

SOMALI ARABIC POETS - SELECTED
CASE STUDIES

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SOMALI ARABIC POETS - SELECTED CASE STUDIES

by

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of Arts in Partial Fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree of Master of
Philosophy of the
University of Ibadan

February, 1981.

DEDICATION

TO MY MOTHER, HAJJAH FATIMAH HAJJ CUMAR IBRAHIM

AND MY STEPMOTHER, HAJJAH MARIAM FĀRAH 'UMĀR

ABSTRACT

This study contains representative selection of Somali Arabic poetry, which gives a clear idea of the quantity and quality of Somali Arabic poetry as well as its literary standard, its themes, its contents and its forms.

Entitled "Somali Arabic Poets - Selected Case Studies", it comprises two parts: "Background Survey" and "Selected Somali Arabic Poets". "Part One" contains three Sections, the first of which is devoted to a brief study of Somalia - geographically, historically and politically. The second is devoted to a study of the place and importance of Somali poetry (in Somali language) in the Somali Culture, and the last is devoted to a study of the emergence and development of Arabic and its literature in the Somali Peninsula.

"Part Two" also contains three sections. The first of these is devoted to a study of the life and works of the eminent poet, "Zayla^Ci", the second is devoted to a study of the life and literary production of the prolific poet, "Hajj Sufi", and the last is devoted to a study of the life, scholarship and Arabic works of the remarkable leader and the famous bilingual poet "the Sayyid". This study ends with concluding remarks, which sum up the findings of this research.

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out by Mr. Alawi A. Adam
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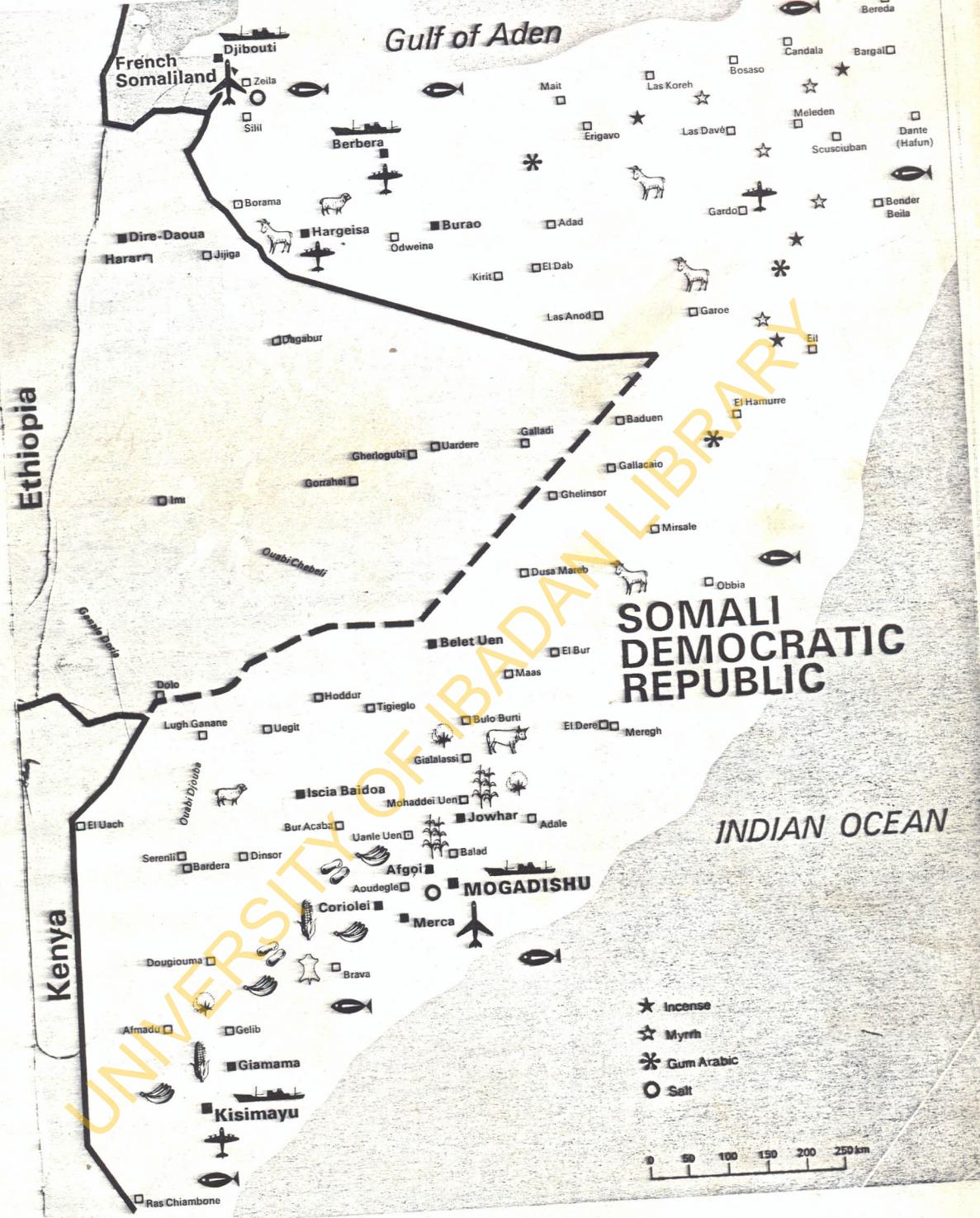
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PREFACE

My interest in the Arabic language and its literature in Somalia as a field of research and study, began to develop at an early stage of my education.

I cannot recall the exact date, but it was in the fifties when I, by chance, accompanied a friend to his house only to see there something that came later to shape and influence my career. He was a member of a family that had a long-standing reputation of Arabic scholarship and strong commitments to Islamic studies in the town of Jijiga and the area around it.

This family, Jama^C's family, provided facilities for all the students who were interested in learning Islam and Arabic language, and even supplied the essential amenities to those students who could not afford to support themselves.

Soon after my arrival in this house, I caught sight of a number of boxes neatly arranged in a corner. Moved by sheer curiosity, I stood up to open these boxes. I was surprised by the large quantity of Arabic manuscripts of various sizes and colours which these boxes contained. Although I was not able to fully understand the contents of these manuscripts, the mere awesome look at these had its impact on me, and must have deeply influenced the future of my research. My interest in this field appears, therefore, to go back to that occasion.

From then onward, I have been fond of reading Arabic literature and reciting Arabic poetry, especially those poems written by Somalis. I have greatly enjoyed poems written by poets like the late Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahman ^cibn 'Ahmad al-Zayla^ci, the late Hajj Sufi, the late Sayyid Muhammad ^cAbdullah Has an and the late Shaykh Yusuf ^cibn Muhammad al-Bahrayn. There are other poems which I failed to enjoy. Examples of such poems are those written by the late Shaykh 'Uways ^cibn Muhammad al-Barawi and the late Shaykh ^cAbdullah al-Qutbi, perhaps because of the obvious artificiality and lack of originality in their Arabic poetic compositions.

When I was admitted to postgraduate studies at the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, I decided to transform my lasting interest in Somali Arabic poetry into a real and active research. One of the great difficulties I was bound to face was the fact that many of the helpful sources one is expected to use were lacking for Somali Arabic poetry has not been studied either historically or critically.

However, considering my own cultural background, my personal acquaintance with most of Somali Arabic scholars, and my full appreciation of both the value of the investigation as well as the problems involved in it, I began my research on this field with determination. The present study is the outcome of some three years of this determined endeavour to carry out a challenging course of research in the area of Somali Arabic poetry.

I wish to thank those who have assisted me in one way or the other in bringing this dissertation to its final shape. I am particularly indebted to my Supervisor, Professor M.S. El-Garh, the Head of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, for his patience in guiding my research and correcting my drafts.

I am also immensely grateful to Dr. M.O.A. Abdul of the same Department for his guidance, encouragement and friendly advice. My thanks go also to my second Supervisor, Dr. I.A. Ogunbiyi of this Department for reading and correcting the final draft of this work. This acknowledgement will be incomplete without a mention of the assistance that I have received from my two colleagues, Al-Hajj D.O.S. Noibi and Dr. S.H.A. Malik. To them and other colleagues of this Department I am deeply thankful. Finally, my deep gratitude is due to Mr. C.O. Akinboade of the same Department for typing this dissertation and for other secretarial assistance.

I wish to state, however, that I alone take full responsibility for any inaccuracies, errors or other shortcomings that may be found in this dissertation.

SECTION I**SOMALIA****A - GEOGRAPHY**

Somalia is located in the North-East horn of Africa. It is bounded on the North by the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, on the West by Ethiopia, on the South by Kenya and the Indian Ocean and on the East by Indian Ocean.

The area inhabited by Somalis is estimated to cover 1,000,000 square kilometres and consists of three parts:

- (1) The Somali Democratic Republic, which sits on an area of 678,000 kilometres square.
- (2) The New Republic of Djibouti.
- (3) Regions inhabited by Somalis but administered by Kenya and Ethiopia.

The whole of the Somali territories is either a desert or semi-desert, with an average annual rainfall of 12 to 20 inches. A thorny type of vegetation covers only 10% of the country, while the rest is sand and barren rocks. However, it is characterised by a network of valleys which are the product of the violent erosions during the rainy seasons. These are of considerable importance to Somalia, in general, and in particular to the nomads who, in the dry season, drill in them to obtain water. Besides, there are two rivers, which have their origin in the Somali inhabited highland now under Ethiopian rule. They flow for a considerable distance through the Somali Republic.

One River Juba, meanders in the lower Juba region of Somali Republic, where it finally flows into the Indian Ocean through Kisimayo city. The other river, Shebelle, which is more useful than river Juba, disappears into the sand dunes and marsh lands, South of Magadishu, the capital of the Somali Republic.¹

The majority of the Somalis are nomads as dictated by the nature of the land in which they are living. They raise sheep, camels, cows and goats. They keep moving with their flocks from place to place, in search of water and pasture. Needless to say, this is their only source of income. Although the exact figure of the livestocks herded in the area is not known, initial estimation carried out inside the Republic, put the number at 24 million sheep, 6 million goats, 16 million camels and 3 million cattle. However, these figures are far from being exact as the numbers are appreciably affected by adverse conditions existing in the area they are living. It is believed that the recent Sahil drought reduced the Somali livestock to one third, if not less, of what it normally was.²

Somali livestock have their markets in various parts of the world, especially the Arabian peninsula, Egypt and some European countries like Italy. This earns the Somali Republic about 70% of total revenue in foreign exchange.³ Again a large proportion of the population, over 90% in the north and 70% in the south, depends for their livelihood on livestock.⁴ But it seems that Somalis realized the danger of such complete dependence on livestock, on one hand, and the little available cultivable lands on the other. As a result,

a lot of attention has shifted from livestock to the agricultural section of the economy.⁵ Although the Somalis have been relatively more successful in this regard than many African countries, particularly in the last few years, the area under cultivation is less than 5% of the arable land, which has been estimated at 8 million acres.⁶ Major agricultural products in Somalia include maize, barley, wheat, cotton, sugar cane, mango and banana. Only few of the above serve as cash crops while the remaining are locally consumed. Banana plantations are highly developed in the Southern region and are regarded as second to the livestock in the export list.⁷

As for the population of Somalia, there has not been an official census in the country until now, but unofficial sources put the figure of the population within the Republic alone, at some 4.5 millions, and it is believed that nearly the same number of people are living in regions outside the Somali Republic. The majority of the Somalis are nomads and also fond of travelling into various parts of the world. There is a large number of Somalis who have crossed the sea as tradesmen or seeking employment. They are found in East Africa, in the Middle-eastern countries, and in the main American and European ports, where they work as seamen.⁸

The characteristics of the Somalis have been nicely summed up in the British survey as follows: "They are intensely individualist, and have sometimes been described as quarrelsome, touchy and

suspicious; but they are also capable of warm human feeling and remarkable hospitality to strangers." We may add to this that the Somalis enjoy a natural inclination to unity; for they speak one language, the Somali language, in all parts of the Somali peninsula; also they are almost 100 per cent Muslims. They have the same customs, traditions and culture inspite of all colonial attempts to separate them.

B - HISTORY

(1) Somalia In the Pre-Islamic Period:

The land, which the Somalis inhabit, used to be known in ancient times especially to the pharaonic Egyptians as the "Land of Punt".⁹ They had a great kingdom which stretched from Ethiopia in the West to the Indian Ocean in the East, and from the Gulf of Aden and Bab al-Mandeb in the North to the Kenya in the South: they possessed strong commercial fleet, which plied the Red Sea, the ports of Yemen and South Arabia as well as the Arabian Gulf, carrying their goods to the people of these areas in exchange for other goods.¹⁰

This kingdom had been ruled in succession by many kings. The names of all these kings are not quite known. However, few of them have reached us, like King "Alalak", the founder of this kingdom, whose capital was named after him to immortalize his memory. Another one was King Barhūraghi,¹¹ the grandson of Alalak,

in whose reign the commercial relationship between the inhabitants of Somalia and ancient Egyptians flourished, as we shall see later.¹¹

Yet another well-known ruler of this ancient Somali kingdom was Queen "Arawelo" who was very stern and strong. She was famous for her antipathy against all men - an antipathy around which many legends were fabricated.

The Somali land was also known to the Phoenicians who referred to it as a region of incense. Phoenician commercial ships used to come to Somali ports continuously for business matters. Moreover, some thousands of years before Christ, this country was known to Egypt and many ancient Egyptian historical records confirmed the existence of good relationship between Egyptians and Somalis.

About four thousand years ago some Somalis migrated to Egypt carrying with them their emblem, a bird known to contemporary Somalis by the name "Huur" and the Egyptian used this emblem later with little change in its name (Hūr). Also during the reign of King Khufu there was a considerable number of Somalis in Egypt. One of them was named "Hartizi", and held a high position in the court of the King Khufu's son.¹² The trading contact played an important role in the ancient Somali-Egyptian relationship. The Somalis imported dates, clothes, jewelry and daggers from Egypt, while the Egyptians imported some animals like giraffes, leopards and monkeys as well as ivory, tortoiseshell, myrrh, incense and cypress from Somalia.¹³

In ancient times, Somalia enjoyed world-wide fame for the production of the best incense, which they exported to both East and West for various applications. Apart from its secular uses in the manufacture of perfumes and medicines, it was indispensable in religious rites during those times. Traders from India, China, Greece, Rome, Egypt and Phoenicia came to Somalia to buy incense, which was again re-exported to various parts of the ancient world.¹⁴

The Somali-Egyptian links cooled when Egypt was occupied by "Hyroods", but it was renewed in the reign of Queen "Hatshepsut" of Egypt, who once sent a trading mission of five big ships to Punt (Somalia). The mission arrived at the capital "Alalak" on the Coast of the Indian Ocean. The Somali King "Burhuraghi welcomed them, saying "How did you come again to this country which your grandfathers had forgotten?"¹⁵

We have to admit, however, that our knowledge of the social, religious and political conditions of Somalia in the pre-Islamic period is very meagre, because it has not been sufficiently studied either historically or culturally. So, any researcher in this subject should be prepared to face the scarcity of adequate source materials. On this Mr. Jāma^c Umar^c Isa, author of Ta'rikh al-Sūmāl fī al-'Usūr al-Wustā wa al-Hadīthah (Somali History in Medieval and Modern Era) says: "The Somali history in ancient times is to us most unclear. It is an area covered with doubtful information and is full of fables and contradictory statements. The little information we have consists only of unreliable narrations, or hints on the tongues of poets."¹⁶

Considering the religious aspects in that period, it is believed that the Somalis were pagans; they worshiped different kinds of idols assuming various shapes especially the shape of a camel or horse. This was due, undoubtedly, to their importance in the life of the desert inhabitants.¹⁶

As far as Christianity is concerned, the Somalis did not embrace this religion, despite the fact that their neighbour, the Ethiopians, practised it. Probably the reason for this is that it was regarded as the religion of their traditional enemy.

The suggestion of Ibn Hawqal in his work al-Masālik wa-l-Mamālik (p.41) that the people of Zeila were Christians by the second half of the ninth century has not been supported by any other known source.¹⁷ It appears that the overwhelming majority of the Somalis remained pagan until they embraced Islam. Any possibility of Christian existence among Somalis prior to the spread of Islam must have been very limited indeed.

