INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL HISTORY

Inventory of the collection of

SHUHDI CATIYYA AL-SHAIFI (1912-1960)

(1955) 1956-1958

Roel Meijer

Amsterdam
1999
INTRODUCTION

History

Shuhdi 'Atiyya al-Shafî'i (born in 1912) became involved as a student in the student movement of the 1930s which inaugurated a more radical phase of the Egyptian nationalist movement. He graduated in English at the Faculty of Arts and taught for a while at a secondary school. At the end of the 1930s he won a prize for his short stories and acquired a grant from the Ministry of Education to study at Oxford University. When he returned to Egypt in 1940 he took up his former profession as teacher and obtained the rank of overseer of the Ministry of Education in 1947.

In this period he joined Iskra and became one of the two Egyptian members of its Central Committee. He assigned responsibility for running Dar al-Abhath al-'Ilmiyya (The House of Scientific Learning), the cultural platform of Iskra, which attracted many young Egyptian left-wing intellectuals to the communist movement.

In addition, Shuhdi 'Atiyya, together with Muhammad 'Abd al-Ma'bud al-Jubayli, drew up the nationalist programme of the Iskra group within the Communist movement, called Ahdafuna al-Wataniyya (Our National Goals), which was printed in 1945. He also participated in establishing the National Committee for the Students and Workers which led the student and workers’ revolt of February-March 1946 against negotiations of the Egyptian minority government with Great Britain.

When Iskra merged with the Egyptian Movement for the National Liberation (EMNL) to found the Democratic Movement for National Liberation (DMNL) in 1947, Shuhdi 'Atiyya became editor of its famous newspaper al-Jamahir (The Masses). At the same time he also became a member of its Central Committee. He immediately clashed with Henri Curiel over his line to unite all nationalist and progressive forces in one front. In protest, he wrote several articles in al-Jamahir, calling for the founding of a Communist Party that should be revolutionary and represented only the working class. When the Central Committee refused to discuss his report that expounded his revolutionary ideas, he left DMNL to establish DMNL - Revolutionary Wing (Haditu--al-Tayyar al-Thawri). This organisation, that never acquired much support, rejoined DMNL again in 1955. During the repression of the communist movement in 1948 Shuhdi 'Atiyya was sentenced to seven years in prison. By the time he was released the communist movement was in conflict with the military regime which had taken over power in July 1952.

In spite of his revolutionary episode in the DMNL-Revolutionary Wing, Shuhdi Atiyya became one of the most outspoken supporters within the communist movement of the Free Officers, whom he regarded as a progressive movement on account of their anti-imperialist and reformist stance. He explained his ideas in his book Amrika wa-l-Sharq al-Awsat (America and the Middle East), published during Gamal Abd al-Nasir’s resistance against the Baghdad Pact in 1955. Because of his sympathetic attitude towards the regime, Shuhdi ‘Atiyya’s was allowed to expound his ideas in the newly founded al-Masa’ newspaper. After the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company in July 1956 and
the following Suez crisis, he wrote his famous historical analysis of the Egyptian nationalist movement *Tatawwur al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Misriyya 1882-1956 (The Development of the Egyptian Nationalist Movement, 1882-1956)*, which contains one of the most remarkable Marxist/nationalist interpretations of Egyptian history. He also published a collection of short stories, *Hara Umm al-Husayni*, which was serialised in the newspaper *al-Masa’*. Relations with the military deteriorated dramatically, however, after communist opposition in Syria and Iraq against the unification of Syria and Egypt in February 1958 under the leadership of Nasser. On the first of January 1959 Shuhdi ʿAtiyya was arrested for the second time and imprisoned, together with hundreds of other communists. Despite his arrest and the repression of the Communist movement, he continued to support the internal reforms and the neutralist foreign policy of the regime. During his trial in March 1960 he stated that every true nationalist citizen should support the government. On 15 June 1960 Shuhdi ʿAtiyya died under torture in Abu Zaʿbal prison.

