



**NUI MAYNOOTH**

Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

**Urban Transformation and Social Change in a Libyan City:  
An Anthropological Study of Tripoli**

**By**

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the PhD degree to the Department of  
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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that the contents of this document submitted by me in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and entitled "Urban Transformation and Social Change in a Libyan City: An Anthropological Study of Tripoli" represents my own work and has not been previously submitted to this or any other institution and is the original work of the author unless otherwise stated.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedication**

**To my late mother and the Libyan people everywhere**

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## **Preface and acknowledgements**

I undertook fieldwork in Tripoli city between August 2002 and February 2003. I also spent eight weeks collecting additional data about the city in the summer of 2001. On each of these visits, I resided in Tripoli itself. I wish to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the people of Tripoli for opening their doors to me at all times of the day and night and for answering the questionnaire. While in the field I received every help and encouragement from a number of government officials, and I found most of them willing to talk about modern times. I would also like to thank the Amin of Tripoli Municipality. I also wish to thank Professor Ali El-Hawat for his advice on data collection and comments on the research and for providing me with a number of references.

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I wish to acknowledge my greatest debt to my family and in particular my wife. They never stopped encouraging me to finish this thesis and they suffered most because of my academic interests. I would also like to thank my brother Mosa who is doing a Ph.D in Computer Engineering in Northumbria University at Newcastle, for his ongoing support.

Studies in urbanisation have been one of my main interests since I started studying as a Postgraduate student in Libya. I did research for my MA in urban sociology. Thus, in Maynooth, the focus of this interest has been directed to African urbanisation, particularly in North Africa. The early emphasis given by researchers to Tripoli was confined to its internal characteristics. Largely for this reason, I have stressed the importance of global culture and its impact on urban people. It is my hope that this thesis will be a contribution to this type of urban study. I appreciate God's help at all stages of the research and my gratitude to Him for enabling me to complete the thesis.

# Map of Libya



Figure 1 Political Boundaries of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya as well as the location of a number of major Libyan cities.

**Translation: Division of Tripoli City by Local Congress (communities)**



Figure 2 Communities of Tripoli.

Source: Community Committee of City Development, Tripoli, 2003.

## Summary

This PhD thesis is a study of urban transformation in a Libyan city. The case study focuses on the city of Tripoli, the capital of Libya. It is at the same time an old city as well as a modern city, and can be identified as a major world city. Libya has experienced one of the highest rates of urbanisation in the last few decades. Libya's rate of urbanisation is 88%, putting it higher than that of all other African cities and, indeed, some European cities as well. The research explores the urban structure of the city including the cultural and social system. In addition, the research explores crucial urban theories from Iben Khaldun to Louis Wirth and examines modern patterns as a method of feedback of the study of urbanisation. This study shows special characteristics of urban phenomena and adds, in general, to the literature in the field.

During the past number of decades, the pattern of life in Tripoli has been transformed, with particular focus on local culture which has felt the impact of global culture. These changes have brought about new aspects and patterns to life in the city. The study also argues that transformation has occurred in some aspects of life such as food and music. Urban transformation in this study is examined within the context of globalisation. That is, in the context of global urban culture with special emphasis on its impact on local culture. Here, the city is seen as a global site with many advantages. The study is therefore an example of appropriation and implementation of a sort of "global knowledge" in a local, Libyan context. It is concerned with the urban transformation and social change of Tripoli as it undergoes a transition from traditional and modern to a global state.

In focusing upon the urbanisation and special structure of Tripoli, the first five chapters of the study review the historical social transformation of Tripoli through urban life, global culture, urbanisation, urban family and urban women. The research addresses the Libyan social structure and includes a history of Tripoli and observations on Libyan structure between traditional and global phenomena in relation to urbanisation. In chapter six, an attempt is made to discuss the characteristics of Tripoli. Large numbers of immigrants have swelled Tripoli's population resulting in unique aspects of change. Tripoli shares many similarities with other cities of the world, such as a modern lifestyle and a growing prevalence of foreign food, music and dress.

## **Chapter 1**

### **1.1 General Introduction**

### **1.2 Tripoli as an urban centre**

### **1.3 Structure of the thesis**

## **1.1 General Introduction**

Many anthropologists, sociologists, geographers and historians have argued that urban transformation and contemporary urban settlement are the product of a long evolutionary process. However, some ignore important dimensions of contemporary urbanism, especially in the third world - Tripoli city is an example of this. Many cities display numerous similarities, yet equally, they have different landscapes, economies, cultures and societies. This is due to the fact that cities are shaped by a diverse set of processes. Hence, it is better to adopt a perspective that recognises this diversity and understands cities as having different roles and functions in world culture and economy.

Many factors affect urban development, which is associated with the world economy and its relationship with individual cities. This study attempts to explain what urbanisation is and its implication in urban transformation. It is difficult to give a concise definition of urbanisation as it depends on one's theoretical standpoint. There are many diverse and often contradictory definitions of urbanisation due to varied emphases of researchers. Wirth (1938), the foundational thinker in the field of urbanisation, would argue, as would most anthropologists and sociologists, that there was not enough analysis of this phenomenon due to the fact that features of human culture differ from one region to another and change over time. There are many diverse and often contradictory definitions of urbanisation due to varied emphases of researchers.

Wirth belongs to the "Chicago School" which is still very popular in urban studies. His theory is referred to as "urbanism as a way of life" or "urban way of life". His theory emphasises the place of the individual in the city, urban behaviour, and he also discusses the phenomenon of urbanism from a cultural perspective.

Modernisation has led to the growth of cities; many changes that arose as a result of the industrial revolutions of countries like Japan and America affected virtually all aspects of social life. Rather than being created, cities grow through development. It is worthy of note that a large number of urban dwellers migrated from rural areas and hence their population cannot be said to be an index of rurality or urbanisation- this is particularly true with regards the first and second generation. Examples of indicators that differ between rural and urban cultures would be practices or behaviours at certain occasions such as weddings or funerals.

The peculiar dominance of urban areas over rural communities hinges on the fact that social, political and cultural infrastructures like commercial, administrative and financial institutions are concentrated in cities. The density of settlement and degree of heterogeneity emphasise that urbanism, as a characteristic mode of life, may be approached empirically from their interrelated perspectives: (1) as a physical structure comprising a population base, a technology and an ecological order; (2) as a system of social organisation involving a characteristic social structure, a series of social institutions, and a typical pattern of social relationship; and (3) as a set of attitudes and ideas, and a constellation of personalities engaging in typical forms of collective behaviour and subject to characteristic mechanisms of social control (Wirth 1938: 18-19).

Wirth's position maintained that the impact of the urban community was reflected by its size, density, and heterogeneity, and that these factors were considered key determinants of social organisation, attitudes and behaviour. Redfield (1941) assumed that heterogeneity and lack of privacy were primary characteristics of the city. In addition, Wirth identified urban life as being composed of secularisation, secondary-group associations, increased segmentation of social roles, and poorly-



defined norms that led to alienation. Wirth and his followers considered these as 'effects' of urban development, to be held separate from the consequences of cultural values or industrialisation, which were assumed to be constant - although all cities, whether in the past and the present, display these characteristics (Butler 1976: 7-8). Wirth established five criteria that a sociological definition of the urbanism of a city must satisfy:

- (1) Urbanism must be defined as a mode of life.
- (2) A serviceable definition of urbanism must be generic and not particular; that is the mode of life referred to must have not arisen out of specific locally or historically conditioned cultural influences.
- (3) The definition should indicate the essential characteristics that cities in our culture have in common and include all characteristics that most cities have in common.
- (4) The characteristics of cities included in the definition should be as little in number as seems feasible for the deduction of significant sociological propositions.
- (5) The definition should lend itself to the discovery of significant variations among cities.

Secondly, there are no criteria in Wirth's essay for distinguishing the essential from the nonessential characteristics of cities (Karp, et al. 1991: 36-37).

Consideration needs to be given to the social consequences of densely populated areas and heterogeneous societies. Cities attract migrants from different areas and consequently, different cultural backgrounds exist within the city such as returning Libyan migrants, especially those from Tunisia and Egypt, as well as those between the different tribes of northern and southern Libya. Thus, there is an

accentuation of individual differences. High population density and numbers decrease the tendency of inhabitants of a community to know each other personally; this phenomenon would consequently engender a level of interaction devoid of ethnic, social and status barriers. It is my belief that the social interactions of urban people in Libya are integrated by maintaining strong links with rural society and family.

Adam Smith found that not only is size relevant in our examination of the term urbanism, the relationship and characteristic behaviour of role members is equally of importance. Density is the most probable reason for difference and consequently, specialisation in individuals. An urban area may be defined by the number of residents, the population density, the percentage of people not dependent upon agriculture, or the provision of such public utilities and services like electricity and education (Prb.org 2003).

Urban transformation and planning that occurs through human behaviour is both unpredictable and problematic because individuals' best interests are of paramount importance in order to be an actor in the social, political and economic decision-making processes of the city. The individual needs to subordinate part of his individual identity and operate at a level of social communication. It is possible to explain the characteristics of urban population on the basis of two factors: the population increase in the number of people living in urban areas and the growing concentration of these urbanites in large cities with thousands or millions of residents (Prb.org 2003). In this context, there are differences with the countryside in relation to skills, gender and accomplishments. For example, cities contain the largest proportion of persons in the prime of life than in rural areas, which contain more old and very young people.

The complexity of city life has resulted in social transformation in areas such as education, income, social values, urbanisation, social environment and occupational stresses. This had led to a decline in birth rates in the last decade, substantiated by the 2005 population census of Libya. However, cities nowadays have become more inhabitable, particularly from a health point of view. It follows therefore that a decline in urban growth suggests to a large extent that city life is not conducive to the traditional type of family life. In other words, families have been deprived of the traditional roles of the position of man and wife. For example, mothers are employed, marriages deferred and a longer time is spent acquiring skills and specialisation to boost the income of city dwellers. All these factors contribute to a decline in the rate of growth of urban populations. Urban personality is usually hinged on the interconnectivity of different associated groups such as economic, social-cultural and political organisations. Studies have shown that the prevalence of social problems like crime and corruption are indices that can elucidate the inconsistencies associated with the quality of urban ways of life. Attempts must however be made to redefine urbanism as a mode of social life; sociologists cannot solve social problems on their own using the available arguments. However, their contributions would help in the appreciation of the problem especially where a theoretical approach is adopted (Wirth 1938: 1-43).

Most studies in urban research accept this theory as interpretation of urban transformation. However, Wirth, in his famous essay “Urbanism as a Way of Life” set forth the case for the relation between spatial configuration and culture (using the culture of impersonality and alienation as was highlighted by Fainstein and Campbell (1996: 11).

Fried and Chrisman refer to contemporary anthropology, which in recent years has begun to describe entire urban centres in terms of their provision of a living environment for residents as well as their interaction with other cities. Cultural and social networks in the city are the subject which urban anthropologists are investigating, with a particular focus on social and cultural behaviour. They seek to explain social relationships and cultural meanings among individuals in urban areas (Fried and Chrisman 1975: 23-24).

Regarding the urban social structure, Wirth stresses that, with the increase of specialisation and competition in a large, dense and heterogeneous population, a multi-dimensional community is created. The individual is conducting a multitude of activities with different groups. The various activities involve contact with different group sets from family and neighbours to co-workers and friends. These contacts are made in various and disconnected places which reflect the high differentiation of activities within the community. The differentiation in social structure weakens the cohesion of primary groups (family, friends, neighbours) and therefore weakens social ties. This is due to the prevalence of some aspects of urban transformation and of multiculturalism in the city. The change in some aspects of the city's social system has positive consequences for the type of urbanisation from the global perspective. The result of this is the diversification of social structure and the creation of new social strata. The researcher noted that new social strata have taken place in the urban social structure. This is a new phenomenon that is born out of the old social structure of Tripoli. The private sector has contributed to urban transformation, especially since economic reform. Some elements of the new social strata have links with European societies, especially in the business and financial sectors. Thus, the new strata will

incorporate global culture. As such, it has an impact on the social formation of Tripoli city. This process occurs throughout Tripoli city.

Wirth argues that by spending less time with family, neighbours and friends, the individual becomes less attached to his intimate groups. As a consequence, friction occurs within the community where norms, rules and values are no longer shared nor respected (Zerdant 1989: 67). However, the researcher disagrees with the hypothesis that values are no longer shared nor respected. The city still maintains particular values and cultural norms; for example, through large family size, eating at home rather than in restaurants, use of traditional dress at home, etc. Thus, traditional values still play an important role in the life of the city in spite of a programme of urban transformation. Cities simply have different rules and values that are more flexible. A number of experts in the field of urban studies have been critical of Wirth's theory. Wirth however points out that this theory ignored land size, population size, trade, cultural and values dissimilarities and as such suggested that what might be applicable in metropolitan cities such as Chicago may not be applicable to many other cities like Tripoli. This is because the population density is not the same as that of Chicago and there is considerably more cultural diversity than in Tripoli.

The focus of concern for some sociologists and anthropologists of the modernisation school lie in the study of change. Some writers argue that the change from traditional to modern society comes as a result of improved standards of living. Apter (1965) considers value change reflected in ideology and mobility by viewing lives of individuals. McClelland (1961) saw the need for achievement as the key to this change to modernity. For Rogers (1969), adapting to new technological ideas is certainly at the heart of the modernisation process. Other important contributions to

urban studies have included Peter Hall's book "The World Cities" (1966). Hall studied the characteristics and structure of the big towns in the world. In the Arab World also, some books have been published in the urban field, most of which rely on foreign references. These books do not review any new subjects apart from exploring the development in some cities from the perspective of modernisation theory. Attir (1980s) follows a particular approach in modern theory, which has been applied by some Libyan researchers to Libyan cities. Modernisation theories as well as their critiques can be applied to urban transformation in Tripoli.

Many anthropologists and sociologists have contributed actively to urban theories and research in the urban field. Low (1999) explores theories of direction in her book named "Theorizing the City". Theorizing the city is a necessary part of understanding the changing post-industrial advancements. As a site of everyday practice, the city provides a valuable fabric of human experience. I refer in particular to the historical trajectory that began with the Chicago School in the 1920s and 1930s and the development of an urban ecological perspective. Low referred to some contemporary researchers, such as the sociologists Anderson (1990) and Wacquant (1994), both of whom trained at the University of Chicago and studied the life of communities from theoretical and methodological perspectives. Low referred to twelve patterns that are explored for theoretical relevance. Four of them focus on social relational processes - the ethnic city, the divided city, the gendered city, and the contested city. Three focus on economic processes - the reindustrialised city, the global city, and the information city. Three patterns emphasize urban planning and architectural approaches to urban analysis - the modernist city, the post-modern city, and the fortress city. Two patterns reflect religious and cultural aspects of urban life - the sacred city and the traditional city. Five of these patterns (the divided city, the

contested city, the global city, the modern city, and the post-modern city) and each of these patterns organise the contents of this section. Furthermore, the city has other patterns: these illustrate the kind of detailed ethnography and integrative theory that characterises contemporary urban anthropology.

As for the ethnic city, increased attention has been given to ethnic politics and ethnically based urban social movements. There are two dominant streams of research in the study of the ethnic city:

- The ethnic city as a group of economically, linguistically and socially self-contained enclaves as a strategy of political and economic survival
- Studies of ethnic groups that may or may not function as enclaves but that are defined by their location in the occupational structure

These ethnic groups may or may not function as enclaves but are defined by their location in the occupational structure. The studies of urban ethnic communities, though part of the continuing tradition of the anthropological community studies, contribute less to the ongoing development of a theory of the ethnic city but provide important insights into collective ethnic politics. This theory however does not lend itself fully to the example of Tripoli, as only one political movement exists.

The divided city is characterised by binary divisions among the population (east/west; upscale/ghetto; black/white) as well as accompanying stereotypes and tension. Studies of divided cities typically focus on aspects of racism and racial segregation. Keith and Cross (1993) argue that the divided city has restored the cultural primacy of the urban as a culture and cash nexus or the city as playground. In this pattern, the division is between the white cultural playgrounds and the abandoned black residential areas clearly seen in large cities throughout the Western World. This pattern may apply to many cities in the Third World, particularly with regard to social

ranks. Fernandez-Kelly (1993) explains the divided city through the unequal distribution of cultural capital; the symbolic repertory whose meaning individuals learn and use as members of particular social networks and as social capital; the relations of reciprocity between individuals and groups. Cultural and social capital are defined by physical vectors such as urban space and by collective constructions such as social class, race and gender, and thus are dependent on physical and social location.

Low also referred to other anthropologists who have focused on differential access to resources. The unequal distribution of material resources and urban services as a reflection of the major cleavage between those able to augment their basic needs through labour market participation at a wage high enough to insulate them from the vagaries of state budget crises and those who remain on state services just to survive (Jones, Turner and Montbach, 1992).

Another form of city that Low refers to is the gendered city. Here the city has been perceived primarily as a male place in which women, children and minority groups are still being marginalised. However, with the increasing feminisation of key sectors of the informal economy and in the formalisation of economic and political processes in third world cities, more women are finding themselves supporting their children by working as street vendors.

The contested cities are those in which temporary inversions of power structures or relations can be found (for example; symbolic control of the streets). These are characterised by urban struggle and resistance. The contestations are typically linked to class and gender and of course, to the stratified provision of material goods and services. However, the process does not always have to be active contestation. For



example, Rotenberg concerns himself with conflicting forms of metropolitan knowledge.

The fortress city is similar to the contested city. In this case, the material construction of the city helps to structure social relations which tend to give spatial identity to factors such as gender and class. Also, social groups leave their mark on urban structure through forming communities, segregation, etc. This city pattern may apply to Tripoli city in some respects. Some individuals have solidarity within certain social boxes and this may take place in the form of members from outside of the city. Equally, another pattern of the city called the sacred city has relevance. In such a city religion plays an important role in the city's construction and organisation. Religion can also play various important roles in the lives of the inhabitants - it can be the basis for urban resistance movement and associations, amongst other consequences. In Tripoli, religion has every important role.

Studies of the traditional city are concerned with the maintenance of 'tradition' within the city. It can be typified by a conflict which tries to maintain a balance between traditional values and the pressures of social change. Once again, this theory can be applied to the case of Tripoli. The reindustrialised city is characterised by deterioration due to the closing or relocation of industry which had been the main source of employment. This can also be identified within the social movements from area to area in Tripoli.

The information city is another pattern applicable to Tripoli. It focuses on the principles of information-processing activities rather than on the everyday space of living and working. This results in everyday places and political institutions becoming meaningless, which is resented and resisted by the people. Power is held by those who control the information or knowledge. Another pattern that has relevance is

the modernist city. This city is often conceptualised as the colonial city where modern methods of planning and architecture are utilised in the construction of new societies and to “indoctrinate cities within the spatial confines of rationally planned towns” these processes colonial power relations can be materialised. This pattern of the city may be applied to most Libyan cities in spite of the fact that some local planners would like to rebuild Libyan cities – which could result in some of Libya’s major cities losing their cultural and historical identities as a result of these programmes of developments and modernisation processes. The changes that have been made to date have taken the shape of western industrialised cities, without maintaining Libya’s cultural identity. Tripoli is one of these cities, and the situation has resulted in a decline in some the old parts of the city.

Low refers to the number of theoretically useful patterns and metaphors of the city. Some of these patterns such as the divided city and the global city have had a clear theoretical impact on the body of research and have provided the basis for ongoing theoretical projects; for example, the global city has focused attention on the unique role that cities play in the development of trans-national cultures and traditions. Other patterns suggest future research endeavours. For instance, the contested city is a powerful pattern for post-structural studies that enrich anthropological theorising about conflict and resistance in both the public and private urban realms. Some areas of anthropological theory have been more influential within the broader discourse of urban studies and urban policy. The anthropological take on globalisation has focused attention on the translational aspects of migration, culture making and identity management, and on the sitting cultural environments and meaning that conceptualise behaviour. The contribution of anthropological fieldwork retains the power to demonstrate the how and when of urban processes and the

theoretical framework that provide a grounding for further study and discussion. Hence, the patterns such as the divided city and the global city may apply in Tripoli in some aspects of urban life.

Some aspects of the different approaches to studying the patterns of cities can be applied physically and functionally (and may also comprise some cultural aspects) to the study of Tripoli.

Direct links between the approaches to the study of the city and patterns of life are made in El-Hawat's research. The specific approaches which the researcher followed involved formal studies of Arab cities and a review of some of the more general literature in urban studies. The researcher noted that the phenomenon is different between different times and places. Tripoli peoples' lives are different now than they were during the colonial era. El-Hawat has also written about development in Libya which argued that oil has contributed to the change from more traditional to modern society. He also mentioned that society still maintains traditional values such as tribal loyalty which impacted in the march of development (El-Hawat 1981). El-Hawat also says that society has changed and become identified with many Arabic societies due to education and improvement in income and links with other societies. Also he refers to education as the main point of change in his book high education in Mugrab Arabic (El-Hawat 2005). He also written about the evolution of human capital in Libya, arguing that the policies of development in the last decade promoted human rights through official institutions. The above factors inevitably affected the dynamics of urbanisation. Attir also researched with team the phenomenon of modernisation. He states that modernisation changed society at both the level of the individual and that of the society (Attir 1980).

This study deals with urbanisation as a pattern of social-cultural structure. It can be argued that the socio-cultural structure is more than just individuals and individual behaviour. In a city, social structure includes groups, social patterns, complex organisations, social institutions and many other aspects which interact in the city.

Libyan cultural, political and economic systems changed with the discovery of oil which led to modernisation and urban transformation - beneficial both at personal and societal levels. Most African states were influenced by Europeans; marriage between Arabs and Europeans led to the spread of Islam and Arab culture to modern Europe. The presence of regional and head offices of international organisations has further led to the integration of African cities into networks of urbanised cities worldwide. The cultural exchange due to inter-marriage with foreigners and emigration has led to increased exposure to foreign influences which is more prominent amongst the youth due to increased levels of computer (internet) literacy.

Between 1950 and 2000, rates of urbanisation in North African countries have been the highest in Libya (from 20% to 88%). Libya has a high level of urbanisation because of its programme for economic, social and country development, which entices foreign multinationals and immigrants, leading to the improvement of lifestyles and income levels.

In Libya, an urban area is a settlement with 5,000 or more inhabitants, but with an administrative function. Although the definition of a city varies from one country to another and different countries have their own criteria, urbanisation may be defined as a process of redistribution prompting shifts of population from countryside to towns and cities. The growth in the Libyan urban population is due to factors such as improved longevity, migration of people from rural to urban areas, a

rise in the number of returned emigrants from other Arabic countries and an influx of non-nationals. Urban development and demographic transformation during the last three decades is due to the following factors:

- Political and administrative factors
- Economic factors
- Demographic factors
- Socio-cultural factors

The above factors have had an impact on the tribal nature of the Libyan social structure, where the family as a social unit was influenced by modern aspects of life. As such, the structure of society changed and developed into an urban modern lifestyle. Some aspects of the traditional style remain at the social level, therefore, there is a mixture of cultures within the urban Libyan living experience.

The urban centre population increased as a result of the influx of people from rural areas. The young generation is influenced by modern knowledge, and some younger individuals speak more than one language as a result of their interaction with people from foreign countries, meaning that they imbibe their language and culture. This interaction also led to changes and improvements in the Libyan service sector and thus it has led to some similarities with the service sector in European states. As a result of this there has been a change from traditional to modern life. Most of the change is reflected in the service sector provision where education and health services are provided free in the public sector and others at highly subsidized rates, which have encouraged the urban transformation of Tripoli.

Life in the city changed completely in spite of known colonisation, which lasted for a long time until the independence in 1952 and the Libyan Revolution in 1969, which brought M. Ghadhafi to power. Western civilisation has influenced the

life of the average Tripoli, in particular, through the social infrastructures and social interactions between males and females. There is a large proportion of foreigners living in the city, including Asians, Africans and Europeans and as a number of these individuals are not Muslims, this occasionally results in urban problems within the existing social culture when differences arise. This is a result of the prevalence of culture conflicts between the past and the present. Despite the influence of modernisation, religious influence is still well “rooted” in society and this encourages strong relations among neighbours, friends and kin groups.

Global technological advancement has led to a change in culture through a change in attitude towards women and has resulted in many women playing prominent roles in commerce, businesses and industry. There is increased exposure to foreigners through business and this is greatly enhanced by the weather and environment of the Mediterranean region, which is a popular tourist spot for holidaymakers. Despite the exposure to urbanisation and modernisation, Tripoli has been able to curtail the influence of modernisation in some areas such as architecture; and Libyans, originally nomadic in nature, have not yet fully adapted the sedentary lifestyle associated with modernisation. Tripoli people still wear traditional clothing, which allows much more freedom, mobility and activity than European clothing. Tripoli humility can be seen despite the influence of modernisation. Many Tripoli house pillows and puts are placed on woven carpets and host and visitors alike sit on them rather than on the sofa. They also enjoy going to more austere environs devoid of much modernisation for their relaxation. In Tripoli, as elsewhere in the world, when external values are taken on, they are modified and changed in order to fit the local values and serve the local way of life in Libya. Tripoli has a unique mode of cultural adoption due to factors such as Islam and social tradition.

Islamic principles are deeply entrenched in the culture, such that women are taught the Quran laws and principles of living. Weddings are consummated by Quran laws and births are equally celebrated in accordance with Islamic principles. The urban transformation has influenced society at different levels, improving people's knowledge of what lies outside of their locality. Many people now listen to the news and read the papers - both foreign and local - such that it has become an integral part of the country's mass communication system. There is an increased level of literacy and education and people are now encouraged to be educated and participate in the formation of the country's political process. Exposure and urbanisation has the most influence on the youth who are now exposed to a dissemination of information via the internet and satellites and are now acquiring foreign culture modes of dress.

Mass media has an important role in history of Tripoli and serves as a means of mass communication and an instrument that contributes to democracy and modern life. The mass media sector has been seen to be an important tool used to influence man, organisations and government activities. Mass media has changed Tripoli's traditional music, which, consisting of folklores, is unique in its own way and is used at celebrations such as weddings and births. The Libyan music and food cultures have equally been influenced by modernisation, as youth can be seen singing and responding to modern music.

The presence of foreigners has led to an increased interest in foreign culture and lifestyle: hence the establishment of a centre of cultural studies. In this research I will explore tourism and urbanisation, Tripoli food culture and the urban development of Tripoli will also be examined in detail.

Tourism shares a relationship with urbanisation: it is a global phenomenon. Anthropologists and Sociologists have studied the dynamics of the tourist system.

Tourism as a phenomenon has an impact on cultural systems and social structures; most societies are influenced by tourism. Therefore, the tourists create a multi-cultural environment due to their exposure to the culture of the various countries they have visited. Tripoli has a long history of tourism: its location and its museums attract many tourists to the city. Tripoli has good urban development and management, which have also increased tourism. Many Libyan tourists are influenced by global culture. Tourism in Tripoli has improved rapidly; investment in tourism has increased like many cities in North Africa. Over half a million immigrants came to Tripoli in 2000, and it is continually working towards developing infrastructure for tourism, aspiring to reach a global standard with efforts being made to update the structural needs for tourism in Tripoli and Libya as a whole. The researcher observed that many types of restaurants and coffee houses exist at different levels; Tripoli cuisine is now a collection of traditional and modern food. Urbanisation has led to an increased demand for pre-prepared dishes which are mainly of foreign origin, such as canned beef, vegetables, fish among others, because modernisation and exposure to foreign lifestyles has altered the traditional food culture which could be cumbersome for an urbanite who combines work with household duties.

Traditional Tripoli dishes consist of exquisitely prepared hot and spicy dishes blended with foreign cuisine such as food found around the Mediterranean region and influenced by Spanish and Italian recipes. The increasing dominance of foreign foods is conspicuous among the youth and urban dwellers who find it easy to heat ready-made food in microwaves after the day's activity rather than preparing a traditional dish from scratch, which may be time consuming.

A few decades ago, Libya was considered to be one of the least developed nations on earth, with meagre national resources and a high proportion of arid desert



land. However, with the discovery of oil, improved economic policies and industrialisation, this status changed and urban transformation occurred. Urbanisation is influenced by political and economic exposure to foreign influences, which have rapidly altered and enhanced urbanisation, industrialisation and modernisation of Libyan society. The education system, planning and exposure have further led to an adequate provision of schools, hospitals, and facilities required for the promotion of well-being of its citizens and immigrant population such as can be found in any developed country of the world.

The phenomenon of transformation and change of the city has generated much public debate in Libya over the last few decades. In particular, this occurred in the 1990s when people began using the internet to connect with individuals and families. However, much of this communication has been characterised by connections with foreigners and local people. This thesis focuses on the issue of change of the city within in the global setting. The researcher hopes to contribute to urban knowledge by highlighting the modern transformation of the city into a universal society. The researcher wishes to fill this *lacuna* in anthropological research with specific reference to changes and aims to identify, describe and produce an analysis of the interacting factors, which enunciate aspects of privation of modern life in Tripoli. .

## **1.2 Tripoli as an urban centre**

Tripoli city is an ancient urban centre, once one of the main four Phoenician cities in North Africa. Tripoli has a good strategic geographical position and a profound history. It is a vital link between the eastern and western part of the Arab cities of the world, and between European cities and African cities.

My choice of Tripoli as an urban centre arises from the fact that as one of its citizens, I have kept up to date with the city. I lived in Tripoli for a long period of

time so I am familiar with the changes in the urban centre. The challenge arose as a result of the fact that there has been little anthropological research work done about Libyan urban society; more specifically, Tripoli city. The prevailing studies have been conducted from sociological and planning perspectives rather than an anthropological perspective. Urban structure includes cultural, social, economic and political systems. Urban life differs in characteristics from one area to another according to the size and type of city: an industrial city has different characteristics from a city whose attraction lies in tourism. Cities show an increased number of different activities in everyday urban life, especially during globalisation. On the other hand, urban life reflects similarities everywhere nowadays because of globalisation. Urbanisation has many consequences for city life - yet the city is more than modernisation. There is movement in the present to understand urban life which is crucial in urban organisation. The urban population is increasing due to many factors, particularly migration. Tripoli has a population of under two million.

Many people prefer living in a city where chances for education, jobs, and health are better than in rural areas where there are fewer amenities and job prospects. Urban life is very important for those who are looking for a better life as cities have a higher concentration of services. Urban populations have increased more than before due to migration from the countryside rather than through internal population growth.

The study of urban transformation and social change is located in the domain of the cultural analyses of the city. Urbanisation has a basic cultural signature and it is very important to analyse this phenomenon, as Tripoli's society is urbanised and highly literate. The theoretical emphasis is on articulating meaning and urban structure, hegemony resistance, and cultural dynamics of urban life. As a study of anthropology of cities, this work offers urban history as a method to situate

participants within global cultural forces. Linking the micro-phenomena of industrialisation identifies socio-cultural movements as part of the urban system and places people back into urban history by considering cities. An example would be the result of endless historical struggles over the definition of urban meaning by opposing cultural actors with contrary opinions, values, and cultural aspects and projects.

Anthropologists have provided a detailed understanding of the processes of place-specific resistance. The urban communities have portrayed dynamic movement, especially into modern culture in the present time. Urban studies have helped cities concentrate control over vast resources, while distance and specialised service industries have restructured the urban social and economic order and global city, for example in the urban centres of London, New York and Tokyo. Most capital cities have global cultures and this applies to Tripoli in some aspects such as communications and lifestyle, etc. However, Tripoli is also quite different and unique. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6.

Urbanisation involves a significant shift in the distribution of population from rural to urban locations. Each year, some 312 million more people are added to the world's towns and cities than to its rural areas (Clark 1996: 47). Contemporary urbanisation studies have shown large-scale redistribution of people in many of the world's poorest nations, which are unable to cope with its consequences. Because the rate is greater than that of developed countries, levels of urban development in the developing world are catching up with and will soon approximate those in the developed world (Clark 1996: 45-52). People's lives may be impacted by urbanisation for example, the status of the Tripoli woman is changing now under the influence of development and urban transformation, which have changed, from more traditional to more urbanised methods during a few decades as a result of many

factors such as increased economic activity. The growth in industry has led to a demand for more workers. So, women can be seen working in all economic sectors, such as education, health, administration, scientific research, social services and production establishments like factories and firms. Urban women have been impacted upon by global culture. There have been recent social phenomena occurring in line with development and urban transformation. This phenomenon has attracted the attention of researchers worldwide.

Urban studies have been undertaken worldwide. Maichel & Certeau, in the “Machinery and Hero of Modernity” argued that a principal factor of the growth of modern cities is due to the migration of people from the countryside to urban centres. A lot of the world’s urban population now live in developing countries rather than in industrialised countries.

Urbanisation as a process and urban transformation is a measure of change in North Africa where pre-urban cities and new urban settlement have increased over the past decade. The colonial system organised African societies so that they produced export that brought only minimal economic returns to local labour. In Libya, during this era, people were poor and few had access to formal education or training.

The attainment of political independence in African countries has not occurred in a rapid manner. It is rather the end-product of a very complex economic, social, and political process that has been at work over a long period of time. North Africa consists of six countries with similarities and structural variations. Apart from being governed by Europeans for a while, African migrant workers to Western Europe were primarily from North and West Africa whom, on returning home, imported their newly acquired foreign culture and lifestyle. With 10,000 as a suitable value of urban population, the level of urbanisation in North Africa varies from country to country;

the highest being in Libya (88%) and Egypt (69%) and lower in Tunisia (60%) and Morocco (51%). It can be argued that in North Africa urban transformation of different countries is remarkable and although the degree of urbanisation is lower than the rest of the Arab world and the Middle East, it was higher than in tropical Africa and Asia.

Despite the influence of urbanisation, people in North African cities still wear traditional dress especially the people with closer interaction in rural areas during ceremonies. Traditional rulers are highly respected with their heritage presence, which influences this dress trend. Rapid urbanisation in North Africa has also given rise to a significant expansion in urban environment. Social problems are characterised by increasing urban poverty, the emergence of informal settlements, slums and a shortage in basic urban services. Rapid modernisation and the spread of the capitalist manner of consumption have all transformed and internationalised culture, concepts and commodities.

The level of urbanisation in Libya is relatively high in comparison with other African countries. This level is fuelled by its oil resources, which has enabled urban transformation, which is centred around the major cities and has encouraged rural-urban migration; however, its level of urbanisation is not matched by its level of industrialisation. Urbanisation brought with it a European mode of sophistication, lifestyle and profiling which were initially imposed on African communities. Urbanisation was confined to developed countries before the middle of the twentieth century, but has since spread to developing countries due to the consequences of growth and the geographical extension of capitalism.

### **1.3 Structure of the thesis**

The structure of the thesis is as follows: Chapter one introduces the topic examined in the thesis, Tripoli as an urban centre, and also outlines the structure of the thesis. Chapter two deals with methods of data collection focusing on the “scientific method” and processes of model-building in urban study. Chapters three, four and five provide the core of the literature review of the thesis. Chapter three deals with urbanisation according to the study of the development of cities and the situation of this phenomenon in North Africa, specifically in Libya. Chapter four discusses crucial urban theories from Iben Khaldun (1377) to some contemporary thinkers as a method of feedback for the study of urbanisation, global culture and urbanisation itself. It also focuses on urban life and the urban family as an essential unit in urban structure and social change, with an additional focus on urban Libyan women. Chapter five addresses the Libyan social structure, and it includes both a history of Tripoli and observations on the Libyan structure between traditional and global phenomena, further exploring the transformations of the city as a result of urbanisation. This is followed by a discussion of the urban development of the city. Chapter six includes data and an analysis of the research, as well as crucial characteristics of Tripoli life (such as the media, music and food culture) that encourage tourists and the transformation of the society. This reflects local knowledge of Tripoli life. This chapter also has a section that describes a ‘day in the life’ of a number of citizens from different parts of the city, and includes inferences from narrative speeches. Chapter seven consists of the conclusions – the characteristics of urban people in Tripoli - and a bibliography.

## **Chapter 2**

**2.1 Study subject and research methodology**

**2.2 Research methods**

**2.3 Study objectives and aims**

**2.4 Selecting the fieldwork site**

**2.5 Selecting cases, informants and the focus of the sample**

**2.6 Understanding interviews and observing them from a marginal position**

**2.7 Fieldwork and time spent**

**2.8 Analytical methods: construction, analysis and comparison**

**2.9 Questions relating to the study**

## **1.1 Study Subject and Research Methodology**

This chapter discusses the research methodology of the thesis. The chapter adopts a real-world research perspective. Indeed, the findings are based on this type of research, which takes place in the field of social science. Interview questionnaires and samples of narratives are important in the field of specific anthropological methodology.

‘The methodological contribution of network analysis as the basis for studying the social organisation of city residents was widely used to understand the rapidly urbanising populations of Africa’ (Mitchell 1969) Low: 3).

A proportion of my reading focused on how to collect and analyse data. A literature review is of significant importance because it helps to develop a command of the subject area and understand the modern characteristics of urban people. It also enables justification of the research topic, design and methodology. The literature review concentrated on descriptions directly relating to people in modern day Tripoli. By the end of the literature review, I was able to establish what research was required in order to the advance knowledge in the relatively new urban research field of Libya.

The subject of this research is to study the urban transformation and social change of Tripoli from the perspective of urban anthropology. I chose Tripoli city as a venue of the study for several reasons; firstly, it is the capital and the largest city in Libya; secondly, Tripoli’s population is nearly all Libyan except for a small number of foreign people and it is my intention to study Libyans, not foreigners. Thirdly, Tripoli as an urban centre is similar to other Arab cities as well as some in Africa, and it is one of the most famous Arab and African cities. It has an illustrious history and is one of the oldest cities in the world. It is in need of more attention by analysts, with



particular focus on the phenomenon of its urban transformation and its interaction with global cultures. The researcher has visited several of the cities in the country as well as a number of European cities, and noted a degree of homogeneity between these. Particularly since the globalisation era there has been an impact on the cities of the world, which has led to physical similarities.

Urbanisation studies have been one of my main interests since my MA research in Urban Sociology in Libya. In NUI Maynooth, the focus of this interest has been directed towards African urbanisation and North Africa in particular. Attir's 1980 study has concentrated on the growing similarity between Tripoli and other cities in the world. Urban growth is an important aspect of development; the word "urbanisation" is widely used not only to denote urban growth, but also urban behaviour. Numerous studies show the importance of urban life, focussing on urban neighbourhoods, family relationships and general modern urban life. In this study the inhabitants of the city are described from various anthropological and sociological points of view, combined with an awareness of various problems, which in general, accompany high-density urban living.

## **2.2 Research methods**

A variety of research methods were used in the study, making it more or less a triangulate one, which involves the use of multiple methods of research. It means learning from different methods, disciplines, individuals, groups and locations as well as obtaining information relevant to a topic or issue from several sources of information (Robson: 2002). For example, information gathered at an interview is crossed-checked with other pieces of relevant research. This improves the quality of data and consequently the accuracy of the findings and it is particularly valuable in

the analysis of qualitative data. The research methodology used in this research is both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data from the study was analysed using Excel. Qualitative research focuses on the meaning of the phenomenon and tends to be concerned with words rather than numbers. It describes and explains phenomena and produces social explanations which can be generalised in some way. Both secondary and primary data were used in the study. Secondary research included a review of existing literature on the subject - despite the paucity of research in the area of transformation and social change in Tripoli. This was performed using reference books, reports, articles, periodicals and internet sources.

The purpose of the following section is to provide an insight into various aspects of the methodological framework that have been followed, both during fieldwork and throughout the process of analysis. The present study is an analysis based upon fieldwork in an urban situation over a period of seven months (August 2002- February 2003). Prior to this, I spent two months collecting a large amount of data on the methods of field research appropriate to the study of urban transformation. Additional data on selected cases and issues were also gathered after the end of the fieldwork period, through occasional visits, correspondence and interviews. Moreover, the research project includes a content analysis of a sample of Libyan urban people.

This study adds an important dimension to the present analysis, as the sample of the urban people allows a far more representative description of Libyan urban life. Consequently, I have used these findings as a background reference against which my empirical cases might be compared, and as a source of information about Libyan urban transformation, particularly in Tripoli. To collect data, a random selection of

people from the Tripoli area were interviewed. The method adopted in this study is based on a study of narratives of daily life in addition to questionnaires.

The study is based on observation and extended interviews. The researcher will also attempt to focus on certain questions from the framework of study to ascertain the degree of error within the questionnaires and empirical findings. The researcher will examine the co-existence of several cultures and the social histories of Tripoli in Libya. In addition, the study pays attention to modern movements in global culture; for example, moving from place to place or from traditional to modern manners. Above all, the aim of this study is to understand the characteristics of urbanisation from socio-cultural perspectives. The research focuses on the factors of modernisation that ultimately lead to urbanisation, especially having observed social aspects of the people that have clearly changed with time. Behavioural patterns of city people have been modified over time by global culture. Moreover, the study will give more attention to the urban environment as a domain of visual urban culture. Urban environment includes elements such as habits and descriptions of urban people.

The field research concentrated primarily on the people of Tripoli. The sample included 300 people, aged 18 to 83, living in 20 communities of the city. The sample was designed in such a way that a variety of characteristics would be analysed for the city as a whole. Two types of questionnaires were used: Open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. All questionnaires included common questions on background characteristics, social and cultural participation and mobility. The researcher met with some consultants in the field and more than four meetings were held with my supervisor with a particular focus on how the objectives of the research could be achieved and improved prior to the final application.

The interviewees filled out the questionnaires in face-to-face interviews. Before most interviews, I explained to participants who I was and where I (1) was doing the research. The duration of each interview was one hour on average, though some interviews lasted for two hours because there a need to record additional information into a study to render it comprehensible to the interviewee. The interview covered numerous variables. The majority of the interviews took place in the houses of the interviewees, others, in their place of work. The people interviewed were selected at random by the interviewer following a detailed dissection of the Tripoli area (see the map of the Tripoli city page 11). The city can be seen in light of patterns of transformation, development, location, and history. The researcher divided up the urban areas in the city so that the sample group studied would be representative of the larger urban society.

There has been strong socio-cultural interaction amongst the people in Tripoli. Aa result of the different interviews carried out, this relationship is notable among the married and the unmarried. The study shows a gender comparison of the sample between the period of residence, social relationship and other variables that are examined through different means. All of those involved in the sample have lived in Tripoli for a varying degree of time. The study focuses on Libyan nationals in order to represent the special characteristics specific to Tripoli life.

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(1) My introduction at interview was: my name is Omar, I am doing a PhD in social science in NUIM. As part of my academic study, I am interviewing people who living in Tripoli. The purpose of interviewing is to find out how they live in the city. In these interviews I hope to gain an in-depth understanding of ways of life. Anything you say will be treated in the strictest confidentiality and your replies will be anonymous.

### **2.3 Study objectives and aims**

Social, cultural and economic changes have affected the different strata of Libyan society. The most fundamental changes happened after the Libyan Revolution in 1969. Social researchers took an account of these changes and modernisation and studied factors which resulted in social change. However, few urbanisation studies with a social science perspective, let alone an anthropological perspective, have been produced.

In spite of a multitude of urban studies, no substantial theoretical and empirical progress has been made. This study about urban transformation in a Libyan city (Tripoli) has at present day acquired an extremely important status as a result of the rapid modernisation of the city. Much more recently, Tripoli has come to mirror other third world cities in its reflection of global culture compared to rural areas.

This study concerns an urban environment which houses millions of people; specifically a quarter of Libya's population. As such, Tripoli may be viewed as a representative example of social change, similar to other modern cities. It shares many characteristics evident in other cities of the world. This study will contribute as a standard study of urban transformation and it will have a practical effect on the urban environment and changes in lifestyle. The researcher aspires to assess the adaptation of the urbanisation phenomenon in different urban environments in order to differentiate or compare the Libyan urbanisation process over time with that of other cities. This will be done through analysing the daily lives of the people as well as through describing infrastructure changes in Tripoli. In addition, this study seeks to enrich relevant literature, arising from the fact that literature on urban studies is still limited to the Third World and especially Libya. The research had a number of more

specific objectives, including: to gather views of the people of the life of the city, of the characteristics of urban life and to analyse the modern aspects of the life.

The aim of the research was to attempt to identify characteristics of urbanisation using an Arabic city as an example of urban social structure. I will examine the uniqueness of Tripoli and the impact of its modern transformation on its citizens. I attempt to limit important variables such as education, cultural activities, services, transport and modern communication, which are important in the study of urban transformation.

The study will highlight general shifts and trends that have taken place in the city. It also charts the effects of urbanisation upon variables, habits and attitudes of individuals. If we know the variables and factors, the research may determine the cultural and social characteristics of urbanisation, patterns of urbanisation and the future of this phenomenon. In addition, information and data are very important in the fields of Anthropology and Sociology, so efforts will be made to gather data for current and future analysis.

The main aims of study are to:

- demonstrate how Tripoli exudes unique characteristics of the general phenomenon of urbanisation. I think that the urban system of the city does preserve aspects of cultures which are different from other cultural systems.
- enrich literature on the subject. There are not many studies in this field. It will enrich urban knowledge with an ethnography of Arabic cities such as Tripoli.
- demonstrate how urbanisation has become a cultural matter in society. It gains interest in anthropology and urban sociology due to the effects on city life.
- establish measurement of urbanisation that will be eligible to be applied to different urban environments.

## **2.4 Selecting the fieldwork site**

My decision to select urban transformation as a topic for my research was motivated by the lack of empirical research on the issue of urban transformation in Tripoli. There is a dearth of research on the topic and researchers in Libya have yet to give it the attention it deserves, particularly from an anthropological perspective. In fact, my interest in the subject of urban transformation results from my teaching experience in Libya. Another motivation of conducting this research was that it would contribute to the development or more in-depth insight into knowledge of urban living.

The fieldwork site involves male and female persons who, by virtue of their various interactions, have social roles and relationships as well as loyalties to different groups or associations. Such associations may include clubs, friends, community groups, and professional bodies. As a result of these facts, these groups of people have a peculiar experience of urban transformation, which is culturally comparative globally. The choice of urban transformation and social change in Tripoli is based upon several criteria from the global perspective. Urban behaviour of people illustrates different patterns of cultural practices. This is based on an assumption that a certain variety of specialisation characteristics would also ensure a minimum of local expertise in the field of urbanisation. Similarly, Tripoli as an urban centre can be identified with many other urban centres of the world. Informants whose careers involve a vast amount of experience in the field of urbanisation have been helpful in pointing out the ways in which this type of urban transformation may be considered typical, and the ways in which it is different from other cities. In my

analysis, I have focused upon specific aspects of urban transformation which I find to be relevant to the field of urbanisation.

