

**Children in Selected Poems by
W. B. Yeats and Ahmad Shawqi:
Poetry as a Literary and Educational Tool.**

Presented by:

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Children in Selected Poems by W. B. Yeats and Ahmad Shawqi: Poetry as a Literary and Educational Tool.

Both William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) and Ahmed Shawqi (1868-1932) are two celebrated literary figures who have their prominent place in the realm of literature in general and of poetry in particular. Their poetry reflects to a great extent their attachment to the heritage of their respective countries, Ireland and Egypt that have long suffered from the same plague; the British occupation. Both of them have been dedicated supporters of national independence and, therefore, they have tried through their poetry to plant such patriotic feelings in the hearts and minds of young readers. In 1923 Yeats was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. In 1927 Shawqi was given the title of poet laureate or "Prince of Poets" (Amir Al Shuara) a title which has never been given to any other poet in Egypt or in the entire Arab world. Shawqi introduced the genre of poetic drama to Arabic literature. Both Shawqi and Yeats are great poets and dramatists who have contributed to the literary movement of their respective countries Ireland and Egypt.

Besides their contributions to the literary world, both Yeats and Shawqi have played a significant role in the political scene in their beloved countries. This is why their poetry is pregnant with references to the legacy of their nations with their unique history, folklore and myth; a legacy which many of their poems have registered and preserved to be delivered to the younger generations who, like the adults, can equally taste its beauty. They have similarly exerted much effort through their creative manipulation of language "to gild the pill" and to avoid being didactic in delivering priceless lessons and valuable pieces of advice for children and teenagers who symbolize the future of their nations. Both Yeats and Shawqi have used their artistic talent as a medium through which they can address the mentality of children and adolescences and discover their amazing world with all its wonders; its innocence, simplicity, fun, imagination, curiosity, inquiries, dreams and even their fears.

The aim of this paper is to highlight how both Yeats and Shawqi have allocated a considerable place for children and their amazing world in their poetry, though in different degrees. The paper underlines not only the talented manipulation of language in their poems for or about children, but also the skillful manipulation of folklore and myth which is typically suitable for addressing children. This is true since it equally matches their wide imagination and gratifies their thirst for knowledge and satisfies their needs for having fun through enjoying both the music of the verse and the wisdom deducted from the magic world of folkloric, mythological, and animal stories. The paper tries to point out how celebrated poets such as Yeats and Shawqi have shown a unique creative talent while addressing the mentality of children and describing their special world through poetry.

More importantly, the comparison drawn between two great poets such as Yeats and Shawqi who belong to different cultural backgrounds, but who almost lived in the same ages, namely, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, will certainly be of great benefit. This is true since it grants universal dimensions to the scope of the research paper which aims at highlighting the importance of children's literature in general and of poetry in particular as a literary and educational tool. Poetry, as Peter Hunt puts it, is a means of improving children's "literary and literacy competence" in both the English and Arabic cultures (138). According to Hunt, children's literature "although widely accepted institutionally, has tended to operate within the paradox that writers in the field need to operate within the academic/ educational world" (2). Thus the scope of the research paper seems to have two inseparable dimensions; the literary and the educational.

To begin, having access to children's world is not an easy job and entering such world through the gate of literature in general and poetry in particular necessitates much effort on the part of writers, critics, and researchers alike. In fact, children's literature "is an amorphous, ambiguous creature; its relationship to its audience is difficult, its relationship to the rest of literature, problematic" and its critics have had to "encompass a huge field

and large number of adjacent disciplines” (Hunt 1). Sometimes, children’s books “were seen as marginal to literary studies and were only studied as historical footnotes or as bibliographical curiosities” (Hunt 6-7). In the first place, dealing with this genre requires special skills on the part of the writers who should be fully aware of the mentality of children and their psychology. They should also be aware of the linguistic and sociological functions of children’s literature, that is, the relationship between the creative use of language as a medium through which children can improve their language and acquire knowledge at the same time. Indeed, as Thnaa Yusuf El Dabba argues, “the theory of the interrelation between language and civilization regards language as an important and essential means for the development of human civilization” (24). She also refers to psychological linguistics or psychology of language and psycholinguistics as two branches of knowledge that appeared during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the aim of pin pointing the strong relationship between psychology and language” (12).

Therefore, both the psychological and sociological approaches to literature are suitable in this research paper. This is true since the poet while writing for children should bear in mind not only the linguistic abilities of his audience, but also their psychological needs, along with the set of social and moral values he aspires to plant in their little minds. Freud points out “that children at play behave like creative writers, in the way which they rearrange the objects in their world to make that world more pleasing to them” and therefore, children “do need teaching in the craft, and they are also real poets” (qt in Sedgwick 14). In an article entitled, “Good Friends, or Just Acquaintances? The Relationship between Child Psychology and Children’s Literature”, Nicholas Trucker illustrates:

Yet to the extent that children’s authors are inevitably influenced by the culture within which they live, some of those psychological theories of childhood which have become widely taken up will eventually begin to work their own way into their writing. (157)

Trucker asserts, therefore, that children’s writers follow “a tradition of partial psychological explanation and partial moral assessment” (157). In this way, it has become evident that

“psychoanalytic influences” as Trucker argues, “had its own effect upon children’s literature” (166).

As for the sociological approach including New Historicism, in the first place, in fact, all critics agree on “the importance of children’s literature and the role it plays in kids’ lives” since “it reflects social, political, and economic aspects of their social milieu” (El Shamy 11). According to Mitzi Myers, “A New Historicism of Children’s literature would integrate text and socio-historic context, demonstrating on the one hand how extra-literary cultural formations shape literary discourse” and, more importantly, “on the other, how literary practices are actions that make things happen – by shaping the psychic and moral consciousness of young readers” (qt in Hunt 11). In an article entitled “Cultural Studies, New Historicism and Children’s Literature” Tony Watkins points out that “the stories we tell our children, the narratives we give them to make sense of cultural experience constitute a kind of mapping, maps of meaning that enable our children to make sense of the world” (183). More importantly, they “contribute to children’s sense of identity that is simultaneously personal and social; narratives, we might say, shape the way children find ‘home’ in the world” (183). This is typical of many of the poems written by two nationalist poets such as Yeats and Shawqi about and for children in which stories derived from national myths and folklore are skillfully interwoven in the texture of their verse as will be illustrated in the present survey.

According to Watkins, “national myths work largely unconsciously but nevertheless powerfully, to shape a part of adults’ and children’s cultural imagination” (185). This true since such national myths “act both psychologically and socially” on adults and children alike (185). In his article “Myth and Education”, Ted Hughes asserts that “What begins as an idle reading of fairy tale ends, by simple natural activity of imagination as a rich perception of values of feeling, emotion and spirit” (94). He refers to the fact that Plato in *The Republic* insists that “a formal education—is not for children” arguing that “the proper education for his future ideal citizens” is instead “something quite different: it is to be found in the traditional myths and tales of which Greece possessed such a huge abundance” and which “were the material of the Greek poets” (77-78). As will be illustrated both Yeats and Shawqi have shown a great talent in manipulating mythological and folkloric

materials in the selected poems to deliver valuable messages to the young readers and to create that powerful link between the legacy of their respective countries and the new generations who symbolize the future of their nations.

Here appears the powerful link between children's literature and education. Poetry, in particular, plays an important role in this regard. In an article entitled "Poetry, Response, and Education" Peter Hunt, argues that "An important body of contemporary research on children's literature explores the relationship between the characteristics of texts, the readers' response to the texts" and above all, "the relationship of these to education, notably reading skills" (126). He highlights how "Both theory and practice has centered around the reading and teaching of poetry, an aspect of children's literature frequently neglected" (126). According to John Cheetham, "There is no doubt that the junior school which produces lively, interesting, sensitive writing has a firm basis of poetry and fiction, introduced and used by the teachers" (193).

In fact, poetry is, "in the first place, a vocal art. It derives its aesthetic value – among a multitude of other things – from the sonic effect it leaves on the listener" (Salama xv). This perhaps accounts for the fact that poetry finds its way to the hearts and minds of children much faster and easier than any other genre of literature. It is certainly this sweet music and rhythm springing from lines of poetry which enable children to memorize them even before they are able to understand fully their meanings (Al Dabaa 257). Literary as well as educational studies have allocated much space for highlighting the effect of poetry on the development of children linguistically, psychologically and socially speaking. According to Al Dabaa, "children's poetry, besides fulfilling some of their emotional needs, it is considered a genre of children's literature which helps in their mental, literary, psychological, social, and ethical improvement" (257). Therefore, as Muhammed Abdel Raheem argues, school curriculums usually contain poems for children to be read aloud, studied, and memorized by students in classes even if they are not originally written for children in particular (172). This is true since, it is well known that poetry is "the most important literary genre that can best unveil and crystallize the beauty of language, the medium through which human beings can transmit their feelings and emotions and convey

their experiences” (169). Here appears the universal value of poetry in particular and literature in general as it provides both pleasure and understanding for children and adults alike (Lukens 3). Though "It is not explicitly the function of literature, either for adults or children, to try to reform human beings, or to set up guidelines for behavior”, yet “it is the province of literature to observe and to comment, to open individuals and their society for our observation and our understanding” (Lukens 3-4). In this way, poetry develops “reflective and reflexive thinking” in children so that when they get older, “the most active and reflective teenage readers not only see texts as constructs offering an author’s evaluation of human behaviour” but they are given the opportunity to actively explore “their own identities” in the reading process and hence they “can direct and control their own thinking when they are conscious of it” (Hunt 136).

