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Cultural and political impact on modern Kurdish poetry in Erbil

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Section One

1. The Introduction

1.1. Erbil – the past and the present (the general information about Erbil)

Erbil is the most ancient city in the history, and one of the oldest towns in the world that have been continuously inhabited¹. Erbil was the capital of an ancient northern Mesopotamian province and today is a capital of the federal Kurdistan Region. It is situated approximately 350 kilometers north of Baghdad. For a long period of time, this city, which is famous for its great civilization, defended itself and its citadel from the barbarian invaders². Erbil has been the center of culture and education in the region. Many famous scientists, historians and leaders were born in the city of the Erbil, such as:

1. Sultan Muzaffar ad-Din Kokburi (1163-1232)

The brother-in-law of Salahaddin, made Erbil his capital from 1190 until 1232 and constructed several buildings that can still be seen at the foot of the upper town³.

¹ M. Streck, *Irbil*, [in:] M.Th. Houtsma, *E. J. Brill's First Encyclopaedia of Islam 1913-1936*, vol. 3, New York 1987, pp. 521-523.

² Fayzi, G. Soran, *Bari Adebî Kudi le Shari Hewlêr*, Erbil 2006, p. 229. Also see: B. Yarali, *naira ıla Arbil bayna al-ams u al-yawm*, Erbil 2008, p. 9-10.

³ D. Sourdel, *Irbil*, [w:] *Encyclopédie de l'Islam. Nouvelle Édition*, vol. 4, Leiden–Paris 1978, p. 80.

Kokburi was also responsible for developing Erbil an important centre of culture and learning. He was the first ruler to patronize the previously unofficial Mawlid al Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet Mohammed) festival⁴. Some historians refer to this time period as the “Golden Age of Erbil “ Soon after his death in 1232, the lower city was laid waste by the Mongols and this period ended⁵.

2. Ibn Al-Mustawfi (1169-1239)

Ahmed bin Mubarak bin Mauhub Al-Erbili was born in Erbil in 1169. Studied the science of Koran and literature in Erbil, wrote poetry and prose, his home became the place of scientists’ gatherings. He was well versed in Islamic law, language, military sciences, and poetical works. He was a judge of the Erbil state during the rule of Abbasid. He died in 1239. His masterpiece is the (Erbil History⁶) in four volumes.

3. Ibn Khelekan (1211-1282)

Ibn Khallikan was a Kurdish Muslim scholar of the 13th century. Born in Erbil in 1211, Khallikan was well-educated in Islamic law, History and Language. His most famous book is *Waffiyat Al-A’yan*⁷ (The Obituaries of Eminent Men). His book serves as a valuable source for his contemporaries and contains excerpts from earlier biographies no longer extant⁸.

1.2. The most important historical sites in Erbil

Erbil has a lot of ancient archaeological places. The most important are as follows:

1. Erbil Castle:

The castle is situated in the centre of Erbil, in the place where the city was originally established. The cuneiform historical texts found in the castle can be traced back to the remains or Assyrian. Erbil Castle was surrounded by walls in the Atabegian Period (1102-1210) B.C. Its total area is (60 000 m), (45 m) high and its diameter is (364 m).

2. Choly Minaret (Al-Muzaffariyya Minaret):

⁴ H. Nicholson, D. Nicolle, *God’s Warriors*, New York. 2006, p. 17.

⁵ Al-Yaqoobi, D. Michelmore, D.R. Khasraw Tawfiq, *Highlights of Erbil Citadel. History and Architecture*, Erbil 2012, p. 39.

⁶ Ibn Al Mustawfi, in his book *Tarikh Erbil: Nabahat al Balad al Khamil biman Waradahu minal Amathil*, talks about the history of the administration in Erbil at the time of the Abbasians.

⁷ *Ibn Khallikan’s Biographical Dictionary*, London 1842-1871, 4 Volumes, New York, Reprinted 1961.

⁸ *Ibn-Khallikan*, [in:] *Encyclopedia Britannica Article*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/280795/> [12.12.2014].