The framework of urbanisation brought me to further analyse the phenomena of the city life. Most importantly, during my experience of different social occasions and cultural activities I gained an insight into urban characteristics. Through those social interactions I was granted access to all cultural occasions at which representatives from local and global culture attended; this aided in reducing the time needed to gain permission to participate in social and cultural activities, provided that I ensured the anonymity of the informants. On the other hand, my involvement with urban life represented a limitation which ought to be mentioned in this research.

### **2.5 Selecting cases, informants and the focus of the sample**

One of the main fieldwork challenges was to select an approach which would enable me to analyze social activities in a coherent manner. It soon became apparent that by simply analysing urban characteristics during these social events it was quite difficult to obtain anthropological information on urban life. As noted earlier, some of my informants took a break from their daily working schedule and arranged to meet me to discuss urban life in Tripoli. Thus, my fieldwork was organised around my informants' busy schedules.

The people with whom I selected to discuss urban culture varied in age, occupation, location and family background, among others. I realised that I would not be able to follow up on all current urban phenomena. I attempted to get an overview of urban transformation in Tripoli, which described urban people in modern times. On this basis I selected different people that I could follow more closely and analyze in greater detail. In the process of selection, both practical issues and theoretical interest



were taken into account. In particular, I was interested in those who had spent all of their lives in Tripoli, and equally, in other people who had recently moved to the city. Consequently, all of those interviewed for my research described Libyan urban life. Generally, however, data on this research remains suitable for analysis and I think that it should be helpful to any urban researcher in building data on global measurements of urbanisation. I have tried to describe and to understand each idea, for example, by analyzing all the various relationships with different groups in urban life. I thought that this might provide a unique type of insight into urban societies from the anthropological and sociological perspectives of urban life.

My selection of case study had immediate consequences for the gradual establishment of relationships to key informants. Generally, I was able to gain a greater insight into urban life, through each of the informants' unique descriptions of their lives. I also found that the most interesting and informative conversations often took place before or after a coffee break, and from these conversations I acquired a fairly good knowledge of current issues. The selection of key informants was employed to include equal numbers of male and female participants in order to achieve a fair gender representation. In my selected empirical cases, I collected statistics from different sources; this information may also be described as part of the anthropological fieldwork. In this case, it includes interviews and conversations, the gathering of written material and simple statistical inquiries. Participant observation seems to be the most effective way of gaining an in-depth understanding of the fashion in which other people see the world and interact with it, and it often provides a check on our own preconceptions and beliefs (Monaghan and Just 2000: 14). In order to allow for a more thorough understanding of the methodological approach, I will describe these urban activities in more detail.

I had the impression from the group of locals that Tripoli had different urban experiences depending on their age and life experiences. The stratified sampling technique was used to ensure that all characteristics of population were represented in the sample (for example; male and female, different groups and different levels of education).

The main purpose of the interview was to gain insight into the situation of city people; particularly, in relation to the global view. It was hoped that the number of those interviewed (300 by questionnaires; 10 as narratives as shown in table 1) would be responsive and it wasn't difficult to get a large number of people but it needed more time. I chose the interview to insure the information came straight from society. I also asked another sample of individuals while writing the literature review.

**Table (1) Breakdown of interviewees**

Instruments	Men	Women	Total
Questionnaires	150	150	300
Narratives	5	5	10

Broadly speaking, the purpose of interviewing was to find out about the life of people in the city. The research tried to apply anthropological perspectives to reveal the features of urban life of the city.

## **2.6 Understanding interviews & observing them from a marginal position**

The interviews constitute one of the key pillars of my data. There are several reasons for this. As already mentioned, social life in the city allowed little time to talk. Although everyone allowed me the opportunity for a prolonged conversation, the amount of time was often negotiated down to what I considered to be a minimum (usually an hour), and interviews were mostly attended at the set time. The interview

format applied may be described as a semi-structured oral interview. An interview guide provided a general structure for the conversation, and enabled a certain comparison between informants during analysis. On one occasion, two informants were interviewed together; otherwise the interviews were carried out on an individual basis. After the initial 300 interviews a further series of semi-structured interviews were carried out with 10 of the interviewees. This formed the basis of the narratives used within this study.

I attended many social occasions and meetings which were not directly related to any of the people I interviewed. With each interview, I obtained as much detailed knowledge about that person as possible. On many occasions, I recorded the information from the interviews in my notebook. Occasionally, one of my informants would ask my opinion, either as feedback, or as an anthropologist who might know something about Libyan urban life. Generally, I freely shared my personal opinion.

## **2.7 Fieldwork and time spent**

As a general rule, I tried to collect urban data about Libyan life. This included project plans, conferences reports, articles and documents. In spite of the limited possibilities for informal interactions, a considerable part of the fieldwork still implied just 'being there'. Sitting in the office, walking through the hallways, and spending time in the canteen were, after all, a significant feature of the fieldwork method. Occasionally, by simply being there, I would take part in events which would hardly have been recorded through interviews. After each week, I generally wrote up interview transcripts or reports from interviews and on some occasions did this at my personal computer in my own house. In addition, I searched for relevant seminars or conferences located in Tripoli when I started the fieldwork, and much spent time

doing these cultural activities. I assumed that the urban life only existed as a social field during daytime working hours. Consequently, I was initially content to spend time looking at urban life during daytime working hours only. Soonafter, however, I realised that this assumption was not valid. Though I asked about individual's habits of urban life, my private responsibilities did not allow me to spend time at night in some places where foreign people met local people during the weekends.

During my fieldwork in the city, I had access to a wide range of information which was considered sensitive by my informants. This issue of sensitivity was most salient with regard to information about various aspects of urban transformation, such as the social system. When I was with informants, I sometimes agreed to let my key informants have a chance to comment upon parts of the manuscript. The anonymity of informants had to be ensured to obtain information.

## **2.8 Analytical methods; construction and comparison**

Throughout the analysis, a combination of analytical techniques was applied. These partially included the juxtaposition of empirical data and theory common in qualitative analysis. In addition, the approach has utilised strategies in different stages of analysis. The first analytical strategy is inspired by the studies of sciences whose approach is presented in different chapters. This research concentrated on urban transformation from a global perspective; that is, on aspects that are common throughout global cities. Consequently, I have drawn attention to the way the material of urbanisation is treated in different subjects; specifically urban anthropology. The constructionist approach turned out to be the most fruitful for empirical cases. This will be apparent in chapter 6.

This provides the basis of the second analytical strategy, which is a metaphorical approach. It was developed out of a necessity to treat discourse in urban life as something which is partly separate from social interaction. I realised that in order to account for various stages of interpretative flexibility, I needed to introduce the urban reader to a description of local and global culture in urban environment. (For a detailed description, see parts from chapter 6).

The third analytical strategy relates to ethnographic comparison. Briefly, I will argue that a comparison of such differently-situated cultural practices may be both useful and illuminating. Anthropologist Holy (1987) has an edited volume on comparison in anthropology. He brings attention to the discrepancy between the current lack of methodological attention to comparison, and the fact that comparison is still widely practiced within anthropology. Cross-cultural comparison has been one of the characterising features of anthropology, and was previously widely used as a method for generating and answering questions. Consequently, according to Holy, the word ‘comparison’ literally disappeared from the vocabulary of methodological discourse and its primary function was to highlight cultural specificity. One may argue that comparison has always been part of the ethnographic method. It also entails describing modern aspects of culture in the context of local society.

## **2.9 Questions relating to the study**

General questions of the study are as follows:

- Is Libyan society a slowly-growing or rapidly-growing urban society?
- Has Libyan society remained balanced and with high achievement with the change and urbanisation which has occurred in the society?

- Has Libyan society changed its view towards the role or contribution of Libyan women in urban society?
- What changes, if any, are there in the relationship between men and women in modern Tripoli?
- What programme of social and economic development guides contemporary urbanisation?
- In what way has growth given rise to new social phenomena concerning the urban individual?
- In what way has urbanisation changed lifestyles and individuals trends?
- What does urbanisation mean?
- What are the results of urbanisation?
- How do urban processes affect social values?
- How unique are the patterns of behaviour in city society?
- Does there exist a similarity between Tripoli and other cities of the Arab world from the perspective of global culture?
- What are the main factors that appear to be responsible for the urbanisation that has taken place in the country in general and the capital city in particular?

The researcher tried to discuss the above questions in different parts of the thesis.

Most of these questions were also shown in the questionnaires.

## **Chapter 3**

### **3.1 Development studies of the anthropology of cities**

### **3.2 Definition of the city**

### **3.3 Urbanisation in North Africa**

#### **3.3.1 Overview of North Africa's history**

#### **3.3.2 The case of urbanisation**

#### **3.3.3 Population and change**

#### **3.3.4 Modern aspects of urbanisation**

### **3.4 The case of rapid urbanisation in Libya**

### **3.1 Development studies of the anthropology of cities**

The anthropology of cities, or urban anthropology, is a branch of general anthropology. So far, limited anthropological studies have been carried out in Africa, Asia, South America and Europe. The urban researchers involved are usually European and American while some are Asian or African. The literature I found on urban anthropology was generally written by social scientists and anthropologists who focused on cities in developed countries.

“More than half of the world’s urban populations now live in developing countries rather than in the industrialised countries” (Dwyer 1974: 9). In the last hundred and fifty years, we have seen a revolutionary shift in the location of the world’s population. Dwyer’s research referred to a movement of the population from the countryside to the city. He noted that the huge populations of the third world play a major part in an urbanisation that larger than any that has ever existed before (Dwyer 1974: 110). These anthropological studies contribute to understanding the city and the struggles of local people in relation to cultural identity and social control. This struggle for identity is part of an on-going dialectic between urban and rural culture. Most urban societies are becoming similar because of globalisation. Even small neighbourhoods and cultural groups within the city are affected (Low 1996: 62).

Anthropology of the city focuses on urban culture. Culture can be defined as a set of values held by individuals who believe themselves and each other to be of the same culture. There are three forces that impact on an individual’s sense of culture in an urban setting:

- Education by cultural standard-bearers who wish to mould the individual into a proper member of society



- Environmental forces, such as climate, economic opportunity, and population density
- Exposure to external models of behaviour (Hoboes.com 2002)

However, cultures are continuously changing, and today these changes are both rapid and far-reaching. Anthropology of the city is particularly interested in urban culture, particularly in the lifestyles of professional people who work in the inner-city, such as community workers. Oscar Lewis (1952) was one of the first anthropologists to observe and provide an inside view of lifestyles which are common to many groups in society. He referred to a gap in communication between people (Bartles-Smith and Gerrard 1976: 48). Lewis published a short paper entitled, “Urbanisation without Breakdown”, refuting the bipolar moralistic assumption that migrants from a peasant village (Tepoztlan, Mexico) would inevitably be demoralised by life in Mexico City. He emphasised that they held on to kinship and religious support systems in the urban environment, and similar findings have subsequently been reported from other cities in other parts of the world (Gulik, et al. 1989: 11). However, before World War II most of the research on urban culture was performed by urban anthropologists on the subject of small cities or defined areas within large cities. The anthropologist Robert Redfield is a good example. “Robert Redfield did broaden the urban perspective of Latin America, but his work largely reinforced already-entrenched anti-city archaeological research on Latin America and the Middle East” (Gulick, et al. 1989: 11). Redfield tried amending his theory on folk society in his article entitled on Simple Primitive Society (Redfield 1947: 293). In 1947, Redfield depicted features of society as a sanctuary against secularisation and against a reduction in the rate of change. Such features could be described as size or homogeneity. This researcher

depicts or characterises folk or rural society as being a sanctuary of homogenization, while the urban society lacks homogeneity and is more secular.

One of the oldest anthropological studies was done by Horace Miner in 1940 which involved an empirical study to test Robert Redfield's theory in the ancient African city of Timbuktoo before its colonisation (Eljohri and Shokry 1983: 464) According to Miner's study, other anthropologists showed interest in urban problems in cities of west and east Africa. Most of the studies outlined special features for these cities, including the immigrant's adoption of urban culture, family organisation and the participation in political life of urban society.

In 1957, Michael Young and Peter Willmott published a classic study of urban anthropology, "Family and Kinship in East London". This book establishes the importance, among working-class Londoners, of close but extensive kinship ties and local hangouts and the effects of urban renewal (Gulick 1989: 11-12). In addition, the book empathised with the plight of the East-end working-class communities that experienced deep structural changes as occupations that had previously employed the male population either were no longer in existence or had been relocated to other regions. The authors also felt that the profound effects of post-war economic change were creating a widening gap between the labour Government and its traditional working-class supporters (Willmott and Young 1992: xiv). Therefore, Young and Willmott centralize social class as the key to understanding many of the differences in the suburb East London (Willmott and Young 1971: 98).

In an effort to make generalisations on urbanisation in African cities, research was carried out in central and South Africa, although difficulties were encountered as a result of diversities between indigenous cities and those set up by Europeans as centres of commerce and industry. Thus, Tripoli is different from other cities in

Africa and as such may identify with many European cities from a historical point of view.

Herbert Gans did another study which focussed on the working-class rather than on ethnic neighbourhoods. His focus was primarily the white working-class enclave in which the community is essentially seen as a 'set of people and institutions to serve and protect the family and peer group' (Gans 1962: xi). This study seemed to emphasise the quality of urban life in terms of education, public service and association in the community. The researchers, Young, Willmott and Gans, thought that this was a pity, because there were valuable aspects of community life such as education, public service and association in the community.

The city writer Michel De Certeau is described as being "simultaneously the machinery and hero of modernity". He argued that urbanisation was a key dimension for the making of modern societies due to the movement of people from the countryside to urban centres. Cities changed qualitatively and quantitatively and their unprecedented scale and complexity required new levels of planning and organisation (Bilton, Bonnett, et al. 1996: 28). However, cities in the third world are relatively disordered which can cause urban problems.

In the second half of the last century, especially in the 1960s, urban societies and cities came to the attention of cultural anthropology. Anthropologists were already conducting research on cities before the term "urban anthropology" began to be used in the 1960s. With this shift in focus, "urban anthropology" counters anthropology's traditional emphasis on "primitive" and peasant people to the exclusion of urban, complex and industrial societies (Basham 1978: 21, Al-Zubaidi quoted by Basham 1978, Indian.edu 2004). The term "Urban Revolution" was introduced by V.Gorden Childe (1950), it refers to the way in which urban

anthropology involves the study of the cultural systems of cities as well as the linkages of cities to larger and smaller places and populations as part of the world wide urban system (Kemper 1996). Thus, urban research in the field of urban anthropology is new when compared with urban studies in general. However, most urban researchers are heavily influenced by urban sociological thinkers like Ferdinand Tonnies (1887), Durkheim (1897), Louis Wirth (1938), Robert Redfield (1947), among others. However, anthropology has changed quite a bit: ethnography is one of the things that distinguishes anthropology from the rest of the social sciences. It began to records ways of life that were rapidly changing with the advent of colonialism (Monaghan and Just 2000: 2). I noticed that the difference between urban anthropology and urban sociology is often no more than methodological. “The main differences between anthropology and sociology lie in methods” (Hann 2000: 10). In the anthropology of urbanisation, the connection between the urban and the rural is a strong field in African research and is mainly explored by British and American anthropologists. Now that we have a clear view of the theoretical development of urbanisation I can move on to define the city and review some facts of urbanisation in North Africa.

### **3.2 Definition of the city**

The aim of this section is to study the development of urbanisation in Libya. Both historical towns and contemporary urban growth will be examined. A salient feature of urbanisation in the country is the manifestation of an imbalanced primed city-based urban system, which needs a policy of decentralisation assisted regional development. At the beginning of this section, a definition of the city in Libya was examined. It has been argued that one fundamental difficulty that exists is that “there

is no sharp boundary in most instances, between urban and rural areas". Attir noted that in Libya, an urban area is defined as a settlement with 5,000 or more inhabitants, but it should also have an administrative function. According to the definition of the town in Libya, there is no obvious division between a large village and a small town. It has been argued that the small urban centres are the most ambiguous points in the rural-urban dichotomy since they are symbols of the major points.

The definition of a city varies from country to country. Population size appears to be one of the most frequently used indicators of urbanisation, while status measure is used only in 33 out of 133 countries (Clark 1982: 29). The different minimum population of an urban area ranges between 2000 in the case of Denmark, to 20,000 in Syria or Jordan. In Malaysia and Venezuela, for example, 10,000 people would constitute a minimum population for an urban settlement. The figure for Thailand is 2,500; South Korea, 4,000; most North African countries, 5,000 (El-Sharif 1990: 32); and Cuba, 2000 (Cohen 2004: 25). In addition to population, occupation is also a factor. Urban populations do not generally work in the agricultural field. In general, I noted that some people live in the city centre whilst having farms outside the city. Most cities in the third world have populations that display a migrant culture; that is, a culture that comes from outside of the local society. Therefore, a city person can have knowledge of local and global cultures as well as knowledge of rural and urban cultures. This characteristic applies to people in most cities in Africa.

Urbanisation may be defined as a process of redistribution, prompting shifts of population from the countryside to towns and cities. The latter are human settlements characterised by a higher degree of population concentration living in contiguously built up areas, and engaged in mostly non-agricultural activities (Ibrahim 1975: 29).

Libyan urbanisation is impacted by Islam, which encourages strong kin and neighbourly relations. As such, urbanisation in Libya differs from urbanisation in the west. The growth in urban populations can be attributed to a number of factors such as longevity, migration away from rural areas, the rise in the number of returned emigrants and the influx of non-nationals. All of this has produced a higher demand for property in Libya's capital city.

As a nation, Libyan people have become more accustomed to living in houses than apartments or flats: living in flats is seen as a more European habit. However, popular conceptions about this type of living have changed, especially among young people. The building of apartments and flats has contributed to the rejuvenation of Libyan cities.

Urbanisation has been augmented by development programmes that include road construction and expansion, construction of lanes to ease traffic flow, provision of recreational facilities, such as cinemas and sports clubs. Flats are surrounded by amenities such as shops and restaurants, as these cater for the needs of the residents of these new complexes.

The level of urbanisation in Libya is very high in comparison to other major cities in Africa. For example, the level of urbanisation in Libya, particularly Tripoli, has been assessed as approximately 86%. Libya is thus rated the country with the highest level of urbanisation in Africa.

The development and sustenance of urbanisation in Libya has been much aided by good structural and social infrastructure. It must also be said that urbanisation has drawn a number of opportunities and much wealth to Libya. Libya is the second-largest African oil producer after Nigeria (Ai.org 2002). Urbanisation and the economy are closely linked as the economy grows, so the urbanisation of the country

progresses. In the case of Libya, the phenomenon of urbanisation was enhanced because of its oil, and its policies were designed to encourage urbanisation and modernisation. Thus, Libyan society became highly urbanised but not highly developed industrially when compared to North Africa countries. In spite of the phenomenon of industrialisation, industry has tended to be centred around a few urban centres. For example, Musrata has many factories, such as manufacture plants for the export of iron and steel. Additionally, Tripoli has a number of factories for the manufacture of plastics, and these produce goods for domestic and export purposes. This phenomenon gave rise to urban growth in Libyan society by attracting immigration from rural areas.

Libya was the smallest and, until the late 1950s, the least developed of all the North African countries. Libya has experienced the most marked shift in its level of urbanisation, as well as all other economic and social indicators, but this remarkable change is due to the discovery and subsequent exploitation of oil. Libya's "urban revolution" since 1960 cannot be understood without reference to this "new" resource. Libya is essentially under-populated and the movement from agriculture and nomadism into cities was caused not by over-saturation of rural areas but by the labour shortage in oil-linked processing and the consequent wide-wage differential (Unikel 1981: 148-149). The oil industry needs much labour and establishes or contributes to urban centres, such as Raslanuf and Elbrega.

Urbanisation in Libya has also been a process of demographic and physical city growth. The rapidity of urbanisation over the last thirty years has emphasised services, which are important aspect of the country's growth. So, urbanisation is part of a progression of the social structure from a traditional to a modern system.

### **3.3 Urbanisation in North Africa**

#### **3.3.1 Overview of North Africa's history**

Societies in North Africa have a long history which dates back thousands of years and is a part of Arabic history. During this long history, there has been much life experience in the area. The region has also experienced different stages in areas such as work, the economy, politics and different social relations. Hence, the characteristics of North African society are similar when looking at it from geographical, demographical and economical angles. The process of social change which happened in this area destroyed the appearance and patterns of daily activity with regards work and living practices and transport. The sea coasts of North Africa have had urban settlements for many centuries; these include Cairo, Alexandria, Tripoli, Tunis, Fas, Morocsh, among others. Some cities have regressed in terms of life circumstances (Attir 1995: 24).

History studies refer to European researchers such as Kouber who visited Libyan cities in the mid 1800s. These researchers visited these cities in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and saw signs of what had originally been cities but were subsequently deserted. The population had migrated many centuries ago. Examples of such cities are Cartage in Tunisia and Liptis in Libya. Some cities keep the main features and extend beyond the old city borders; for example, Cairo in Egypt. During the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a rise in new industrial cities in North Africa, for example, Halwan in Egypt, Elbrega and Raslanuf in Libya, and Hassi Masud in Algeria. The main cities that extended came to incorporate new cities within their boundaries. An example of this is the way in which Cairo incorporated Nasar, Sedet, and Tenth Ramadan, which then became parts of greater Cairo. Since the first appearance of cities in North Africa, a large proportion of the population has lived within the cities



and this has not decreased. Attir says that the rate is between 10 and 20 percent of the total population and the situation continued until the Second World War (Attir 1995: 24).

The circumstances of North Africa changed during the colonial era. Colonialism had different phases and coexisted with foreign governing forces. After the Second War, the colonial forces began to withdraw and countries of North Africa gained independence and joined treaties and agreements allowing existing military elements (Attir 1995: 25).

Governments of North Africa established national power aspects in different phases. The programmes of development focused on repairing and caring for capital cities. The main cities received investment from the colonising countries and made amendments and additions to the buildings, infrastructure and services. The main beneficiaries of this investment were the western colonies of North Africa. After independence, the main cities in North Africa became capital cities, such as Cairo, Tunisia and Rabat. These cities received investment in buildings and different institutions, companies, hotels, transport, theatres, and embassies (Attir 1995: 25.26).

Sad Aldin Ibrahim refers to North African society by saying that this area shows traditional stability. A high birth rate and a high death rate mean that the rate of growth was slight, due to wars and natural disasters. Sad Aldin Ibrahim noted that a dramatic change had occurred in this region when it joined a link with colonialism and western societies. He assumed that communication with western societies benefited from modern facilities in different fields such as health, cleanliness, and nutrition, which were a result of a decrease in the death rate, particularly in respect of children. The birth rate has stayed at the same level (Ibrahim 1979: 18). He gained evidence for this from data in Algeria and Egypt. These countries communicated with

the west during the colonial expansion of North Africa. History reports refer to the original population in Algeria and Libya as decreasing during the period of colonialism. European colonialism, especially French and Italian, described Arabic people as a group undeserving of modern facilities. The population of cities increased because of the growing western presence within them. Tripoli, which represents an old Arabic city, passed through various stages. It stayed behind high walls for many centuries and thus its size could not increase (Attir 1995: 28-29).

Many cities in North Africa became centres for markets and the slave trade in Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania during the colonial era. Evidence of the impact of the slave trade on urbanisation patterns is scarce and contradictory. Algiers was the largest slave port following the appointment of a Turkish governor in 1520. In 1830, the French invaded Algeria followed by Tunisia, Mauritania and Morocco. However, the European presence was generally confined to defence and trading in coastal settlements and there was little penetration inland. Meanwhile, Egyptian incursions occurred into Sudanese sultanates to establish political control (Unu.edu 2003) into sub-urban pattern.

“The colonial system thus organised African societies so that they produced exports that provided only minimal returns to local labour. It restructured peasant agriculture, introduced a new administrative system, and changed the pattern of urbanisation” (Unu.edu 2003).

After the colonisation period a system of education was introduced in all of North Africa. Consequently, North African cities developed not as industrial centres, but to facilitate the extraction of commodities and the politico-administrative system on which they depended. Many coastal settlements that were already engaged in

international trade expanded and Tunisia is an important example of this in North Africa. Some countries in North Africa fulfilled their functions as administrative and commercial centres, and colonisation established these urban centres and left infrastructural footprints which can be seen through, for example, the architecture of the cities. Transport infrastructure, especially railways, was developed to connect the ports to their hinterlands. In some parts of Africa, earlier urban systems had decayed and new colonial settlements were established and port cities thrived at the expense of inland settlements. Cities in North Africa were typical of a new pattern of urban settlement that had been established by these colonial relationships. Parts of Africa where local economies were linked to the outside world grew and urbanisation in these areas was considerably influenced by the European models. These patterns of development were common during the colonial era (Unu.edu 2003).

The independence of North African countries as nation-states is a relatively recent occurrence, mostly taking place in the 1950s. All were ruled by European countries for a considerable period of time; with the longest colonial rule in Algeria. During their rule, the Ottoman Turks, the French and the Italians imposed their own legal systems and forms of government upon the indigenous systems of social organisation. They also linked the urban-agricultural policy pursued in the colonized countries to their own home policies in order to serve their primary interests (El-Ghonemy 1993: 455).

The achievement of political independence in African countries has not, however, occurred overnight. It is rather the end-product of very complex economic, social, and political processes that have been at work over the span of many years.

The past has left its mark on African cities, which have histories dating back thousands of years into the pre-colonial times. The mosque and the marketplace

served as centres of urban life. The mosque has its own characteristic style of architecture built of adobe in desert hues, the horizontal lines of massed flat-roofed houses broken only by the slender round towers of the mosques (Curtin, et al. 1995: 509). The mosques played the most significant role in the mobilisation and organisation of popular opposition in Arab societies.

### **3.3.2 The case of urbanisation**

The process of urbanisation is a major aspect of change in North Africa where pre-urban cities and new urban settlements have developed over the past decades. Several cities rapidly became regional centres or international nodes which responded to economic and political pressures. Poorly-planned urbanisation causes land cover changes, which can lead to deeper social, economic, and environmental changes (Weber and Puissant 2003: 341). Pre-colonial cities of North Africa sometimes reached considerable size.

North Africa is the most urbanised sub-region in Africa and urban growth in northern Africa is partially the result of rural-urban migration, but natural urban growth and reclassification account for more than 70 per cent of urban development (World Bank 1995). This migration trend can be attributed to the greater opportunities in terms of education and employment that are to be found in cities. Table 4 reflects the change in population size within North African societies.

The significance of urban areas in northern Africa is long-standing. Well-established urban centres such as Cairo, Casablanca and Tripoli, which continue to thrive, have retained their character despite various economic, social, cultural and political changes. However, urban agglomerations and mega-cities are important features of recent urbanisation trends, as well as heavy industrialisation. In this

section, I should point out that urbanisation as a phenomenon has characteristics which differ from one urban area to another.

In general, the rate of urbanisation of the Muslim population of North Africa has been quite spectacular during the post-independence period. North Africa is changing very rapidly and the cities are experiencing high population growth combined with urban problems. Many of these problems stem from the speed with which the city has grown, and the majority of people residing in the region are concentrated in the coastal area along the Atlantic and the Mediterranean seas (Pacione1981).

### **3.3.3 Population and change**

The total North African population was 140 million in 1990, but by the year 2000, it had increased to over 220 million. The population of all six countries grew faster than in previous years due to the notable progress achieved in reducing death rates. This is important as income and health improved between 1960 and 1988, resulting in a population increase from 20 million to nearly 60 million. Much of the population lived in urban centres, especially in Libya (El-Ghonemy 1993: 446).

In general, Africa still is one of the world's least urbanised regions. In 1960, at the time when most of Europe's colonial powers were present in Africa, the colonisers lived in cities. There were not more than 33 million European people amidst more than 220 million inhabitants of the vast rural areas (Aiid.org 2003). Between 1960 and 1980, Africa's population exploded, with an average annual growth of 3.2 per cent. The rural population increased from 220 million to 370 million, but the urban population more than tripled, from 33 million to 110 million. Almost a quarter of the African population lived in cities in 1980.

Tunisia became the most urbanised country of the continent (52% of its people living in cities), while Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco all had an urban population of at least 40%. By the 1970s, the population of Africa began to grow more rapidly than that of Latin America and the Caribbean. Reports show that the population of sub-Saharan Africa increased by an annual rate of 2.9 per cent between 1975 and 1990, and the increase diminished only very marginally to 2.8 per cent between 1990 and 2000 - the fastest rate of growth of any of the world's regions during this period. It was between 1975 and 2000 that it surpassed all other newly industrialising and developing regions, apart from the Arab world. However, there was little relationship between the size and degree of urbanisation (Palgrave.com 2003). Between 1980 and 2000, population growth slowed somewhat (to 2.5% per annum) but the urban explosion continued, with an annual increase in the urban population which was close to 5%. Over the last twenty years, Africa's urban population has almost tripled to 300 million people (Aiid.org 2003). The population of the Arab world increased dramatically by a rate of 2.43 per cent per annum between 1975 and 1990, but declined marginally to 2.54 per cent per annum between 1990 and 2000. The level of urbanisation also rose substantially during the last quarter of the twentieth century, and in proportionate terms, exceeded that of both sub-Saharan Africa and most of Asia.

**Table (2) Total population from 1950 to 2000**

Country or territory	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000
Algeria	10,197,000	13,623,000	18,577,000	24,864,000	28,047,000	31,200,000.
Egypt	25,959,000	32,614,000	41,020,000	52,392,000	58,066,000	69,100,000
Libya	1,350,000	1,933,000	3,068,000	3,964,000	4,934,000	6,400,000
Morocco	11,672,000	15,081,000	19,390,000.	24,016,000	26,588,000	29,600,000
Tunisia	4,067,000	4,975,000	6,316,000	8,007,000	8,992,000	9,700,000
Mauritania	1,212,000	2,571,000	5,304,000	6,004,000	6,732,000	7,661,000
<b>Total</b>	54,457,000	70,797,000	93,675,000	119,247,000	133,359,000	153,661,000

Source: United Nations, World Bank 1995 and other references.

\*Compiled by the author

**Table (3) Uurban population from 1950 to 2000**

<b>Country</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Algeria</b>	3, 186,000	4,772,000	7, 380,000	11, 301,000	13, 305,000	28,021,000
<b>Egypt</b>	12,993,000	18,016,000	24, 650,000	34,115,000	38,859,000	39,084,000
<b>Libya</b>	358,000	862,000	1,903,000	3,146,000	3,882,000	5,115,450
<b>Morocco</b>	3,163,000	4,948,000	7,593,000	10,854,000	13,118,000	19,704,000
<b>Tunisia</b>	1,227,000	1,814,000	2,881,000	4,240,000	4,957,000	5,305,000
<b>Mauritania</b>	=====	=====	=====	2,902,000	4,166,000	5,110,000
<b>Total</b>	=====	=====	=====	<b>55,257,000</b>	<b>64,982,000</b>	<b>102,339,450</b>

**Source:** United Nations, World Bank 1995 and other references.

\*Compiled by the author

The quantitative and qualitative distribution of population in North Africa and coastal regions is of considerable importance from a development point of view. This phenomenon pushed up the level of urbanisation in North Africa, the level of economic development as well as the state of the environment. Urbanisation has a weighty effect on both the world and the standard of living. It is both a significant cause and effect of modern life. Most scholars agree that once the total population reaches or surpasses 10,000 inhabitants, it is considered an urban population as calculated according to the demographic sources available in each country. As an example of the data, Tables 2 and 3 give the total and urban populations for North African countries between the periods of 1950 and 2000. In lower Libya, the 1950 urban population was about 193 times larger than it had been 45 years earlier - a rural increase of 3,000,882 inhabitants. The same trend was seen in other Arabic countries. The urbanisation rates of North African countries to Arab countries were almost equal, and they were even higher than that of Europe.

For analytical and comparative purposes, we can classify African countries according to their degree of urbanisation as follows:

- 1- Low urbanisation (0- 34%).
- 2- Medium urbanisation (35 – 73%).

3- High urbanisation (more than 74%).

If we apply this measure to the actual urbanisation in North Africa in 2000, we find:

- a- Low urbanisation not found in any country.
- b- Moderate urbanisation in Algeria (60%), Tunisia (60%), Morocco (51%), Mauritian (49%), and Egypt (69%).
- c- High urbanisation in Libya (88%).

In Africa, there are nine countries where more than 15% of the population live in the largest city. In two cases (Libya and Congo), the figure is over 30% (Cohen 2004: 29).

**Table (4) Urbanisation rates of North Africa countries (as percentage)**

Country	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000
Algeria	18	31	35	40	54	47	60
Egypt	43	50	55	60	65	67	69
Libya	20	26	45	62	78	79	88
Morocco	24	27	33	39	45	49	51
Tunisia	26	30	36	47	53	55	60
Mauritania	2	6	-	29	40	46	49

Source: United Nations, World Bank 1995 and other references.

\*Compiled by Author

Table 4 indicates that the majority of North Africa's population lives in urban areas.

Table 4 also indicates that there has been a rapid population growth, particularly over the last two decades. There are great differences between North African countries.

The importance of the towns in social change has not gone unobserved amongst students of African affairs. Thus Hodgkin, a political scientist, has commented that, above all, it is these new urban societies that the characteristic



institutions and ideas of North African or Arab nationalism were born and grew to maturity. Social anthropologists have made the most detailed studies of urbanisation and urbanism in Africa to date. Yet as our knowledge of African urbanism accumulates, it also becomes clear that such formulations may do less than justice to the complexity of the phenomena and can lead to obscuring certain important problems that call for analysis.

Processes of urbanisation in modern Africa, such as industrialisation, modernisation, urbanisation and the growth of settler communities, must all be kept analytically distinct if we are to make valid generalisations. Every African is assumed to be “detrribalised” as soon as he leaves his tribal land. (The term “urbanisation” itself is complex: how can we decide whether one African or one population is more urbanised than another?) It is of course true that the man who comes to town finds himself involved in social groupings which are different from those existing in the village. Life in rural communities seems to involve a process of movement and change; its essence is that life in rural communities creates the possibility of discontinuity with some pre-existing set of conditions. This may be contrasted with urbanism, which is the way of life in the towns themselves (Epstein 1967: 275-276).

One of the first scholars who wrote about urbanisation in North Africa was Iben Khaldun. Khaldun could not have guessed the proportion of the population of the Mughab countries and Libya were urban dwellers before 1900, but one tenth may be a fair estimate. Figures of 8-9% have been suggested for Morocco in 1900 and Tunisia in 1880, and 16% for Algeria in 1886, while urban life was probably least developed in Libya (Dwyer 1974: 79). The study refers to urban and suburban international figures. In Morocco, there are 117 declared urban centres, some of which have a population of less than 5000, yet these fulfil urban functions including

tourism. Algeria defines urban centres as those with a population of at least 10 to 12 thousand inhabitants. Tunisia uses a similar definition. The latest Libyan census of 1964, however, is unique in failing to recognise urban agglomerations at all, although the presence of oil supports urban growth revolution. The oil towns of Hassi Messauoud in Algeria or Maras Elbrega in Libya are obvious examples.

Using 10,000 as a suitable threshold for urban population, the level of urbanisation in North Africa varies from one country to another. It is highest in Libya (88%) and Algeria (60%) and lowest in Mauritania (49%) as shown in table 4. The population of all countries is growing and the world's cities are growing by 1 million people each week. Today, less than half of the world's population lives in urban areas, but by 2025 more than two-thirds of us will be urban dwellers. Much of this urban growth – along with its most serious consequences – will occur in developing countries (Brockerhaff 1996: 1).

Dwyer argues that in North Africa, urbanisation of different countries is remarkable, despite the fact that the degree of urbanisation is lower than in the rest of the Arab world and the Middle East, but higher than in tropical Africa and southern Asia. Before 1900, North African towns were not only smaller but also fewer than today. Nevertheless, Algiers and Tripoli were still moderate size towns of 20,000 - 30,000 people. More remarkable than the actual level of urbanisation in Morocco and Libya is the rate of urban growth, which demonstrated almost unchecked acceleration through the twentieth century. During this period as a whole, Libya demonstrated the most rapid rate of expansion, largely as a result of an exceptional increase in the urban population. The writer found that in Algeria, the rate of increase has been slower than in Libya and Morocco. However, between 800,000 - 900,000 non-

Muslim town dwellers have moved to cities through emigration since 1954 (Dwyer 1974: 68).

Mauritania, unlike the other Maghreb countries, is experiencing a relatively moderate population growth (2.08% per year) because of a continually high death rate. Town dwellers represent about 32% of the population, in spite of various factors (lack of rainfall and forced population migrations after the conflict with Senegal in April 1989, for example) that have accentuated the movement towards urbanisation. However, during the last 20 years, the development of iron deposits has led to amenities for new centres, a trend towards the sedentarisation of nomads, and the tertiarisation of the economy. This has contributed to the considerable growth of the towns, especially Nouakchott.

The appearance of new types of population mobility during the 1980s in the Arab countries is linked to the transformation of the relations between town and country. In the 1960s, faced with the rural exodus, the big urban centres such as Cairo, Casablanca, Tunis and Algiers offered the possibility of integration to the migrants; however since the late 1970s, this is no longer the case. In fact, these urban centres find it difficult to absorb the increasing flow of migrants and one can observe a slack in emigration towards the large urban centres.

At the same time, small and medium-sized towns have created significant spatial zones of influence that largely polarize the burgeoning inter-urban migrations. For 20 years, various strategies have been worked out in this way in the rural zones: pendular migrations, migrations abroad, and the development of intermediary towns as well as new agglomerates. One can equally emphasize the important role of United States in the development of these poles, both new and old, as result of their efforts towards

decentralisation. This is seen mainly through the bias of descending migrations of state employees.

During the colonial period in Mauritania, social structure had come to reflect the impact of French administrative preferences. Individuals, families, and dominant clans attempted to use their privileged status. Independence was granted in 1960; Mauritanian society changed faster than it had over the span of the colonial period. This era saw the beginnings of urbanisation, the founding of a permanent capital, the establishment of national organisations such as trade unions, and the expansion of education facilities. This led to social improvements in different fashions. The economic development has altered traditional social organisation, particularly among groups near centres of modernisation. Rapid urbanisation has accelerated these changes. However, while Mauritania was transformed from a nomadic society to an urban society a number of years ago, the characteristics of nomadic society still infuse the society, particularly with respect to social matters. It is clear that the experience of urbanisation in Mauritania was different from other parts of north Africa due to poverty, low income and the fact that society is unstable in light of political developments.

Cairo is estimated to have had a population of 300,000 in the eleventh century and 500,000 at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Although the urbanisation rate grew slowly, Cairo is the largest urban area in North Africa, and it now has a stabilised population which is comparative to other metropolitan cities of the world (Blue Plan Papers 2001: 12). In comparison to Libya, Egypt, which has a population of 69 million (with only 15 million living in its capital city, Cairo), is proportionally less than in Tripoli. There is also a socio-economic difference between the inhabitants of the two cities as wages are lower in Cairo than in Tripoli. The population in Tripoli

increased but to a lesser extent. For instance it is believed that one third of the population of Tripoli were Jews; however, there is no clear evidence to prove this. After Italy's conquest of Libya in 1911, urban growth followed. In 1964, 200,000 Libyan people migrated to Libyan cities and as a result the urban population increased by 92%. They subsequently impacted on the social formation of Libyan cities. During that time more than 100,000 Italians and Jews departed, many before 1951. However, non-Muslims still constitute approximately one-tenth of the urban population in Libyan cities. Table 3 indicates that for each period between 1950 and 2000, the population of Libya increased much more rapidly than most other North African countries. Although Tripoli is comparatively better than Cairo in attaining a stabilised population growth; it is home to 2 of Libya's 6 million inhabitants. In 1959, 80% of Algeria's urban population was European. 1962 to 1964 saw the departure of 600,000 Europeans from Algerian towns, while simultaneously 800,000 Algerian people moved from the countryside into the cities.

In general, most countries in Africa are still mostly rural with low urbanisation rates, however, Libya has a high rate of urbanisation and is the country with the strongest growth in urbanisation rate between 1950 and 2000 – a rate of 88% in absolute terms. In spite of this, the urbanisation rate in both the northern countries and those that were already highly urbanised stagnated and even regressed between 1990 and 2000. The spectacular growth in cities in Libya has been linked to a deep change in the economy brought about by income from oil. The size of the Libyan population was 5 million in 1995 as a result of the economic boom (Blue Plan Papers 2001: 13). It is now estimated to be over 5.6 million. Urbanisation has strongly increased since 1950, where it began at less than 20% in 1950 to over 88% in 2000. This increase is

very high: in Libya, there was an increase of 34% from 1975 to 1995 (Planbleu.org 2003).

During the period (1950-2000), there was a substantial increase in the population in urban centres far in excess of the growth rate for Libya as a whole. This increase, however, has been confined to the largest cities of the country such as Tripoli and Benghazi. In general, Libyan society has seen growth in different fields especially in urban populations, and levels can be measured and compared from one country to another. Libya has a high level of urbanisation due to the fact that its programme for economic, social and political development has been successfully implemented - thus encouraging the influx of foreign multinational companies and other businesses to invest, and ultimately leading to improved income and a higher standard of living for citizens. In Libya's past, people were poor and uneducated and the acquisition of formal training was limited to the few who had access to Italian institutions of education.

In 1995 there were no clearly under-urbanised countries in North Africa. The last rates recorded in Morocco were 45% and, as in other developing countries, Moroccan rapid urbanisation has caused housing shortages, a lack of urban services, and environmental problems. The rate of urbanisation is different from one society to another. This study will now focus on the specific case of urbanisation in Tripoli, which represents Libyan society.

In the past, Libya and Algeria had a similar urban structure, but more recent anthropological studies have demonstrated a slight difference in their spatial organisation. Most notable among these differences are the spatial representation of indigenous cultural and social organisations. The colonial system communities in

particular portrayed these differences in spatial taxonomies and systems of classification (Attir 1995: 25).

### **3.3.4 Modern aspects of urbanisation**

In the first half of the nineteenth century, a surprisingly high proportion of town dwellers were non-Muslim. The European's consciousness of North Africa is much older than his/her awareness of other cultures, and early impressions could not help but be coloured by the historical oppositions between Christianity and Islam (Fernea and Malarkey 1975: 184). The transformation of the cultural and ethnic composition of North African towns in the course of a few years has far-reaching consequence, particularly in Algeria - less so in Libya (Dwyer 1974: 72).

North Africa is an amalgam of six countries with broad similarities and significant structural variations. Apart from being ruled by Europeans for a considerable period of time, African migrant workers to Western Europe come primarily from North Africa and from West Africa (Garenne 2003: 14). The obvious common feature is cultural: the Arabic language, the Islamic religion and many shared customs. The region comprises countries with different economic structures: a predominately agricultural low-income economy (Mauritania), balanced middle-income economies (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) and an oil based high-income economy (Libya) (El-Ghonemy 1993: 445).

African people further from the main routes of invasion and urbanisation did not have time to learn western culture sufficiently for effective adaptation before the intensity of capitalist penetration broke upon them. They were left in a pathological condition; their own rich culture decayed and became incoherent, no longer capable of securing harmony among them (Southall 1998: 290).

Urban development was largely confined to developed countries before the middle of the last century but has spread to developing countries since then. Both outcomes are seen as interdependent consequences of the growth and geographical extension of capitalism, which is in keeping with the merits of the interdependency theory. Recent urbanisation in Africa and Asia are localised responses to the new global economic order. In Africa, there are enormous variations, since in some areas there are vulnerable civilisations and high levels of urbanisation (Abu-Luchod and Hay 1979: 5). Most countries in Africa have not become heavily industrialised. African cities have grown due to the influx of manufacturing and service jobs from developed economies, and the immigration of workers displaced by agricultural adjustment.

The urban planning profession seeks genuine improvements in the quality of life, which are necessary for societies that are experiencing rapid change. There is a need to develop a planning and urban theory supported by suitable development controls which will generate and regulate an urban environment more suited to offer residents comfort at all levels. After the discovery of petroleum a development programme was set up which led to an improvement in the standard of living. My research has shown that programmes of modernisation in Libya brought about many benefits, at both personal and societal levels. The programmes brought about the construction of new western-style buildings, indicating an acceptance of western culture. There are certain elements particular to Arabic culture, just as there are elements that are particular to western culture. This is due to inter-culturalism within the society in different fields such as education, business, etc. Indeed, rapid urbanisation in North Africa has also given rise to significant environmental and social problems, characterised by increasing urban poverty, the emergence of



informal settlements and slums and a shortage in basic urban services (Grida.no 2002). More than one-third of the urban population now live in substandard housing.

Another important urban development is the use of computers for administration in Libya today. Improvement in the use of modern technology for communication has also improved Libya's economy. Whether young or old, male or female, citizens and foreigners have become proficient in the use of modern means of communications, which are inexpensive and readily available in Libyan cities. In fact, most North African (and specifically Libyan) administrative staff and diplomats enjoy computer and internet access to perform their various activities in the city. Computers are available in internet centres, embassies, airline offices, hotels, coffee shops, shopping plazas and other public locations. Business and the economy have improved in the city and the entire country for both the government and the individual because there is a friendly relationship between Libya and other countries, especially African countries. There is much opportunity for the Libyan government, private establishments and individuals to form excellent business relationships with other Africans because foreigners are allowed to come into Libya to invest. The Libyan government also permit their citizens to leave the country to travel to other African countries to do business, and it supports and encourages them to do this through funds and loans to invest in other African countries. Business relationships between Libyans and other Africans have had an impact on Libyan citizens' understanding of other African cultures as well as global culture (Blak 1984: 267-293).

Urbanisation comes in different forms and the major meaning is confusing here for it could be seen in the light of the term "Coca-Cola culture". The term can refer to the trans-nationalisation, rationalisation and global organisation of production in an array of manufacturing industries and categories of services, such as finance and

telecommunications together with high profile advertising. Until recently, the use of European models and actors in world-wide advertising promoted images of western sophistication creating a desire for such lifestyles. In less fortunate regions like Africa there is a gradual resentment of European economic superiority. This has led to the assertion of indigenous values and roles and to the increasing use of indigenous models and actors thus enhancing the integration of different world cultures which ultimately has led to a generally acceptable world standard that is all inclusive (Unu.edu 2002).

Major African cities host the headquarters of international organisation of various types. This provides another good indication of the strength of insertion into global networks of contacts, communications and information (Unu.edu 2002). In general, African cities are faced with many problems emanating from their past development with influences of colonisation as well as unprecedented urbanisation and population growth (Adebayo 2002: 351). In modern cities, incomes are unequal and inhabitants are differentiated and ranked. Individuals live in neighbourhoods which reflect and reinforce these inequalities of income and status. In pre-modern cities, rich and poor often lived in close proximity, sometimes at different levels of the same dwelling (Byrne 2001: 105).