As a result, far beyond just enjoying the rhyming sounds and rhythms of poetry as younger children grow older, such “control over their own thinking and the rhetoric of text, gives them more power to operate effectively in their society” (Hunt 136). This accounts for the fact that many of Yeats and Shawqi’s poetry are still studied in school till the present time for both the pleasure they produce and the knowledge they provide for the young buds about their heritage and national identity. In this way, it has become evident that, “criticism of children’s texts could contribute very usefully to debate over contemporary definitions of literacy and literary competence and to debate about what counts as reading development” (Hunt 138). The present research paper is one step forward in this regard as it explores how the world of children is dealt with in selected poems of two celebrated poets such as Yeats and Shawqi.

From all the above mentioned, one can easily come to the result that poetry seems to be the main gate towards children’s literature. In a chapter entitled “From Rhyme to Poetry” Rebecca J. Lukens explains:

Because nursery or Mother Goose rhymes use the elements of literature and the devices of style, and because the rhymes are sources of pleasure and understanding, we can legitimately call them the earliest literature for the youngest child. These *rhymes* are brief stories which have been passed

orally from generation to generation, and are beginnings of poetry for children. (187)

In this context “one question seems in order. What is the difference between poetry for adults and poetry for children?” (195). According to Lukens, “the essential point remains that poetry is poetry, and that poetry for children differs from poetry for adults in degree, but not in kind” (195). In other words, “just as the interests of adults are the subjects of their poetry, the concerns of childhood are the subject of children’s poetry” (195). Nevertheless, “some poetry appeals to both children and adults, and it seems impossible and unnecessary to designate it as poetry for either group” (195). This will be more evident as we examine selected poems by the two poets in question in the present study.

In fact, poetry “stands as an experience in itself. Rhythm, sound, and connotation expand meaning; imagery heightens our sensory awareness, and apt figurative comparisons tempt our imaginations” and therefore, poetry “at its best permits the reader to participate, but without the burden of didacticism or sentimentality” (Lukens 213). Children are recommended to read poetry since the experience of “the best efforts of skillful poets is enlarging; it gives pleasure and promotes understanding” (Lukens 213). These are perhaps the same reasons stated by Ahmed Adel Mutii Hegazy in his book entitled *Let your Children Learn Poetry* which highlights the role of poetry in sharpening the senses of children and improving their capabilities and enlarging their knowledge and experience. In his book *Read my Mind: Young Children, Poetry, and Learning*, Fred Sedgwick argues that “poetry has a crucial function, like art, across the curriculum”. He explains:

Trailing their clouds of glory, most children are closer to poetry by a long way than most adults are. And I am certain that adults could learn much from children by respecting them more, and listening to them, and reading what they write with a more careful attention than common. (xi)

He considers poetry as a means of learning and regards it as being “something more than teachers teach when the real work has been done” since “Way beyond all that fiddle, poetry provides muscle for science, history, geography, art, technology, religious

education” and more important “those activities usually grouped under the heading of personal, social and moral education” (2). Besides, he asserts the “educational power of poetry” which “stems from the fact that it is a *process* of discovery, not a record of it” (2).

Nevertheless, children’s literature should contain certain distinguishing qualities which make it palatable for young readers. It is true since “their experiences are more limited than those of adults” and hence they “may not understand the same complexity of ideas” (Lukens 8). Therefore, “the expressions of ideas must be simpler both — in language and form” (Lukens 8). However, children are “frequently more open to experimenting with a greater variety of literary forms than many adults will accept — from poetry to folktales, to adventure, to fantasy” (Lukens 9). For children “the personified animals and toys of the child’s world, by behaving like human beings, may show what human beings are like” (Lukens 9). As a result, both folklore and animal stories are two sources of both pleasure and knowledge for young readers. The present study illustrates how they are skillfully interwoven in the poetry of Yeats and Shawqi and how they are beautifully manipulated as literary devices through which valuable pieces of advice are indirectly given, and illuminating remarks on universal values in life along with general comments on the nature, condition, and experiences of mankind are artistically conveyed to the young readers.

In his book (*The Child and his Literary World*), Abdel Raof Abou El Saad asserts that children’s literature “should be part and parcel of our spiritual culture” (9). He also confirms that folklore and myth provide two infinite sources of nourishment for children’s literature from which universal lessons about human experiences through ages can still be drawn (7). In this way, poets “can convey intellectual, emotional and social experiences to children through their poetry” (49). More importantly, the human dimension is thus stressed when the link between children and the literary heritage of their forefathers is tightened so as the inherited values and customs of their nations are firmly established” (106). Indeed, both Yeats and Shawqi are lovers of their nations. As a result, a large part of the heritage of their nations is registered and persevered to a great extent in their poetry for children and adults alike.

In fact, the seeds of such national feelings and the deep attachment to the soil in which both Yeats and Shawqi are brought up with its entire folkloric heritage were planted in the early days of the childhood of both Yeats and Shawqi. There is no wonder since it is thought that “children’s literary experiences begin with folk materials and their literary expectations are in large part shaped by those experiences with folk material” (141). Such folk materials had been the main source of nourishment for a great poet such as Yeats whose mother “gave the slow, rich feed of an inheritance of folklore” (Ross 13). In addition to his mother’s stories, the time he spent in Sligo is a second source of nourishment:

Even though he only visited Sligo on these occasional long holidays, it was Sligo more than London (and far more, also, than Dublin, after his family returned there) that coloured the child’s thoughts and left there the most enduring images of his life. For Sligo was full of whispered talk of fairies and ghosts, and the boy was all ears. (Liammoir 12)

But even when he is away from Sligo, Yeats’s mother “had a crucial effect upon his developing sense of the world as a child” for she “kept alive his love of Sligo in the dismal London years” as he himself relates in *Reveries over Childhood and Youth* (1916). Yeats’s mother herself “detested the London to which her husband had dragged her against her will” (Brown 16). Though it is his mother who “opened a channel to the land of fairy and the lore of the countryside”, Yeats’s father, on his part, noticed “his eldest son growing preoccupation with the supernatural world and with the mythical theories and phenomena” and regarded this “as being relevant enough to a poet’s calling” (Liammoir 9). Thus in the realm of poetry Yeats has become “The Wandering Angus” who as he used to be in his childhood and adolescence “was a restless creature, forever in quest of some new solitary adventure” (Liammoir 9). In 1888 his book entitled *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry* was published and read by a large number of readers with the final result of his being “accepted by a growing body of opinion as an authority of Irish folklore and a poet of importance” (Liammoir 31).

Similarly, Shawqi’s childhood days are important components in the formation of his literary talent and his national

political stances. Shawqi was born to “a family of an Arabian, Turkish, Greek and Janissary origin. His was a wealthy family with strong connection to the Khedive [Abbas]”. He was brought up in the khedival court by his grandmother on his mother’s side who “bestowed on the child more parental care and love than his parents” (Ahmad Shawqi: Egyptian Poet 1). This is apparent in Shawqi’s poem entitled “My Grandmother” in which he express his love and gratitude for his grandmother who was so kind to him. In the khedival court Shawqi’s national feelings have been watered to blossom later on in his poetry that is deeply rooted in Egypt’s soil, history and heritage. Such national feelings planted in his early years are always present in Shawqi’s poetry for adults and children alike. Young readers can easily touch such patriotic feelings as they read some of Shawqi’s poem especially those poems that are usually part of school curriculums. One of those famous poems is “The Fox and the Rooster” which relates an imaginary animal story through which children are warned against the hidden threats of life in general and those resulting from the wicked forces of colonial powers in particular. Such threats may come in various disguises to lurk the innocent inexperienced children. This poem can be compared to Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child” which raises the same point in a legendary folkloric framework.

Indeed, Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child” is a brilliant example of his preoccupation with the Irish folklore and myth and it can be of interest for young readers as well who may not be able to resist, in the first place, the attraction of the title itself. The title of the poem is enough to arouse the curiosity of young readers to read the poem and examine its significances and the messages it tries to convey to the readers about childhood. The poem has been praised and appreciated widely:

Nor could any poet whose imagination was not on fire with the living legend of his own countryside have written “The Stolen Child’ in which the voice of an earth spirit is heard luring a child from suffering existence to lands of invisible enchantment. (Liammoir 34)

The poem is one of Yeats’s early poems which reflects his “fascination for folklore as a young man” and his “transportation into literary activity of his feelings for the mother who had introduced him to the magic world of story and oral tradition” (Brown 18).

Therefore, “The Stolen Child” highlights Yeats’s “uncanny imagination” and his early obsession with the legends of his country:

This poem first appeared in the *Irish Monthly* in December 1886 when the poet was twenty-one. In a work, which provoked Yeats himself to identify his early verses as ‘a flight into the fairyland from the real world . . . the cry of the heart against necessity’ (CL1: 54-5), the fairies call to a human child, inviting him to forsake domesticity and security for a more compelling reality: ‘come away, O Human child!/ To the waters and the wild’. The implication of course is that when the human child heed their call, the fairies, will leave behind one of their own in its place, as the folklore belief has it. (Brown 19).

In this way, the poem underlines the poet’s “literary attention to the imaginative world of western Irish” countryside with a rural legend that children have ever heard not only in the Irish or English societies but in other societies as well including the Egyptian one.

This is true since children in the Egyptian countryside used to listen to the warnings of the adults about the fairies that may, likewise, call their names, entice them to approach them, and hence kidnap them at night, or rather what was known as “An Naddah” or the (The Night Caller). Here appears “the universality of myth to make the readers of one culture understands literary characters and concepts from a culture unfamiliar to them” (qt. in Sullivan III 143-144). According to X. J Kennedy, “Poets have long been fond of retelling myth, narrowly defined as traditional stories of immoral being” and one of the main characteristics of myth is the fact that “it can be believed” (623). Children do believe in such mythological stories which fire their imagination and carries them to faraway places. More importantly, a great deal of universal values can be transmitted, directly or indirectly, through such myths.

