

no exercise, to sleep frequently, to avoid sweating. By suitable clothing, by keeping out the sun and being in a breeze, not putting up heat production, a man can avoid sweating, but for a productive life in a hot country a man must be willing to sweat.'

Intellectual work requires will power, perseverance and time. Maltese can do as well as any other nation. The fact is that in the past ten years, a number of young people from the island have gone abroad and distinguished themselves in hard and exacting mental toil and have attained high honours. It is especially to the men and women who have been able to profit by long years of study at the University that the demand goes forth: 'Fructify your talents, turn your minds to the work to be done at home.'

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EDITORIAL

THE description of our only institution of higher learning as the Royal University of Malta sounds more ornamentally insular than really regal. But if our university were to be known instead as the University of Mediterranean Studies, our institution of higher learning would become immediately a focal point of European civilisation. Our university, like Malta, can be much greater than what it has been so far. It can expand and spread out. But before it can do so, it has to pool all its cultural and academic resources in order to produce the basis of a Mediterranean culture and civilisation. In other words, it is time we did justice to our national heritage without which no university can claim to have a distinctive character of its own.

Most of the eight departments in the Faculty of Arts are common to other universities. Therefore, as far as these departments go, no matter how individually good they may be, being common to all other universities, they confer no national character on our Alma Mater. Of these eight departments the two exceptions are the department of Maltese and that of History, but the latter only in so far it covers accumulation and assessment of new Maltese historical knowledge. These Chairs to which should be added a Chair of Maltese Archaeology, are Malta's contribution to linguistic and historical learning. But even these two departments, however useful and contributory they may be, can reach complete academic fulfilment only when they are integrated with the general background of a European, largely Mediterranean, civilisation. As Malta is situated at the centre of an Euro-African civilisation, no other university is more favourably situated for the pursuit of Mediterranean Studies. The next academic year will see the beginning of a foundation course of Mediterranean studies common to several degree courses. At the moment, we have not yet got all the tools in hand, but in time we shall have them. A foundation course of Mediterranean studies as a common background to

several degree courses must remain at an experimental stage for some years. But as we shall learn from our mistakes and as we shall acquire more tools and learn how to handle them, we shall also overcome the difficulties of our new undertaking. We can confidently look forward to a foundation course of Mediterranean studies which will enlarge the scope and research contribution of our university in the academic world. To make such a foundation course of Mediterranean studies possible and worthwhile also at the higher levels, the Council of the University will have to provide the necessary facilities creating the right atmosphere for research, the publication of departmental work and encourage scholarship without which no member of the teaching staff can do more than rehash trite facts which have ceased to be significant because other corrective facts have overshadowed their original importance. Academic scholarship must be compared not to a stagnant pool but to a fast moving stream which joins many a water source to the rich ocean. We cannot impress the world of learning at home and abroad by big words only. We have to record academic progress in terms of academic deeds which, in the world of learning, are the products of scientific research all the time on the go actively enriching its fields of enquiry with new assessment.

THE ARAB CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE IN THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

By ISSA I. NAOURI

BRIEF HISTORICAL NOTE

THE modern history of Jordan began with the arrival of Emir Abdullah Ibn Al-Hussein in the country, in 1921. Till then Jordan was a vast territory, mostly arid deserts, and thinly populated. Yet Emir Abdullah succeeded, in a short time, in establishing there a constitutional and democratic institution, and in eliminating the Beduin raids. He built an army that was considered to be one of the strongest armies of the area, for its discipline and high military qualities.

In 1946 a treaty was concluded between Jordan and Great Britain by which Jordan became a Kingdom, and King Abdullah mounted the throne. Until 1948 the population of Jordan – then called Transjordan – was only about four hundred thousand. The Palestine calamity arose in that year because of the foreign invasion that established there the state of Israel, leaving without support one million Arab refugees. These were expropriated of their houses, their orange groves and their fertile soil.

The Jordanian army – that counted then about 4,000 soldiers only – participated in the Palestine war in 1948 and succeeded in maintaining a big part of the territory. This part was united with Transjordan in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This unity was proclaimed on April 24th, 1950. Thus Palestinians and Transjordanians were fraternized in one loyalty, without any sort of difference in rights and obligations. With this unity the population of Jordan has increased to about two millions, now, a great part of which are refugees.

In 1951 King Abdullah died in Jerusalem, and in 1953 King Hussein Ibn Talal mounted the throne. Assuming the power at eighteen years of age, he has shown that he is an intrepid pilot of a small ship perturbed by various waves, holding the rudder with great skill, and always guiding the ship safely and surely to a secure harbour.

THE LITERARY MOVEMENT

Now, speaking about contemporary literature in Jordan we, naturally, refer to that of both Banks, Western and Eastern, of which Jordan is composed nowadays.