The system of Libyan culture has been changed by many factors such as the political and economic systems. Many people from rural areas moved to cities such as Tripoli to work and maintained their kinship ties while in search of work and at their work place. Further urbanisation is likely to create better employment opportunities and living standards (Wos.heanet 2002)

Africa's peoples and cultures have been subject to dramatic external interventions and influences which have enmeshed them firmly within the emerging

world system. The successive conquests, colonisation and associated cultural imperialism of Arab and European, Islam and Christianity, the abduction of literally millions of Africans by the slave trade, and more recently the fast modernisation and spread of the capitalist manner of consumption have all transformed and internationalised cultures, concepts, and commodities. This increasingly powerful process of convergence has captured the popular imagination to the extent that 'globalisation' is as much a subject of media interest as of academic enquiry (Unu.edu 2002).

Now more than earlier, foreigners have influenced the character and social structure of African culture: international European culture has affected African cities, and in Libyan cities, many citizens have become familiar with communities from abroad. Because other African people have migrated to Libyan cities through various means of transport, the citizens of the country now find it easier to communicate with foreign people and to understand the cultures of other African people. Foreigners also find it easy to communicate with citizens in the city because the native citizen can often speak and understand other African and European languages. This has had an impact on the citizens in the city and has led to a development of a sense of unity with other Africans. Many citizens in the city travel to other European countries to learn more about European culture.

In North Africa, there is one dominant language with different colloquial usages. However, there are many cultural similarities. Traditional rulers are highly respected, especially in rural society, but they have little impact on urban society apart from in some social occasions such as weddings, funerals or celebrations on religious occasions. People everywhere have dresses for social occasions; however, Libyan people still observe traditional dress, especially the oldest people in urban or

rural areas. Younger people do not follow the dress code. At weddings, for example, they wear European costumes. There are traditional rules, duties and obligations among the system of communities, the system of culture creating and maintaining harmony and order in the community. The cultural heritage has an influence on many occasions such as participating in marriage or funeral ceremonies. These are some of the duties expected from all individuals.

Most studies refer to urban people as being less fertile than rural people and this is widely observed and discussed in the field of fertility. It has often been suggested that urbanisation is closely connected with a decline in fertility. In general, Arabic families are larger among rural than urban populations and modern large cities have provided a particularly favourable environment for the development of attitudes that motivate family planning. The process of urbanisation in developing countries has not been completely similar to the corresponding process in the currently developed countries (Abdel Hakim and Abdel Hamid 1982: 6). Statistics show that the population of urban Libya is on the increase, and that the population of all Arabic cities are on the rise, especially North African cities. However, the concept of Islam in Libya rejects modern family planning and this might be contributing factor to the relatively high rate of fertility. Other factors are the higher standard of living and return migration from other Arabic countries. With the urban way of life, the significance of typing of cities becomes crucial in modern time. In addition, urban characteristics are different from one city to another city according to size and type of social organisation, but in general the researcher has seen a similarity in terms of patterns of life in the cities.

The climate and culture also influence the style of houses in North African cities, such that provision is made for adequate heat exchange by building with red

bricks which tend to lose heat during the day and retain warmth at night. They also have a central quadrangular space which allows direct viewing of the sky. This exists together with modern western style and multi-storey buildings. The current style and planning is different from past styles. For example, Tripoli has many styles of houses because several schools of architecture exist. In the past most houses in Tripoli city had their own private courtyard, whether large or small, on to which they faced (Culverwell 1980: 266).

### **3.4 The case of rapid urbanisation in Libya**

Substantial urban development and population growth have happened during the past three decades. In general, it is the city-born citizens who are primarily responsible for the phenomenon of urban development. Political, distractive, economic, demographic and cultural factors accelerate the rate of urbanisation. There have been some factors which generated this phenomenon as follows:

#### **1- The political and administrative factor**

The political system is a crucial factor and it has had a role in social transformation. Since 1969, the Libyan Revolution has established modern institutions for development. These institutions have contributed to the acceleration of urbanisation in the country. The political system creates huge sums for investments that are allocated to carry out national development. Investment has been provided to carry out development programmes as part of the national development programme. Modern infrastructure is then achieved through urban development. Administrative systems drive urban development, which produces goods and services of a high quality. Most urban societies have effective administrative systems. Urban centres have faced unique urban growth through unbalanced development planning.

Physically it may change rapidly, however, the culture does not progress as quickly. The success of urban development has been enhanced through the relationship between culture and politics.

#### 2- The economic factor

The increase of oil revenue during the last three decades has considerably improved the economic situation and created opportunities for investment in urban development. El-Hawat referred to the fact that Libya and other Arabic countries have their unique pattern and life with regards urbanisation. This combines their past history and culture with the economic factor, helping to push infrastructure. Infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, universities, public offices, roads and housing as urban services are crucial in urbanisation. The economic factors changed the social system into an urban one by increasing employment opportunities and establishing modern commercial and trade centres.

#### 3- The demographic factor

Libya is characterised as having one of the highest levels of urban population growth in Africa. The rapid rate of urban population growth is due to high natural increases and rural-urban migration. The increase in population has been a result of massive migration to the cities. More recently, Libyan cities have also received immigrants from foreign countries, mostly those in Africa.

#### 4- The cultural & social factors

Social structure still has a traditional line of tribal kinship and social relations. Large numbers of rural people migrated to urban centres in search of a better life. They also went to cities to obtain a better education and improve their employment opportunities (Al-Buainain 1999: 89-92).

Global culture and the process of rapid urbanisation that has been occurring on the continent have influenced the development of African urbanisation. As with the rest of the world, African countries have been integrated into the world economy. Phases of urbanisation can be distinguished and, in part, related to the shifting terms on which African countries have been integrated into the world economy. The role of global forces in Africa's development include trade, foreign investment, flows of international financial capital, and flows of official development assistance. There is a difference in the influence of urbanisation among different African countries. Libya, for example, is influenced by the global culture system to a lesser degree than most African countries (Unu.edu 2003). This is because it has not had as favorable connections as other developed countries. However, the situation is now changing and it has good relations with other advanced countries, such as France and the United Kingdom.

Cities have grown rapidly during the last three decades as a result of a series of deliberate strategies and policies. The causes of population growth in Libyan cities are (1) natural population increase (difference between births and deaths) within the cities themselves, and (2) migration to the cities from rural and semi-rural areas. Natural population increase in Arab cities has been a part of the total population revolution in North Africa. This revolution was triggered during the early part of this century when the traditional equilibrium was upset. Libyan cities have high birth rates and low death rates due to the advent of modernisation and heavy borrowing of medical technology from the west. This led to a steady decline of mortality but left fertility at its previously high level. North African cities, including Tripoli, are strongly influenced by Islamic traditions. Unlike European cities during the time, most Arab cities displayed the following features:

- (1) An absence of municipal self-government and institutions.
- (2) The coexistence of various religious communities, each in its own quarter but with no rigid segregation,
- (3) The concentric layout, with the nobler crafts and trades is located immediately around the central mosque and palace, and the baser ones on the outside. The Arab urban centres of the early nineteenth century fit the theoretical model developed by sociologists and anthropologists for the pre-industrial city (Ibrahim 1975: 31-32). This applies to the past but at the present time it has changed somewhat. The influence of that age can still be seen in North African cities.

Libya has been transformed from a country that was largely rural in 1952 to one that is highly urban today. The majority of the country's workforce is no longer employed in agriculture but in the administration sector (72%), a transition in employment activity which is reflected in the government's employment records. For example, Tripoli and Benghazi, like most of the secondary Libyan cities, are on the Mediterranean. These two cities contain 41% of the country's population because of urbanisation and the national development plans.

As far as Libyan demographic growth and migrating movements are concerned, the urban population has grown exponentially since 1969 due to rural exodus and demographic growth. Urban policies improved living conditions in Libyan cities with developmental projects such as the Great Man-Made River Project. This was launched in 1983 to utilize the fossil aquifer ground water by bringing water up from the south to irrigate the land in the north and supply water to the coastal urban areas. At the same time, new industrial cities such as Elbrega and Raslanuf have been established in the Gulf of Sirt, ensuring continuous urbanisation along the coast between northeast and northwest. Both Tripoli and Benghazi have been the



flagship of urban centres in Libya. However, other smaller cities like Misratha, Zawya and Albeida have also shown some levels of dynamism in their growth.

Urban policies have changed peoples' lifestyles and reduced traditional urban problems like transport, employment and supplies. For the last twenty years, Libya has multiplied its resources for its people and has encouraged and promoted continuous urban growth. In so doing, Libya has adopted a pattern of urban growth similar to some parts of the first world. However, Libyan cities are different from other cities in many ways; for example, there are transformation problems, lack of many urban facilities, mapping of the city, environmental problems and problems with sewage.

## **Chapter 4**

**4.1 Older theories of urbanisation**

**4.2 Modern theories of urbanisation**

**4.3 Theory of human ecology**

**4.4 Global culture and urbanisation**

**4.5 Urban life**

**4.6 Urban family and social change**

**4.7.1 Urban women and society**

**4.7.2 Urban women and education in Tripoli**

**4.7.3 Urban women and employment in Tripoli**

#### **4.1 Older theories of urbanisation**

Many thinkers have shown interest in different aspects of the issue of urbanisation throughout the world. Urbanisation is as ancient as cities whose growth dates back to ancient civilisations, most of which predated modern European civilisation. World philosophers like Aristotle, AL-Farabi and Aflaton had reflected on urbanisation. AL-Farabi, in particular, is regarded as the philosopher of early Islamic cities. Many world authors contributed to urban theories while the Arab philosopher Iben Khaldun (1377-1406) can be described as the father of sociology. He defined the foundations of sociology more than four centuries before Auguste Comte defined them. Iben Khaldun proposed that society is an organism that obeys its own laws. Application of human reasoning to data collected from historical records or obtained by direct observation establishes this law. This data fit into an implicit framework derived from his views on human and social nature, his religious beliefs, legal precepts and philosophical principles to which he adheres. He argues that the laws which operate across societies are essentially the same, with the same kind of structure; thus his remarks about townspeople apply equally to Arab Bedouins (both contemporary and pre-Islamic) and these laws are sociologically explicable. Facts such as climate and food are important, but he attributes more influence to purely social factors such as cohesion, occupation, wealth and ethics/ morals (Iben Khaldun 1377: 41-42).

Iben Khaldun sees history as a constantly changing cycle, with two main groups of individuals: nomads and townspeople (urban people), with peasants in between. He characterized each group thus: nomads are rough, uncultured and their presence is adverse to civilisation. However they are also hardy, frugal, uncorrupt in morals, freedom-loving and self-reliant, and so make excellent fighters. In addition,

they have a strong sense of “Asabiya” (translated as group cohesion or social solidarity), which greatly enhances their military potential. Towns, on the other hand, are seats of crafts, sciences, arts and culture. Yet luxury corrupts them, and as a result they become a liability to the state, like women and children who need to be protected. Solidarity is lost; the arts of combat are forgotten, and they are no matches for conquering nomads (Iben Khaldun 1377: 400-401).

In Iben Khaldun’s theory of society, development of the arts and sciences corresponds at the human level to the perfection of the spiritual and natural worlds as well as at a social level to the final stage of transition of society from the rural order to the urban order. The distinction between the rural and urban world is thought to be a consequence of passage from the ‘necessary’ to the superfluous, from the ‘simple’ to the ‘complex’. Rural society, satisfied with the necessary, develops only the simplest of the arts, for example, clothing and agriculture; it has no knowledge of writing and science. While at times some of its members may take an interest in such matters, they are never perfect (Iben Khaldun 1377: 20).

Iben Khaldun, a fourteenth-century historian and sociologist who resided in North Africa, studied the changing facet of Arab civilisation of his time and phased this study of changes in terms of social behaviour. He started from the early stages of civilisation, whose integrity and prosperity he understood in terms of religious and tribal solidarity. He also traced the subsequent development of Arab civilisation and found that as prosperity grew and the ease of life increased with growing complexity of social, economic and political structures, the solidarity disappeared and cultural disintegration occurred. This is reflected in wasteful habits of consumption, social ills and weaknesses arising from corrupt administration (Iben Khaldun ND337-339). The city is necessary for urban life. Therefore, urban life

would not exist without the city. Iben Khaldun looked to the city as urban life in his book *Muqaddimah*. Completed in 1377, his theory is referred to as the Science of Human Civilization. From Iben Khaldun's point of view, sociology describes general, social, economic, political and cultural conditions. Its categorisation, relations and causal interdependency between events must be clarified and explained.

Iben Khaldun wrote that dynasties existed prior to towns and cities. Towns and cities are secondary - for example, the products of royal authority. Thus, people must be forced and driven to build cities and it is the royal stick that compels them to do so. The cost of building and managing a city is so large that only a royal authority or a state is able to form towns and cities (Islamic-finance.net 2003).

#### **4.2 Modern theories of urbanisation**

Lerner (1958) described the process of urbanisation as flowing along a continuum from traditional to modern along a gradient progressing from traditional, which has the least amount of change, progressing to modern or urbanised at the other end of the continuum, which demonstrate complete or near-complete change. However, many of the world's societies are clustered between traditional and modern. In rural Libya, individuals dress formally when going to work, but in the evening, they return to their traditional outfits such as the "Jarad". They assume urban life at work while the home is reserved for rural style of life.

A number of thinkers (Karl Marx, Durkheim) wrote about the conditions of city life and the characteristics of urban life. They discussed city roles from the perspective of traditional and moral systems. However, Durkheim developed a model of contrasting types: mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity.

Mechanical solidarity refers to social bonds that are constructed on likeness, on common belief and custom, on common ritual and symbolic, organic solidarity. On the other hand, he describes a social order based on individual differences which are characteristic of modern societies, especially cities. Organic solidarity depends on a complex division of labour, in which many different people specialise in many different occupations. In this complex division of labour, Durkheim saw the possibility of greater freedom and choice for all of society's inhabitants. Previous theorists recognised that cities were associated with the growth of social differentiation and individuality (Durkheim 1947) every moral system has its own rationality (Durkheim 1858-1917: 65). Toennies' views are similar to those of Ibn Khaldun, who saw the city as bound to decay; Durkheim, on the other hand, saw the possibility of continuing social cohesion and furthering human development (Macdonald and Parrillo 1999: 142-143). In this case study of urban transformation, I will concentrate on the cultural perspective and human ecology, thus making use of the Chicago school of urbanism and also its critique. Most studies in the urban field were not able to build general theories about urbanisation on a global level and often focused on western cities from an ecological perspective and social dimension.

From the foregoing, I understand that urbanisation theories cut across the globe and I tend to favour the Chicago School's emphasis by Louis Wirth (1938) on the place of the individual and urban behaviour, termed urbanisation. The new urbanism needs to recognise the engineering of certainty through varied technologies of regulation (such as traffic signs, postal rules, and modern management). The role of the city as a site of localised flows and contact network is emphasised. The city's connections come as a result of the growth of fast

communications, global flows, and linkage into national and international institutional life. The city then needs a theory as a site of local-global connectivity (Amin and Thrift 2002: 26-27).

There are also classic approaches to urban research, such as the foundation of modern urban theory in the work of Weber, Simmel, Benjamin and Lefebvre. Urban theories trace key aspects of development in the idea of the city. Most urban researchers from Charles Booth to William J. Wilson, explore studies of the city, , along with alternative approaches to the modern industrial city which range from city movement to the new urbanism.

The American urbanite Lewis Mumford asked: what is the city? Mumford focused on the great renewal of urban society in Europe and the Western World from the tenth century onwards with particular focus on the massive extension in the number and size of cities since the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. In that time, London and New York each had populations of approximately eight million, and the rate of urbanisation has been considerable since then. The majority of the world's population now live in cities. Mumford, at that time, came to understand the nature of urban experience and the relationship between politics and the city, the factors that have led to the development of certain urban forms, and the role that the city plays in relation to its wider region and, indeed, to the wider world (Mumford 1938: 10-11). This research discusses the culture of the city, policies and factors, which guide the transformation of the city according to some thinkers, with Mumford as a prime example.

Urban theory has become accepted in academic circles for the purpose of interpretation of phenomenon in the city and aims to provide a general understanding of city life in different ways, focusing on the essential characteristics

of the urban life and experience in the urban environment. Urban theory can be considered as a subset of social theory, but for all shared conceptual vocabulary that social theory and urban theory possess, the first distinction that the researcher ought to note is that urban life is *not* universal and urban problems are complexes of fictions and activities. All urban theories deal with one or more aspect as follows: culture, consumption, conflict and community. Hence, culture includes systems of belief, together with the physical built environment (buildings, bridges, streets and parks), the contents and means of communication (newspapers, books, television, radio, the internet), as well as traditional cultural production (art, theatre, literature, orchestral music) and popular culture (movies, fashion, comic books, popular music).

The consumption of urban life refers not just to the consumption of goods and services but also the nature of the exchange and the means by which such goods and services (private and public) are produced. Conflict relates not just to visible, physical violence, such as riots or civil disorder, but to less visible struggles over resources (for example, between urban residents and developers but also between social classes and different interest and status groups). Community involves all aspects of the social life of cities, from the size of the population to its distribution, demographic make-up, and changing characteristics over time. Community is also a value-term for contiguous association that bears with it a series of assumptions about how we, as humans, should live in close confinement with one another.

Theories concerning the dynamics of urbanisation of cities transformed the life of the city. The basics of urban theory had been Weber, Simmel, Benjamin and Lefebvre. They appear to have little in common. Max Weber's contribution to urban theory was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Weber does refer to



aspects of urban organisation in other parts of the economy and society such as the division of labour, bureaucracy and religion. In addition, the organisation and reproduction of status and interest groups in the city. Weber makes use of a 'multi-dimensional, ideal-typical approach' (Kaesler 1988: 42). Weber also gives the city its special character as being principally the existence of commerce and trade, together with all the activities associated with it such as market establishment and exchanges. Hence Weber's idea centred on the city as market settlement (Weber, 1958: 67). Weber's 'City' essay helps to understand how this process of urbanisation leads to the bureaucratic economic complexes of modern capitalism, which forms the subject of economy and society, as Martindal rightly points out in his introduction to the city (Martindal in Weber 1958: 50).

Henri Lefebvre began writing on the city in the 1930s and continued to produce important contributions right up to his death in 1991. Simmel and Benjamin are, perhaps, rather easier to bracket. Both are from Berlin and both were called interchange thinkers. They were as familiar with major debates in philosophy on in-depth development of the city. However, both gave a special place to the culture, values and rhythms of the city in a series of writings that have inspired subsequent generations of urbanists, and their work also lends itself to anthropological and cultural analyses of city life. In spite of the contribution of Benjamin to life philosophy he failed to achieve the same academic acknowledgment as Weber, Tonnies or Durkheim.

Despite the fact that all four thinkers may have widely varied, it is their treatment of the city as an object of critical reflection that makes their work continuously relevant to contemporary urban studies. Max Weber's essay on the city considers only direct description of urban society produced by a classical

sociologist (Durkheim and Marx both failed to give the city tension), and for that reason alone Weber must certainly be included among the key classical writers on urban morphology. But it is not as a historian of urban society for which Weber is principally known: it is for his contributions to the origins of capitalism.

The work of Georg Simmel is profoundly concerned with modern metropolitan life but, like Weber, he only directly addresses the nature of urban life in one, brief, much quoted essay: ‘The Metropolis and Mental life’ (Simmel (1902) 1950). Simmel also wrote *The Philosophy of Money* (1907) 1990). His philosophy was written with the city as a permanent backdrop for his analysis. Weber does acknowledge the importance of Simmel’s work in *The Protestant Ethic* (Frisby 1987: 423). Simmel remained largely silent on the work of Emile Durkheim. Undoubtedly, each writer was attempting to seize whole the transformation of the city wrought by the advent of modernity.

Both Benjamin and Lefebvre gave a special place to the culture and values of the city. While they are remarkably similar, Lefebvre’s interest had roots in the everyday dynamics of the urban process in the city. Most urban thinkers like Weber and Simmel discuss the urban character of the city (called the metropolis), as a historical development. Weber’s purpose was to identify the general characteristics of urban life. Unlike Weber, however, Simmel constructed his vision of metropolitan society by observing micro level behaviour, giving his analysis more of an anthropological quality than the systemic analysis preferred by Weber. Thus, Simmel tends to focus on the consciousness, personality, and character of the individual social actor (Brody 1982, in Frisby 1994: 83). Urbanisation is associated with emancipation from traditional forms of social domination. Hence, aspects of

Tripoli's traditional culture have been carried on primarily by the elderly and during certain social occasions of Tripoli.

Modern approaches to urban theory are seen in the work of David Marvey and Manuel Castells and the Los Angeles school of urbanism; equally, there are contemporary approaches such as Peter Hall (1998). Ed Soja (2000b) still regards him as one of the most important urban theorists of the twentieth century.

#### **4. 3 Theory of human ecology**

The term human ecology was first used in 1921 by sociologists at the Chicago School of Sociology. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, definitions and interpretations of human ecology have varied considerably, not only in human sciences, but also among academic disciplines in the social sciences including anthropology, geography and sociology. The term ecology has been in use since 1866 when introduced by Haeckel (1834-1919, see Lawrence 2003). Human ecology generally refers to the study of the dynamic interrelationship between the human population and the physical, biotic, cultural and social characteristics of their environment and the biosphere. However, this is not the original meaning of the term, which was also used in 1921 by Robert Park and Ernest Burgess (Lawrence 2003: 31). The proponent of this theory is Robert Park, a lecturer in the University of Chicago in 1914. Park was primarily interested in urbanisation, and he performed empirical studies in social cultural environment near the university. Park received various forms of support from different quarters in Chicago.

Park and Burgess defined human ecology as the study of the spatial and temporal organisation and relation of human beings with respect to the selective, distributive and accommodative forces of the environment (Lawrence 2003: 31).

Park and Burgess (1925) developed a Darwinian positivist account of the actual socio-spatial organization of the city in terms of land use functions and residential segregation. They argued for a process of ecological competition in an urban environment, the competition among species to occupy niches in natural environments. Groups were differentiated by ethnicity and class. Not all groups were equal. Park (1952) noted that natural environments are often characterized by the presence of a dominant species which seems to impose order on the whole system - not in terms of social group as such, but rather by reference to the component of urban space which commanded the highest land values. The central business district is the pattern of land in a series of rings surrounding the central business district.

This is the classic urban ecology where the structure of the city is the product of the operation of the market in local areas interacting with the demographic characteristics of its various social economic groups. The Chicago School's understanding of social order is an overarching whole (Byrne 2001: 107-108). According to Wilson (1984) urban ecology is one of the oldest areas of specialisation in urban anthropology and urban geography, but in sociology it is as specific as Durkheim's treatise on the division of labour. Gan's study of working class areas in London. Most practitioners credit Hawley's treatise on human ecology with providing a sound theoretical framework. Hawley's discussion is rather explicit in identifying the community as the basic unit of analysis in human ecologies. Conversely, urban ecology is not a distinct area of specialisation such as sociology and anthropology; it is rather a body of knowledge about the urban milieu derived by applying a human ecological form of reference. The major considerations focus on urban units as interdependent system patterns based on the

sustenance production. Emphases are on the internal spatial structure of urban units as well as the identification of the forces of power that arise to sustain and transform these phenomena over time (Wilson 1984: 282-283).

The direction of urban ecology has become a key issue since the industrial revolution, due in part to interest in the urban environment as an important component of urban studies. There is some evidence which indicates that changes in the role of activists have helped alter the areas. The relative positions are metropolitan in the urban hierarchy. Wilson's explanation of Beckham's (1973) study of changes in the industrial profiles of 65 urban areas shows that differences among these areas have declined over time. Houseguests, a geographer, said that this might be a consequence of the environmental influences affecting urban areas (Wilson 1984: 286).

Some ecologists hypothesize that a process of convergence between societies' rural-urban sectors, as well as between metro and non-metro sectors, underlies the whole process. Essentially, they argue that the convergence process hinges on the operation of a number of factors, including:

- I. The growth of personal affluence and the diffusion of urban life styles and traditionally urban-based amenities
- II. The effect of the structure and cultural system of the city

Similar impacts on the city can also be generated by differentials in the supply and cost of energy resources and the development of nationally integrated transportation and communication networks. Ecologists such as Hawley (1971), Wardwell (1980) (see Wilson 1984) and Long (1981), who interpret current redistribution trends as a process of convergence imply that advanced societies are moving towards an equilibrium of population concentration, resulting largely from the modification of

existing technologies and the introduction of new ones (Wilson 1984: 391). The demographic flow has an impact upon this field's ecology in the city; and with a good result the impact would be positive and assimilated. Most of the ecological interest in population change and sustenance activities has focused on the latter's effect on immigration and emigration and is strongly influenced by prevailing economic structure change. This theory refers to the impact that a lack of growth may have on metropolitan areas and demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between economic changes, migration, a rising rate of natural increase, and falling median age levels. The interrelations between migration and economic processes are much more complex than the above comments indicate, as noted by Wilson (1984: 293-294).

Urban ecology has undergone massive revision, emerging as a very powerful tool for both practical and theoretical purposes. It starts with the assumption that the urban landscape is a mirror reflecting the society which maintains it (Berry 1982: 56). Human ecology has determinates which are listed as follows; first, the biosphere and the Earth are finite. Both natural and human ecosystems at all scales of the planet and its atmosphere are circumscribed by certain immutable limits, such as the surface of land, its bio-mass and bio-diversity, the water cycle, bio-chemical cycles and thermodynamic principles including the accumulation and radiation of heat from the Earth. Although these principles are fundamental, even scientists in the same discipline have interpreted their relative importance in various, sometimes-contradictory ways. They highlight the diversity and limitations of current knowledge, which has not been well co-ordinated. Secondly, human ecosystems are not closed, finite systems but are subject to external influences of an ecological kind (e.g. water, solar energy cycles) and of a biological nature as well as

anthropological nature (e.g. disease and warfare). These claims are hard to justify given that sedentary populations have been overly dependent on all kinds of imported goods from the hinterland. Thirdly, humankind must create and transform energy by using materials, energy and acquired knowledge to ensure their existence. The widening disparity between biological and ecological processes and products can be related to the rapid growth of urban populations. The creation of synthetic products, the reduction in bio-diversity, the accumulation of waste, the 'green-house effect' and the incidence of natural disasters such as floods, famine and landslides have all contributed to this. Fourthly, human beings are distinct from other biological organisms because of the kind of regulators they use to define, modify and control their living conditions. These regulatory mechanisms include thermal regulation and circadian rhythms, which are necessary to ensure and maintain vital needs like nutrition and other patterns of life (Lawrence 2003: 32-33). Because the world is a global village, the above human ecological principles have been imbibed by Libyan people through interaction with foreign personnel, especially in urban areas and in their travels that lead to further exposure to the different patterns of life in other nations.

The methodological contribution of network analysis as the basis for studying the social organisation of city residents was widely used to understand the rapidly urbanising population of Africa (Mitchell 1969). Network studies have become more elaborate and quantitative but they still provide an important methodological strategy and theoretical model for urban researchers (Laguerre 1994b, Kadushin and Jones 1992, Liebow 1989).

The city has complex relationships and anthropologists continue to utilize Leeds' theoretical model of the flow of goods, cash, labour, and services between

metropolis and countryside in their analyses of the city (Guldin 1989, 1992). This theory can be applied to Tripoli. These studies theorise the city by examining the social effects of industrial capitalism and deconstructing the confusion of urbanism with inequality and alienations (Mullings 1987, Ong 1987).

According to Jacobs (1993), new cities require new forms of analysis in which the urban built environment becomes a discursive realm. Social anthropology in African exchange, political alliances, market relationships, and network analyses form the core of contemporary theoretical work (Barnes 1986, MacGaffey 1987, Peil 1991, Moore 1994). Thus, the historical development of the anthropological study of the city has produced a number of theoretical approaches that continue to be drawn upon by urban anthropologists. These approaches include urban ecology models; communities, family and network analyses; studies of the power/knowledge of planning and architecture, supra-local / local linkage analyses; and political economic, representational, and discursive models of the city. Similarly this theory can be applied to Tripoli. This is because the city expansion of Tripoli is influenced by non-local knowledge, theories and practices. The main centre of the city was largely created in the past during the colonial era which brought with it much outside influence. Some aspects of the above theories can be applied globally due to similarities between different cities.

#### **4.4 Global culture and urbanisation**

The concept of culture as defined by Edward Tylor states that culture is a complex consisting of knowledge, art, belief, morals and custom, capabilities and habits acquired by a person as a member of society. But there were other more vocal writers, of whom Keesing was one, who felt that the definition should include



less and reveal more: this was accomplished by sieving out ideational elements from Tylor's broad definition, separating them from the actual behaviour of people and its material products (Cornk 1995: 182). Tooby and Cosmides define culture as "any mental, behavioural, or material commonalities shared across individuals, from those that are shared across the entire species down to the limiting case of those shared only by a dyad, regardless of why these commonalities exist" (Tooby and Cosmides 1991: 170). The components of culture can be summed up as: symbols, language, values, norms, and material culture, which are analysed in cultural anthropology and sociology.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, anthropology went through transformations such as the still-current focus on the study of urban cultures. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century everywhere seemed urbanised: yet, while this is a global phenomenon, people in cities are likely to be the only ones to label the countryside rural just for the sake of urban construction - this can be referred to as a reduction in traditional values or a kind of suburbanisation (Strathern 1995: 426-427). While aspects of traditional and modern values still coexist, this does lead to generational conflicts in respects of some issues in Tripoli.

The concept of global culture is a new one in the field of social science and in this case I have to discuss culture and urbanisation in a general way. This culture is related to urbanisation; therefore the industrial revolution culture has a logical progressive link with the urbanised world. For example, when a person is affected by modern global culture, the person's socialisation is contrary to the logic of the inhabitants of the villages, who experience a different form of socialisation. Some current scientists of anthropology make clear distinctions between urban culture and other forms of culture. Urban culture is not a knowledge of urbanisation or city life,

but knowledge of life in it - in the understanding of the life. In addition, rural culture is not embedded in a person who is an agricultural engineer, nor a geological scientist; it is maintained through working and living in the land. It requires having an understanding of life from a rural point of view – for example, the raising of cattle This is the subject of rural anthropology. Society is described as dynamic; thus, culture is continually changing. The urban person is more flexible and accommodating to new ideas. On describing the phenomenon of urbanisation, one respondent said that urbanisation could be equated with advancement and development in all fields - economic, political, culture, and education - while adding that people still maintain their traditional culture, often in conflict with urbanisation. Another reported that, “urbanisation means education and increased change at moral and cultural levels”. But one respondent noted that “urbanisation has two phases (1) a material phase which involves housing, and (2) use of technological development in all fields which benefits people. Urbanisation leads to development in all fields”.

In the contemporary world, most societies are changing from traditional to modern day society. The standards of urbanisation will become global. The combination of spatial dispersion and global integration has created a new strategic role for major cities. This can be clearly seen in major world cities which now function in five new ways. Firstly, as highly concentrated command points in the organisation of the world economy. Secondly, as key locations for finance and for specialised service firms, which have replaced manufacturing as the leading economic sectors. Thirdly, as sites of production, including the production of innovations in these leading industries. Fourthly, as markets for the products and innovations produced. These changes in the functioning of cities have had a

massive impact. Finally, as sites of production of new cultures, which hinge between the global and the national (Fainstein and Campbell 1996: 62). In addition, cities concentrate control over vast resources, while distance and specialised service industries have restructured the urban social and economic order and global city as with, for example, London, New York and Tokyo, Most capital cities have global cultures and this also applies to Tripoli as well in some respects. Tripoli has many similarities with other Arab cities; however, cultural values, norms and behaviours exist which are specific to Tripoli. Tripoli has not been completely impacted upon by globalisation, especially in respect of integration between women and men on different occasions. Local culture still has a rule about maintaining certain values; for example, very religious men could not marry women dancers or singers because this would cause conflict between religious values and global values. Tripoli people reacted to global culture in some, but not all, norms of the phenomenon. However, as time goes by, there is a steady increase in the absorption of certain elements of global culture. As a result there are now patterns of culture and behaviour in Tripoli city.

Urbanisation involves a significant shift in the distribution of population from rural to urban locations. Each year some 312 million or more people are added to the world's towns and cities than to its rural areas (Clark 1996: 47). Contemporary urbanisation involves the large-scale redistribution of people in many of the world's poorest nations who are unable to cope with its consequences. Because the rate is greater than that of developed countries, levels of urban development in the developing world are catching up with and will soon approximate those in the developed world (Clark 1996: 45-52).

Urbanisation came before globalisation. Giddens (1990) defines globalisation as the increasing importance of worldwide social relations that link distant places so that happenings faraway have an effect on local happenings (Giddens 1990: 16). Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1995) defines globalisation as the increase in available modes of organisation: transitional, international, macro-regional, micro-regional, municipal, and local (Crane, Kawashima and Kawasaki 2002: 7). This globalisation process, which depicts the extension of global cultural interrelatedness, can be defined as a process of persistent cultural interaction and exchange. It is a process whereby a series of cultural flows lead to both cultural homogeneity and transitional areas, for example, still-evolving cultures (Featherstone 1990: 6-7). Culture is becoming globalised in most cities of the world. Urban people are impacted by globalised culture, and they use global channels of communications such as the internet. Through fieldwork, it can be noted that most people who have a higher education qualification are also more influenced by globalisation. This is because many travelled abroad to study or work. Additionally, many of these individuals work in institutions where which employ people from different cultural backgrounds,, such as universities. Education also encourages independence and individualism.

Globalisation has clearly had a varied impact on different parts of the world. While the reconstruction of global production has brought numerous benefits to some countries, thriving manufacturing cities in advanced economies have lost many factory jobs and have been forced to re-evaluate their economy, Thus, globalisation brings both risks and advantages. Theoretically, as the economies of the world become more interconnected and as technology and management expertise spread, factors of production are used more efficiently, markets expand,

and the opportunities for wealth creation broadens. Nevertheless, there is also a potential downside: while the opportunities for wealth creation are multiplied, so is the inherent insecurity in the economy (Cohen 2004: 35).

The language of globalisation is primarily English. Other common languages used include French and, to a lesser extent, Italian, by virtue of their predominance over other languages. Those who do not speak English have limited access to this powerful global culture. Cultural globalisation would have a powerful effect on society. The city of Tripoli has been affected, to a large extent, by globalisation in many different fields like many other cities in the world. The official language of Libya is Arabic; government policy discourages use of other languages, but English is used extensively - even by the government - for various purposes and as such it ranks as a second language. The city of Tripoli, however, has had to compulsorily absorb the influence of global culture; national culture is rapidly becoming urbanised due to the influence of foreign culture. Despite this influence, individuals still have a strong hold on their national culture. Global culture has had an impact on cultural configuration in most societies, especially those who speak English, and the lesser 'global languages'. Furthermore, thousands of cultures and millions of combinations are all now confronted and being undermined by the spreading of global culture. The celebrated syndrome of jeans and tee-shirts, Coca-Cola and rock music across all cultural and linguistic barriers is being spread by television, broadcasting and radio (Southall 1998: 297).

Information technology is often assumed to be a linear process ending in cultural apocalypse as the internet becomes the haunt of uncritical users, and an all-comers affair (Amin and Thrift 2002: 40). The advent of the internet, information technology and telecommunication networks which increasingly provide a currency

of urban life have become a presentation in their own right. Technology has helped people to live a similar lifestyle with the use of video cameras, computers, TVs, microwaves and automobiles as a means of transportation. These technologies, which are very important in modern life, add their own contribution to modern city life through the services they provide and as sources of entertainment. Electricity and gas are used as energy sources. Much of the sound produced in the city has not been subject to governable codes. Noise is quickly becoming one of the new landscapes of urban governance, increasingly treated and programmed; the careful use of music in shops has been used to establish buying mood (Amin and Thrift 2002: 121-122). Many thinkers describe modern technology as playing a crucial role in global consumption. Urry (2000) lists a series of contemporary examples, all of which thrive in modern cities: food, gender, animals, vegetarianism, pets, dance culture and the array of specialised leisure practices based on heritage, conservation and preservation (Amin and Thrift 2002: 64).

Unexpectedly, the modern city is based on mobility. Moreover, the mobility seems to increase yearly, whether for work, study or tourism purposes. This is found especially in technologically advanced cities and countries; for example, in London (Amin and Thrift 2002: 43); where passenger-miles travelled and migration are both high. “Urban places have many similarities of physical appearance, economic structure and social organisation and are sometimes beset by the same problems of employment, housing, transport traffic congestion and environmental quality” (Clark 1996: 2).

## **4.5 Urban life**

Many people prefer living in cities, whether large or small. The city has abundant facilities and opportunities for employment and different types of services. Therefore, the world's population has become more urban than rural. Over half of the world's population of 5.2 billion now live in cities rather than villages, hamlets and the countryside (Clark 1996: 2). Urban life has gained prominence at the global level, reflected in increased interest and in the appearance of subjects like urban anthropology, urban sociology and urban geography. The urban concept is a description of places and of large population settlements; thus, urban-ness is characteristic of a town or city. Urban settlements generally have larger populations than rural villages, although the size threshold will vary from country to country. People who live in urban settlements and urban places usually work in non-agricultural activities and as such, have different types of services, or an "urban life" (Witherick, Ross and Small 2001: 276). The urban life of cities has facilitated the diffusion of significant cost advantages in the delivery of essential goods and services, and for the private sector and in production and consumption. This work acts as a pull factor which attracts people to the city (Prb.org 2003).

Although cities have always been socially, politically, and economically important, the urbanisation of industrialised western societies in the nineteenth century was very rapid. For instance, after the industrial revolution, people in the United Kingdom moved to urban areas replete with factories. However, people do not live beside factories in modern life. In almost all of these societies, urbanisation has changed the lifestyle, building up very slowly, then expanding rapidly before slowing down, or regressing slightly, with greater suburban development. The proportional increase in urban populations in the nineteenth century was largely

caused by migration from the countryside by people in search of work. However, in contemporary underdeveloped societies, which become urbanised with the help of public health and medical facilities, the tendency is to converge in cities. In general, periods of urbanisation appear to be associated with industrialisation. However, there is some controversy surrounding the nature of the association and the role finance plays in the process of industrialisation.

“Urbanisation has contradictory consequences for economic growth since it cheapens the cost of providing services such as health and education while increasing the cost of labour that can no longer supplement its wages by small-scale agricultural production” (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner 1984: 442). Despite this, the extent of urbanisation is different from one area to another in the city. Round the globe, individuals prefer to live in a city or modern village as they are better supplied with services. Individuals, especially the elderly, prefer to live in suburban areas. Any person in this demographic cohort is impacted by the many forces, visible and invisible, of urban life. Urban social structures reinforce political stability, economic strength, religion and tradition.

There are differences between urban societies which differ from time to time in culture and perception. In urban life, many things are very controversial from the perspective of contemporary urbanisation. Still, contemporary urban life is influenced by many factors, including cultural globalisation. Individuals make internet contacts in different fields without knowing the organisation of a country. Furthermore, urban life is becoming similar across the world: Tripoli is like Dublin in many respects, yet it retains strong social relations among neighbours, relatives, and friends. In fact, few studies describe social relations in Arabic cities, and a few researchers have referred to the subject for a lengthy period of time. These studies



are limited to relations with kin, friends, neighbours, and the like. To be sure, the studies frequently touch on relations with co-workers, but such relations are invariably viewed in terms of leisure-time and friendship activities (Guterman 1969: 494).

Tripoli is quite special on various occasions as well as at night, and most sections of the urban population are homogeneous because many people come from the same rural areas and the urban residents know each other in the neighbourhood. However, this is not always applicable. The social variables of urban life are different to those of rural life. Therefore, it follows that most people have fluctuating relations with their neighbours and varying levels of respect for, or subservience to, the family and traditional values. Urban neighbourhoods manage to retain their identity over time only on special occasions, and even then, with the greatest difficulty. The increasing proliferation of transportation and communication facilities in the city stimulates population mobility and that tends to break up the tensions, interest, and sentiments, which give neighbourhood their individual character (Karp, et al. 1991: 32).

Saudi writer Eben Saleh (2001) argues that the newly developed neighbourhood demonstrates urbanisation and modernisation in distinctive approaches. A number of new neighbourhoods have village walls. The writer argues that the characteristic of urban life in Saudi Arabia is traditional. In particular, the streets are much wider and straight, which influences the distinctive pattern of the individual in urban life. However, he maintains that the discovery of oil has improved the standard of living and extended social expectations towards modernisation, which has brought about many benefits (Eben Saleh 2001: 3). Most cities grow significantly before indirect secondary social contact replaces primary,

face-to-face relations. The forces that destroy the neighbourhood in the urban community also destroy other primary groupings including transport and communication systems (Karp, et al. 1991: 33). However, in the city, multiple forms of mass communication dominate and all societies have become similar in many respects since the discovery of the internet.

Burgess wrote that the city becomes differentiated into distinct sub-communities, which are associated with particular types of residents who collectively exhibit particular kinds of culture. Rex and Moore take this insight as the starting point for their theory of the city. They suggest that in the initial settlement of the city there are different groups, differentially placed with regard to the possession of property. They become segregated from one another and take on their own community style of life (Routledge 1986: 115). Simmel's notion is that urban life can be described in terms of individualisation, as the chances for individual freedom are obviously enhanced in the urban environment (Karp, et al. 1991: 25). The system of popular socialism creates equality between people, such that many people come to own private houses and have jobs within the public sector. However, at present, the situation has changed as a result of reform policies. Now, some individuals own private companies like individuals in other societies. Thus, life in Tripoli has become identified with many cities of the world, especially Arab cities. The development of Tripoli reflects this but only to a very limited extent as demonstrated in chapter 6. As shown in table 8, there is a broad similarity in the house contents of all residents who replied to the questionnaire. This is enhanced by global forces. Tripoli is part of the world at large, and cannot be cut off from the influences of other economic systems which maintain differences between the social strata.

Currently, urban life is being standardised in some respects due to the spread of global culture. Globalisation occurs in cities; cities encompass and reveal processes of globalisation. This leads to change in the city and equally in the network and lifestyle of the city. Urban life is being modernised due to global culture, translating into a level of interculturality between different cultures. Tripoli is affected by globalisation through different forms of communication such as the internet, travel and satellite TV. There has been a growth in the phenomenon of individualism which has resulted from such modern communications whereby people have found less-social means to pass the time. Nevertheless, strong ties still remain in Tripoli in spite of this. Presently, urban dynamics are a spatial expression of globalisation, while urban changes modify and correct the processes of globalisation. Global culture takes place in cities, particularly large metropolises. The emerging global system of production, market, finance, service, telecommunication culture, and politics has become spatially articulated through a global interconnection of cities (Rennie and Kim 1999: 9).

Globalisation is demonstrated through a global interconnection that influences contemporary urban life. The concept of urban life after globalisation has changed and been centralised by culture. Here, I refer to urbanism, which has the cardinal effect of promoting the intellect and individuality of those who are exposed to it. Emotional reserve and the uncharitable attitude that distinguish the conduct of urban people are to be understood as the principal adaptive mechanisms of individuals as in the metropolitan cities (Karp, et al. 1991: 25).

In fact, urban life has positive characteristics that vary. Urban social organisation takes on characteristics of non-homogeneous and social heterogeneity. This could be seen to be a result of urbanisation. However, group specialisation

appears in urban areas as can be seen in some Arabic cities. This, of course, often leads to multiculturalism, especially in large cities, such as the centre of Tripoli. Urban-life relations are secondary due to urban regions and mastery controls. Increased social mobility is also evident. Facilities are provided in order to help urban people advance economically and culturally, and urban development affects urban relationships. The urban structure in Tripoli has many different characteristics in comparison to those in Europe. However, global culture affects Tripoli's urban structure in areas such as fashion, food, language (particularly in the learning of English), international business, tourism and, of course, the internet. Even today, it still retains its unique characteristics when compared with other cities or countries of the world, especially with respect to social systems with neighbours and relatives.

Urbanisation augments national income through short-term efficiency gains due to shifts in labour from low to high marginal productivity employment and long-term growth effects due to higher accumulation rates in urban places (Zhang and Song 2003: 391). Urban areas are characterised by higher consumption and by spatial concentration of economic activities and buildings. The economy of urban life in Tripoli city has been impacted on by local culture, especially in the traditional sector in the older quarters of Tripoli. But local culture may be thought to occasionally create minor spatial behaviour or simply to constitute a set of exogenous variables. It can be observed that local culture reveals many modern variables such as fashion, the use of coffee-houses, and so forth. But these local representations seem to have a remarkable fixture in that they grow in number, but they do not change in distinct fashions. This includes cumulative status, which aims to recognise how local culture is influenced by global cultural. In Tripoli, there are

many aspects of global culture which have impacted on social units such as the family.

#### **4.6 Urban family and social change**

Urban society has many patterns of family structure in the third world. Families in Tripoli differ in character from other societies on the globe, specifically European societies, which comprise social structures that lead to cohesion in relation to family and social relations in the society. The most common pattern of family structure in most cities is the nuclear family. It has been influenced by urban life, leading to changes in structure, function or social environment; for example, modern methods that take place in the house, apart from those which increase and multiply intermediary modern communications. However, there are similar approaches between different family trends in society even though the social and economic frameworks impact particularly on family trends in city society. More so than the rural family, the urban family has been affected by cultural and social shifts. Therefore, the absorption of norms has a connection with urban life. An individual finds himself in a non-family relationship in the city. Social and family relations are characterised by change and urbanisation. The system of family structure has more impact on social organisations with socio-cultural change. Socio-cultural norms are very important in choosing a partner for life. Bearing social effects upon urban structure, a woman's fortune in marriage is influenced by her level of education in addition to her traditional skill in cooking and housekeeping. Urban women are traditionally responsible for daily decision-making and often have an input in determining major purchases. Women are more urbanised than men in specific urban areas because women are at home more often and as such

have more access to television and radio, where they can tune into foreign broadcasts, thereby learning about culture from other countries (Elbendak 1996: 200). Thus, they absorb the global culture which has gradually become evident in their food taste, meals and vocabulary. However, women still spend more time on household activities than men. In some ways, women maintain traditional aspects of culture, such as wearing the veil. The family has to function according to Islamic rules which enforce aspects of religion such as dress when working, studying or shopping. However, there are many global aspects of the family regarding wedding celebrations. There are now many wedding halls in Tripoli where women may sing, dance and wear clothes similar to that of Europeans. However, these remain women-only affairs and the genders do not mix at these functions. Additionally, wedding clothes similar to those worn by European women are readily available in Tripoli and other Libyan cities. Thus, the family can take on more- or less-traditional roles depending on the social situation, and such multiple patterns of life become a phenomenon within the family structure.

