

**Tribe and State in the History of Modern Libya:  
A Khaldunian Reading of the Development of Libya in the  
Modern Era 1711-2011**

**القبيلة والدولة في تاريخ ليبيا الحديثة قراءة خلدونية لتطور**

**الدولة الليبية في العصر الحديث 1711-2011**

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ملخص بالعربية:

مثل مشهد مقتل الزعيم الليبي القذافي يوم 20 أكتوبر 2011، مشهداً سينمائياً دراماتيكياً للسلطة والصحافيين، لكن تفاصيل الحدث وغرابته لم تشدني مثل ما شدني الصراخ الجنوني لبعض الثوار بأسماء مناطقهم وقبائلهم لحظة القبض على القذافي، كان المشهد مرعباً لكن حدة الصراخ والشعارات القبلية والجهوية التي صاحبه كانت أكثر رعباً على الأقل بالنسبة لي، حيث كشفت ولا زالت تكشف عن تعمق شديد للبنى الاجتماعية التقليدية في المجتمع الليبي، وعن ارتباط بدا قوياً للإنسان الليبي بقبيلته وعصيته القبلية، وهو الأمر الذي برهنت عليه الأحداث التالية لمقتل القذافي وسقوط النظام، حيث بدأت التصفيات والنزاعات القبلية واحتلت صدارة الأحداث، في مجتمع تشير احصائيات عام 2004، إلى أن 86 في المئة من أفراده حضريون بالفعل، ويتجمع القسم الأكبر من

هؤلاء الحضريين الليبيين في أربع مدن، حيث تضم طرابلس لوحدها 28 في المئة من مجموع السكان (حوالي مليون و800 ألف قاطن). كما تشير الاحصائيات نفسها إلى أن غالبية كبيرة من الليبيين هم من سكان المدن منذ جيلين على الأقل. أدى هذا التمدن وصموده زمنياً إلى أشكال جديدة من الهويات المدنية. حيث ظهرت ولاءات وعصبيات جديدة تدين بالولاء للمناطق والمدن مثل ما هو الحال مع أهالي مصراته والزنتان. لكن هذا التمدن لم يُزل الفوراق والتباينات التي رسمت تاريخ القبائل الليبية التي يبلغ عددها نحو 140 قبيلة ومجموعات عائلية لها امتدادات جغرافية عبر الحدود. والتي يتمتع 30 منها فقط كما يرى فرج نجم، بتأثير فعلي في ساحة الأحداث. ويتربع على رأس 30 قبيلة كل من قبيلة الورفلة التي تعتبر أكبر القبائل الليبية عدداً وانتشاراً جغرافياً ويبلغ عدد سكانها نحو مليون نسمة، وتتميز علاقات أفرادها بترابط اجتماعي وولاء قبلي متين وتتركز - خاصة - في غرب ليبيا. وترهونة التي تتركز في جنوب غرب طرابلس ويمثل أتباعها ثلث سكان العاصمة. وقبيلة القذاذفة: وهي القبيلة الأساسية التي هيمنت على السلطة في ليبيا طيلة عهد القذافي، ومركزها الرئيسي في منطقة سبها وسط ليبيا ويفوق عدد سكانها 126 ألف نسمة، وتُعد من أكثر القبائل تسليحاً. ثم قبيلة المقارحة وهي ثالث أهم قبيلة في ليبيا وتتركز في المنطقة الغربية. وإلى جانب هذه القبائل الثلاث تبرز قبيلة التبو بوزنها الثقيل في عموم صحراء ليبيا، كما تبرز قبائل الزنتان كإحدى أشرس وأعتى القبائل في الغرب الليبي.

لقد أبرزت درجة العسكرية التي فرضت على السكان في ثورة 2011، القبائل وقوتها بشكل واضح في المشهد الليبي، حيث حاول القذافي مستميتاً من جهة والشوار من جهة أخرى توظيفها لغاية "استراتيجية" هي الضغط على موازين القوى المستقبلية. لأن متانة ومقاومة "العصية" القبلية تجعلها تمتلك قدرة أكبر على التعبئة العسكرية. وقد تعاظمت هذه القدرة العملية للقبائل لتجد القبيلة

الليبية نفسها تمتلك فعالية أكبر بما لا يقارن من وزنها الاجتماعي والديموغرافي. إن هذا الاستحضار العميق للبعد القبلي وانفجار أحداث العنف العرقي بعيد الثورة مباشرة، وفشل الساسة الليبيين لحد الساعة في الاتفاق على شكل النظام الذي سيحكم، وحدة التجاذبات والاستقطابات التي تعطل تحقيق أهداف الثورة، تدعو الباحثين إلى العودة إلى تفكيك الظاهرة السياسية في ليبيا الحديثة والبحث في الأطر السياسية والاجتماعية التي نشأت فيها ليبيا الحديثة منذ انضمامها للخلافة التركية، وتوحيدها الجغرافي في شكلها الحالي بداية من عصر القرمانليين (1711-1835) ومرورا بفترة الدولة السنوسية (1843-1969) وانتهاءً بعهد العقيد القذافي (1969-2011)، وذلك من أجل فهم حقيقة الظاهرة السياسية وفق تطوراتها التاريخية، وذلك وفق التحليل الخلدوني الذي سنختبر مدى حضوره من عدمه في المشهد السياسي الليبي الحديث من خلال تسليط الضوء على مبدأ العصبية الذي أرتأه ابن خلدون أساسا لقيام الدول وزوالها.

## تفاصيل الورقة وجزئياتها

### 1- الإطار النظري للدراسة

- ماهية وآلية العصبية:

- مفهوم الدورة العصبية:

- رهان قوة الدولة وأفولها:

2- جدلية البادية والمدينة والقبيلة في ليبيا المعاصرة

3- العهد القرملني وتشكل ملامح الدولة

4- السنوسية والدعوة الدينية

5- ليبيا القذافي ونموذج الدولة

6- خاتمة

### **Abstract:**

Libya is among the few Arab countries with a social structure that has not changed and seems to have been little scathed by colonial policies in contrast with other Arab countries. This is especially true in the context of the Maghreb. Perhaps this is largely due to the deeply rooted tribal system in Libya. However, Libya has been subjected to certain transformations towards becoming a modern state. This paper attempts a reading of modern Libya in terms of its inception and development, through to its relative state of stability and fall by subjecting these issues to a Khaldunian framework of analysis. The study focuses solely on the Khaldunian principle of *asabiyya* (Group Feeling) and attempts to illustrate its early appearance in the formation of modern Libya. The study is based on a number of important historical events in the history of Libya in which it will be demonstrated that the principle of *asabiyya* was present in all forms of modern Libya from 1711 to 2011. The paper concludes with a number of suggestions for the progress of the current troubled state of Libya.

**Key Words:** *Asabiyya*, Libya, Ibn Khaldun, Karamanli, Senusi, Colonel Gaddafi.

### **1 - Introduction**

Although the death of the Libyan leader, Gaddafi on October 20, 2011, was a cinematic and dramatic death scene for politicians and journalists, it did not trouble me with the same intensity as the maddening screams of partisanship by some of the rebels for their regions and tribes the moment Gaddafi was captured. Moreover, although the circumstances of Gaddafi's death are truly unfortunate, the calls of blind support for a particular tribe or region were to me, much more terrifying, as they revealed, and continue to reveal, a deepening schism in the social fabric of traditional Libyan society. It also reveals the strong association Libyans have with their tribe and their deeply rooted sense of tribalism. The merit of such claims are attested to by the events following the killing of Gaddafi and the fall of the regime, which marked the beginning of the tribal conflicts that dominated those events. This is interesting as the social statistics

indicates that in 2004, 86 percent of Libyans were metropolitan,<sup>1</sup> and that the bulk of these urban Libyans congregated in four cities, with Tripoli alone home to 28 percent of the total population (approximately 1.8 million inhabitants). The same statistics also indicate that a large majority of Libyans have resided in cities for at least two generations. Doubtless, such steady urbanization has led to new urban identities.<sup>2</sup> To this end, new loyalties have appeared such as is the case with the people of Masrata and Zintan.

However, this urbanization has failed to mitigate longstanding feuds and disparities between the Libyan tribes, which number approximately 140 clans and family groups that extend beyond geographical borders. Only 30 of these tribes, according to Faraj Najem, have real impact on the course of events in Libya.<sup>3</sup> At the top of the list of the 30 tribes is the Werfella tribe, which is the largest of the Libyan tribes in terms of numbers and geographical distribution. It has a population of roughly one million, is characterised with strong, deeply rooted bonds of tribal loyalty and solidarity, and are concentrated predominantly in western Libya.<sup>4</sup> Closely following the Werfella tribe in regards to its influence within Libya is the Tarhona tribe, which is concentrated in the south-west of Tripoli and its followers represent a third of the population of the capital. The third is Gaddadfa tribe (Colonel Gaddafi tribe) which dominated Libyan politics during the reign of Gaddafi. Centring in Sabha district of central Libya and Sirte, and its numbers exceed 126 thousand. The Gaddadfa was the most heavily armed tribe in Libya. Fifth, Magarha tribe which constitutes the fourth most important tribe in Libya and is concentrated in the western region. In addition to these four tribes is the Tebou tribe, which wields significant influence throughout the pan

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<sup>1</sup> In the year of 1975 the urbanization process reached to 61% and increased in 1980 to be more than 70%.