To illustrate as the case with the poem in question, the myth relates the story of the stolen child and thus it opens a window on the magic world of childhood in which children can draw lessons from what happened to the legendary characters who go through imaginative hardships and face imaginative temptations that may stand for real threats that children may possibly encounter in

reality. Children are always warned by adults to keep themselves away from any source of possible threats putting in mind their inability to face dangers, and therefore, they have their own fears and uncertainties. In fact, reading Yeats's poem in the light of what goes on nowadays on the social, economic and political arenas will enable the readers, adults and children alike, to come to the fact that more calamities are befallen children because of a long list of dangers including, violations, social disputes, wars, and the miseries they brought in their walk. Children, as Yeats's poem reveals, may fall prey to the fairies but children nowadays can be caught into the clutches of other big calamities and hence appears the universality of myth and the talented manipulation of folk material on the part of the poet. As will be illustrated, Shawqi's use of folklore, myth, and animal stories in his poems for children is to be similarly highlighted.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that children in Celtic mythology and throughout Irish literature, in many occasions, are introduced as symbols of the Irish nation itself as speaks the title of Barbara Young's Ph. D. dissertation "The Child as Emblem of a Nation in Twentieth-century Irish literature". This valuable survey associates the challenges before the figure of the literary child with the social and political conditions of the nation of Ireland. There is no wonder since children are universally regarded as the symbols of the future of their countries.

In fact, nationalism is a key word in the poetry of both Yeats and Shawqi. Even in their poems for or about children, their nations are present in their minds. Yeats's ancestors "by his own account, were men and women of personality and markedly conflicting political persuasions" (Liammoir 5). Consequently, Yeats has been a lover of his country which has been "henceforth permanent, temple of his muse" (Liammoir 33). That is to say, Yeats's nationalism can never be mistaken. He has been "obsessed by a burning desire to free Ireland from its seven hundred years' domination by England" (Liammoir 37). This is also the case with Shawqi who similarly has been obsessed by the desire to free Egypt from the domination of the British occupation. As a result, when children are given the chance to read some of the poetry of such great poets, they will certainly touch this sense of identity and hence their attachment to their countries increases.

Thus, Yeats's "The Stolen Child", is more than just a poem relating a mythological story from the Irish folklore. In fact, it does not only pin point Yeats's early fascination with folk material

but it also highlights, as James Pethica argues, his “desire to identify himself specifically as an Irish writer, and assert the distinctiveness of ‘Irishness’ as a cultural identity” (129). Pethica illustrates:

Folklore and legend offered him subject matter that contrasted sharply with the orthodox concerns of the contemporary urban world, but he was able to claim as distinctively Irish and draw on master-myths of Irish nationality. (192).

Thus the use of folk material in “The Stolen Child” seems to be intricately manipulated so as to carry out a two-fold task of covering socio-political and literary dimensions.

To illustrate, Yeats’s references to mythology, as in “The Stolen Child”, marks what James Pethica describes in an article entitled “Yeats, Folklore, and Irish Legend” as “his efforts to characterize folklore as essential source of Irish Identity” (134). More important, Yeats’s early fascination in mythology ‘made it clear to him that Ireland lacked a coherent literary tradition, with the contours of the country’s social and intellectual life’ which was “deeply marked” by “its colonial status” (130). To put it more accurately, Yeats’s poetry reflects his keenness on constructing “a tradition from those divergent literary products of colonized culture” (130). Above all, it underlines the fact that Yeats regards Ireland’s myths and legends as “imaginative resource of potential locus of national identity” (140). In an article entitled “Yeats and the Post Colonial” Marjorie Howes argues that post colonial studies “should obviously consider the question whether we should call Yeats’s nationalism more colonial or post colonial” (221).

In this way, on reading Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child”, young readers, like adults, are introduced to the literary heritage of their nation. Consequently, besides enjoying the legendary story with all its magic and mystery, children will never miss the socio-political significances of the poem. “The Stolen Child”, as Yeats’s early poems, as Marjorie Howes puts it, “proclaims Yeats’s engagement with Ireland and Irish culture” (4). More important, in his early poems Yeats associates Ireland with childhood:

The early Yeats’s Ireland is alternately a homely, rural landscape populated by rustic, and an idealized otherworldly place. In both cases Yeats associates it with childhood, and with extreme age.

“Into the Twilight” claims that “Your mother Eire is always young” (VP 59), but it is the eternal youth of the ageless, ancient Ireland that Yeats consistently identified as the source of vital culture and tradition” (4).

This indeed reflects Yeats’s “interest in folklore and fairy tales and their potential to help create an Irish national literature” that can be preserved for the coming generations (5).

It is evident then that “The Stolen Child” represents “the supernatural as alluring but also threatening” (Howes 3). A re-reading of the poem in the light of the contemporary threats hovering around children in reality will certainly underline the universality of the mythological story related therein. In fact, Yeats’s early poems are sometimes labeled by critics as “escapist” but this, as Marjorie Howes asserts, is “somewhat misleading” (3). This is evident because the use of mythology besides being an affirmation of the Irish national identity on the part of the poet and his endeavour to create an Irish literary revival, it underlines the social and psychological dimensions that can never be mistaken. Terence Brown explains:

Such beliefs have social and psychological significances. They seem to be the ways of explaining and coping with the manifold shocks and sorrows of a rugged rural life of peasant poverty in an unrelenting environment . . . The accidents, drawings, mysterious illnesses, sudden deaths (particularly of children), in which the church and the local healer, a redoubtable woman, complete for social power, are given some kind of meaning for the people in the narratives of the supernatural world interacting with the natural. (20)

In this way, connections between the supernatural world and the natural real world are highlighted and crystallized.

In other words, the real world seems to carry for children the possibility of facing real threats, sorrows and miseries in their life; challenges that children face worldwide. In his poem, Yeats warns children against such threats:

Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,

For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand. (9-12).

Here appears the universality of mythology. Yeats “had come to accept the view” that all mythologies “have universal correspondences and that there exists a universal source for them all” (Havredaki 9). According to Nicholas Trucker, “the continuing popularity of such fairy-tale themes suggest that Freud was right in believing that the inner tensions these fantasies reveal have always been present throughout history” (162).

In the poem children's innocence is contrasted to the shocking miseries of real life. Children continue their usual play chasing the pleasing bubbles till they are unconsciously dragged to dangerous areas that hide many of the unexpected threats and dangers:

**To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles,
While the world is full of troubles
And is anxious in its sleep. (20-23)**

Indeed, Yeats use of “figurative language and parallelism build up the faeries enticement technique to tempt the child from his world”. The word “bubble” contains a “strong connotation” since it extends the idea of the faeries' world being full of fun and nice things while the child's world is simply full of troubles” (Language and Literature 1). In reality, like in fairylands, life is full fearful challenges and of demons disguised in other forms such as the “great engines and spinning-jinnee” of modern life (qt in Brown 19).

The last stanza shows the surrender of the stolen child to the call of the fairies and his entanglement in their traps:

**Away with us he's going,
The solemn-eyed:
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the warm hillside
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace into his breast,
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal-chest.**

For he comes, the human child,
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
from a world more full of weeping than you can
understand. (42- 53)

In fact, the refrain that is repeated four times at the end of each stanza contains “the most significant figurative language of the entire poem” through the use of both metaphor and metonymy”. The refrain consists of four lines, written in iambic pentameter. The “world” is “metonymically stands for the child’s reality, his society and life” (Language and Literature 1). Nowadays, apart from the calamities facing children in many parts of the world as a result of socio-economic and political turmoils, modern life, even as Yeats puts it in his poem, when adults “sing peace into his breast”, children are still exposed to dangers of completely different nature.

That is to say, in a world with websites, internet and social media applications which replace the fairies in Yeats’s poems, children can be enticed to be dragged away from real life and the sorrows of the real world. In this way they may get entangled in this “web” which while adding to their knowledge, may take of their time. It has become evident then that both the social and political significances of the poem are highlighted. Above all, this in itself crystallizes the universal quality with which the poem is coated due to Yeats’s brilliant use of mythology.

Moreover, in accordance with the legendry magic atmosphere depicted in the poem, Yeats’s uses a highly figurative language in which various literary devices are beautifully manipulated. For example, Yeats “uses soporific diction to induce a sense of drowsiness in the poem to symbolize the lulling of the child”, such as in “the drowsy water rats” (L. 5), and “slumbering trout” (L.32) Yeats also uses irony “to illustrate mankind’s failure to achieve happiness” (The Stolen Child 1). Other devices are used such onomatopoeia in “whispering in their ears”. This “helps create vivid imagery as the strong sound of the word immediately depicts a clear image of what is described”. There is also alliteration such as “wandering water” (L.29) and “seek for slumbering” (L.32) (Language and Literature 1). According to

James Pethica, for Yeats a poem “was part object, a construct of language which possessed precise magical attributes, part pattern of sounds that lulled auditors into appropriate state of being” (79). Thus, like his early poems, “The Stolen Child” is one of Yeats’s “scrupulously fabricated artifacts” (78). In fact, “it was as lyric poet, that primarily, he had made his literary reputation” (172). This is also typical of Shawqi as will be illustrated.