Most women work between 7 and 14 hours every day, outside the home: including Jordan at 12 hours, Lebanon at 14 hours, Morocco at 12 hours and Egypt at 7 hours. This comparison shows that women in North African states work fewer hours than in other Arabic states, which is in keeping with the traditional role of women in Islamic homes (Zahari 1991: 16). In Libya, a woman works a maximum of 8 hours. Men's power within the family, however, is absolute in its control over women's actions and mobility, as women are considered the repository of their family's respectability (Ahmed and Donnan 1994: 132).

Most urban characteristics have changed due to social interaction between individuals. Furthermore, they merge into the requirements of urban life and the

complexity of city society. Hence, young men and women marry later in life so they may obtain higher educational qualifications necessary for urban life. The urban family influences different system, affecting social relations as well as social roles. However, some institutions beside the family have allegedly played a major role in the education of children. Kinship systems play an important role in Tripoli's culture. The cultural and social networks in the city are an important subject in urban anthropology. Anthropologists are investigating social and cultural behaviours, among others. They seek to explain social relationships and cultural meanings among individuals in urban areas (Fried and Chisman 1975: 23-25). This research also focuses on social networks within Tripoli city, especially on family, relatives, different loyalties, and neighbours. In recent years, contemporary anthropology has begun to describe entire urban centres in terms of their providing a living environment for residents as well as their interaction with other cities. Social relations in a large urban area are different from those in small urban areas such as seen in the area of male– female relationship. Islamic culture does not encourage 'un-wanton' interaction between people of different sexes who are not connected by marriage. This reduces the number of unwanted pregnancies and broken relationships because the extended family structure influences the young couple's marriage, thus leading to low divorce rates compared to developed European societies. European influence has been seen in the more urban Libyan cities where college and university students are seen to interact among themselves in college parks or gardens to establish friendship that might lead to marriage. This signifies a change in the patterns of life. In this way, higher education institutions have contributed to the construction of families. The urban person has many relations with different groups like friends, kin, and local communities. One is a

member of different associations through connections with co-workers and neighbours. Therefore, an urban person has different roles in the urban environment. In large areas, social relations among relatives are not as strong as in small areas: this is due to the differences in the social systems.

The organisation in a typical Libyan family now is different from the past. Formerly, the man had total control over his family. A woman needed to have her husband's permission to travel abroad. In recent years, a growing sense of individualism in some segments of society, especially among the educated young, has been noted. For example, through the use of such communications, indirect connections may be made with other communities which may reduce the level of socialisation within the family or local community. However, many Tripoli people nonetheless maintain a tribal mind, remaining proud of and loyal to their blood. Thus, in the case of family structure, Tripoli's individualism is different from western individualism. So, individualism in Tripoli society works within the family and the general environment due to external factors such as facilities of communication.

Many educated young couples prefer to set up their own separate households, rather than move in with their parents. Since 1970, educational differences between men and women have narrowed and this has resulted in role sharing and joint decision making between the younger generation couples. However, the husband still has main role within family life. In general, the emancipation of women and wives is a general phenomenon: urban women under the age of 35 tend to have more modern attitudes towards life. While changes have impacted on family life, older urban women are more reluctant to give up their traditional values (Afrol 2002).



Most Libyan families in urban areas are large. Fertility rates of almost six children per woman has also led to high population growth and a large expatriate population. Libya has an extremely young population; 43% are under the age of 15. A high birth rate and decades of high fertility have kept the population young, with approximately 40% of the population under the age of 15 and only 5% over 65 years of age (Demokritos: 2002). Through governmental encouragement, this has led to an increase in population to over six million from one million in 1950, resulting in a young and urban populace (Harris 1986: 31). However, in recent years, fertility rates are declining: this is in part because of individuals' consciousness of the multiple requirements of urban life. Middle Eastern culture, religion and even politics all encourage large families, and high fertility is the norm throughout the region. The system of family has been affected by Islamic organisations; most families have a stronger structure in Arabic cities and in Africa as compared to European countries, where modernisation and technology have driven families apart. Family ties are paramount, both with co-resident relatives in Tripoli and with other African communities. Social interaction is affected by density and distance, so relatives often look for accommodation in the same neighbourhood if this is viable. Concentrations of indigenous inhabitants in central city areas tend to have the most intensive kinship network (Peil and Pins 1984: 150). However, new arrivals usually have kinship ties which support them socially and economically assistance is necessary. It is my opinion that it is characteristic of most African cities.

Urban family members become more autonomous, particularly if the urban family lives in a city for a lengthy period and acquires different names from the rural traditional family. However, up to the present, names have largely been the same.

Observations have been made that urbanisation has had less effect on family life than theorists previously predicted it would. Family and kinship continue to be very important factors in urban Arab life at all levels of society and the characteristics of the urban family (especially size), have come to resemble the countryside (Peil and Pins 1984: 182). Family life in urban areas has become less cohesive and children are not regarded as highly in terms of their role as an economic asset in the city as they are in the villages. This is because they do not generate family income through contributing labour in farms which generates income for the family.

Many changes have had an effect on family structure, especially in metropolitan cities such as London and New York; changes in family structure common to every city have been profoundly influential at all levels of the social hierarchy (Bridge and Watson 2000: 165). However, changes in Tripoli life are not entirely the same as those in other cities of the world. Tripoli families and community structures still have characteristics which differ from many other cities in the world. This is because they have strong social links with neighbours, particularly in homogenous areas where the majority of inhabitants have moved to the city from the same community, such as the Alhataba Alkatra area. Strong relationships among Islamic families have been encouraged by the Muslim Prophetic recommendation to maintain “good relationship to the seventh neighbours”.

The impact of urbanisation on families is shaped and given special character by specific cultures. During a society’s initial stages of urbanisation, kin ties are frequently strengthened by the uncertainties of urban life (Basham 1978: 131). Studies of the impact of modernization and social change on family patterns in North African societies reveal that the extended family was still the general pattern,

with only the “urban educated class” forming nuclear families. This was most frequently found in towns and cities and the economic condition and lack of education were the main factors responsible for the prevalence of extended family on a fair scale in cities (Al-Thakeb 1985: 575).

Urbanisation has affected attitudes, role perception and behavioural patterns regarding marriage. Islam permits a man to have up to four wives “provided he treats them with complete equality”. Despite this, men with more than one wife are few, as economic considerations as well as problems of managing a large household make it difficult for a man to have more than one wife (Al-Thakeb 1985: 575). This is also as a result of the impact of modern culture.

Traditionally, Libyan parents play a prominent role in their children’s decision to marry and choice of spouse, but with the spread of education and the increasing economic independence of sons over the last two decades, this traditional role of the parent has changed. The degree of freedom to choose a spouse varies according to the level of education, socio-economic status, age and gender. The young generation also has more freedom than the older generation in the choice of spouse. The upper and upper-middle class as well as the educated also enjoy freedom in this respect. Here, the role of parents tends to be secondary, as more and more people enter marriage by their own free choice.

According to an informant, “social change encourages development and many families do not hold on to their traditional values but progress with the changes as induced by communication facilities. Despite this, traditional religious beliefs or values are still considered to be strong even if it can be argued that urbanisation results in a refurbishing of cultures”. Another reporter notes that life has become complicated, having an adverse affect on interpersonal relations and co-

operation between people. Most people are busy due to employment and do not have time for entertainment. This results in the change of existing family type from “extended” to “nuclear” and this has led to the spread of social problems due to people failing to deal with each other through religious principles. Modern changes have, in some ways, negatively impacted on the family. This can be seen as the result of factors such as unemployment, drug taking among some young and lack of certainty in their lives.

#### **4.7.1 Urban women and society**

The status of Tripoli women has changed through the centuries. Local culture has promoted progress for women in society. However, given the importance of patriarchy in influencing religion’s view of the role of women, such innovations in religious interpretation alone would likely be insufficient to force major change (Haddad 1998: 106). Therefore, the man is still the head of the household. However, rural societies are influenced by the spread of modern global culture. Research has shown that modern media in Tripoli such as television, radio, and the internet have a growing influence on family structures in both rural and urban areas (Elhimaly 1986).

Researchers, of whom a great number are women and in many cases of middle-Eastern origin, are studying the role of the woman, her status, and rights in Islamic culture through usage of a variety of disciplines including political science, history, anthropology, and sociology. Their efforts have made it possible to further understand the complexity of the evolution of what was encouraged at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the “emancipation” or “liberation” of women (Marcotte 2003: 153-154). Considering the status of Tripoli

women, we ought to refer to the ways in which the position of women has changed from traditional to present-day society, and the family status is one of the most important for establishing identity. Women's behaviour, according to Libyan culture and social systems, differs from one region to another.

Over the last 20 years, Muslim women have attempted to foster greater awareness of their plight outside the realm of the state and its institutions. A body known as Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) monitors laws affecting women's status, as they believe that both men and the state use these laws against them. As sisters in Islam, they are trying to bring their plight to the state's attention in order to create more changes in the legal and political sphere so as to increase their level of participation (Marcotte 2003: 162).

In order to understand urban life and its effect on the activities of women in Libyan society, we must examine anthropological studies that have contributed to explaining this issue. The most important studies clearly explain the role of woman in traditional society. Therefore, the situation in this thesis explores the transition from traditional society. However, a review of literature of Tripoli women as currently exists explains the relationship between men and women in modern life, specifically in an urban setting from an urbanisation perspective. The relationship between men and women - while improving - is still an unequal one, as the work accomplished by the woman outside the home is considered as marginal and not crucial, due to low returns. A woman's place used to be in the home, but now women are able to take part in the public sphere like men. While a small proportion of men may help women with household work, this is a new aspect of life.

Women participate in various endeavours of life. The study of women in urban society cannot be reduced to simply understanding the role of the woman in

the home and in activities outside the house, as this relationship varies from one society to another. Libyan women have a strong relationship with family members and have a greater impact on urban social structure than men.

In Libya, the Tuareg culture allows more freedom for women compared to mainstream culture. The Tuareg are Muslims with strong residues of native beliefs and pre-Islamic African religions. Their culture places women in a high position compared to those in the traditional Arab culture. Among them, women are more likely to be educated than men. This is still the case today. Inheritance is passed in a matrilinear fashion, and it is the men, not the women, that are veiled (Harris 1986: 27). This principle departs from Islamic Sharia law.

Women in Libyan culture are accorded a special status. Libyan culture is known for honouring women for they play a central role in building a balanced and stable society. Islam honours women and this is evident in legislation. Most Libyan legislation is addressed to the citizen, irrespective of gender. This legislation establishes a number of rights for the citizen in the political, economic and social domains without any differentiation between men and women, since these rights pertain to the individual human being. In addition, the Libyan legislative body, “Basic Popular Congresses”, issued several pieces of legislation specifically for women, with a view to achieving two things: firstly, giving women rights that had previously been usurped for centuries. Secondly, it outlines the maternal and nurturing role of women, specifically in regard to determining their roles through circumstances that would enable them to engage in a full role in society. This takes into consideration the nature and role of women, making it incumbent on urban society to create the “natural climate” in which women can perform their roles and functions in social life in a manner that would lead to integration and harmony

between the two genders so that human life can go forth in a “healthy and natural manner”. Modern Libyan culture recognises women’s eligibility to achieve equal rights without any discrimination and gives them extensive freedom, such as the legal freedom to freely dispose of their possessions. Libyan people have issued The Green Document, which stipulates equality and justice between people. Women must sign up for national service, as do men. Thus, women do not feel that they are unequal to men when it comes to shouldering the responsibility of defending the territory of the homeland.

The Green Document has affirmed that men and women are equal and any separation between them is an unjustified and a glaring injustice. Women’s political rights and international pacts relating to civil and political rights are respected. The Libyan Women’s Union has international agreements with global women’s associations. Most international women’s conferences include Libyan female participants. Libya has also signed numerous International Labour Organisation agreements which aim to protect women and establish the principle of equality between genders. Libyan women have forged links with different institutions for women in many countries of the world. The originality of this contemporary external force helps integrate areas once considered far outposts of the western world and creates a sense of belonging for the wider global community. International donor agencies, non-governmental organisations, trans-national corporations and their advertising firms, along with infrastructural changes in airline travel, facsimile transmissions and global television networks, all lead to a continuing sense of globally-shared social values. The spread of a common global culture is evident in things such as dancing at parties while listening to loud rock music, sitting in an auditorium listening to tranquil classical music, travelling to

destinations once prohibited by cost or political restriction, reading small-town newspapers which give coverage to events in such countries as Bosnia and Vietnam on the same page, or eating a burger or pizza virtually anywhere in the world (Ahmed and Donnan 1994: 128).

The government celebrated September 9, 2003 as Libyan Women's Day. It was a celebration of Libyan women's ability to hold their sway in all areas of Libyan life. Women can now display their skills in public life in such areas as media, broadcasting, among others. The celebration enabled Libyan women to connect with sister international women's organisations.

However, Libyan culture obliges women to stay at home more than men. The position of the average Libyan woman in the family is important, as she looks after the house and family. Many women combine their house roles with business positions. Libyan laws prohibit a man to take another wife without approval from the first wife. So, this ensures most men have only one wife. The law permits the man to marry another wife if the first wife did not bear any children.

#### **4.7.2 Urban women and education in Tripoli**

Education has helped women to adapt to urban life. The percentage of women in education is increasing and women are sometimes provided with better facilities than men (U.N. Report: 1994: 1). It would be true to say that education in Libya changed the way of life from a traditional system to a modern way of life. Education, technical qualifications and work experience play a major role in determining the choice of occupation among the majority of those seeking freedom and security. Having based their business ideas on solid ground, these women are not only more confident and committed to their vocational ideas, but are also



encouraged by their family and friends to put their professional ideas into practice (Gregorio 1996: 514). In addition, the local system is structured to enable them to improve their standard of living and economic situation (Opiyo 1987: 459-462).

Libyan Islamic culture encourages education. The Prophet Mohammed said “it is the duty of every Muslim man and woman to seek education” (Arabyaba.com, 2003). Among working women, there has been increased access to higher education for women in society. The urban environment is better structured to allow women easy access to socio-educational amenities that help broaden their horizon. All cities have centres for the education and training of women.

Although patriarchal ideology is still in place, social practices contest this ideology; women strive for better access to health, education and employment opportunities, with equal pay. For an egalitarian society to exist, there must also be a fundamental change in the attitudes of men toward the position of women in society and within the family (Fernea 2000: 186). These social practices, evident in the workplace, the home, the courts, the political arena and the religious sphere are challenging men, women and other family members to re-evaluate women’s role, status and leadership potential during the next century (Fernea 2000: 185).

#### **4.7.3 Urban women and employment in Tripoli**

Women receive the same education as men and are encouraged to enter many different types of occupations. Women have the same rights as men to participate vis-à-vis professional associations, and the General Union of Women’s Associations has been created for the promotion of the interests of women. In Libyan cultural tradition, a woman cannot work outside the home without acceptance or permission from her husband. However, the Libyan government has

approved international pacts relating to economic, social and cultural rights of women that challenge such attitudes. In terms of the status of women in society, the Libyan system stipulates equal opportunity as a principal aspect of legal dispensation. The modern status of women is reflected in a great diversity in ways of living. Some women have earned positions in management; a number of women are active in modern administration. Libya has encouraged an increase in the number of working women (25% of Tripoli women now work outside of the home, which is a new phenomenon in Tripoli society only happening in the last three decades [El-Hawat 2002]). Half of the female population of working age want to start a business in order to have the freedom to choose the type of work in which they wish to participate, and younger women want to start their own business in order to escape from the dominance of men (Gregorio 1996: 514), therefore also become less dependent on men for their material needs. Urban women are exposed to more employment opportunities and the urban setting allows for more freedom. Libya has recently become more tolerant of women's advancement. As of 1977, women began to hold important governmental offices and also began to develop careers in other socio-economically important areas. In Arabic societies, the participation rate of women in the labour force has increased over the last few decades.

At present, women marry at a later age, and immediately take care of their husband and children. The participation of women outside of the home is a new phenomenon and they participate in different economic activities and services.

The physical and emotional attributes of women could occasionally limit the extent of their productivity in the area of employment. Cultural changes have helped woman because they are now better educated and more socially conscious,

exhibiting interest in software and internet communication and thus are now considered to be as important members of research organisations as are men.

Urban women have a role in the field of culture in Tripoli. They have overcome negative conditions that have held them back, preventing them from exercising their role in artistic and literary creative movements, and in information technology. Their presence in this field was intermittent. Some of them have already excelled in broadcasting, theatre or journalism; however, social backwardness in the fifties and sixties has deprived many Libyan women of exercising their right to free expression and artistic work.

The seventies witnessed a breakthrough for women’s participation in areas of artistic and cultural expression. Women’s presence was clearly felt in the fields of short story and essay-writing poetry, theatre, song, and folklore. There was also a surge in women’s attempts to join the media, either through the press, broadcasting, news agencies or printing and publishing. During the second half of the eighties, enthusiasm for female participation in all fields of information and cultural expression dramatically increased. This decade witnessed great responsiveness and positive changes compared with previous years, and women’s contribution to the fields of artistic and literary expression are summarised in table 5. It should be noted that the number of women involved in these activities is always increasing.

**Table (5) Female versus male cultural contribution in Tripoli**

Profession	Number	
	Women	Men
Broadcaster/Theatre Actress	30	106
Poet	10	78
Short-story writer	6	46
Folklore writer	25	71
Singer	10	42
Sculptor	8	53

**Source:** Bureau for statistics, Tripoli 2000.

Although the number of women working in these fields has increased, women are generally still significantly under-represented. This may be attributed to the fact that their participation in the labour force is relatively new and has only occurred over the last thirty years. In the field of information technology, the eighties witnessed the participation of women in various forms. Women have also contributed to written journalism. Libyan women are now working in different fields in Libyan cities, where they hold leading posts within the framework of exercising power and participation in political life. Over the last twenty years, women managed to attain several leading posts in many economic, social and political fields, including:

- Secretary General of the Popular Committee for General Education (Minister of Education)
- Under Secretary General of the Popular Committee for Public Information.
- Assistant Secretary at the People's General Congress (Deputy Speaker of Parliament)
- Secretary of a Popular Bureau Abroad (Ambassador)
- Secretary of a Popular Committee in companies and establishment (Chairperson of Board of Directors)
- President of a United Nations Human Rights Organisation Committee

Thus, in addition to increasing participation two years in succession in the economic activities of the national work force, women have had more chances to occupy leading positions in public administration. These positions include posts such as directors of departments; heads of administrative sections in the secretariat, companies and public establishments; deans of colleges and heads of college departments and principals of schools and institutes at all levels. In addition to other occupations such as aviation, police and the armed forces, Libyan women can now drive military tanks and armoured trucks with the same dexterity with which they

teach and handle classroom jobs, the judiciary and voluntary work. Furthermore, women now occupy leading positions in programmes for the training and development of skills of women, in programmes of rural development, as well as in the industrial sector, in social security and health programmes. This kind of participation enables Libyan women to effectively contribute to decision-making at all levels and in all economic, social, and political fields. It is noticeable that women do not work in some occupations such as taxi driving, construction or as mechanics in Libyan cities, but in the countryside, women do participate in agriculture. Their involvement in this area in rural areas is due to their encouragement through being allocated farmland, loans from agricultural cooperatives and other incentives. However, with the acquisition of higher levels of education, many women want to work in other areas of public employment.

Local culture distinguishes between men and women, evident by the fact that most women stayed at home and their participation in the workforce was limited. Women had many duties, especially with regards to the house and children. Thus, they had little free time. However, women had responsibility for housework, such as cleaning, cooking and childcare. The house was the primary place for family interaction. Presently, women's situation has improved as result of education and social policy which encourages women to work outside the home. Equally, the media has a role to play in the reshaping of the function of women and connects them with other societies. This has led to a mixing of the roles of women between the modern and traditional.

A number of Libyan studies indicate that women seem to be uninterested in the freedom Western women possess because it frees women in such a way as to violate Islamic religion. There are conflicts in women's lives between her role as

mother and housekeeper and her role as a professional or worker outside of the home. Additionally, many people have a positive attitude towards women who work in many areas of life and types of jobs. However, not all individuals may share these views in relation to women in their private life – for example, their sisters, daughters or friends. If a comparison is to be made between the past and the present, it is clear that there has been an important change has occurred in the lives of women. The woman's role and status is influenced by modern society. The change puts the women in a difficult situation because she does not know whether to perceive herself as a modern or a traditional woman. This is as a result of the rapid transformation of Tripoli. In the following chapter I will discuss the phenomenon of transformation within the structure of Tripoli society.

## **Chapter 5**

**5.1 Libya's social structure**

**5.2 History of Tripoli**

**5.3 Population of Tripoli**

**5.4 Culture and social transformation of Tripoli**

**5.5 Urban development in Tripoli**

## 5.1 Libya's social structure

Libyan social structure is impacted by the social background of tribalism, which may be described as the sense of loyalty that a person feels towards a particular social group. The anthropologist Linda Layne defined tribalism as "the placing of family ties before all other political allegiances". This tribal affiliation can be understood as a complex network of kin relations. It has been said of the Bedouins that they traditionally placed great importance on the role of honour. In this case, all individuals in the tribe were responsible for the actions of other members. However, it remained an important fact for both the family or tribe as well as the individual that he/she was a representative of the tribe. Tribalism is more common in rural areas as people tend to live in closer-knit groups or small towns. However, people in cities may still experience this sense of loyalty towards particular social groups. As such, some modern parts of Tripoli where people have migrated from similar social backgrounds may be described as being tribal in nature. However, education has had a huge impact on tribalism and few people nowadays have the same sense of tribal affiliation.

The term "tribalism" has decreased in usage; however, many of the characteristics are still evident as kinship systems, specific components, and identity systems involve units. Tribes have collective identities which are paramount in the comprehension of the system of life for these units, especially from the perspective of social and cultural anthropology. However, Southall refers to three problems spawning from the concept of "tribe":

- I. Definition- the term can be ambiguous, imprecise, or there may be conflicting definitions or the failure to be consistent with the usage of the term.



- II. Illusion- this involves the misapplication of the term to other groups.
- III. Transition and transformation – this involves the use of the term "tribe" in relation to phenomena that are actually products of modern influences.

Southall maintains that the “tribal society may be largely a phenomenon of the past, but it is still of enormous intellectual and human importance”. He argues that studying tribal societies should be carried out in more specialised fields, such as through kinship, ritual, politics and economics, among others. Tribal society has two dimensions: firstly, there is the dimension of transformation. Some tribal societies have been transformed over long periods of time. Second is the distinction between the transformation of the situation of the communities and the transformation of the who descended from these communities. Southall says that at the present time, one should use the term "ethnic group“, not "tribe" (Southall 1998: 48-50).

The researcher noted that Tripoli harbours many ethnic groups from different countries and nationalities which could not be described as ‘tribal’. The policies of development in Libya have faced problems due to the fact that these ethnic groups do not always mix. Certain policies are specifically aimed at integrating people by restructuring the population in Tripoli society.

Libyan social structure used to be tribal, and tribes were arranged in a pyramidal lineage scheme of sub-tribes. The family as a social unit was influenced by tribalism; in fact, it was the basic unit of tribal life. Fifty years before the discovery of oil, the country’s tribes operated, to a large degree, as autonomous political units. Inhabitants were then identified as members of a tribe; true Bedouins leading a nomadic or semi nomadic existence accounted for about a quarter of this total.

El-Hawat says that Libyan society is tribal in nature and there are many different tribes which exist is within Libyan society. There are two types of tribal

structure in Libya: that which exists in the north and that of the south. The northern tribes comprises approximately 80% of the population. They are found along the Mediterranean coast and approximately 100 km towards the south. The northern tribes are considerably larger than the southern ones, which only make up approximately 20% of Libya's population. The southern tribes exist in the desert and oasis communities which extend down to the borders of Chad, Niger and Sudan (El-Hawat 1994). The two tribal structures have distinct characteristics. The northern tribes are predominantly settled and live in urban areas. They work in areas such as agriculture, industry, commercial and urban services. The Mediterranean lifestyle and culture has had a noticeable impact on their way of life as does the Arabic and Islamic cultures. On the other hand, the southern tribes practise a more nomadic way of life in the desert. Their occupations are in areas such as animal husbandry and trade. Some of these communities are settled and their lifestyle can be described as semi-urban; however, they continue to be influenced by desert geographical conditions. In spite of the differences between the northern and southern tribes, the two sets of communities are socially and economically integrated by factors such as modernisation, technology, unified national education, mass media and social interactions resulting from marriage and friendship (El-Hawat 1994).

Tripoli exists within the northern area and thus consists of the northern tribal structure. Tripoli, like any other Arabic or Islamic capital city, has two main social structures within its society. These two social structures co-exist and can be harmonious or may produce tension and conflict. The two can be characterised as the traditional (Arabic/Islamic) and the modern (western) social structures. People within the traditional structure primarily work in trade, traditional industry and crafts, as well as within the religious establishment. People in a modern social structure have

occupations in public and private establishments, the modern economy, labour in modern service sectors such as hotels, and in intellectual occupations such as journalism. Individual personalities within the local population vacillate between the traditional and the modern (EL-Hawat 1994).

Traditional social structures continue to exist and can be seen in the family, the tribe, the mosque, the school and the market. Hence, family structure in the city has loyalty to tribalism and community solidarity also exists. The primary units of belonging were the extended family or tribe. The family was the main unit of social structure in Tripoli. Marriage was seen within each tribe as more important for the family than the individual. The family system remained primary in urban centres; close bonds of solidarity grew up around various quarters of Tripoli. Traditional family arrangements have become less common with many young couples choosing to live in smaller nuclear family groups. As such, family structure in the city is linked to tribalism and there is solidarity within the community. The extended family or the tribe constitute the fundamental unit of belonging and this is the primary element of the social structure in Tripoli. Consequently, there was great importance attached to social life. However, this has begun to change with younger generations opting for the smaller nuclear-style of family life.

Colonialism had a significant impact on the social and cultural structure of Tripoli. This can be seen in local behaviour and cuisine which has been infused by Italian culture. However, Italian colonization did not affect Tripoli's social structure to the same degree that other European colonial projects affected places in North Africa (Sjostrom 1993). Social structure reflected traditional life in many ways, however, after gaining independence and subsequent to the discovery of oil, many of these aspects dematerialised. Oil had a significant impact on social structure because

of plans for social transformation that followed its discovery and the fact that it provided more opportunities and resources for education, resulting in many young people marrying outside of the tribal structure. In many ways, the traditional social order was replaced by new values linked to social progress (El-Tlesi 1974).

The loyalties to tribalism were very strong and these loyalties of the smaller urban population were largely confined to the extended family. Since then the structure of society changed and developed into urban modern life. As such, these loyalties have diminished. Libyan social structure has links to the shifts in the behaviour, beliefs and outlook of the people of the concerned society. In modern society, behaviour, thoughts, habits and customs of individuals assign greater importance to nationality, global and secular ideology. This implies equality, freedom and independence for everyone; social ties thus become rational, contractual and secondary in nature.

During the oil boom of the 60s and 70s, rural migrants flocked to Tripoli and congregated in loose families. Many retained patterns of social organisation specific to particular hinterland tribes. People sharing the same kinship chose to dwell close to each other, thus creating mini-townships within the city such as Tarhuna town (Libyanet 2002). Some studies conclude that tribalism is found in urban agglomerations, sociologically and culturally in Libyan society. Elhimaly's studies of Libya and Rashwan's research in Kafer Eldawar in Egypt, shows the social structure of the city still keeps some rural characteristics.

The social structure of Tripoli has been impacted by Libyan ideology which prohibits tribalism in the context of the service industry and all official institutions. As such, it rejects nepotism. In spite of this, tribalism still has an amount of power in life systems especially at some social occasions. Modernisation programmes of

education, combined with a multiplicity of cultures, eventually led to a diminished tribalism in the city-centre population. Perhaps as a result of modernisation and development on a practical level, the average sub-urban Libyan's loyalty to traditional patronage networks and authority figures has survived the urbanisation process. Many people continued to outgrow loyalty to their localities. Many rural people want to live in cities and have adapted to urban culture. I believe that using the Internet and watching television, together with Jamahiriya ideology and culture, encouraged interaction with different societies, contributing to social formation in Libyan society. Libyans polled at the height of the urbanisation experience feared that traditional values and lifestyles such as their style of attire would be lost as the country's youth succumbed to modern influences; however, their concerns appear to be unfounded. Younger people tend not to consciously desire to perpetuate traditional social structure; however, their need for modern urban amenities restricts their practical choices. Many people prefer to live among relatives for economic and cultural reasons or possess minimal means, such as improved transportation, and must maintain close contact with their kin. Urbanisation and global culture have admittedly worked to attenuate individual loyalties among the better-educated (Libya.net 2002).

The homogeneity seen among the countryside population does not exist in the "heart" of Tripoli. At the periphery, I found that people and culture have become even more defined outside Tripoli's municipal boundaries. In terms of Tripoli's evolving identity, the expansion of the major industries also brought about the development of many purpose-built commercial buildings, institutions, banks, shops and company offices. Many of the buildings and designs, influenced by global urban transformation, now represent Tripoli's architectural heritage, and serve to differentiate Tripoli from European cities in some aspects. However, as a result of

globalisation, they have also become similar to those in other cities. Major changes to Tripoli's built environment did not come about until 1969. The urbanisation programme, however, required major physical changes, which in turn attracted major attention to its social structure. A new network of roads through the inner city linked Tripoli with many villages and cities. The change in environment through this modern infrastructure brought a new lease of life to the city.

Population increase is the common of modern Libyan cities. Also common is a great increase in the number and sizes of buildings: a number of complex processes often simply referred to as urbanisation. Also important is the high number of people with a high level of education using technology. Popular fascination with the urban lifestyle attracted people to Tripoli, thus making it a high-density city; moreso than other Libyan cities.

In the process of urbanisation, families impart family values related to their roles in the social structure and the solidarities play a very important role in determining the physical form and social structure of urban areas. These can be classified as groups of people bound together by ties of family, tribe, and communities groups. These groups were the basis of the residential settlement pattern as they traditionally lived together in one part of Tripoli, and they performed an important function in social control, socialisation, and mutual help for their residents (Juma 1996: 53).

The system of a cultural social structure has been influenced by the system of government which has been the primary governing principle since the Libyan Revolution of 1969 alongside the private clinics. The government of Libya now provides free health services for its citizens. Within one decade of privatisation and urban spatial transformation there has been a radical change within urban spaces of Tripoli. The health of the society has improved during the past three decades. The

Libyan individual's average life span was only 46 during the sixties. Now the average age is 70. The mortality rate among infants has diminished from 118/1000 in 1973 to only 24.4/1000 in 1995. This decrease happened in both urban and rural areas (El-Hawat 1994, 2002). In addition, pension and National Insurance schemes are now in place in the modern system, arising from the prospect of an upturn in the country's economic future. The government was set to address socio-economic problems, especially in the areas of equitable distribution of wealth and the astronomically high rate of unemployment. According to estimates by UNESCO, the rate of illiteracy among the population aged 15 and over was 25% in 1961. However, education is now compulsory for children between ages 6 and 15 years. For instance, in 1992, primary school enrolment included 96% of the relevant age group, and that of secondary school was estimated to be about 98%. Libya also has institutes for agricultural, technical, and vocational training (The Europe World Yearbook, 2001).

The education sector led to improvements in the lives and development of people. Studies have shown that, besides approaches training, 37% of Libyans attend various educational courses. In total, 41% of the population have received some form of education. As result, education has become an indicator of the development and change which has led to urbanisation. This indicator shows an increasing enrolment among students within the 6 to 24-year age group. The increase in education occurred as a result of broadening the educational base and putting in place the appropriate measures (El-Hawat 2002).

In the past, the political system reflected pride in Arab nationalism but this has now shifted to emphasize Africanism instead. Libya was seen as part of the Arab nation, aiming at comprehensive Arab unity, but since globalisation it has been seen as part of Africa. This is due to the fact that it is economically preferable to be part of

Africa and that Africa holds more power at a global level than the Arab unity. It currently has good relations with all African countries and works closely with them in the African Union, Africa's unifying body. The African Union (AU) was founded in Sirt city, Libya, on 9 September 1999 to replace the Organisation of Africa Unity. Its structure is based loosely on that of the European Union. The African Union upholds the sovereign equality and independence of its 53 member states and aims to promote peace, security and solidarity on the African continent. It can be described as an event of great magnitude in the institutional evolution of the continent. At this time, the heads of the states and Governments of the Organisation of African Union met with a view to accelerating the process of integration in the continent to enable it to play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and problems compounded as they are by certain negative aspects of globalisation (African-union.org 2003). This Union was advertised and encouraged by Libya, and has taken place in a Libyan city. It is an annual event where all African heads of state meet to discuss the advancement of the continent, similar to as with the European Union. Some Libyan youth speak African languages fluently and many people from African countries used to live in Libya without the need for a residence permit as with the European Union. However, recently the situation has changed because of the prevalence of some urban problems such as crime thus permission is currently required for residence.

## **5.2 History of Tripoli**

Tripoli lies at a latitude of 32° 56 north, and a longitude of 13° 10 east and is on the south coast of the Mediterranean Sea in a central position surrounded by many agricultural areas such as Tajura and Suk Eljomha in the east, Zawia in the west, and



Benghashir and Swani Ben Adam in the south. Tripoli has a good strategic geographical position and an extensive history. It forms a vital link between the eastern and western cities of the Arab world, and between European cities and African cities. Tripoli's history reflects the history of the country. It has known ups and downs but its historical architectural monuments are a testimony to the great Libyan civilisation (Libyaonline.com 2002). Tripoli has many old and historical buildings such as the Red Saray Castle, which was established at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The first municipal system in the city was established in 1870 and the first building of the municipality was a small house in the old city, donated by a Libyan woman.

Tripoli is an ancient city. It was one of the four main Phoenician cities in North Africa. The other three were Karthag, Sabrata and Leptis. Located on the edge of a large oasis, the city was probably founded in the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The main city of the historic region of Tripolitonus was later captured by the Romans (1<sup>st</sup> century B.C), the Vandals (5<sup>th</sup> century A.D) and the Arabs (7<sup>th</sup> century). Tripoli city and the other two cities (Leptis Magna, Sabrata) were established in Libya between the seventh and eighth centuries B.C. by Phoenicians. Tripoli was named Marca Uiat. In 146 BC the Romans came to Libya and transferred the political capital from Leptis Magna City to Oea City and changed its name to Tripolis.

The Germans invaded it in 24 B.C., entering Tripoli from the south. At the beginning of the third century, it was named "Tripolitanos". This refers to the three cities, Sabrata, Ouia and Liptes. The Arabic name of Tripoltanos is Tarablus or Atrablis or Tarabals, and it received this name after the arrival of Arabs. Some historians gave Tripoli the name "The White City" (Libya.net 2001) due to the fact that all buildings in the city cetnre were painted white.

The historical development of the city in the Islamic world impacts upon the common conception and production of the urban fabric of Islamic cultures. Over centuries, the architectural specificity of the various historical time periods was merged into the existing urban fabric. Urban principles from Greek, Roman and Byzantine periods were absorbed into the new religious situation. Old cities like Tripoli are characterised by specific urban landscaping of regional, socio-economic and political influence of the Islamic religion and the inhabitants traditional way of life. The subsequent rapid urbanisation of North African countries with limited resources has typically resulted in a steady and marked deterioration of the urban environment (Bedford 1996: 22).

Ondal invaded Tripoli in 429 and devastated public buildings and houses. They killed many inhabitants; the remainder fled. The invaders stayed one hundred years during a period in which commercial activity ceased (Elzoe 1985: 35). According to an Arab testament stated by the Arabian leader Omar Ben Alass, there was a lack of meaningful commercial activities from 429 until 1510 A.D.

In 1510, Tripoli was invaded by Spanish forces, who remained there until 1530. The city was a terminus of important trans-Saharan caravan routes. The commercial movement stopped between 1510 – 1551, during Spanish and Frsangadis Ohana occupation. At this point in time, Tripoli's population had dropped to below ten thousand due to wars and migration (Najee 1970: 18). In 1528, Tripoli was granted to the knights of St. John, who held it until 1551. Maltese forces came to the city and stayed until 1551, until governed by the Turkish Government for 360 years (from 1551 to 1911). Tripoli was an Ottoman territory from 1551 until the Italian invasion of 1911. Italian armies took control of north coastal areas but their efforts were interrupted by the first World War and further delayed by the economic crises of

1920. Colonization by Italian citizens only began in the 1930s (Davis 1987: 1). During this time it was also taken by the Ottoman Turks from 1711 to 1835. Tripoli was the seat of the Karamanli dynasty, which ruled most of what later became Libya with little control from Constantinople (now Istanbul). During the second Ottoman rule of Libya (1835-1911) Tripoli had relations with different European countries close to it. During that time, North Africa was connected with Malta and Italy through trade and migration. The situation in Tripoli developed in a completely different direction. Although, like Tunis, it had begun to supply livestock and grain on a regular basis since 1803, trade was initially a monopoly of the Qaramanli pashas (Buru, et al. 1985: 4). Before Italian occupation in 1911, Tripoli already had six banks - French, Maltese, Italian and German. There were also twenty- four commercial agencies, together with hospitals and schools to service the European population of 4,403, which included 918 Italians, 2,623 Maltese, 664 French, 105 Greeks, 150 Spaniards and 43 Austrians (Buru, et al. 1985: 26). In 1911, Tripoli was invaded by Italian forces and between the years of 1923 and 1939, Italian citizens were granted land concession, or were settled on large demographic estates drawn up by the Italian government (Gannous 1977: 41). In 1911, Tripoli was passed to Italy, and later it was made the capital of the Italian colony of Libya. During World War, the city was captured (1943) by the British and its Allies (French) (Infoplease.com 2003).

The Italians were active in the Tripoli region, and, indeed, many of the distinguished leaders of the resistance to Italian colonisation were citizens who were born and bred in the region who set up military camps. Italy stayed in Tripoli until 1943 when the British governed the city until 1952, at which point Libya became an independent country (Kingdom). At the point of independence (1952), Libya was among the poorest countries in the world, with a population of just over one million.

Many individuals lived on the Mediterranean coast in and around Tripoli and Benghazi (Buru, et al. 1985: 194). Also notable is that first and the last King was Idris Elsanusy. In 1969 the Libyan “Revolution” took power led by the leader M. Gadhafi.

Tripoli has a large port on the Mediterranean Sea. It is a commercial, industrial, administrative and transportation centre. Products manufactured included processed food, textiles, tobacco products, and woven goods. Tripoli City is the oldest and largest city in Great Libyan Jamahiriya and in the area where the largest proportion (28%) of the Libya population is concentrated. It is the focal point and centre for commercial, manufacturing, retailing, cultural and financial services, and is also the political capital. The city is still growing in construction activities due to its population growth and the migration of countryside residents, which caused a high rate of urbanisation. The land area of the city reaches 120 square km (29.652 acres) which will increase with time. The city has several embassies and consulates located within it.

### **5.3 Population of Tripoli**

Urban population change is most commonly described by two measures (1) the level of urbanisation, and (2) the rate of urban growth. The level of urbanisation represents the share of a country’s total population that lives in urban areas. The world’s urbanisation level increased steadily throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After 1950 (the first year for which the UN provides urban data for countries), the percentage of the urban sector rose from 30% of world population to an estimated 47% in the year 2000. The urban share is projected to reach 58% by 2025 (Prb.org 2003). The urban population as a proportion of the world’s population is set to rise to even higher levels

in the new millennium, particularly in the poorer countries of the world where urban population growth ran at about 3 per cent per annum at the end of the twentieth century. This is greatly ahead of employment opportunities in the formal sectors of the economy, particularly manufacturing (Dickenson, et al 1996: 194). This trend of urban growth is also evident in Tripoli. In 1992, 76% of Libya's estimated population of 4.5 million was urbanised but by 2000 that increased to 88% of the population of 5.2 million (Youho.libya.com 2002). The population of Tripoli has grown considerably in recent years due to many factors as the city has become an important religious, economic and political centre with improved public services.

**Table (6) Population of Tripoli**

Years	Population
1911	29761(1)
1914	30378 (1)
1931	515,000 (2)
1936	547,000 (3)
1954	240,147 (3)
1964	376,117
1973	709,117
1984	990,697
1995	1,209,502
1998	1,317,332
2002	1,904,150(5)

**Sources:**

- 1) Elkabir, Y., Assimilation of Rural Migrants in Tripoli, Libya, Case Western Reserve University, (PhD) 1972.
  - (2) Sharf, A, Geography Libyan Unit King, University Cultural Institute, Alexandria, 1963: 407.
  - (3) Sharf, A, Libyan Geography, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Cultural Institute, 19971: 224.
  - (4) Elmahdoy, M., Human Libyan Geography, Establishment Popular Institute Distribution and Advertising ( No date p.81).
  - (5) Economic and Social Survey, Second Part: Social Characteristics, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nat, Cop. For Inf. & Documentation, (2002-2003).
- \* Compiled by the author

Libya's total population has increased from 947,000 in 1950 to 6,400,000 in 2000. Normally, a developing nation experiences significant rise in its population rate of natural increase as it moves towards improving living, nutrition and health conditions (El-Shakhs and Robert 1974: 373). If we examine the population statistics

of Tripoli in 1931 of 515,000 and compare this with the latest statistics in 2002 of 1,904,150, we find that the population has increased by 1,389,150. This is a significant increase in the number of people as a result of the policies of transformation of Tripoli city – in fact, this population increase represents the world's highest rate of urbanisation, and suggests continued future population growth. Tripoli is attractive to populations from different parts of Libya as it has better facilities in the fields of accommodation, transport and connections with other cities as well as the availability of public services. Moreover, Tripoli also attracts immigrants because it is an important city for foreign companies, embassies, army units and industrial establishments.

#### **5.4 Culture and social transformation in Tripoli**

Libyan Arab society is immersed in Islam and the law that governs it is mainly derived from the holy Quran. Islamic faith affects relationships, rights, duties, and various dealings among individuals, communities and groups in all aspects of life. Islam in Libya is flexible enough to allow females to attend to and sell to customers in shops such as those catering for women's clothing; equally, women are now allowed to wear fashionable dress such as those available in Europe. The purpose of this is to create a society free of gender restrictions, where public and individual rights are kept and maintained.

Islam played a prominent role in the birth, cultural, and ecological vista of the medieval Middle East. Therefore, any analysis of urbanisation in the Arab world must start with an investigation of the essential traits of Islam, especially those that would greatly affect the establishment of cities (Juma 1996: 48). Islamic civilisation, like many other civilisations in the world is being influenced by global life and society so

modern values have a clear influence on Tripoli. Contemporary western civilisation has greatly influenced the lives of the average Libyan; bearing especially on social infrastructures and social interactions in gardens and leisure centres in cities. There are also separate clubs for each gender and relaxation spots at the sea side for fishing and water sports.

The transformation of the city has effects on the cultural economy as numerous shops and business centres have appeared in the city selling foreign fashion dresses, foods and cosmetics used both by foreigners and citizens. The city contains an abundant number of shopping plazas, which include shops such as Adidas, and also contain international restaurants. Names of foreign shops and plazas are written in English. Many shops and plazas are also located in Dahra near the church. The cityscape in Tripoli is like most cities in the world in terms of its buildings and infrastructure. In Tripoli, there is a mixture of local and global architectural designs and shops sell various types of clothing, shoes, jackets and Italian products for both females and males which originate from various European countries. These trends in transformation are reflected in other Arab cities such as Cairo, where there has been considerable development in amenities such as shopping malls, upscale hotels and private clubs. Kuppinger argues that global artefacts and models are taken on and marketed at a local level. Her article on gated communities found that developers promoted spatial arrangements and lifestyles that were to be found outside of Egypt. Additionally, she refers to the fact that rapid urban transformations have led to physical similarities between different cities in the world. Kuppinger puts particular emphasis on the local factors that can challenge or accommodate the particular and local articulations of these transformations. It is these particularities which give articulation to the otherwise global phenomena and which lead to local variations

(Kuppinger 2004: 5). Undoubtedly, this has had an effect on culture more generally, and such transformations play a strong role in linking Arab cities to other cities. Of course, it should be noted that such global trends always have a degree of specificity in relation to the local context (Kuppinger 2004: 35-37).

Information can be obtained about other cities because nationals and foreigners live together. The city has characteristics unique to it such as its buildings, most of which are painted white, and its shops, many of which have their doors painted green. Some areas have also been designed with the country flag as a logo and symbol. The green is historically rooted in Islam. This reinforces respect for the holy prophet whose history is connected with the colour green. Many clothes in the city are also green, an aftereffect of Turkish occupation. Recently, however, the system has changed completely due to new development in the city.

There are a number of foreigners from all around the globe, including Asia, Africa and Europe, most of whom live in the city. The total population of foreigners living in Tripoli city was calculated at 409,326 in 2002 (National Corporation for Information and Documentation - Tripoli 2002). However, foreigners are always loyal to their own nations, and the urban community has not been able to absorb international loyalties and transform them into a national one. Some foreigners also visit the city as tourists or to attend the trade fairs for medical purposes and research exhibitions. The city also hosts a large number of unskilled and unemployed Africans. As Africans, they come to the country because they are permitted and the borders are open. Others who do have qualifications, for example, in journalism, business administration and medicine, live in Tripoli or in the countryside. They also introduce different cultures to Tripoli. A number of African people in Tripoli are not Muslim, which can occasionally lead to cultural conflicts at the individual level. Other



African people invite Libyans to their home countries for investment purposes. These Tripoli people, in turn, use the support of the Libyan government and the Libyan Central Bank to assist them in the development of enterprises. With regards to other Islamic countries in Africa, Islam is presented as a culture of the land. Changes in the city's culture occur as reproduced by Tripoli dwellers, and also by other Africans who come into Libya from different regions. Tripoli people interact with foreigners and often adopt some of their cultural practices, although local culture does not permit sexual relationships outside of marriage as can be found in European cultures. However, many foreign females now reside in Tripoli city, especially those from Morocco, Tunisia and other different countries like Egypt and Sudan, and they have a strong influence on Tripoli culture. Gender relations in the rural and urban area are different because rural people do not permit frequent gender relationships. There are some shared values that are peculiar to Libya and other Islamic states, such as aiding each other in times of financial distress. They have moral values such as abstinence from drinking alcohol or financial misappropriation. However education undermines some of these values.