<sup>2</sup> Ali bin Saad, Pro-Gaddafi Libya and the amplifying the tribes role, Al-Safir Al-Arabi Newspaper, 08.08.2012 London

<sup>3</sup> Faraj Abd al-Aziz Najm, al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah, Maktabat al-Dawah bi-al-Ahar, 2005. P

<sup>4</sup> Maḥmud Sayyid, Tārīkh duwal al-Maghrib al-‘Arabī, **Alexandria**; Mu’assasat Shabāb al-Jāmi‘ah, 2010. P 43

desert of Libya, while the Zintan tribes is one of the most fiercest and powerful tribes in the west of Libya.<sup>5</sup>

The degree of militarization imposed on the Libyan population in the 2011 revolution highlighted the strength of the Libyan tribes. Gaddafi attempted to control the power of tribes on the one hand as a means to control rebellion, while on the other hand employed tribal sentiments as a “strategy” to tip the future balance of power. This is because tribal resistance possess a greater capacity for military mobilization. This practical ability, namely to mobilize as a military unit, has grown among Libyan tribes, to become an effective means to achieve their goals to such an extent that it far exceeds its social and demographic weight.

There is a need for deconstructing the political phenomena of modern Libya and a study of the political and social issues that led to its formation in order to better understand the deeply rooted tribal sentiments prevailing in Libya. These include the explosion of incidents of ethnic violence, which are far removed from the revolution, the failure of Libyan politicians to agree on the system of governance, and the social polarizations that prevent achieving the objectives of the revolution. Such a study must begin from Libya’s succession from Ottoman rule and the period in which it consolidated its geographical boundaries. Accordingly, such a study must begin with the Karamanli era (1711-1835), pass through the Senussi era (1843-1969), and end with the era of Colonel Gaddafi (1969-2011). This will allow a better understanding of the current realities of modern Libya by means of understanding its historical developments via a Khaldunian framework of analysis that highlights the principle of *asabiyya* as the basis for a State and its demise.

## 2 - The Theoretical Framework for the Study

Perhaps referring to Ibn Khaldun for the current study of many Arab societies is not an option of researchers it is an obligation not an option; however, it nevertheless constitutes an important framework

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<sup>5</sup> See: Yahya Mursi ‘Īd Badr, *Dirāsāt anthrūbūlūjīyah fī al-mujtama‘ al-Lībī*, Alexandria: Dār al-Wafā’ li-Dunyā al-Ṭibā‘ah wa-al-Nashr, 2010, p

for deconstructing and analysing the political and social conditions in these communities. This is because Ibn Khaldun wrote about politics and society on the level of theory, through to the level of reality as embedded in historical experience.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, these communities retain many of the intellectual and social factors present during Ibn Khaldun's period of study and analysis. The Libyan society is perhaps considered one of the best models upon which the Khaldunian analysis can be applied, especially since it is located within the region which Ibn Khaldun studied, namely North Africa and Andalusia. This means that many of Ibn Khaldun's observations and criticisms must have been made of Libyan society, as it existed during his time, except that it lacked the geographical boundaries that form modern Libya, which were produced after the arrival of the Ottomans.

This paper is limited to an analysis of the "principle of asabiyya" which helps us in analysing the forms of political organization in modern Libya and offers a logical perception of the facts of the historical and current political landscape. For Ibn Khaldun, the principle of was central to his understanding of the State, so much so that he could not imagine a State without it. He held that a State was, "the spatial and temporal extension of the rule of asabiyya."<sup>7</sup> This paper does not indulge in an extensive and elaborate description of Ibn Khaldun's principle of asabiyya, rather it satisfies with what is necessary as an analytical framework to analyse Libya's current realities. This is achieved through the following four major themes central to this theory, namely:

- **The nature and mechanism of asabiyya:** Ibn Khaldun discusses in depth the ability of asabiyya to form political entities and its relation to nomadism (*Badawa*) and urbanization (*Hadar*). Khaldunian thought suggests that the nature of asabiyya, in as much as it is a force for the state and producer of civilisation it is a "fluid driving force" of civilisation (*Umrān*) and not a destructive force. It creates, by means of benevolent patrons, and the collective acceptance of the ruler and ruled, what is today considered the will of co-

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<sup>6</sup> Muḥammad Jawhari & others, Ibn Khaldūn : injāz fikrī mutajaddid, Alexandria: Maktabat al-Iskandarīyah, 2008. P 92

<sup>7</sup> Muḥammad 'Abid Jabiri, Fikr Ibn Khaldūn : al-'Aṣabīyah wa-al-dawlah : Ma'ālim naẓarīyah Khaldūnīyah fī al-tārīkh al-Islāmī, Beirut: Center of Arabic Unity Studies Press, 1992, p 211

existence, which forms the general sense of affiliation, in what Ibn Khaldun termed ‘al-Mazāj fī al-Mutakawwin’<sup>8</sup> “the mood of the formulators”.<sup>9</sup> It is in this state of affairs that all groups and forms of tribalism are on equal footing no matter how savage, primitive, or isolated they may appear. Each group enjoys the same opportunities to participate in the creation of a humane civilization, either through the merits of their natural existence, or the good they have done, or more importantly, from their religious advocacy.<sup>10</sup> In fact, from this particular perspective, Ibn Khaldun does not distinguish between nomads [leadership] and urbanites [governance], except by means of the strength of asabiyya. Weak and vulnerable asabiyya exists within the state of urbanised, while strong asabiyya exists in its nomadism state as manifested by its form of governance and glory. Ibn Khaldun “perceived nomadism not as the opposite of urbanization but as its origin. The issue for him was one of the developments of civilization and civil rights, not a conflict between the two types of lifestyles.”<sup>11</sup>

- **Understanding the role of asabiyya:** Muhammed Abed al-Jabri suggested in his thesis, “al-asabiyy wa al-Dawlah fī Fikr Ibn Khaldūn”<sup>12</sup> ‘Asabiyya and the State in the thought of Ibn Khaldun’, an interpretation of asabiyya different to that pertaining to the cycles of nations. Al-Jabri ruled out the theory of “historic session”, and suggested in its place the concept of the ‘cycles of asabiyya’. In this context, al-Jabri stressed that it is a matter solely pertaining to the ‘cycles of asabiyya’ by means of the transfer of power and authority from one asabiyya to another but within a single broader asabiyya.<sup>13</sup> This claim is contrary to popular opinion.<sup>14</sup> Al-

<sup>8</sup> Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimat, 1. p 213

<sup>9</sup> يقصد ابن خلدون بمصطلح المزاج في المتكون هو حالة الغلبة لعصبية ما على مكونات عرقية أخرى للتكون بذلك العصبية ومن ثم الدولة، فتتولد حالة من التوافق، تشبه حالة انصهار وتكون معادن جديدة التي تتشكل حين يغلب عنصر طبيعي على آخر في عملية الانصهار لتتم عملية تكون العنصر الجديد

<sup>10</sup> Jawhari, Ibn Khaldun : injāz fikrī mutajaddid, p 111

<sup>11</sup> Jabiri, Fikr Ibn Khaldun, p 120

<sup>12</sup> Jabiri, Ibid, p 315

<sup>13</sup> Jabiri, Ibid, p 216



Jabri believes it is necessary to develop “phases of the State” in the historical framework proposed by Ibn Khaldun, namely, the presidential/power transition from one specific *asabiyya* to its like within a single broader structure of *asabiyya*.<sup>15</sup> Ibn Khaldun’s *Muqaddimah* consists of a detailed analysis of the type suggested by al-Jabri concerning the concept of *asabiyya* and phases of a State’s development. It can be inferred from the text of the *Muqaddimah* that the founder of ‘*Ilm al-Umran*’ ‘Science of Urbanism’ distinguishes between two levels of State development, namely, that concerning the person governing (this consists of the five well-known Khaldunian phases), and that concerning the governance of *asabiyya*, which Ibn Khaldun called ‘*Hasb*’ (Ancestry)<sup>16</sup> Ibn Khaldun is of the mind that under such circumstances, the *asabiyya* becomes extinct in the fourth generation, namely that the state ceases to exist without *asabiyya*. Ibn Khaldun accurately determines the duration of a state governed by *asabiyya* as comprising of 120 years give or take.<sup>17</sup> This lifespan can extend more if there is no what Ibn Khalun called “*Al-Mutalib*” the enemy, which led the *Asabiyya* to its distinction and hasten its demise.<sup>18</sup> Such a thesis is clearly relevant to the modern political history of Libya.

- **Religious Call (*Dawaha*) and nation building:** Ibn Khaldun discusses in chapter V of the *Muqaddimah* the role of religious call in the establishment and empowerment of the state. He explains how religious call can transform into a strong form of governing *asabiyya* in which religious sentiment and brotherhood are like blood ties, or at times supersede it. On this, Ibn Khaldun says, “And the reason for this is that

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<sup>14</sup> Such as: Fuad Baali; ‘Alī Wardī, Ibn Khaldun and Islamic thought-styles, a social perspective, Boston, Mass. : G.K. Hall, 1981; Barbara Freyer Stowasser, Religion and political development : some comparative ideas on Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli, Washington, DC : Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1983; ‘Azīz ‘Azmah, Ibn Khaldūn, London : Routledge, 1982; Muhsin Mahdi, Ibn Khaldūn's philosophy of history: a study in the philosophic foundation of the science of culture, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1964.

