

SOME ASPECTS OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN LIBYA

By Dr. Gamal El Din El Danasouri

Libya, the country of transition par excellence; in terms of location, natural conditions as well as human activities, comprises restricted economies; namely the Jebel Akhdar and the Tripolitanian North, often likened to islands teeming with life dotted in a sea of sands of desolation. Interrupting the continuity of productive Libya, the vastness of these barren expanses has created for long an over-shadowing mode of a nomadic life, felt even in the deep recesses of sedentary life seemingly immune from its recurrent threats, which have broken out occasionally to engulf the distinctive settled life adopted in these inhabited localities. Thus, the coastal areas of Derna and Tolmeitha, as well as the dry farming areas of the third terrace in the region of Shahat, Beida and Messa in Cyrenaica; besides the coastal areas in the vicinity of Tripoli and eastern more humid parts of the Western Jebel, have represented the strongholds of a sedentary life based on a settled type of farming, successfully maintained even during periods of decadence. These centres of gravity in terms of population and production, include sub-centres of regional significance which contribute to the strengthening of their hold on their tributary areas. The motley of oases in the hinterland of the south, has functioned as havens for nomads roaming the desert tracts, besides their once vital role of catering for the desert caravans, especially where the oases are closely strung, such as the case in the Fezzan, which has been a tributary area of Tripolitania.

*Associate Professor of Geography, Faculty of Arts, Libyan University, Benghazi. Seconded by Ain Shams University, Cairo. Ph.D. from Kings College, Durham University, U.K. Author of "World Political Geography" and "Geography of Egypt" and several other contributions as research papers.