It is located west of Erbil and was originally a mosque. It was named after the ruler – Muzaffar ad-Din Kokburi. It's (37) m high and dates back to (1123-1163 A.D.).

Erbil City is a strategic place of crucial importance for Iraqi Kurdistan Region since it is surrounded by three important nations – the Turkish, Persian and Arabic. In Erbil most of Iraqi, Kurdish, Turkish, Assyrian and Islamic Political Parties have their headquarters. The community in the Erbil is a tribal society and is composed of numerous Kurdish tribes. The most important Kurdish tribes in Erbil are: Dize'i, Surchi, Gerdi, Herki, Barzani, Shirwani, Baradusti, Zrari, Kheyliani, Khošnâw, Piran, Siyan, Blbas⁹.

1.3. Cultural life in Erbil

Erbil became a governorate on 1st April 1923 according to Act No. 5307 issued by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior¹⁰. Erbil was established as the capital of the Kurdish Autonomous Region in 1970 and its position as the seat of the Kurdistan Regional Government is enshrined in the Iraqi constitution of 2005. The Citadel lies at the core of the rapidly expanding modern city and will be re-established as its cultural hub as a result of the Erbil Citadel revitalization Project.

As it is referred to previously, that there are many historical places in Erbil that discriminate it from other cities. Erbil can be considered as a multi-cultural city. There are different nationalities and religions in Erbil, like, Moslems, Christians, and other minorities like Turkmanians, Ashurians, Arabs and others as well.

There is the greatest mother University in Erbil, named Salahaddin University which previously was named as Sulaymania University which has been established in 1968 in Sulaymania City, then it had been transformed to Erbil City in 1981, in addition to other Universities.

There are several international and national organizations in addition to many literary, artistic, teaching and journalistic establishments. There are also many literary and cultural centers and many publishing centers of books, cinematic shows, university and central libraries. Mass media channels that have been produced in Erbil in 1958 and hundreds of journals that cannot be numerated which is necessary to document them, the most famous is Tishk (1969-1970), Roshinbir (1973), Chya (1970-1971), Karwan (1982) and since 1990-1991 that had been published in Erbil more than fifty newspapers and magazines like for example Kurdistani Nwe, Rizgari, Brayati, Gulan, Turkmen Eli, Midya, Hawler, Hangaw, Regay Kurdistan, Haremi Kurdistan, Hawsang, Rasan, Ayinda and the magazines include Tishki Zanko, Matin, Duhok, Khani, Peshmarga,

⁹ Muhammad-Amin Zaki, *Khulasat T'rikh al-Kurd w Kurdistan*, Baghdad 1939, p. 399-410.

¹⁰ T. Kjeilen, *Irbil*, [in:] Encyclopaedia of the Orient, <http://looklex.com/e.o/irbil.htm> [10.12.2014].

Dangi Zana, Nishtiman, Roshnbiri Nwe, Payami Rasti, Payami Mamosta, Karwan, Zagros, Bangi Haq, Kalapuri Kurd, Hazarmerd, Hang, Rebazi Nwe.

The cultural situation of the city along the production of mass Media role concerning journals and Magazines had played great role in enlarging the educated circle and contributed in rising the ideas and conscious development for the necessity of the establishment and developing the cultural and literary movement in Erbil City¹¹.

Section Two

2.1. Political situation and its impact on the poets from Erbil

As with national movements, the poetry of Erbil is highly politicized and mobilized for the Kurdish cause.

On 11 March, 1970, the Autonomy Accord Agreement was signed between the Kurdish liberation movement and the central government which proclaimed Erbil the capital of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region. Under the wide autonomy which the Kurds of Iraq enjoy, Kurdish writing has moved one step forward, resulting in many years of peace in Kurdistan. This peace gave rise to an extensive cultural and literary movement with a surge of publication of newspapers, magazines and books. Cultural organizations were formed, among others, the association for Kurdish authors¹².