<sup>15</sup> See: Jābirī, Ibid, p 217

<sup>16</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn*, edited by Abdesselam Cheddadi, Casablanca: Dār Tūbqāl lil-Nashr, 2000. 1. P 221

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimat*, 1. p 222

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p 222.

religiosity eradicates the rivalry and envy associated with asabiyya while guiding to the truth. If they happen to achieve insight into their position, naught distracts them because they equally share in a single destination and desire for which they are ready to die for...<sup>19</sup> Ibn Khaldun supports his claim with evidence from Islamic history by drawing on the example of the Almohad dynasty consisting of the Masmuda tribes, led by Ibn Tumart(1080–1130), and how his religious call and the asabiyya emanating thereof defeated the tribe of Zanata despite the latter being stronger.<sup>20</sup>

- **The rise and decay of the State:** Finally, within the framework of identifying the theoretical features of the analytical framework, we arrive at the point of the rising strength of the state. In this regard, Ibn Khaldun argues that a State's power is organically and necessarily associated with its asabiyya. This means that the height of a State's urbanization/civilization depends on the strength of its asabiyya, and the weakness of its counterpart's asabiyya. Similarly, the opposite is also true, namely that growth regresses and a state debilitates and decays and its prowess disappears with the weakening and subsequent absence of its asabiyya. This is evident when the ruler seeks support outside of his own asabiyya as a means to consolidate the prowess of his own asabiyya. Such is the characteristic of the transition from nomadism to urbanisation.<sup>21</sup> Ibn Khaldun provides additional reasons the weakening and collapse of asabiyya, among them, 1 – For the ruler to solely bask in glory with the exclusion of those around him. 2 – Extravagant luxury depleting the state's treasury by means of increased expenses and reduced income resulting in an unravelling state of asabiyya. 3 – Complacency and comfort, which is one of the features of urbanisation, which destroys chivalry and dedication among his asabiyya supporters to the extent that they ignore their allegiances.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimat, 1. P 266

<sup>20</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat, 1. p 267

<sup>21</sup> Jābirī, Ibid, p 220

<sup>22</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat, 1. P 248

### 3 – The Dialectic of Nomadism, Urbanism, and Tribalism in Modern Libya

Throughout its history, Libya as a nation has constituted a region absent civilization, politics, and culture due to it being located between the eastern (Egypt) and western (Tunisia) urban centres. This is largely due to its large desert, which has not helped in the resettlement of migrating peoples and tribes. Such a state was also caused by the nature of its tribal composition in which its many tribes live simple nomadic existences without any sense of national unity or central authority. States with many *asabiyya*, according to Ibn Khaldun, are seldom ruled by state authority.<sup>23</sup> Libya benefitted little from the Andalusian migrations witnessed by North Africa between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as opposed to Tunisia and Algeria which received the migrating Andalusian communities, who subsequently contributed to the development of the cultural, political and social life therein.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the sole exception is the Libyan region of Derna with its natural geography and climate, which agreed with certain migrating Andalusian families. The traveller Abu Salim al-Ayyashi (1628–1679) recorded in his travels in the year 1649 AD aspects of urbanisation undertaken by Andalusians in this city.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the urbanisation of Derna, other migrating Andalusian and Jewish families in the early sixteenth century contributed to the urbanisation of other regions such as Tajoura, Maslata, and Zliten, which were metaphorically known as the *Tawajeer*.<sup>26</sup> Such urbanisation extended to include the Arabs of Masrata and Tagoura who were forced to immigrate due to the military campaigns led by the governor Dragut Pasha on Tagoura and Masrata in 1555 AD, to Cyrenaica, wherein they applied what they had seen and learned from

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<sup>23</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimat*, 1. P 277

<sup>24</sup> Rashād Imām, the Andalusian in Tunisia during the Ninthinth Century from the National Tunisian Archive Transcripts. *Maghribian Historical Review*, 23-24, Nov 1981, p 293-318; Georges Marçais, *La Berbérie musulmane et l'orient au moyen age*, Paris, Aubier, Éditions Mouton, 1946. p.297; Rachel Arié, *L' Espagne musulmane au temps des nasrides*, Paris, É. de Boccard, 1973. p 66

<sup>25</sup> Abū Sālīm 'Ayyāshī, *Al-rihlā al-'ayyāsiyyā : mā' al-mawā'id*, Rebat, Dar Almaghrib, 1977, I, p 109-110.

<sup>26</sup> Muḥammad M Bāzāmah, *Tārīkh Barqah fī al Ahd al-Qarmānī*, Buruet: Dār al-Hiwār al-Thaqāfī al-Arabī al-Urūbbī, 1994.p 246

the experience of Derna.<sup>27</sup> Therein the nucleus for the urban community of the city of Benghazi was formed, which subsequently became the urban centre for all Libya.<sup>28</sup>

In contrast, the nomadic regions of the east, west and south teemed with Arab and Amazigh (Berber) Bedouins who were not able to settle in the urban communities of Benghazi and Derna.<sup>29</sup> As a result of the absence of a central authority in tribal and nomadic areas, the Bedouins sought some form of unifying organization through which to administer their sense of justice. For this purpose, the tribal chieftains and dignitaries of the Awlad Ali<sup>30</sup> tribes and their vessels tribes stayed in Al- Butnan in 1653 AD for a period of six months, from which was produced a system called '*Durbah Awlād Alī*' or in other word '*Sharāh al-Saharā*' 'the law of the desert'. Backed by the strong asabiyya of Awlad Ali. The Durbah became a sort of code similar to the penal code, which was nominally and partly attributed to the Islamic Sharāh. It consisted of 67 items that codify the relationships between members of the tribe/tribes, and the types of attacks and traditional sanctions levelled against the perpetrators of the attack. All the tribes committed to the Durbah, which circulated among the tribe of Awlad Ali. The Durbah became the bastion of peace and security among the tribes in the region in question, which judged between them and governed from civil to personal affairs and from misdemeanours to felonies. However The *Durbah* would not witness that level of success without the strong asabiyya of Awlad Ali tribes, which was the mean dominant tribes in the whole region, and most of the other tribe had had associated themselves with Awlad Ali whether

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<sup>27</sup> In that period the Bedouins used the term Darnāwī to refer to the inhabitants of the city of Derna and Benghazi to distinguish them from the population of the desert. To this day Derna is considered a unique urban centre across Libya. See; 'Alī 'Abd al-Laṭīf Ḥumaydah, *al-Mujtama' wa-al-dawlah wa-al-isti'mār fī Lībiyā*, Beirut: Center of Arabic Unity Studies Press, 1998, p

<sup>28</sup> Costanzo Bergna, *Tripoli dal 1510 al 1850*, Tran to Arabic by Khalīfah Muḥammad Tilisī, *al-Firjānī*, 1969, p 59

<sup>29</sup> E E Evans-Pritchard –*The Sanūsī of Cyrenaica*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954, p 41.

<sup>30</sup> It is considered among the biggest and strongest tribe in desert of North Africa; in particular in Libya and Egypt, its members are estimated to be more than 5 million between Libya and Egypt. See: Khair Allah Atyywa, *the journey of one thousand years with the tribe of Awlad Ali*,

by *×ilf* or *WalÉ*.<sup>31</sup> The Eastern Libyan tribes continued to observe this traditional practice until the emergence of the modern state during the Karamanli dynasty.

The delayed emergence of a central authority in Libya resulted in the influence of surrounding political forces on the fate of its tribes. Political forces in both Tunisia and Egypt have played their roles towards polarizing the loyalties of the Libyan Bedouin tribes. Such was the case prior to the arrival of the Turks, whereby Mamluk Egypt politically influenced the large tribes of East Libyan (Cyrenaica Tribes). The Hafsid dynasty exercised similar influence on the tribes of the West (Tripolitania and Fezzan tribes). These geographical and political factors prompted the emergence of a natural boundary between the three regions, namely, Tripoli, Cyrenaica and Fezzan, which resulted in these regions having historical experiences that differed from each other until the arrival of the Karamanlis who established the concept of state by force.<sup>32</sup> Prior to this, Tripolitania always maintained relations with Tunisia stronger than its relations with Cyrenaica and Fezzan. Cyrenaica was always historically, socially and economically associated with Egypt and the people of Western Sahara rather than with Tripolitania and Fezzan. Whilst Fezzan was always with the Sudan to the extent that dark skin and appearance of Africa dominated some southern regions.<sup>33</sup> Egypt and Tunisia constituted a shelter for persecuted Bedouin tribal leaders whenever constraints upon them intensified.

Perhaps the most notable case of asylum is the migration of Ali Pasha al-Karamanli the first, governor of Tripoli, and his family to Tunisia after Ali Benghul, popularly known as the Al-Jazā'irī<sup>34</sup> 'the Algerian' seized Tripoli from them in 1793 AD.<sup>35</sup> Ali Pasha al-Karamanli sought

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<sup>31</sup> Faraj Abd al-Azīz Najm, *al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah*, p

<sup>32</sup> Inām Muḥammad Sharaf al-Dīn, *Madkhal ilā tārikh Ṭarābulus al-ijtimā'ī wa-al-iqtisādī : dirāsah fī mu'assasāt al-madīnah al-tijārīyah*, 1711-1835, Ṭarābulus, al-Jamāhīrīyah al-Uḡmā : Markaz Jihād al-Lībīyīn lil-Dirāsāt al-Tārikhīyah, 1998, p 239

<sup>33</sup> Faraj Abd al-Azīz Najm, *al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah*, p 242.