The collection
The collection of Shuhdi ʿAtiyya al-Shafiʿi was donated in 1997 to the IISH by dr. Rifat al-Saʿiʿid. A large part of the collection consists of preliminary and final drafts of the historical work that Shuhdi ʿAtiyya al-Shafiʿi wrote in 1956, *Tatawwur al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Misriyya, 1882-1956*. Much effort has gone into trying to systematise and organise the numerous drafts of this historical work, with the aim to enable researchers to trace the development and shifts of Shuhdi Atiyya’s political thought in the different drafts of the manuscript and compare them with the final version of the book. A distinction has been made between preliminary and the final draft, although the final draft has also been heavily edited. The different drafts of the manuscript, preliminary and final, were in complete disarray when they arrived at the IISH. Ninety percent of the received manuscript has been traced and put together according to the numbers of the pages, the style of handwriting and different hues of ink. This does not mean that the manuscript is now complete; although the final draft of the manuscript is almost recovered, large sections of the preliminary drafts are either missing or include several versions. Some parts were, for example, unretrievable, while other sections, such as chapter X, and especially some specific paragraphs of this chapter, have been rewritten several times and are therefore available in different versions. The collection also contains a small part of the edited print proofs.

In addition to his manuscripts and proof prints, the second part of the collection consists of notes and documentation Shuhdi ʿAtiyya presumably used for writing his historical work. This part consists of economic statistics, reports of banks, magazine cuttings and other material.
The third part of the collection consists of drafts of the manuscripts of his collection of short stories *Hara Umm al-Husayni* and *ʿAzīza* and his more philosophical work *Mawkiḥ al-Bishriyya*. These manuscripts are complete and are in their final form. Also a manuscript of a pamphlet of Shuhdi ʿAtiyya on Nasser has been found among the collection and was added to this part. The size of the collection is 0.36 m.

**Consultation**

There are no restrictions to the consultation of the collection.
INVENTORY

Publications

Tatawwur al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Misriyya, 1882-1956


   N.B. This draft exists only in manuscript form.

2. Pages 1-20 of preliminary draft of the paragraphs entitled ‘al-Tabaqa al-’Amila al-Misriyya’ and ‘Hala al-Iqtisadiyya’.
   N.B. This draft exists only in manuscript form.

3. Notes to chapter III.


5. Preliminary drafts of chapter IV (no page numbers).

6. Notes and rough draft of chapter IV (not clear exactly which pages in the book).

   N.B. contains important differences with the final chapter in the book.


20. Pages 1-14 of an unidentified manuscript.

21. Collection of unidentified pages of several different manuscripts, both preliminary and final, of Tatawwur al-Haraka. (folder)


NB. Final version is heavily edited, with the result that many paragraphs have been scrapped.

27. Pages 220-244 of the final draft of chapter IX, pages 132-142 of the book.


Proofs

Notes and documentation


30. Excerpts from the article entitled ‘Two Conferences, Two Papers.’ November 1958.
   N.B. Handwritten excerpts by Shuhdi Atiyya. 5 pages.


32.Untitled incomplete typescript. N.d.

33. Report written by the Egyptian Chamber of Commerce, with comment of Shuhdi Atiyya. N.d.

34. Untitled incomplete typescripts in Arabic and English. Nd.

35. Different parts of historical works on 19th century Egypt and European history, written in Arabic by unknown authors. N.d.

36. Manuscripts with notes concerning the Russian Revolution. N.d.


41. Draft for a law on housing initiated by Milad Hanna. 1 January 1957.


43. Report on foreign trade in Arabic. 7 pages.

44. Report on the economy of France. 3 pages.


49. Notes and rough draft on weakness of production in Egypt.

50. Notes and economic statistics.

51. Documentary material. (folder)

52. Documentary material. (folder)

53. Notes, drafts and documentary material. (folder)

Other publications

54-59. Notes and various drafts of the manuscript of *Mawkib al-Bishriyya (Triumph of Humanity)*. N.d. 4 covers and 2 folders.
54. Draft of the manuscript. 64 pages.
55. Notes made for *Mawkib al-Bishriyya*.
56. Draft of the manuscript. 115 pages. (folder)
57. Draft of the manuscript.
58. Draft of the manuscript. 54 pages. N.d.
59. Final and complete draft of *Mawkib al-Bishriyya*. (folder)

60-64. Different drafts of the manuscript of the collection of short stories *Hara Umm al-Husaini*. With other documents concerning the manuscript. N.d. 5 covers.

65. Draft of the manuscript of short story *‘Aziza*. N.d. 1 cover.

   NB. Second chapter heavily damaged and incomplete. 37 pages.


**Trial**