In March 1974 the war between the Kurdish liberation movement and the central government broke out again. The period of peace for Kurds in Iraq came to an end. Four years and political disturbances affected virtually all aspects of Kurdish life. Many activists and intellectuals fled towards the borders of Iran. The war ended one year after, with the capitulation of the liberation movement in March 1975, as a result of an international conspiracy where Iraq and Iran were the two obvious oppositional parties. In 1976 the Kurds again took up the armed struggle in South-Kurdistan, and later also in other parts of Kurdistan¹³.

The political situation and the armed liberation movement in Kurdistan strengthened the political direction of Kurdish poetry as far as the choice of themes is con-

¹¹ Ibrahim Khalil Al-alaf, *Al-bawakir al-ula l-nashat al-sahafa al-kurdiya fi Arbil*, <http://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/content/print/73947.html> [10.12.2014].

¹² R. Sabir, K. Mirawdeli, S. Watts, *Modern Kurdish poetry An Anthology & Introduction*, Uppsala 2006, p. 25.

¹³ F. Shakely, *Classic and Modern Kurdish Poetry*, Initiative for Human Rights in Kurdistan. Documentation of the International Conference on Human Rights in Kurdistan, Bremen, 14-16 April 1989, p. 49-59.

cerned. Despite the fact that Modernism in itself became a goal for some of these poets, their interest in political issues grew¹⁴.

All these political events have contributed strongly to Kurdish literature. The new generation of about 30 young poets who emerged at the beginning of the 70s grew up under these conditions and were of course greatly affected by it¹⁵.

2.2. The poetry movement in Erbil

In the middle of the 20th century Kurdish literature and especially poetry in Erbil city underwent major changes and reached a new stage. It was an important step for Kurdish literature because during the second half of the last century, the political and the ideological changes, established an effective and a stable base for the present and future time and contributed to the enrichment of the Kurdish literature.

Among the contemporary Kurdish literary movements, many groups and literary movements have appeared in Erbil City in Eighties and Nineties of 20th century. These movements have outstanding roles in renewing Kurdish literature. These groups are called:

1. The *Taliekayan*¹⁶ (Pioneering) Group,
2. The *Weran* (destroyed) Group,

These are the outstanding literary and cultural movements in Erbil City in which these political and cultural causes resulted in the establishment of these literary movements. Lights are shed on the role and impact of these groups in Erbil City in such era.

2.3. Taliekayan (The Pioneering) Group

It is the most famous cultural and literary group that appeared during Eighties. The political situation at that time in Iraq and Erbil was very complicated and the authority at that time did not give a chance to any other groups (except their own) to work. This led to the appearance of these groups on a condition that they will no longer accept politics or political authority to intrude themselves in literature or literary activities. They just wanted to free poetry and other literary forms from Politics¹⁷.

¹⁴ R. Sabir, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

¹⁵ F. Shakely, *op. cit.*

¹⁶ The naming process of this group in the world of Kurdish culture had taken various ways like (Hawlêr School) in which many writers started to write, but each time had been published under different title like, Pioneer, Formalism etc. (Ahmed Mira 131) Dilshad Abdulla, Mahmood Zamdar, Abbas Abdulla Yusuf, Jalal Barzinji and Hashim Sarraj). These were the most outstanding names of the first Group in Eighties.

¹⁷ A. Mira, *Karigeri Bzutnewe Roshnbiri u Adebîye kurdiyekan Leser Komelgay kurdi- bashuri Kurdistan 1970-2003*, Sulaymani 2010, p. 130-132.

Characteristic features of the poem of the Pioneering Group in Erbil City:

1. The use of Symbols and signs in their poems.
2. Grammatically speaking, the poetic texts of this group was specific and different from the grammar of the poems written in seventies.
3. Linguistically speaking, many changes take place concerning the purification of language in the Eighties from the one used previously. It was a free kind of language, unconscious, dreamy, and daring style.
4. Complexity in portraying the poetic feature.
5. It has an urban style for they were obliged to stay away from villages because of the complex political situation in Kurdistan.
6. Due to their pessimistic atmosphere, these poets were different, their poems reveal their agonies and problems¹⁸.