<sup>34</sup> He is of Caucasian descent from Georgia. He migrated to Algeria wherein he lived a long period of time until he became known as 'al-Jazā'irī' (the Algerian). As for his kunyah (nickname) 'bulgur', it is said that he fed his soldiers bulgur. See ///////////////

<sup>35</sup> Rodolfo Micacchi, *La Tripolitania sotto il dominio dei Caramanli*, trans by Fouzi Taha, *Institutions of the Arab League*, 1961, p 119-130

refuge from the rulers of Tunisia. Tunisia responded with military support which quickly led to the return of Karamanli rule in Tripolitania and the permanent expulsion of Benghul the adventurer in 1795 AD.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, Ahmed the brother of Yusuf Pasha al-Karamanli sought refuge from Muhammad Alfi in Egypt following the dispute between him and his brother. Ahmed remained there until he died in Egypt in 1811 AD.<sup>37</sup> When the son of Yusuf Pasha, Othman, sensed danger in Libya, he fled to Egypt and found therein a safe haven until his death in Alexandria.<sup>38</sup> Such was the state of affairs throughout the duration of the Italian colonization of Libya.

This predicament upset the political and social infrastructure throughout the history of modern Libya. The picture changed after the Ottomans gained power beginning in the sixteenth century as follows:

- Authority stabilised in the hands of the urbanites with foreign origins stationed in Tripoli and allied with major Libyan tribes until the emergence of Colonel Gaddafi and his upheaval of the monarchy in 1969.<sup>39</sup>
- Weak State control until the second half of the nineteenth century over a large part of modern Libya, and the predominance of tribal sovereignty over those areas (the Ottoman flag was not raised in the city of Kafra in the far southeast of the country until 1912 AD). This state of affairs continued through to the birth of the Kingdom of Libya in 1951 AD.
- The continuation of local communities (tribes) in most areas of the country in the production and development of its political and economic influence in isolation from central State intervention to this day.<sup>40</sup> Maintaining its geographic

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<sup>36</sup> Ammār Juḥaydar, *Maṣādir dirāsāt al-ḥayāh al-fikrīyah fī Lībiyā fī al-Ahd al-Qarmānī*, 1123-1251 H/1711-1835, Tripoli: Markaz Jihād al-Lībīyīn lil-Dirāsāt al-Tārīkhīyah, 2003. P 179

<sup>37</sup> Bāzāmah, *Tārīkh Barqah fī al- Ahd al-Qarmānī*, .p 218

<sup>38</sup> Muḥammad Rajab Za idī, *Lībiyā fī al-ahd al-Qarah Mānī*, Bīnghāzi: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lībī, 1974, p 75-79

<sup>39</sup> The Senussis before him were of Algerian origin, whilst the Karamanlis were of Turkish and Circassian origin.

<sup>40</sup> This attribute continues to this day, in that tribal powers were great, enabling them to declare war. This is evidenced by the numerous instances of war that colour the history of modern Libya. Among the most famous of those tribal wars was the war between the tribes of Tripoli and the tribes of Farjan and Awlad Suleiman, which

boundaries that continue to be called by the name of the respective tribe. This attribute faded in the Gaddafi era, but reappeared soon after his demise.

- The general absence of political and cultural institutions throughout the history of modern Libya as authority concentrated in the hands of the Karamanli rulers. This continued throughout the monarchy era despite being warned by Tunisia regarding the dangers of this approach.<sup>41</sup> Such authoritarianism continued in the era of Colonel Gaddafi, who succeeded in imposing his ideas and political agenda (the Green Book, Socialism, World Revolution, and Democracy for the Masses...) on all Libyans people for forty years.
- The emergence of deep intellectual and social differentiation between the regions of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and Fezzan, because of the political balance imposed by each of the Ottoman and Italians in the colonial period, and the British and the French at the beginning of Libyan independence. The urban disparities (dynamic cultural life, opening up to the outside world, prosperity, trade...) remain visible between the three regions in modern Libya. This explains the beginning of the 1969 coup and the 2011 revolution in 2011 from Cyrenaica (Benghazi), and Cyrenaica's current inclination towards Federal rule, which is dominated by their political elites

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destroyed the country. Among the dire consequences was the displacement of a large portion of Farjan to Tunisia at the end of the eighteenth century (approximately 1767 AD). There was also the extensive disorder concerning the zāwiyah that claimed the lives of hundreds from the tribes of Rishvana and Alnoael in 1781 AD. Not to mention the wars between Awlad Ali and Al-Abaydat in the region of Barqah. This phenomenon continues through to the present day. In 2008, and three years before the fall of Gaddafi, there were bloody confrontations in the "Kafrah" between the tribes of Toubou and Al-Zuwayah, which are tribes concentrated in the border areas. This event highlighted the importance of controlling cross-border trade; a subject of the eternal rivalry. Perhaps what is now taking place in regards to the rivalry between the tribes after the fall of the Gaddafi regime stands proof of this. See; See: Micacchi, *La Tripolitania sotto il dominio dei Caramanli*, p 88-89; Bāzāmāh, *Tārīkh Barqah fī al- Ahd al-Qarmānī*, p 154; Charles Féraud, *Annales Tripolitaines*, trans by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Karīm Wāfī, Tripoli: Dār al-Farjānī, 1973, p 331

<sup>41</sup> Habib Bourguiba pointed this out this matter and sent, at the beginning of 1969AD, an urgent message to King Idris al-Sanusi to the effect that Libya suffers from a demographic, cultural and political vacuum. This took place four months before the coup that toppled the king. See////////

because of their sense of excellence and superiority over the rest of the Libyan regions.

#### 4 – The Karamanli Dynasty and Shaping the Contours of the State

The Ottoman period constitutes the first appearance of a political entity for Libya on the international map. Prior to Ottoman rule, there was only desert and wilderness between Egypt and Tunisia. This phase began with the fall of Tripoli and then the rest of Libya to the Ottomans after defeating, under the leadership of Murad Agha, the Knights of St. John in 1551 AD. Following his victory, Murad Agha was appointed governor of Libya by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. The Ottoman conquest of Libya heralded a new era of migration of Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Circassians, Albanians, Greeks, and Bulgarians in the form of Ottoman soldiers stationed there. It worth mentioning that the Ottoman was first welcomed by the mean Libyan tribes, even more they were considered by the inhabitants as protectors from the European Christian consistent harassment. However the Ottoman has depended on the tribal support before the emergence of the Karamanli clan

These immigrants were shortly after married to the women of Tripolitania, which marked the beginning of a new breed of *asabiyya*, which was to play a prominent role in the history of modern Libya, after the nomadic tribes failed to form a united political system. The generation resulting from intermarriage were called the Kouloughlis. When they grew in number and influence, the tribal environment forced them to associate themselves with a tribe form based on *Nasab* so that they will have a tribal identity as was customary according to Libyan tribal customs.<sup>42</sup> With the passage of time, tribal power increased until its first official appearance on the political map in the form of the Karamanli Dynasty (1711-1835).

It is the Karamanlis who are credited for establishing a sense of national identity in Libya and for introducing the modernization movement. The Karamanli dynasty was founded by Ahmed Pasha al-Karamanli (d.1745), who was a Janissary officer in the Ottoman army. Ahmed Pasha sensed the growing influence of the Kouloughlis and a looming spirit of independence. He then began forming tribal alliances

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<sup>42</sup> Faraj Abd al-Azīz Najm, *al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah*,



(*×ilf*) between his new formed tribe (Kouloughlis) and the powerful Libyan Arabic tribes of Al-Awagir and Bara'sa. Following the political corruption and rampant materialism among the prefectural Ottoman, Ahmed Pasha declared a revolution against the Ottoman governor, which was of little resistance in front of the tribal alliance (Asabiyya according to Ibn Khaldun) led by Ahmed Pasha. Sultan Ahmed Khan III (1673 – 1736) was quick to recognise him as governor of Libya, Ahmed Pasha extend his rule of Libya nearly 34 years. At the time Libya was called West Tripolitania, and consisted within its territories Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan. Ahmed Pasha died in 1745 AD followed by hereditary rule among his offspring.<sup>43</sup>

Ahmed Pasha al-Karamanli is considered the founder of the Libyan state.<sup>44</sup> The existence of modern Libya was cemented by his grandsons in particular, Yusuf Pasha (d.1838), who identified himself and his country as Arab-Islamic Libyans, and by so doing left behind his Turkish roots. His rule of Libya covered from the coast to south Fezzan. During this period, Libya knew the meaning of unity of self and administration during Karamanli rule for almost 124 years, despite the occurrence of revolutions and unrest in the interior and urban centres.<sup>45</sup> Libya was a legal anomaly during the Karamanli era as it enjoyed full independence in regards to the management of its internal and external affairs, however, at the same time it remained dependent on Istanbul as a State of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>46</sup> However, with the Karamanlis consolidating their authority over Libya, the Libyan tribal system began to deteriorate for the same reasons identified by Ibn Khaldun, namely nomadic aspirations of urbanism.<sup>47</sup> This occurred by means of Karamanli focus on the development of major urban cities such as Tripoli, Masrata, Tobruk and Benghazi. These cities began to bite into the influence of the tribal system, especially with Kamaranli manipulation of tribal loyalties (*A'laf*), and strong deterrence

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<sup>43</sup> Ibrāhīm Aḥmad Abū al-Qāsim, al-Muhājirūn al-Lībīyūn bi-al-bilād al-Tūnisīyah (1861-1981) Tripoli: Markaz Jihād al-Lībīyīn lil-Dirāsāt al-Tārīkhīyah, 1996, p 32-33

<sup>44</sup> Muḥammad Rajab Za idī, Lībiyā fī al-ahd al-Qarah Mānī, p 27-34

<sup>45</sup> McLachlan, K. S. "Tripoli and Tripolitania: Conflict and Cohesion during the Period of the Barbary Corsairs (1551-1850) " Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series 3.3 (1978): 285-294.