(2) Somalia After Islam:

It is difficult to say when exactly Islam came to Somalia, or who brought it to that part of Africa, since no helpful record for this is yet available. It is, however, believed that the Arab and Persian Muslim merchants had brought their Islamic faith together with their merchandise to some Somali coastal towns, like Mogadishu, Zeila^c, Berbera, Merca, and Brava in the seventh century A.D. From these towns, Islam spread thereafter to various parts of the country's hinterland.¹⁸ But apart from these commercial arrivals,

it is reported that during the Umayyad and Abbasid eras, many Muslims fled to the East African Coast because of the civil war. There, they preached Islam to the pagan peoples of that area. Arnold refers to an Arabic chronicle found by the Portuguese on a small Island south of Zanzibar in 1505, which states that: "The first settlers were a body of Arabs who were driven into exile because they followed the heretical teachings of a certain Zayd". The author suggests that "the Zayd referred to is probably Zayd b. Ali, a grandson of Husayn." It appears therefore that the Shi*c*-Sunni conflict must have resulted, among other things, in some Shi*c*i Muslims fleeing from the established Sunni rule to places in East Africa. There, they tried to settle down, initially under a great fear of the native population; but later, with further reinforcement coming from Arabia, they appear to succeed^{ed} gradually in extending their settlements and spreading their religion.¹⁹

On the building of the coastal city of Mogadishu, Arnold states that it was a secondary Sunni wave of immigration from Southern Arabia that built it. The earlier refugees, who were Shi*c*ites, refused then to recognize the authority of the Sunni new-comers and were, therefore, forced to leave the coastal settlements and go to the interior, where, gradually, they became merged into the native population.²⁰

Another view is that Islam was brought to Somalia by ^cUthmān b. ^cAffān (who later became the third Caliph) and his wife, Ruqayyah bint Muhammad, during the first immigration to Abyssinia. It is said that as they were on their way to the King of Abyssinia, they passed some Somali settlements perhaps Zeila^c and Harar and called their people to Islam. They finally accepted it and both Zeila^c and Harar consequently became Muslim during fifth year of the mission of Muhammad, i.e. eight years before the entering of Islam to Medina.²¹

Whether Islam came to Somalia in the sixth, seventh or eighth century, its spread in East Africa was considerable in the period between ninth and twelfth centuries A.D. It appears that by the thirteenth century Islam had already covered most of the Somali peninsula and since then the Somalis are believed to have become 100% Muslims.²² At the same time, many parts of Ethiopia also became Muslims. The latest census indicates that even at present the Muslims are over 50% of the Ethiopian population.²³

Moreover, from time to time, frequent Muslim missionaries used to come from Arabia to this region to preach the Islamic faith. The most remarkable band of these is described by Arnold as follows: "In fifteenth century, a band of forty-five Arabs came as missionaries from Hadramawt, landing at Berbera on the Red Sea and thence dispersed over the Somali country to preach Islam. One of them, Shaykh Ibrahim Abu Zarbay, made his way to the city of Harar about A.D. 1430, and gained many converts there, and his tomb is still honoured in that city."

The Somalis, in their turn, took great pains to preach Islam not only to the Somalis in the hinterland but also to other nationalities in the neighbourhood. In the thirteenth century, they established a number of state governments in the area. The most important one among these states was the Adal state, whose capital was Zayla^c. Apart from Zayla^c, the towns of Harar, Mogadishu and Merca were also important centres both for the Islamic missionary activities and for trading. These towns flourished commercially, culturally, politically and industrially. Palaces, mosques and institutions of Islamic learnings were constructed. It was said that the religious institutions at Harar and Mogadishu compared with the religious institutions in Cairo and Medina.²⁴

The Somali Islamic state of Adal is reported to have become a significant power in the area. It minted its own metal coins and manufactured the best clothes they exported to Aden, Hadramawt, Hijaz and Egypt.²⁵ It cultivated its own strong army. It felt strong enough at the end of thirteenth century to promise the Sultan of Egypt a supply of one hundred thousand horsemen together with their equipment whenever the Crusaders attacked Egypt and Syria again.²⁶

Wars broke out between the Muslim Somali state and Christian Ethiopian Kingdom during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They fought each other for a long time but undecidedly until the

colourful leader, al-Imām Ahmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ghāzi, known to the Somalis as Ahmad Gurei (the left-handed), took over the throne of 'Adal State' in 1527 A.D. He waged a war against the Christian Ethiopian kingdom in 1528 and was able to over-run almost the whole of the Ethiopian country in 1530 A.D. He actually ruled Ethiopia for a period of fifteen years (1528 - 1543). When the Ethiopians realized that they would not be able to defeat the Somalis, their king, Lebna Dengal, appealed to the Portuguese for help. Portugal, being then the only Christian country which had contacts with Ethiopia, supplied them significant quantities of the most up-to-date arms which were not known in many parts of Africa.²⁷ With these, the Ethiopians were able to defeat Imām Ahmad in a great battle in 1543 A.D. during which the Imām himself was killed.

Since that time the Somali State (Adal) began a process of decline which continued until the Europeans came in nineteenth century to the Horn of Africa and captured the scattered Somali sultanates and colonized them.

(3) The Occupation and Partition of Somalia

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the whole Somali peninsula had become the theatre of colonial competition between Britain, Italy, France and Ethiopia. Each of these governments was trying to obtain the largest portion of the divided Somali territory.

This led to the creation of what came to be referred to as the British, French, Italian and Ethiopian parts of Somalia.

(i) British Somaliland:

The British government had colonized two separate parts which came to constitute British Somali protectorate, whose capital was Hargeisa in the North East of the country and Northern Frontier District (N.F.D.), whose capital was Wajeir in the Southern part of the Somali peninsula. It was under this occupation that the British government entered into a series of treaties of protection with the various Somali tribal leaders.

In the British Somali protectorate, the British government signed a treaty of protection with the local Shaykhs in 1884, and notified the European powers that it had established a protectorate in the North-east of Somalia in 1887. It seems that the British government occupied this part to secure the supply of meat to her garrison in Aden, and to forestall any designs by France, Italy and Germany.²⁸

The region referred to as N.F.D. is located in the area where Kenya today meets the Somali Republic. It came to be fully occupied by the British in 1905, after a number of treaties with the tribal chiefs. It was separated administratively from British Kenya and regarded as a closed district which could be entered into from the rest of the lands of Kenya only by a special permit.

It remained like that until 1963 when it was finally attached to Kenya. In 1962, the British government set up a commission to investigate the public opinion in N.F.D. and to hold a referendum as to whether the population would prefer to unite with Somalia or Kenya. The result of this referendum was 86% in favour of unity with Somalia and people unequivocally expressed their opposition to become part of Kenya. Yet the British government, ignoring the commission's findings and the result of the referendum, handed the whole region over to Kenya.²⁹

(ii) French Somaliland

During the scramble and partitioning of Africa by Europeans, the French government established a sphere of influence along the Red Sea Coast, North-east of British Somali protectorate. They signed a treaty of protection with the local chiefs in 1886, bearing in mind that the strategically important port of Djibouti would serve as a coaling station for French ships going to the French colonies in the Far East.³⁰ This part of Somalia was known as "The French Somaliland" but the French government later realized that this name had implications which were not compatible with their policy of "divide and rule". Hence in 1967 they changed the name into "The territory of 'Afars and Issas." This was mainly a reaction to the independence struggle in which all Somalis living in the area actively participated. It was only in June 1977 that

the people of this territory gained independence, with the help of their Arab and African brothers. They relinquished the colonial name of "Afars and ^cIssas" and became simply known as "The Republic of Djibouti."

(iii) Italian Somaliland

The Italian interest in Somalia began in 1885 when parts of Somalia including Mogadishu were ruled by the Sultan of Zanzibar. An Italian colonial mission came first to Mogadishu and later negotiated with the Sultan for an agreement of commercial co-operation with the Italian government. The Sultan agreed to leave the port of Mogadishu to the Italians for an annual rent. In the middle of 1892, the Sultan also had let the coastal area, with its ports, Mogadishu, Merca and Brava, to the Italian government for an annual rent of 144,000 rupees in a minimum period of 25 years and a maximum period of 50 years.³¹ In 1889, the Italian government succeeded in signing a number of treaties of protection with the local tribal Shaykhs and declared that it had established an Italian protectorate over most of the coastal regions of Somalia and their hinterlands which stretches from Mogadishu northwards to Cape Gardafui on the very tip of the Horn of Africa.³² After failing to pay the annual rent to the Sultan of Zanzibar and establishing the protectorate, the Italian government assumed direct control of the whole southern Somalia in 1905. On the defeat of Italy in the Second

World War, the British took over all the Italian parts of Somalia in addition to the areas they were already holding. The situation continued until 1950, when Italy regained its former Somali region and ruled it until 1960 the year of Independence.³³

(iv) Ethiopian Somaliland

In 1889, the Ethiopian powerful leader, Menelik King of Shoa, became the Emperor Menelik II of the whole of Ethiopia. He addressed a letter to the European powers in 1891, and made extensive claim on the areas to the north, east and south, far beyond the frontier of Ethiopia at that time.³⁴

This claim was directed to the Somalis in Ogaden region who, having no means of defence, were not in a position to resist the Ethiopian expansion, which succeeded finally in seizing that region.³⁵ However, the Ethiopian expansion had really begun when Menelik II occupied in 1887 the city of Harar, the capital of the Ogaden region, and extended his sovereignty north, east and south towards the French, the British and Italian portions of Somali. But in 1889, these three powers signed a treaty with Ethiopia to stop her from expanding its frontiers towards their respective areas.³⁶

So, by 1889, the colonial partition of the Somali peninsula had been completed, though many adjustments of the boundary between the new rulers have since taken place. For the first time in its known history, Somaliland was now divided into five

different administrative parts, namely: British Somaliland, French Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, Ethiopian Somaliland and N.F.D. (which may be referred to as the Kenyan Somaliland).

(4) The Struggle for Independence

While colonialism was dominating the whole of Somalia, and Britain, Italy, France and Ethiopia were engaged in the partition of this country, a strong nationalist movement known as al-Darāwīsh emerged under the leadership of a Somali religious leader, al-Sayyid Muhammad Ḥabdullāh Has an, towards the end of nineteenth century.

In 1869, he waged a war against the British, Italians and Ethiopians which lasted for more than twenty years. He was able to defeat their troops several times. He forced the Italians and the British to withdraw from Nugal and Hawd regions. Then, in 1905, they informed him that they were ready to recognise the area controlled by him as an independent state, if he agreed to a ceasefire. But al-Sayyid Muhammad Ḥabdullāh Has an turned down their offer and continued the fight until combined air, sea and land raids were directed against him and his movement, destroying his strong fortress at 'Taleh' and defeating his movement. However, together with a few of his followers, he was able to escape towards the west of the country. He managed to reach Imi town, where he remained until he finally died on 21 December, 1920 A.D.³⁷

(We will learn more about this leader in Part Two **Section III** of this study). The colonial partition of Somalia was, therefore, destined to continue until 1960, when two parts: the British Somali protectorate and the Italian Somalia, achieved their independence and united to form the present Somali Democratic Republic with Mogadishu as its capital. As already mentioned, the French Somaliland was granted independence only in June, 1977, when it constituted an independent state with its capital, Djibouti. Both the Ethiopian Somaliland and N.F.D. (which was attached to Kenya) however are still struggling for their independence from Ethiopia and Kenya respectively.

The unity of all the regions inhabited by Somalis remains the dream of all these Somalis.

SECTION II**THE SOMALIS AND POETRY****A - GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

The Somalis are considered as a nation of bards, perhaps because poetry continues to play an important role in their social, political, cultural and religious life, before and after the advent of Islam. They have great admiration for poetry and hold the skill of poetical talent in high esteem. A considerable number of Somalis possess poet ical talent, and utilize this ability to produce new poems. Such interest led, and is still leading, to the production of a huge poetical heritage, the Somali poetry, which is regarded as the most important cultural achievement of the Somali nation.

Elaborating on the position of poetry in the Somali culture, Andrzejewski and Lewis say:

"It is perhaps not too much to claim that the Somali are a nation of bards; and their poetry certainly is one of their principal achievements. Poetry occupies a large and important place in Somali culture, interest in it is universal, and skill in it is something which everyone covets and many possess. The Somali poetic heritage is a living force intimately connected with the vicissitudes of everyday life."¹

Actually, poetry played a great role in the preservation of the social and historical aspects of Somali life throughout history. It has always been used, specially in the past when no other means of communication were available, as a means of spreading the news of their great events to the distant parts of the Somali lands, with amazing rapidity.² Virtually, poetry contributes considerably to the settlement and solution of Somali social problems. Even before the rise of national awareness, when various conflicts between various clans were of common occurrence, and pastoral wars lasting a number of years were frequent, poets were looked on as mediators and peace-makers in the Somali nomadic society. In such a situation, they composed conciliatory poems in the Somali language which is known to have readily lent itself to versification. Usually, the poetical compositions they produced would cool down tempers and restore peace and stability among feuding nomads.³ An example of these conciliatory poems is a long poem entitled "Oh Clansmen, Stop the War", composed by the renowned poet, Salaan Carrabey.⁴

With the rise of Somali political and nationalistic movements, poetry became more and more popular, and its scope became wider, until it finally came to be effectively utilized in the political and nationalistic campaigns. Due to their awareness of the considerable impact of poetry on Somali society, various political and nationalist groups utilized poetry as a means of propagating

their cause and giving it wider publicity. Consequently, almost every group came to have its own poet or poets who would recite a relevant poem in their social, political and religious occasions. For instance, Abdullaah Sultaan (d.1970), popularly known as Tima Cadde, was the special poet of the Somali National League (Al-Rābiṭa). He composed a famous poem entitled "Kaana Siib Kaana Saar" (Put the British Flag down and Raise the Somali Flag) on the day of Independence and Unity (1.7.1960), to mark this historic occasion. More recently countless poems and songs have been composed to celebrate the victories of the force of Western Somali Liberation Front over the Abyssinian invaders particularly in Guday and Jijiga battles (June/July, 1977).

This shows that poetical talent remains highly esteemed even in the modern Somali society as it had been by the ancient Somalis. There is even an attempt nowadays to extend the application of poetry to the teaching of arithmetic. "Professor M.N. Alin of the College of Education has, for example, prepared lessons for teaching fundamental mathematics through Somali poetry,"⁵ believing "that mathematical poems and songs suit the African cultural educational context, and they also sharpen students' interest in mathematical terminology."⁶

The popularity of Somali poetry and the wide scope of its social and educational utilization has been greatly helped by the

fact that the Somali language is a poetical language and that the Somali people have a taste for the literary and refined use of their language - a condition which is very much similar to that obtaining with their kin nomadic nation - the Arabs. In this connection, it is appropriate to quote David Latin's statement:

"The Somali language should be seen as a central cultural system. The Somalis have been described as a nation of bards, and that is no exaggeration. Poetry, recitation and singing, which required no heavy paraphernalia, flourish in nomadic societies, where art is limited by the weight a camel can carry. Somali songs, poetry, and proverbs are treasured by the people; and speaking the language well has always been, and still is, a necessary condition for political authority."⁷

As to the beginning of Somali poetry, there is no evidence as yet with any degree of certainty to indicate the specific dates when Somali poetry appeared. However, there is a suggestion that the earliest Somali verse we have is a fragment attributed to Queen Arawaylaw, who lived about three thousand years ago on the Eastern part of Somali peninsula along the Indian Ocean. The fragment is as follows:

" Maantana far baan maydhayaas

Hay fadhiyo geelaw

Let the camels stay today also

For I am going to wash one more finger.⁸

Although we doubt the authenticity of this composition, we find it well-metred and rhymed according to the Somali metrical system.

While there is not much information about the development of Somali poetry from medieval to contemporary times, the suggestion is made that the position of Somali poetry in the medieval period was much better than at the present time.⁹

Somali poetry remained in oral form due to the fact that the Somali language had not been written until very recently. The Somalis, who are known for their strong retentive memory preserved this literary heritage. Gatherings for the purpose of holding interesting poetical recitals are of very common occurrence in the nomadic society of Somalia. At night, under the shining stars, the Somali nomads assemble in great numbers and compose new poems, or recite poems composed by their predecessors. Some members of such gatherings could learn by heart the recited poems and repeat them wherever they go, transmitting them to others, thereby spreading them to various parts of the Somali Peninsula in a relatively short period. The ability for memorization on the part of the Somali reciters is indeed incredible.¹⁰ Some of these reciters could, immediately, repeat the recited long poems even if they had never heard them before, and even if their recitation had taken more than one hour. An example of such outstanding reciter is Xusayn Dhigle, one of the couriers of al-Sayyid Muxamad Cabdullah Xasan,¹¹ who, as has been

reported, used to repeat his master's poems immediately after the very first recitation, and spread them thereafter throughout the country. Another example of such reciter is Yuusuf Saciid, an aged contemporary poet, who claimed in a press interview that he could memorize any poem immediately after hearing it once no matter how long the poem was.¹²

The Somali audience attending these occasions of poetical recitals is highly discriminating and artistically appreciative. Hence, if the poem recited is poor or mediocre, it is criticized and condemned to oblivion.¹³ Because of this we may assume that it was only the poetry of a highly literary standard, both in content and form, that would meet public satisfaction and enjoy preservation and wide circulation.

B - RECORDING THE SOMALI POETRY

As stated earlier, the Somali language remained unwritten until very recently. Indeed, it came to have a generally accepted form of writing only in 1972, when the Somali government decreed that the Somali language should be written in an adapted Latin Script.¹⁴ As a result of having no specific orthography for writing Somali language up to that date, Somali poetry remained oral. However, up to that time, various individual attempts were made to record this literary production. Perhaps one of the earliest attempts to do this, as far as we know, was that of the revered poet, al-Sayyid Muxamad

Cabdullah Xasan (1856-1920), who tried to transcribe his own Somali poems in the Arabic script.¹⁵ Another attempt was that of Cali Yuusuf Cismaan Kaynadiid who tried to invent about 1925 an indigenous Somali script attributed to him (Cismaaniyya).¹⁶ He applied this script for recording the Somali poetry. Others tried to use the Latin script for recording the Somali poetical production. An example of such was the attempt of Musa Galaal, a specialist scholar in Somali culture and poetry. He published, in 1956, using the Latin script, a work entitled: Xikmat Somali (Somali Wisdom), containing selection of poems, proverbs and wise sayings.

In 1964, two western scholars, B.W. Andrzejewski and I.M. Lewis, published an important work entitled: Somali Poetry. This account, which is up to 167 pages, contains the best known Somali poems and songs, both classical and modern, all of them in Latin characters. One year later, Mr. Shire Jaamac published (with his own efforts and in Latin script) a work entitled Gabayyo, Mahmah iyo sheekoojin Yar Yar (Poems, Proverbs and Short Stories).