More importantly, a re-reading of the poem in the light of the new challenges facing children nowadays whether in troubled or untroubled areas is to raise important issues that concern children and adults alike. Children now are living in a world where their happy childhood days or rather their lives can be “stolen”. More seriously, they are robbed of their “innocence”, “peace of mind” and perhaps their “homes” and “countries” in a threatening world that has its own wonders and surprises that may outnumber the mysterious dangers and threats of the imaginary world of ancient myths and legends.

Similarly, this imaginary world of legends and myths which its unique attraction for children is skillfully manipulated in dozens of Shawqi’s poems for children that relate animal tales through which moral lessons coated with excitement and fun are artistically rendered in a highly figurative language. To illustrate, as has been pin pointed while elaborating on Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child”, the use of such imaginary world provides a medium through which valuable pieces of advice can be, indirectly, given to children. In addition to this, through such legendary stories many of the truths of real life, as is the case with Yeats’s poem, are revealed and conveyed to young readers in a way that suits their little minds, nourishes their imagination and, more important, keeps them away from the didactic tones most children, if not all, dislike.

It is noteworthy that Shawqi’s use of animal stories in his poems, as Yeats’s fascination with myth and folklore, is a distinguishing characteristic of his poetry of children in particular. In fact, children are fond of “discovering the mysteries of animal life” especially those mentioned in myths and legends such as those in the famous book of “Kalila wa Dimna” (Abou Al Saad 159). In a chapter entitled “Children’s Literature in the Light of Myth and Folklore and its Implications on Children”, the literary and educational implications of such genre are

highlighted as a means of increasing children's knowledge and experience on various levels, linguistically, socially, politically, (Abou Al Saad 292-277). Above all, folkloric and mythological stories, as they are repeatedly narrated by mother and grandmother through ages, have the effect of enlarging the experience and knowledge of little children, "deepening the human dimension" and "establishing the values and customs of nations" (Abou Al Saad 106).

In fact, Shawqi's keenness on composing poems for children in general and his skilful handling of animal stories in such poems in particular reflect the faithful endeavour of a national poet who wants to keep the heritage of his nation and at the same time introduces what is new and innovative in the European culture: "Shawqi's literary output reflects his attempt to find out this ideological reconciliation between old heritage and western culture since the world has become in, the modern age, like a small village" (Wady). This is true since such poetic animal stories were composed during the years Shawqi spent in Paris from 1892 to 1893 where he was sent by the Khedive to study French and English literature. Shawqi was greatly influenced by La Fontaine's fables (Sueiliem 11).

As Shawqi himself states in his introduction to his poetry collection Al Shawqqiat, he has decided to write poems for children following the example of poets in the advanced countries who allocated much space for enriching the intellectual world of their children (Wady 24). Moreover, he should have read "Kalila and Demna" by Ibn Al Muqfaa (Sueiliem 13). It is noteworthy that as Arab heritage has dealt with animals stories ancient Egyptians have "used animals in their stories and legends dealing with ethical values. Those stories were curved on the walls of their temples and written on their papyrus paper and they are still narrated till now" (Wasfy xi). In western literature, animals are used "symbolically either to consolidate or to oppose prevailing ideas about ethics and politics" (Wasfy xii). Animal stories are also mentioned in the holy Quran. As Abdelattif Sharara argues, it seems that Shawqi, through his use of animal stories, has combined both La Fontaine's poetic talent and Ibn Al Muqfaa's depth" within a pure Arabic and oriental framework" (47). Here lies part of Shawqi's innovation and contribution to the realm of poetry since his poems, whether those directed to adults or children alike, reflect various aspects of Shawqi's talent: a

combination of Arabic, Western, Islamic, historical and national backgrounds and influences

Shawqi wrote over sixty poems for children narrated on the tongues of animals. Shawqi uses standard Arabic with the usual meter and rhyme (wazn and qafia) with each line divided into two halves (shatr):

Shawqi was particularly fond of this genre, and a posthumous volume of his al - shawqiyyat (Vol - 4) includes some sixty short fables in verse. Thirty six of those fables have the 'non canonical' rajaz meter, and in most of them rhyming couplets rather than monorhymes are employed...a close study of their language may show they were instrumental in the rise of several decades later, of a new, non classical poetic language in modern Arabic literature. (Ahmad Shawqi's Contribution 11)

Thus Shawqi is using the traditional poetic meter as he was known for his "command of rhyme and diction" (Ahmad Shawqi: Egyptian Poet 1).

More important, through such poems he has successfully managed to make his young readers aware of many of the moral, social and political issues at his time especially those that can deepen their sense of belonging to their country and tighten their attachment to the heritage of their nation that was struggling to get rid of the British occupation, the same plague that has infected Yeats's beloved country Ireland. Therefore, as will be illustrated, many of the animal tales introduced in Shawqi's poems for children are not free from political significances and symbols.

Indeed, Shawqi's poem "The Fox and the Rooster" provides a brilliant example. It is one of Shawqi's most famous poems that have long been studied by school children. It does not only introduce an amusing story about the cunning fox that tries, this time wearing the garment of a preacher, to devour the rooster through deceptive ways. But it is rather a poem about "a stolen country" that has fallen in the clutches of the unjust colonial powers that prey on the body of nations under several pretexts and in the name of false slogans such as educating and improving such nations whose people are mistakenly considered to be, just as children are, in dire need of continuous supervision and permanent guidance.

Thus, as Yeats's poem "The Stolen Child" highlights the threats faced by innocent children in a world full of sorrows that are beyond their understanding, Shawqi's poem warns children against a malignant source of such sorrows and miseries, i.e, colonialism that slyly "steals" their freedom and threatens their innocent world exactly like the fox that tries to convince the rooster, wearing the cloak of preachers, to appear and announce the call prayer, just to devour him as soon as he embarks upon the holy mission:

One day the fox appeared wearing the cloak of preachers,
Walking on earth rambling and cursing the cunning,
Thanking God, the Lord of the universe,
Asking God's slaves to repent,
For He is the cave of repentance. (My translation).
(Al Shawqqiat, Part IV, 670: L. 1- 4)

بـرز التعلب يوما	في شعار الواعظينا
فمشى في الأرض يهذى	ويسب الماكرينا
و يقول: الحمد لله	رب العالمينا
يا عباد الله توبوا	فهو كهف التائبين

The fox tries to convince the rooster that he is the first one to declare his repentance since he has decided, like vegetarians, to abstain from eating birds and to live the life of asceticism and to dedicate the rest of his life, instead, to worship only: "O slaves of God, abstain from devouring birds and live in austerity /Just ask the rooster to call us for the dawn prayer" (L. 5-6)

Nevertheless, the rooster is not to be deceived that easily. This is evident through his wise reply to the messenger sent by the fox to deliver the deceptive message, contrive the plan and carry on the trick upon the supposedly naive rooster:

Tell the fox on my behalf and on the behalf of my pious ancestors
Those crowned roosters who entered the cursed stomach (of foxes)

They said earlier, and the best sayings are those
uttered by the most experienced

“Mistaken are those who ever believe that the fox
has a creed”. (10- 13)

بلـغ الثعلب عنى
عن جدودي الصالحينا
عن ذوى التيجان ممن
دخل البطن اللعينا
أنهم قالوا وخير القول
قول العارفين
مخطيء من ظن يوما
إن للثعلب ديننا.

In this way, the poem ends with a wise saying, almost taken to be a well known proverb, highlighting a moral lesson that children should keep in mind throughout their life. As Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child” is threatening and warning children against getting entangled in the traps of the fairies and their cunning tricks, Shawqi’s poem “The Fox and the Rooster” similarly delivers almost the same message.

Thus, the moral lesson conveyed by the poem is obvious since it, as Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child”, warns children against falling prey to the agents of deception symbolized by the fox generally known to be the very symbol slyness and conceit. More importantly, the political implication of the poem and the animal story it introduces can never be mistaken since children can easily figure out that the fox can stand for the occupier and the rooster for the occupied. Thus, as Yeats’s poem asserts, literary and politically speaking, the Irish identity, Shawqi’s poem, likewise, highlights national feelings and the necessity of combating the hateful advocates of colonialism. As usual, those masters of deception cunningly appear in various disguises, wearing the masks of innocence to hide their utter savagery and wicked intentions, in the same way the fairies in Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child” try to deceive and steal the innocent child who, as previously mentioned, is considered in Irish literature as an emblem of the nation itself; a nation stolen by the agents of colonialism and robbed of its freedom. Shawqi’s aptitude is clear in the way he introduces this animal story which raises big issues in an easy flowing language that has deep allegorical significances.

In the same way, other political issues such as the relationship between the ruler and his subjects is introduced in other poems for Children related on the tongue of animals such as “The Lion and the Donkey: His Minister” which makes fun of the repercussions of wrong choices on the political level by entrusting the wrong persons with important mission and tasks that may affect the future of their nations. Such political symbols appear in other poems written by Shawqi for children such as “The Donkey on the Ship” and “The Lion, the Fox and the Calf” which introduce stories of great significance not only for young readers but for adult readers as well (Abou Al Saad 165).

It is worth mentioning that as Shawqi has been influenced by La Fontaine’s fables, he has also been affected by the animal stories related in the holy Quran. Such stories are skillfully introduced in his poems for children so as to refer symbolically to the political situation at that time and to deliver other important messages for moral and educational goals. This is clear in poems such as “Prophet Solomon and the Hoopoe” through which children get to know the penalty of injustice (Abou Al Saad 171). The poem relates the story of the hoopoe that is almost dying of a grain of wheat in his chest that “neither the water of the Nile nor that of the Tigris would remove”. Yet the right diagnosis of his malady is rendered by Prophet Solomon who explains to the Hoopoe that this is the case since the wheat is stolen from an ant’s house. The poem ends with a great wisdom (truly a wrongdoer’s chest should go through suffering/ even without apparent illness “ إن للظالم صدرا يشتكى من غير علة” (Al Shawqqiat, Part IV, 672: L.10).

