ibid, p. 470.
27. Ibid, p. 360.
28. Moreh, pp. 247-248.
29. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol 1), pp. 320-321.
30. Ibid, pp. 499-501.
31. Ibid. P. 469
32. Ibid, p. 325.
33. See ^cAbd al-Riḍā ^cAlī (a), pp. 25-44. cf. also Anas Dāwud, pp. 234, 383, 527, Jayyusi (a. vol2), pp.
34. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol1), p. 434.
35. Ibid, pp. 328-329.
36. Ibid, p. 410.
37. Ibid, p. 437.
38. ^cAbd al-Jabbār Dāwud al-Baṣrī, p. 44.
39. ^cAbd al-Ḥalīm, p. 71.
40. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol1), pp. 529-530.
41. Ibid, p. 250.
42. Ibid, p. 420.
43. Ibid, p. 425.
44. Ibid, p. 468.
45. For example, see Safar Ayyūb, Qālū li Ayyūb.
46. Moreh, p. 253.
47. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), p. 311.
48. Ibid, pp. 484-485.

49. Moreh, p. 254.
50. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.1), pp. 486-490.
51. Gōrān (a), p. 516.
52. Shārazā, p. 43, see also ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p.11.
53. Gōrān (a), pp. 268-269.
54. Al-Sayyāb (d. vol.2), pp. 537-541.
55. Gōrān (a), pp. 239-250.
56. Shārazā, p. 47.
57. Interview with Shêrkō Bêkas in Sulaimānīyah (1983).
58. Gōrān (a), p. 151.
59. Ibid, p. 30.
60. Ibid, p. 10.
61. Ibid, p. 48, The title of this poem is "Bō Kichêkī bēgāna".
62. Ibid, p. 212.
63. Ibid, pp. 327-328.
64. Al-Sayyāb. See Jarīdat şawţ al-ĵamāhīr (Baghdad), October 26, 1963. Quoted also by ^cIsa Boullāta (b), p. 113.
65. ^cAbd al-Mun^cim al-Zubaidi, pp. 14-15.
66. ^cAbd al-Ridā ^cAlī (a), pp. 88-89.
67. Interview with Shêrko Bêkas in Sulaimānīyah (1983).

NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. See Majallat al-Ṭariq (Beirut), August-September, 1953.
2. Gōrān (a), p. 270.
3. Al-Sayyāb (d , Vol.1), pp. 570-571.
4. Gōrān (a), p. 301.
5. Al-Sayyāb (d , vol.1), p. 581-82
6. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p. 145.
7. Majid Khadduri, p. 157.
8. Ibid., p. 175.
9. Ibid.
10. J.B. Glubb, pp. 240-248. Cf. also Langrigg, pp.304-305; Caractacus, p. 44; Jihād M. Muḥī al-Dīn, p.59.
11. Lenczowski, pp. 273-274. Cf. also Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p. 36; Boullaṭa (a), p.28; Jihād M. Muḥī al-Dīn,p.59.
12. Al-Sayyāb (d , vol. 2), pp. 109-110.
13. Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p. 35.
14. Ibid., p. 49. See also Maḥmūd al-^cAbṭa (a), p.8.
15. Al-^cAbṭa (a), p.9.
16. Al-Sayyāb (g.no. 1441).
17. Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.89.
18. Al-Sayyāb (g. nḡ.1441).
19. Al-Sayyāb (b), p.93. See also Boullaṭa (a), p.44; Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.92.
20. Nājī ^cAllūsh (b), p.36.
21. Longrigg, pp. 340-345. See also Laqueur, pp.191-194.
22. Longrigg, p. 344.
23. Ibid., p.347. See also Laqueur, p.193.

24. Laqueur, pp. 192-193.
25. Interview with Dīlān in Sulaimāniyah 1983.
26. Shānōf, p. 92.
27. Ibid., p. 105.
28. Interview with Ajī Gōrān in Sulaimāniyah 1983.
29. Interview with Dīlān in Sulaimāniyah 1983.
30. Interview with Ajī Gōrān in Sulaimāniyah 1983.
31. Gōrān (a), pp. 215-216.
32. Shānōf, p. 94.
33. Interview with Dīlān in Sulaimāniyah 1983.
34. Interview with Ajī Gōrān in Sulaimāniyah 1983.
35. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (b), p.12.
36. Interview with Kākāī Fallāḥ in Sulaimāniyah 1983.
37. ^cAbd al-Jabbār ^cAbbās, pp. 27-30.
38. Iḥsān ^cAbbās (a), p.90.
39. Laqueur, pp. 178-184. Cf. also Longrigg, p.302; Khadduri, p.16.
40. Laqueur, p.184.
41. ^cIzz al-Dīn M. Rasūl (a), p. 134, cf. also Aḥmad A. Hijāzī, p.137.
42. Y. al-Ṣā'igh, p.56.
43. Laqueur, p. 179.
44. Ibid, p. 202.
45. Moreh, p. 268.
46. Al-Sayyāb (d , vol.1), pp. 576-589.
47. Y. al-Ṣā'igh, pp. 75-76.
48. Al-Sayyāb (g.no.1450) See also Caractacus, p. 51; Langrigg, pp. 355-356, Laqueur, p.192.

49. Ibid.
50. Boullaṭa (a), p.60. See also al-Sayyāb (g. no.1471).
51. Al-Sayyāb (g , no. 1458).
52. Majīd Muḥī al-Dīn, p. 137. See also al-Sayyāb (g. no.1443).
53. Lewis ^CAwad, pp. 63-64. Further, we have already indicated that the Iraqi Communist Party played an important role in the political uprising of January 1948 which denounced the Treaty of Portsmouth; as did also parties such as the National Liberal Party, the Democratic Kurdish Party, the People's Party. At that time, al-Sayyāb himself said:
- "Our Communist Party became active when the government allowed freedom. Our demonstrations used to pack the streets, so much that the traffic stopped". See al-Sayyāb (g. no.1452).
- But when he left the party he started to criticise it and point out its defects:
- "We remember the political uprising of January, also we know that all the political forces, indeed all the people, participated in it, though the role of the Communists was peripheral and trivial; they claimed after the great victory of the people that they were responsible for it". See al-Sayyāb (g. no. 1452).
54. Iḥsān ^CAbbās (a), p. 173. See also Boullaṭa (a), pp. 66-67; Shafīq al-Kamālī; Ḥasan Tawfīq, pp.89-90; al-Sayyāb (g. no. 1442).

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