Moreover, since 1972 when the Latin script was officially introduced for Somali orthography, more efforts have been made for recording Somali poetry, and a number of poetical anthologies published. These include:

1. Jama^c Cumar Cissa, Diiwaankii Gabayadii Sayid Muxamed Cabdullah Xasan (a collection of poems of al-Sayyid Muhammad)

2. Axmad Faarah Cli, Ismaacii Mirri (a collection of poems of Ismaacii Mirri, one of the Sayyid Muhammad's generals).
3. Rushiid Muxamed Shabeel, Cilmi Bawdary (a poetical anthology of martyr of love, Cilmi Bawdari, the Poet who is said to have died in 1941 because of the love of his beloved girl, Haddan.)
4. Cumar Aw Nuur, Diiwaanka Gabayada Xaaji Aadan Axmed Afqallooc (a collection of poems of the late Hajj Adam Afqalloo¹⁷) 1975.

Although, the current exercise of recording the available heritage of Oral Poetry is still in its initial stage; it has succeeded to a considerable extent in achieving its aims, and there is much hope that, within two or three years, most of the orally available famous Somali Odes will be preserved in writing.

C - THE THEMES OF SOMALI POETRY

The conventional opening theme of Somali poetry is mostly self-praise. The Poet exalts his own bravery and generosity, and proclaims a number of glorious deeds of his ancestors. He may describe his poems as the stormy rain and thunder which accompanies it, as the sea and its waves, and as the lions and their frightful roar. After this introductory theme, the poet breaks into the specific subject of his poem.

Somali Classical Poetry, like Pre-Islamic Arabic Poetry, or perhaps any other nomadic poetry, covers the conventional themes of

love, elegy, panegyric, satire, apology and description, especially the description of the camel and horse - the two beloved animals to the hearts of Somalis.¹⁸ In addition to that there is war poetry, which celebrates the pastoral wars between the various clans. Nowadays, such a theme is no more popular and is already dying off, owing to the unifying national awareness which has been immensely achieved in modern Somalia, eliminating the former tribal feuds. But all other themes still exist, although with some changes and modifications. For example, the satire theme, which was previously employed against individuals and ~~clans~~, is becoming now directed against colonial and imperialist powers, who are keeping reluctant Somalis under their yoke.¹⁹

D - FORM OF SOMALI POETRY

Before this generation, the prosody of Somali poetry was not studied seriously. Hence, the basic nature of this system remained really unknown. More recently, series of researches have been vigorously carried out by a number of western and Somali scholars to discover the metrical structure of Somali poetry, yet the result so far achieved remains tentative and uncertain. Expressing the immense difficulties that have been met over the issue, Andrzejewski and Lewis, said (in 1964): "In our research we have been seriously handicapped by the lack of any study of the melodic and rhythmic features of Somali poetry by a competent musicologist. Unaided by such data, we have not been able to establish the nature of the units of which the rhythmic patterns are composed, and we have not succeeded

in arriving at any definite formulations in this sphere. Our study of the number and length of syllables in each line and the distribution of the accentual pattern among them has so far yielded very limited and disappointing results."²⁰

In 1979, however, two Somali scholars, Muxamed Xaashi Dhamac and Cabdullah Diiriye Guuleed introduced a new theory for scanning the various types of Somali poetry. This theory suggests that: "the four classical genres are scanned quantitatively, that is by counting temporal units on the line. They are not scanned by tone, or by stress patterns, or by any other method."²¹

Nevertheless, we may state here that there are five main genres in the Somali poetry, each of which has its specific metre and poetical form. They are Gabay, Geeraar, Jiifto, Buraanbur and Hees. Before reviewing each of these individually (which is the subject of Section E below), we should give an account of "alliteration" in Somali poetry.

The most distinguishing mark of Somali poetry, which can easily be observed even by a person who does not understand the Somali language is its unique rhyming system technically called in the Somali language "Higaad." The couplet of a Somali poem consists of two hemistiches. The rhyming sound is at the beginning of the word, and not at the end which is the case in Arabic poetry. To make a well-rhymed couplet, one must provide in each of the two hemistiches at

least one word beginning with the same sound, be it a consonant or a vowel. For instance, the sound "J" is the alliterative letter of the poem composed by al-Sayyid Muxamed Cabdullah to satire Richard Corfield.²² In this poem, which is up to 33 lines, there is at least one word beginning with the sound "J" in each of the sixty-six hemistiches, regardless of the actual position of that word in the hemistich. One finds at least sixty-six words beginning with "J" in this poem, as the following extract illustrates (the word providing the aliteration is underlined):

"Adaa Jiitayaan, Koofiyow:

dunida joogayne

Adigaa jidkii la gugu wacay:

jimicla aaneede

Jahannamo-la-geeyow, haddaad:

Aakhirow Jahato

Nimankii Jamno-u Kacay war bay:

Jerin inshaalleeye

Jameecooyinkii iyo haddaad:

Jawhartii aragto

Sida Eebbahay kuu jurrabay:

mari jawaabteeda

Daraawiish jigraar naga ma deyn:

ten iyo jeerkidheh

Ingriis jab yoo waxa ku dhacay

Jac iyo baaruude

Waxay noo jayuunteen na waa:

Jibaasha diineeddheh

Jigta weerar bay goor barga ah:

nagu jiteeyeen

Aniga jikray ila heleen:

shalay jahaadkidheh

Jeeniga hortiisay rasaas:

igaga joojeen dheh"

This extract can be translated as follows:

"You have died, Corfield, and are no longer in this world.

A merciless journey was your portion.

When, Hell-destined, you set out for the other world,

Those who have gone to Heaven will question you if God is willing.

When you see the companions of the faithful and the jewels of Heaven,

Answer them how God tried you.

Say to them: "From that day to this one,

The dervishes never ceased their assaults upon us

The British were broken while the noise of battle engulfed us.

With fervour and faith the Dervishes attacked us.

Say: "They attacked us at mid-morning."

Say: Yesterday in the holy war a bullet from one of their old rifles
struck me.

And the bullet struck me in the arm".²³

Although most of the Somali poets apply the "alliteration" system strictly, there are some cases which may be considered as a violation of this system. For instance, it has been observed that some poets break the rule of "alliteration" by arranging the verses of their poems according to the Arabic alphabetic order, beginning from Alif to Ya, and employing each one simultaneously as alliterative sound for a number of lines. In other words, the poem begins with "Alif" and uses it at the same time as the alliterative sound in the first three or four lines, then it is

replaced by "Bā'" in the following three or four lines, and by "Tā'", and so on to the end of Arabic Alphabet. An example of such poem is the religious poem composed by the renowned poet, Goorleex, who apparently survived to the first half of this century. The following is an extract from it:

<u>"Alif:</u>	<u>Alif waxaa ka idhi Aadamat</u>	<u>Aakhiraa tagiyee.</u>
	<u>Ifkan uun inaynaan heleen</u>	<u>waad ugsoontahaya</u>
	<u>Ajri guro daddow yaan Eblays</u>	<u>uuba ka ridinee</u> ²⁴
<u>Bā' :</u>	<u>Ba wawaan ka idhi Eebahay</u>	<u>Bookii baa yimidee</u>
	<u>Niman loo bayaansha dhigoo</u>	<u>beeni ku matalee</u>
	<u>Waa bari danboo aydaan heleen</u>	<u>baydida aduunee</u>
	<u>Bal dayaay Barwaagada Aduun</u>	<u>wa banaan madhanee</u>
<u>Tā' :</u>	<u>Ta wawaan ka idhi loo ma turo</u>	<u>rooxii taarigae</u>
	<u>Tusbax iyo nin towxi id badsaday wuu ku taajiree</u>	
	<u>Tariikhdi inay soo dawdahay</u>	<u>yay ku tiriyeen</u>
	<u>Tukaday kob lagu taaqyaryahay</u>	<u>yaa la teegayaa ee"</u>

This extract may be translated as follows:

"Alif: Oh mankind, since you are definitely, going to the Hereafter,
And since you are surely aware that you cannot for ever remain
in this world,
Then, seek more rewards from your Lord!
And adhere to the right path, so that you may not be misled
by the Devil into annihilation!

Bā'

The Book of God has come

It was recorded by learned men, and thereby, it does not contain any lie or falsification.

The Day of Resurrection is coming nearer, and therefore you will never enjoy this world for a long time.

You should remember that the joy of this life will never last; it is like a green grass fast changing into swarthy stubble.

Tā'

A person who neglects his duty to his God is not worthy of respect!

We have received that whoever constantly used Rosary, and realized the unity of God, will be satisfied in the Hereafter.

It has been mentioned that the Day of Judgement is approaching.

Therefore pray to your Lord, for you are heading to where nothing could benefit you but your prayers. 25

Furthermore, a good poet is expected to use for his "alliteration" ^{Substantive} words, such as nouns or verbs, and not merely particles.

The examples given above bear testimony to the validity of this observation. These rules obliged the Somali poet to widen the scope of his vocabulary and develop a large number of synonyms.

Frequently, a poet may have to revive archaic words and reactivate obsolete and antiquated ones, so as to abide by this rule, on the one hand, and to show his outstanding poetical ability in both content and form, on the other.²⁶

E - THE MAIN GENRES OF SOMALI POETRY

Somali poetical production could be divided into five main types, namely, Gabay, Jiifto, Geeraar, Buranbur^a and Hees. Apparently, this classification is based mainly on the metrical structure, average length, subject matter and manner of poetical composition and recital. For instance, while some genres are usually recited without accompaniment of any musical instruments, hand-clapping, and drumming, others are always accompanied by one or two of the above mentioned musical means. Four of these types, Gabay, Jiifto, Geeraar and Buraanbur are classics while the remaining genre, Heese, is a modern and newly invented type. Gabay, Jiifto and Geeraar are considered as the most noble genres out of the above-mentioned classical types, and are thereby more appropriate for important theme. Here is a short account on each of these five genres of Somali poetry:

(i) The Gabay

This is the longest and most popular among all the Somali poetic forms. It could extend into hundreds of lines, in which

the poet must maintain the same alliteration throughout. In brief, Gabay is the most fascinating and dominating type among the varieties of Somali poetry; the word "Gabay" signifies loosely "the poetry" even though Gabay is only one of the various genres of Somali poetry. The term "maanso" is a synonym of "Gabay" but less popular and less circulated than "Gabay". A line of the Gabay consists mostly of 18 syllables, 12 syllables out of these represent the first hemistich while the remaining 6 syllables represent the second one. The traditional custom of Somali poets is to recite the Gabay form alone and without accompaniment of any kind of musical instruments.

Recently some Gabay poems are recited accompanied by music. Such should be regarded as an innovation which may have emerged under foreign influence.²⁷ Here are some examples of this poetical form:

(a) A poem entitled "To Power Respect is Due!", composed by the famous poet, Raage Ugaas, who lived about three centuries ago:

"Sud libaax leh meel bahal salkiyo:	saymo la arkayo
Sangadh tirashadaa legu maraa:	laga ma soo saaro
Suryo Oodan meeshii surdub ah:	suul hadaad geliso
Qun yar baa siddaha loo baxshaaa:	leant la ma saydh
Ninkii maalintaa kaa sita een:	laga sad qaadaynin
Sawd gibin ah baa loo ceshaa:	lagu ma sooyaansho"

This can be translated as follows:

"A forest with lions and a place where their buttocks and
manes of prey are seen.

Can only be crossed by silencing all sounds, leaving them
unroused.

If you catch your thumb in the thorny thickness of the fold-fence
You withdraw your hand carefully without shaking your whole arm.
Anyone who stands above you and pays tribute to no one,
Must be answered softly, not with harsh words."

(b) A poem composed by the same author, lamenting the death of his beloved wife:

"Sida koorta yucub oo la suray:	Korommo buubaalah
Ama geel ka reeb ah oo nirgaha:	laga kaxaynaaye
Ama beelo kaynaan ah oo:	kor u hayaamaaya
Ama ceel Karkaarrada jebshiyo:	Weki karaardhaafay
Ama habar kurkji wadnaha:	Lagaga kaw siiyay
Ama kaal danley gaybsatiyo:	kuriyo dhaal yaabis
Shinni kaaluf galay ama sidii:	koronkorro oomi
Xalay kololo'aygii ma ladin:	kaamil reer uhu e
Kunbulkiyo ardaagii miyaa:	laygu kaliyeeyay
Wixii laygu kuunyeeyay mayaa:	igu karaamoobay
Kunbiskii miyaa layga qubay:	kolayo ii buuxay
Maanta na kataantii miyaa:	layga kala qaaday
Kob abaar ah oo dhexe miyaa:	Koore ila meeray
Kub miyaan ka jabay biixiyaan:	kabayo loo haynin"

This may be translated as follows:

"Like the yu'ub wood bell tied to gelded camels that are running away,
 Or like camels which are being separated from their young,
 Or like people journeying while moving camp,
 Or like a well which has broken its sides
 Or a river which has overflowed its banks
 Or like an old woman whose only son was killed,
 Or like the poor, dividing the scraps for their frugal meal
 Or like the bees entering their hive, or food crackling in the frying

Yesterday my lamentations drove sleep from all the camps

Have I been left bereft in my house and shelter?

Has the envy of others been miraculously fulfilled?

Have I been deprived of fried meat and reserves for lean times which were so plentiful for me?

Have I today been taken from the chessboard (of life)

Have I been borne on a saddle to a distant and desolate place?

Have I broken my shin, a bone which cannot be mended?"²⁸

(iii) Jiifto or Masafو

This is a poetical form devoted mostly to philosophy, melancholy and admonition. It is less important than Gabay and Geeraar, and has nowadays almost gone out of fashion. Jiifto has a number of features in common with Gabay: it deals with serious matters; it

is usually recited without accompaniment of drumming or hand-clapping. However, the verse of this poetical genre consists of 16 syllables with the caesura in the middle of the verse; that is to say, the two hemistiches are, unlike to Gabay, equal in the number of the syllables.

Here is an example for the Jiifto form. It is an extract from a long poem of 90 lines entitled "The Sayyid's Reply", written by the nationalist poet, al-Sayyid Muxamed Cabdullah Xasan. This poem is an answer to a letter from the British government. In this letter they first asked the Sayyid to return camels which he had taken, and - in the second place - tried to dissociate themselves from the responsibility for what the Italians had looted from the Sayyid. But "in the style of a defendant stating his case before a Somali Court of Arbitration, the poet neatly counters each charge made against him",²⁹ in the message of the British. Here is the extract:

Ogaadeen ha ii dirin: dacwad baan ka leeyahay

War, duul haad amxaaraha: adiga kaa ma dayayee

Deyntaan ku leeyahay: dun ha iiga qaadine

Wuxuu aniga iga dilo: diyo hayga siinine

Amba waa ka dabo geli: dakankiyo qaadkee

Dirham haddii aan kaga tago: anaa been dabaad ahe

Waxaan ka dalbahayaa: duunkaagu wuxuu qabo

Intaad dawlad u tahay: adigaa u damiin ahe

Ma waa diidi nimankaad: dabataye i soo dhacay".

This can be translated as follows:

"Concerning your plea, 'Do not incite the Ogaadeen against us,
I also have a complaint.

The people of the Ethiopian region look for nothing from you,
So do not press my claim against them

Do not claim on my behalf the blood money which they owe me.

I will myself seek to recover the property and the loot which
they have seized.

Were I to leave a single penny with them, my pledge would be
perverted.

What I claim from you is only what you yourself owe me;

Since you are the government, the responsibility is yours

Can you disclaim those whom you tricked into attacking me?"³⁰

(iii) Geeraar:

This genre is usually shorter than the Gabay. In ancient times, it was conventional for the poet to recite this poetical form while on the horse's back, but this is no longer the practice. In the modern era, it is more popular than Jiifto, though its circulation is less than Gabay. Here is an example extracted from a long poem entitled Tul Oo Culk Jooja (O Clansmen Stop the War) by the renowned classical poet, Salaan Carrabay. It was reported that while two sub-clans were about to attack each other, Salaan Carrabay took a position between them, where both could see him clearly and began

to recite this poem. Immediately tempers cooled, peace ^{was} restored, and reconciliation was effected. Here is the extract:

"Maalintii Cumar Daahir

Is ku geoyay Cayaartiyoo

Min Caloolacad joogay

Oe Meygaag Ciiden war qaatay

Waa cibaaro qabaa yoo

Belaayuu Curufkeediyo

Camalkeeda yaqaan e

Waar tølow, colka jooja!"

This may be translated as follows:

"The day the ^cUmar Daahir

Cut themsleves into pieces in the battle

Of Caloolacad, he who was present then

And who also know what happened at the battle of Meggaad ^clidan,

Know to the full.

The horror and turmoil (of war)

And understand its real nature;

Oh Clansmen, stop the war!"³¹

(iv) Burmanbur:

This is a feminine poetical form which is composed by women and addressed to women, on social occasions such as wedding ceremonies.

Being shorter than the above-mentioned genres, it usually deals with

lighter topics. The syllables of this form are between 14 and 16 with a caesura in the middle of the verse. But the distinguishing mark of this genre is that the alliterative letter is required to be identical only between the two hemistiches of each couplet, but not throughout the poem, which is similar to the rhyming requirement of the "Rajaz" in Arabic. When this genre is recited it is usually accompanied by drumming, hand-clapping, step-dancing and chorus responding.