Other poems are also symbolic but they are free from political significances such as “The Animals on the Arch” which refers to the Quranic story of Prophet Noah. The poem’s funny tones are remarkable since it refers to the peaceful coexistence among different animals, a temporary situation that lasts only for a while, but as soon as the arch is on shore the animals behave in the usual way according to their distinguishing qualities. Young readers laugh at the funny scene in which (The lion and the donkey walk peacefully together / while the cat and the rat walk hand in hand (حتى مشى الليث مع الحمار/ و اخذ القط بايدي الفار (Al Shawqqiat Part IV, 675-76: L.3). In this way, old disputes are settled and the enemies of yesterday have become today’s friends as long as they

are in the same boat. Nevertheless, once the ship harbored on the mountain of “AL Goudy” old enmities soon come to the surface:

Feuds of past days were soon renewed,
As soon as they harbored on Al Goudy mountain
And they were sure that normal life is resumed
They behaved in accordance with their innate
qualities
Resuming [the disputes of] the past days as usual.
(9-12)

فذهبت سوابق الأحقاد وظهر الأحياب في الأعادى
حتى إذا حطوا بسفح الجودى و أيقنوا بعودة الوجود
عادوا إلى ما تقتضيه الشيمة ورجعوا للحالة القديمة

From all the above mentioned, it has become evident that the more children are encouraged to read such poems, the more they can easily make the link between the distinguishing qualities of animals and their real life. Exactly in the same way young readers of Yeats’s poem “The Stolen Child” will discover the connection between the mythological folkloric fairy tale related in the poem and the sorrows and dangers of real life, not only those threatening their personal life but their national identity as well. Here appears the significant role of including such stories in children’s literature. They are the stories related to younger generations by mothers and grandmothers.

In this way, both Yeats and Shawqi have contributed through their creative talent to keep the heritage of their nations and to deliver it to the coming generations; a legacy which is about to be forgotten due to electronic games of other visual applications of modern age (Zalat 23). Certainly, with internet access and applications such as facebook, twitter and the like children are deprived from the chance to examine the legacy of their ancestors as they prefer to live in this imagery virtual reality that takes them away from the sorrows of life that, unfortunately, tend to increase. In this way, children may be “stolen”, allured and dragged to this deep well of escapism; in a magic world that has its own wonders, its own foxes and fairies. Nevertheless,

children are still having chances to approach and “install” and “update” precious parts of their heritage through reading poems such as Yeats’s “The Stolen Child” and Shawqi’s “The Fox and the Rooster” which are never outdated due to the symbolic significances they contain, the moral lessons they reveal, and the embedded wisdom they highlight .

Two other poems written by Yeats and Shawqi about children are to be examined and compared. They are Yeats’s “A Prayer for my Daughter” and Shawqi’s “A Playful Girl”. Each poet, as apparent from the two titles, addresses his daughter and wishes her all the best in her life. The two poems highlight another mode characteristic of Yeats’s and Shawqi’s poetry about children, namely, the personal one. The two compared poems are marked by an obvious sense of fatherly tenderness mingled with fatherly fears and uncertainties of the future awaiting his little girl. Terence Brown appreciates Yeats’s poem for this remarkable tenderness:

So Yeats between February and June 1919 composed for his first child the tender, anxious poem ‘A Prayer for my Daughter’ which prayed, in fear of a future ‘Dancing to a frenzied drum’, that her life would be one in which a bridegroom would ‘bringer to a house/where all’s accustomed, ceremonies’ . . . ‘A Prayer for my Daughter’ was first published in November of the year of Anne Yeats’s birth [1921]. (271)

Brown hence points out that the poem publication was delayed and it was actually written “in the last weeks before Anne’s birth” to be included in Yeats’s volume of poetry *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* in 1921. (271). It is “the first volume of poetry published in the last third of Yeats’s writing life” (Venler 78). That is to say, the poem is different from Yeats’s “The Stolen Child” which, as previously mentioned, was written by Yeats in an earlier phase of his life. “A Prayer for my Daughter” was written in a later phase in Yeats’s life when he had become a father for the first time. According to Marjorie Howes, the poem “celebrates the personal peace and stability that Yeats had found in marriage and fatherhood” despite the fact that he, at the same time, “identifies various threats to this tranquility” (12). Thus if “The Stolen Child” with its mythological references highlights the challenges that face children in general, “A Prayer for my

Daughter” points to another characteristic mode of Yeats’s later poetry, i.e., the personal mode which has also been characteristic of Shawqi’s poetry as will be elaborated.

It is also noteworthy that the poem was written “in the year when the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, protecting female employment rights, was passed in Westminster”; a poem which “envisaged a future of leisured ease for the poet’s first child” (Brown 279). In fact, the poem “registers a troubled ambivalence of feelings about woman’s social role and of her place in the poet’s imagination” (279). Nevertheless, sometimes “Yeats’s wishes for his infant daughter” are thought to be “mistakenly represented as patriarchal and limiting” (Venler 81). The truth lies in the fact that Yeats’s poem reflects his worries about the future of his daughter along with alluding to the calamities that had befallen dear women in his life, namely his mother and his beloved Maud Gonne.

According to Helen Venler, Yeats seems to be warning his daughter against a number of curses that have destroyed the life of the women he loved in his life; First, “the curse of beauty that led Maud Gonne (as it had led Helen of Troy and Venus herself) to mate with a fool”. Second, “the curse of hatred that chokes the mind and that destroyed Maud Gonne’s inner peace”, and finally the curse that had fallen on Yeats’s mother when she “married a feckless man who never settled her a stable house, but shifted her round from lodging to lodging until she sank into permanent depression and illness” (81). “Haunted by the evils that had befallen the two women dearest to him in his youth”, as Venler argues, Yeats prays for his daughter wishing that she could avert such calamities in her future life (81). Thus, Yeats’s poem reflects his wishes to “launch” his daughter “on a life less full of distress than his mother’s, less full of hatred than Maud Gonne’s” (81). In this way, the autobiographical quality of the poem is never to be mistaken.

In fact, Yeats’s worries about the future of his new-born girl are apparent from the very first stanza of the poem. As Yeats has spoken out his fears about the child who is lured by fairies in his lyrical poem “The Stolen Child”, he is now voicing his fears about his own daughter who is ostensibly protected “Under this cradlehood and coverlid”, but who at the same time is destined to face the possible threats of life symbolized in the howling storms and

all the dangers it carries, this is why the anxious father is praying for his daughter in a gloomy and stormy atmosphere:

**Once more the storm is howling, and half hid
Under this cradle-hood and coverlid
My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle
But Gregory's wood and one bare hill
Whereby the haystack- and roof-levelling wind,
Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;
And for an hour I have walked and prayed
Because of the great gloom that is in my mind. (1-8)**

Thus the two poems, though representing different modes of Yeats's poetry, the early lyrical mythological mode, and the later personal and autobiographical one, seem to highlight the same universal theme of the dangers threatening the innocent world of childhood which in many occasions represent the future of their nations that may be, likewise, threatened due to different factors throughout ages. Here lies the universal quality of Yeats's poems about childhood due to the themes they touch upon. Such themes are typical of all children, applicable to all societies and present at all ages.

Like all fathers of the world, Yeats is so worried about the future of his daughter in a world full of storms and uncertainties. In the final stanza, unlike the first, Yeats, the worried father, somehow abandons this gloomy outlook and dispenses with his pessimism and wishes that his daughter may get married to a good man who will secure her happiness as a wife and a mother:

**And may her bridegroom bring her to a house
Where all's accustomed, ceremonious;
For arrogance and hatred are the wares
Peddled in the thoroughfares.
How but in custom and in ceremony
Are innocence and beauty born?
Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,**

And custom for the spreading laurel tree. (73-80)

This is the wish of every father on the earth's face including Shawqi who will express the same wish in a poem written especially for his daughter Ameena as will be illustrated.

Between the first and the last stanzas of Yeats's poem, the loving father directs valuable pieces of advice to his little girl asking her to cling to certain good qualities, to make the right choices, and to avoid superficiality; "Consider beauty a sufficient end,/ Lose natural kindness and maybe/ The heart-revealing intimacy/ That chooses right and never find a friend" (21-24). She is also advised to avoid a number of bad qualities such as hatred; "Yet knows that to be choked with hate/ May well be of all evil chances chief"(L. 70-71), stubbornness and fanaticism; "An intellectual hatred is the worst,/ So let her think opinions are accursed" (L.75-76). Yeats believes that hatred contrasts with the innocence of childhood: "Considering that, all hatred driven hence,/ The soul recovers radical innocence/And learns at last that it is self-delighting./ Self-appeasing, self-affrighting" (L.85-86). Such pieces of advice are the typical ones given by almost all fathers to their dear daughters worldwide.

In an article entitled "Yeats and Gender" Marjorie Howes argues that the poem underlines Yeats's "patriarchal prescription for his daughter's sexual identity and conventional role in marriage, and his image of the ideal woman" (177). According to Howes, the historical context of the poem adds to it another dimension besides the personal conventional one. This enables the reader to "appreciate its interest as a document of its time by juxtaposing the traditional interpretative strategy of close formal analysis with considerations of historical context" (177). In other words, the poem is not only directed to Yeats's daughter Anne since for Yeats, "women's history in this period was interwoven with the history of Irish nationalism" (178). Thus, "What threatens the future identity of Yeats's baby Anne, then, is not only the postwar political chaos evoked in the drafts of the poem" but also "the model of femininity" of women who have fanatic opinions (178).