<sup>46</sup> M M Bāzāmah, al-Diblūmāsiyah al-Lībīyah fī al-qarn al-thāmin ashhr 1720-1792, Binghāzī : Maktabat Qūrīnā, 1975, p 28-32

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat, 1. 195

campaigns led by the Karamanlis against hostile tribes.<sup>48</sup> Tribal influence was further reduced by natural disasters, which afflicted the Libyan Desert<sup>49</sup> and marginalized the Libyan tribes from playing any political role. Furthermore, the tribes stopped producing competitor leaders because of the power enjoyed by the Karamanlis.<sup>50</sup>

According to Ibn Khaldun, in the period the Karamanlis lived a life of comfort and luxury in the history of their nation, especially in the era of Yusuf Pasha. The destabilisation of the asabiyya structure upon which the state rested due to the aforementioned factors in addition to successive waves of mass migration to Egypt and Tunisia, and economic crises, played a major role in aggravating the political situation in the country. The country's rapidly depleting population due to either death or migration, and the deterioration of the state's economy due to decreasing seasonal crop yields and livestock, which were the backbone of the national economy, and the ensuing decrease in income tax for the State, significantly weakened the country, especially the government, which was unable to pay the debts owed to European countries.<sup>51</sup> In such a way did the second and third aspects – which we have mentioned earlier- of the causes of a nation's decline transpire in the case of the Karamanli dynasty. Furthermore, the demise of the Karamanli state was not finalised, in line with Ibn Khaldun's theory, until the advent of a tribal revolution in which certain Libyan tribes united under the leadership of Abdul Jalil, Seif El-Nasr, which forced Yusuf Pasha to abdicate his throne to his son, Ali ibn Yusuf. The situation did not settle until after the Ottoman Sultan

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<sup>48</sup> See: Faraj Abd al-Azīz Najm, *al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah*, p. ????

<sup>49</sup> The country has been plagued with four harsh crises, especially in the western region, where the region of Tripoli suffered a drought, which led to a famine that began in 1767 and lasted until 1771 AD. This caused the migration of some forty thousand people to Tunisia and Egypt. It suffered another famine in 1776 that almost emptied the country of its population. Several other waves of famine inflicted the country. The drought brought disease, which swept through Tripoli and was followed by a deadly plague during the summer of 1785. The country was hit with yet another drought in 1792 AD. See; Féraud, *Annales Tripolitaines*, p. 334

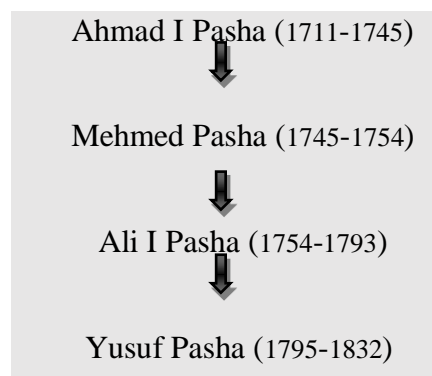
<sup>50</sup> al-Mawlidī Aḥmar, *al-Judhūr al-ijtimāīyah lil-dawlah al-ḥadīthah fī Lībiyā : al-fard wa-al-majmūah wa-al-binā al-za'āmī lil-zāhirah al-siyāsīyah*, Buruet: Centre for Arab Unity Studies Press, 2009, p.

<sup>51</sup> Ḥumaydah, *al-Mujtama' wa-al-dawlah wa-al-isti'mār fī Lībiyā*, p.

Mahmud II (1789 –1839) intervened and returned Libya under his direct rule in 1835 AD.<sup>52</sup>

The complete congruence of the fate of the Karamanli State with Ibn Khaldun's evolutionary cycle of asabiyya occurred with the congruence of the finer details related to the formal frameworks of the State. The asabiyya cycle of the Karamanli dynasty lasted just 124 years, as predicted by Ibn Khaldun who repeatedly emphasized the fact that the lifespan of asabiyya is in

the range of 120 years.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the Karamanli dynasty ended in the fourth, also as predicted by Ibn Khaldun. The Karamanlis were governed by four Pashas and the dynasty ended in the era of Yusuf Pasha, who represented the fourth generation and a State that had distanced from asabiyya and the principles upon which the State was originally established by its founder; all in line with Ibn Khaldun's theory.



## 5 – The Senussis and Religious Call

After the fall of Libya's first political entity (the Karamanli dynasty) and the return of power to the Sublime Porte, in 1843 AD the renowned Algerian sheikh and leader of a strong religious calling, - according to Ibn Khaldun-, wandered between Algeria, Morocco, Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula in search of a suitable environment for the beginning of his reform. Sheikh Mohammed bin Ali Al-Senussi chose Libya as home for his reforms. He opted to stay in a remote village far away from the cities, specifically among the powerful Al-Awagir tribe in eastern Libya. Soon after, tribal

<sup>52</sup> Folayan, Kola Tripoli during the reign of Yusuf Pasha Qaramanli. Ife, Nigeria: University of Ife Press, 1979. P 45; Hume, L. J. "Preparations for Civil War in Tripoli in the 1820s: Ali Karamanli, Hassuna D'Ghies and Jeremy Bentham." *The Journal of African History* 21.3 (1980): 311-322.

<sup>53</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimat*, 1, p 221

delegation after delegation flocked to greet him, after which the Sheikh was convinced that the Bedouin region of Cyrenaica (eastern Libya) was the best place from which to begin his reform. In addition, the tribal chieftains, foremost among them the tribal leaders of the Al-Awagir, Bara'sa, and Al-Magharba tribes, were of the view that Cyrenaica was in dire need of a leader under the banner of whom they could unite.<sup>54</sup> Thus began a new form of a new asabiyya in the history of modern Libya. This new cycle of asabiyya was based on a religious calling (*WalÉ*) about which Ibn Khaldun discussed in the fourth chapter of the *Muqaddimah*.<sup>55</sup>

Sheikh Al-Senussi's choice of the Cyrenaica's countryside as the home of his first *zāwiyah*, and a centre for Senussi reforms was a strategic choice because Cyrenaica was both isolated and remote and surrounded by the desert to the east, south and west, and the overwhelming majority of the tribes lived in hamlets overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. As for the tribal structure, it is Arab Bedouin united by heterogeneous patterns of social life governed by the tribal system, as is the case in the rest of Libya. It is based on a common bloodline (*Nasab*), and shared nomadic traditions and customs. The asabiyya of revenge based on "blood kinship" is an effective tool for fighting and sacrifice in that region,<sup>56</sup> and as such constitutes an important contributing factor for any powerful governing asabiyya<sup>57</sup> according to Ibn Khaldun. Doubtless Sheikh Al-Senussi was fully aware of this and worked towards employing it in the formation of Senussi loyalties and covenants.<sup>58</sup> This manifested, according to Evans Pritchard, in what is known as the Senussi brotherhood, which was clearly adapted from the concept of brotherhood among the Bedouins this Senussi brotherhood cemented day after day after the establishment of the first *zāwiyah* in Al Bayda' in 1843 to form a new form of asabiyya.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Pritchard –The Sanūsī of Cyrenaica, p 91

<sup>55</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat . 1. 266-269

<sup>56</sup> The Bedouin proverb: my brother and I stand together to our cousin and my cousin and I stand against the stranger was well absorbed. The Senussi managed to transformation of this proverb to: My cousin, my brother and I together against the stranger

<sup>57</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat, 1. P 159

<sup>58</sup> Faraj Abd al-Azīz Najm, al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah,

<sup>59</sup> Pritchard –The Sanūsī of Cyrenaica, p 89.

Another significance of Imam's al-Sanusi choice to stay in Cyrenaica is the urgent need of the nomads of that area for spiritual leadership in a land where ignorance had replaced spiritual and moral values. Another implication is Cyrenaica's absorption of immigrants irrespective of their origins, especially Algerian and Moroccan immigrants. Sheikh al-Sanusi believed that his *zāwiyahs* were the ideal instrument for reformation and the stabilisation of the Bedouins among whom had developed enmity and hatred, which weighed heavily on the tribes in terms of lives and money. To this end, Sheikh al-Sanusi established a *zāwiyah* for each tribe and clan<sup>60</sup> on its soil for which the tribe bore the cost of construction and management. These *zāwiyahs* acted as centres to govern disputes between tribes. They served as safe havens for all who entered. No weapon is wielding therein and no bullet shot. Fighting is strictly prohibited and no voice should be raised either for singing or quarrelling. Furthermore, in accordance with the *Sharī'ah* of Islam, nomadic customs and traditions in line with the *Sharī'ah* must be observed.<sup>61</sup> All this was in the service of the religious and worldly benefit of the tribes as recognised by the nomads themselves. If the number of nomadic residences increased so did the number of *zāwiyahs* as much as possible in order to meet the needs of the community.<sup>62</sup>

The Bedouins accepted and the leadership of the Senussi and the emergence of a state or 'al-Mazāj fī al-Mutakawwin' "the mood of the formulators." according to Ibn Khaldun's terminology<sup>63</sup> has taken place based on *WalÉ* in the Pro-Karamanli era, that was for several reasons, chief among them is that it is a movement concerned with the simple man (nomad), meets his needs, and provides him with security and stability. More importantly, in our view, is that it was not a leadership from among local competitors, or hostile tribes, but of noble men without tribal backing, nor did they pursue any tribal or personal agenda other than to serve Islam and all Muslims.<sup>64</sup> This reasoning is consistent with the logic and practical realities of the fact that the tribes in Cyrenaica would not have accepted leadership from its peers because the various tribes are constantly competing and

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<sup>60</sup> The number of *zāwiyahs* has exceeded 100

<sup>61</sup> Faraj Abd al-Azīz Najm, *al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah*,

<sup>62</sup> Evans-Pritchard –The Sanūsī of Cyrenaica, p 98.