Living standards have changed for the better due to the impact of incoming modern culture. The involvement of expert professional architects has led to changes in design and the standards of improvement can be markedly seen as engineers, companies and business associations improve the city through designs and development. Some of those in the city still practice traditional culture, which exists alongside external forces from various global cultures. Some urban individuals are completely different, having adapted to the European way of life. Some Tripoli people prefer to move from one area to another, and the inclination to travel long distances is a salient feature in Libya. This is natural for a people living in such a vast

country with a population scattered in remote places that are far apart from each other. One can observe this typical pattern in such individuals even when it occurs in towns and villages, particularly through the new destinations people choose once they leave home, which represents a point of salience. It is therefore possible to understand why some individuals would not stay put and would respond positively to any request for a walk, possibly explaining Libyans' attachment to their traditional clothes. Large trousers and wide shirts allow free movement and enable people to endure tiresome trips more than European clothes. Most travellers in rural societies and some travellers in urban areas, especially those who are originally from rural society, only wear a *Jarad* and do not need a whole suitcase of European clothes. In the afternoon, because of the comfort traditional clothes allow, they tend to stay longer at social occasions. Libyan dress is a mixture of modern and traditional. Most people follow this pattern of dress, but it is important to note that dress differs between urban society and rural society. In general, traditional or Arab clothes are the most conservative as they conceal differences between the rich and poor, elderly and young. They convey the idea that people are the same at heart, no matter where they are. The traditional apparel could be used as inspiration to those researching material culture, particularly through the realm of clothing, by looking to the *jarad* and *zbun* for men, and *rada* and Arabic suits for women. Libyans hold their cultural ceremonies in high regard and sufficiently strong that the government, Libyan High Commissions elsewhere and the populace are involved in the celebration of events such as the Libyan Revolution Anniversary and religious ceremonies.

The utilisation of technology has also enhanced the living standards of the people of Tripoli. For example, the advent of internet communication has led to the opening of internet shops and cafes, where a great deal of interaction can be seen. The

combination of old and new traditions and modern advancement has changed peoples' lives, ushering in an improved and a more modern culture through links such as satellite technology. Most houses have good communication systems and most individuals are familiar with the internet. Traditional and modern cultural developments have recently been affected as a result of such new communication systems: most internet centres have coffee shops and play European songs, as an example. Both females and males are permitted to chat, discuss and relate with each other. Many Libyans frequent internet cafes to use the functions of the internet services as well as to learn English. Young girls and boys in Tripoli explore the internet in such a fashion, leading to a prevalence of modern aspects of life and transformations in the cultural system. However, there is a significant difference between the average use of the Internet between men and women. The researcher noted that internet shops are more frequently used by women than men. There is also a similarity between boys and girls.

Rural identity which is rooted in kinship, community and neighbourhood, all of which continue to survive in the urban setting. However, there are subtle differences as urban areas contain different groups of communities and neighbourhoods. Islamic religion encourages individuals to forge positive relationships and friendships with those in other communities and neighbourhoods. Urban dwellers celebrate the Prophet Mohammed's birthday in mosques and other places. Every year on this occasion, individuals come together to organise delightful musical parades through the streets and city squares, the smell of incense perfuming the air. The difference in the urban setting depends on the recognition of Tripoli as a multicultural capital. Some foreign people are not Muslim and this is unique in the

urban setting. Thus, the urban neighbourhood is not equivalent to the rural setting, as women may visit unsupervised

The main channels that demonstrate culture are family history, which gives an indication of cultural background and demonstrates much more in terms of culture and tradition in rural areas. Travel and exposure to life outside Libya have led to cultural change due to various visits made by Libyan people to other African countries. Numerous newspapers are written in English, thus aiding the introduction of global culture. Various foreign companies and embassies in Libya use English on a daily basis and this further accentuates the global aspects of culture.

Urban people have different groups of communities; for example, sports communities, associations, individual organisations and local communities, which are paramount in the Libyan political movement. Urban people aspire to further relationships with each other, despite extremely busy nature of those in an urban setting. Moreover, many urban people interact and do business with rural people, as with foreigners, where this is usually carried out over the Internet.

Tripoli is an old city with complex avenues of communication, including mosques, markets, shops and artisan workshops which, suffused with subtle light, give a feeling of beauty, simplicity and purity. This plays an important socio-cultural role in modern life, attracting rural people into the city to trade and shop. These streets hold countless memories and pleasures in which feelings are framed by these city walls. The walls and doors are newly whitewashed give off an air of freshness. Events and memories combine to create the history of these places. Tripoli, despite being a modern city, still holds on to traditional cultures, whereby specialised artisans and traditional cloth makers have created a niche in the city market called *Rubaa*. Rural individuals must travel to such areas to purchase unique costumes worn for

Libyan weddings and ceremonies which occur during the busy summer months; thus exposing rural dwellers to modernisation. The old town in Tripoli is as well integrated as many other cities of the Arab world, particularly due to its architecture. In various cities of the world, there are ancient building-remains and perhaps even whole quarters which date back to historical periods. In the old city of Tripoli, many shops line the traditional market in this area. They sell Libyan handcrafts, such as colourful hand-made prayer-carpets, fine silver jewellery and remarkably well-designed rugs. There are many jewellery shops that deal mostly in white and yellow gold. Inside such establishments, the courteousness typical of the marketplace atmosphere is lost. Libyans hate bargaining, and oftentimes the shop-keeper might feel offended when asked for a discount. This results in the occasional return of money to the shop-keeper as the buyer may feel that the merchant decided to sell his product at a lower price to avoid such bargaining. At an earlier stage of development of the Libyan community, jewellery shops were an important aspect of the celebration of marriage in urban and rural areas alike.

Tripoli is cosmopolitan. People prefer to celebrate it and enjoy this aspect of the city rather than feel threatened by it. They are associative, accommodating and accept foreigners who visit the city. The weather and environment is extremely conducive to sightseeing by both foreigners and nationals and there is an abundance of delightful places to visit and shop. Tripoli has many tourist spots that are conducive to learning about the city, for example, an amusement park has been built in Tripoli's international fair, thus allowing a visiting child's curiosity and desire for learning to be developed. There are many modern toy factories, and many publishing houses have programmes every year in Tripoli's international fair to help children. Some people go to the suburbs of Tripoli, where there are popular picnic spots for city

dwellers. This leads to interaction between city dwellers and rural people. Many young people in the city prefer to visit coffee-houses, gardens, the beach or clubs. Some females spend time in amusement sections of Tripoli's clubs. Tripoli's international fair is an important annual socio-economic event, with exhibits of handicrafts, commerce, and industry. The fair also provides for cultural and technical exchange.

Whether urban or rural, most Libyan people drink tea frequently, similar to their European counterparts. Libyans are the biggest tea consumers in the world, and tea-drinking is an integral part of Libyan life. Libyans drink tea even more than those who cultivate it. For them, tea is more ceremonially important than any other drink. The great Libyan conversationalists, whether men or women, drink tea at almost every social occasion. They make tea in a manner that suits the nature of their long and continued social gatherings where stories last for a long time. Most city people like to drink tea, especially when on holidays. Drinking tea kills time and is an essential way to make friends. The small tea cup is the first thing to be offered to a guest on his arrival in a Libyan home, and the very sweet taste of tea is what remains in his mouth as he bids farewell.

Libyans live a life of modernity and contentment and do not live flashy lives, though occasionally they do exhibit expensive lifestyles. Lives of modernity are the hallmark of Libyans, who prefer sitting on floors and eating out of the same dish without class segregation. At the end of the day, a person wraps himself up in his *Jarad* and sleeps where night falls without needing additional extra comforts. In *marbuah*, or reception rooms, pillows are left all over the hand-woven carpets to arouse one's desire to relax. There are modern settees in many houses on which guests sit for a time before moving to the floor. This austere culture explains why

Libyans leave the city on weekends to go to villages or the countryside in search of a genuine austere environment deeply rooted in their spirit. In his book, *Wasf Al-Ardh*, Arab geographer Iben Hawqal describes the Libyans of his era as pure in body and mind and clean in their deeds and attire, their smart garments, good looks and distinguishing austere way of life. They are virtuous and neighbourly, compassionate and good-intentioned, highly reputable, strong minded, sincere and righteous with unfailing generosity. They are well-known as do-gooders and have an unequalled sense of patriotism. This statement is also complemented by Al-Ayashi, Al-Idrissi, Al-Sabty, Al-Yaaqubi and Al-Maqdassi, who also bore witness to the same qualities. Graziani, who commanded the Italian occupation troops, added to the list courage and natural military sensitivity upon making a speech to his soldiers before the start of a battle. A Libyan feels that these qualities have been affected by modern life, and this is why they may be seen clinging to the backs of their horses and clutching their guns whenever such a feeling of fear overtakes them (El-Telsi 1974: 21-22).

Most Libyan people are frank and many are proud of being Libyan. Twenty years ago, when a Libyan wanted to stress that he was serious, he would emphatically state, "I am a Bedouin", meaning that he is a son of the Sahara who does not jest. However, most young people today see Saharan life as underdeveloped - ideas about this type of life have changed, due to modernisation and urbanisation, which is a result of policies of transformation and openness to other societies.

In reception and sitting rooms of traditional Arabic houses, the visitor may find the following verse from the Quran written in different characters and styles: "enter it in peace and security" (Surah Al-Hajr: 46). This may be due to Libyans' yearning for faithful and loving friends, who could enter the country in peace and security and without being met by brandished arms or even suspicious looks. A few

houses in Tripoli have unique exterior and interior features – for example, the windows and doors are decorated with colourful hand-woven curtains and potted plants. Likewise, some have modern Italian furniture; though most have traditional Arabian-styled rooms.

Libyan mosques exhibit a unique architecture. They are simple and unadorned, mainly characterised by simplicity in the use of architectural elements, decoration and colours. Minarets are rectilinear, with only one balcony, and are free from engravings. These are slightly higher than house roofs. Facades are not decorated, and most mosques have only one entrance that may be green in colour. Roofs are usually made up of several interlinked domes; an architectural phenomenon unique to Libyan mosques. Mosques have a role in education, and they also played an important role in cultural consciousness. They become the focal point of the community and the centre of political, social, intercultural, cultural, and judicial activities. They are also the place of secular activities, such as eating, and also provide recreation for many people. In the rural and urban setting, Friday is a very important day to the community, when many go to the mosque to pray and the shops all close for at least two hours. Moulay Mohammed mosque, Tripoli's largest, is an example of this return to architectural styles of the past. There are a number of interesting mosques including the Karamnli Mosque, the El-Naqah Mosque and the Gurgi Mosque, both in the old town and adjacent to it. The best-known of the Tripoli mosques is the Gurgi Mosque with its elegant architecture. It was built comparatively recently, in 1833, by Yussef Gurgi (Libyaonline.com 2003). Massana, who is a professor of modern architecture, tried to explain this phenomenon by claiming that it was derived from the design of shrines, whose simple shape constitutes of a rock with a dome on the top. Hence, the mosque is a series of sanctuaries that have been linked



together, with walls replacing the pillars. The domes have been interlinked to symbolise the variety in interpretation of religion and the unity of objectives, and also to reflect the structure of the Libyan people themselves, for every tribe is proud of their own identity.

It is only in the last few years that women have started to visit the Mosque for prayer and to study the Quran. Libyans are earnest and strict about religion, and there is nothing in their life that has been left unaffected by a profound sense of piety. Oath-swearing does not occur prior to reading the opening chapter of the Quran (Fatiha), nor can work begin before some verses of the Quran are recited. While no longer common practice, the bridegroom traditionally meets his bride on the night of their nuptials holding the holy Quran. When a baby is born, it is reminiscent of the Prophet's birth. Libyans are fond of religious stories and heroic lives; they honour saints, following their example and guidance, particularly if the saints in question were patriotic fighters in national struggles of the past. This is still strongly entrenched in rural society. Some city-dwellers visit Marabouts. In the Libyan countryside many Marabouts exist, some of them famous throughout the Arab world, for example, Abduslam Alasmar. The mosques have been paramount in the mobilisation and organisation of popular opposition.

One of the most striking scenes that may occasionally be observed in Libyan cities is that of craftsmen struggling with unequalled bravery against the sudden invasion of the market by foreign manufactured products or “sea goods” as they call them, as they come from beyond the seas. The craftsmen are determined to carry on in spite of decreasing financial gains and consumers’ preference for foreign products. Even more surprising are their handicrafts. In some small shops, craftsmen may be seen bent over their old looms, copper vessels or fine embroideries, working steadily

and quietly, as if, through an expressive silence, struggling against the stream of the “sea goods”. It is a deeply-rooted belief that maintains only what is hand-made depicts who people are, and is therefore the only thing worth being inherited by the coming generations (Mokatar 1971: 106). The Libyan economic system encourages people who work in the traditional industry because it represents an important source for tourists to understand Libya.

Educated Libyans have succeeded in protecting Tripoli from attempts of haphazard modernisation by refusing to leave when its inhabitants began deserting it to settle in newly-built areas. They have also served as guardians of Libyan tradition throughout history and as a source of specificity and distinction for these traditions. It is through the old town that internal forms and colours of popular crafts have been preserved and has brought forth interest. Libyan students must spend large amounts of time studying and preparing for examinations and many find it is necessary to study in order to attain qualifications needed for employment or for further education. Until recently, Libyans did not realise the importance of reading; they were still at a very slow state of progress. This has changed and now people can be seen in libraries and in internet cafes. However, society is not receptive to books or other reading materials. Among young Libyan people, there is a tendency to only read textbooks and rarely for pleasure. Apart from their great concern for the progress, Libyan education programmes encourage students to read. Most schools have libraries and have recognised their importance. However, there are marked differences in the facilities and services offered from one school library to another.

Many parents encourage their children to use public libraries. It is noted that many people spend time reading and talking in the afternoon by the International Library, which is well-located and has a good view of the landscape. Others think that

reading materials unrelated to coursework will not hold much importance for future purposes. In recent years, patterns of thinking have shifted away from those of the past. Libyans have become influenced by political system and have also been affected by global culture, particularly the younger generation. Media, particularly print media, has a long history in Tripoli. The first newspaper was established in 1812, called *Tripoli Algharbe*, meaning Tripoli West. Written in Arabic and Turkish, it was issued as one page every Thursday. Another popular newspaper, *Altrke*, was established on 26 June 1897, which focused on science and politics. The first magazine was established in 1898, called *Arts*. It contained information about the economy, health, agriculture, geography, metals and animals. The first edition from the new era of newspapers was printed in March 1908. It had the motto: “from people to people” (Elnhum: 174-177).

It is noticeable that lifestyles in different faculties at Alfateh University and some departments in the Arts have changed. Many magazines and newspapers from different countries and establishments are sold in the city. There are now a number of professional scientists from different disciplines working in cultural offices. Many of the English schools teach English in the city. Likewise, English is learned and used at internet cafes. Most internet centres use English teaching sites and computers. I will refer to these urban developments in fields of Tripoli life below.

### **5.5 Urban development in Tripoli**

Cities have traditionally been associated with development, though there is seldom any consensus on the direction of the causal relationship between the two variables of urbanisation and development (Njoh 2003: 167). In the not-too-distant past Libya was considered to be, by all measures, one of the least developed nations

on Earth. With meagre natural resources and an overwhelming proportion of its territory classified as desert, Libya gave many experts very little hope for potential development. Such dim prospects, however, have been quite radically altered over the past decade as a result of a newfound and tremendous wealth in natural resources (oil) and a revolutionary change in the political system. Urbanisation and economic development go hand-in-hand as a country moves from a rural-agricultural base to an urban-industrial base (James and Henderson 2003: 98). Almost half of Tripoli's infrastructural developments called for by the Tripoli Plan for the Year 1974 were all but completed by 2000 (El-Shakhs and Robert 1974: 372).

Libya's relatively high degree of urbanisation could be attributed to such an inhospitable environment, which often leads to a concentration in population in larger settlements, particularly along the coast. In all aspects of economic development measured, the Tripoli region (as a whole) seems to fare better than the national average, particularly in terms of industrial and agricultural production and per-capita income. This is because Tripoli, as the capital, is home to the head offices of most general organisations and centres of administration and government. In this sense, the region not only possesses a relatively diversified and integrated economic structure, but also a more self-sufficient one by national standards. It appears that the Benghazi Region is experiencing rapid development comparable to that of the Tripoli region. A similar conclusion, based on available data, could also be made with respect to health services (El-Shakhs and Robert 1974: 375).

Some sociologists and anthropologists define development as change in relationships and change in patterns of life. In his discussion of development, Ogburn includes both material and non-material changes. He emphasises the importance of development in material culture and its impact on non-material culture. Development

has a relationship with the economy and high level of economic activity reflects high rates of programmes of development in any society. Phenomena of urbanisation support economic growth and development. There are four major forces determining the pace of urbanisation throughout the world:

- 1) Economic growth and development
- 2) Technological change
- 3) Rapid growth in the total population
- 4) Large-scale movement of people from rural areas to cities and villages

These processes are often accompanied by improved communication transportation systems and city services. Development has a relationship with urbanisation because a successful programme of development accelerates urbanisation. As a society generates more financial surpluses, economic activities ascend to high-profile production techniques, which are partially dependent on the presence of related economic activities, labour and consumer markets. It is known that trade between societies has always been a factor in economic development and associations between societies are brought about by concentrated points of economic and social activity (Kasarda and Crenshaw 1991: 486). Indeed, one unmistakable fact about Libyan urbanisation is its provision for free education, free health service, industry and a strong economy.

Urbanisation is a parameter that describes the percentage of the total population living in urban locations. Few political scientists have looked on urbanisation as a process of socio-cultural change (Friedman and Wulff 1975: 30). Urbanisation and development of agencies in the city is a way of improving the city so as to facilitate its mass economy and environment. Urban cultural policy creates new boundaries between the city and its environment as well as boundaries inside the

city. It builds new audiences and changes the level of stratification in existing audiences (Crane, Kawashima and Kawasaki 2002: 170). In addition to various calls for refinement of urbanisation models (Abu-Luchod and Hay 1979: 181), the standardisation of research projects warrants special attention in the years to come. This attention focuses on the efficiency of cities related to various dimensions, and on detailed analyses of the governmental influence on urbanisation and urban culture from the perspective of global culture. My understanding of the influence of political and legal systems on the type, rate, and efficiency of urbanisation is rather sketchy. This will influence employment, industries, liable feeding, and a higher standard of living in the city resulting from these improvements (Abu-Luchod and Hay 1979: 181). Fourthly, movement exists between national states from time to time and towards individuals, cities and regions in Africa

The system of education has had an impact on urban culture in Libya. However, there are various types of schools in Libya similar to those found in European cities. The education system in Libya consists of public and private sector schools and higher education. As a result of education policy, the number of students grew quickly to reach 908,327 in the 2002/ 2003 academic year, compared to 32,703 in 1970/1971(Social and Economic Survey 2002: 45).

With regard to health services, education, culture and urban service in Tripoli, urban services have improved to put them on par with other modern cities. One example of this is the development of specialised hospitals in the city, the modernisation of existing health service and the extension of the old hospital located in city centre, where the number of beds rose from 122 to 400. Tripoli has demonstrated that it is concerned about the provision of health services, and as a result, most medical centres and hospitals have modern infrastructure. Moreover, the

university hospital, opened ten years ago, has approximately 1,200 hospital beds; and there are also 25 central laboratories located near hospitals. In addition, Tripoli has 200 private clinics, 30 public clinics, 10 hospitals and three general hospitals. It has 318 pharmacies. These facilities and services compare favourably with those in other developed countries and this is a direct result of urban development subsequent to urbanisation. As a political strategy in Libya, health is free for all (although some use private services) and the state aims to for all individuals to be healthy (physically and mentally) and free from disease. The most important objective and strategy of Libyan society, in the field of health services is to have people who are physically fit and who possess the best possible knowledge, capabilities and expertise, with high cultural and intellectual standards. This is achieved by creating a complete balance between the physical, intellectual and social state so people are able to positively influence their surroundings. This is essential to the development of efforts aimed at achieving the extension of these objectives to all citizens, such as persuading them to interact with each other to realise desirable urban health standards in a manner that conforms with the principles of the constitution of the World Health Organisation. In implementing this policy and in order to achieve the objectives formulated in this field, total expenditure on the health sector in Tripoli during the period 1970-2000 reached 19,888.5 million Libyan Dinar (1 Libyan Dinar equivalent 1.2 Dollars). Health coverage has reached 100% for both males and females throughout the country, equally spread over cities and rural areas (Report Establishment of Planning 2000). European and foreign influences brought about by a multiethnic workforce result in a positive effect on the urban health service.

The city has special functions as a national centre for the economic, social and cultural life of a country's accelerated development. The growth of the manufacturing

industry and the production of goods involves a simultaneous development of various institutions to plan and organise all aspects of the economy and co-operation in the production and the circulation of goods. These are the institutions of the state as well as economic organisations, together with financial and other establishments, most of which are located in the city centre. Thus, development of science and technology is closely linked with overall economic development. The city has a multifunctional character of being at the centre which ensures economic and other advantages which result from the concentration of various services. Within this area there are clusters of mono-functional services and other establishments such as administration, commerce and cultural institutions. The concentration of various service establishments and institutions in the city centre greatly enhances its attractiveness both for the inhabitants of the city and visitors. A shift to service-sector economies is widely seen in developed countries and this relationship has been studied in a third world setting (Kasarda and Crenshaw 1991: 4487).

Landscapes always change because they are the expression of the dynamic interaction between natural and cultural forces in the environment. Urban sprawl is the result of consecutive reorganisations of the land in order to adapt its use and spatial structure so it will better serve a changing society's demands (Antrop M., 2004: 12). "The important driving forces are related to the population growth and the lifestyle has become increasingly more urban and more mobile" (Antrop 2004: 12).

The city centre had been developing for centuries together with the growing urban population in the city. At the beginning, it consisted of an existing concentration of shops and handicraft workshops, located primarily in the old city and suburban Tripoli. It had gradually expanded by commercial revitalisation of streets located in the old city. Before the discovery of oil, commerce and handicraft



production had been the main occupation of the population of the city and was concentrated in the city centre. Now, commercial offices developed in the city centre since oil exploration include governmental offices as well as economic and international trade institutions. Little research has been carried out on the relationship between urbanisation and the level of development; of the handful of empirical studies performed on urbanisation and its growth, only one found a relationship between them, while others have found no statistical evidence to support the relationship between urbanisation and development. Urbanisation occurs as a result of development programmes, for the reason that development plans aspire to transform life to higher standards. So, urbanisation becomes a phenomenon of modern life in Tripoli which is on the way towards global standards, overshadowing local characteristics. At present, Tripoli people live between localisation and globalisation. They are collective factors at both levels. The phenomenon of the mix of localisation and globalisation can be seen in the different parts of the city, especially the old city.

The old city covers an area of about 15 hectares and most of its inhabitants belong to the low socioeconomic group. It comprises densely built up two-storey quarters and narrow streets, many of them too narrow for cars. At present, most inhabitants of the old city are foreigners. Of the total area of the old city, 20% is occupied by services and the remainder by historical monuments and vacant plots; both service and residential quarters are of a low standard and are often in bad condition. It has been estimated that about 52% of structures are in good condition.

The location of Tripoli on the Mediterranean Sea coast has created favourable conditions, enabling the city to play an important economic and political role in an international context. At present, Tripoli is an area not only reflecting the changes in the economic life of Libya and in administrative and commercial activities, but is also

the seat of international organisations and congresses. It has a role as a regional and national centre of culture and science, as well as being a national and international tourist centre. Tripoli has both national and international roles due to central offices of business and different facilities. There are also institutions and establishments of higher education and science, including Alfateh university, whose student body numbered 70,145 in 2003 - one of the largest in north Africa. There are also centres for culture and computer science and centres for international co-operation and exchange.

Tripoli has an urban infrastructure which includes most urban services and facilities essential for social development, public care and improved living conditions. All facilities are included in the tertiary sector of the national economy, such as road networks constructed in the past forty years. These roads connect different areas of the city and also connect it with other cities. Tripoli has a large port, which is the most important one in the country and is serviced by extensive roads. The first road serves the eastern side; the second serves the western side. It is possible to transport heavy goods by these roads. The dense network of roads has promoted greater contact between urban and rural areas. As a result, this has contributed to increased urbanisation in rural areas and places other than Tripoli. As such, a good transport infrastructure acts as a source of change. There is also a good taxi service in Tripoli, which is an essential part of its transport system. These taxis offer a flexible service at reasonable prices and operate at all hours of the day. There are also many bus and minibus companies in Tripoli, as well as bus companies for suburban transport. The number of private cars increases every year. By 2000, Tripoli had 59,299 private cars and 15,924 commercial vehicles (Department of Traffic & Licences, Tripoli 2000). The good infrastructure in and around Tripoli helps to foster growth in tourism and

urbanisation. Table 22 on page 226 shows the number and types of social, recreational in Tripoli. All of these serve to improve the standard of living found in cities worldwide and they also help to reflect the progress of urban services which help promote tourism in the city.

Such development accelerated urban transformation of the city. Urban transformation contains various aspects of change around the urban area. It refers to the complete transformation that takes place when pre-modern society is altered to such an extent that new areas of organizations or social characteristics appear according to modern lifestyle and infrastructure. This research discusses transformation as a multi-dimensional concept that affects social change in Libyan society. The transformation implicates varied understandings of social change of city life from a cultural perspective. In recent years, it is argued in the south and west of Tripoli that this transformation is a multi-dimensional process in different fields of urban life. It has both a demographic and a social context. Urban transformation is aimed at a fundamental change in Libyan cities, and many areas that changed due to formal planning now contain impressive buildings by worldwide standards. These are called popular areas which have excellent local culture. This process of urban transformation is changing how and where people live in cities. From this type of social change, we can say the concept of urban transformation has derived from planning policies.

Urban researchers usually seek to understand and explain the phenomenon of urban transformation and explain it as part of the general development of cities on a national or even global scale. Urban transformation has impacted largely on the values, habits and lifestyles of urban dwellers. Urbanisation is a complex transformation process. It has effects on social values, which impact upon on

individuals and create conflict, especially between generations. This is as a result of rapid social change.

Tripoli city is an important centre of economic development and social transformation. It has become the national centre of development and urban transformation. Rapid economic growth and structural change that take place in big cities find their way to and reshape the urban landscape, requiring new approaches to urban planning. The transformation of Tripoli in recent years has concentrated on urban mobility and urban structure. It has experienced important recent social change. However, important changes have taken place in the behaviour and habits of its inhabitants. The city still requires urban transformation projects in the services field, such as public transport stations and stops, bicycle paths, housing and planning. In recent years, planners and urban scholars worldwide have enthusiastically aspired to improve the standards of infrastructure, which is influential on local culture. For example, living in apartments or flats is a concept that has been imported from foreign countries. At the present time there are companies which contribute to this urban transformation of Tripoli. The urban development of Tripoli is the outcome of urbanisation. It results from factors which include policies of transformation in the city; foreign marketing and building companies which use largely western models and images to promote their projects; urban development projects similar to other global cities; cultural trends and dramatic increases in social polarisation.

The following chapter will analyse the primary data collected during the fieldwork. The analysis will refer back to literature reviewed in this chapter from time to time shed light on some of the findings. Furthermore, this chapter will contribute to urban knowledge and the body of empirical urban studies.

## **Chapter 6**

### **6.1 Analysis & data**

### **6.2 A day in the life of a Tripoli resident**

### **6.3 Inferences from the daily life of Tripoli**

## 6.1 Analysis & data

This chapter explores variables which demonstrate general characteristics of modern life in Tripoli. In the following pages, I will explore major characteristics of Tripoli people, based on data collected through interviews of 300 people from different families.

**Figure (3) Age group**

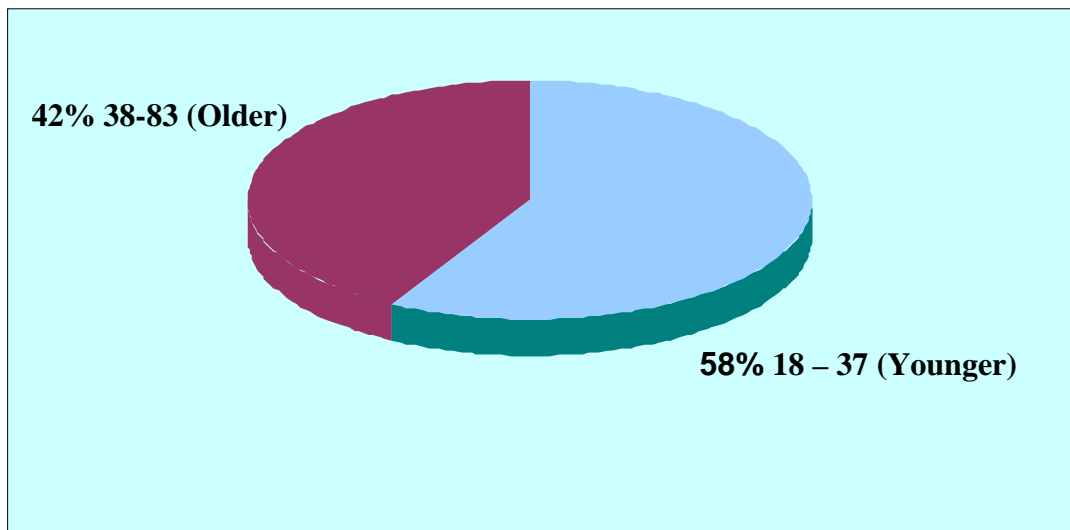


Figure 3 shows the division of the sample according to age. 58% of the members of the sample belong to the age group (18 - 37). Therefore over half of the sample are younger, with the remaining members being in the older category (38 - 83). This shows that Tripoli is a youthful city. This situation deviates from other European cities, where the average age may be higher. Among others, Tripoli still bears some features of traditional Islamic societies with a prevalence of multiple children per family. In some ways, this indicates a weakness in the level of urbanisation and its supposed individualism. Moreover, as a centre of education, Tripoli also attracts young people from the rural areas who lodge with their urban relatives to avail of education facilities.

**Figure (4) Birthplace**

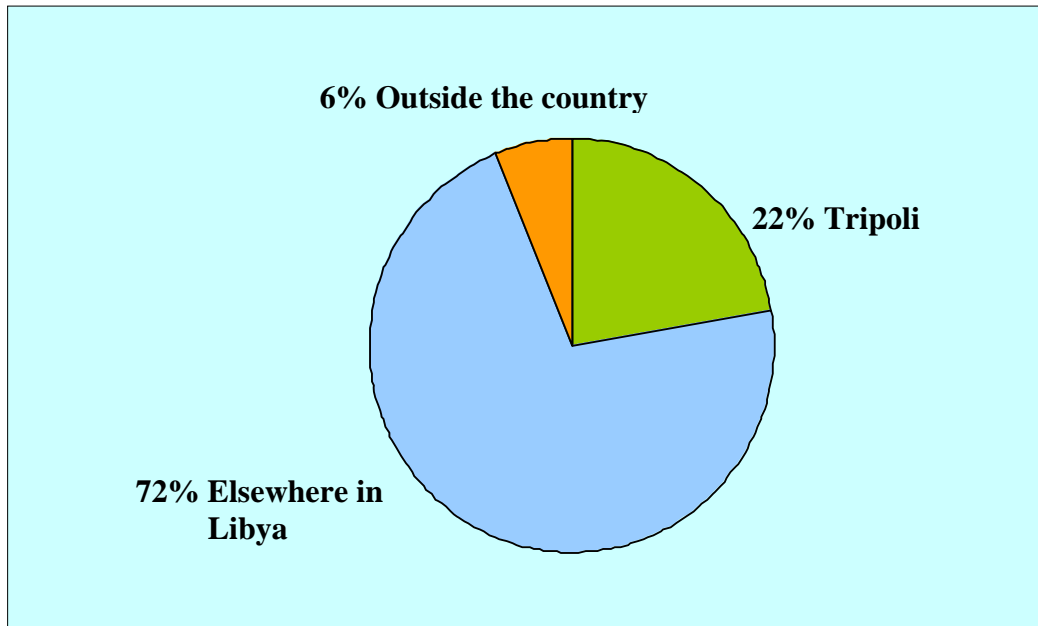


Figure 4 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to birthplace. 22% of the members of the sample were born in Tripoli. 72% of the members of the sample belong to outside Tripoli. Therefore, almost three quarters of the sample were born outside Tripoli and come from other cities or rural areas in Libya. Individuals with similar socio-cultural and ethnic backgrounds live together as neighbours which makes Tripoli distinct from other European capital cities where socio-cultural identity and ethnicity does not define a neighbourhood. This may help to reduce conflicts within residential areas but does not necessarily reduce conflicts between them. A further 6% of the sample are from outside the country. However, before the discovery of oil, most Libyan people were very poor. As such, some individuals migrated to Arab countries such as Tunisia and Egypt; thus, most are used to urban life and thus adapt to city life – this is in line with Elkabir’s research. Most of these individuals have returned to Libya within the past forty years.

**Figure (5) Sex**

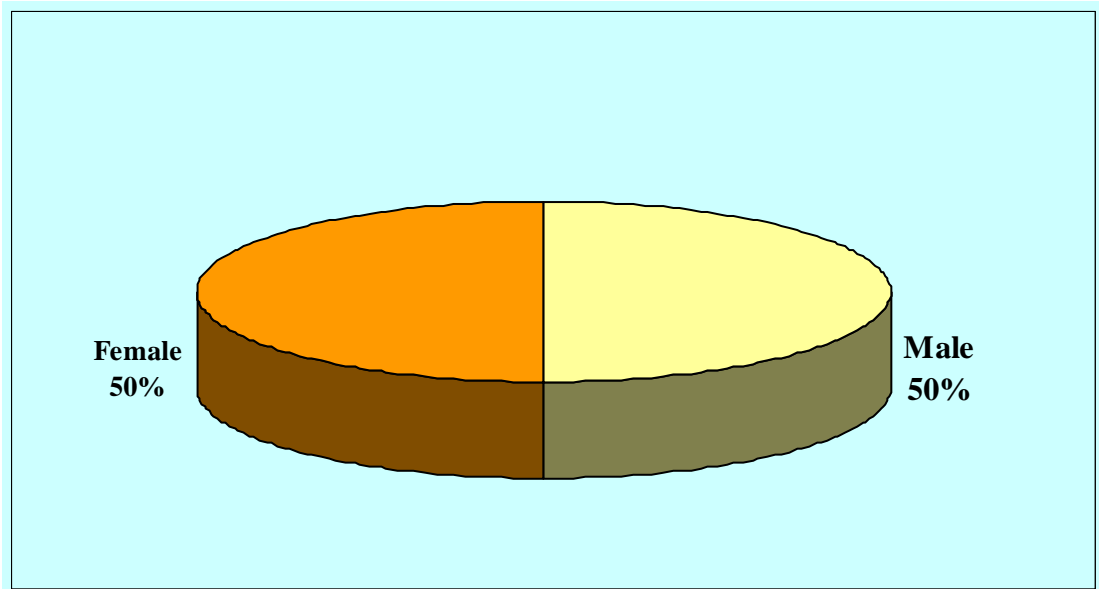


Figure 5 shows the division of the sample according to sex. 50% of the members of the sample were female. The gender divide in the sample is even and this allows for effective generalisation and prevents sample bias when discussing results. I will note that this gender division of the sample may not reflect the gender division of the city as a whole. It was my intention to have an even-gender division so as to adequately represent urban life.



**Figure (6) Education level**

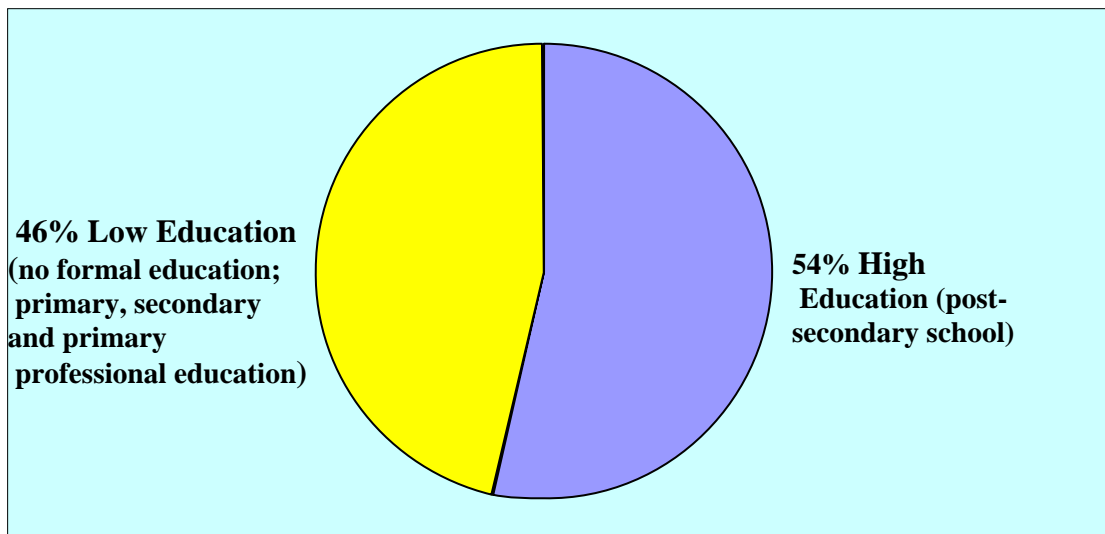


Figure 6 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to education category. 54% of the members of the sample have what can be considered a high-level education which is post secondary school. 46% of the members of the sample belong to the low education category (this includes primary education, secondary education and primary professional education). The above figure denotes that the percentages at various levels of education are almost the same between low and high education levels. It reflects availability of institutions in the city and the positive effects of the free education policy.

Education facilities are available in rural areas just as in urban settings. Thus, the education status in Tripoli city has become similar in some respects to small cities. However, education policy is provided through governmental policy and most small Libyan cities have colleges and institutions of higher learning. Most Libyan parents wish for educated children, whether in urban or rural society. Education accelerates urban development and helps produce a transformation within city life, especially with respect to culture. As many individuals in older generations were denied an education in both the colonial and pre-Ghadhafi era, this propels them to seek education for their children.

**Figure (7) Marital Status**

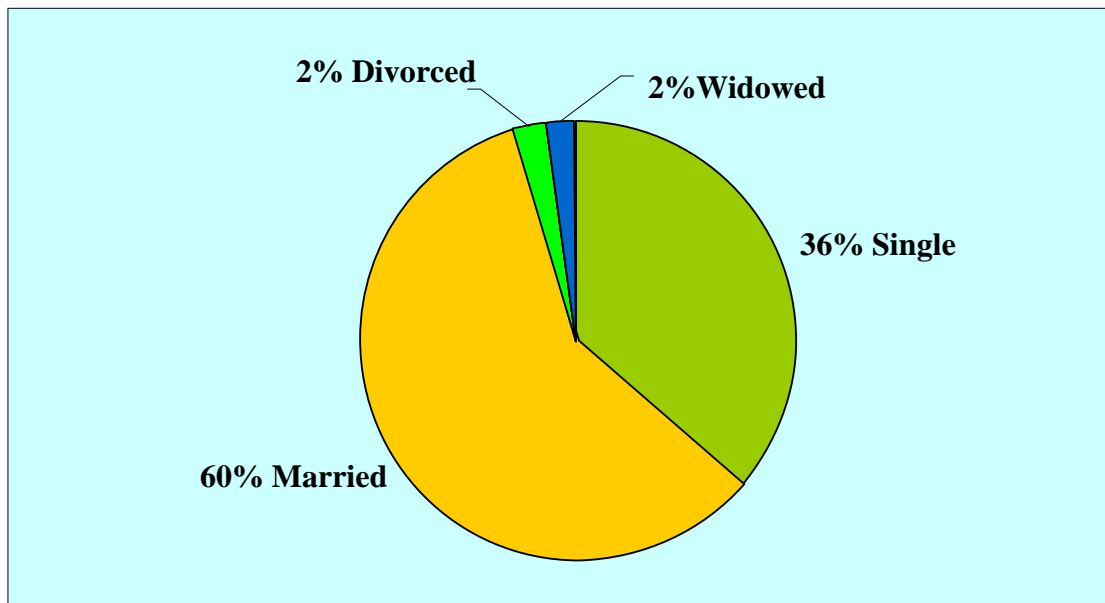


Figure 7 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to marital status. 36% are single; 60% are married. Libyan tradition encourages marriage, and banks provide social loans to ease the financial burden of marriage. Parents are also highly supportive of marriage as well. The above figure indicates that 2% of the sample are divorced, indicating a low level of divorce and thus demonstrating that there is a high level of stable marriages. Oftentimes, when conflicts arise in marriages, there is a traditional custom that allows intermediaries to resolve the conflicts peacefully. It can be argued that stable marriage and a low level of divorce are predominant features of traditional societies in general and Libyan rural traditional society is no exception. As such, one may say that Tripoli's urbanisation is influenced by a traditional Libyan ethos that encourages marital stability.

**Figure (8) Number of wives**

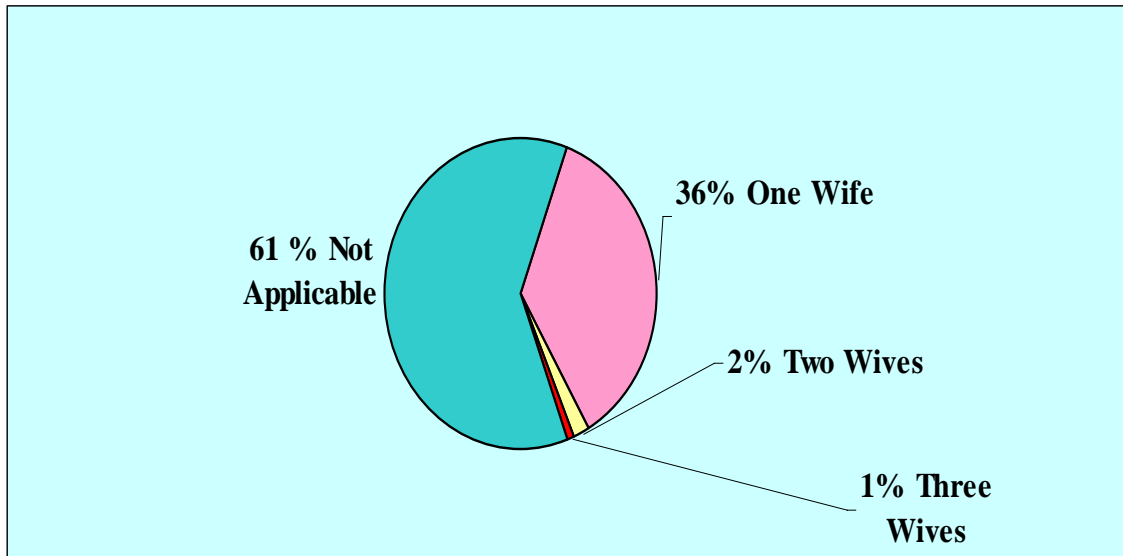


Figure 8 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to number of wives. 36% of the sample denotes monogamous marriage. This is similar to what obtains in European societies and is influenced by high levels of education. 2% have two wives and 1% have three. This is a reflection of Islamic culture and a high level of income. The proportion of those in a polygamous marriage is 3%. Justification for having more than one wife includes the desire for more children and other unspecified reasons. Due to the high cost of maintaining two houses, it is conceivable that more men in rural areas are able to maintain more than one wife compared to their counterparts in the city. The phenomenon agrees with many studies of Islamic societies, such as Elhimaly's study of some eastern Libyan cities. However, it has decreased in recent years due to extend factors such as the absorption of aspects of global culture.

**Figure (9) Occupation**

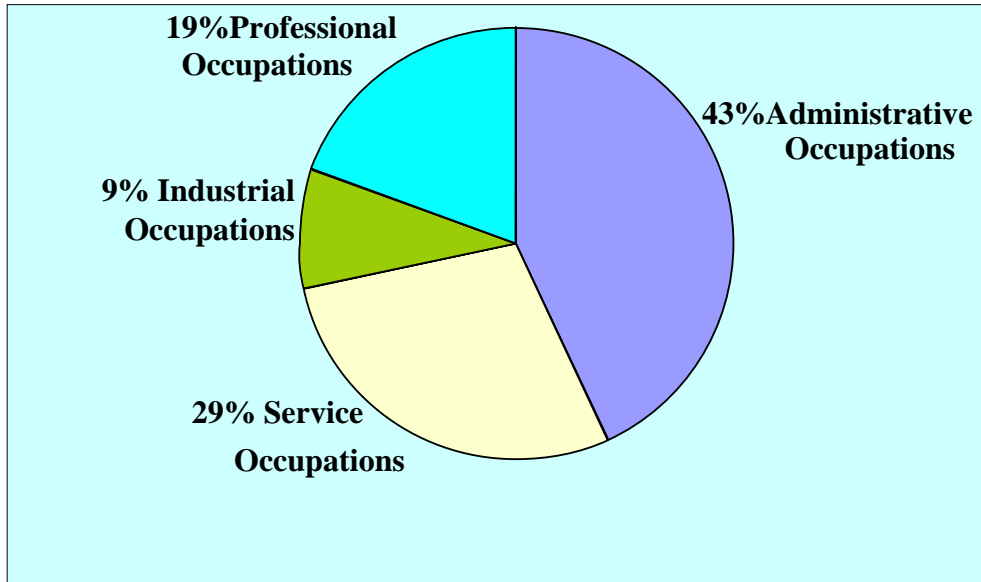


Figure 9 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to occupation. 43% of the members of the sample are in administrative occupations. This reflects the high level of governmental participation in the economy. Administration is the largest category of employment in the Tripoli system due to the fact that administrative jobs are not physically demanding. In this case, Tripoli is different in this regards from many cities in the world such as in Mexico City, as well as certain cities in Colombia, Turkey, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Brazil and India, where industry is the largest employer (Palgrav.com 2003). The above figure reflects the occupational characteristics of Tripoli. 29% of the members of the sample are in service occupations. 9% of the members of the sample are in industrial occupations. Most factories are located outside the city and production workers are usually physically exhausted after the day's work. 19% of the members of the sample are in professional occupation. Tripoli presently has many training centres and institutions, which offer advantages to people who are looking to become professionals.