In an article entitled "Yeats and Politics", Jonathan Allison argues that the notion that Yeats's "revolutionary women friends

destroyed themselves through hatred recurs in his poetry of this [later] period” (194). Nevertheless, Yeats can never be described as a misogynist:

Yeats loved, liked, collaborated with, and respected women: he certainly preferred them to men. He encouraged their intellectual and creative work, assumed their professional competence, and chose them as allies. His best friends were all women . . . The over-protective father of “A Prayer for My Daughter” urges a quiet, “rooted” life and marriage founded in “custom” and “marriage” (VP 403-6) but Yeats was delighted when his daughter Anne took up painting and started designing sets for the Abbey Theatre. (182-183)

In short, Yeats’s poem “A Prayer for My Daughter” does not only reflect his wishes for his daughter but his keenness on the role of women in his society in general.

It has become evident then that “A Prayer for My Daughter” is more than a poem about childhood. It reveals a great deal of the personal and autobiographical details in Yeats’s life and expresses his attitude towards the role of women in the history of his nation. Above all, the poem is also linked to his worries about his beloved Ireland which, like his newborn girl, faces many challenges in a similarly stormy atmosphere of political turmoil. It is, therefore, linked to other two famous poems in the same volume: “The Second Coming” and “Easter 1916). Helen Vendler illustrates this fact: “in these three poems, we can see three characteristic modes of late Yeats: the historic, the archetypal, and the personal” (79). More important, they “raise the question whether Yeats is ‘the last romantic’ (as he said himself) or the first modernist” (79). Thus even in his prayer for his daughter, Ireland is present, as usual, in his heart and mind. There is no wonder since, as previously mentioned, children are regarded worldwide as the future of their countries and in Irish literature in particular as an emblem of their nation.

It is noteworthy that Yeats’s “A Prayer for my Daughter”, has been appreciated not only on the rich thematic level but also on the linguistic structural level as well. The poem - which contains ten stanzas of eight lines each written in iambic pentameter with the rhyme scheme of aabbccddc - is filled with

various figures of speech that are skillfully manipulated to convey Yeats's fatherly anxious feelings towards the future of his daughter in chaotic atmosphere that threatens his beloved Ireland at the same time. For example, Yeats uses personification in "The Storm is howling" and the storm itself is a symbol of the external forces of threatening his daughter's safety. Other literary devices are employed such as juxtaposition, oxymoron or paradox in "murderous innocence of the sea", assonance and onomatopoeia in "sea-wind scream", metaphor in "crazy salad", and parallelism in "self-appeasing self-affrighting". The overall tone of the poem is gloomy, precarious, reflective, prayer-like, hopeful and advisory in the final stanza. (Wong 1-4).

Similarly, as Yeats prays for his daughter and wishes her happy life with a partner who will take care of her and secure her future days, Shawqi voices the same rosy wishes for his two-year-old daughter Ameena in his poem "A Playful Girl". Thus Shawqi's poem for his daughter begins with the same wish Yeats concludes his prayers for his daughter Anne. Shawqi addresses his daughter saying:

Ameena, my dear daughter,
I congratulate you on your second birthday.
May God preserve you for me for years to come,
And provide you with prudence and good health,
I hope you get married to one of the most courteous
men,
And give birth to noble souls. (My translation)
(Al Shawqqiat, Part IV, 639: L. 1-5)

أمينة يا ابنتي الغالية أهنيك بالسنة الثانية
وأسأل أن تسلمى لي السنين وأن ترزقي العقل والعافية
وان تقسمى لأبر الرجال وأن تلدي الأنفس العالية

Thus the opening lines in Shawqi's poem about his daughter are almost identical with the final stanza of Yeats's "A Prayer for my Daughter". Thus the tone of the poem is like Yeats's prayer-like

but it is not gloomy and frightening. It is rather wishful and hopeful.

To illustrate, the stormy atmosphere threatening the cradle of Yeats's girl is almost absent in Shawqi's poem which is marked by noticeable funny and optimistic tones perfectly matching the childish behaviour of the playful daughter who seems to be totally absorbed in her little world of candies and toys:

How often your father's pockets were emptied,
While yours were not.

And how often he complained from the bitterness of life

While you are just enjoying your candies. (Al Shawqqiat 639: L. 8-9)

وكم قد خلت من أيبك الجيوب وليست جيوبك بالخالية
وكم قد شكوا المر من عيشه وأنت وحلواك في ناحية

Like most children, Ameena seems to be unaware of what Yeats has referred to in his poem "The Stolen Child" as the sorrows of life that are beyond her understanding: "For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand". Shawqi, likewise, explains how his daughter is completely unaware of the calamities of life that have befallen her father, a blessing for which she should be envied:

I wonder how many calamities have happened,
while you are completely absent-minded

If a parent was ever capable of envying their children,

I would envy you, my carefree child. (Al Shawqqiat 639:L. 12-13)

ومن عجب مرت الحادثات و أنت لأحداثها ناسية
فلو حسدت مهجة ولدها حسدتك من طفلة لاهية

Like Yeats's baby girl Anne who is half secured in her cradle and is protected from the surrounding stormy atmosphere through parental care, Shawqi's daughter, Ameena is absorbed in her little world, just playing with her "precious toys" and enjoying her sweets because she is protected by an anxious father who saves her

the toil of life that may storm her peace of mind and shatter her happiness.

In fact, Shawqi has written a number of poems about his daughter Ameena in particular and his other two sons. For example, in his poem “A Toy” he likens her to “angles”, with beautiful eyes “as blue as the sky” and her wonderful teeth are likened to “pearls” ” (Al Shawqqiat 641: L. 14-15). In this poem he warns her against the dangers of life asking her to be alert to its tricks:

I said to her, o my angel,
Who loves peace, I can never deny,
He who lives amongst wolves without clutches,
Will be devoured by wolves. (Al Shawqqiat 641: L
20-21).

فقلت لها: ايهذا الملاك تحب السلام، و لا أنكر
ومن يعدم الظفر بين الذئاب فإن الذئاب به تظفر

In another poem entitled “Selfishness” Shawqi warns his daughter Ameena against selfishness as Yeats has warned his daughter against choking hatred in his poem “A Prayer for my Daughter”. Nevertheless, Shawqi’s advice for his daughter, unlike Yeats’s, is once again coated with humorous tones since the poem relates how Ameena treats her dog in a childish selfish way. Though she loves her dog, she prefers to feed herself than to feed the hungry dog. The poem ends with a wise saying pointing to the innate selfishness of children.

In another poem entitled “The Best Cradle” Shawqi describes the physical appearance of his extraordinary beautiful girl likening her to “an angel”, “Virgin Mary” and “Prophet Yusuf”. Yeats, likewise, talks about his daughter’s beauty and yet warns her against being vain: “May she be granted beauty and yet not/ Beauty to make a stranger’s eye distraught,/ Or hers before a looking-glass” (L. 17-19) or in short not to “consider beauty a sufficient end” in itself and to keep her natural kindness instead of just taking care of her outer appearance (L. 20). Unlike Shawqi,

Yeats seems to be fond of natural imagery as he likens his daughter to “a flourishing hidden tree” (L. 47).

In another poem entitled “Ameena” Shawqi expresses his fatherly tenderness and love for his daughter in an easy flowing language:

My heart beats for her
When she laughs and cries.
My eyes are always watching her
When she moves or stops (Al Shawqiat 638: L 3-4).

خفق القلب لها عند البكاء و الضحك
و كم رعيتها العيون عند السكون والحرك

Thus, it is true that Shawqi’s daughter, Ameena, seems to have a lion’s share of her father’s poetry through which readers get to know that she has been the apple of his eyes. It is also true that though Shawqi’s poem “A Playful Girl” is shorter than Yeats’s “A Prayer for my Daughter” since it contains thirteen lines only, yet his fatherly feelings are expressed in various other poems about his sweet heart Ameena.

From all the above mentioned, it has become evident that though both Yeats and Shawqi are praying for their own daughters in particular in poems such as “A Prayer for my Daughter” and “A Playful Girl”, yet the pieces of advice delivered therein prove to be of general applications since they reflect fatherly tenderness and anxieties towards their daughters. Nevertheless, whereas Yeats’s poem contains serious remarks about the role of women in the Irish society, along with the political turmoil in Ireland as that time, as has been previously illustrated, Shawqi’s poems about his daughter are free from any remarks about such big issues. They are just reflections of his deep attachment to his family evident in poems such as “The Mother” and “My Grandmother” as he was generally known for his kindness to his parents as well as his love for his children. Shawqi himself was “a pampered child and this is why he was fond of lulling his own children and grandsons”. In fact, Shawqi himself has this “innocence” characteristic of children (Sueiliem 13-14). This innocence and love for children are reflected in his poems for them especially those included in part IV of his

collection of poetry Al Shawqiat entitled “The Specialties”. It is worth mentioning that Yeats, like Shawqi, was “preoccupied with memory; he wrote several powerful elegies for dead friends” besides those poems directed to members of their families (Howe 15).

Apart from the personal mode, it is noteworthy that such autobiographical poems may touch upon political issues such as “Samira’s Phantom”, a poem written by Mahmoud Samy Al Barody, another great Egyptian poet. Al Barody wrote this poem while he was in exile addressing his five year old daughter Samira whom he saw in his dreams. The poem expresses not only his deep love of his beloved daughter but, more important, his nostalgia for his dear country (Omar 69-71). Though Shawqi was also exiled due to his political stances against British colonialism, yet his poems about his daughter Ameena are almost free from political allusions. Such bitter feelings of exile and detachment have rather found expression in a poem like “Expatriation and Nostalgia” which is reminiscent of Yeats’s longing for Ireland while he was in London as previously elaborated.