The following two verses, which are recited by the female relatives of a bridegroom during the wedding feast, are an example of this genre:

"Ayaan badaneey, ayaa kuu ilala tegay?

Ayaa kuu sheegay shan-ka-roone inan kayaga"

This can be translated as follows:

"Great is your fortune! Who went out to seek him for you?

Who told you of our boy? Five times a man he is!"³²

(v) Heello:

This poetical form is different from all the classical genres so far reviewed in terms of metrical structure and manner of performance. Its recital is accompanied by different kinds of musical instruments and takes place before a big audience. It normally consists of short poems made up of a few lines, each of which has its independent alliteration.

While the advent of the four classical forms is not known, the date of the emergence of this type is known; it was introduced by Cabdi Deeqsi in 1945. Initially, the dominating theme of this genre used to be love, but now it has developed to become the medium of modern Somali songs, which as a consequence of the prolonged Somali struggle for liberation and unity, has come to be involved in political themes.³³

Here are two examples for the Somali modern songs of this genre which are widely circulated throughout the Somali peninsula and frequently broadcast from Mogadishu, Hargaysa and Djibouti:

(a) A Love Song (Anonymous)

"Hillaac biliq yidhi harraad ma ba' shoe

Muxuu hormarkaagu ii tari?

Soomaaliday caadadeed tahay

Nin caashaqay bay ku caydaa

Haddii aad dhimato na dhul baad geliyeey

Wadaad yuu ku dhaafin dhaantaada e

Yartaan u gallalay sidii quri

Ka quuso miyaad i leedahay?"

This song can be translated as follows:

"A flash of lightning does not satisfy the thirst.
 What then is it to me if you just pass by?
 It is the custom of the Somali;
 To mock a man who has fallen in love
 When you die you will enter the earth,
 Let not the preacher then turn you from your love-song.

The girl for whom I have withered like a stick,
 Are you telling me to despair of ever attaining?"³⁴

(b) A Nationalistic Song (Anonymous)

This song was composed to mark the occasion of independence and Unity between the former British and Italian regions of Somalia as well as the creation of Somali Republic (1/7/1960).

"Gobannimo dhowaatay
 Oo labadan is u geynay e
 Waa gallada Iliaahii yao
 Dhaha guul allee!
 Guul Allee!
 Waa guullaynay
 Garanca ciyaarta
 Giddigiinna adkeeya!
 Aan goynnee, gam ka siyya!
 Guul Allee!
 Guu Allee!"

This song may be translated as follows:

"Freedom and dignity have reached us,

We have brought together the two lands.

Glory to God!

Say: "It is God's victory-

It is God's victory!

We are victorious.

Beat the drum, join the dance!

Everyone, with all your might!

And now let us finish, cease!

It is God's victory!

It is God's victory!"³⁵

F - CONCLUDING REMARKS

This short account shows that Somali poetry reflects in one way or other, the cultural, social and historical aspects of the Somalis. It illustrates their passions and emotions as well as their attitudes, concepts and customs.

Having been oral, owing to the fact that Somali language was not committed to writing until recent times, it is believed that a substantial portion of it has been lost. However, the available Somali poetry (which has been preserved for generations by Somali retentive memory and is now being committed to writing) is fairly sufficient to give us an idea about the Somali poetical talent - a talent which must have played some significant role in their admiration and imitation of Arabic poetry - the main subject of this study.

SECTION III

ARABIC LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN SOMALIAA - Arabic Learning in Somalia

Arabic is not the indigenous language of the people of Somalia, yet a large number of them mastered it to the extent of writing books and composing poems in it. Hence, there is some need here to investigate briefly the advent and spread of this language in Somalia, and to examine the factors which led to such development.

Since Islam reached the Somali Coastal area during the seventh century A.D. and subsequently penetrated into the hinterland, the Somalis became gradually interested in learning Arabic not only as the language of their chosen religion, Islam, but also as a language of an established trade between them and the Arab world. Right from the start, Arabic was not seen by the Somalis as an entirely foreign language, but was regarded as the language of their religion on the one hand, and of their fellow-Arab brothers with whom they had very strong traditional ties, even before the advent of Islam, on the other. Hence, the introduction of Arabic into this part of Africa, did not meet any resistance from the Somalis; instead it was welcomed and accepted both as the language of the holy scripture, the Qur'ān and the language of learning and literary attainments in general.

The Somalis, welcoming Arabic as the first language to introduce literacy to them, employed their limited facilities and primitive means to the study of the language, its literature and culture. This interest in Arabic continued to develop and increase through many generations, until Arabic became almost the lingua franca of the Somali people used in literature, culture and education as well as in the various types of communication, transactions, international treaties¹ and general correspondence.²

Right from the initial stage, the Somalis employed, in their effort to learn Arabic, the following means and methods:

1. They found easy access to the required writing materials such as ink, inkpot and wooden boards - all of which were locally made and easily available for every student.
2. They tried to simplify the teaching of reading Arabic letters for their beginners by adopting a method of teaching known as 'Alif la Kordhabay', which means teaching each consonant together with the three possibilities of its vocalization e.g. 'ā - 'ī - 'ū ; bā - bī - bū; tā - tī - tū ... etc.

The Somalis believe that the founder of this method was the great famous saint, Shaykh Yusuf al-Kawnayn, who lived in the eleventh century A.D. at Da^car city, about twenty miles north of Hargeisa, where his tomb remains honoured until today.³ This method may have been influenced by the traditional method of teaching the

letters of Arabic alphabet in the Arab world. However, the method involves giving the beginners an easy start in writing the Arabic letters by introducing them in three stages.

In the first stage, the Arabic letters are taught without dots and vowels, e.g.: 

١- ج - ح - ح - ح - ح - ح - ح - ح - ح

In the second stage the Arabic letters are introduced to the beginners with dots where necessary, but without vowels, e.g.:

١ - ب - ت - ث - ج - ح - خ - د - ذ - ئ

In the third stage, the letters of Arabic alphabet are taught with the dots and with the three possibilities of their vocalization, e.g.:

أَيُّ - بَمْبَجْ - ثَتِتْتُ - ثَثِثْثُ

The traditional system of teaching Arabic which perhaps was commonly used in the past, and which is still practised in some parts of the country, was that children at the age of five or six attended Qur'anic schools to learn how to read and write Arabic and to memorize parts of the Qur'an, for a period of three or four years. The majority of these children would often leave Qur'anic schools after they should have memorized the whole Qur'an or most of it, earning thereby the title of Mu'allim. These Qur'anic schools were,

and still are, scattered all over the country, and one could hardly find a village of nomadic Somalis without a Qur'anic school.

Some students, having completed their education in these schools, pursued their religious and Arabic learning further by joining another type of school called Hirr ^CIlmi where more advanced studies of Islamic law, Theology, the Hadith, Qur'anic Exegesis and various sciences of Arabic are taught. The Somali word, Hirra, signifies a group of students learning various subjects relating to Arabic and Islam from scholars specialising in these areas. The students used to sit in a circle with the teacher in the middle as was commonly practised before the introduction of the modern schooling system. In other words, it was possible for some of such traditional schools to be so small as to have only one class, in which one man ~~was~~ responsible for all the teaching and administration of the whole school. These schools were free; the teachers, or the shaykhs, believed that it was a religious duty to teach without demanding fees or any other rewards. However, the students were free to honour their shaykhs with gifts whenever they felt like doing so. The shaykh did not object to anybody who wanted to join his Hirra school, as long as he was ready to follow the principles of Islam particularly the daily prayers. The shaykh usually selected a collection of different books for different grades, but students were free to choose from amongst this collection the book which

was particularly suitable for their own standard. They did not have something like entrance examination, admission regulations or final examinations.

Accommodation for students in the rural areas was different from that of towns. In towns, mosques were the centres of learning while rich families hosted those young ones who had left their homes in quest of knowledge. It could happen that any rich family in the town would accommodate one student or more in their own home and regard them as members of their families for the duration of their course. This duration used to depend on how long it took a certain student to complete the selected books or parts of books he had opted to study. Hence, the duration could be three months if the book was small, like Kitāb al-'Ajrūmīyyah on Arabic grammar or Kitāb Matn al-Ghayah wa al-Taqrīb on Shāfi'i jurisprudence. The duration could also extend to three or four years, if the book was voluminous, like Kitāb 'Alfiyatu 'ibn Mālik on grammar or Kitāb al-Minhāj, on jurisprudence.

It seems that this system of accommodation, which had been adopted to solve the problem of the students, had replaced a more ancient system of accommodation in which the government used to set aside special quarters for students separated from their families. Ibn Battuta, who visited the two main towns, Zayla^c and Mogadishu, in Somalia in 1331 A.D., was accommodated in the house of the students which, as he described, was well furnished and was provided with

necessary requirements.⁴ Apparently, when the government quarters became no more available, a substitute system, whereby rich families cared for the students, began to develop.

In the rural areas, the Hirta School was a mobile one. Pupils moved with their shaykh from one village to another, spending a few nights here and a few others there, where the villagers welcomed them warmly. As a manifestation of joy at the arrival of Hirta, the nomads fired shots and the women shrilled. After that, they were provided not only with accommodation but also with essential amenities such as food and drinks throughout their stay in the settlement. The nomadic villagers never regarded their shouldering of this as a kind of charity, but as a social obligation for the sake of their religion and the upliftment of its learning.

The usual practice of Hirta school was to change places according to changes in seasons. One of the reasons for such moving about was to enable Hirta students take advantage of renowned scholars in the areas they were visiting and benefit from these specialists by learning from them their subjects of specialization. For instance, in winter, these schools resort to the highlands of the west, where agriculture, water and permanent green grass were available throughout the year. These areas, which extend up to the towns of Jijiga, Harar, Balbalayti and all the villages around them, soon became the seats of Arabic learning in Somalia. Students of

Hirta schools moved to this area, not only in search of further learning of Arabic, but also to run away from unbearable hot and dry weather that obtained in most of the eastern areas during the winter season. In spring, the students moved back towards the east and south-east where green grass abound and fresh milk and meat were plentiful and life in general was very pleasant. This area now covers the towns of Qalafa, Beletuun and Mogadishu, an area which became gradually the centre of the studies of Shāfi'i jurisprudence, which the whole Somali people follow.

The system of teaching in these schools was by operating a kind of curriculum, which was not planned by any Ministry of Education or any other administrative authority; but evolved merely by the custom and traditional practice of the Somali scholars. This curriculum was not confused as it may seem. It was a systematic one, in which the textbooks were arranged to meet the standards required at each stage of education. Students started with easy books such as the primary Mutūn (condensed textbooks), and moved gradually to more difficult ones such as Shurūh and Hawāshī (commentaries and annotations), until they went through all the required texts and became qualified either in jurisprudence, Qur'anic exegesis, prophetic tradition, or in grammar and other branches of Arabic

Students, in the Hirta school, for instance, began with small textbooks, which were written by non-Somalis in the medieval era, like Matn al-Ghāyah wa al-Taqrīb, widely known as Abū-Shu'āc,

Safīnatu al-Salah and Safīnatu al-Najah on jurisprudence. As for theology, students started with Matn Ḥaqīqat al-Āwām and Matn Jawhar al-Tawhid. Students who had completed these books were regarded as having completed their primary education in this traditional system of learning. Those who wished to proceed further, were required to study Kitāb Muḥāfiẓat al-Ḥarāb of Abū Muḥammad al-Qaṣīm ibn Aḥmad al-Harīrī (d.516 A.H.), Kitāb Qatr al-Nadā of ibn Hishām (d.761 A.H.) On grammar and Kitāb Sharh al-Qasimi on jurisprudence. When students completed these books, they were regarded as having completed their secondary stage and were given the new title "Aw". If the students then opted to seek further learning, they would proceed to the final stage of this traditional educational system. In this stage, which is a stage of specialization, the students learnt either one of these two advanced works, al-*Alfiyyah* of ibn Mālik with its various commentaries and annotations for those specializing in Arabic grammar, or *al-Minhāj* of Yahyā al-Nawawī, with its different commentaries, for those specializing in jurisprudence. At the end of this final stage, the students were considered as graduates and were given a new title "Shaykh" which is the highest educational and religious title in Somalia. This title, Shaykh, indicated that those who obtained it were scholars qualified to teach and give Fatwa (formal legal opinions).

* * * *

Since Somali scholars have traditionally divided the sphere of Arabic and Islamic learning into three main branches, namely:

- (1) The study of 'Aslayn (the two basic sources);
- (2) The study of the 'Ahkām (the rules of jurisprudence); and
- (3) The study of 'Alah (tool),

we may now proceed to review the main scholarly activities in each branch and manner of carrying out these activities.

The first, which is al-'Aslayn, refers to Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth and the study ~~centering~~ ^{on} them, particularly Qur'ānic exegesis and their commentaries. Though Qur'ān comes first in the list of Islamic sources and Ḥadīth ranks second, the Somalis did not give ~~their~~ study the attention they deserve. They had the inclination to pay more attention to the rules of jurisprudence because they had the common belief that the real meaning of the scripture could not be easily understood, except by the highly specialised scholars. The rules of jurisprudence, on the other hand, are clear and easily applicable. However, the month of Ramadān always has been a season of intensive Qur'ānic studies in Somalia. As soon as the new moon appears, the study of the Qur'ān and tafsīr (exegesis) commences in most of the mosques all over the Somali peninsula. These studies are usually attended by the regular students as well as by members of the public. Among the Tafsīr books which are then favoured are: Tafsīr al-Jalālyn⁵ and Tafsīr al-Badāwi⁶. As for Ḥadīth, which

unfortunately remains the least studied subject in the Somali curriculum, Kitāb Riyād al-Sālihiñ and Kitāb al-'Arba'īn al-Nawawi are its main textbooks.

The second branch is al-'Ahkām. This term refers to the study of all branches of jurisprudence. As mentioned above, the Somalis follow the Shāfi'i school of law and therefore it is the only system of law and jurisprudence existing and being practised in the country. There used to be a significant number of jurists in Somalia. Each of these scholars took the title of Fiqi, a corruption of the Arabic Faqīh; hence, one could find today many Somalis who trace their ancestors to these Faqīhs and keep the title in their names. Even today one could find numerous jurists in a small nomadic village, who pronounce the Shari'ah ruling on any Islamic issue, especially those regarding the daily prayers, the fasting of Ramadān, matters related to marriage, divorce, inheritance and penal law. Some of these jurists have become classical figures in the history of Islamic learning in Somalia, such as:

1. Shaykh Jamāludīn Muḥammad 'ibn Munīr al-Zayla'i - who died in 749 A.H. (1348 A.D.);
2. Shaykh Ahmad 'ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān 'ibn 'Umar 'ibn Muḥammad al-Zayla'i, who died in 768 A.H. (1366 A.D.). He was a great jurist and an outstanding poet in Arabic.

3. Shaykh 'Abduallah al-Zayla'i - who led a Somali delegation in a period between 1332-1338 A.D. to Sultan Nasir Qalawun, the ruler of Egypt. The aim of this mission was to seek help in their perpetual struggle against the Abyssinian enemies.
4. Shaykh 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Nur al-Dīn, ibn 'Isā al-Maqdashi, who died in Yemen in 1453 A.D. (857 A.H.). He is the author of Kitāb 'Al-Anīq 'Ala Masa'il al-Minhāj al-Daqīqah.⁷

The following books represent the chosen textbooks for the study of Islamic jurisprudence in Somalia:

1. Matn al-Ghayah wa al-Taqrīb by al-Qādi 'Abū Shu'ayb Ahmad ibn Husayn, and the commentary on it by al-Qāsimī.
2. Matn Safīnat al-Najah by Salīm ibn Samīr al-Hadāry.
3. Matn Safīnat al-Salāh by 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar al-Hadramī
4. Kitāb al-Minhāj by al-Nawāwī
5. Kitāb al-'Irshād by Shaykh Isma'il ibn Muqrī.

The third is al-'Alāh (the tools). This refers to the various branches of Arabic studies such as grammar, morphology, philology, rhetoric and prosody. Logic is added to this group because it is also regarded as a tool for the study of both 'al-'Aslāyñ (Qur'ān and Hadith) and al-'Ahkām (the rules of jurisprudence). While the Somalis put up a lot of efforts to study the different branches of Arabic, they concentrated particularly on the branch of Nahw (grammar), which they mastered very well. There were a good number

of Nuhāh (grammarians) who devoted their lives tirelessly to the teaching of this subject in Somalia. Examples of these scholars are:

1. The late Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān 'ibn Ahmad al-Zayla'i - who died in 1299 A.H. (1881 A.D.)⁸ and was the author of Hadiqat al-Tasrif and its commentary.
2. Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān 'ibn Shaykh 'Umar, an aged contemporary scholar and the author of Nathr al-Jawahir fi Qā'idah al-Tasrif.
3. Shaykh 'Ahmad Sibawayh, who was given this title because of his great knowledge of grammar. It was said that he memorized the most grammatical and morphological problems in the 'Alfiyat 'ibn Malik and its commentaries. He is still teaching.
4. Shaykh 'Ahmad Rabi' 'ibn Hajj 'Umar, who was very famous for his memorization of the grammatical and morphological texts such as the Alfiyah and Iamiyyah al-'Affāl both by 'ibn Malik. People say he used to recite them between the Maghrib and 'Isha prayers. Like the preceding one, he is still teaching and I have personally attended some courses in their Hirta schools.