<sup>63</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimat*, 1, p 213

<sup>64</sup> Faraj Abd al-Azīz Najm, *al-Qabīlah wa-al-Islām wa-al-dawlah*,

warring with each other. Moreover, they see in these noble personages civil, spiritual and scientific leadership. Everyone can bask under the shade of such leadership emanating from Islam. More than that, the affiliation under such religious call as Khaldun characterized, will generate the unification mode, and the group feeling, in addition to that, bury and Infanticide the hatchet.

The Senussi religious movement differed from the religious movement of Ibn Tumart (1080–1130) widely discussed by Ibn Khaldun as the religious dimension dominated Senussi alliances, whereas Ibn Tumart's movement consisted of both religious and tribal alliances. Moreover, Ibn Tumart would have failed if it was not for the support of his tribe the Masmuda.<sup>65</sup> This highlights the success of the Senussi movement, which consisted of no tribal roots, whereas other religious callings analysed by Ibn Khaldun failed such as the Tawbadhri movement in the Sus region area and Khaled Aldrius movement in the Abbasid era.<sup>66</sup> In my opinion, the issue is a question of Sheikh al-Sanusi understands of the true reality, namely the importance of asabiyya for the success of his reform project, in addition to that, the overwhelming religio-spiritual glow that the Senussi Order has brought to the area, and unification of the people toward one objective as Ibn Khaldun mentioned<sup>67</sup> had all played strong role in deepening the root of the new asabiyya. Ibn Khaldun points out that both the Idrisids (789- 974) and the 'Ubaydi (909–1171) in the history of the Islamic Maghreb were aware of this truth and thus succeeded in establishing powerful states.<sup>68</sup> In comparison, the experiences of Khaled Aldrius and Tawbadhri failed due to their failure to grasp this truth. Similarly, the absence of a united central authority in modern Libya has created a vacuum for which the tribes are awaiting someone to fill, which is what Sheikh al-Sanusi did in the past.

This was the religio-political entity that rapidly evolved partly under the auspices of the ruling Ottoman authorities who did not perceive in this movement a threat to their rule. The Senussi movement gained in influence and momentum until there was practically a state within a

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<sup>65</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat 1. P 272

<sup>66</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat 1. P 271-273

<sup>67</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat 1. P 272

<sup>68</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat 1. P 213

state. It was not long in the running that Sheikh Mohammed bin Ali al-Sanusi was recognised by the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid (1839-1861 AD) in 1855 AD as the leader of an independent emirate.<sup>69</sup>

Sheikh al-Sanusi's influence grew immensely in Jaghbub (later, the centre of the Senussi Tariqah) to the extent that he became the undisputed master of the desert. This did not change with he relations with the state, rather the Ottomans governors in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania would address him with affection and were keen to cultivate his friendship<sup>70</sup> until his death in 1859 AD.<sup>71</sup> Such empowerment of the Senussi movement facilitated a smooth transition of power after the withdrawal of the Ottomans in 1912 AD and their defeat at the hands of the Italians. It is inevitable, according to the Khaldunian framework that the movement transforms organizationally from a nomadic framework (Jaghbub) to urban centres (Benghazi, Derna, and Tripoli) in order to adopt forms of different modern political systems as opposed to nomadic systems in order to oversee the State as a result of the political vacuum left by the Ottomans. Moreover, it was a means to control the reins of the military leadership to advance a Jihad movement against the Italians from 1911-1947 AD under the leadership of Mohamed Idris al-Sanusi.<sup>72</sup> Such a move took advantage of the spiritual influence and the tribal network established by the Senussis with all Libyan tribes. It is worth noting the striking congruence between Khaldunian theory for the emergence of a monarchy in this particular stage of Libyan history, and the seamless transformation from a nomadic to urban system in a completely compatible integrative process according to al-Jaberi.<sup>73</sup> This is seen when the phase of the Senussi asabiyya was succeeded by

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<sup>69</sup> N. A. Ziadeh, *Sanusiyah: A Study of a Revivalist Movement in Islam*, Brill, 1958, p 211.

<sup>70</sup> As evidence on the status the Ottoman governor of Benghazi, Ali Kamali Pasha, who considered himself: first and foremost a servant to Sheikh Sanusi, and one his followers, only then an Ottoman servant and governor. Benghazi over history, see: M Bāzāmah, *Ibid*, p 292.

<sup>71</sup> Muḥammad Fu'ād Shukrī, *al-Sanūsīyah dīn wa-dawlah*, Cairo : Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1963, p 73-74

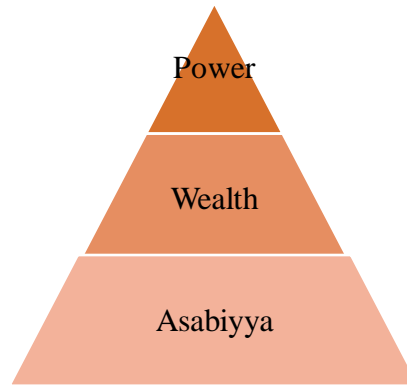
<sup>72</sup> Idris al-Sanusi was appointed in the year 1922 the Emir of Cyrenaica according to an agreement between Libyan Tribes. After his return from exile in the year 1944 he founded the "The Cyrenaica National Front" before he changed it to "the Cyrenaica National Congress." However, he did never spiritually left the Senussi Tariqah.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimat*. 1. P 120

the phase of a nation, which managed to establish, without any opposition, a monarchy in 1951 AD at the hand of Idris al-Sanusi, who was crowned king of Libya on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1951.

The Senussi religious movement played a prominent role, as we have seen, in uniting Libya under the rule of a single king. However, this asabiyya moved to the city and quickly transformed into what Ibn Khaldun explained in the third chapter, “that some of the royal quorum of the state might dispense with [the need of] asabiyya.”<sup>74</sup> This attitude marked the decline in Senussi tribal relations after the emergence of political institutions in the modern State. This undermines, according to Khaldunian analysis, the strong nomadic alliances upon which the state depended, which ultimately weakened the Senussi asabiyya, especially with the emergence of what Ibn Khaldun anticipated under such circumstances regarding dualism in the relationship between power and wealth.<sup>75</sup> This is when certain groups supporting the monarchy work towards undermining the existing asabiyya in favour of establishing a new form asabiyya in its place, thereby isolating the king from his public influence. This is precisely what transpired shortly after the establishment of the monarchy whereby power became concentrated among the relatives of the king and his allies. In light of the financial boom resulting from oil revenues, such persons saw this as an opportunity to reproduce the same relations with the social circles from which they descended in an attempt to create new asabiyyas in favour of their families and their friends.<sup>76</sup> King Idris became isolated in his palace far removed from his spiritual guides and subjects.

This rapid transformation in the structure of Senussi Asabiyya, and the failure to complete the three aspects of Khaldunian power (Asabiyya, Wealth, and Power (*Shawka*)) played a prominent role in the failure to ensure the sustainability of new Senussi



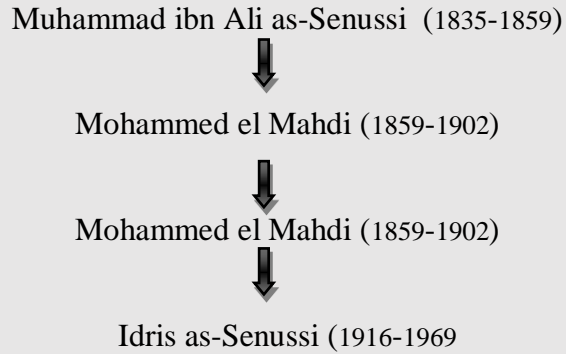
<sup>74</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat. 1. P 164

<sup>75</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat. 1. P 284

<sup>76</sup> Muḥammad ‘Uthmān Ṣayd, Maḥaṭṭāt min tārikh Lībyā, Rabat: Talha Publication house, 1996, p 285-286



system. King Idris al-Sanusi, despite his upbringing and deep religious convictions, failed to strengthen the security apparatus (*Shawka*) to impose his control over the country, and failed to provide the physical resources necessary to maintain the prestige of the system. However the failure of King Idris was due to the looming independence and its consequences, among them was the institutional vacuum as pointed out by Tunisian president Habib Bourguiba.<sup>77</sup> All of these factors led to the dissolution of the bonds of Senussi asabiyya in its fourth generation as theorised by Ibn Khaldun, and its demise with the emergence of the first rebel, according to Ibn Khaldun, as represented by way of a coup by a group of junior officers after exactly 126 years after (1843-1969 AD) also as anticipate by Ibn Khaldun.