2.4. Weran Group

This group consists several poets and writers who establish new movement after spring of 1991 in Erbil City. They have new ideas in their Kurdish poems. Their aims was „we should be free and create new aspects to the last bearable degree”¹⁹.

The writers were: Rizgar Abdulla, Hashim Sarraj, Abbas Abdulla Yusuf, Dilshad Abdulla, Namiq Ali Qadir, Atta Qaradaghi, Salah Omer, Azad Hama Sherif, Farhad Pirbal. These established the Weran magazine which had been published in spring 1994. The moment when it is established, it faces many difficulties, full of both positive and negative points. When it was first appeared, there was a terrible internal conflict. Then followed by the Civil war and most of the following five magazines were published in war period²⁰.

What is important about this group is that it appeared in the midst of the Civil war conflicts and most of the neighboring countries were fighting against Kurdistan region and at that time Kurdish Literature arise.

Among the characteristic features of this group:

1. It was the only group that took women also into consideration in their literature. Writers and women poetesses participate in the group and have major roles like, Mhabad Qaradaghi, Nazand Bagikhani.

¹⁸ A. Mira, *op. cit.*, p. 132-134.

¹⁹ „Weran Magazine Manifest”, spring 1994, No. 1, p. 1.

²⁰ A. Mira, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

2. This group is affected by the new European literary movements like, the Dadaist, Surrealistic movement that appeared during post First War and most of the features of these European movements influence the Kurdish literature²¹.

Section Three

3.1. The most important poets from Erbil

In this study three very famous poets from Erbil who played a great role in the poetry movement in the city during the last quarter of 20th century until nowadays are introduced, namely, Abdullah Pashêw, Karim Dashti and Dilshad Abdulla. An analytical study of the poetical movement concerning the shape and the form of the skilful talents that are appeared in that period is contained.

3.2. The characteristic features of Kurdish poetry in Erbil

The dominant form of the writing was free verse, but the poets also mixed different verse meters, or wrote prose poems. These poems often dealt with Kurdish people's oppressed situation, depicted the people robbed of fundamental human rights in a world which speaks of solidarity, humanism and justice, but whose actions support the Kurdish people's oppressors. Even among the more lyrical poems, questions of existential and philosophical nature are raised²².

The poets of this period, especially Pashêw, make use of a simple language which is easily understood by the readers and conveys difficult thoughts in an easiest way possible.

Their poetry is a reflection of the history of Kurdish nation and its suffering and is marked with an immense love towards Kurdistan. The motif that is repeated in the poems is the dream of free and independent Kurdistan.

Modern poetry of Erbil replaces the already established patterns of poetry writing with its experiments and new forms. It encompasses the whole range of themes, from politics and corruption till love and women.

3.3. Abdulla Pashêw:

Pashêw is one of the most prominent Kurdish poets. He was born in 1946 in Hewlêr, Iraqi Kurdistan. His first collection of poems was published in 1967.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 176-178.

²² F. Shakely, *op. cit.*, p. 49-59.

He has also translated many distinguished writers and poets, in particular Walt Whitman and A.S. Pushkin. His complete works have been recently published in two volumes in Sweden²³.

He is one of the few voices of Kurdish poetry, which still exerts a significant influence on Kurdish cultural reality. His poetry reflects the concern for the history of the Kurdish people - the story of the suffering of the people. Pashêw is a permanent lover of the nation and the land of Kurdistan. Pashêw's voice shook everybody's conscience. Pashêw was successful in the selection of symbols and the significance of poetical dream of an independent Kurdish state.

Abdullah Pashêw's poetry was highly influenced by the acts of violence that the Kurdish nation faced in the 20th century. The bombing of Halabja with chemical weapons, committed massacres, genocide and the brutal ultra an inhumane mass uprising in 1991 have all shaped the poet's consciousness. All of this suffering that Pashêw Abarrh went through, all these misfortunes and tragedies had a great impact on his works²⁴. A sample of Pashêw's poetry:

Turmoil

It is autumn, your coolness kills me
My body is the most naked land
The thirst of summer is inside me
Drops of soft rain do not wet my lips
Then thunder you down-rimmed cloud
Let there be lightning, torrent, downpour
The red line between you and me
Is mirage, the hallucinations of drugs
Throw off your earrings and necklaces
Let loose your hair, shake your head²⁵.