**Figure (10) Housing**

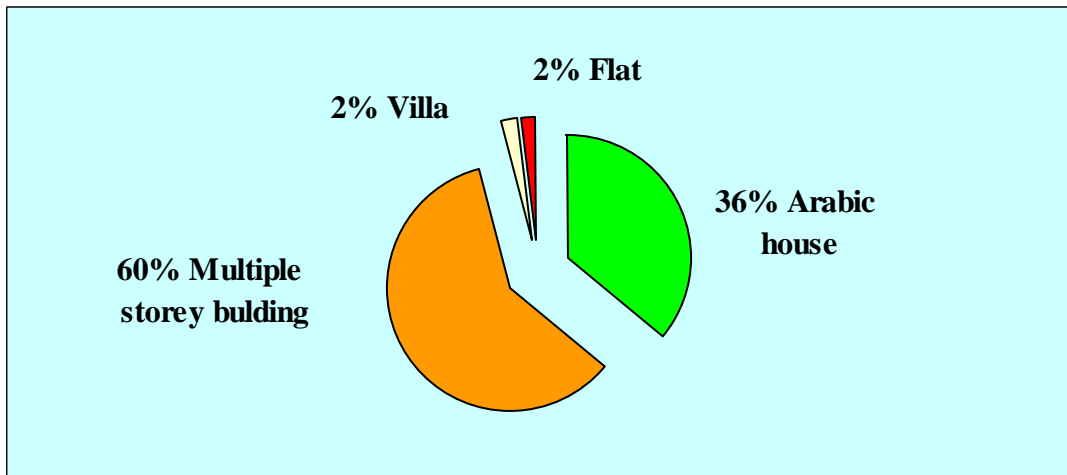


Figure 10 indicates the division of the sample of individuals according to types of house. 36% of the members of the sample live in an Arabic house (Libyan-style house) which is a building with an old design and more than three rooms. Usually, it has a small sitting room situated in the front of the house, with doors that open into the main road which are used for receiving guests. This high proportion of Arabic houses is due to the influence of a preference for traditional Libyan architectural designs. 60% of the members of the sample live in multiple-storey buildings. This is a result of the strong foreign influence on housing, especially for the younger generation of home owners, which allows them to live near their extended family. Limited land availability, the high cost of purchase of extra land space and the impact of education on the young generation has made storied buildings popular. However, living in multiple-storey buildings does not allow room for many guests or others to in the house.

Finally, 2% of the sample live in flats and the remaining 2% of the sample dwell in villas. The Libyan or Arabic style of housing is now the minority, indicating a

transformation away from traditional styles of house architecture. This style is becoming less popular as people now prefer to live in modern two-storey houses.

Recently, we can see the western influence in building and architectural design as well as in other aspects of life due to the presence of expatriates, whose different cultures and religions have helped influence the social system. This has resulted in lifestyle changes due to the influence of migration and the impact of western culture.

**Figure (11) Duration of marriage**

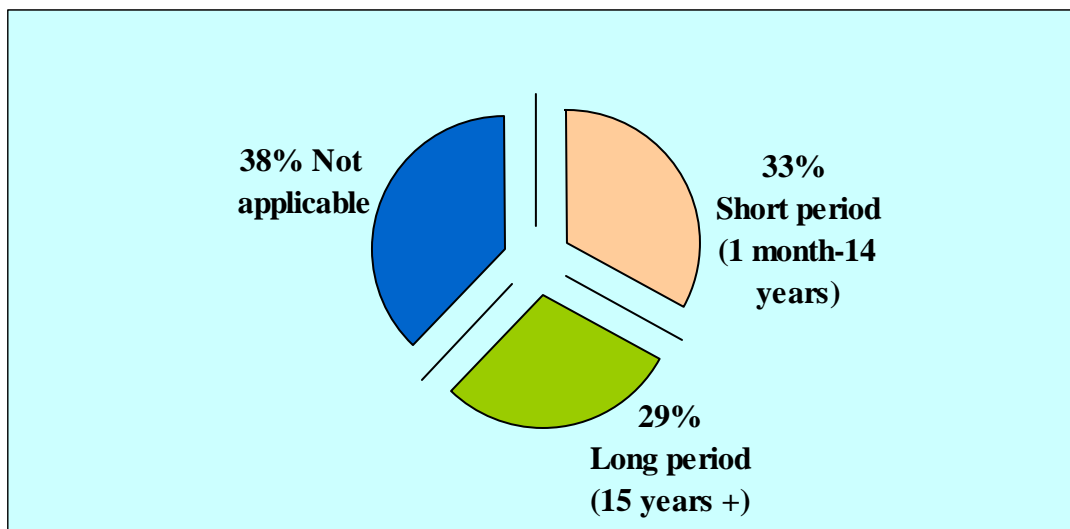


Figure 11 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to the duration of marriage. 33% of the sample have been married for a short period of time (1 month-14 years). This is because this group is primarily made up of the younger generation who predominantly live in cities and have adopted an urban behaviour, influencing the age at which they marry – for example, marriage may be delayed for the sake of education. 29% of the sample belong to the long-term category (15 years and over). It consists of the older generation, who dwells predominantly in the country. This question was inapplicable to a further 38% of the sample.

The above data reveals that marrying relatively early in Tripoli society is common because of the influence of traditional marital culture and owing to the

improvement of the quality of urban life that is to be expected. This characteristic of Tripoli is different from European cities. Over a third of the sample was not applicable, due to the young age of the participant.

**Figure (12) Family size**

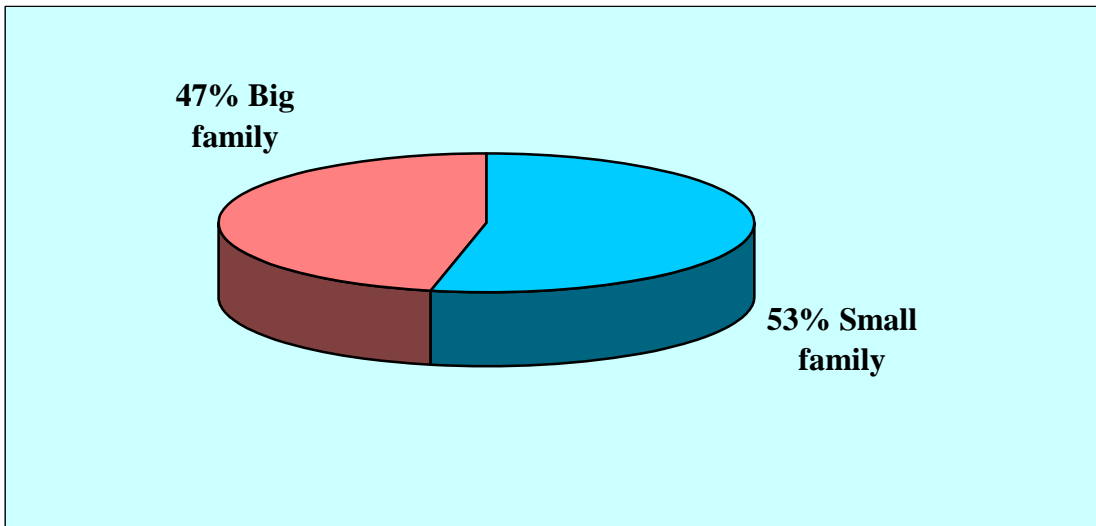


Figure 12 shows the division of the sample according to family size. 53% of the sample belong to small families (2-5 family members). Some of these families are small because they are young and will grow with time because of reproductive potential. Urbanisation has had an impact on family size as a result of the use of western forms of family planning. Family type in an urban setting is nuclear as is seen in other cities of the world. 47% of the sample belong to the large family size (6+ family members). This shows that almost half of the sample are still influenced by rural and religious culture, and demonstrates that there is only a limited impact of urbanisation on family size in Tripoli and that rural family-size ethos is still dominant. The nuclear family system as opposed to the extended family system (found in rural areas) are a function of several variables which include an availability of space in the city; the cost of living; occupational limitations and the cultural-generational gap among city/ urban dwellers.

Family size in Tripoli has been impacted by urbanisation. The phenomenon of urbanisation can be studied through the impact of urbanisation and modernisation on the family. Urbanisation has not led to the weakening of the relationship between family and kin. Family-kin relations are strong even among the educated. There is an important link between grandparents, married children, and grandchildren and a consciousness of belonging to a particular kin. The majority of families prefer living next door to their kin and this has resulted in family members helping each other find jobs and mind children. This pattern of living leads to stronger relations between family and kin and also to increased economic cooperation.

Those most affected by urbanisation and modernisation are the educated, the young and the upper socio-economic strata, who appear to be less enthusiastic about marrying relations or spending leisure time with them. This is because they hold ideas and knowledge that are more broad-minded than traditional values. This is not a sign of future weakness in family-kin relationships but instead a sign of their modification, because these segments can offer the highest proportion of contact and assistance to kin in a time of need.

The typical Tripoli family has experienced significant change in recent years because of urbanisation, modernisation and to a lesser extent, industrialisation. The nuclear family is not only presently in majority of family types, but it is also preferred. The culture of the western nuclear family has influenced some segments of the population, such as those in the upper- and middle socio-economic strata, the educated, and the young. However, the Tripoli family still remains far more attached to Islamic principles than to the western family patterns. This is because the Quran is the basis of legislation in society and so it becomes the constitution of Libyan life.



**Figure (13) Years of residency in Tripoli**

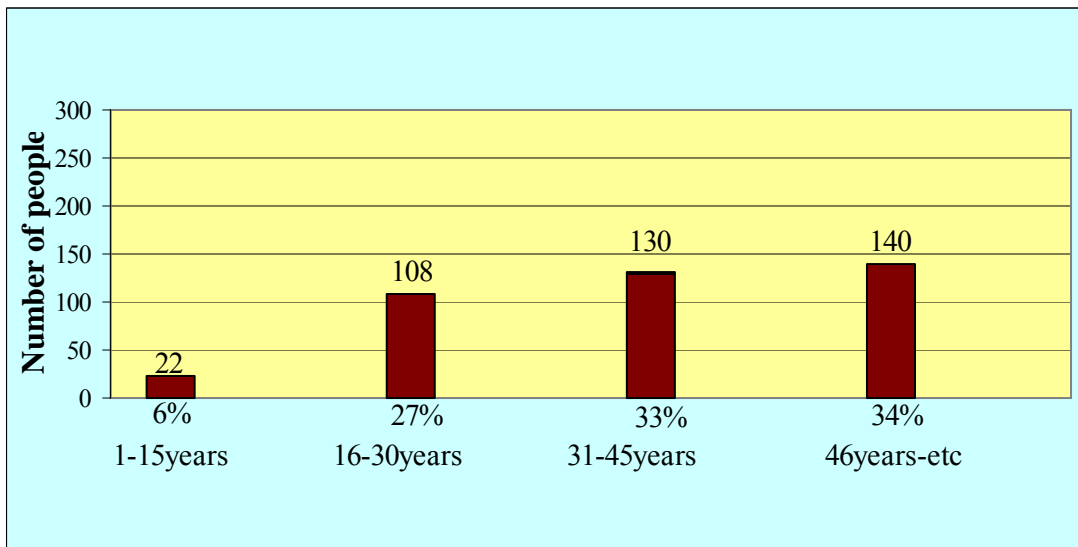


Figure 13 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to the number of years they have resided in Tripoli. 6% have resided in Tripoli for 1-15 years. 37% have resided in Tripoli for 16 – 30 years, and 33% of the sample have resided in the city for between 31 and 45 years. 34% of those surveyed had lived in the city for over 46 years. This figure shows the march of urban transformation in Tripoli. It shows that the majority have resided in this city for more than 15 years. This majority moved in after Ghadhafi accession to power in 1969. (See Table: Population of Tripoli, p.148).

Figure 13 reflects the influence of Ghadhafi’s policies on the growth of urbanisation in Tripoli. Thus, development programmes in Tripoli have encouraged urban migration in pursuit of employment opportunities, housing and better urban service such as health care and social freedoms.

**Table (7) Reasons for moving to Tripoli**

<b>Reasons for moving to Tripoli city</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Better Lifestyle	37	12%
Work Reasons	44	15%
Study	12	4%
Family Reasons	31	10%
Good Life	1	0%
Return to Home	2	1%
Not applicable	173	58%
Total	300	100%

Table 7 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to their reasons for moving to Tripoli. 12% of the sample moved to the city in search of a better lifestyle. 15% of the sample moved to the city for work reasons. 4% of the sample moved to Tripoli for education and 10% of the sample moved to the city for family reasons. 1% of the sample moved to the city to return home. This question did not apply to 58% of those surveyed, mostly due to the fact that these individuals were born in Tripoli. Excluding those who are born in the city, there is sizable proportion of respondents who moved to the city for services including education. This reflects disparities in education between rural and urban areas of the country.

**Table (8) House contents**

Contents of house	Available		Not Available	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Car	253	84%	47	16%
PC	123	41%	177	59%
Microwave	196	65%	104	35%
Dishwasher	284	95%	16	5%
Fridge	281	94%	19	6%
Gas	297	99%	3	1%
Mobile Phone	101	34%	199	66%
Library	223	74%	77	26%
Garden	117	39%	183	61%

Table 8 shows the division of the sample individuals according to the contents of their homes:

First, 84% of the members of the sample have cars whereas 16% of the sample do not have cars. This high percentage is due to the new phenomenon of women-drivers, many of whom have cars in Tripoli. Cars are important for affirming links beyond neighbourhoods and may be equally be important as a status symbol. In this case, Tripoli is similar to other global cities. Next, 41% of the members of the sample have personal computers whereas 59% of the members do not have PCs. This is due to the fact most surveyed individuals do not work in the business sector but instead in administration. Further, access to the internet is still not available everywhere in the city.

65% of those surveyed had a microwave, the remaining 35% did not own one. The high percentage can be attributed to the fact that it is practical for women who work outside of the home and also because most modern homes have microwaves as a basic kitchen feature, usually because meals may be cooked three times per day and some of them may be cooking for large families.

95% of the sample had a dishwashers, leaving only 5% without. This is due to the fact that most modern houses in modern societies come equipped with them.

94% of those surveyed had a refrigerator, and only 5% did not own a fridge. Again, this is a basic feature of modern houses and is particularly important due to the hot weather. Also, it enables people to keep stocks of food, especially for guests.

A total of 99% of the sample had gas. Once again, this is commonly found in modern homes and is important for all individuals. This finding corresponds with many studies, such as that of Attir and Elhimaly.

Only 34% of those surveyed owned a mobile phone. This reflects the fact that This trend will change as relations improve with more advanced countries.

74% of those surveyed had a personal library. The library has become part of the modern house, irrespective of education.

39% of those surveyed had a garden, with a higher percentage (61%) without a garden. This low percentage of gardens is due to the design of the house and the locations or lack of space, which often does not allow for gardens.

The above table shows a high acceptance of modern technology indicating a departure from typical Libyan rural life. The researcher deduces that Tripoli people have come to be this way (like the citizens of developed societies who own many material possessions) as a result of urban transformation. The effects of urbanisation are twofold: firstly, there is an abundance of material goods. Second, the development of sophisticated social skills and manners means that these material goods may be used efficiently and effectively. The developments of both material and immaterial means are crucial to the progress of urbanisation and social change. Most of the results in table 8 correspond with research into Arabic cities – one example of this is Goname's (1990) research of Doha. This research piece noted that economic change

is the result of swift economic and social transformation, which has a prevalence for individualism and independence in society. This comes from a connection with foreigners and a change of dwelling types from the traditional to the modern (with two levels and modern domestic facilities) as well as from the changed values and trends in society.

**Figure (14) Market house value**

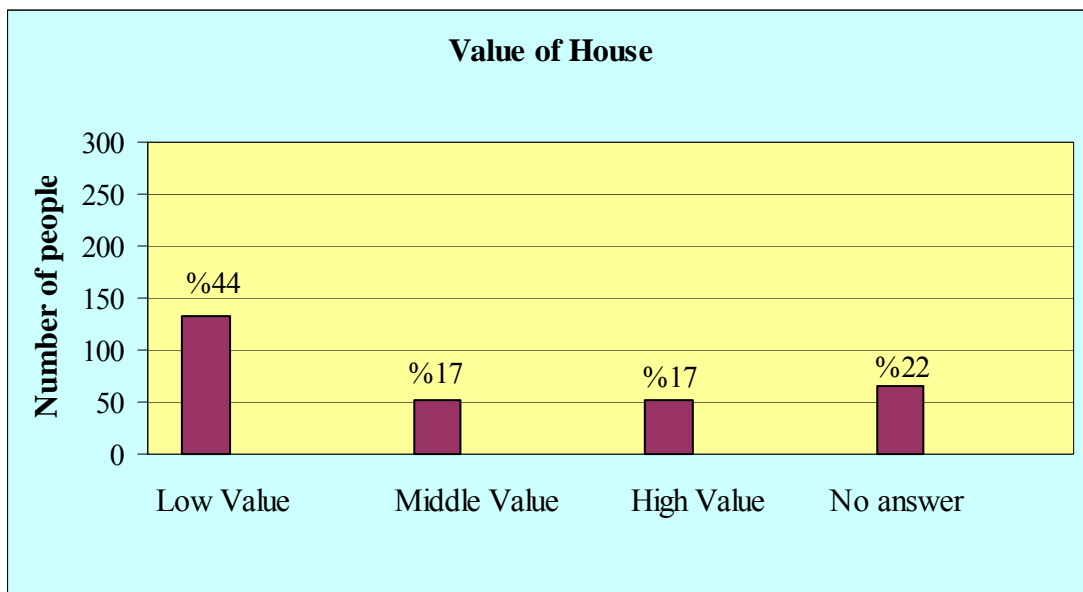


Figure 14 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to the market value of their house. 44% of the sample owned a house of low value (10000-60000 DL). 17% of those surveyed owned a home of average value (61000-111000 DL) and 17% of the surveyed sample owned a house that was classified as having a high value (112000- 1000000 DL). Many individuals in this category lived in old buildings and in the city centre, but the majority were from the native urban population. 22% of the members of the sample did not answer the question. They are not interested in the value of their house; perhaps because they choose display humility; perhaps because they do not wish to have the value known; or perhaps simply because they do not intend to sell their home. Fear of being begrudged may also be a factor for not disclosing the market value of houses.

These figures show the extent to which social class distinctions exist in modern Libyan society despite a political ideology that has diminished class distinctions in recent years. Recently, there have been economic reforms which have created a gap between different social strata. This has manifested itself particularly in the private sector. However, these figures are normal for any modern society. The researcher noted that the value of houses is increasing due to both their re-development and also to the improvement of incomes. These recent development plans will lead to major changes in the physical and social structure of the city.

**Table (9) Previous expenditures over 20,000 DL**

<b>Previous expenditure</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Home Improvement	70	22%
Social Occasions	22	7%
Wedding	37	11%
Car	30	9%
Medical	5	2%
Land Purchase	2	1%
Business	1	0%
No Answer	156	48%

Table 9 indicates the division of the sample of individuals according to previous expenditure over 20,000 D.L. 22% of those surveyed spent the funds on home improvement (the minimum wage in Libya is 420 D.L per month). 7% of the sample spent it on social occasions; 11% on weddings; 9% on cars; 2% on medical care, and a final 1% on land purchase. High expenditure on social occasions such as weddings is an aspect of rural life in Libya. This shows that urban Libya is still influenced by a rural ethos whereby lavish displays of wealth and the affirmation of community

bonds as distinct from individualism. Over half of the sample did not spend money in any of the above due to high levels of consumption which is not dissimilar to the situation in European societies.

**Table (10) Relationship with family members**

Relations with Family members	Always		Occasionally		Never	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Seek advice for education	109	36%	149	50%	42	14%
Seek help for disagreements with others	76	25%	136	46%	88	29%
Seek help for childcare family members	102	34%	101	34%	97	32%
Seek financial help from family members	99	36%	138	51%	63	13%

Table 10 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to their relationship with family members.

36% of the sample claim to always seek advice on studies. Likewise, 50% of those surveyed claim to occasionally seek advice on studies from family members. 14% of the sample noted that they never seek advice with respect to studies. This reflects the situation of family structure which has multiple rules for all members. In this respect, Tripoli is quite different from many cities of the world, especially those in Europe where asking for advice on studies is not common practice.

25% of the sample noted that they would always seek help with disagreements with others from family. 46% of the sample noted that they occasionally sought help with disagreements with others. 29% of the sample answered that they never looked for help with disagreements. This last group makes up nearly one third of the sample,

which is similar to many cities of the world, demonstrating that urbanisation encourages people to become independent.

34% of the sample always seek help for childcare from their extended family. It is represented equally by a sample of 34% who occasionally seek help for children care from extended family. 32% of the sample noted that they never seek help for childcare from family members. This shows that the family has an important role to play in children's development.

36% of the sample noted that they always seek help for financial help from their family. 51% of the sample occasionally seek financial help from their family. 13% of the sample never seek financial help from their family.

This table reflects the privacy of the social structure in Tripoli, and outlines an urban area which still retains family relationships. Again, this reflects the fact being urban does not imply weak family relationships.

Libyans are inevitably affected by the culture in which they are immersed; a culture which encourages social solidarity. Considering this, it is clear that Tripoli differs from other European cities. Table 10 also indicates that people still have strong relationships with family members: for example, relatively low percentages of respondents never looked for advice from family members with respect to education. Likewise, only 13% never looked for financial help from their extended family. Table 15 shows a strong extended family relationship, which is not a typical feature of the city.

Tripoli is well-suited for the study of the impact of urbanisation and modernisation on the family. Urbanisation has not led to the weakening of the relationship between family and kin. Family-kin relations are strong even among the educated, and it is notable that there is an important link between grandparents,



married children and grandchildren, as well as a consciousness of belonging to a particular kin. The majority of families prefer to live next door to their kin and this has resulted in family members helping each other find jobs and mind children. These types of patterns lead to stronger relationships and increased economic cooperation between family and kin. Those most affected by urbanisation and modernisation are the educated, the young and upper socio-economic strata, who appear to be less enthusiastic about marrying relations or spending leisure time with them. This is because they hold views and are often more broad-minded than those with traditional values. This is not a sign of future weakness in family-kin relationships but a sign of their modification, because these segments can offer the highest proportion of contact and assistance to kin in a time of need.

**Table (11) Relationship with other relatives**

Relationship with other relatives	Always		Occasionally		Never	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Seek advice for education	17	6%	108	36%	174	58%
Seek help for disagreements with others	13	4%	123	41%	164	55%
Seek help for childcare from relatives	5	2%	71	24%	224	74%
Seek financial help from relatives	9	3%	91	30%	200	67%

Table 11 show the distribution of the individuals sample in relationship with relatives of the extended family.

6% of the sample always look for advice from relatives with respect to education. 36% of the sample occasionally seek advice for education from relatives, and 58% of the sample answered by never for seek advice for education from

relatives. This indicates a similarity with many cities of the world. However, there is still a significant link with relatives.

With relation to disagreements with other, only 4% of the sample always seek help with this type of problem, and 41% of the sample noted that they occasionally seek help with disagreements with others. 55% of the sample claimed that they did not seek help at any time. More than half of the sample never seeks help for disagreements which reflects that education has impacted upon them in such a way that they may now deal with such issues themselves instead of turning to relatives for assistance

A small number (2% of the sample) noted that they always looked to relatives for help with childcare. 24% of the sample occasionally looked for help with childcare from relatives. 74% of the sample never asked for help with childcare from their relatives. Thus, most of the sample do not depend on relatives for children care. This may indicate weak relationships with relatives of the extended family in this matter.

A similarly small figure (3% of the sample) noted that they always looked for financial help from relatives. 30% of the sample occasionally looked for financial help, and 67% never looked for financial help from relatives. It is my opinion that this result concurs with many urban studies I have read over the course of this thesis.

The above table indicates low dependency on relatives of the extended family for resolving certain matters such as child care and education. These features can be seen as characteristics of most modern urban societies. For example, most people in Dublin would not look to extended relatives with respect to advice or help with children. Thus, in this, regard Tripoli is different from many European cities

**Table (12) Relationship with neighbours (excluding family, relatives and co-workers)**

Relationship with neighbours(excluding family relatives and co-workers)	Always		Occasionally		Never	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Seek advice for education from neighbours not relatives	9	3%	51	17%	240	80%
Seek help with disagreements with others	7	2%	65	22%	228	76%
Seek help for childcare from neighbours not relatives	4	1%	39	13%	257	86%
Seek financial help from neighbours not relatives	2	1%	42	14%	356	85%

Table 12 shows the division of the sample of individuals with respect to relationship with their neighbours (excluding family, relatives and co-workers).

3% of the sample note that they always seek advice for studies from this group. 17% of the sample occasionally seek advice for studies, and 80%, the majority of the sample, never seek advice for studies.

2% of the sample confirm that they always seek help for disagreements with others. 22% of the sample occasionally seek help for disagreements with others. 76% of the sample never seek help for disagreements with others.

Next, 1% of the sample always seeks help for childcare. 13% of the sample occasionally seek help for childcare, and 86% - the majority of the sample - never seek help for childcare from neighbours.

Finally, 1% of the sample claim to always seek financial help. 14% of the sample occasionally seek financial help with neighbours but not relatives. 85% of the sample never seek financial help from neighbours, nor relatives or co-workers.

This table shows that some individuals in Tripoli have relations with neighbours which is typical of Islamic culture. However, it is revealed that the majority *never* link with neighbours in relation on these issues - this is due to influence of the media (satellite TV), computers and telephones, which diminishes the effect and prominence of direct connections between neighbours. This can be considered a new phenomenon, demonstrating a new form of social structure in Tripoli.

**Table (13) Relationship with Neighbours**

Relations with Neighbours	Always		Usually		Occasionally		Never	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Know neighbours by name	90	30%	101	33%	89	30%	20	7%
Discuss private matters	8	3%	13	4%	67	22%	212	71%
Offer financial help	2	1%	3	1%	52	17%	243	81%
Discuss family problems	3	1%	5	2%	35	12%	257	85%

Table 13 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to their relationship with neighbours.

30% of the sample know all neighbours by name, 33% of the sample know most neighbours by name, 30% of the sample know some neighbours by name. 7% of the sample do not know any of the names of their neighbours.

3% of the sample discuss private matters with all of their neighbours. 4% of the sample discuss private matters with most neighbours; 22% of the sample discuss private matters with some neighbours, and 71% of the sample never discuss private matter with their neighbours. This reflects trends in global society where it is not considered appropriate to discuss private matters outside of the home. This marks a difference from rural areas where there are stronger links between neighbours.

Next, 1% of the sample indicated that they offer financial help to all neighbours and a further 1% of the sample offer financial help to most neighbours. 17% of the sample offer financial help with some neighbours, and 81% of the sample never offer financial help with neighbours. This demonstrates the fact that most city-dwellers make use of official institutions as opposed to relying on neighbours.

1% of the sample confirm that they discuss family problems with all neighbours. 2% of the sample discuss family problems with most neighbours. 12% of the sample discuss family problems with some neighbours, and 85% never discuss family problems with neighbours. This is because some areas are mixed; that is, there are people from different parts of Libya.

Table 13 shows that strong neighbourhood and household solidarity still prevails in urban Libya. This is usually seen as a feature of rural rather than urban areas. Thus, Tripoli is an urban environment that still retains strong solidarity which is rarely an urban feature elsewhere. However, Tripoli still shows characteristics common of European societies when it comes to neighbour relations: high proportions (71% and 85%, respectively) do not discuss private matters or family problems. Hence, Tripoli still retains characteristics of traditional rural life, while at the same time it has many features typical of modern urbanisation.

Tables 10 - 15 focus on social networks within the city, demonstrating that Tripoli still retains numerous rural characteristics such as social bonds with neighbours.

**Table (14) Relationship with co-workers**

Relation with co-workers	Always		Occasionally		Never	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Seek advice for education	53	18%	152	50%	95	32%
Seek help for disagreements with others	22	7%	133	44%	145	49%
Seek help for childcare	4	1%	34	11%	262	88%
Seek financial help	8	3%	116	39%	176	58%

Table 14 shows the distribution of the sample in their relationship with co-workers.

18% of the sample always seek advice for studies from co-workers. 50% of the sample occasionally seek advice about studies from co-workers, and 32% of the sample never seek this type of advice from co-workers.

7% of the sample always seek advice about disagreements with other from co-workers. 44% of the sample occasionally seek help from co-workers, and 49% never seek help from co-workers.

1% of the sample note that they always seek help with childcare from co-workers. 11% of the sample occasionally seek help from co-workers, and 88%, the majority of the sample, never seek help from co-workers.

3% of the sample always seek financial help from co-workers. 39% of the sample occasionally seek financial help, and 58% of the sample never seek financial help from co-workers.

Table 14 reflects the involvement of co-workers in private matters. Co-workers are treated by some as an extension of extended family or community at large. This also shows a low level of individualism in Tripoli.

**Table (15) Loyalty grade in different communities**

Communities	Strong		Middle		Low		None	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Primary family members	236	79%	8	3%	40	13%	16	5%
Extended family members	124	42%	43	14%	117	39%	16	5%
Friends	155	52%	19	6%	119	40%	7	2%
Neighbours	66	22%	53	18%	161	53%	20	7%
Co-workers	87	29%	42	14%	143	48%	28	9%
Sports club members	29	10%	35	12%	71	24%	165	54%
Local community	144	43%	41	12%	99	29%	56	16%
Religious association	48	16%	33	11%	50	17%	169	56%

Table 15 shows the division of the individual sample according to loyalty grade in different communities.

9% of the sample are very loyal to primary family members. This is a reflection of religious influence and social organisation in modern social life. 3% of the sample are somewhat loyal to primary family members. 13% of the sample have little loyalty to primary family members, and 5% of the sample have no loyalty to primary family members.

42% of the sample are very loyal to extended family members. This reflects the position of family structure and social solidarity. 14% of the sample are somewhat loyal to extended family members. 39% of the sample have little loyalty with extended family members, and 5% of the sample have no loyalty to extended family members.

52% of the sample are very loyal to friends. This is because relationships are formed over long periods of time. The statistics show that people generally do not change jobs or localities often. This stationary lifestyle is a characteristic of society in Tripoli. 6% of the sample are somewhat loyal to friends. 40% of the sample have little loyalty to friends, and just 2% have no loyalty to friends. For most, there is little difference in the quality of relationships with relations and friends. The former are important in rural settings while the latter dominates in urban media. As for Tripoli, many seem to combine both urban and rural aspects in their socialisation.

22% of the sample are very loyal to neighbours. 18% of the sample are somewhat loyal to neighbours. 53% of the sample have little loyalty to neighbours. This is due to the impact of modern technology which has become available in city life. 7% of the sample have no loyalty to neighbours.

29% of the sample are very loyal to co-workers. 14% of the sample are somewhat loyal to co-workers due to the fact that in a work environment relationships are forced upon them; workers have no choice but to have a relationship with their co-workers and therefore loyalty between these groups is low. 48% of the sample have little loyalty to co-workers, and 9% of the sample have no loyalty to co-workers.

10% of the sample are very loyal to sports club members. 12% of the sample are somewhat loyal to sports club members. 24% of the sample have little loyalty to sports club members, and 54% of the sample have no loyalty to sports club members. For women sports club membership is still limited to a few clubs in the city centre. Women are generally occupied with child care and traditionally are not encouraged to partake in sports.



43% of the sample are very loyal to the local community. 12% of the sample are somewhat loyal to the local community. 29% of the sample have little loyalty to the local community, and 16% of the sample have no loyalty to the local community. This is because some people are not originally from Tripoli and maintain loyalty to their first community. Also, most Tripoli people come from the countryside. This is also due to the fact that some Tripoli people have little interaction with their neighbours.

16% of the sample are very loyal to religious associations. 11% of the sample are somewhat loyal to religious associations. 17% of the sample have little loyalty to religious associations, and 56% of the sample have no loyalty to religious associations. In fact, Muslims everywhere make and engage in religious associations except when forbidden by authorities. The majority of individuals in Tripoli are Muslim, and laws do not allow people to make religious associations. Recently, however, people have more freedom to make associations in different fields, in both cities and rural areas.

Religious and professional groups are an important aspect of Libyan community. For example, when a Libyan meets a foreigner, they may be asked about their religion or profession before being asked where they are from. This shows that religion is important to Libyan people; perhaps more so than nationality. I believe that this system is slightly different than that of European cities where most individuals have more an interest in where you are from, and perhaps fewer in your profession. In an urban context, individuals have social obligations to members of various social groups - from religious groups to sport teams and friends. In contrast, individuals have a very different set of obligations towards their peers in rural life. Most of the above reflects urban characteristics of Tripoli urban structure.

Urban media has had an impact on Tripoli society in different ways. In modern times, the role of the mass media in Tripoli has changed since the Cultural Revolution of 1973 when a system of education was adopted which served all citizens. Mass media has also changed. The radio had been used to announce what is called the beginning of the “Era of the Masses”, where people commonly began to participate in different fields of life, such as media and politics. The mass media in Tripoli has played a significant role in the realisation of the goals of the country. According to the ideology of Libya Jamahiriya there are no political parties, though there is a local congress where people may have discussions and make decisions about various matters. The ideology doesn’t officially recognise social classes; however, these still exist and were particularly apparent after economic reform. Some of the lower classes raised themselves. The Jamahiriya ideology has also held power on everyday matters since 1977 until now, particularly in respect of the revolution committees. Mass communication is an instrument that can contribute to democracy, cultural transformation and modernisation. The reason for the popularity of the newspaper in Tripoli is attributed to the fact that it has become an integral part of the country's mass communication system. It is the cheapest form of reading material, it is easily accessible and, more importantly, it contains current information for readers with diverse socio-economic backgrounds and interests. Radio and television also play a significant role in disseminating information such as government policy.

Most individuals in Tripoli utilise the mass media to express their feelings. Every trade, professional, and other organisation has their own journals and access (as an organisation) to the broadcast media, and as such, most people express themselves as members of a collective group (Ghejam 1990: 324-334). Many authors write about heritage and culture and have discussions about cultural phenomena since the

Cultural Revolution. Writers in Tripoli have their own associations and unions. They have a relationship with other cultural associations and unions in the Arab world and Africa. Most local groups in Tripoli have a newspaper. It is possible for each sector (e.g. workers, police, students, engineers) to publish a specialised newspaper which does not have a specific audience. Most authors, including editors, claim to seek public opinion, noting that the entire public may participate (Elfathaly and Palmer 1980: 183).

The media has now reached almost everywhere in the world to a certain extent (Hannerz 1992: 26). Media has affected human experience and social life in many ways beyond strictly local affairs (Hannerz 1992: 28). Mass media has a role in urban knowledge and urban communication, and in general, the media has become the most important tool used to influence people, organisations and government activities. Thus, it is extremely important to work for media control so as to have suitable influence over others (Elfathaly and Palmer 1980: 18).

**Table (16) Types of mass media in Tripoli (2000)**

Types	Number
Newspapers & Magazines (not local)	32
Local newspapers & Magazines	31
Popular Libraries	2
Cultural centres	7
Plazas	64
Arts teams	39
Theatres	8
Local broadcasts	5
Cinemas	10

**Source:** National Corporation for Information Media and Documentation-Tripoli 2002.

\*Compiled by the author.

Information has had an effect on society. TV exposes people to other cultures, and affects local cultures through the introduction of new morals and foreign culture. The TV can be listed as one of the principal destroyers of local culture in most societies. Mass media is one of the principal means to create culture. It influences a

person's identity and creates a cultural breakaway as it separates individuals from their geographical and cultural location (EL-Tom and Adam 1999: 35-36). In Tripoli, there are many types of media (see table 16). Media and culture today are of central importance to the maintenance and reproduction of contemporary societies. Television, film, popular music, magazines, and advertising all play an important role in media culture (Durham and Kellner 2001: 1). Media and culture have a role in every city of the world; historically, the early development of urbanisation has had a great deal to do with the fact that cities and urban centres are made up of heterogeneous activity and combine and merge cultures, and work out local reactions to what is initially foreign, and disseminate this to areas outside of the city. (Hannerz 1992: 198). In Tripoli, there are institutions for translation and broadcasting. Presently, Tripoli has a centre for the study of various cultures, especially African cultures, since the birth of the African Union. Hence, Tripoli has become urbanised amongst African cities and it has organised African celebrations. It has also played an important cultural role in Africa. However, information as a result of the internet has had more impact in modern times as it becomes more available (see table 17). According to one source, individuals were exposed to various modern technologies both inside and outside the home as a result of the influence of mass media and the internet; and thus, people became aware of other societies and cultures. The younger generation was most influenced by foreign culture through fashion and communication 'slang'.

**Table (17) Media contents of the home**

Media contents in the home	Available		Not Available	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Satellite TV	287	96%	13	4%
Video [player]	191	64%	109	36%
Internet access	60	20%	240%	80%

Table 17 indicates the division of the sample according to media contents in their home. 96% of the sample have satellite TVs; 64% have videos, and 20% have internet access. The high rate of modern technology shows a certain level of departure from rural life. Table 17 shows a high acceptance of modern technology, which indicates a departure from Libyan rural life and as more and more urban Libyans take advantage of modern technology.

From the above table, I deduce that Tripoli people, like citizens of developed societies, have come to own more material possessions as a result of urban transformation. However, the effects of urbanisation are two-fold: there is an abundance of material goods, as well as a development of sophisticated professional skills and manners to use these material goods efficiently and effectively. The development of both material and immaterial goods is crucial to the progress of urbanisation. Both elements must advance and coexist as the two faces of urbanisation. In order for the progress of urbanisation to be meaningful, no gap can exist between material goods and the knowledge required to create and utilise them (immaterial goods).

**Table (18) Media pastimes**

Media Pastime	Always		Often		Occasionally		Never	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Read newspapers	87	29%	45	15%	137	46%	31	10%
Listen to the radio	50	17%	55	18%	153	51%	42	14%
Watch television	129	43%	62	21%	105	35%	4	1%
Use the Internet	27	9%	18	6%	78	26%	177	59%
Go to the cinema	2	1%	12	4%	43	14%	243	81%

Table 18 shows the division of the sample according to pastime.

29% of the sample always read newspapers. 15% of the sample often read newspapers. 46% of the sample occasionally read newspapers, and 10% of the sample never read newspapers.

17% of the sample always listen to the radio. 18% of the sample often listen to radio. 51% of the sample occasionally listen to the radio. 14% of the sample never listen to the radio.

43% of the sample always watch TV. 21% of the sample often watch TV. 35% of the sample occasionally watch TV. 1% of the sample never watch TV.

9% of the sample always use the internet. 6% often of the sample use the internet. 26% of the sample occasionally use the Internet. 59% of the sample never use the internet.

1% of the sample always go to the cinema. 4% of the sample often go to the cinema. 14% of the sample sometimes go to the cinema. The majority (81%) of the sample never go to the cinema because they have access to global and satellite TV in their homes, coupled with the fact that urban life is busy and allows for little leisure time.

Both newspapers and radios are strong channels of communication and dissemination of cultural information and ideology. This may be different from rural areas where communication depends on face-to-face interaction. As shown in table 17, 59% of urban people never use the internet. The majority of whom are women. This level of internet access is a new phenomenon in Tripoli society, and it is a rapidly-increasing phenomenon with greater access week by week in both urban and rural areas. Watching television has also become an important pastime in Tripoli. The use of the internet is spreading but it is still low compared to many other global cities, particularly those in the west. This information demonstrates the importance of TV, newspapers and radio as modes of communication. TV has seemed to have overtaken the radio as a channel of public communication as well as a source of entertainment.

In light of globalisation, the younger generation is influenced as globalisation leads to changes evident in behaviour of young people – such as their tendency to visit clubs and coffee-houses. Likewise, young people now go on holidays, use the internet, read newspaper, watch satellite TV and emulate global culture; although the latter is more evident among women. More women watch TV and are more aware of urban culture such as food, dress, and foreign tradition, than do men.

**Table (19) Music listened to**

Listen to music	Number	Percentage
Yes	253	84%
No	47	16%
Total	300	100%

Table 19 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to whether or not they listen to music. An 84% majority of the sample listen to music. 16% of the

sample do not listen to music. The majority of those consulted reported listening to music as a means of entertainment. This is a characteristic of urban societies.

**Figure (15) Music types listened to**

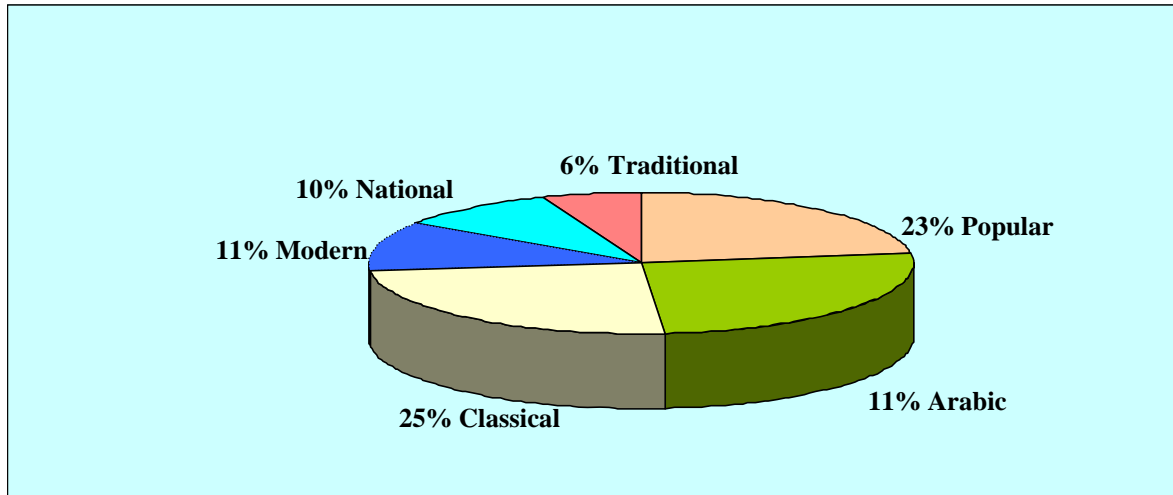


Figure 15 indicates the breakdown of the sample of individuals according to the type of music they listen to. 23% of the sample listen to popular music. It should be noted that popular music in all countries is shaped by international influences and institutions, by multinational capital and technology, and by global popular norms and values (Cranc, Kawashima and Kawasaki 2002). 25% of the sample listen to Arabic music and 25% of listen to classical music. This may be due to the long history of musical appreciation in Tripoli. This is typical of many cities, many of whom often which have a musical tradition. 11% of the sample listen to modern music, and 10% listen to national music. A mere 6% of the sample listen to traditional music. The type of music that is most popular among people in Tripoli is classical or Arabic rather than modern. Tripoli as a capital city is unique in this way.

Modern music began with an exhilarated sense of centrality of the ear to modern life; high modernist music made listening beside the point. Modernism began with the desecularisation of musical matter, the advent of the nonformula, the non-situated, the non-representative, but the code of dissonance, into which modernism



developed became a more efficient channel for the creativity of the imagination. Modern music is an aspect of modernism. World music began with modernism, with Debussy's incorporation of the structures of music which were found in some Islamic cities, Indonesian and Malaysian cities and which always drew on various folk traditions by other composers. Modern music has different styles and influences that were then treated as basic material by modernist composers to be adapted and transformed into modern music within the young generation, thus confirming the identity of modern music, rather than causing a crisis of identity. Although it is evident that "world music" has now become a particular meta-style of western commodity-music, whose undemanding and unsurprising blend are instantly recognisable as a specific style, there have been richer more profound effects from the merging of traditional music (Connor 1989: 167-172). The researcher noted that there are cassettes and CDs of modern music sold in the shops and young generation purchases them. This is a new phenomenon in Tripoli, especially in the last decade.

Music in Tripoli has been greatly affected by modern and global culture, particularly with regard to young people. The Libyan pop music industry is generally drowned out by the noise of its Arabic cousin across the border in Egypt. One is far more likely to hear Libyans listening to music from elsewhere such as cities in North Africa: countries such as Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. European music is more popular among the youth. In general, the fact that people listen to music has significance as this reflects exclusive urban characteristics as well as the presence of the Arts in the city, which is similar to many cities of the world. This confirms the fact that it is young people in particular who are influenced by global culture more than their older counterparts. Libyan singers are famous in Arabic culture because of 'Sing Tent', which organise celebrations in Tunisia and Egypt. 'Sing Tent' includes

both men and women who explore Libyan national culture in different celebrations. Libyan song carries all the heartfelt passion of Arab music elsewhere, but it is the subject matter, rather than the style, which marks it as distinctively Libyan (Libyaonline 2003).

Different types of music are present in city society and musical preferences are changing in all Libyan cities, accumulating to provide substance to the origins of modern music itself. Every society has a traditional musical heritage, which is at times is preserved and protected. For example, Sean-nos, traditional Irish music, is still preserved and systematically passed down to younger generations. In spite of this, the impact of global culture can not be ruled out. Traditional Libyan music can be used as an example. Traditional Libyan music is often performed in conjunction with ritualistic dance. Important musical instruments include the clarinet, the guitar and the Zukra (similar to a bagpipes but smaller, without the attached bag). One of the most famous forms of music in Tripoli is the Mriskawi, which comes from Murzug in the south of the country and forms the basis of the lyrics of many Libyan songs. It has since been modernised and is played on the accordion at parties on Wednesday nights before weddings, particularly during the last decade in Tripoli. During celebrations on the wedding night (Thursday), music known as Malouf is played. With origins in Andalusia, Malouf involves a large group of revellers singing and reciting poetry of a religious nature or about love. Groups capable of performing the Malouf are highly sought after. Another form of traditional music is Aalaam, which is normally performed by two people. The first makes a short heartfelt statement, after which the other makes a similarly meaningful reply, and so it continues. This Libyan music culture is called Malouf orchestras; and whether

playing ancient and allusive airs or accompanying classical Middle Eastern singers, it enjoys great popularity nation-wide and locally.

Folk music and forms of poetry are very specific secrets of the Libyan Arabs. It is rather difficult for casual visitors to comprehend their strength and richness. In their outer form, the music and poetry sound coarse, monotonous and repetitive, but they draw their ingenuity from these aspects, and lead to truly deserved enjoyment and pleasure which is characteristic of Tripoli's society. As verses are constantly and continuously repeated, the poet takes people to the peak of faith through the firm and steady beats and rhythms of the poem.

Reciting poetry is a deep-rooted tradition. People of Tripoli listen to it with utmost attention and recite it to last word of the last verse with the poet. Many poets partake in poem-reciting in well-ordered succession. They may also compete to improvise poems while emulating each other, but they remain, together with their poems and audience, part and parcel of the same entity.

**Table (20) Other Pastimes**

Pastime	Always		Often		Sometimes		Never	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Picnic in the countryside	36	12%	44	15%	164	54%	56	19%
Dine at restaurants	8	3%	28	7%	116	39%	154	51%
Holiday abroad	27	9%	40	13%	141	47%	92	31%
Play sports	29	10%	33	11%	106	35%	132	44%
Go to Coffee Houses	16	5%	31	10%	97	32%	156	53%
Go to a Cultural Centre/ Library	23	8%	30	10%	101	34%	146	48%
Visit Relatives	56	19%	74	25%	163	54%	7	2%
Visit friends	43	14%	71	24%	173	58%	13	4%

Table 20 indicates the division of the sample of individuals according to whether or not they partake in any of the above activities.