Another characteristic mode of Yeats’s and Shawqi’s poems for children is to be highlighted through approaching other two poems written by them. They are Yeats’s “Among School Children” and Shawqi’s “Learning, Education and the Role of Teachers”. As apparent from the two titles, it is the educational dimension, not the mythological and folkloric, or the personal and autobiographical, that is stressed this time. To begin with, Yeats’s poem “Among School Children” touches similarly on important issues pertaining to childhood and their education. Like “A Prayer for my Daughter” it reveals a great deal of Yeats’ personal affairs at a different stage of his life when he is a man of sixty and holds the position of a senator in 1922. In this way children and their problems seem to be of interest to Yeats the poet and the politician at the same time. This time his prayers are not confined to his daughter but to the daughters and sons of Ireland. According to Helen Vendler, “Among School Children” is “the most comprehensive of all Yeats’s late poem” (82). Vendler elaborates:

After a deliberately mundane and autobiographical beginning in which the senator (who bitterly sees himself at sixty as a “scarecrow” and a “smiling public man”) visits children in kindergarten and is shown round by the nun in charge, his mind wanders to what Maud Gonne might have looked like as a child of their age. But then, cruelly, his imagination shows her to him as she now is sixty, “hollow of cheek.” This despairing diptych of Maud young and old is succeeded by a second diptych of the poet himself young and old. (83)

The poem, therefore, touches upon an important theme: “One is not, then, in terms of identity, either the child one was or the scarecrow one is” for “one’s identity is the linear shape self-choreographed throughout life, a shape never ceasing to evolve, and continuous from childhood to death” (85). This is why “the dancing dancer represents living as a continually invented creative act extended over time” (85). Psychological speaking, Yeats’s celebrated poem “Among School Children” seem to possess a therapeutic effect for being a medium through which the writer recalls memories from his own childhood days. According to Nicholas Trucker “the ability to write about childhood can itself act as a process of therapy and understanding where past experience is concerned. Children’s authors can therefore become their own psychologists when reconstructing their own childhoods” (165).

Apart from the psychological perspective, as education is thought to be a continuous process from cradle to grave, one’s identity and personality continually develops from childhood till old age. This perhaps accounts for the rhetoric question posed in the final stanza of the poem: “How can we know the dancer from the dance?”. According to Vendler, “Many of Yeats’s most ambitious late poems take these themes of identity, culture, and wisdom, reflecting them in different emphases” (85). In an article entitled “Yeats and the Post Colonial”, Marjorie Howes points out that “we cannot reliably separate” Yeats’s “personal opinions from the rhetorical strategies he hoped to employ persuasively” as national figure who is “interested in the notion that a postcolonial Ireland should be or had been transformed” (214).

Indeed, if Yeats has been present among school children as part of his Senatorial work, he will always be present with them through his literary work every time they are given the chance to read and examine his poems. As Yeats states in the first stanza of the poem, children will go on learning and acquiring knowledge throughout ages:

The children learn to cipher and to sing,
To study reading-books and histories,
To cut and sew, be neat in everything
In the best modern way_ the children's eyes
In momentary wonder stare upon
A sixty-year-old smiling public man. (3-8)".

According to Oriel Steel, the poem is marked by its "humane and acceptant tone" since it is along with Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantine" is "ironically one of the most private poems. It is a poem of self reflection, rather than of political metaphor" (1).

The poem consists of eight stanzas, each containing eight lines written in iambic pentameter with the rhyme scheme of ABABABCC known as ottava rima traditionally used for heroic or epic poetry (Steel 1). The final stanza contains the rhetorical question in last two lines which are "the most often quoted part" that has been given various significances by critics (Among School children): "O chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer/are you the leaf the blossom or the bole?/ O body swayed to music, O brightening glance/ how can we know the dancer from the dace?" (L. 61-64). Despite the complexity of these lines, young readers can understand at least the natural imagery of the plant which should be perceived as a whole unity not as inseparable entities.

This is applicable to man's different stages of life; childhood youth and old age since this life long experience is an accumulation of a continuous process of learning. In this way the young reader comes to the conclusion that the formation of his own personality is deeply rooted in the soil of his country; a process of development that is watered by continuous education. This is why the inclusion of poems of great nationalist poets such as Yeats in school curriculum will be of great benefit to the young

buds blossoming in the heart of their nations not only in Ireland but worldwide as well.

In fact, this is typical of Shawqi's poem entitled "Learning, Education, and the Duty of the Teacher". As the last line of Yeats's poem "Among School Children" are one the most-often quoted parts of Yeats poetry, the following poem contains the most-often quoted part of Shawqi's poem that have long been studied by school children. Like Yeats, Shawqi was appointed as Senator in 1924. The poem was first recited in a ceremony held by Teachers' Club. It proves to be one of Shawqi's most famous poems underlining the significant role of education in the development of nations and the important role of teachers who are performing a sublime mission compared to that carried out by Prophets whose sacred task is to guide humanity to the right path. This is why the poem has been repeatedly studied by school children to the extent that the first "bayt" or the initial line of the poem has taken the effect of well-known proverbs in Egyptian and Arab communities as well:

Stand for the teacher and give him his due respect,
For he is almost (delivering the message of) a prophet.
Have you ever known someone who is nobler
Than he who establishes souls and nourishes minds?
Glory be to God, the first Teacher,
Who taught human beings in old ages how to use
the pen.
Thus their minds were taken away from the
darkness (of ignorance),
And hence guided to the right path (of education).
(My translation).(Al Shawqqiat, Part I, 151: L. 1-3)

"العلم و التعليم و واجب المعلم"

كاد المعلم أن يكون رسولا	قم للمعلم وفه التبجيلا
يبني، و ينشئ أنفسا و عقولا؟	أعلمت اشرف، أو اجل من الذي
علمت بالقلم القرون الأولى	سيحانك اللهم خير معلم
وهديته النور المبين سيلا	أخرجت هذا العقل من ظلماته

Through such a striking metaphor the opening line of the poem crystallizes the sacred mission of teachers who, like Prophets, are entrusted with the sublime mission of leading their nations towards the right path. Like Yeats, Shawqi uses a rhetorical question that goes in line with the educational context of the poem. The paradox between the “light” of learning and “the darkness” of ignorance is striking and helps in highlighting the importance of education as a continuous process of enlightenment. More importantly, the poem bears witness to Shawqi’s fascination with the Islamic cultural and heritage. There is no wonder since Shawqi is famous for his celebrated poem “Nahj al Burda” in which he praises Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and his teachings.

Shawqi’s long poem about education is divided into four stanzas. In the first stanza which contains eighteen lines written in standard Arabic Shawqi presents a number of analogies derived from the Islamic heritage. He refers to God as being “the first Teacher who has taught people how to write with the pen”. This is already mentioned in one of the chapter of the holy Quran entitled “The Pen” in which Allah swears by “the pen” and what is written by it. He also refers to a number of prophets and holy books revealed to them to guide humanity such as “Moses’s Old Testament”, “Jesus’s Bible”, and Prophet Mohmmad (Peace Be Upon Him) the seal of prophets with the Holy Quran (151: L 6-7).

Shawqi laments the deteriorating conditions of education at his age through the revealing image of “little infants who are just finding their ways towards education” despite the fact that their ancestors have educated the world (151: L 9). He attributes such deterioration to the tyranny of the unjust forces of colonialism. Therefore, he calls upon the youth to follow the example of Socrates who had gone through many pains for acquiring knowledge. In other words, the first stanza ends with a valuable piece of advice for the younger generations. That is, children should endure the hardships of learning instead of tasting the bitterness of ignorance if they want to keep their freedom and national identity. This is typical of Yeats’s poem “Among School Children” in which he describes how children are absorbed in deciphering the theories of great philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras.

In the second stanza Shawqi asserts the fact that it is the duty of teachers to shoulder their own responsibilities towards developing the educational system in their country instead of leaving such mission in the hands of the colonizer. He refers to Dunlop, the British consultant to the Egyptian ministry of education Known at that time as “the Ministry of Maaref”. Dunlop’s policy has proven Shawqi’s theory that the colonizer has never been willing to improve the conditions of the colonized countries. Therefore, he uses another eloquent metaphor through which Egypt is likened to an infant who takes his first step on the educational level. Shawqi laments the fact that other countries have walked miles in this road while Egypt is still lagging behind: “We have seen Egypt taken only its first step in the way to education/ while other kingdoms have covered miles”. Shawqi is sad that this occurred in a country like Egypt known for its ancient civilization since the ages of king “Khufu” as an inevitable result of lack of proper education (153: L 24-26).

As Shawqi has given teachers their due respect in the opening stanza of the poem, in the third stanza, he points out their duties towards their community and the future generations of their country. He insists that proper education should be accompanied by a set of abiding morals and ethics which both teachers and students should cling to. He uses a striking metaphor in which the lack of morals is likened to a serious fatal illness that has infected the communal body of the Egyptian nation: “If my people are plagued in their ethics, so weep for them and walk in their funerals” (153: L 41). As Shawqi’s line about the sacred missions of teacher is famous, his poetic description of the importance to ethics as a corner stone in the progress of his nation is also memorized by both adult and young readers: “Nations are but the ethics they cling to/ If their ethics are gone, they are gone too” (Al Shawqiat, Part I, 18)

فإنما الأمم الأخلاق ما بقيت فإن هم ذهبوا أخلاقهم ذهبوا

Therefore, Shawqi is calling upon parents to regard educating their children as their first priority. In this stanza he gives new poetic definition of the word “orphan”. For him, the

word does not only mean those children who are left without a father or a mother, but it rather refers to those children whose parents have not provided them with proper education: “The orphan is not the person whose parents passed away/ and left him behind facing the sorrows of life alone”, but “The orphan is rather the one who has/ a mother who never cares about him or a father who is too busy to take care of him) (Al Shawqqiat 154: 45).