Pashêw through certain images is able to reflect the Kurdish people agonies. He is a Kurdish voice defender. A courageous poet, able to say authentically 'no' to those who oppress the Kurdish nationality. Along history, Kurdish people in Iraq and other neighboring parts of the world are oppressed and tortured by other ruling systems from different nationalities. Each word Pashêw uses has more than one connotative meaning. The title Turmoil also indicates great suffering. There are certain vocabularies specifically used for such miserable notions like: „autumn”, though autumn is

²³ A. Pashêw, „International Journal of Kurdish Studies”, Jan. 2004, <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-132796691.html> [13.12.2014].

²⁴ N. Jaf, *Shar allm al Kurdistanî*, <http://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=39922> [13.12.2014].

²⁵ R. Sabir, K. Mirawdeli, S. Watts, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

the favorite season of many people for its golden leaves but in this poem it is used to refer to a dark stage followed by winter, far from spring. There is no hope in Kurd's situation because of the absence of justice in the ruling system. The other words like, „coolness”, „kills”, „naked”, „thirst”, „do not wet”, „thunder”, „cloud”, „red line”, „mirage”, „hallucinations”, „drug” all portray and create a pessimistic image, a barren one that symbolized the miserable situations of the Kurds. Anybody who has a close look at this piece of art, will notice the negativity or lack of warmth, lack of affection and passion, danger and sense of deceitfulness cover the poem. For example, the first two lines of Pashêw's poem means that the body that is naked, cold, without passion, even the drops of rain never wet the poets lips because it is not sufficient. It is just like the thirst of Summer never soothes him for very soon the feeling of thirst will return to him. The word „mirage” which is used in the eighth line of Pashêw's poem is a proof that all the previous words that search for sufficient raining from clouds after lightening and thunder is no more fruitful which refers to a barren land full of injustice, even the sky is not merciful. The poet achieves an utter success in creating suspense and affecting the reader. The style Pashêw manipulates is touching and draws the addressee's attention. It is full of melancholy, it is the voice of a Kurd in need to be independent, to have homeland, to be an independent identity and achieve immortality.

3.4. Dilshad Abdulla

He was born in Hewlêr in 1953. He graduated from the College of Agriculture, University of Baghdad in 1973. Abdulla's poetry represents a modernistic trend within Kurdish literature during the 1970s and 1990s.

Abdulla is one of the most important poets of the reformists movement of modern poetry in Iraqi Kurdistan. He belonged to the 80's generation, which is the third generation of Kurdish poets, who founded a new modern poetry. They constitute a group of pioneer poets (Jalal Barzanji, Hashim Siraj, Abbas Abdullah Yusuf, Azad Mawlud, Mahmoud Zamadar) who worked on the poetry not being attached to the official policy. Where the poet with his colleagues sought to get rid of the poetry of Kurdish dependence created by those that knew him and standardized frameworks and stereotypes that set Kurdish literature as a whole²⁶.

His collected works were published by Aras Publishing house in Hewlêr in 2002 and he is currently editor of the cultural journal *Ayinde* („Future”) in Sulaymani.

²⁶ L. Mahmud, *Al sha'r Dilshad Abdulla fi Sarxat allayl*, <http://www.alitthad.com/paper.php?name=News&file=article&sid=47880> [13.12.2014].

According to literary biography of the poet, we find that he is a well-known poet, who wrote poetry since the second half of the seventies. So far eleven divans of his were published. In his poems the poet is trying to mix realistic images of our lives and is trying to alter them using his imagination and poetic imagery. He creates new images that reflect the life of Kurdish people²⁷.