12% of the sample always go to picnics in the countryside. 15% of the sample often go for picnics in the countryside because of the peace and serenity of countryside, accessibility and the fact that they are originally from the countryside. Many still have relatives that live there. 54% of the sample occasionally go for a picnic in the countryside. 19% of the sample never go for picnic in the countryside.

Next, 3% of the sample always go to restaurants. 7% of the sample often go to restaurants. 39% of the sample sometimes go to restaurants, and 51% of the sample never go to restaurants. This is due to rural cultural impact on the urban social structure; most people still prefer eating in their home, preferring the traditional style of eating (with the right hand). They also enjoy the social aspect of receiving guests.

9% of the sample travel abroad for holidays. 13% of the sample have often travelled abroad for holidays. 47% of the sample have occasionally travelled abroad,

and 31% of the sample have never travelled abroad. A high percentage of people travelled abroad - especially during the 80's - due to a good foreign exchange rate. Also, under the socialist system at this time, investing money in private businesses was difficult as the law prohibited it, leaving income available for other purposes and activities.

10% of the sample always played sports. 11% of the sample often played sports. 35% of the sample occasionally played sports - this third of the sample realise the importance of sport and make use of free sports facilities available in parks. 44% of the sample never played sports. Engagement in sport (and particularly when the sport is commercialized) is more common in urban areas than in rural areas. This particularly holds true for women.

5% of the sample always go to coffee-houses. 10% of the sample often go to coffee-houses. 32% of the sample sometimes go to coffee-houses, and 53% of the sample never go to coffee-houses due to aspects of local culture still which continue to have an impact on the social system. Therefore, a low number or no visits to coffee houses indicates a rural ethos. This can also be explained by the fact that half of the sample are women who are generally busy with childcare of household tasks.

8% of the sample always go to a cultural centre or library. 10% of the sample often go to a cultural centre/library. 34% of the sample sometimes go to a cultural centre/library. 48% of the sample never go to a cultural centre/library. Most do not go to the library as it is located in the city centre. Additionally, a number of people are not interested in reading and would prefer to watch satellite TV instead.

19% of the sample always visit relatives. 25% of the sample often visit relatives. 54% of the sample sometimes visit relatives, and only 2% of the sample never visit relatives. Visiting relatives forms an important part of Tripoli social life.

This is due to the impact of local culture and the fact that most individuals living in the city are originally from a rural community. There are also various institutions that promote social relations with relatives (the mosque, for example).

Last, 14% of the sample always visit friends. 24% of the sample often visit friends. 58% of the sample sometimes visit friends, and 4% of the sample never visit friends.

When it comes to the importance of spending time with relatives and friends, there is little difference in the research findings. Relatives are important the rural context while the it is the latter that dominate in urban areas. As for Tripoli, people seem to display both urban and rural features in terms of their patterns of socialisation. Social relations have an important function in social life and as a result Tripoli people have many links with different blood relations. This element makes Tripoli different from other cities, especially those in Europe. This result concurs with El-Hawat's research.

**Figure (16) Favourite foods**

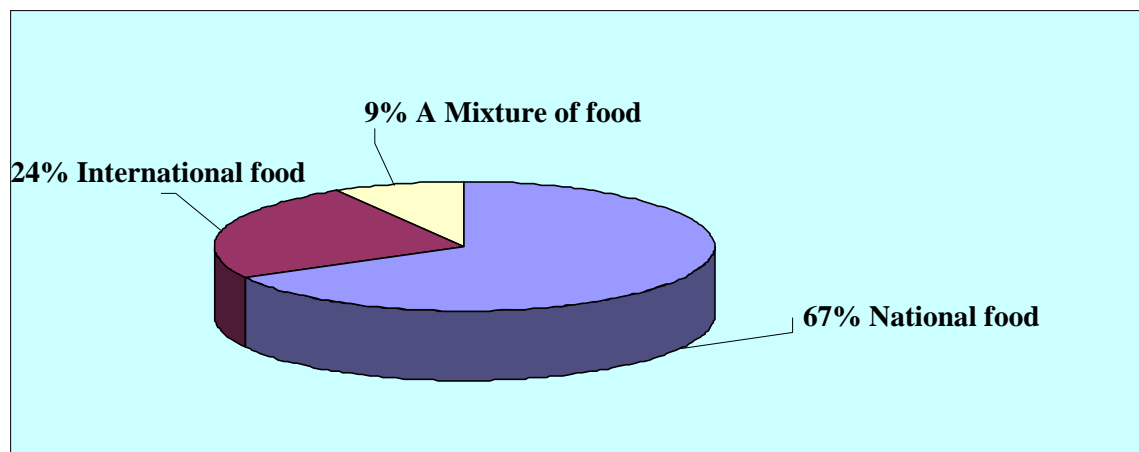


Figure 16 shows the distribution of the sample according to their favourite type of cuisine, divided into the categories of international, traditional, and a mixture of the two. 76% of the sample have noted that they prefer traditional food to the other groups. 24% of the sample favour international food, signifying a presence of global culture in the city. 9% of the sample favour a mixture of food. Thus, the majority of

the sample people prefer traditional food, demonstrating that global cuisine has not completely displaced local cuisine.

The researcher will begin by simply asking, what is food culture? In answering this question, I will note that anthropologists use the term 'culture' as a collective noun for the symbolic and learned, non-biological aspects of human society including language, custom and convention, through which human behaviour can be distinguished from that of other primates. Cultural anthropology takes as its special province the analysis of the culture of human societies. Anthropology recognises that human behaviour is largely culturally - not genetically - determined. This has given rise to debates about culture diffusion and the uniqueness of culture and culture relativity. In certain countries, the concept of culture is often used synonymously with civilisation, and there has been little difficulty with equating culture to civilisation. Indeed, both culture and civilisation in North Africa have traditional aspects which are opposed to foreign culture (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner 1984: 98). There are similarities between the food cultures of cities in North Africa and Tripoli, and Tripoli's food is a collection of the traditional and the modern.

This is indicative of the fact that, indeed, Tripoli is home to aspects of both traditional and modern (also read as national and international) culture (see figure 16). Societies often combine different patterns of food consumption. Most societies have various kinds of cola; one produced locally under licence and consumed in bottles and another more expensive variety, imported in cans from other advanced countries (Friedman 1975: 236). As urban populations do not produce their own food, rapid urbanisation has compounded food problems by increasing the demand for food, contributing to rising food imports, and changing the pattern of food demand. This is particularly true in the cases of wheat, vegetables and meat. Rapid urban

expansion has also encroached upon the already-limited quantity of cultivated land in Libya (El-Ghonemy 1993: 448). Most countries today import food and Libya is no exception with respect to some types of food (Ghosh 1984: 97). In fact, Libya has aspired to become completely independent in this right; however, despite this there is still a strong market for foreign food.

Although food varies little from country to country through the Arabic world, it is when the Arab world meets the Mediterranean that it becomes rather interesting. Libyan food combines the sophistication of international cuisine with the excitement of African spices, and it is Tripoli's culinary contributions that have been the greatest influence on modern Arabic cuisine. Dishes from Tripoli provide the framework for exotic cuisine recognised internationally in Arabic countries. They are simple preparations based on elements including vegetables, fruit and spices. At present, Tripoli's cuisine has many varieties, and it has become international particularly in urban areas. Tripoli cuisine incorporates many foreign styles.

The Libyan sociologist Attir discusses social changes which were a result of Italy's colonisation of Libya. Tripoli people encountered a vastly different culture and were impacted by different cultural practices in relation to food. The Italian influence in Libya extended to types of cooking, and Italian dishes became integrated into Libyan cuisine (Attir 1980: 31). Despite this considerable influence, many people still retain the desert dwellers' culinary traditions. The distinctive hot and spicy nature of this cuisine comes from neighbouring Mediterranean countries and the many civilisations that have ruled Libya: the Phoenician-Roman, Arab, Turkish and Italian. Many of the cooking styles and utensils began to take shape when the ancient tribes were nomads. Nomadic people's cooking was limited by the number of pots and pans they could carry with them - unlike North African cuisine. In the past, a common folk



lore noted that a husband can judge his wife's affections by the amount of hot peppers she uses when preparing meals - it was believed that her affection had decreased if she did not prepare hot and delicious food for him.

The main types of traditional Tripoli cuisine are as follows: *sharba Libya* (Libyan soup), *hassa* (Gravy), *Basboosa* and *Mhalbiya*. The local flat bread and Arabic coffee are made of lightly roasted coffee beans (Djursaa and Kragh 1998: 29-30). Charming food covers, typical of those woven by rural women and elderly women in the city, often cover a popular dish called *bazin*, which consists of meat, eggs, lemons, and green pepper. People traditionally eat this with their right hand, especially at social occasions, such as weddings or funerals. We should probably now turn to the characteristics of Tripoli's cuisine. First and foremost, Tripoli's food culture is influenced by the ingredients available for use; thus it is not surprising that Tripoli's cuisine is characterised by a mass of ingredients; some of which, such as tea and sugar, are imported. Tripoli's cuisine has also recently become popular in many Arab cities. A traditional Libyan dish called *couscous belbusla*, made of couscous and onions, is now regarded as an international meal. Foreign dishes have also become popular in urban centres as standards of living have risen.

**Figure (17) Cooking international dishes**

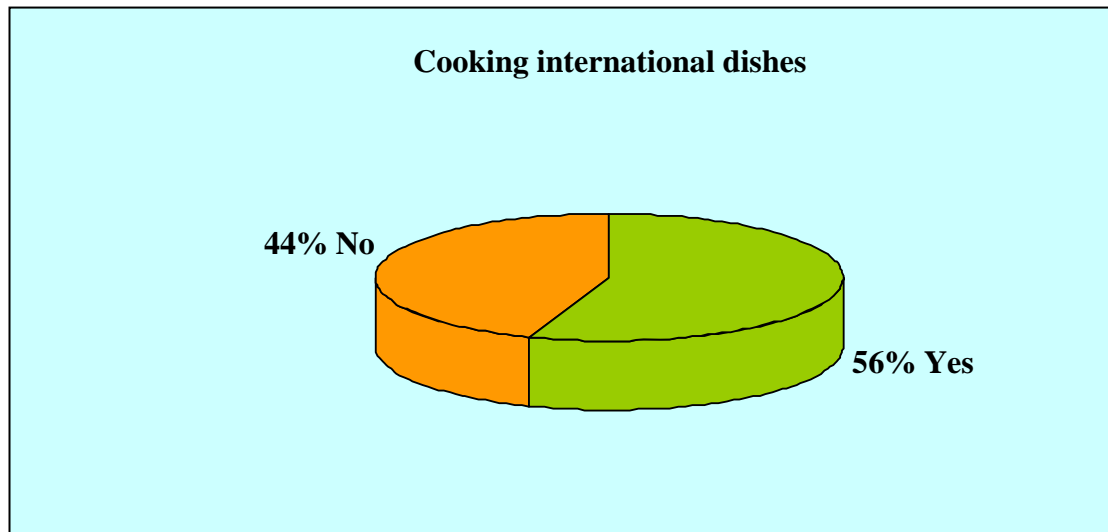


Figure 17 indicates the division of the sample according to whether or not individuals cook international dishes. 44% of the sample do not cook international food. 56% of the sample have cooked international dishes because they measure up to the taste and standards of the working-class female population and also due to the fact that these types of meals can be easily prepared. The sample also reflects a degree of cultural interaction and exchange with the rest of the world. This reflects the spread of global culture in Tripoli.

Often quick and easy to prepare, international dishes have become a common aspect of urban cuisine. According to one informant, international food is now readily available in the market and is cheap and easy to prepare in comparison to Libyan dishes. The availability of satellite TV has also made these dishes familiar to Tripoli families. One might note here that foreign dishes are characterised by the “jet-set speed era” which has all family members in the workplace - thus as these meals are pre-made they are easy to prepare. Satellite TV and the internet have played a role in the spread of international dishes, and some see this phenomenon as being a fashion peculiar to urban culture. Others see it as a direct result of the presence of foreign restaurants and coffee shops which serve foreign dishes.

According to the results of the study, it was found that young people in general are more open to globalisation, change and urbanisation than the those in older age groups, but findings also noted that tradition has begun to mix with modernisation (Djursaa and Kragh 1998: 26). This is true of Tripoli as modern food outlets are an attractive spot for young people.

**Figure (18) Number of cooked meals**

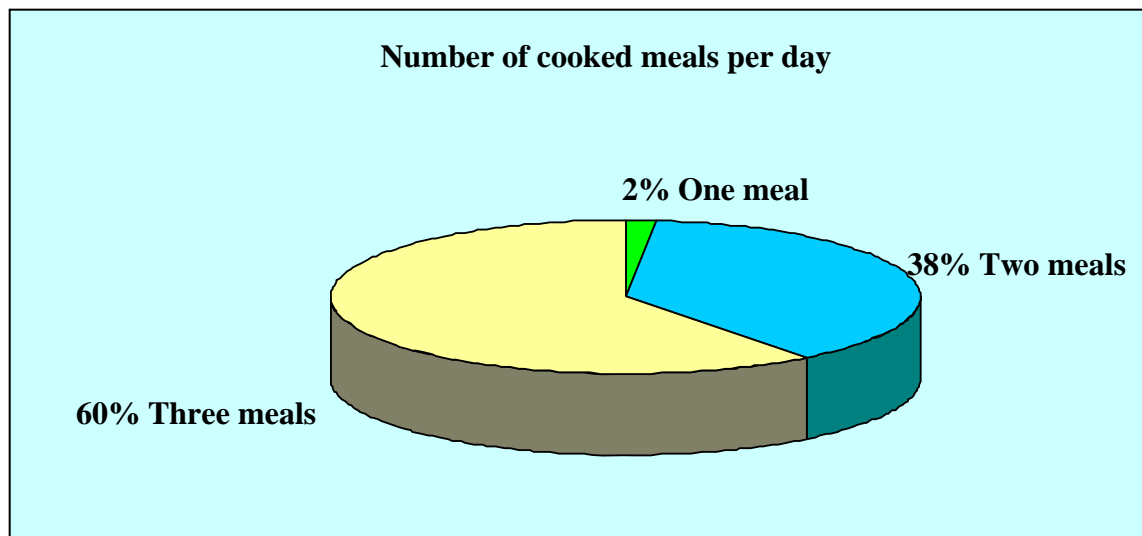


Figure 18 shows the division of the sample of individuals according to the number of cooked meals per day. 2% of the sample have one cooked meal per day, 38% of the sample have two cooked meals per day, and 60% of the sample have three cooked meals per day. Food culture has an important role to play in Tripoli’s social structure which has been affected by urbanisation in modern times. The phenomenon of the variety of foreign food spread throughout the city is thus due to the influence of urban transformation. In this section I will examine aspects of Tripoli’s food culture.

Various meals of the day have varying importance for consumers. In Arab countries, the principal meal is lunch, while dinner and breakfast are considered secondary in importance. This contrasts the practices of northern Europe, for instance, where dinner has utmost importance. According to one of the respondents, an Arab proverb says that “You should have breakfast like a working man, dinner like a

beggar and supper like a princess". Lunch is eaten between 2 and 3 in the afternoon and dinner between 7.30 and 8.30 in the evening. Lunch is an important social activity, and several respondents stressed that 'you cannot eat lunch alone'. Lunch is considered to be primarily a family gathering, where the importance of the husband as head of the family is emphasised. The husband expects lunch to be ready when he comes home from work. The father is the head of household in Libya, and this is demonstrated by the fact that both his wife and children await his arrival, which is an influence of rural culture. The fact that his importance in the family is expressed in the culturally-centred situation of meal time suggests a relationship between his social role and the food eaten. The importance of lunch is associated with the role of the head of the household and with the father's role as the most important member of the household for this occasion. In contrast, the children take on a dominant role in the evening. Young unmarried men are described as typical users of fast food compared with married men (Djursaa and Kragh 1998: 32-33).

Most lunch dishes are often traditional and use no foreign products, especially in rural society. Dinner is particularly interesting because it is in this context that one would find typical global products. The common pattern is that some Tripoli people, especially the younger generation, eat dinner out of the home, which is a modern phenomenon similar to that of western societies. The younger generation may eat foods such as pizza, which is can be organised in private houses and restaurants alike, where the male and female members of the family eat together in compartments, separated from the other guests. When the families eat dinner at home, foreign dishes also play a very significant part in the meal. Like dinner, breakfast is relatively unimportant, and foreign ingredients have found their place alongside traditional ingredients. Products which are relatively new to Arab culture, such as

cheese spreads, jam, traditional honey and Arabic coffee are eaten with cream. This intercultural trend is in itself a pattern of cultural transformation in modern times which connects both the traditional and the modern.

The modernisation and urbanisation process in most Arabic capital cities is accompanied by certain patterns of consumption which reflect standards of life and are an indicator of the phenomenon of urban transformation (Djursaa and Kragh 1998: 33). An example of such indicators is a change in the food culture which indicates a level of urbanisation as individuals now seek foreign meals which are less cumbersome to prepare. As a result, they do not spare funds from their income in order to make life more easy and pleasurable while living in the city (e.g. Hall 1992; Robertson 1992; Barber 1995). However, there are still quite a few people who resist this modern trend by seeking and preferring a traditional Libyan diet (Djursaa and Kragh 1998: 35).

General social change cuts across each generation, meaning that any one generation will have lifestyles and consumption patterns which differ from that of their parents at that particular stage of their lives (Lunt and Livingstone 1992: 106). This indicates a patterned cultural transformation in Tripoli. One of the main ways in which people come to learn about and appreciate international foods and dishes and other ways of life is through international travel.

**Figure (19) Percent of people spending lengthy periods abroad**

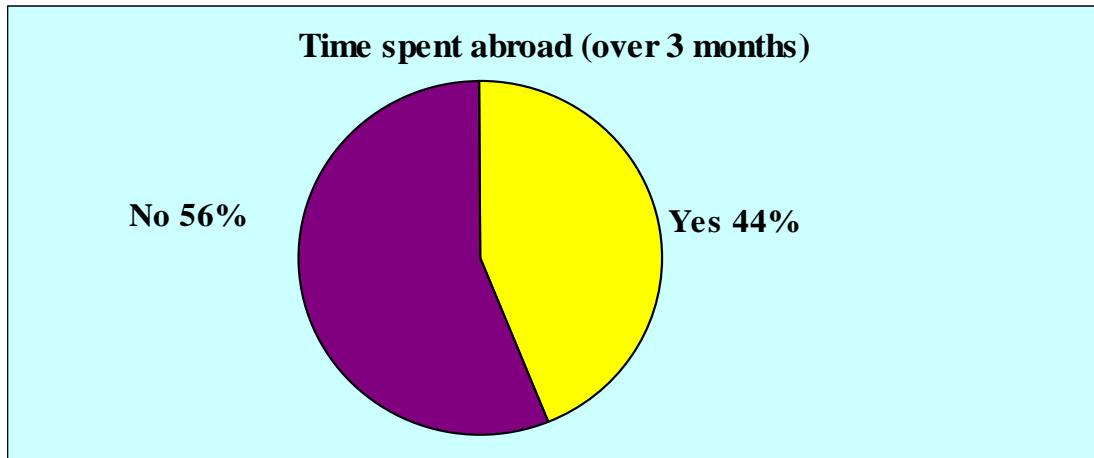


Figure 19 divides the sample of individuals according to time spent abroad, with a three-month period constituting the basal timeframe. The Libyan government has introduced a system of money-lending to encourage people to undertake international travel for holidays. The government also has a developmental programme whereby students are sponsored to visit to foreign countries to undertake training. 45% of the sample spent a lengthy period abroad, and 55% of the sample did not spend a lengthy period abroad. This indicates familiarity with global culture.

**Figure (20) Continents where respondents spent time**

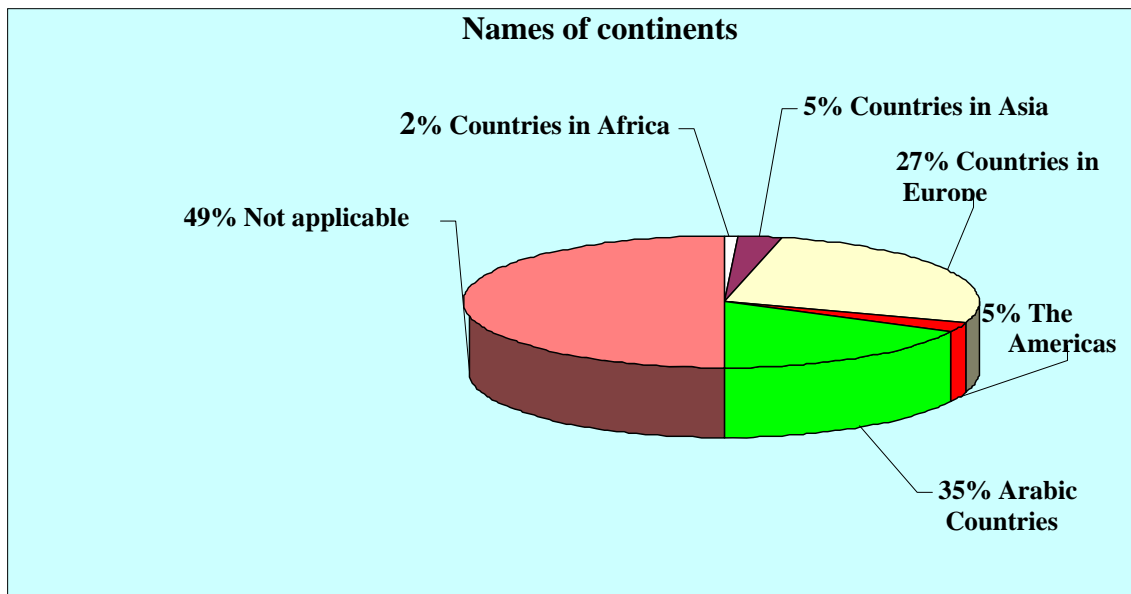


Figure 20 indicates continents visited by the survey sample. 3% of the sample spent a period of time in African countries. 5% of the sample spent a period of time in Asian countries, and the majority - 53% of the sample - spent a period of time in European countries because of Libyan's geographical proximity to Europe and because of the economic, cultural and academic exchange agreements with most European countries. 5% of the sample spent a period of time in North, Central or South America, and 35% of the sample spend time in Arabic countries. Respondents gravitate to Europe much more than to the Arab countries. This is due to the colonial history, economic and medical reasons (such as receiving medical treatment elsewhere).

**Table (21) Length of time spent abroad**

Length of time	Number of persons	Percentage
Short time (20 days-3years)	85	64%
Long time (4years-25years)	48	36%
Total	133	100%

Table number 21 shows a division of the sample based on the length of time spent abroad. 64% of the sample have spent between 20 days to 3 years abroad. 35% of the sample have spent between 4-25 years abroad for training, study, and work purposes.

Besides travelling abroad for training and education purposes, individuals also travel for tourism and leisure. In recent years, tourism for those living in Tripoli has been accompanied by various changes in patterns of life. International tourism has become a modern urban phenomenon since World War II when it came to embrace almost all social classes in industrialised western societies (Cohen 1984: 376). Urban tourism is an ecological, economic, and political activity that is complex and global; and the core of global tourism is located in tourist-friendly countries (Cohen 1984: 282-283). Anthropologists and sociologists have studied the dynamics of the tourist system at the regional and local levels. Tourism as a phenomenon has an impact on both cultural systems and social structures. It creates new employment opportunities in hosting industry and it also has an impact on both traditional society and the economy (Cohen 1984: 283- 284).

Tourism is a modern activity which is has roots in urbanisation and modernisation. In modern times, most societies are influenced by tourism, which is a source of urbanisation. Tourists who visit Libya come from many different parts of the globe and all come from distinct cultures. One portion of Tripoli, called ‘the old



city', has a large museum, a tourist office, and many shops. The area is very popular, as are the markets, where a great variety of Libyan handicrafts such as traditional clothes, carpets, handmade gold and silver jewellery and copper and silver dishes, leather goods and pottery can be purchased.

Tripoli has an urban history. It is a city of breathtaking beauty. It has an excellent geographical position and deep history. It is a vital link between eastern and western cities and European and African cities alike. The city is no stranger to turbulence, but its historical monuments are a testimony to the city and the great Libyan civilisation of old. Libya has played host to many civilisations, and, in turn, has enriched civilisations through both the writing, drawing and engravings visible in the caves of Tadrart Mountains as well as through archaeological treasures in Phoenician, Roman, and Byzantine ports of Tripoli and some cities in Libya especially near the sea. Tripoli not only reflects Arab culture but also has many aspects of global culture. Hence, the majority of tourists visiting Libya visit Tripoli, the "Queen of the Seas". It is a historical site; the city of Islamic civilisation; and is home to Arab art and handicrafts where every monument tells a story. The city has a wealth of old and new monuments (Libyaonline 2002). Tripoli has many facilities and its people are very friendly and eager to interact with people from other cultures. Travel and tourism have also had a role in the decline of traditional authority. Foreign travel for vacations or education brought about new ideas to an old society. Tourists and students returned wondering what type of society they should have in Libya. As a result, a modern global culture has developed with new patterns of behaviour and major structural changes. Figure 20 indicates that 27% of travellers visited Europe. At present, most businesses in Tripoli employ at least a small percentage of English speakers which encourages growth in the tourist industry.

The development of tourism in Tripoli has changed certain social aspects in society. For the past twenty years, many people have engaged in tourism, which has, in turn, had an impact on their culture. For example, nowadays some individuals wear different clothes, speak foreign languages and have incorporated aspects of foreign lifestyles into their own. During this time, there has been a significant growth in the tourism industry worldwide. Many tourists to Libya have noted that Libyan culture is highly influenced by religion. In some ways, religion is seen as an obstacle to tourism as it prohibits alcohol and has a strict dress code. Tripoli city is the centre of tourism in Libya, and it is rich in history and culture. Clearly, tourism occurs outside cities as well as in them, but there is an undeniable relationship between tourism and cities (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2000: 58). Tourists who visit Libya tend to do so by way of other, larger cities. In turn, these cities benefit greatly from the resulting boost in trade. As Tripoli has a long history as an urban centre in Libya, it has encouraged tourism. Due to Tripoli's rich history, culture, and the large number of monuments and artefacts it is home to, it has become a popular tourist centre and is representative not only of the city itself but of North Africa as a whole.

Urban history and systems of tourism aid to tourism all over the world. However, Tripoli has had a long history and has reasonable urban management through which tourism is encouraged (Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000: 97). However, it is on par with other global cities in terms of standards. Tripoli is well situated for global tourism: the Farwa and Gobaroun lakes located in the western and southern parts of Libya are important tourist attractions and bring in much trade to those areas. This has created many new jobs in the hotel industry. These industries have seen massive growth over the past 20 years: by 2002, there were over 100 hotels

and public houses, while the number of restaurants and coffee houses had risen to over 900 (see table 22) (Rotenberg and McDonogh 1993: 72).

**Table (22) Facilities and services in Tripoli 2002**

<b>Services</b>	<b>Number</b>
Bakeries	506
Oil Stations	167
Markets and Department Stores	782
Hotels and Public houses	109
Post Offices	85
Banks and Financial Establishments	94
Police Stations and Popular Security	107
Schools and Educations Institutions	953
Hospitals, Health Centres and Clinics	395
Mosques and Religious centres	662
Sports Clubs	120
Restaurants and Coffee houses	906

**Source:** National Corporation of Information and Documentation, Tripoli 2002.

Tourism in Tripoli has developed rapidly and investment in tourism has increased as with many African cities in. Libyan law now allows people to establish tourism-related companies, including private agencies, hotels and coffee-houses all over Libya. The government encourages this growth by granting loans and equally, numerous banks have been established to fund tourism in. Libyan law has become more liberal with regard to the free movement of people. This cultural change was affirmed in legislation in the 1988 Green Document on Human Rights. People can now travel freely around Libya and abroad. This has had a twofold benefit for Tripoli's tourism as it promotes business growth, and also helps to generate a more relaxed culture for potential tourists. Various tourist organisations indicated that in 1999, Libya received over half a million visitors. In fact, the majority come to find work. More recently, Libya has made a major effort to attract even more tourists and these efforts are in place under the Plan of Tourism, which is effective until 2018. Under the Plan, new luxury hotels have been built and older hotels have been

refurbished and upgraded. The internal transport system has improved, despite the vast distances and small population. The city has a good road network and this has aided the advancement of tourism. There are also taxis and different types of private cars; some of which are telephone operated. However, Tripoli does not have infrastructure for tourism that is of a global standard. This is due in part to its lack of experts and its social values, which do not encourage tourism. There are also cultural conflict in the values and behaviour of residents of Tripoli city, but in spite of this the country aspires to increase the standards to that of other global cities. The high standard of service delivered to tourists and the distinct types of food available are also attractive to tourists. Tripoli's community has new plans for tourism, including the development of two seaside resorts to encourage foreign tourists. These resorts are often operating at a full capacity on weekends as throngs including visitors and foreign embassy officials spend time there on weekends and during the summer.

A large number of students currently study in foreign countries; many of these students are in favour of some form of basic change in Libya (El-Hawat 1974: 121-122). Libyan students who study abroad are gradually influenced by global culture and many Libyan tourists are equally influenced by globalisation. In short, in less than a decade, Tripoli has transformed itself from a traditional society, dominated by large projects and traditional relationships, into a modern one where global culture and modern patterns of behaviour dominate. Transformations in Tripoli have resulted from plans of transformation in Libya as a whole and are not limited to Tripoli. Some people are more willing to return to rural areas because of these transformations.

**Figure (21) Intention to return to the countryside**

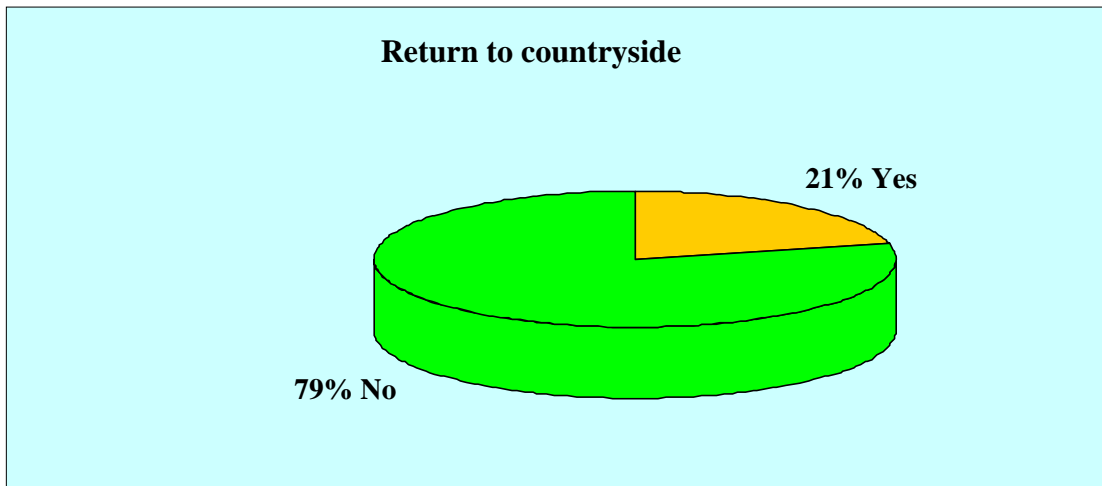


Figure 21 shows the distribution of the sample according to their intention to return to the countryside. 21% plan to return to the countryside. 79% of the sample have no plan to return to countryside because of the availability of a high standard of social services, telecommunication facilities and road networks. For this cohort, life in the city is comfortable. Another factor is that city life offers more freedom from traditional culture present in the countryside. Thus, most of those sampled are satisfied with urban life in Tripoli. Many people also have a preference to live in Tripoli because, as Low argues, as a centre of knowledge and information, is where communication, media and power are centralised. This is what Low calls “the information city”, which can be applied to Tripoli (Low 1999: 14).

**Figure (22) Reasons to move to the countryside**

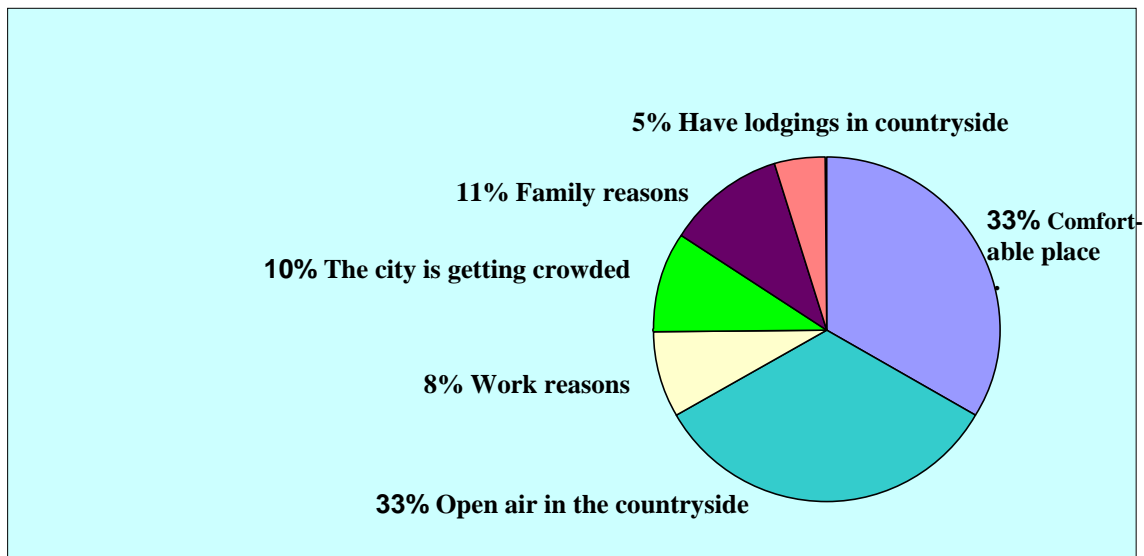


Figure 22 indicates, of those who plan to move to the countryside, their reasons for doing so. 33% of the total of the sample this cohort would like to move because they feel the countryside is more comfortable than the city. A further 33% of the sample enjoy the countryside's fresh air. 8% of the sample individuals plan to move for work reasons. 10% of the sample want to escape overcrowding in the city. 11% of the sample want to move into the countryside for family reasons. 5% of the sample want to move into the countryside as they already own a home there.

**Figure (23) Ownership of houses in the country**

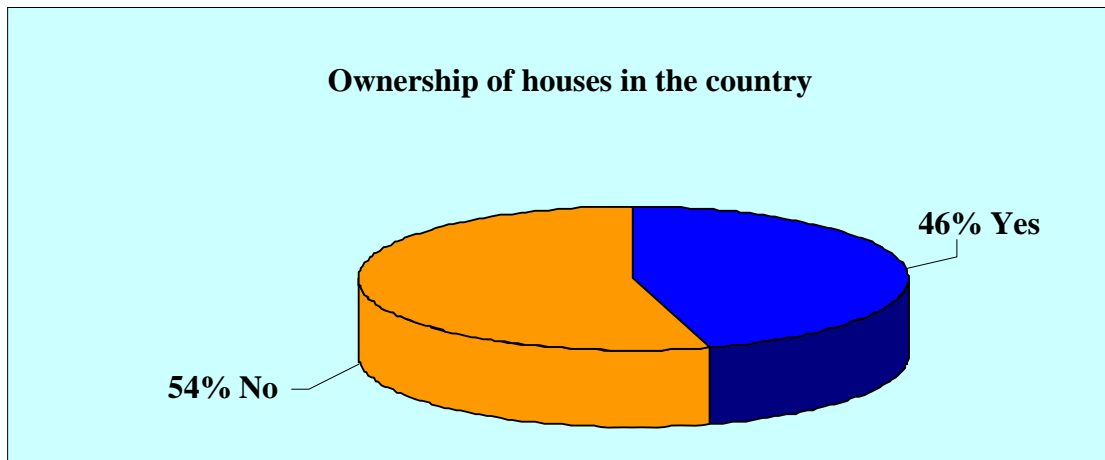


Figure 23 shows the distribution of the sample of individuals according to ownership of a house in the country. 46% of the sample own houses in the country. 54% of the sample do not own a home in the country. This shows that a substantial number of the sample maintains a link with the countryside and may have both rural and urban identities, despite the fact that only 21% intend to move back to the countryside as indicated in Figure 21.

**Figure (24) Ownership of houses in the city**

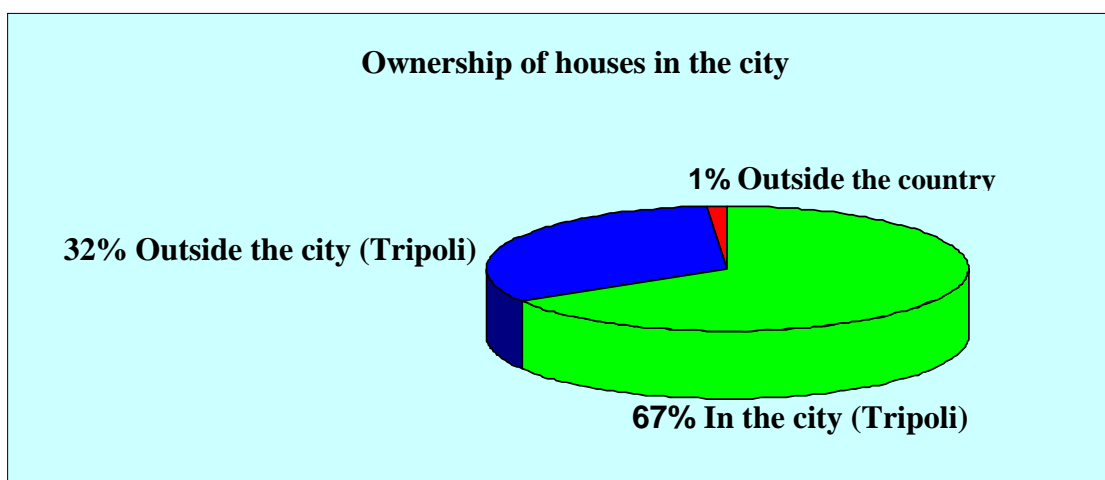


Figure 24 shows a breakdown of the overall sample according to ownership of houses in the city. 67% of the sample own one or more home in Tripoli city only. 32% of the

sample own one or more homes outside the city. 1% of the sample own one or more homes outside the country. This reflects the relationship between rural and urban society. I believe that most cities in developing nations have relations with different rural environments. Tripoli is impacted by rural society in different ways, such as building the ‘tent of consolation’ to receive consolors at funerals in some areas of the city. It has also impacted the style of clothes on certain occasions.

**Figure (25) Favourite clothes**

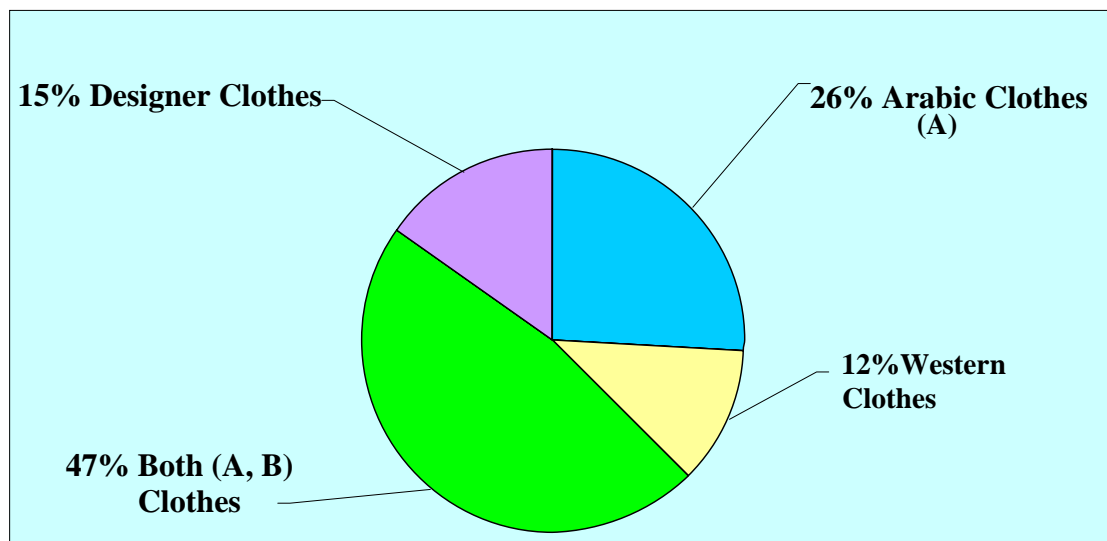


Figure 25 shows the distribution of the sample according to their favorite type of clothing. 26% of the sample favour wearing Arabic-designed clothes due to their comfort and suitability for all social occasions and seasons of the year. Another reason is they are very affordable and city dwellers maintain a traditional manner of dress. 12% of the sample favour western clothes. 47% of the sample wear both Arabic and western clothes because of their exposure and acceptance of foreign culture in the city. 15% of the sample favour designer clothes. Information shows a substantial incorporation of foreign clothes in Tripoli. Foreign clothes do not threaten the national identity and may indicate positive identification with the outside world.



## **6.2 A day in the life of a resident of Tripoli**

This section describes and evaluates a day in the life of small number of residents from different parts of the city. Each narrative constitutes movement through a single day in Tripoli. Efforts will be made later to pin down convergence between the local and the universal in the experience of the narrator. The significance of urbanisation in the narratives will be explored.

### **Case 1**

Rabab, who I knew from college, was 20 years old, single, and lived with her parents in Tripoli. I interviewed her at home, which was located in a wealthy neighbourhood. It consisted of two floors with three bedrooms on each floor, and it also had a garden. Attached to the house was a large garage where the family kept their three cars. At home, Mansur, Rabab's brother, took me into the men's guest room of the house called Marbuah. We sat in the corner a few meters away from the other male members of the family. Here, I was introduced to Mansur's brother, a college student. After a few minutes, Rabab arrived in this room. I shook hands with her and began the interview. Mansur left me alone with her briefly to bring us juice. Rabab asked me if I would prefer coffee or tea, and I told her I preferred coffee, which was subsequently served. Her brother sat beside me but did not participate.

Rabab was a computer graduate, currently employed by the Department of Tourism and studying part-time in the University. She gave me an account of a single day in her life. This particular day was Friday, which turned out to be full of surprises. She awoke in the morning to perform her pre-dawn prayer. Prior to that, she had risen in the middle of the night for her mid-night prayer. She then went back to sleep until 8am. At 8am, she awoke to have a shower and perform ablutions for a sunrise prayer.

She noted that the whole family were very devout and that they always said their prayers on time. After this, she had a cup of coffee, served breakfast to her father and brother (the other members of family had eaten their breakfast earlier). Her mother and sister were at her grandmother's house, and Rabab was only woman at home. The family then had breakfast together consisting of eggs and Dutch cheese. After breakfast, Rabab cleaned the house and then sat down to read Quran Karim. After this, she watched a TV program called "Sabh Alkher Awel Jamahiriya". After this her father and young sister went to Friday prayers at the mosque. As a woman, Rabab did not go to the mosque with the men. Instead, she said her midday prayer (Dhuhur) at home.

Rabab then visited her grandmother's house nearby where she met her aunts and uncles. She was surprised to see her aunt, a qualified solicitor working in the Libyan embassy in Tunisia, because she had not seen her in a month. Her aunt brought her a gifts of bracelets. At this stage, it was approximately 2.30pm, at which point a usual family meeting was held in her grandmother's house. After this, the family members deliberated on what to have for lunch and decided to prepare a local dish called "Rushdah with Caded" which the family ate together. This is popular in rural society. Lunch was followed by washing the dishes while listening to "Shagar and Jorgh", Arabic musician. Rabab then had a siesta until 5pm and followed this with afternoon prayer. Rabab's uncle then suggested they would go to a club called "Ellintrutotrah", which was located a few miles away in Girgarsh. The club consisted of a garden, a restaurant and sport facilities including a swimming pool. While at the club, Rabab did not swim, but listened to music while eating crisps and *samence*. Rabab took out her sketchbook and drew the surrounding landscape and vegetation. Her uncle brought her flowers. While swimming, they drank juice and ate barbequed

chicken. They also played tennis and basketball. It was a relaxed day, joyous and trouble-free with no worries on Rabab's part, though she was a bit nervous when she was pushed into the swimming pool.

It was around 8.45pm when Rabab and her family returned home. Rabab realised that she missed her sunset prayer (Maghrib). She did not feel guilty as she could still do this at home. Rabab then left to go to a party with female friends. As the party wasn't too far from her home, she walked unaccompanied to the house party, where she stayed until 10.15pm. Back home, Rabab had to say her final prayer of the day, the evening/night prayer (Isha). Rabab and her family finally got to bed at 2am. The fact that the house was decorated with Quranic verses shows the impact of religion.

The researcher has deduced from the above discourse that there are patterns of cooking, gender separation, excessive prayers, Quran readings and visiting extended families, all of which reflect the rural features of the city. Equally, these results concur with studies in Libyan society such as El-Hawat's study which refers to two patterns (traditional and modern), in Libyan life.

## **Case 2**

Ebtihal was 31 years old and lived with her husband in Tripoli. I visited her home to interview her. Their house was located in the Damascus residential area. Unlike other parts of the city, Damascus is populated by people of diverse ethnic and cultural origins and is also rich in services including shops, cafés and restaurants. Ebtihal's house consisted of four bedrooms and a garden. The house had a large room attached to it, used as an office by Ebtihal's husband as well as acting as a sitting room. The house had a small garage where the family kept their new car. Ebtihal offered me

milk with hot chocolate, and we sat in a large sitting room which mixed traditional and modern décor. We sat on the sofa, and her husband sat in front of me, where he stayed until I finished, as Libyan tradition would not allow me to go into the female quarter of the house. She served coffee. Ebtihal's husband was also her cousin. She told me that a friend of her family would arrive soon and that the house was occasionally with friends, especially on weekends and on social occasions. The sitting room had a large cassette recorder; music was of particular importance to her life. Ebtihal believed that listening to music would bring her happiness. She then recounted a day in her life to me.

Ebtihal worked in a Social Welfare Department. It was Friday so she did not go to work. She woke up at 9am and prayed pre-dawn prayer (Surooq) and had breakfast afterwards, which lasted about 30 minutes. She then organized the house until 11am. As her four-bedroom house was large, it took a long time to clean. At 2pm Ebtihal began to prepare lunch - this took two and a half hours. As usual, although the food took a long time to prepare, it was consumed in only 15 minutes. She said that her husband did not help her with the cooking. In Libyan culture, most men do not cook after getting married. Ebtihal then did the dishes and sat down to watch TV until evening prayer (Isha) when she had tea, prayed and sat down again to watch TV until it was time to prepare dinner. This took an hour and a half. After dinner, Ebtihal cleaned up and watched TV until 11.30pm when she retired to bed. The family usually sat to watch TV together and she usually went to bed at midnight.