As Yeats’s poem “Among School Children” reveals his involvement in the political life of Ireland at that time as it was written after visiting a school in Dublin as part of his senatorial work to provide encouragement to students, the fourth and last stanza of Shawqi’s poem highlight the same involvement with the political affairs of his country Egypt. In the final stanza, Shawqi pays tribute to the Parliament and the efforts it exerts for attaining the welfare of the Egyptian nation. Again Shawqi is asking teachers to shoulder their duties so as no ignorant people are sent to the parliament as senators or parliamentary members. He asks them by “the martyrs of the Egyptian nation”, by the “noble blood” that was shed to free this country “never to send ignorant people to the parliament” (Al Shawqqiat 154:L. 55). He addresses the Egyptians to dedicate all efforts to educating the children and youth of the nation because they are the future of their country. It is the same wish voiced by Yeats in his poem “Among School Children” and the wish of every patriotic person worldwide.

What is really striking about the poem is the fact that it reflects two different sides of Shawqi the nationalist poet; First, his attachment to the legacy of his country with its Islamic heritage along with the civilization of Ancient Egyptians, and second, his keenness on the development of his nation through education and having contacts and coping with other western cultures he has come across through his years of study in France. In the introduction of *Al Shawqqiat* readers are told that Shawqi has been greatly influenced by his study in Europe as apparent from his poetry which also reflects his attachment to the legacy of his nation. This is true to the extent that “one may get the feeling that he is examining two completely different poets, yet the two sides of Shawqi bear witness to his deep love of his beloved Egypt “a scared kind of love or rather a worship”; (12).

This is also typical of Yeats whose “entire career could be characterized as a search of hybrid poetic form that would combine English and Irish” and this is why in post colonial studies, “hybridity is often seen as adaptive, appropriative response to cultural contact, particularly on the part of the colonized” (Vendler 221). Therefore, this noticeable sense of national identity is never mistaken in the poetry of both Yeats and Shawqi in general and in their poetry for children in particular as apparent from the last two poems in question: Shawqi’s “Learning, Education, and the Duty of the Teacher” and Yeats’s poem “Among School Children”. The same kind of faithful national feelings are revealed through the two compared poems in which the speakers address the younger generations, the little sons and daughters who will shoulder the responsibility of developing their nations in the near future.

As evident from the comparison dawn in this survey, both Shawqi and Yeats are of the opinion that education is the only way towards the development of their nations that have long fallen prey to the unjust powers of the British occupation in the name of education and false slogans of shouldering the white man’s burden of refining such colonized nations. Nevertheless, this burden can never be carried properly except by the young buds of such nations. Those faithful sons and daughters, who are the emblem of their nations and the symbol of their future, should be alert to the dangers threatening their nations in reality as they have conscious to the dangers of the supernatural world related in legends and myths as part of their heritage. They should work hard to develop their countries through a continuous process of education from cradle to grave, a process that will armour them against the sorrows of life resulting mainly from ignorance, backwardness and, more important, the lack of genuine sense of belonging to the soil in which they are born.

Such patriotic feelings appear in other poems written by Shawqi for children such as “Egypt’s Anthem” or (“Nasheed Misr”) and “The Nile” in an eloquent metaphor derived from the Islamic culture in which the Nile is referred to as Al Khawther, a river in paradise. Besides this metaphor, Shawqi uses a brilliant personification to express the generosity of the Nile as an infinite

source of prosperity and welfare of the Egyptian people throughout ages. The Nile itself is a symbol of “national identity” and “sense of belonging”, and the stream of life and the infinite source of renewable blessings for the coming generations (Abou Al Saad 175). This poem in particular has repeatedly been studied by school children and it is even sung as one of the most famous “school songs” or “Anasheed” in Egypt. The importance of such songs lies in the fact that they “plant” in children virtues and values such as “faith, love of countries, kindness to their parents, keeping away from evil, etc. ” (Abou Al Saad 159).

In this way, powerful national feelings can be planted in the minds and hearts of children even in kindergarten and primary schools which play a significant role in forming the personality of children socially, politically and intellectually (Dawood 24). In this way, children’s literature can help great deal in the development of societies through providing proper nourishment for the young readers and this is why topics related to this genre, with all its various types, are not confined to literary studies only but they are part of subjects of psychological and educational surveys as well (Ahmad 5). It is noteworthy that such “Anasheed” or “march-like poems” are “composed to be sung or recited on patriotic or communal occasions” (Ahmad Shawqi’s Contribution 11). As for the rhyme scheme, “Most of the anashid of the neo-classists use a European strophic scheme, which historically preceded the adoption of strophic poetry by romantic Arab poets in the inter-war period” (“Ahmad Shawqi’s contribution” 11). With poems such as “Among School Children” and Shawqi’s “Learning, Education, and the Duty of the Teacher”, they are encouraged to continue their study, enlarge their knowledge, assert their national identity, and express their love and deep attachment to their countries at the very time they are reading aloud or reciting such eloquent poems with the musical tones produced therein.

Here appears the importance of children’s literature in general and of poetry in particular as a literary and educational tool. Since poetry is “the most condensed form of language” children’s “knowledge of what language is and does will become deeper and more subtle through poetry rather than any other form of literature” (qt. in Hunt 128). As a result, “To deprive

children of poems is to deny them the society of clear, single voices and an irreplaceable range of feelings” (qt in Hunt 129).

Indeed, children’s literature in general and poetry in particular are sometimes marginalized in favour of other visual stimulations exemplified nowadays in the magic world of websites in which children are attracted or rather “trapped”. They are lured to a world that has its own entanglements and its various wonders:

The fact that television and videos [and internet applications nowadays] are blamed than books for sometimes having a bad influence upon the young simply reflects the greater importance today of visual over literary stimulation in the lives of most children. Whether this occasional scapegoating of television is unfair and unfounded as was so much criticism of former children’s literature remains a controversial area in needs of modern research. (Tucker 171).

That is to say, the relationship between “teacher, text, author and young readers . . . would be changed considerably, if criticism of children’s text were to be more readily available” (Hunt 138). Indeed, the present study is but a step forward in this regard.

Critical studies of literary texts directed to children by such great poets as W. B. Yeats and Ahmad Shawqi can help enhancing this literary genre which “were seen as marginalized to literary studies, and were only studied as historical footnotes or as bibliographical curiosities” (Hunt 6-7). They share the same interest of other literary figures who have been keen observers of the magic world of childhood that have been described in some of the poems such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “A Child Evening Prayers”, William Makepeace Thackeray’s “The Zoo”, Lewis Carroll’s “Humpty Dumpty’s Song”, Robert Louis Stevenson’s “Happy Thought”, Emily Dickinson’s “A Light Exists in Spring”, Ann Taylor’s “My Mother”, Christina Rossetti’s “The Rainbow” and Charles Kingsley’s “The Little Dolls”.

Similarly, in Arabic literature there are several poems written for children that can be elaborated in further critical

studies such as children's poetry of Muhammad Othman Galal, Kamel Al Kilany, Abdel Tawab Yusuf, Suliman Al Eissa and Ahmed Sueiliem. Unfortunately, many children in the Arab world in particular nowadays are destined to face the sorrows of life resulting from several socio-political problems. The suffering of the Palestinian children is one of those serious issues highlighted by great poets such as Nizar Qabbni's, the Syrian poet, in his poem "Children of Defeats" and "Stone-throwing Children" by the Egyptian poet Ahmad Heikal. Such poets have dedicated part of their poems to describe the hopes, dreams, and calamities of children in their nations. There is no wonder since children symbolize the future of their countries and the emblem of their nations.

To sum up, as apparent from the comparison drawn in this survey, children occupied a considerable place in the poetry of two great poets such as Yeats and Shawqi. Though they belong to different cultural backgrounds, they share, as obvious from the compared poems, several distinguishing qualities on the top of which are their faithful national feelings exemplified in their deep love of and their preoccupations with the past and future of their respective countries Ireland and Egypt. The poems in question, along with their political stances, bear witness to such national feelings which both poets have been eager to plant in the heart and minds of their children. They regard children as the emblem of their nations who will shoulder the responsibility of developing their countries that have long fallen prey to the unjust colonial powers of the British. As apparent from the selected poems in comparison, both Yeats and Shawqi have skillfully managed to transmit such patriotic national feelings, along with several other moral lessons, to the young buds blossoming in the dear soil of their beloved countries. Such messages are repeatedly delivered as long as their poems are read by school children and examined by critics and researchers.

As evident from the poems examined and compared in this study, Yeats's and Shawqi's poems directed to children are not just pieces of advice or prayers delivered from anxious fathers to their kids, but they are rather the faithful prayers of two national poets who are fascinated with the heritage of their nations and at the same time preoccupied with the future of their countries

symbolized in the innocent world of children. This world, like that of the adults, still faces the hardships and sorrows of life especially in the light of the threatening challenges prevailing worldwide. Here appears the role of children's literature in general and of poetry in particular as a literary and educational tool for the improvement of societies, a continuous process that should be launched from early childhood on.

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