It is worthy of mention here that other branches of knowledge were not taught in the Hirta school intensively. Only occasionally would the Shakhs teach Kitāb Mawlid al-Barzanji and Kitāb Mawlid al-Dayba'i, which are the biography of the Prophet Muhammad and his

Companions. The Shaykhs also taught some panegyric poems of the Prophet Muhammad like "Banāt Su'ādū" of Ka'b ibn Zuhayr and "al-Burdah" of al-Busīrī in the Hirta school.

The operation of these schools, in addition to the availability of local facilities for learning Arabic, led to the spread of this language to the various parts of Somali peninsula until Arabic became finally the language of education, the language of the written Somali literature and the official language of the Somali states prior to the colonial era. Ibn Battūṭa, who visited the two main coastal towns, Zayla^c and Mogadishu, in 1330 A.D. remarked that Arabic was flourishing there though the people had their own native language.⁹

Moreover, being the language of the Qur'an and Islamic literature, Arabic has always been considered a sacred language which has an important place in the Somali society. It kept this position even when the European colonialists came to Somalia and imposed their own language on their Somali subjects. The Italian language was taught beside Arabic in Italian Somaliland. Similar situations were to be found in British and French colonies. It is worth mentioning here that the Somalis were very much opposed to colonial education in general and missionary schooling in particular. Somali religious scholars formed a rejectionist front and were successful in convincing the local chiefs that it was the intention

of the colonial administrators to change their religion and culture. They even prevented the British government from introducing any educational facilities in the British Somali Protectorate, except with a clear observance of the Islamic setting. For instance, the girls should go to the school only with veils, the teachers must be brought only from Muslim countries and Arabic should be given top priority at all levels of education. In addition, all kinds of missionary schools should not be allowed to appear or function in the area.¹⁰

It is obvious, therefore, that the contribution of Hirta schools to the development of Somali culture and civilization was immensely significant. It spread Islam and Arabic into various parts of Somalia and subsequently formed a solid foundation for the development of Islamic-oriented culture, which enabled it to resist any invading foreign culture.

Explaining the position of the Arabic language in Somalia, Andrzejewski and Lewis said "Arabic, as the language of Islam, has an important place in Somali life. In every nomadic village children learn the Qur'an in Arabic and most of the prayers, both private and public, are said in Arabic. Students of Muslim law and theology have to reach a high standard of knowledge in this language to be able to read their textbooks. Men of religion constantly consult Arabic works when they prepare their sermons or make decisions in matters of law or conscience brought to them."¹¹

However, it should be made clear that the types of school so far reviewed must have flourished in Somalia during the medieval era - probably as early as the end of the sixteenth century, following the defeat of 'Imām 'Ahmad Guray in 1543 A.D.¹² which led to eventual decline of the Somali state of Adal. These types of schools remained the only system of education in Somalia until the Europeans came to Somalia in the middle of the nineteenth century and introduced the western system of education in a few schools which they had established in their respective colonies. This led to the existence of two systems of education in the country - a state which remained until the day of independence and birth of the present Somali Democratic Republic in 1960.

* * *

Soon after independence, the Somali government introduced the first Somali modern system of education under a unified syllabus for the two regions formerly administered by Britain and Italy. In this system, before any child was admitted to Governmental Primary School, he should have attended for a period of two years, a Qur'anic school at the age of four or five to learn how to read and write Arabic, and to memorize some parts of the Qur'ān. At the age of seven, the child was allowed to go to Government Primary School where Arabic was the medium of instruction and English was taught as a foreign language throughout its four-year education.

Successful completion of primary school led to intermediate and secondary schools where English was the medium of instruction and Arabic was taught as a major subject in the school curriculum.¹³

But the introduction of this modern system of education in the newly independent state did not eliminate the traditional system of education, Hirta school, although it decreased its importance and limited its spread. Therefore Hirta schools are still scattered in various parts of the country, particularly in rural areas.

The major contribution to Arabic studies in Somalia during the last two or three decades came from Egypt, which established since the fifties a significant number of primary, intermediate and secondary schools as well as other religious institutions in various parts of Somalia. Arabic was the medium of instruction at all levels in these Egyptian schools, which were estimated to be over thirty-eight in number.¹⁴ One of these schools, 'Abd al-Nasir's secondary school, popularly known as 'allah's school, is considered to be the best and the biggest secondary school in the country. Also, the Egyptian universities offer scholarships to the Somali students who obtain the secondary school certificate (the Egyptian equivalent of the G.C.E.), to enable them pursue higher education in Egyptian universities. In addition, there were some two hundred graduate-teachers seconded by the Egyptian government to teach in various schools in Somali Republic since 1960.¹⁵

In 1967, the Saudi Arabian government founded, at Mogadishu, a religious institution called Ma'had al-Tadamun al-'Islami (the Institute of Islamic Solidarity). It was affiliated to the Islamic University of Medina, which offered scholarship annually to the best ten students in the final certificate examination of this institution.

This situation continued until the Somali government nationalised all schools in the country in 1972. The nationalisation decree brought about many changes; Somali language was given the first place and introduced as the official as well as the national language in the country. Arabic, which was to be taught at all educational levels, was introduced as the second official language in Somalia and remained the medium of instruction in the ex-Egyptian schools and some government religious institutions. However, the nationalization of the Egyptian schools and other Arab educational institutions affected only the school ownership, but not the curriculum except for the introduction of the Somali language into them.¹⁶

Nevertheless, Arabic was not really displaced from its position of pride in Somalia by the adoption of the Latin orthography for writing the Somali language. As already stated, it became the second official language in the country. All official documents and reports carry an Arabic translation beside the Somali original.

Arabic is a major and compulsory subject, taught in all the Somali schools up to university level. In addition, a number of daily, weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines are published in Arabic. Examples of these Arabic journals are: Najmat Oktobar (October Star), al-Ahd al-Jadid (The New Era). These two papers are published by the Ministry of Information and National Guidance. Other examples of these journals are: al-Nidal (The Struggle) - a monthly magazine published by the ruling party in Somalia; Sawt al-Mu'allim (The Voice of the Teacher) - published by the Ministry of Education; and the independent weekly newspaper al-Taliyah (The Vanguard), which is owned by 'Umar Muhammed 'Abd al-Rahman - a well-known journalist and a famous Somali Arabic poet, who has been playing an important role in Somali Arabic journalism since 1957. These Arabic journals are printed in large quantities, because of the great number of their Somali readers. Radio Mogadishu also has four hours of daily broadcast in Arabic. It is worthwhile to mention here that all the staff of the Arabic Section in Radio Mogadishu are Somalis, whose competence in Arabic is of the same standard as their Arab counter-parts in the broadcasting stations in the Arab world.

Thus one can see that Arabic has, since its coming into Somalia several centuries ago, been gaining more and more influence over the years. Inevitably, it must, in spite of the overstressed Somali nationalism, gain more strength by Somalia joining the Arab League and becoming the twentieth member of this organization of countries whose mother-tongue is Arabic.

B - A GENERAL REVIEW OF SOMALI ARABIC LITERATURE

As we stated earlier, from the time the Somalis accepted Islam, they took great pains to learn the Arabic language, which was very important for proper understanding of the Islamic Religion. They devoted their limited facilities and indigenous means to the study of this language, its literature as well as to the study of the Islamic legal and religious systems. This interest in the Arabic language continued to develop until the Arabic language, noting that Somali was not written yet, became the only available vehicle for all the Somali written literature, and the means of preserving the cultural achievements of the Somali nation. It also became, for a long time, the sole means of education and learning in Somaliland. Although a good portion of Somali literature was and continues to be in the Somali language, this literature remained oral owing to the fact that the Somali language was not committed to writing until 1972. Thus any written literature produced by the Somali people has, up to that date, to be written only in Arabic. Unfortunately, we know little about the development of Somali Arabic literature throughout its long history, due to lack of sources. Any significant information we have on this literature goes back only to the 19th century.

However, it seems that the Somalis, until the last century, did not use the term 'Adab', (literature) in its technical sense (i.e.

creative literary composition). They knew it only in its general lexical sense which refers to good manners and praiseworthy qualities. It appears that one of the first Somali people to use the term ''Adab' in its technical sense was Shaykh Qāsim ibn Muhyī al-Dīn al-Barāwī, who lived in the 19th century and died early in this century. He used the adjective, 'Adīb (a man of letters) in the following verses taken from his long Lamiyyah poem in censure of Shaykh 'Abdullah ibn Mu^callium Yusuf al-Qutbī, the author of Kitāb Nasr al-Mu'minīn (The Victory of The Believers):

حَيْ لِي حَاجْ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَعْلُومٍ
وَفَقِيمَا مَفْسِرًا وَأَدِيرًا
يُوسُفُ الْقَادِرِيُّ شَيْخًا جَلِيلًا
كَانَ سَيفُ الْهُدَىِ الْجَرْزُ الثَّقِيلًا

"Greet for me Hajj 'Abdullah 'ibn Mu'allim Yusuf al-Qadīrī a dignified Shaykh.

A jurist, an exegesist and a man of letters. He used to be a heavy and solid sword of guidance."¹⁷

Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that from the beginning of the nineteenth century a good number of Somalis developed an interest in Arabic literature. They wrote a considerable number of literary works, although most of them poetical. In fact, the Somali literary prose that we know about is very little compared with the available numerous poetical anthologies. The strange thing is that most of the noteworthy Somali Arabic poets were also competent prose writers; Shaykh 'Abdullah al-Qutbī said in his work

Nasr al-Mu'minīn: "Surely, Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān Shaykh 'Abdullah al-Shāshī al-Qādirī, his pupil, Shaykh Qāsim al-Barāwī and Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān son of 'Ahmad al-Zaylā'i were the authors of many books on various subjects, both prose and poetry - covering all the poetical met̄ers".¹⁸ We have been able to see a good quantity of their poetry, but only little of their prose is available. It appears that the bulk of their prose writings has either been lost or not yet published. People are normally more interested in the transmission of poetical, rather than prose, productions; hence the bulk of their prose may perhaps have remained in manuscript form, awaiting those devoted scholars who would research, edit and publish them.

* * *

Somali literature in Arabic could be classified into:

- 1) Literary Prose: the most important Somali works of Arabic literary prose, which are available to us, are the following books:
 - (i) The first is Kitab Nasr al-Mu'minīn. This is the most significant work of the four. It was written by Shaykh 'Abdullah son of Mu'allim Yusuf known as al-Qutbi (1881-1951). The book consists of two parts in one single volume, which contains up to 400 pages. It was published in 1338 A.H (1919 A.D.).

by the proprietor of the Islamic Bookshop in Mogadishu and printed by al-Mashhad al-Husayni Press in Cairo. It ~~was~~ edited, annotated and appended by Shaykh Mustafa 'Abū Yusūf al-Hamāmī, one of the learned men of al-'Azhar. At the end of the book, there are three eulogies, the first which belongs to the Shaykh, who revised the book, the second to Shaykh Yusuf 'ibn Ismā'īl al-Nabhanī, the Lebanese Sufi and the ex-president of high law court at Beirut, and the third to Shaykh 'Umar 'Ahmad al-Sūmālī, widely known as al-'Azhari. The book was published in series known as the Qulunqūl collection. Qulunqūl, a village in western part of Somaliland popularly known as Ogaden, was the author's village and the headquarters of Mirta 'Ula Madau (School of Black Staff Students). The Qulunqūl collection ~~consists of~~ the works of Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Zayla'i, the founder of this school, and the works of his pupils.

(ii) The second is al-Jawhar al-Nafīs fi Khawass al-Shaykh 'Uways (The Precious Jewel about the qualities of Shaykh 'Uways). It was written by Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān 'ibn Shaykh 'Umar al-'Ali. Although the book is modern, its author has followed the style of classical Arab writers. Its first edition was published in 1388A.H. (1964 A.D.)

and contained 240 pages of a rather small size. The work is a general study of the life of Shaykh 'Uways and his poetry, in a style similar to the style of al-Qutbi

At the end of the book, there are seven poems; the longest of which is 53 verses while the shortest is 14 verses written by the author, his admirer and his disciples. All of them are in praise of the author and his work.

(iii) The third book is Jalā' al-^cAynayn Fi Manāqib al-Shaykhayn (The Clarity of the Two Eyes on The Virtues of the Two Scholars - i.e. 'Uways and al-Zayla^ci). This work is also written by ^cAbd al-Rahmān al-^cAli, the author of al-Jawhar al-Nafīs in the same style and approach. It consists of two parts in one single volume, which is up to 200 pages. The first part, which is the biography of al-Shaykh 'Uways and the review of his poetical production, is originally written by Qāsim al-Barāwī, but it remained in manuscript form until al-^cAli edited and prepared it, together with the second part, which is his own writing, for publication. It was also he who gave this part of the work the title of 'Uns al-'Anīs fi Manāqib al-Shaykh 'Uways (The Pleasure of the Companion in the Virtues of al-Shaykh 'Uways). The second part of this work is Rahāb al-Qalb al-Mutawalli^c fi Manāqib al-Shaykh al-Zayla^ci (The Companions Entertainment of heart on the Virtues of al-Zayla^ci). This part of the book is a general review of

al-Zayla^ci's life and literary output. At the end of the book, there are two appendixes, one of which is about the author's biography in brief, while the other is a praise of the book itself, both in prose and poetry. The book is published by Muhammad 'Ahmad and Company, printed by al-Mashhad al-Husayni Press, Cairo; no date of its publication is indicated.

(iv) The fourth is Murshid (The Guide). As its full title indicates, it is about the scholarly controversy and the religious arguments which took place in the Northern Region of Somalia, about 1940 when the colonial power established school in Hargeisa, the capital of this region. It was written by Shaykh Ali Hajj Ibrahim, one of the contemporary Somali scholars. The book was published in 1971, but neither the publisher nor the printer is indicated. It contains 130 pages. The book deals primarily with different types of problems related to the introduction of western education in Somalia. But it also covers Arabic and Islamic learning, such as grammar, rhetoric and literature, jurisprudence, logic, etc. by means of questions and answers. At times, it also makes use of poetry. In addition, it devotes many chapters to important literary topics like "The poetry and the poets" where the author asserts that Islam is in support of poetry and is not against it.

It is worthwhile to state here that beside the works we have talked about, there are a number of Arabic works in history written by Somali scholars at various periods. The most interesting one among these works, and the earliest Somali Arabic work, which is available to us, is Fath al-Habash (the Conquest over the Abyssinians). This book was written, in 1540 A.D., by the Somali erudite author, al-Shaykh 'Ahmad 'Abd al-Qadir known widely by his nickname 'Arabfaqih'. It is a narration of the perpetual struggles of the Somalis in the medieval¹⁹ era especially the events of the famous defeat of the Abyssinians by Imām 'Ahmad Guray whose forces over-ran most of the Abyssinian lands, between 1528 and 1543.²⁰

There is another work of historical literature in Arabic written by the Somali sage, ^QAydarūs 'ibn Sharīf 'Ali al-^CAydarūs, the founder of Islamic Convention at Mogadishu in 1931 A.D. This book, Bughyat al-'Āmal fi Tarīkh al-Sūmāl (The Maximum Hopes On The History of Somalia) was printed in 1954, by the Italian Trust Administration Press at Mogadishu. It contains about 300 pages devoted to studying the cultural, social and political institutions of Somalia; it also provides useful information about all these aspects of Somali history. Strangely enough, the book does not refer much to the Somali struggles against colonialism - perhaps this is due to the fact that it was published during the Italian Trust Administration, which had the power to remove any part of the book which did not meet their satisfaction.

Finally, here are two significant Arabic works on the history of Somalia in the medieval and modern era. The first work, Ta'rikh al-Sumāl (History of Somalia), which was written and published by Jāma' 'Isa 'Umar, in 1965. It was printed by Imām's Press, Cairo. The second is Kashf al-Sudūl 'An Ta'rikh al-Sumāl, wa mamalikihim al-Sab'ah (The Removal of the Veils about the History of Somalia and their Seven States). It was written by Shaykh 'Ahmad 'Abdullah Rirāsh, and published by the Ministry of Information and National Guidance, Somalia, in 1971. It was printed by the State Agency for Press and Publication, Mogadishu. These two works concentrate on Somali's struggles for independence especially under the leadership of the following three heroes: (i) Imām 'Umar Walasma^c. of the thirteenth century; (ii) Imām 'Ahmad Guray of the sixteenth century (iii) Sayyid Muhammad 'Abdullah Ḥasan of nineteenth century. They also cover the Somali modern political parties which led the unification and independence of the country in 1960.

* * *

The style of Somali Arabic prose is still keeping, to some extent, the features and characteristics of the style of the decadent period in Arabic literature as one could observe easily from the rhymed titles of some of the works reviewed as Jala' al-^cAynayn fi Manaqib al-Shaykhayn Al-Jawhar al-Nafīs fi Khawass al-Shaykh ^cUways, and Kashf al-Sudūl 'An Tarikh al-Sumāl. Somali Arabic journalistic prose, is, to the contrary, quite modern and typically similar to the modern prosaic style in the

Arab world. It appears that while the Somali Arabic journalistic prose shows forth modernity of style, characteristics of its counterpart in the Arab world, there are some Somali Arabic prose writers still exercising the stylistic methods and manners of the decadent period.

2) The Poetry

The Somalis admire Arabic poetry so much that it has become one of the principal aspects occupying an important place in their cultural heritage. Since Arabic became the medium of Somali education and culture, the appreciation of poetical composition became common and intense. A countless number of Arabic poems composed by Somalis or by others, passed from one place to another, attracting the attention of many Somalis by their selected vocabularies, rhythmic patterns and euphonical music. This sheer joy in the beauty of the words manifested itself in various parts of Somali peninsula and subsequently led to the development of Somali Arabic poetry. The popular traditional religious dancing called Hadro or Dikri (which has been flourishing in Somalia perhaps since the medieval era and continues to flourish until the present time), has contributed tremendously to the spreading of the Arabic poems into various parts of Somalia.