Ebtihal liked reading, listening to modern music and socializing. She said that city life had changed, noting that women were now allowed to mix freely with non-family members; but she preferred to interact with females more so than with males. After half an hour or so, I finished the interview and asked her if she could give me

her phone number to ask more questions if it was necessary. She looked at her husband, and after his approval, she gave me the phone number.

### **Case 3**

Ageel was 58 years old and had nine children. I knew him through his neighbour Alhaj Abdulmohsan. Their house was located in the Abusaleem residential area close to where he worked. He had a two-story house and knew all of his neighbours who came from different parts of Libya. He met me in traditional clothes and greeted me by shaking hands. His son served coffee before Ageel began to recount a day in his life.

An employee in a soft-drink factory, Ageel worked near his house. He was born in a village outside of the city, and most of his relatives lived outside the city. As always, Ageel woke up at 6am for the pre-dawn prayer (Shurooq), and left for work at 7.30am after breakfast. Upon his arrival to work at 8am, he worked until 3pm. Upon his arrival home, he found a lunch of couscous ready for him which he ate. Preparing food was always his wife's responsibility, but food shopping was his responsibility. He drank tea with his family while they talked. At 5pm, Ageel left for his farm to inspect the workers and stayed there until 7.30pm. His farm was located in southern Tripoli, not far from his home. After his inspection, he went home. Back home, he prayed, sat down with his family for dinner and they all discussed the day's activities while drinking Arabic tea. He liked drinking tea both at work and at home. He went to bed at 11.30pm, and noted that the day had been different from most days.

The researcher may say that Ageel's day reflects the elements of a large family. He has a strong bond with his neighbours and there is an element of seclusion of women, the wearing of traditional clothes, eating at home and alcohol is forbidden.

All these traits are peculiar to rural rather than urban settings. The house is also decorated with pictures of family members as well as Ghadhafi. This is a characteristic of rural society.

#### **Case 4**

Ahamed was 49 years old and had had six children. I arrived in his house to interview him on his day off. His house was located in the Sideelmasary residential area and had four bedrooms and a small garden. The house also had a small garage. Ahamed gave me an account of a single day in his life. He works in a bank. He woke up 7am, had breakfast and drove to work. He arrived at work at 8am and he worked till 2pm. At 2pm, he left work to return home. When he arrived, his family was not in the house. At 3.15pm he ate lunch alone, drank some tea, and then watched the Aljazeera and Alarabiya channel on TV until 8.30pm. Ahamed has always had a keen interest in news and swimming. After his evening prayer (Isha), he ate dinner and spoke to a friend on the phone for fifteen minutes. After this, he continued to watch TV until 11pm, when he went to bed. After speaking to Ahamed for approximately a half hour, I finished the interview. I then asked him if he would allow me to interview his wife. As Libyan tradition did not allow me to go into the female part of the house we had to do the interview in the male side of the house.

#### **Case 5**

Kholod was 42 years old and lived with her husband in Tripoli. I interviewed her in her office. Their office was large and had a new sofa and a big painting on the wall. I sat on the sofa which was in front of her. There I introduced myself as a researcher researching life in Tripoli. Coffee and tea were served by a female

employee, and I sat alone with Kholod in her office. Her secretary was present in a separate but adjacent office. Kholod wore a headscarf and beautiful clothes, and I interviewed her for approximately one hour.

Kholod worked as an Educational Social Affairs officer of the Libyan Popular Congress. She awoke early at 5.30am, at which point she had pre-dawn prayer and then read some chapters from the Quran. She prayed to God to protect her children from evil and guide them along the right path in their lives. Secondly, she made breakfast, tidied up the house and woke her children to get them ready for work and school. She then woke her parents, who lived a few doors away, and made them breakfast before leaving for work. Kholod had to care for them as well as her children. It was 8am by the time Kholod had arrived at her desk. She was in charge of work connected with three schools: Abudalah Ben Masud, Alantalag and the Green Document School. Her work consisted of supervising day-to-day school activities as well as resolving any problems that might arise.

Kholod knew what needed to be done that day: she was to evaluate preparation for the Anniversary of the Revolution and prepare a list of men and women who were to be invited to the occasion as dignitaries. Kholod gave me an invitation to join in the celebration. On the same day, she went to the Secretariat of the Popular Congress to aid with preparations for the Thirty- Fifth Anniversary of the Alfateh Revolution which brought Ghadhafi to power. The Anniversary was a national occasion celebrated across the country. Kholod left work to go home at 2pm. On her way, she bought fruit and soft drinks. She drove home in a car loaned to her by the Congress. At home, she performed her afternoon prayer and proceeded to help her daughter cook lunch. Kholod was fortunate to have a dishwasher in her modern kitchen, which helped speed up the cleaning after cooking. By 5pm, Kholod was able

to relax for a while, and afterwards went back to finish her work. Kholod phoned a number of invitees to give them advice on speeches and the types of flowers to be brought to the celebrations. At 8.30pm she returned to her house, prayed, relaxed, prepared dinner, and arranged the dishes in a special area. After that, she prayed Isha and read parts of the Quran as well as newspapers. She watched a TV programme and then went upstairs with her children until 11.30pm when she finally fell asleep.

After the interview, I asked Kholod if she would allow me to interview her co-worker friends. However, Libya's administration system did not allow me to talk to employees without permission from their guardians. So, I made an appointment with her co-worker, Fatila in Ibn Ashur coffee shop.

## **Case 6**

Ghufran was a 25-year-old woman who lived with her parents in Tripoli. She did shift-work at a hotel office. I interviewed her at her home. I know Ghufran through her brother, whom I have have been friendly with for several years. Their house was located in the Mansura residential area which is inhabited by people of different nationalities. At the house, Sami, Ghufran's brother, took me into the male sitting room of the house which was both traditional and modern. After a few minutes, Ghufran arrived home in her car and she greeted me by shaking. Ghufran wore very modern clothes, and wore three gold rings on her fingers. She did not wear heavy make up like most modern Libyan women. Here is a description of a day in Ghufran's life:

Ghufran rose at 8.30am, washed and began preparations for breakfast for the entire family. Preparing food was occasionally her responsibility. She then ate breakfast and went to an internet cafe until 11am. After that, she read a book until



2.30pm and then slept until the late afternoon prayer (Asr). After the Asr, she visited her cousin's family. She later collected a friend at a women's sports club located in Bumalana. After this, she returned to her cousin's home with her friend, and she stayed there and they talked until 7pm. After that she returned home and watched TV until 12pm. She noted that many aspects of life have changed and girls have become much more liberal than in the past. She also commented upon some of the differences between the past and present, such as being able to drive her own car and go to women's clubs. These are new aspects of Libyan life. Education and interaction with European life and the media, especially satellite TV, has had a significant impact on life. Thus, some traditional values have become similar to those in western societies.

### **Case 7**

Moftah was 51 years old and lived in the Babbingasher residential area of Tripoli. He had seven children. I went to his home to interview him. I had never met him before this interview. His home was located in a wealthy neighbourhood and consisted of three bedrooms without a garage or garden. At the house, Moftah's son, Sufyan, took me into the male sitting room of the house. There, I introduced myself to Moftah and showed him my card. He gave me an account of a single day in his life: Moftah was recently promoted as a director in the Communication Department of his company. He was born in a small village and his father was a postman. The particular day in question was Thursday, the last day of the week. He got up from bed in the morning, prayed with a group in a public prayer room and returned home to eat breakfast before leaving for work at 8am. Moftah worked until 3pm, and then returned home to eat lunch at 3.30pm. After lunch, he drank tea and received phone calls from work. After speaking on the phone, he went to the zoo with his family,

where they stayed until 7pm. He then went home and watched TV until 10pm, then prayed and finally, went to bed at 11pm. In the interview, I asked him about neighbours and social relations. He said that he had good relations with different people, in particular, two foreign families lived close to his house and he often visited them.

### **Case 8**

Ali was 58 years old and married. He was a doctor and had lived with his family in a big flat in the Zawad Elthamany residential area for 10 years. We met after I arrived at the Eye Hospital with the intention of interviewing a doctor. After 10 minutes, the receptionist took me into the doctors' room, which had a fridge, a microwave, a kettle, a phone and a TV. I found Dr. Ali waiting for me. I sat with him in this room during his break. He gave me an account of a single day in his life:

Ali rose at 7am for his morning prayers and had breakfast. He then went to work at the hospital. Later, he returned home by car at 2.30pm for lunch with his family. At 3.20pm, he checked his mail. He then went to his private clinic and stayed until 7pm. I learned that Ali had two jobs, which he thought was necessary to enable him to earn more money and improve his lifestyle. His plan was to buy a modern house near the city centre. At 8pm, he arrived at his flat, watched TV, had dinner and drank tea. Then his relatives, who lived in the west of the city centre, arrived and visited him for 40 minutes. He stayed on the Internet from 10.10 until 11pm and then he prayed evening prayer (Isha) and went to bed. I finished my interview after approximately 20 minutes. He said that he would be interested in reading my research, and I promised that I would give it to him to read when it was finished.

## Case 9

Abtihag was 22 years old and resided with her parents in Tripoli. I arrived at her institute to interview her after gaining permission from the office of the institute. At the institute, the Director of Students took me into the hall. There, I was introduced to a group of female students. Then I took Abtihag into a corner a few meters away from her male friends. Judging from her style of dress, Abtihag looked quite religious. She wore a typical Libyan Islamic dress which consisted of a long sleeve top, and a scarf over her head and shoulders. She was studying for an Arts Degree at the Iben Mantor Institute of Education, located in Alhatba Elkatra in the south of the city centre. Here is a description of a day in her life:

Abtihag awoke at 6am for her Fajr prayers. She noted that all her family members prayed together in a special area which translates to ‘the room of prayers’. The room was used a lot, especially when fasting. Her father was a member of a religious association. Abtihag was in the habit of reading the entire Quran every Ramadan; the fasting month of the year. She prepared breakfast, which took ten minutes and then sat down to eat for another ten minutes. At 6.30am, she read the Quran for a half hour. Between 7.15am and 7.40am she read more prayers. At 7.40am she left for the institute in her father’s car which would give her time to arrive at the Institute by 8am. Upon arrival, she would meet her male and female friends. She and her friends stayed on the ground floor by the classroom and chatted until 9.30am. She then went for lectures and degree presentations until noon. After this, she joined her friends in the Institute’s coffee-house, where she stayed until 1pm. Abtihag then had to rush to consult with her supervisor at 1.15pm. Her father collected her to go home because he worked near the Institute.

At home, Abtihag helped her mother prepare lunch for the whole family. It was ready at 2.30pm, and she ate lunch, prayed, and then sat down to watch TV. She chose to watch the *Iqraa* channel, a religious TV broadcasted by the Qatar Satellite System. The TV was located in the main sitting room. It was not until 4.30pm that Abtihag finished watching her TV programme and then began saying her afternoon prayer (Asr). After this, she had some coffee and sat down to chat with her mother until 6.30pm. Abtihag was told to prepare dinner which took almost 90 minutes. As Abtihag was the eldest girl in the house, her daily responsibilities included cooking, washing the dishes and cleaning the house. Men were exempted from this work, and as these were female duties Abtihag couldn't expect any help from male members of the family. Abtihag finally had time to study for an hour at 10.30pm. At 11.30pm, tired after her long day, she decided to watch some TV. It was 12.30am when she said her evening prayer (Isha) and went to bed. According to Abtihag, her day was busier than most days. Normally, she would have more time to herself which she would spend reading newspapers and magazines and relaxing with friends and relatives.

### **Case 10**

Khalid was 40 years old and lived with his family in Tripoli. He had five children. I arrived in his house to interview him without an appointment, yet he welcomed me when I explained my research to him and showed him the letter from the Education Department. I told him I chose his house as a sample for my research. His house was located in the Elantules residential area, a wealthy neighbourhood, and consisted of four bedrooms and a garden. The house had a large garage where the family kept their two cars. The house also had a big satellite dish. Once inside, he took me to the male quarter of the house. Tea and coffee were served by his daughter

Marem, who studied in a private primary school. Khalid worked in the Public Service. He gave me an account of a single day in his life:

Khalid awoke at 6am for his morning prayer (Shurooq), after which he ate his breakfast. He left for work at 6.30am and arrived at 7.30am. His workplace was far from his home, and he travelled to work by car, where he worked until 3pm. He talked to me about the newly changed office furniture, computers and also the number of new females employed in the Computer Department. This particular day, he was very busy with work and his employees and arrived back home at 4pm at which point he ate his lunch, which had been prepared according to Libyan tradition, had been prepared for him by a woman. He did state that he helped his wife at home sometimes. He then sat for a time with his family, and they subsequently went shopping. They returned at 8pm, had some snacks and watched TV. He had a chat with his daughter about her schoolwork, and went to bed after midnight.

### **6.3 Inferences from the daily life of Tripoli**

In this section, I presented interviews I conducted with ten Libyan citizens, five women and five men. The interviews aim at giving us brief outline of an ordinary day in the life of a Libyan citizen. The information gathered reveals a number of interesting points.

To begin with, religion is central to the lives of all the interviewees. Each day in the life is literally punctuated by prayer. This is in line with the Quranic verses “When ye pass (congregational) prayers, celebrate Allah’s praises, standing, sitting down, or lying down on your sides; but when ye are free from danger, set up Regular Prayers: For such prayers Are enjoined on Believers at stated times” (Surah Alnisa: 4). Regular performance of prayers seems to be commonplace regardless of genders

and age. There is, however, one important gender difference here. For men, prayers connect them with the community, because men go to the mosque and meet with non-family members. Women, however, pray at home. In Libya, religion is considered an essential component of social life.

The move from rural to urban life in western societies did not seem to have had a negative impact on adherence to Islam, at least not to the performance of prayer on a regular basis. The assumption that rural people are more religious than urban people is not upheld in this case. Most Tripoli people are of rural origin and the Libyan society is highly regulated by legislations that are derived from the Quran.

It is perhaps true that urban people display weaker extended family relations than rural people. This may be so, but only up to a point, according to our interviewees. Ageel, Moftah and Ali all displayed strong relations with their extended family. Brothers of husbands, wives and parents continued to be supported by their married daughters like Kholod. Community relations are also seen to be strong where members display strong bonds with neighbours and relatives who often live close by.

Urbanisation has had a strong impact on social systems, especially with regard to gender relations and marriage. Women now spend more time obtaining an education and ultimately getting employment before stepping into marriage. In comparison with rural areas, urban women are seen more and more outside the home. Like Ghufraan, women now go to work, to sport clubs and shop unaccompanied by a male relative. Here, there is no doubt that urbanisation is accompanied by a shift in women's status and role in society. In general, women are allowed more individual freedom in cities than in rural villages. Invariably, this is accompanied by a lessening of male guardianship over women. Here, the interviews highlight the changing roles of women.

From the above interviews one notes that the advent of satellite television has jolted Libyans to the reality of modern life. Satellite television has and continues to weaken local culture as it has become a part of life by entertaining and informing audiences. Most people watch Arabic channels more than foreign ones; however, the impact of international media can be clearly observed through women's appearance in a public space, as well as in their style of dress, food, and music. An expression of these changes can also be observed through women's freedom of association.

While it can be argued that male hegemony over women has decreased with urbanisation in Libya, this is only true to a certain extent. Women are still burdened by excessive duties at home in a way that is similar to what one might find in rural Libyan societies. Men do not engage in cooking, house cleaning, child minding or serving guests in the home. Nursing and caring for the sick and the elderly are also regarded as principally female duties. These duties are performed by women even when they hold jobs outside the home. Their movements are also closely watched by their male guardians, such as in the case of Ebtihal, who needed to obtain permission from her husband before giving her phone number to the researcher.

Houses in Tripoli are also designed to guarantee strict separation between the sexes, whereby women are relegated to the back of the house. This is a field in which international media and globalisation have made little impact. Although the design of houses, apartments and flats may look deceptively western from the outside, they all display strong Islamic influence which reflects a clear gender divide in the home. The design and structure of houses have changed to keep with modern trends and they have also become larger with an increase in family size and occasionally to serve as social avenues for hosting parties.

Upon examination of the texts of the daily lives scrutinised in this section, one is struck by the amount of time taken up by two main activities: prayers and watching TV. Ironically, one of these activities reinforces the past, the traditional and the local, while the other reflects the present, the modern and the global. In effect, we are essentially looking at two broad areas: religion and the global media. These two areas can be seen as constituting two competing - if not outright contradictory - forces. It is of course acknowledged that the international media also includes images and ideas that are Islamic, aired by the media of Muslim countries. The *Igraa* channel watched by Abtihag is a good example of this. This particular channel is dedicated to the recitation and teaching of the Quran. Nonetheless, there can be no doubt that international media is dominated by western culture, which is at best at odds with Islamic culture and at worst antagonistic to it.

There are differences in people's choices in terms of modes of relaxation and entertainment, and these range from visiting public spots, resorts, parks and clubs to more introverted activities such as visiting friends and family members in their homes. Here, individuals (like Rabab) chat over meals and drinks. The younger and more broad-minded generation prefer outdoor activities like visiting parks and clubs. They are readily influenced by the global culture and this affects their lifestyle.

Urbanisation has led to the spread of urban culture to a large extent, as women visit beauty parlours and shop unsupervised. The number of female drivers who are not restricted to driving during the day has also increased, such as in the case of Kholod.

The financial demands of urban life have resulted in many city-dwellers holding two jobs or more in order to be able to keep on top of their bills and ensure their lifestyle is maintained; as with the case of Ali. The city's expansion and



population increase mean individuals move around different parts of the city regularly for work, to shop and enjoy leisure activities. This has led to a more rapid pace of life and many conduct themselves with increased formality similar to Ageel, who travels from one part of the city to another in his car on a daily basis. Individual lifestyle is influenced by strong social relationships between different individuals or groups; displaying loyalty to family and relatives. There is little difference here between rural and urban settings which is a strong characteristic of Arabic cities, thus distinguishing them from western cities.

Cultural events such as weddings and funerals still play an important role and it is the duty of relatives and family members to support the celebrant or grieved financially, morally and otherwise in order to help reduce their burden. These events were once celebrated exclusively in private residences, but as restrictions in the usage of public halls no longer exist, many Tripoli residents now use community and public halls for their celebrations. The majority of the younger generation listen to modern secular music which has influenced their lifestyle, partly due to the fact that they are more obligated to cater for their families financially before marriage, as in Ebtihal's case.

Lunch is the main family meal and is eaten at home. Many people still prefer eating at home to eating at restaurants because most individuals prefer eating in the traditional style, with one's right hand. The researcher noted that most of Tripoli's restaurants are designed in a modern fashion and are located around the city centre. There are strict Muslim taboos against alcohol, and meat must be prepared according to Islamic Halal methods. Tripoli residents are known for their hospitality, and this is particularly true of the immigrant population. Residents are honoured to receive guests and socialize with friends and relatives. At the present time, some may invite

friends to restaurants, and this is particularly popular among those who work in the business sector, which is characterised by young and prosperous generation. Tripoli's restaurants offer a wide variety of food and fast food restaurants have also become popular.

Presently, family size is quite different from the past. In the past, the average number of children per family was 8.67, influenced by the parents' and particularly the mother's level of formal education. In the process of modernisation, major factors have resulted in a decrease in desire for children. This can be seen through increasing income, urbanisation and women's education. Equally evident is a modest level of communication with relatives. While this is not common of what we might find in western cities, is not alien to Middle Eastern and African cities. Equally, westernisation and globalisation have led to women working outside the home, men helping out in the kitchen, as well as men and women alike watching foreign channels on TV, wearing modern clothes, frequenting sports clubs, driving their own cars, having foreign friends and working two jobs. These are all global characteristics of the city.

The researcher infers from the above interviews that life in Tripoli still maintains patterns which are different from those in rural society. This includes having a large family, eating at home as opposed to in restaurants, relinquishing traditional dress in favour of other clothing and keeping foreign friends. These all depart from what is common in rural areas.

## **Chapter 7**

**7.1 Conclusions: characteristics of urban people in Tripoli**

**7.2 Summary of research findings**

**7.3 Bibliography**

## **7.1 Conclusions: characteristics of urban people in Tripoli**

This research was undertaken from an urban anthropological perspective. The main objectives of the research were to (1) produce an analysis of urban life and changes from a perspective of global culture, with the view to contributing to the body of urban knowledge in general; (2) to examine the impact of the city on the habits and characteristics of the people living there; and (3) to identify the main factors that may influence transformation in people's lives. A core concern of the thesis was to identify causes of urbanisation and to reflect on modern aspects of the changes in accordance with global perspectives.

This research is unique in that it has been carried out using an observational approach, for example, through the appearance and lifestyle of city dwellers in conjunction interviews of a representative sample of the local population. To anchor the study in empirical research, I conducted semi-structured interviews with more than 300 people, of whom 50% were male and 50% were female. The sample was strategically chosen using a special technique to represent males and females in Tripoli. In addition, a sample of narratives based on in-depth interviews with ten people (both male and female), were also analysed. These age of these individuals varies and as such, some of whom grew up during a time of rapid social change. The main purpose of these interviews was to gain insight into the urban life of Tripoli's residents. The research opted to use interviewing as a method of data-gathering because it was deemed the most appropriate approach for collecting the primary data due to the sensitivity of the subject (Dawson 2002). Given the depth of empirical research in the area, the interviews were essential to enable people to answer questions about their daily life in the city.

Urbanisation is the increase in the proportion of people living in towns as well as an extension of urban transformation in cities. Urbanisation may be defined as a process of redistribution which encourages shifts of population from the countryside to towns and cities. The growth in the Libyan urban population is due to factors such as the availability of services, a growing rate of young people and an increase of economic activity. Urbanisation is a rather complex term, as it can be applied at different scales of growth. It is related to changes both in the environment and in individuals. Globalisation also increases similarities between Libya and other world cities. In Libya, an urban area is a settlement that holds an administrative function and has 5,000 or more inhabitants. However, the definition of “city” varies from one country to another. Urban development and population growth in Libya during the last three decades are due to improvements in the following areas: (1) political and administrative factors - as a result of a brief attempt at applied democracy, there have been marked improvements in the quality of services; (2) economic factors - as a result of the discovery of crude oil; (3) demographic factors, as a result of the increase in the immigrant population and better social services; and, (4) socio-cultural factors such as culture services and cultural consciousness (it should be noted that the presence of foreigners has had an influence on culture).

The phenomenal transformation of city life has been described by different researchers - many of whom have focused their interest on urbanisation. Iben Khaldun can be regarded as the father of Arab social science and philosophy. Writing in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Iben Khaldun described two sets of people: nomads and (urban) townspeople. He characterized each as follows: nomads are rough, uncultured and their presence slows down development, but they are frugal and morally incorrupt. Towns are centres of culture, science and crafts, and the availability of luxury can

lead to corruption in some individuals. In keeping with this approach, Lerner described urbanisation as flowing along a continuum from traditional to modern; however, many societies cluster around the extremity of the continuum. Previous theorists believed that cities were associated with the growth of social differentiation and individuality. In 1952, the anthropologist Oscar Lewis published a short paper entitled “Urbanisation without Breakdown”, refuting the bipolar moralistic assumption that migrants from a peasant village (Tepoztlan, Mexico) would inevitably be demoralised by life in Mexico City. He emphasised their holding onto kinship and religious support systems in the urban environment, and similar findings have subsequently been reported from cities in all parts of the world. Before the World War II, research on urban culture was on small cities or defined areas within larger cities. The writers Robert Redfield and Michel DeCerteau argued that urbanisation was an important aspect of the making of modern society due to the shift of people from the countryside to urban centres. Quantitative and qualitative changes in cities require new levels of planning and organisation (Bilton, Bonnett and Skinner 1996: 28). Finally, Lewis Mumford analysed city life which plays a role in development of the city.

In the 1960s, urban society and cities came to the attention of cultural anthropology. Anthropologists were already conducting research on cities before the term “urban anthropology” came into use in the 1960s. Theoretically, urban anthropology involves the study of cities’ cultural systems as well as their linkage to larger and smaller places and populations as part of a worldwide urban system. The present research explores city literature which focuses in particular on the urban field. Similar urban studies have been carried out worldwide in cities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and America. Michel DeCerteau argues that urbanisation was a principal

factor of modern cities due to the migration from the countryside to urban centres. Over half the world's urban population now live in developing countries rather than in industrialised countries. Urban transformation happens in different societies, but the degree of this phenomenon is not standard across different countries. Furthermore, contemporary urban researchers such as Charles Booth once discussed how cities experience movement to a new urbanism.

The urbanisation process is a measure of change in North Africa, where pre-urban cities and new urban settlements have increased over the past decade. The colonial system organised African societies so that they produced goods for export, but this brought only minimal economic returns to local labour. Most African states were influenced by Europeans and marriage between Arabs and Europeans led to the spread of Islam and Arab culture to Europe. The presence of regional and head offices of various international organisations has further led to the integration of African cities into the network of urbanised cities worldwide. The cultural exchange due to inter-marriage with foreigners and emigration have led to increased exposure to foreign influence which is more prominent amongst the young. Modern-day anthropologists clearly distinguish between culture and urbanisation. Culture is found in the origin of character of a nation and adds to the continuity of a nation. Urbanisation is simply a shift in distribution of the population from rural to urban locations and also large-scale redistribution of people from the world's poor nations to the wealthy ones; however, urbanisation also brings with it change in culture, identity, social relations and world outlook. These are distinct and separate from what we find in rural settings.

The situation created by this phenomenon is different in each society. As a result, most studies are not able to build a general theory on urbanisation at a global

level. Within the study of urbanisation, the emphasis is placed on centralising the cultural perspective ecology. The theory of human ecology (Park and Burgess) defines human ecology as the study of spatial and temporal organisation and the relation of human beings to the selective, distributive and accommodative forces of the environment. Urban ecology has undergone transformation and has emerged as a strong tool for both practical and theoretical purposes; it follows the assumption that the urban landscape is a mirror image of the society reflecting it. Human ecology is governed by the following determinates: firstly, that the biosphere and the earth are finite. Secondly, in that ecosystems are not closed but open to external influence. Thirdly, that mankind must create and transform energy and reduce the widening disparity between biological and ecological growth. Fourthly, that human beings are different from other biological organisms by the kind of regulators they use to define, modify, and control their living conditions. Because the world is a global village, the above principles of human ecology have been imbibed by Libyan scholars through contact with foreign people, especially in urban areas. The above theory can be applied to the transformation of Tripoli from a rural setting to an urban setting and the change in its landscape has been seen to occur in most modern cities of the world.

The research discussed the cultural theory of Louis Wirth who developed a theory called “urbanism as a way of life”. He belonged to the Chicago School of thought which is famous in urban studies. His theory emphasised the place of the individual and urban behaviour in which he discussed the phenomenon of urbanisation from a cultural perspective. The fact that social, political and cultural facilities are concentrated in cities means that there is a trend for people to move from rural communities to urban life. There are different indices governing the quantity and quality of people of different skills, sex and orientation, among other issues in



rural-urban dwellings. For example, cities contain the largest proportion of persons in the prime of life in comparison with rural areas.

Wirth defined five criteria a city must satisfy sociologically:

- (1) urbanism must be generic and not particular
- (2) the city should show essential characteristics that most cities have in common
- (3) the city should yield itself to the discovery of significant variations among cities
- (4) the characteristics of cities included in the definition should be as little in number as seems feasible for the deduction of significant sociological propositions
- (5) the city should lend itself to the discovery of differences among cities

Density of settlement is used as a measurement of urban areas everywhere; urbanism as a characteristic mode of life may be viewed from their interrelated perspectives thus: 1- as a physical culture consisting of a population base, a technology and an ecological order; 2- as a system of social organisation; 3- as a set of attitudes and ideas, and a constellation of personalities engaging in typical forms of collective behaviour and subject to characteristic mechanisms of social control (Wirth 1938: 18-19). The research referred to Low's (1999) book which explores modern theoretical patterns such as the divided city and the global city and how these may apply in Tripoli in some aspects of the urban life. There are urban patterns of Tripoli. They have a major impact on the lives of the city's residents. Growth, development and transformation generate changes in life patterns. The study of cities is present in many different sciences due to the complexities of life-systems. Thus, no one theory can adequately explain how cities grow. Moreover, multi-urban patterns and characteristics of internal structures of urban areas are different, especially from a cultural perspective.

The policies of urban transformation accelerated urbanisation and change in the city. This is related to globalisation, and attempts have been being made to standardise it so that its impact in various parts of the world can be similarly measured. Despite the risk and benefits of globalisation, Tripoli has been able to maintain some of its unique characteristics, especially in its social system whereby city people still maintain strong bonds with relatives, neighbours and kin groups as a result of regional influences. Therefore, this cultural transformation did not have a negative impact on the social structure of the religion. Many people prefer living in the city due to the availability of a variety of facilities in contemporary urban life. Urban transformation creates an urban social structure that is distinct from one that is rural. With the intensification of globalisation, it is often said that cities across the world have become similar in some aspects. Despite this, heterogeneity still exists among urban people. There are similarities between most city people who spend a large part of their day earning their living during the week. Socialisation, politics, recreation, and holidays are reserved for weekends. There are many people in the streets buying and selling and movement is not easy in some parts of the city on some occasions - for example, religious occasions - due to human traffic. People prefer living in urban areas because of unique characteristics which differ from one urban district to another. This research indicated that these changes impacted on Tripoli's population as well as the majority of societies in Africa.

The achievement of political independence in African societies has not occurred in a rapid manner. They are rather the end-product of very complex economic, social and political processes that have been at work over a long period of time. North Africa consists of six countries with similarities and structural variations, apart from being governed by Europeans for a time. African migrant workers in

Western Europe primarily originated from North and West Africa who, on returning home, imported their newly acquired foreign culture and lifestyle. The same applies to Libyans who travelled, studied and conducted business abroad. New ideas and experience of modern life generated some aspects of urban transformation throughout Libya and North Africa. Between 1950 and 2000, urbanisation has increased in various African countries with Libya having the highest rate from 20% to 88%. Urbanisation has further increased in Libya because of its programme for economic, social and country development which entices foreign multinationals and immigrants to its urban centres. This has led to the acquisition of improved lifestyles and economic power for the individual and society. With 5,000 as a minimum size of an urban population, the level of urbanisation in North Africa varies from country to country; the highest being in Libya (88%) and Algeria (60%), Tunisia (60%), Morocco (51%), Mauritian (49%), and Egypt (69%). It can be argued that in North Africa the urbanisation of different countries is remarkable and although the degree of urbanisation is lower than the rest of the Arab world and Middle East, it is higher than in tropical Africa and Asia. Most Arabic and Middle Eastern cities have an urban history prior to the pre-colonial era exemplified in their architecture, which is influenced by their climate and culture. For example, an allowance for adequate heat exchange is made in the architecture of private homes.

Rapid urban transformation in North Africa has also given rise to significant environmental and social problems, characterised by increasing urban poverty in most North African cities. This results in an emergence of informal settlements and slums and a shortage in basic urban services. Rapid modernisation and the spread of the capitalist manner of consumption have all transformed and internationalised culture, concepts and commodities. Urbanisation was confined to developed countries before

the mid-twentieth century, but has since spread to developing countries due to the consequences of growth and the geographical extension of economic development and cultural separation.

The Libyan social structure has been transformed since the time it was tribal, but the family as a social unit has been influenced by a system of tribalism. In modern times, however, the structure of society has changed and developed into an urban modern lifestyle structure. Urban centre population increased as a result of the influx of people from rural settings. Libya has the highest level of urbanisation (88%) and the system of life is moving towards what we would find in developed countries.

This research explored the state of society in the past: only a few decades ago, Libya was considered one of the least developed nations on Earth, with meagre national resources and a high proportion of arid desert land. However, with the discovery of oil, improved economic policies, fine governance and industrialisation, this status soon changed and modernisation proliferated. The level of urbanisation in Libya is relatively high in comparison with other African cities. This is fuelled by its oil resources. Urbanisation is centred in major cities and has encouraged rural-urban migration, but its level of urbanisation is not matched by its level of industrialisation. Urbanisation brought with it European modes of sophistication, lifestyle and profiling which were initially imposed on African communities. Urbanisation is influenced by politics, economics and exposure to foreign influence which has rapidly altered and enhanced urbanisation, industrialisation and the modernisation of the Libyan society. Libyan development policies have further led to adequate provision of schools, hospitals, and facilities required for the promotion of the wellbeing of its citizens and immigrant population such as can be found in any developed country of the world.

The Libyan cultural, political and economic system changed with the finding of oil and led to modernisation which is beneficial both at a personal and societal level. Tripoli has a traditional market located in the old city. Traditional life has changed since colonisation, which lasted until the Libyan Revolution in 1969, which brought M. Ghadhafi to power. To an extent, Tripoli has stopped the formation of class differences because the practised system of “Popular Socialism” reduced the income gap between the different social strata in the society. However, at present, the country applies privatisation in the economic sector which may generate differences between people. This effort is now impeded by global forces. Tripoli is part of the world at large, and cannot be cut off from the influences of other economic systems, which maintain differences between the social strata.

This research has contributed to knowledge by the fresh examination of the daily lives of residents of Tripoli presented earlier in the thesis. They have shown that religion is central to the lives of all interviewees. The move from rural to urban life in western societies did not seem to have a negative impact on adherence to Islam. The assumption that rural people are more religious than urban people is not upheld in the case of these interviews. Religious and professional groups are important in the Tripoli community. For instance, when people meet foreigners, they ask about their religion and profession before their countries of origin. This shows that religion is important to Libyan people, perhaps much more so than nationality. This is especially characteristic of urban people in Libyan society. This system is slightly different compared to that present in Europe, where most hosts are more interested in country of origin rather than profession. Libyans are earnest and strict about religion, and there is nothing in their life that has not been affected by a profound sense of piety. There is no oath-swearing without reading the opening chapter of the Quran (Fatiha),

nor can work be started before verses of the Quran are recited. The bridegroom meets his bride on their first nuptial night holding the holy Quran.

This research also indicates that there is transformation in women's lives. It is only in the last few years that women have started to visit the Mosque to pray and study the Quran. Islamic principles are deeply entrenched in culture, such that women are taught the Quran laws and principles of living. Weddings are consummated by Quran laws and births are celebrated by Islamic principles. Urbanisation has also brought about increased interaction between both sexes, especially in third level education. Moreover, exposure to foreign lifestyles is altering the traditional dress code, particularly the use of the veil (hijab). The home, however, seems to have resisted that gender change and it still reflects strict gender separation. Women experience more individual freedom in the city. The advent of satellite television has contributed to the changing roles of women in Tripoli culture. Although women have gained more freedom in recent years, they have not escaped their traditional workload in the home. Men still do not engage in cooking, cleaning, or child minding. From this, one can infer that the impact of global media in gender roles in urban Libya is somewhat limited. Urbanisation has an impact on people's behaviour as women now visit beauty parlours and go out unaccompanied.

Urban transformation has improved the lives of Tripoli women, who have now more access to foreign culture and thus receive exposure to foreign lifestyles via the media (newspapers, magazines and the internet). Tripoli women have also been influenced by their occupations outside the home and their new roles in larger society. Libyan women are represented in various world organisations which stand for the cause of women which is also promoted and encouraged by the central government which recently declared the 9th of September as Libyan Women's Day. Libyan

women's modern status is clearly reflected in the increasing number of women holding management and administration positions in society and this is being encouraged more and more by both the Libyan government and the legal system, which stipulates equal employment opportunities. In line with the Libyan concept of Islam, women are accorded an important place in society. They are honoured and allowed to achieve quite equal rights in acquisition and disposition of property the way they choose. They are also encouraged to acquire education which has bettered most Libyan women in general. Globally, advanced technology has led to a change in culture and attitude towards women and has resulted in many women playing prominent roles in commerce, business and industry as in European cities. The gender relations in the rural and urban area are different because rural people do not permit frequent gender relationships.

This research showed the transformation of the population as a modern phenomenon. Most of the population of Tripoli are of rural origin and Libyan society is highly regulated by legislation that is derived from the Quran. It is commonly held that urban people display weaker extended family relations compared to rural people. Tripoli people challenge this perception as they have strong relations with extended family. According to our interviews, Ageel, Mofth and Ali have all displayed strong relations. Further, the questionnaire indicated that 79% of the people have strong loyalty to primary family members, and 42% of the people have strong loyalty to extended family which reflects rural culture. However, 52% of the people have strong loyalty to friends, so friends are more important than neighbours which is a feature of urban society. In rural societies, it is often the case that neighbours are more important and they are often relatives. The researcher found that Tripoli's social networks were different to many city societies of the world.

Despite the influence of modernisation, religious influence is still well-rooted in society and this encourages good neighbourly relationships and friendships as well as kinship. Despite the exposure to urbanisation and modernisation, Libyan cities have been able to curtail the influence of modernisation in some areas of architecture, and Libyans who are originally nomadic in nature have not totally imbibed the sedentary lifestyle associated with modernisation.

Libyan humility can still be seen despite the influence of modernisation - if one needs to communicate with relatives, despite the presence of phones and mobile phones, one needs to go to them physically rather than making mere calls. In most Libyan homes, pillows and puffs are placed on woven carpets and host and visitors alike sit on them rather than on sofas. It is clear that some people still maintain traditional characteristics within the culture of the city, which is unique of Libyan cities. Libyans are a frank set of people that deal with and expect honesty from the people they interact with. Urbanisation has a strong impact on the social system today, especially when it comes to gender relations and marriage. There are some shared values that are peculiar to Libya and other Islamic states, such as helping each other out when in financial distress. Dependence on relatives for cash is still more common than reliance on banks- this is clearly a rural feature while the latter is more dominant in urban settings.

There are strong moral values, such as abstinence from premarital sex and from drinking. However, education undermines some of these. A high level of education encourages change through modern communications with regards to the above. Urbanisation has had an influence on the traditional marriage culture as most people who live in cities are influenced by the nuclear family system with little influence from the traditional extended family system. 53% of Tripoli people have



small families, like most modern societies in other parts of the world. Another effect of urbanisation on marriage is that both males and females now marry at a later age because they spend more time acquiring education and finding employment before thinking of marriage. Later marriages have also led to a drop in the rate of population increase – however, one could say that families are still large, such as that of Ageel and Ahmed. It seems that children are still seen as an asset and in a way similar to what is typical in rural environments. Furthermore, large family sizes are a rural characteristic but they still exist in Tripoli. Family size at the present time is different from the past and is diminishing. The average family size was 8.67, however, the number of children per family was influenced by the level of formal education of the parents, especially that of the mother. The current average is 6. In the process of modernisation, major factors resulting in a decrease in demand for children can be seen to be increasing income, urbanisation and women's education.

Western civilisation has influenced the life of the average Tripoli person, most importantly via social infrastructures and social interactions between males and females. This is enhanced by the proclivity of public gardens, parks and leisure centres in cities for socialising and recreation. Transformation also occurred within the culture of clothing. Most clothes in the city were designed using the colour green (even more so during the Turkish occupation). But recently, the system has changed completely due to development in the city. However, living standards have changed for the better due to the impact of incoming modern culture. Despite the influence of urbanisation, Tripoli people still wear traditional clothing at home and during ceremonies, especially those with closer links to rural areas. The design and prints on traditional clothes have changed as a result of the influence of urban transformation and this has also influenced architecture and the hospitality sector. Libyan

traditional clothes allow much more freedom of mobility and activity than European clothes. 26% of the survey sample favour Arabic clothes, 12% favour Western clothes, 47% both styles of dress because of their exposure to and acceptance of foreign culture in the city, and finally, 5% favour designer clothes.

This research indicated that the mass media has an important role to play in cultural transformation. Media coverage of the history of Tripoli serves as a means of communication and an instrument that contributes to democracy, cultural transformation and modern life. The mass media sector has been seen by the community to be an important tool used to influence citizens, organisations and government activities. The system of Tripoli life has changed. The type of inter-generational relations prevalent in traditional Tripoli society are being broken down by current changes. In addition, this research found that urban transformation has many advantages, including effects of urbanisation and the modernisation of people. People began reading a local newspapers over foreign ones, and now newspapers have become a larger part of the country's communication system. There is an increased level of literacy and education awareness such that people are now encouraged to be educated and participate in the formation of the country's political process. Urbanisation has a great influence on the youth, who are now exposed to the dissemination of information via the internet and satellite TVs and are now acquiring foreign modes of culture and dress. Mass media has changed Libyan traditional music, which is unique in its own way and is used in weddings, birth celebrations and folklore festivals. The music culture of Tripoli has been influenced by modernisation, as young people can be seen singing and adapting to modern music. 84% of Tripoli's population listen to music, some of which are sourced abroad. Most young people

listen to modern secular music that has influenced their lifestyle, which is one of the urban features of Tripoli.

Tourism is also linked with urbanisation, in that it is a global phenomenon. Urbanisation has gradually led to the inculcation of modern lifestyles into traditional Tripoli culture as is evident in food and vocabulary. This is due to the exposure of foreign culture and media (such as the internet, satellite networks and easy access to foreign newspapers and magazines). Libya is located near Europe and has many tourist attractions such as the desert, religious activities and sport. There are a number of factors that would attract tourists to Tripoli, such as its good location, its numerous museums and its long history. Urban development programmes in Tripoli have attempted to attract tourists. This has been done by improving urban services such as hotels, restaurants, beaches and by encouraging multilingualism among natives. Also, through development programmes, Libya plans to improve elements of infrastructures such as bank services and car rentals and to modernise the institutes and training of people who deal with tourists. While Tripoli has infrastructure for tourism that aspires to global standards, improvements are still needed to encourage more tourists. The evolution of tourism in Tripoli should not be exaggerated as it lags behind several North African countries like Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

Tourism is a factor that has led to change in the way of life of Tripoli people and has partly influenced the culture. There is a large proportion of foreigners living in the city, including Asians, Africans and Europeans; and some are not Muslims. Most youths speak more than one language as a result of their interaction with people from foreign countries and thus they imbibe their language and culture. This is another urban feature of Tripoli. The presence of foreigners has also led to an increasing interest in foreign culture and lifestyle which has led to the establishment

of a new centre cultural studies. Tripoli has benefited hugely from the tourists and arrival of immigrants who have contributed to the development of the economy and to the enrichment of cultural and social life.

The research also indicates that food in Tripoli attracts tourists. Equally, modernisation and awareness of foreign lifestyles have altered the traditional cuisine which is cumbersome for women who combine work with household duties in cities. Meals are served as a collection of traditional and modern food. Traditional Libyan dishes consist of exquisitely prepared hot and spicy food, but this is blended with foreign cuisine such as that found around the Mediterranean region. The data indicates that 56% of Tripoli people cook international dishes. Again, the use of international foods is an urban feature of Tripoli city. The increasing dominance of foreign foods is conspicuous among young urban dwellers who find it easy to heat pre-made food in the microwave after a day's activity rather than prepare traditional dishes from scratch, which may be time consuming. Urbanisation has led to an increase in the demand for pre-prepared dishes which are mainly of foreign origin such as canned beef, frozen vegetables and fish dishes.

Many restaurants and coffee shops open in Tripoli are of European design and they offer 24-hour service. Boys and girls stay there, especially in the daytime. Some internet restaurants sell international food from Arab countries in particular, as well as Italian snacks. Most restaurants sell both local and foreign food. However, our case studies indicate that the restaurant is not yet integrated into the Libyan urban culture. The home is still a prime site for eating three daily meals. Eating at home rather than in restaurants is a rural characteristic but is still retained in urban centres. Lunch is the main meal for the family and is eaten at home. However, at present, some choose to invite friends to restaurants, especially those who work in the business sector and

these restaurants are characterised by a young and prosperous generation. The restaurants offer a wide variety of food, and fast food restaurants have become popular. The researcher noted that most restaurants in Tripoli are designed in a modern fashion and are located around the city centre.

Urbanisation has a strong impact on local culture in some aspects. Traditional activities are in decline especially in the young generation. People living in Tripoli have better access to global culture and more chances to engage in activities that connect them with the outside world. In addition, urban transformation exposes the individual to multiple cultures and increased freedom. The above-mentioned are characteristics of urbanisation in Tripoli life. The results obtained from the survey provide information that may be eligible to build a global measurement of urbanisation.

## **7.2 Summary of research findings**

The research indicated many urban features of Tripoli as a contribution to urban knowledge of the city. The following provides a summary of the main urban features:

- More than half of the sample have small families, like most developed societies in the world. This is a result of the influence of family planning systems that exist in most cities of the world..
- The bulk of the people have modern facilities. The result of the research reflects the fact that Tripoli shares an identity with many modern cities of the world. All rational scholars would come to the same conclusion eventually, as knowledge establishes true facts.
- The majority of individuals have a strong loyalty with primary family members. This influences the characteristics of Libyan urban structure.

- There is no doubt that urban transformation has improved women's status and increased their choice and roles in society. There has been an increase in the presence of women in the public sphere.
- The advent of satellite television has exposed Tripoli people to the reality of modern life. The impact of international media can be clearly observed by the appearance of women in the public space, in style of dress, food, music and freedom of association and expression.
- Late marriage can be observed due to people continuing education or work. This has largely been impacted on by interaction with foreign people. Also people are influenced by modern obligations for marriage such as a salary and apartment.
- The global style of consumption in relation to food, clothes, music, etc.
- The use of international languages.
- The growth of tourism, the policy of which aspires to become of global standard.

Also, the researcher found that Tripoli still retains rural features, these can be summarised as follows:

- Many people have relations with their neighbours. This is a noticeable characteristic of life in Tripoli. This is local knowledge. This has been culturally significant in the transformation of the city.
- The majority of the people have no plan to return to the countryside, this reflects that people have been satisfied with urban life. This knowledge indicates the absorption of urban ideas and structures of urban life.

- Community relations also seem to be strong where members display a strong bond with their relatives who often live close-by. This finding demonstrate the unique characteristics of people in this frame of social relationship.
- Individual life style is influenced by strong social relationships between individuals and groups. There is little difference here between rural and urban settings. This is a strong characteristic of Arabic cities, which distinguishes them from modern cities.
- To some extent, male hegemony over women has decreased with urban transformation and social change in Tripoli. However, women are still burdened by excessive duties at home in a way that is similar to what one finds in rural Libyan society. So, separation of women and a high work load at home are rural features of the city.
- The centrality of religion to the lives of people; for example, the regular performance of prayers.
- House architecture accommodates gender separation and one's position within society.
- Sitting on pillows (many houses have a special room where people can sit on pillows in the traditional manner).
- The fact that most people still prefer to eat at home rather than in restaurants.

The findings of this thesis demonstrate some of the unique characteristics of people of the city, which contributes significantly to urban studies.

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