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Volume 26 of *al-Karmil* opens with Jeries Khoury's article "Nizār Qabbānī and Shahrayār between Identification and Schism." Through the observation of the use of Shahrayār as a symbol in Nizār Qabbānī's poetry, Khoury have noticed that the poet could not develop this symbol or take it out of its limited indicative denotative circle. He used it for the first time in a poem in 1967, and since then it has remained confined in one narrow circle as a symbol of the Arab backwardness, and evidence to the Arab mentality that is characterized by its masculine, savage, violent and oppressive tendencies. This symbol does not contribute to the formation of the poetic indications in an essential way, because it is used in most of Qabbānī's poems in a superficial non-suggestive way. The general indications of the poem will not be affected even if the symbol is substituted or deleted from the poem. The symbolic use of Shahrayār in Qabbānī's poetry is lifeless, as the symbol has no specific characteristic that distinguishes it from other Arab symbols that the poet employed in his poetry. Actually, almost all of these symbols are used for the same aim, with the same meaning and in the same way. In this case, Shahrayār turns to be just another copy of other Arab heroes who represent the weakness of the Arabs culture in most of his poems.

In "The Shī'ite Poet Ibrāhīm bin Yaḥyā al-Āmilī (1741-1799): A Faithful Reflection of His Age," Khālid Sindāwī inquires the poetry of the Shī'ite poet Ibrāhīm bin Yaḥyā al-Āmilī, as a model of poetry in the Jabal Āmil region during the second half of the eighteenth century. This was a period of both revival and disaster for the region, a time from which extant poetic texts abound. The study shows that Ibrāhīm Yaḥyā was a talented and prolific poet, who belonged to a well-read and educated family. He was familiar with

the treasures of Arabic poetry, to which he reacted by composing pastiches in the *takhmīs* verse-form (pentastichic amplifications), an activity that helped him develop his own poetic skills. The poet composed poems dealing with most topics addressed by Arab poetry in general. The greater part of his poetry was devoted to depicting the political situation in his days in the Jabal 'Āmil region. He also wrote a great deal of religious poetry, in which he extolled the Prophet, his descendants and the Imāms of Twelver Shī'ism, and sang the virtues of visiting their shrines. His Shī'ite inclinations come through very clearly in his writings. The study found that Ibrāhīm Yaḥyā was influenced by the overall literary developments in his days. However, while he did imitate contemporary poets in his use of metaphorical embellishments and in the way some of his poems begin, these influences do not dominate his poetry, but rather play a functional role in it.

The next article is Ḥasīb Shihāda's "A Survey of Chadian Spoken Arabic" in which an attempt is made to touch upon the multilingual (over one hundred languages divided into ten families) and multiethnic (two hundred groups) situation in Chad in general and the relatively unknown Arabic dialect, mentioned above, in particular. Arabic is the second official language in Chad since 1996; French is the first. Most of the people of the north and east are Muslims who originally migrated from the Arab east and west in the 9th century, and they form today approximately 44% of the total population of 9 million, along with minority Christians (33%) and animists (23%). Due to natural or economical conditions people may change their language(s). There are about thirty Arabic dialects but not all the speakers of these dialects are of Arab origin. This northern Chadian Arabic is common to an area of half a million square kilometers and spoken by 200 hundred thousand

souls. These are islands of Arabic in the midst of African languages. Understandably, this Arabic is influenced by those languages as well as by French and Moroccan Arabic. For instance we find the foreign sounds [p], and [g]; likewise the sound [q] changes to [g] or [k] or [kh]. Some basic phonological and morphological features are presented as well as an alphabetical word list accompanied with the literary Arabic equivalents. Furthermore, a sample of this Arabic according to the Gospel of John 1:1-8 is attached. Finally, names of scholars who dealt with the subject in the past are indicated for those interested in further studies.

ʿUlā ʿUwayḍa's article "al-Sumayser's Image according to his Poetry," deals with the life and poetry of al-Sumayser, who moved to Granada after Al-Bireh's destruction and whose personality and poetry were a reflection of the political life of his time, and thus we can say that he was not only a poet, but also a political figure as well. His poetry may be divided into two sections, each reflects a certain period of his life. In the first period, he was an enthusiastic and rebellious poet who wrote harsh criticism; on the other hand, he appeared as a wise man that offered advice for his brethren by using oratorical style. Al-Sumayser pointed out political unrest, domestic disputes, wars and cleavages which tore Andalusia's image, and destroyed the country. He attacked social groups, like the Barbers, he warned kings of hibernation and drowning of selfishness of ruling. However, his voice disappeared in this chaos that controlled the country. He was characterized for his courage to criticize and berate sharply in order to rebuild the country and reform society. He may be considered a social reformer; his poetry calls for rebuilding the country and commends education, security and stability.

In "Of the Extratextual Sign in Memmi and Ben Jelloun," Robert Elbaz argues that the Maghrebian French novel is essentially a memorial novel, a novel of the origins and its primary obsession is to tell everything, to constitute the total book in which everything will be said on the fleeing past preceding the colonial fall. But this narrative project cannot be realized given unbridgeable gap between the signified and the signifier of this novel. The extra-textual sign so prevalent in this Text comes to compensate for its fundamental lack.

In his study "'Beware Men, They Are All Wild Animals': Arabic Feminist Literature: Challenge, Fight, and Repudiation," Ibrahim Taha argues that many Arab women writers have in recent years demonstrated a willingness to go on the offensive, rather than maintain the submissive image they have normally been associated with for a long time. One can certainly identify a new trend in women's literature, which thematically and aesthetically accords with the fundamental views of the world feminist movement. The key concepts of this trend are *challenge*, *fight*, and *repudiation*, which can be formulated as follows: challenge, the fundamental intention, is translated into action, which means an aggressive fight that leads to the repudiation of many social, religious, and sexual taboos. In respect of themes, the young generation of Arab women writers seems ready to challenge the patriarchal system vehemently and to combat social and religious norms and rules.