The system of this religious dancing is to recite, at a gathering in the form of a circle, a good number of Arabic poetical compositions. The attending congregation admire the recital so much that every one

attempts to memorize the poetry even though he may be an illiterate; that is no exaggeration! Somalis derive a great deal of pleasure from listening to recitation of the Arabic poetry. They enjoy its rhythm and music even if they do not understand its actual meaning. Hence, they developed a specific system of reciting Arabic poetry which may, in some cases, be accompanied by drum-beating and systematic hand-clapping. One can confidently assert that there is no religious or social occasion in which the Somalis do not recite some Arabic poetry. They usually commence with a poem of supplication to 'Allah and follow it by one in praise of the Prophet Muhammad. Finally, a poem in praise of the Shaykh of their religious order is recited.²¹ These poems may be composed by Somalis or drawn from Arabic poetical heritage in general. Among the poems composed by non-Somalis which they recite on such occasions are: "Banāt Su'ādu" of the early Islamic poet, Ka'b ibn Zyhayr (d. 40 A.H.); "Al-Burda" and "Hamsiyyah" of Imām Busīrī (608-697 A.H.);²² and Taybat al-Ghara of the contemporary Lebanese Sūfi, al-Shaykh Yusuf ibn Isma'il al-Nabhāni.

As for the poems composed by Somalis for recitations on such occasions, the following poems are the most frequently used:

- (1) Two poems of Al-Tawassul (Intercession) both composed by the late Shaykh Abd al-Rahmān al-Zaylāfi (d. 1299 A.H.)²³;
- (2) A poem entitled Hādiyah al-'Ar wāh (The Singer For The Souls) composed in the praise of the Prophet Muhammad by the same author.

The traditional custom of Somalis is to recite the former two poems, usually after the morning prayer, Subh, while the latter is, usually recited between the two evening prayers Maghrib and 'Ishā.

(3) A panegyric poem in praise of Shaykh ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlāni composed by the late Shaykh Yusuf 'ibn Muhammād al-Bakrī, widely known as al-Bahrayn (The Two seas). This poem commences with the following verse:

أَجْسِرْنَا مِنَ النَّارِ جَدْ بِالْمُنْيِ

اللَّهُمَّ بِحَيْلَانِ غَوْثِ الْمُورِي

"Oh my Lord, through the intercession of Jīlāni, the saviour of mankind, Save us from the Hell fire and grant us our hope."²⁴

(4) A poem composed by Shaykh ^c'Abd al-Rahmān 'ibn 'Abdullah, popularly known as al-Sūfi. This poem, which is entitled ^cAlam al-Qādiriyah (The Flag of the Qādiriyyah Sect) is usually recited at the beginning of the Somali traditional religious gathering, al-Hadro. The following line is the opening verse of this famous poem:

شَهِيْنْ ؛ لَلَّهُ يَا عَبْدَ قَارُونَ * مَحْبِيْ الدِّينِ فِي الْقَلْبِ حَاضِرٌ

"We exclaim at the greatness conferred on you by Allah, Oh you 'Abd al-Qādir, the reviver of the religion, who is ever present in our hearts."²⁵

The poems are admired by most of the Somalis, not so much for the contents but for their music and diction. Elaborating the fascination of the Somali people by Arabic poetry, Andrzejewski and Lewis say: Among the educated elite, fully literate in Arabic, poets have turned their talents to the sacred language. As Arabic seems to the

Somali people always particularly appropriate in the context of religious thought and worship; it is only natural that most of the poets using this language as their artistic medium have composed hymns or didactic poems. Arabic hymns are known by heart by many people and in fact religious literature in Arabic occupies a central position in the Somali culture."²⁶

Moreover, the Arabic poetry is surrounded in Somalia by a hallow of religious veneration. This is even enhanced by the fact that most of the Somali Arabic poets are simultaneously religious leaders who, because of their strong Arabic educational background, are usually capable of composing Arabic poetry. It is therefore no wonder that most of the Somali poetry in Arabic is of religious nature; it draws its religious inclination from its strong connection in the Somali environment with the langdage of the holy Qur'ān, on one hand, and from the religious scholars, who compose it, on the other.

In fact, many of the Somali Arabic poets were, at the same time, committed Sufis and belonged to one or other of the two main religious Orders in Somalia, namely, the Qādiriyyah²⁷ and the Ṣalīhiyyah. It was the intensive involvement of these two religious orders in the development of the Arabic language and Islamic Culture in Somalia that gave rise to the two rival literary schools, one representing each of them. The general inclination of these two schools has been to eulogize the Prophet Muhammad, to seek the intercession of the righteous saints, to describe the holy places in Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem and finally

to satirise their opponents. The most important one, among these literary schools is, Hirta 'Ula Madaw, which literally means "The students of Black Staff". Members of this school have always played a prominent role in the field of Arabic literature and education. They have produced a substantial number of Arabic and Islamic scholarly works as well as an impressive amount of Arabic poetry. The greater part of their poetry is devoted to the praise of the Prophet and Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, the founder of Qadiriyyah Order, which is very popular in Somalia and is perhaps the earliest Sufi Order to appear in the country.²⁸ The Ṣalīhiyya, on the other hand, is another rival sect which has always been zealously and actively involved in political and nationalistic activities. Hence their literary output is less important than the Qadiriyyah. Members of the Ṣalīhiyyah Order represent the reforming and revolutionary converts. They have often engaged in prolonged polemics with their Qadiriyyah counterparts. They consider members of the Qadiriyyah sect as more conservative and dogmatic.

* * *

Having reviewed the works of a substantial number of Somali Arabic poets, one could observe that the quantity of their poetical output varies between three thousand verses for the most prolific amongst them (such as Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Abdullah, known widely as Hajj Sūfi; Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Ahmad al-Zayla'i; Qāsim al-Barāwi;

and Shaykh Yusuf al-Bahrayn) and two hundred verses for the occasional composers like 'Uways al-Barawi.

Taking the bulk of the Somali Arabic poetry as a whole, we may discuss the following aspects of it:

a) - The Content of Somali Arabic Poetry:

Most of the Somali Arabic poetry is simple, conventional and even superficial. It centres almost around one main theme which covers the praise of the Prophet and his Companions, the description of various parts of the Islamic holy lands, and the intercession through the saints, especially the founder of the Qadiriyyah Sect. The links between various verses in one poem are usually very weak, because, as is the case with Arabic poetry in general, each line represents an independent unit, which could easily change its position in the ode without any significant effect on its content. It is hard to find in Somali Arabic odes a line which is structurally connected to the previous or following lines. Among these rare cases are the following lines of Qasim al-Barawi:

ك هو شافيا وقولا ثقيلا *

فيحق الذي هداك وأعطيك

قمت تدعوا البر الرحيم الوكيل *

أذكرون البراوي بالخير مما

"By the right of Him, who has rightly guided you and given you a healing love and weighty wisdom.

You should remember al-Barawi's goodness whenever you arise to pray to Him who is charitable, beneficent and reliable trustee."²⁹

The Somali Arabic poetry has been influenced tremendously by the literature of decadent period, particularly the popular panegyrical

poems of the Prophet. Especially influenced in this regard have been the works called al-Mawālid al-Nabawiyya^c by such authors as al-Barzanji, and al-Dayba^ci.

The word Mawālid is a plural of Mawlid which is mainly a biography of the Prophet written in a form of rhymed prose or in poetry and injected with a great deal of exaggerations and fabricated stories. Such work is usually recited, in a large audience, on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday or any other religious or social occasion.³⁰ While there are no less than forty different works of this type, each called Mawlid, it is only the Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām, Mawlid al-Day-ba^ci (both written by ^cAbd al-Rahmān ibn al-Day-ba^ci al-Zabīdi d.1537),³¹ and Mawlid al-Barzanji (d.1766)³² that are most popular in the Somali peninsula. These three Mawlids are combined in an anthology called Majmū^c Mawālid Sharaf al-Anām³³ (The Collection of the Birthday Accounts of the Glory of the Creations).

In fact, the impact of this literature on the development of Somali Arabic poetry is tangible and incalculable. It goes so deep into its most characteristic features such as meaning, imagery, and illustration.

Often enough, Somali Arabic poetry quotes directly from this literature. As a result of this impact, the Somali Arabic poetry is full of exaggerations in exalting the personality of the Prophet as well as that of Shaykh ^cAbd al-Qadir al-Jīlāni whose order the majority of the Somalis follow. Here are two lines by al-Zayla^ci to illustrate the degree of that exaggeration:

رسول الله مالي من مجير سواك يجير من كرب شدار *

وسالى يا حبيب الله من ألوذ به سواك عن الأعادي *

"Oh the messenger of 'Allah, I have no other protector but you who protects me from terrible calamity.

Nor have I, Oh the beloved one of 'Allah, any shelter to which I would take refuge against the enemies, except you."³⁴

It is clear that al-Zayla^ci in these two lines was imitating the following line of al-Busīrī:

يا أكرم الخلق مالي من ألوذ به سواك عند حلول الحادث العص

"Oh you, the most noble one of the creation, I have none to take refuge with, except you, when the overwhelming calamity hits."³⁵

Another example of this exaggeration is the following line of al-Zayla^ci too:

ولولاه ما كان الخليل ويونس وآدم مع موسى وعيسى وتبع
"If it were not for Him, God would never have created Khalīl, Yūnus, Adam, Moses, Jesus and Tuba^c."³⁶

Certainly, al-Zayla^ci was copying the following verse from the Mawhid of al-Barzanjī (where the difference between the two lines are confined to changing the positions of some words and using the word Juba^c instead of Mulk Sulayman)³⁷:

ولولاه ما كان الخليل وآدم وموسى وعيسى بل وملك سليمان *

As for the exaggerations about al-Jilānī, Somali poets composed a considerable number of Arabic poems eulogizing this religious saint and enumerating some of the Karāmāt (miracles) that are attributed to him, in spite of the fact that most of them were fabrications. Some of these incredible miracles are mentioned in the following extract from al-Qutbi's long poem entitled al-Nafhah al-Miskiyyah (The Musky Smell):

كم لكم من شفاء	÷	كم لكم من كرامات
وأنا في الظماء	÷	كيف لي بالوصول
بعد عزم الخناء	÷	لصهم صار قطبا
ه عنق الأولياء	÷	قد علت قدما
جهرة في المرواء	÷	قد تخوض خطوات
عدهم صار وطاء	÷	قد تسمى بأسماء
في استجواب الدعاء	÷	كسما ذي الجلال

"Oh you, the possessor of numerous miracles and many praiseworthy qualities.

How could I reach up to you while I am still in dire thirst?!

How many a thief that had through you **become a great saint** in spite of his resolve to commit the sinful act!

The feet of Him (Jilānī) stands higher than the neck of all other saints

He has walked a series of steps openly in the space

He has even ninety-nine names.³⁸

Which are as effective in having prayers accepted as the names of the One to Whom glory belongs."³⁹

Apart from this, Somali Arabic poetry has many things in common with the Arabic poetry of decadent period. For instance, Somali Arabic poetry goes to excess on the ornamentation of the style, with the selections of allegorical expressions, and in quotations. Poets give more attention to these and less to the contents and meanings of their poetic compositions. As regards quotations, some poets go to the extent of quoting a full hemistich or even a complete line and inserting it in their own poem with little or no change. An example of quoting the hemistich could be seen in the following verse of ^cAbd al-^cAzīz al-'Umāwi al-Barāwī (d.1896):

وَمَا مُقْدِرٌ كَالْمَغْرِبِيِّ لِبَحْرِهِ * وَمَنْ قَصَدَ الْبَحْرَ اسْتَقْلَ الصَّوَافِيَا

"My intention is to seek, through the intercession of the Saint, al-Maghribi, the vast mercy of Allah for anyone aiming for the sea belittles the rivulets."⁴⁰

The second hemistich is a part of the following line composed by al-Mutanabbi, in praise of Kāfir:

قَوَاصِدَ كَافُورٍ ثَوَارِكَ غَيْرِهِ * وَمَنْ قَصَدَ الْبَحْرَ اسْتَقْلَ الصَّوَافِيَا

"Those who are proceeding to join Kāfir will be leaving all others...".⁴¹

As for quoting the whole line, the following verse of al-Zayla^ci in praise of al-Jilāni is an example:

فَانْ فَاقَ الْأَنَامَ وَكَانَ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ الْفَزَالِ * فَانْ الْمَسْكَ بَعْضُهُ دِمَ الْفَزَالِ

"If he has surpassed all human beings, while he is one of them (it should not surprise anybody

Since Musk is surely part of the deer's blood!⁴²

This is almost identical with Mutanabbi's ⁴³ verse in praise of Sayf al-Dawla:

فَانْتَفَقَ الْأَنَامُ وَاتَّمَ مِنْهُمْ * فَانْتَفَقَ الْأَنَامُ وَاتَّمَ مِنْهُمْ

It is common to find in the Somali Arabic poetry more than one simile in one line as in the following verse of al-Zayla^c:

هُوَ الْذَّهَبُ الْأَبْرِيزُ اَكْسِيرُ قُلُوبِنَا * هُوَ الْذَّهَبُ الْأَبْرِيزُ اَكْسِيرُ قُلُوبِنَا

"He (i.e. the Prophet) is like a piece of purest gold, and the Elixir of our hearts,

"He is a curative balm for every calamity."⁴⁴

Apart from simile, Somali poets have resorted to the use of the traditional rhetorical types, but with obvious artificiality and little originality.

However, the Somali Arabic poetry is on the whole very simple, clear and true reflection of the nature, education and environment in which it is composed. It contributed a great deal to the spreading of Arabic because the Somali system of recitation attracted many people to memorize the poems and subsequently led to the development of their interest in the language of these poems. It contains some important historical data and information about the Somali nation. This poetical piece, for instance, specifies the Somali boundary

during the reign of 'Ahmad Guray (d. 1543 A.D.) which stretched then from Mogadishu in the south to the Nuba land in the north, and from the Red Sea in the east to Gojam in the west:

ثم انتشت مع العساكر راجعا من مقديسو الى نوبا ونائارا *

من بعد ما جبت الفيافي كلها في وسط جوجام خطت المحمداء *

"Then you have returned with your army from Mogadishu to Nuba lands.

After you have wondered the vast distances, then you have settled down in the middle of Gojam."⁴⁵

Perhaps, it is not fair to expect a Somali Arabic poet, who grew up in an extremely traditional society which considers ^{the} Arabic poet as a great saint, to break away from imitating the traditional heritage and to introduce a completely new and original poetry.

b) The Form of Somali Arabic Poetry

The general structure of Somali Arabic odes seems to have been influenced tremendously by the conventional Friday Sermons. As a result of this, the opening theme of these poems is no more than the erotic prelude used by the classical Arab poets. Instead, the Somali Arabic poems begin mostly with the popular Islamic formulae, such as Bismillah (in the name of ^cAllah), al-Ham dulilah (praise be to Him), al-Salat ^cAla Muhammad (blessings be upon Muhammad). They may also be started with praying to Allah and seeking the intercession of his Apostle and righteous saints. This religious introduction

has been systematically maintained by the majority of the Somali Arabic poets regardless of the themes of their poems. Here are some examples:

- برأت ببسم الله والحمد لله داعيا
فسبحان من قال أدعوني عبار يا (١)
أصلى على من قال: ان دعائكم
كوز ليوم لا توالون واليَا
محمد والآل الكرام وصحابه
بحبهم أرجو لديك نس واليَا

"I begin my poem in the name of 'Allah and with thanks to Him, praying
Glorified be God, who said: pray to me Oh you my worshippers!

I invoke blessings of 'Allah upon him who said: your prayers will be a treasure in the Day of Judgment, when nobody would be in a position to recognize any loyalty.

I pray for Muhammad and the noble Family and Companions, through my love to them I hope to achieve all my desires from you." ⁴⁶

- الله بجيلا غوث الورى * أجزنا من النار جد بالمنى (ii)

"Oh my Lord, through the intercession of Jilani the saviour of mankind,
Save us from the Hell fire and grant us our hope."⁴⁷

After this opening theme, the Somali poet proceeds to his main theme. Some poets, however, arrange the verses of their poem according to the Arabic alphabet. The first line in such a poem begins with 'Alif, the second with Ba and the third with Ta, and so on, up to the last verse which begins with Ya. This is an unnecessary additional

imposition, as if the requirement of the metre and rhyme are not enough! Here is an example taken from supplicatory poem composed by Hajj Sūfī:

الىك وجاء تائبا متخفضا	*	الهـ استجب دعاء عبد فـ
ومنك استجار يا مجيب بك أجيـعا	*	بغـي من عظيم الفضل بـرا مؤسـدا
وأيقـن قلـبا بالـاجابة إـذ سـعـيـ	*	تـسـلاـمـؤـمنـاـأـجـيـبـرـعـوـةـمـنـدـعـاـ
عبـادـةـعـبـارـوـمـاـنـوـمـوـدـعـاـ	*	ثـوـيـفـيـالـعـاصـىـوـاسـتـصـرـفـطـالـهـ
علاـعـاـعـلـاـعـوـهـأـهـوـيـكـانـهـأـبـدـعـاـ	*	جـنـاـيـاتـهـجـمـتـوـجـازـتـفـكـلـصـاـ

"Oh my Lord accept the prayer of a worshipper who supplicates to you and comes repently and submissively.