Dilshad Abdullah is responsible for making fundamental changes in the structure of the new Kurdish poem. And following the work of this poet, it can be found that he is still looking for new abilities the language of poems possesses, he tests its capabilities of expression, making the language of his poetry sensitive to the problems of people²⁸. A sample of Dilshad's poetry:

Last evening

Standing at the other end of the world
 Drunk & melancholic
 The pigeons approaching the riverbanks
 The wind slowly moving
 The wave of meaning rebellious, intoxicated & ill
 It is the final spring
 Morning has held tight the hands of flowers
 Beyond the waters
 Some pink butterflies
 Dream me drunk
 Don't search under the leaves & the magic of evening
 Put the pigeon under your breast
 This cold grave is the wedding box
 Tell this idiot "Drink it"
 So that you will not die²⁹.

Dilshad Abdulla's poem is full of images and from the very beginning, the poet expresses his desire to lose his consciousness and drink because reality is shocking and traumatic. He wants to get rid of the present image of catastrophe of Kurd's reality. So he adds that even those who form part of nature like, „riverbanks”, „wind”, „wave”, are all „rebellious” and do not accept the picture of reality. They are sick of unjust reality, here Dilshad Abdulla uses personification to increase the effect of the imagery to the last bearable degree. This is the final spring and hope will fade away with the last spring.

The poet with the beginning of the ninth line of his poem, starts using images of concealment because the situation is full of mystery, it is ambiguous. The use of „dream” indicates absence of reality, „search under the leaves” refer to the hidden

²⁷ A. Abdulwahid, *Dilshad Abdulla*, „Journal of Raman”, 5.12.2005, No. 103, p. 37-47.

²⁸ L. Mahmud, *op. cit.*

²⁹ R. Sabir, K. Mirawdeli, S. Watts, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

facts to create suspense. The poet calls for somebody in distress to be quick and start drinking to rest himself because reality is just like a „cold grave”. So he wants to keep himself warm and avoid death. Definitely Dilshad Abdulla uses many ironic situations to express his deep sense of sadness because those who want to face reality must avoid drinking but unfortunately the situation here turns up sight down. Each poet carries his sufferings with himself and some aspects of his agonies if not most of it appear in his poetry. The images these poets use reflect the bravest ways for expressing their states, feelings and the reality they face. Just like Pashêw, Dilshad in all of the images calls for independence.

3.5. Karim Dashti

Born in Hewlêr in 1955, Dashti studied law at Baghdad University in the late 1970^s and worked as a teacher and journalist in his home city. He has published five collections of poems.

The beginnings of his poem writing are dated back to 1974 until 1978 and are considered to be an experiment in the world of poetry.

The Kurdish city of Erbil, in particular, was always the scene of social and political developments, which the life of the poet has certainly benefited from. These developments have become the main theme of his poems and have highly influenced his writing. And if we look closely at his writings in terms of literary form and content we find that the poet reflects on the concerns of the lovers, the overcoming the pain of the exile, the happiness of the reunion of lovers.

In his poems, the poet also brings us to the days of childhood and adolescence and the lives of youth and to this period of his life when he was surrounded by a group of his closest friends and relatives. His relationships with these people were filled with love and tolerance, but were also occasionally marked by misery and grief³⁰.

The technical characteristics of the style of the poet in the images and ideas seem obvious in the shape of a sentence, and the beauty of words as well as the choice of words. The feature that distinguishes his poetry is the preoccupation with the philosophical thought – his poems serve to simplify and illustrate the complicated ideas of his. The images depicted in the poems the poet tells are filled with the suffering of his soul and are purely subjective, showing all of the feelings he experiences, such as love, happiness and anger³¹. A sample of Karim's poetry:

³⁰ O.A. Saleh, *Tajribat Krim Dashti Aladabiya*, <http://www.sotakhr.com/2006/index.php?id=7776> [15.12.2014].

³¹ M. Parêshan, „Journal of Nusari Nwê”, October 2008, No. 43.

The Cave of Love

There is a cave of love
Forever emptied of people
There is a window of purity
That has always stayed shut
There's a hand of friendship
That has never been held
There is a book for peace
That has never been read
There is a river to wash in
Where no-one now bathes
There is a ladle-full of love
No tongue has ever tasted³².