## 6 – Gaddafi's Libya and his State Model

After only four months of the warning to the Senussi monarchy by the Tunisian President, on September 1, 1969 AD, a group of young officers led by Lieutenant Muammar Gaddafi launched a successful coup toppling King Idris al-Sanusi declaring the beginning of a new era in the history of Libya. One may argue that this was a natural outcome given the atmosphere prevailing in both Egypt and Algeria, which were full of ideas regarding the socialist revolution. This environment played a prominent role in the maturation of the Libyan coup project. However, the nature of the new system of monarchy also played, as earlier explained, a role in facilitating this transformation. Under the monarchy, Libya rapidly sought to modernise its system of governance thus overlooking the role of asabiyya, tribalism, and

<sup>77</sup> al-Mawlidī Aḥmar, the Problem of the new-born Libyan state, Arab centre for research and Policy studies, 14 June, 2011. <http://www.dohainstitute.org/release/ab9f1425-78d2-4751-a931-ba04996cefcc>

religious call in the establishment of a united Libya for the first time in the history of Libya.

Coup leader Muammar Gaddafi worked towards exploiting these factors to consolidate his rule despite heralding from the marginalized Gaddadfa tribe, which did not have a glorious historic background compared with other tribes, especially in the last two hundred years.<sup>78</sup> Although Gaddafi was opposed to the tribal framework during the beginning of his reign, he nevertheless successfully sought to develop the logic of a clan State (pertaining predominantly to the Al-Gaddadfa tribe). After Gaddafi realised that his tribe was unable to exercise control over other Libyan tribes without employing the clan component. He therefore employed it within the framework of intimidation and invitation sometimes with money and gifts, other times through the force of arms. This is reflected in the tribal alliances (*Íilf*) forged by Gaddafi in the beginning of his reign between his tribe and the tribes of Magarha, Werfella, and Al-Awagir<sup>79</sup> under the umbrella of the Gaddadfa tribe, which become known as the “tribe of the state.” With this began a third asabiyya cycle that united the four tribes from which was drafted the organs of the State in accordance with the concept of the “State tribe.” By this means, Gaddafi managed to arrange the tribal affairs of the State thus ensuring the sustainability of his ‘State tribe’.<sup>80</sup>

Gaddafi then started to expand the scope of alliances (*Íilf*) by including all tribes within the ‘State tribe’ (thus including and obliging the tribes to follow the system). He achieved this through a variety of mechanisms notably the Revolutionary Committees and People’s Congresses, and the involvement of the tribes therein to ensure their allegiance (*walÉ*) to his clan. Gaddafi associated the interests of the tribes with that institution to control both the fate of society and balance of power. This strategy proved successful as the tribal leaders eastward, westward and southward saw in its local natural extension of the authority of the leader of the largest clan (the head of the regime). By such means, Gaddafi managed to deal with the two Libyan dilemmas:

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<sup>78</sup> Faraj, Ibid, p

<sup>79</sup> Aḥmar, al-Judhūr al-ijtimāyah lil-dawlah al-ḥadīthah fī Lībyā, , p 289.

<sup>80</sup> Libyan Political project and the danger of case of State of the tribe, The New Libya New Paper 30.08.2011

- 1- The difficulty of exercising control over the tribes.
- 2- The fragmentation of the society into varied and at times opposing regional and tribal groups, along with the absence of a central authority or national unity.

Tribal influence in the political process spread unofficially through institutions such as the People's Congresses and People's Committees, through a system of promotions and the people's selection since 1977AD. Gaddafi considered these institutions the best means to rule the masses. And represented the official national umbrella for all forces in Libya, with a practical focus on tribal leadership in each region. Gaddafi's approach also sought to create a popular social leadership that extends across the nation.<sup>81</sup>

To increase the loyalty of the tribes to the regime and the Gaddadfa tribe, Gaddafi took several measures to prop up the tribes, including the 1990 law, which grants each tribe exclusive ownership of land that was commonly theirs in the past, but has become part of the urban real estate space. In 1994, in what appears to be congruent with the Khaldunian framework, Gaddafi appeared to be open to different *asabiyyas* by means of the establishment of popular committees for social leaders, i.e. tribal leaders. The fruits of this strategy are clearly seen in the 1997 signing of tribal leaders of what was known as the "document of honour" under which they pledged allegiance to the revolutionary system, and to unite against any clan or tribe attempting armed opposition to the regime.<sup>82</sup> This openness was only a formality. The true purpose, according to Ibn Khaldun, was ensuring the monopoly of glory,<sup>83</sup> i.e. preventing the establishment of any tribal leadership of excelling outside of the general framework of Gaddafi's regime. Perhaps the consequence of the Khaldunian principle of monopoly glory is for the leader to deflect any party that would constitute a threat to his leadership.<sup>84</sup> As such, Gaddafi was often

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<sup>81</sup> See the report of Roula Al-Khatib on Arabiya Net:  
<http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/>

<sup>82</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2010 — Libya Country Report. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009, p.11. at: [http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/fileadmin/pdf/Gutachten\\_BTI2010/MENA/Libya.pdf](http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/fileadmin/pdf/Gutachten_BTI2010/MENA/Libya.pdf), Accessed: 201117/5/

<sup>83</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat. 1 p 281

<sup>84</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat 1. P 284

preoccupied with internal disputes between tribes in order to tighten his grip on power.

Throughout his forty-year reign, Colonel Gaddafi formed a rival network of institutions, which he manipulated to prevent the emergence of any rival.<sup>85</sup> Perhaps the feuds that have arisen between the Arabs and the tribes of Tebou in the south and among the tribes of Masrata, Tawergha and Zintan are evidence of the success of this policy. Ibn Khaldun considered this the physical manifestations of the rule of the individual. Whilst other tribes were busy feuding, the influence of the Gaddadfa tribe quietly increased, and power became increasingly concentrated in the hands of its members. In 1976, of the 12 members of the Revolutionary Command Council,<sup>86</sup> who belonged to oppressed or marginalized groups from different tribes, only four remained; everyone was replaced by people from the city of Sirte (Gaddadfa's stronghold), i.e. members of the Gaddafi's Gaddadfa tribe.<sup>87</sup>

Most of the important administrative tasks were entrusted to members of this tribe. From here began the process of disintegration of the asabiyya upon which the state originally began. This is reflected in Gaddafi's marginalization of the second man in the State Abdessalam Jalloud, leader of the Magarha tribe. Gaddafi completely removed the entire tribe from all authority in 1992<sup>88</sup> Soon after relations with the Al-Awagir tribe deteriorated, which secured the loyalty of eastern Libya to him.

At the same time, after the dissolution of the Libyan army, military tasks were entrusted to the three sons of Gaddafi (Mutassim, Khamis, and Hannibal), who lead the elite units, mercenaries, (African Islamic Battalion), which was established after the decision to disband the army in 1975AD. This decision was made after the coup attempt of Omar Meheshi. This led Gaddafi to believe that the army represented the biggest threat to his influence, so he dissolved it under the name of

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<sup>85</sup> Tripoli witness: tribalism and threat of conscription,  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13380525> Accessed: 15/05/2011  
11:39

<sup>86</sup> In the year of the coup 1969, they were 12 captain aged 27 to 29 years old.

<sup>87</sup> Ali bin Saad, Pro-Gaddafi Libya and the amplifying the tribes role.

<sup>88</sup> Libya - The Political Perspective: Will Qadhafi Regime Survive?, in APS Review Oil Market Trends, 2 July 2001.

an “Armed People” as an alternative,<sup>89</sup> where the public were trained to use weapons.<sup>90</sup> Doubtless, this initiative remained under the control and domination of the regime, and the guardianship of loyalists from militias and private security forces headed by his sons or members of his tribe, at the expense of the country’s official army.<sup>91</sup> By this the army completely transformed, as predicted by Ibn Khaldun,<sup>92</sup> to secret mercenaries and militias named the “People’s Leaders”, which had the mandate to observe and protect neighbourhoods in the cities.<sup>93</sup> They also closely monitored the bilateral relations between the tribes. They watched everyone, even each other. They were instrumental in realising the state of security throughout Libya during the reign of Gaddafi. Libya had an approximate 200 thousand soldiers, mostly within the civilian population, for a population not exceeding six million.<sup>94</sup>

At this juncture, it is worth noting the comparison conducted by Ibn Khaldun between a true and false calling. The first relies on the principles of religion to impose its power and prestige over the state. It requires valour (force) to deter the outlaws.<sup>95</sup> This is represented in the context of Senussi Libya. Whereas, a false calling relied on force, oppression, hidden alliances, and money to buy the loyalty of the community. In such a calling, there are rampant security services and militias. It gives no importance to the morality of its policies. Such is reflected in the contemporary history of Colonel Gaddafi’s Libya.

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<sup>89</sup> Oye Ogunbadejo, “Qaddafi’s North African Design”, International Security, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Summer, 1983), p. 156 The MIT Press Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2538490>. Accessed: 13/05/2011 11:57

<sup>90</sup> The value of the arms reached approximately \$13 billion USD, which is far greater than the needs of an army of 55 thousand troops in that period. This justifies the chaotic state of security in which Libya is currently drowned in. All Libyans known how to use weapons and all possess a variety of them. See; David Gritten, key figures in libya’s rebel council ,At: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12698562> Accessed: 15/05/2011 12:06

<sup>91</sup> Pargeter, Alice, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012, p 112; Davis, Brian Lee, *Qaddafi, Terrorism, and the Origins of the U.S. Attack on Libya*. New York, 1990, p 34.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimat*, 1, p 213

<sup>93</sup> Aḥmar, al-Judhūr al-ijtimāyah lil-dawlah al-ḥadīthah fī Lībyā, p 116.