He sought a continued charitable gift from your immense generosity for he took you as his entire shelter, Oh the grantor of prayers. He recited, believing it, the verse which signifies that you will answer whoever supplicates to you, realizing your response to the devoted and submissive.⁴⁸

He indulges in sins, continuously, and never worships like the devoted worshippers, and says farewell to sleep.

His sins became so plentiful that they have exceeded all other people's sins for whenever he abstains from one sin he is attracted into another as the sins were found for him alone."⁴⁹

Finally, the poet, concludes his poem with the supplication to Allah to shower his mercy upon the Prophet, his Family, Companions

and the generality of the Muslims. He may mention his name, the name of his poem, the poetical metre he used and the date he composed his poem, using the numerical value of the letters of the alphabet.

* * *

Coming now to the prosody of Somali Arabic poetry, we would like to state that Somali Arabic poets have always shown a great concern about poetical metres. As a result of this, most of their poems are well rhymed and metrically balanced according to the rules of Arabic prosody. Somali Arabic poems are composed not only on the sixteen metres but also on the different varieties of each metre. For instance the famous poet, Ḥajj Šūfi had composed poems on all the sixteen metres and their various branches such as Mashtūr, Majzū', and Manhūk.⁵⁰

Moreover, the Somalis invented a specific musical metre for everyone of the sixteen metres where, if one applied them one could easily discover the metre of any line without any need to discover its poetical foot through Taqti^c (scanning). These musical metres simplified the science of prosody for the Somali students.

It seems, however, that some Somali Arabic poets have occasionally attempted composing poems on non-canonical metres. Both al-Sayyid Muhammad ^cAbdullah Hasan and 'Uways ibn Muhammad al-Barāwi have used non-traditional metres. In fact most of 'Uways's poems are composed

on non-canonical metres, as can be seen in his poetical anthology, al-Jawhar al-Nafis fi al-Shaykh 'Uways. Although the majority of Somali Arabic poems are composed on mono-rhyme form, as we have stated earlier, there is a substantial number of these poems which, like their decadent counterparts in the Arab world, are multi-rhymed. One popular form of this is known as al-Takhmis, meaning that each stanza in the poem contains five hemistiches, the first four of which are rhymed while the last one is on different rhyme like the fifth part of every stanza in the poem. Hajj Sūfi is the first Somali poet, who, as far as we know, composed on the form of Takhmis. But the leader of this trend in Somalia is, without any doubt, Qasim al-Barāwi. His poetical anthology contains nine poems, and only one poem out of these is mono-rhyme, while all the remaining are composed on Takhmis form.

Somali Arabic poets have not so far been influenced by the new poetical trend towards "Free Verse" which is currently popular in the Arab world proper.

c) The Themes of Somali Arabic Poetry

The main themes in Somali Arabic poetry could be identified as follows:

First - Panegyric: This is the most popular theme in the Somali Arabic poetry. Indeed, more than 90% of Somali Arabic poetical output falls into this theme. Again, overwhelming majority of Somali Arabic panegyric poetry is devoted to the praise of the Prophet of Islam. Yet a

few poems and poetical pieces are found in praise of other leading personalities, such as the praise of Imam 'Ahmad Guray after his great triumph over the Abyssinians as mentioned earlier (section one part one). The author of these verses is not known:

يا أحمد جرى يا أسد الوفى	*	لا يعرفون النوم ولا المأكل
جابت البلاد على الخيول ملكتها	*	أعطاك ربك ما تريده وكما لا
شم اثنين مع العساكر راحها	*	من مقد بشو الى نوبا وناء لا
من بعد ما جبت الفيافي كلها	*	في وسط جو حشام حطت المحملا
بات الحطي مع العساكر هاريها	*	وأكسنوم واتيريا ففابلا
سيرا عنيفا مثل ماء حساري	*	سر ثم وراءهم الى الصباح المقللا
والغرب في الكفار يقطع رؤوسهم	*	حتى اختلطم وسط ليل مسبلا
والصوماليون على الخيول لوابر	*	حتى أصبحوا وسط نيل حفلا

"Oh 'Ahmad Guray, the lion of the war, you have not been sleeping or eating [until you have achieved your aim.]

You have wandered on horses' back over vast distances to control and thereby God has given you what you have requested Him.

Then you have returned with your arms from Mogadishu to Nuba Land.

After you have wondered the vast distances, then you have settled down in the middle of Gojam.

The Abyssinian leader had run away with his army leaving behind Oxum and Arateria.

You have followed them like a strong current water up to the next morning.

The smite at the heads of the unbelievers continued until the darkness of the midnight stopped it.

The Somalis, wearing the gown of war, were ridding their horses (in this war) until they have reached the middle of River Nile.⁵¹

While the metre of this composition is al-Kamil, it is full of metrical errors.

As for the poems devoted to the eulogy of Prophet, the poet normally expressed his love for the Prophet, his family and his Companions. He may also describe the holy cities of Islam especially Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. Other places such as those known historically to have been battle-grounds like Badr, 'Uhud and Hunayn, may also be described. The poet may refer with veneration to the special places where the Prophet is known to have been born, grew up and received his early revelation, as well as the persons who looked after him in his childhood particularly his wet nurse, Halimah Bint 'Abū Dhu'ayd al-Sādiyya.⁵² The poem may be concluded with prayers for the Prophet, His family, His companions and His sincere followers. The oldest prophetic panegyric in Somali Arabic poems goes back, as far as we know, to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Since then, this type of poetry has continued to flourish in Somalia until today. The following factors may have contributed to this:

(i) Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the Europeans with their African agencies did not only colonize the Somali territory, but also divided it among themselves without any regard for the people's will. The Somalis, particularly the Qadiris who produced a lion's share of this poetry, believed that what happened to their country was because of their sins. They thought that only through honest repentance to 'Allah and seeking the intercession of his Prophet and the righteous saints could they be helped to overcome this immensely terrible calamity. This is clearly reflected in the following poetical quotation from a poem originally composed by Hajj Sūfī, and written its Takhmīs by Qāsim al-Barāwī:

وتسالى القحد. فينا علـنا
وأحاطنـنا العـدـاة بالـفـنـاء *

ليـسـ غـيرـ الـاتـجـاـهـ مـنـكـ لـنـا
ووهـيـ الـاسـلـامـ بـلـ زـارـ الـخـنـا *

وابـتـهـالـ وـدـعـاءـ فـيـ الـقـرـىـ

"Successive waves of famine continued ostensibly to hit us,
And our enemies surrounded us, ready with their spears.
The Islamic faith grew weak, and maybe its weakness increased,
No hope left for us except to be given a refuge from you to us.
And to have loud collective supplication and prayers in all villages."⁵³

(ii) As a result of colonial policy of divide and rule:

the foreigners governing Somalia aimed at inciting communities and tribes against each other. Hence disorders prevailed in Somalia, tribal wars spread all over the country and security became almost completely lost. This created a grave situation of helplessness which led to self-surrender and Sufi devotion. Such a climate was conducive to the production of this type of literature. The poetical extract below may illuminate the Somali's view of their grave situation created by the colonial unbelievers:

ذات بين الورى بجاه محمد	:	رب أَحْمَدْ نِيرَانْ حَرْبَ وَاصْلَحْ
وينار يرهم بجاه محمد	:	رب كسر مراكبا للنماري
وأنفهم عن بلادنا بمحمد	:	رب زلزل أقدامهم وأحنّهم
من بلاد لنا بجاه محمد	:	رب حرق ديارهم واذلّهم
هـ وحزب الهدى بجاه محمد	÷	رب أيد سلطاناً واحداً وانصر

"Oh my Lord settle all conflicts among the people, and instead establish peace and harmony between them through the intercession of Muhammad.

Oh Lord destroy the Christian's ships and annihilate their seaports and commercial centres through the intercession of Muhammad.

Oh Lord stumble their feet, twist them and then expel them from our country through the intercession of Muhammad

Oh our Lord destroy their houses by fire and then eliminate them from our lands through the intercession of Muhammad.

Support our leader Oh my Lord and guide him as well as the group of
guidance to the right path through the intercession of Muhammad."⁵⁴

(iii) A number of panegyric odes praising the Prophet gave rise to exciting stories which made the composing of such poems very desirable. As these stories spread over a wide area in Somalia, they undoubtedly attracted the attention of the people and encouraged them to imitate such odes. One example of this is an ode entitled Hadiya al-'Arwah (The Singer for the Souls) of al-Zayla^c i which was said to bring anybody who read it between the Maghrib and ^cIsha['] prayers plenty of sustenance from where he would never expect.⁵⁵

Another example is Mirqat al-Wusul, which was reported to have caused the author to see the Prophet immediately after composing it. Perhaps, the most interesting one among these stories is the story of a poem called Ruh al-Masarrah by 'Uways, ibn Muhammad al-Barawi in which he claims that he had seen the Prophet in a dream as can be seen from this quotation:

رأيت المصطفى في المقام
 تلك الرؤيا ليلة الخميس
 ومحيا كدر مثير
 وكان جالسا في المحافل
 والناس خلفه بازد حمّام
 فلا شك أنه ختامي
 وصوحبة من رب الأنعام
 بروضة أشرف المقام

"I have seen the Prophet in a dream in his holy Mosque, the best place. The dream occurred on the night of Thursday, and undoubtedly it was a precious gift from the Lord of mankind. His face was shinning like a full moon, and that was, undoubtedly, my aim. He was sitting among large audience, and the people were behind him in crowds."⁵⁶

The most prominent poets of this theme are:

- (i) The late Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahmān al-Zayla^ci, the founder of Hirta 'Ula Madaw (1881 A.D.).
- (ii) The late Hajj Sūfi, who as we stated earlier, composed poems on the sixteen metres and their various branches (d. 1904).
- (iii) The late Shaykh Yūsuf 'ibn Muhammād al-Bākri, widely known as Yūsuf al-Bahrayn, who is said to have composed the same number of poems as the number of the chapters in the Holy Qur'ān, that is 114.
- (iv) The late Shaykh 'Uways ibn Muhammād al-Barāwi, (d. 1909).
- (v) The late Shaykh Qāsim al-Barāwi, the famous poet in the Takhmis art

Secondly - Satire: The satire theme in Somali Arabic poetry has also a religious character. The poet does not write a satire about anybody except because of defect and imperfection in his religious standing. Al-Qutbi, 'Uways al-Barāwi and al-Sayyid Muhammād ^cAbdullah Hasan are considered the leaders of this poetical theme.

Al-Qutbi and 'Uways's satiric poems are directed completely against the Sálihiyyah Order in general and al-Sayyid Muhammad Abdulla Hasan, the leader of this sect in particular. Al-Sayyid would then give them a long satiric rebuff. In fact, a great proportion of al-Sayyid's long mīmiyyah poem, which we will talk about later (section III part II), has been devoted to satire the spokesman of al-Qadiriyah Sect, al-Shaykh Abdulllah al-Qutbi. Nevertheless, the poetical quotation below illustrate the Somali Arabic satiric poetry. It is extracted from a satiric Ya'iyah poem of 34 lines. The first 22 verses of this poem are composed by 'Uways al-Barawi, while the remaining 12 verses are added to the poem by al-Qutbi after 'Uways was assassinated by a band of Sálihiyyah Order in April 1909.

Here is an extract, translated by Martin:

واصرف بهم من كل سوء راهية	*	صل على محمد والله
لا يقتدى جماعة الشيـطانـية	*	من اقتـدى محمد بـشرعـه
والمال والحرير هـم ابـاحـيـة	*	هم العـبيـحـون دـماء الـعـلـمـا
كـالـفـقـهـ وـالـفـحـوـهـ هـمـ الـكـرـامـيـةـ	*	رـيـمـنـعـونـ الدـرـسـ لـلـعـلـوـ
لا يـنـوـسـلـوـنـ كـالـجـنـاحـيـةـ	*	كـلـ شـيـخـ مـاتـ كـالـجـيـلـانـيـ
سيـمـاـهـمـ التـحـلـيقـ كـالـوـهـابـيـةـ	*	لـاـ يـقـتـدـونـ خـلـفـ مـنـ لـهـ شـعـرـ
فـيـ دـارـنـاـ جـهـرـاـ هـمـ الـكـلـابـيـةـ	*	وـيـشـتـرـوـنـ الـجـنـةـ بـصـالـ
زـةـ كـأـمـهـمـ قـذـاـ سـفـاحـيـةـ	*	وـيـخـتـلـوـنـ بـالـجـرـيمـ لـلـإـحـاـ
وـنـيـدـعـونـ النـورـ مـنـ بـلـاشـيـةـ	*	يـتـبـعـونـ رـأـبـهـمـ لـاـكـتـبـنـاـ
فـعـلـاـ وـقـوـلـاـ يـقـضـىـ قـرـآنـيـةـ	*	وـيـفـعـلـوـنـ النـكـرـ فـيـ ذـكـرـهـمـ
شـكـاـ بـهـ جـلـ هـمـ الشـمـالـيـةـ	*	كـالـلـعـبـ قـائـلـينـ أـللـهـ

ن وفحىج كالكلاب النابحة	*	لهم ضحىج وأنين وحنبي
وينكرون الكلفة الالمية	*	ركثرون الحلف بالطلاق
بـرا ويـرا أى من الصومالية	*	ضلوا وأضلوا العبار في الشري
بـهم فـفر عنـهم كالدواهـية	*	أليس نـو لـب وفهم يـفتر

"Blessed are Muhammad and His Family.

Turn to them in every evil calamity.

The person guided by Muhammad's law (revealed to him by Allah)
Will not follow the faction of Satan

Who deem it lawful to spill the blood of the learned
Who take cash and women, too: they are anarchists.

They hinder the study of sciences

Like law and grammar. They are Karāmiyya.

To every dead Shaykh like al-Jilānī

They deny access to God, like the Janhiyya.

They don't pray behind Imam with big shock of hair.

Their characteristic mark is shaving like ~~wal-habīyyah~~^a

Publicly, they sell Paradise for cash

In our land, they are a sect of dogs.

Having permission, they secluded with women not belonging to
their families

As they are their own mothers, which is nothing but fornication

They follow their own subjective opinions and not book of ours.

Yet they claim that ~~they~~ follow the light of God from nothing.

They do forbidden word and deed at their Dhikr which definitely lead to unbelief

Like their game of saying "God?"

As they are in doubt of Him, God is above that. They are the people of Hell.

Great clamour they make, a moaning and groaning

A noise like the barking of curs

In divorce cases they augment the oaths

But they abridge the religious ceremonies

They have gone astray and make other deviate on earth

By land and sea among the Somalis

Have they no reasoning or understanding?

Be not deceived by them, but flee as from a disaster.⁵⁷

Thirdly: Correspondence: The Somalis have used the Arabic poetry for the purpose of correspondence and personal contact. They follow in their poetical correspondence, the traditional system of prose letters, beginning with the name of 'Allah and the prayer for his Apostle. Thereafter, they proceed to the object of the letter. They would finally end with prayers and greetings to relatives and friends etc. The traditional practice, in such correspondence is to compose the reply on the same rhyme and metre of the letter; failing to follow, strictly, this method is regarded as a sign of

lack of poetical abilities. The following two lines, which are the opening verses of one of the Somali letters in verse, illuminate some of their customs in such poetical correspondence:

أبْدأ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُحَمَّدِ
عَلَى هَبَاتِي *

إِلَى جَنَابِ الْأَكْرَمِ الْمَكْرُومِ
عَظِيمِ جَاهِ ذِي الْمَقَامِ الْأَفْعَمِ

"I begin in the name of 'Allah and prayers

For Muhammad (the Prophet) to whom goes all my offerings

I am sending this letter the most respected (friends)

Who is the most honoured and intensely respected and whose
position is the most glorified."⁵⁸

This type of versified letters must have been so plentiful in
Somali Arabic poetry that one of the writers claimed that the
poetical letters between him and his friends would fill a separate
volume.

Finally, Somali Arabic poetry may occasionally deal with other
poetical themes such as elegy, boasting and asceticism. Because of
the scarcity of poetical compositions on these themes we regard them
less important than the three major themes just reviewed and
exemplified.

PART TWO

SECTION I

SELECTED SOMALI ARABIC POETSIntroductory Remarks:

Since Arabic became an established language in Somalia, used as a medium of learning and literary expression, the poetic heritage of the Arabs coming to Somalia from the Arab world became a subject of admiration and a focus of attention. With the Somalis being themselves highly talented in poetry, and with the obviously strong connection between Arabic and the Islamic faith of the Somali people, it could not have taken a long time for Arabic poetry to gain the affectionate veneration of the Somalis. Such affectionate admiration and veneration led the Somalis to attempt to emulate Arabic poetry. It was therefore only to be expected that Somalis would allow the logical process of admiration, veneration and emulation to complete its natural course, leading thereby to the emergence of Somali Arabic poetry. This process may have been enhanced by the fact that while poetry produced by the Somalis in their indigenous language could not be preserved in writing, the poetry they produced in Arabic could be written down. This allowed Arabic poetry to be further revised and refined, giving it thereby wider circulation and almost eternal preservation.

The Somalis have produced a considerable number of poets who composed in Arabic. Unfortunately, we do not have as yet any reliable

records of the names or poetical productions of those poets that appeared prior to the nineteenth century.