The Cave of Love is a little bit different, not in aim but in meaning. He uses the image of „Cave” for love. The title represents an impossible case, a difficult one, which refers to the case of love in a cave which is ironic because the cave is not a place of human beings perhaps it is suitable for animals. The poet wants to say that this is an age where love does not exist because it is the age of enmity and aggressiveness. All images of beauty is replaced by ugliness. Pessimism and hopelessness characterize the love inside love. There are two possibilities the poet wants to convey: the first one is related to the love that the poet once experiences but fades away for some reason, the second one may refer to people who change due to change in principles, faithfulness and purity. The poem carries deeply philosophical issues about life in general.

Conclusion

The generation of modern Kurdish poets in Erbil is much more conscious of the negative impact that the years of occupation and division of their motherland have exerted on Kurdistan. Thus, their poetry is filled with the struggle to fight those negative influences that the enemies have planted in their country. They no longer speak solely about their personal feelings, but act on the behalf of all Kurds. What is more, the writings of modern Kurdish poets can be also interpreted in a broader, universal way as they reflect general human values and feelings.

Although the youngest generation of Kurdish poets has only recently found a voice and a form of its own, it has still managed to introduce significant developments owing to the abundance of their poetical experiments.

All of the described poets representing modern poetry of Erbil have been highly influenced by the political situation of the last quarter of the twentieth century and the

³² R. Sabir, K. Mirawdeli, S. Watts, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

traumatic experiences that Kurdish people have gone through. The search for identity and freedom of Kurdish nation is one of the central topics of their poems. The poets participate in the process of shaping modern Kurdish society as they criticize the governments that have ruled in Iraq. The thoughts, opinions and images that they convey through their poems appeal to the citizens of Kurdistan and of Erbil in particular.

Erbil, a city of rich culture, has constituted a fertile soil for the development of poetry and literature in general. All of the prominent writers and poets that were born there have been embraced by the unique atmosphere of the city which has always been and will always remain a shelter for all sensitive, poetic souls.

The setting has its effect on the poets in Erbil. The Castle and other cultural aspects helped and strengthened the relationships among Erbil poets and artists. The beautiful shape of the cultural aspects made them proud of their nobility and nationality. In addition to the role of setting, the political situation and the consequences of bad ruling system by other nationalities led the modern Kurdish poetry movement more powerful. Oppression creates courageous generations. Usually the only group that is able to solve the problems in the society full of injustice is the artists and philosophers. In other words, the poets, novelists, dramatists, prose writer's and other educated group in the society present vital solutions for oppression through the use of the power of their pen. Poets, philosophers are able to create new generation with courageous, deeply convinced goals. Finally it is necessary to remember that God create us in a beautiful shape with best qualities of mind and manners. Our role as a Kurd is to defend our nationalities and live with honor.

Wpływ kulturowy i polityczny na współczesną poezję kurdyjską w Erbilu

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł traktuje o kulturowych i politycznych wpływach na współczesną poezję kurdyjską w Erbilu. Został podzielony na trzy części. Pierwsza jest wprowadzeniem traktującym o życiu kulturalnym i głównych historycznych miejscach, jak Twierdza Erbil czy Święty Minaret, który znany jest jako minaret Al-Muzaffariyya. Omówiono także najważniejszych badaczy, historyków i liderów dawnego Erbilu jak ad-Din Muzaffar i Ibn Khallikan Kokburi. W części drugiej przedstawiono kulturalne i polityczne wpływy na poezję kurdyjską w Erbilu. Trzecia część przedstawia trzech kurdyjskich poetów, którzy pisali o kurdyjskiej tożsamości i mocno jej bronili poprzez swoją twórczość. Należą do nich: Abdullah Pashêw z wierszem pt. *Turmoil*, Dilshad Abdulla i jego wiersz *Last evening* i wreszcie Karim Dashti w wierszu *Cave of Love*. W konkluzji autor dokonuje podsumowania. Dokonuje przedstawienia głównych wniosków dotyczących kurdyjskich poetów w Erbilu w ostatnim ćwierćwieczu XX wieku oraz istotnych dokumentów stosowanych w niniejszej pracy.