<sup>94</sup> Aḥmar, *Ibid*, p 218

<sup>95</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimat* 1. P 299

Gaddafi's system of governance designed to ensure his authority and the dominance of his tribe, drastically impacted on the State. For most of the Gaddafi era, the State was represented by its despotic leader due to the absence of any meaningful state institution. This resulted in Gaddafi's advancement of the tribal framework to that of limited authority as a means to negotiate with the population. This is a stark contrast with the new-born institutions left by the Senussis, and his own political slogan "the tent triumphs over the palace."

Gaddafi implemented a political process that was completely opposite to that suggested by Ibn Khaldun regarding the inevitability of the transition from nomadism (*Badawa*) to urbanism (*Hadar*),<sup>96</sup> and not vice versa! This perhaps explains the profound strangeness of Gaddafi and his actions, and the embarrassment that he caused to the states he visited. Even the revolutionary committees he founded for which he chose the slogan "committees everywhere" did not transform into effective independent institutions. Its members were not constrained to any bureaucratic system in which competencies are gradually formed and officials elected. Rather, it was a political system based on kinship, friendships, and certain interests.<sup>97</sup>

The state distribution mechanism was conditional on political loyalty by tribal leaders. This resulted in a renewal of the tribal system, which generated fierce competition and dangerous hostilities. It emphasized tribal identity and rendered the tribe instrumental in receiving social demands and achieving personal ambitions.<sup>98</sup> The majority of Libyans depended on their tribes for protection, secure their rights, and find employment, which all depended on the strength of the tribe or the degree of closeness or loyalty to the ruling regime. In this way, Gaddafi governed the redistribution of wealth and all economic opportunities to prevent the development of any oppositional political force. Nothing remained for those seeking wealth and prestige except loyalty to the leader and submission to his authority.<sup>99</sup>

The three factors of a monarchy (Asabiyya, Wealth, Power) were capable of carrying the state, but for a very brief period. The

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<sup>96</sup> See; Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimat* 1. p 190, 290, 296

<sup>97</sup> Aḥmar, *Ibid*, p 221

<sup>98</sup> Ali bin Saad, *Pro-Gaddafi Libya and the amplifying the tribes role*

<sup>99</sup> Aḥmar, *Ibid*, p 226.

Khaldunian equation began to unravel after the asabiyya concentrated in the Gaddadfa tribe, and superficially in the Werfella tribe, and the exit of the powerful Al-Awagir and Magarha tribes from political influence. The public committees and bodies did not fill the vacuum that occurred in the asabiyya due to its superficial structure, and its association with wealth and profit more so than its relations being based on blood or religion, as identified by Ibn Khaldun.

The second pillar (wealth) also played a role in disrupting the system, which disturbed the balance of force and wealth by means of the extravagance of the bureaucratic class (Gaddadfa) according to the Khaldunian description.<sup>100</sup> Gaddadfa, especially Gaddafi's four sons (Hannibal, Mutassim, Al-Saadi, and Saif al-Arab) lived a life of corruption and luxury squandering billions. The global communications revolution allowed the Libyan people to see the true face of its government.

Similarly, Power (*Shawka*) played a part in the demise of the regime, whereby Libya, in the late stages of the Gaddafi era, was difficult to control, as predicted by Ibn Khaldun,<sup>101</sup> due to its lack of order and dependence on the whim of Gaddafi's sons. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to think about human and legal rights, and nothing was open and transparent. Perhaps the most important event reflecting this predicament is the event of the Abu Salim prison in 1996, in which more than 1,200 prisoners were murdered. This event passed without Libyans being able to express their right to know the truth about what happened.

The system was waiting for what Ibn Khaldun called the 'Muṭālib' (Enemy), which was achieved in the revolution of 17 February that was launched from the city of Benghazi. Benghazi was controlled by the big and powerful Al-Awagir tribe, which was politically marginalized after being distanced from the ruling asabiyya. Furthermore, they were materially deprived due to the continued unease of the Gaddafi regime. The Al-Awagir tribe were also physically persecuted where most of the dead from the Abu Salim prison incident belonged to them. Another factor that led to the decay of the ruling asabiyya, according to Khaldunian description, is how

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<sup>100</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat p 1.284

<sup>101</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimat p 1.312

quickly the remaining members of the Revolutionary Council<sup>102</sup> turned on Gaddafi at the beginning of the revolution, the rejection of the tribes, who felt marginalised in the political system, as well as the futility of Gaddafi desperate calls for aid and rescue.<sup>103</sup>

## 7 - Conclusion

So many historians has tried to came up with reasonable understanding the development of the modern Libyan state, such as al-Mawlidi Aḥmar, who has stressed that the modern history of Libya is characterized with competition of three type of chieftains *ZaĒmat*, the warrior Bedouin leadership, the Sufi leadership, and the military-bureaucratic leadership, without giving observed attention to the role Ibn Khaldun theories mechanism. In our view, and After this brief account of the history of modern Libya and the development of the state according to a Khaldunian reading based on the principle of *asabiyya*, we can conclude that Ibn Khaldun theories was more apparent in the emergence of modern Libyan state, and it was metaphorically present in the three phases of *asabiyya* that governed modern Libya (the Karamanlis, Senussis, and Gaddafi). This is so by virtue of the manifestation of the concept of *asabiyya* and its mechanisms. The mechanisms of *asabiyya* constituted the driving force of the state and producer of urbanization in the eras of the Karamanlis and Senussis and managed to create a will of co-existence. It became the dominant *asabiyya* that guided the gradual and rational transition from a nomadic to urban framework. However, when the equation was reversed in the Gaddafi era, the urban framework became dominated by the nomadic wherein the role of religious call and moral values were ignored. This resulted in the nomadic lifestyle detracting from the achievements of urbanisation. *Asabiyya* was thus transformed into a destructive as opposed to constructive force as theorised by Ibn Khaldun. Perhaps what is transpiring now in Libya in regards to lawlessness and tribal rivalry is an accurate translation of what it means for the nomadism cultivated by Gaddafi over a period of 42 years to dominate urbanism.

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<sup>102</sup> Among them the members of Revolution Council Abd-Fattah Younis, and Abdessalam Jalloud .

<sup>103</sup> See Gaddafi speech on 22 February 2011



As for concept of the cycles of asabiyya and its lifespan according to Ibn Khaldun, this paper applied the interpretation proposed by al-Jabiri, which provides for the transition of the presidency/authority from one specific asabiyya to its like within a single broader asabiyya. These phases are subjected, according to Ibn Khaldun, to a finite lifespan. The study period of this paper reveals the surprising accuracy of this Khaldunian theory. We observed that the Karamanli asabiyya lasted 124 years and ended in the fourth generation as estimated by Ibn Khaldun. History also bears witness that the Senussi asabiyya lasted 126 years and also ended it its fourth generation. Whereas the Arab Spring revolutions precipitated the end of the third period of asabiyya (the Gaddafi era). Perhaps the contradictions experienced by Gaddafi Libya and the distortions that inflicted the tribal structure require further analysis to extract thereof other congruencies with Khaldunian theory.

As for religious calling talked about by Ibn Khaldun in Chapter five of the *Muqaddimah* that entrusted the role of the establishment and consolidation of asabiyya, for which Ibn Khaldun conducted a large number of comparisons between the history of intellectual movements from the Muslim West and East, it manifested in the materialized in the Senussi Asabiyya. The Algerian Senussi's managed to extend their religious followed by their political influence to all parts of Libya. Libya had not witnessed in the Karamanli era nor in the Gaddafi era what was witnessed in the Senussi era in terms of tribal consensus and cooperation. According to the Khaldunian standard for the success of these callings, we can say with certainty that the Senussi asabiyya is among the successful asabiyyas in line with the successful experiences of the Hashemite, Ibn Tumart, Ubaydi, and Idrisid movements among others. The sole secret behind the success of Senussi Asabiyya and all other successful models presented by Ibn Khaldun, is their awareness of the role of asabiyya and its proper management and conservation.

As for the end of the asabiyya and its causes, the combined factors identified by Ibn Khaldun for the demise of a State were present in all three phases of Libyan asabiyya. Senussi asabiyya came apart with its rapid and ill calculated transition from a nomadic to urban lifestyle, whereas the asabiyya is Gaddafi's era unravelled when the tribes turned on the Gaddadfa tribe, with only the Werfella tribe remaining in support, and who are nowadays suffering for it. Furthermore, the economic decay and the state of luxury and opulence that afflicted the

Karamanli and Gaddafi states, in addition to the life of convenience and comfort lived by the ruling class, and Gaddafi's monopoly of glory were central factors associated with the unravelling of their respective asabiyyas.

Lastly, we would like to note that any political process in modern Libya that strays from the Khaldunian factors hitherto referred to in the construction of an asabiyya and its advancement is doomed to fail. The Libyan people are by their nature tribal. The increasing role and influence of the tribe after the revolution demands of those interested and involved in Libyan politics a deep insight of the reality of affairs in order to attempt real and meaningful national reconciliation. This is necessary to restore dignity to the large Werfella tribe and ensure its involvement in the political future of Libya. In addition, the Gaddadfa tribe and the tribes of Tebou, Amazigh, and Tuareg that were marginalized after the revolution should be given appropriate political roles. Libya must be concerned with developing a social contract (asabiyya) based on mutual respect and forget past transgressions, while ensuring adequate protections for this new asabiyyas explained by Ibn Khaldun. It must uphold religious values, justice, science, and diplomacy, and focus on their shared history, in addition to other factors Ibn Khaldun termed as 'dominant'.