With the coming of the nineteenth century, however, a good number of Arabic poets began to emerge in various parts of Somalia. Many of those poets devoted themselves to the mastery of Arabic and to the cultivation of a high degree of poetical excellence. The most illustrious representatives of these are the following six poets:

1. Al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahmān 'ibn 'Ahmad al-Zayla^ci (d.1881), the famous poet and the erudite scholar who is said to have written thirty-eight books in Arabic. He founded Hirta 'Ula Madaw School, a school which contributed tremendously to the dissemination of Arabic and Islamic learning in the whole of the Somali peninsula. Section I of this part is devoted to this poet.

2. Al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-^cAzīz 'ibn ^cAbd al-Ghani al-Barāwi (d.1896), a historian, a Chif Qādī and an important adviser of al-Sayyid Khālid 'ibn Barghash, the ruler of Mogadishu (1871-1888). He is the author of Namusiyyah poem which is regarded as one of the most important and longest Somali Arabic poems; it consists of 135 verses.¹

3. Al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahmān 'ibn ^cAbdullah 'ibn ^cAbd al-Rahmān, widely known as Hajj Sūfi (d.1905). He is regarded as the most prolific Somali Arabic poet and as a master of Arabic prosody. He is credited with having composed poems on all the traditional sixteen metres of Arabic prosody and their varieties. Section II of this

study is devoted to this poet.

4. Al-Shaykh 'Uways ibn Muhammad al-Barāwi (d.1909), a leader of the Qadiriyyah Sect, not only in Somalia but also in all other Islamized East African communities, such as those in Zanzibar, Tanganyika and Comoro Islands.² His role in the Islamization of these areas is highly significant and indeed immensely esteemed in Islamic circles in this part of Africa. 'Uways was bilingual, writing poems both in Arabic and in the regional dialect of Upper Juba, known as 'Aff Raxanwayn. The two works of Jalā' al-'Aynayn and al-Jawhar al-Nafīs, written by ^cAbd al-Rahmān ibn ^cUmar al-^cAli, contain most of his Arabic poetic production.

5. Al-Sayyid Muhammad ^cAbdullah Hasan (d.1920), the founder of modern Somali nationalism, who led the holy struggle against the colonial powers for more than two decades (1898-1920). He was a bilingual poet, composing poems both in Arabic and in Somali. His Somali poems were not committed to writing for a number of decades, but most of them are now recorded. It was due to his political and military leadership as well as to his poetic bilingualism that al-Sayyid attained a great deal of fame and recognition throughout Somalia. Section III of this study is devoted to this poet.

6. Al-Shaykh Qāsim ibn Muhyi al-Dīn al-Barāwi (d.1940), the famous poet in art of Takhmis. Indeed, he collected a

considerable number of the best known Somali Arabic poems, and then quintupled them by adding three more hemistiches at the beginning of each verse, making each of the original two hemistiched verse of a five-unit stanza. This collection is called Majmu'at Qasa'id. He too was a bilingual poet, composing poems both in Arabic and in the local dialect of Barawe City known as Aff-Barawe.

Since it is not possible to give a detailed study of each of these renowned poets in this work, we have chosen three eminent ones who belong geographically to different places. In fact, these three poets represent, in my own opinion, the topmost cadre of Somali Arabic poets. Their impact on the Somali society as a whole, and on the other Somali Arabic poets in particular, is so immense that it is not confined to their own generation but also continue to be felt long after their death.

AL-ZAYLA^CI

A - His Life History:

Al-Shaykh ^CAbd al-Rahmān Nūriyya 'ibn 'Ahmad al-Zayla^Ci was a gifted poet and a distinguished writer. He was the author of thirty-eight works in Arabic and the founder of the famous school, Hirta Ula Madaw (school of Black Staffed Students), which played a highly significant role in the dissemination of Arabic and Islamic learning in Somali.

He was born in the early part of 19th century at Kudly Town¹ in the present Bacoul Region which is a part of the former Upper Juba Region in the southern part of Somalia. He came from a very obscure family; therefore very little is known about his birth, upbringing and childhood. Even the exact date of his birth is still uncertain. He is widely known as al-Zayla^Ci, although he is from the South. Perhaps his origin could be traced back to the ancient seaport of Zayla^C, the capital of the Somali medieval state of Odal, on the Red Sea.

Al-Zayla^Ci attended the Somali conventional school of his period, starting with the Qur'anic school where he had memorized the totality of the holy Qur'an.² He later joined the Hirta school where he learned the preliminary textbooks of the Somali traditional curriculum. But his eagerness for search of knowledge led him to set off to Mogadishu, the main centre of Islamic and Arabic learning in Somalia to pursue more advanced studies.

In Mogadishu, Zayla^{cī} met an eminent scholar and prolific poet, al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahmān 'ibn ^cAbdullah, widely known as Hajj Sūfī, who, according to Somali traditional custom, accommodated him for a period of four or five years. Both Zayla^{cī} and Hajj Sūfī joined the Hirta school of 'Abū-Bakr al-Mihdār, who, because of his tremendous contribution to Arabic and Islamic learning, and the numerous scholars who had graduated from his school, was given the title of Shaykh al-Mashā'ikh (the teacher of the teachers). Al-Zayla^{cī} continued attending this school until the famous Sūfī, al-Shaykh Ismaīl al-Magdashi arrived there and Zayla^{cī} immediately went over to him for spiritual training. Later on, Zayla^{cī} accompanied this new spiritual teacher to the nomadic area where they roamed over a vast distance and visited the various nomadic villages. During this period, al-Zayla^{cī} and his teacher visited the renowned mystic, al-Shaykh Hamzat 'ibn Muhammad, who gave them al-'Ijāza (the authorization) of the Qadiri Order.³ Both Hamzat and al-Magdashi were recognized as great saints whose intercession with God was always sought. Even Zayla^{cī} sought it as is shown in his following verses:

وَبِابْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ اسْمَاعِيلَ وَشِيخِهِ الْمَقْدُشِيِّ *

بِكُلِّ أَهْلِ الْقَرْبِ أَهْلِ الْمَنْصَبِ بَشِيخِهِ حَمْزَةَ عَالِيِ الرَّتْبِ *

"(I supplicate to you Oh Lord) through the intercession of Shaykh Ismaīl 'ibn Ibrāhīm and his teacher Shaykh Ismaīl al-Magdashi.

Likewise through his teacher, al-Shaykh Hamzat whose status is exalted and all those enjoying closeness to God as well as the high-ranking members (in the Sufi Order)."⁴

Al-Zayla^{c-i} stayed with al-Magdashi for unspecified period, in which he acquired the fundamentals of sufism such as self-purification, upright life, asceticism and piety. Such spiritual training developed Zayla^{c-i}'s sufi tendency and eventually directed his poetical talents towards religious themes. Having been satisfied with the training which Zayla^{c-i} had so far attained, al-Mogdashi advised him to set off to the holy lands, giving him the name of an important Qadiri teacher in the grand mosque and instructing him to contact this teacher at Mecca. Al-Zayla^{c-i} set off for Mecca and Medina, via the historical city of Harar, where he had a short halt.⁵ In his brief halt at Harar, he came into contact with its ruler, 'Amīr ^cAbdullāh 'ibn 'Amīr Muhammad (d. 1292 A.H.)⁶, who offered him the moral and material support that could facilitate the achievement of his noble goal. On his arrival in Mecca, Zayla^{c-i} communicated with al-Sayyid Fadl, the Chief Qadiri teacher in the grand Mosque, who was said to be a descendant of Shaykh ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, the founder of the Qādiriyyah. He accommodated Zayla^{c-i} for unspecified period, in which he received from him the Ijazah of the Qadiri Brotherhood. Since then, al-Zayla^{c-i} became a full fledged Qadiri, qualified to

to give 'Ijazah and mandated to appoint khalifahs (local heads of Qadiri communities).

In Mecca, Zayla^{c-i} accidentally met an eminent scholar and distinguished personality from the city of Jijiga, al-Zhaykh^c Abdullah^c Ali, widely known as Hajj Jama^c. According to the oral historical information given by Muhammad Husayn (Sheeka Xariir), whose father was an important disciple of al-Zayla^{c-i}, both Hajj Jama^c and al-Zayla^{c-i} decided to return to Somalia and work together for the promotion of the Arabic language and Islamic learning in their native land.

Having performed his pilgrimage, Zayla^{c-i} returned to Harar in Somalia, where he was joined by thirty disciples. Zayla^{c-i} began to teach various branches of Arabic in the central Mosque of Harar. He was particularly interested in morphology and the art of reciting the Qur'an (^cIlm al-Qira'at), the most difficult two courses in the Somali conventional curriculum. The elites of Harar city as well as the regular students attended al-Zayla^{c-i}'s classes. Those elites were the old intimate friends of Zayla^{c-i}, like 'Amir^c Abdullah the ruler of Harar. It is said that al-Zayla^{c-i} was very much concerned with the academic discipline of his students regardless of their position.⁷

The people of Harar were so much impressed by al-Zayla^{c-i}'s competence in morphology that they appealed to him to write a Suitable textbook on morphology. Hence al-Zayla^{c-i} wrote his work on morphology entitled Hadiqat al-Tasrif and its commentary Fath al-Latif ^cAlā Sharh Hadiqat al-Tasrif. He also wrote at this particular time the annotation to the well-known medieval book of al-Shātibi (d.1193 A.D)⁸ on Qur'anic recitals. Al-Zayla^{c-i} must have also composed during this period a substantial number of his poems, especially the two intercessionary ones. These various activities made him very popular not only among the learned class, but also among the common people.

The following incident, which showed al-Zayla^{c-i} as a man of outstanding intelligence, also contributed immensely to his popularity and recognition as a great scholar. It is said that al-Zayla^{c-i} had, on one of his numerous pilgrimages, attended a teaching session held in the grand Mosque at Mecca where an Arabic scholar was conducting a class on Logic for his disciples. The scholar raised a number of relevant problems and sought answers to them. Surprisingly, no one in the large audience could give the correct answers, except Zayla^{c-i}, in spite of the fact that a good number of famous scholars were among the audience. Al-Zayla^{c-i} was then asked to identify himself and people were highly impressed by his knowledge in Arabic generally and in Logic particularly. Later on, he was called to take a special

challenging test arranged by prominent scholars and headed by the grand Mufti of the Shafi'i school at Mecca, Shaykh 'Ahmad 'ibn Zayn al-Dahlanī. Al-Zayla'i passed the test and was granted yet another Ijazah.⁹

Having spent some time at Harar Zayla'i went to Jijiga in 1860's where he met his intimate colleague, Hajj Jāma'. With the hospitality and support of Hajj Jāma', he began to disseminate Arabic and Islamic knowledge in Jijiga. Numerous students came from Jijiga and all adjacent villages to join al-Zayla'i's newly established educational centre.

Besides his educational activities, al-Zayla'i was also actively involved in the promotion of the Qadiriyyah Sect in Somalia. He had adherents particularly in Jijiga, whom he trained spiritually and recruited mostly as new Khalifs. Members of Hajj Jāma' s family in general and Shaykh Abd al-Salam 'ibn Hajj Muhammad 'ibn Hajj Jāma' in particular were regarded as the Chief Khalif of al-Zayla'i in the area of Jijiga. It is believed that a large number of Zayla'i's writings are still preserved in the hands of this family. Unfortunately, it has not been possible for me to go there in search of these due to the present political situation there where Western Somali Libration Front have been waging war against the Ethiopian occupation forces.

About 1870, Zayla^{c-i} moved into Qulunqūl village, about one hundred miles south-east of Jijiga, where he was accommodated by Hajj 'Abū-Bakr 'aw Yusuf 'aw 'Umar Nūr, who subsequently became his chief Khalif and who married al-Zayla^{c-i}'s wife after his death.

Zayla^{c-i}'s life history is better known since he settled down in Qulunqūl for he received in this village much more publicity than in any other place. It was here he established, together with his host Hajj 'Abū-Bakre, the famous school, Hirta'Ula Madaw. With this, Qulunqūl soon became a new centre for both educational and spiritual training. Students who used to travel from one place to another in search of learning now resorted to this newly established centre. Their numbers increased during the life of the founder to more than one thousand.¹⁰ Zayla^{c-i} himself supervised all academic and administrative activities of this school, giving some specific social and academic assignments to his disciples. This school has played a dynamic role in the diffusion of Arabic and Islamic learning. It has produced a number of impressive, scholarly works known as al-Majmū'ah al-Qulunqūliyyah (The Qulunqūl Collections). A substantial number of these works have been published under this title, but an overwhelming majority of these are still in manuscript form awaiting editing and publication.

Zayla^{c-i}'s reputation and success attracted the calumny of opponents and detractors. One of the attempts they made against

him was poisoning the mind of Zayla^{c-i}'s spiritual leader, al-Shaykh 'Isma'il^{c-i} ibn Umar al-Magdashi towards him by asserting that Zayla^{c-i} no longer recognized him as his spiritual teacher but considered himself more knowledgeable than he. Magdashi eventually sent his men to Qulunqūl to investigate and the outcome showed that the claims were all baseless fabrications. Since then al-Zayla^{c-i}'s relations with his spiritual teacher kept flourishing.¹¹

The information we have obtained so far on Zayla^{c-i}'s family background is very meagre. But the little we have reveals that, at his home town, Kudly, he married his first wife who gave him two female children. As mentioned previously, Zayla^{c-i}'s pursuit of higher education brought him to Mogadishu, where he stayed for a long period. During his absence from his home town, al-Zayla^{c-i}'s marriage to his wife was terminated by the jurists of the town on his wife's request.¹² The jurists' action annoyed him immensely, but he did not take any further action against it. Presumably, al-Zayla^{c-i}'s sufi tendencies from his youth did not encourage self-revenge, or he may have realized that the jurists' action was in compliance with Islamic law. But taking into consideration the traditional Somali custom, one may guess that al-Zayla^{c-i}'s migration from his home town was an ultimate reaction to the jurists' action. By the time this marriage was terminated, one of the two daughters had died, while the other, whose name was given as Fatima, was given to her mother for custody.

When al-Zayla^{cī} established his new settlement in Qulunqūl, he married another wife, Fatima Bint Yūsuf widely known by her nickname, Rādiyah.¹³ It seems that she had no issue by him, although she had one son by his successor, Hajj Abū-Bakr 'aw Yūsuf, who married her after Zayla^{cī}'s death. Fatimah, the surviving daughter from his first marriage, remained the only child of al-Zayla^{cī}.

Al-Zayla^{cī} died in the year 1299 A.H (1881 A.D.) which was called ^{c-}Am al-^cIbadah (year of worship) because piety, self-purification and devotion prevailed during it. His body was buried in Qulunqūl and a dome was erected on his tomb. Since then, it has become a holy place for all the local qadiris who honour it annually on each anniversary of al-Zayla^{cī}'s death. His Chief Khalifah, and his host at the first arrival at Qulunqūl, Hajj Abū-Bakr had undertaken the building of the tomb. Later on, the local Qadiris, especially members of the Jama^c and al-Qutbi's family have continued up to the present time to maintain al-Zayla^{cī}'s tomb in spite of a serious dispute that developed between these two families over their respective responsibilities in maintaining the tomb in the early part of this century.¹⁴

Before his death, al-Zayla^{cī} had nominated his Khalifahs in Qulunqūl, Jijiga, Harar and even in the southern areas of Somalia up to Mogadishu and Barawa. These have continued to be maintained by the local Qadiris to the present time.

B - Al-Zayla^{c-}i's Scholarship

Al-Zayla^{c-}i was a versed and intelligent scholar as well as an erudite author both of prose and poetry. He engaged, zealously and enthusiastically, in the dissemination of Arabic and Islamic learning for most of his life. He taught in a number of educational centres in Harar, Jijiga and, finally, in the Qulunqūl Settlement which he personally established. He enjoyed so great a fame among the learned class that he was nicknamed Sibawayh as well as 'ibn Hajar, to indicate his excellence in linguistics and jurisprudence respectively.¹⁵

It seems that Zayla^{c-}i had taught at his educational centres or Hirta school all the various subjects in the Somali conventional curriculum. Al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahman ^c'ibn ^cUmar al-^cAli claimed (in his work Jala' al-^cAynayn) that al-Zayla^{c-}i used to teach daily twelve courses on different branches of Arabic and Islamic learning. In addition to that, he asserts Zayla^{c-}i taught Qur'ānic recitals, according to the acceptable seven different readings.¹⁶

Zayla^{c-}i is regarded as a prolific writer both in prose and poetry. Professor M.A. Alin credited him with thirty-eight works in Arabic, most of which have unfortunately been lost.¹⁷ This is confirmed by the aged contemporary historian, Muhammad Hajj Hugayn, whose father was an important disciple of al-Zayla^{c-}i.

However, al-Zayla^{c-}i's available works are three books and seven poems. One of the three books is an interesting work on sufism

entitled al-Fath al-Rabbānī wa al-Fayd al-Rahmānī which is described by the author of Nasr al-Mu'minīn as one of the main sources of his own book. A significant portion of this work is devoted to the praise of the founder of the Qadiri Brotherhood as shown in the following quotation:

هو السيد الشريف العالم المتنيف، قدوة العلماء المحققين
 وتابع الأئمة السلفيين ، وفي جميع الكمالات
 أمير المؤمنين ، مالك زمام الفضل والغفار
 فاق مني في الوجه و هو منهم ، فالياقوت في جملة احجار
 الجبال ، وليلة القدر منتظمة في سلك الليالي . فهو بالاجماع
 أستاذ أهل الشريعة والطريقة ، وحامل لواء جيش الحقيقة
 القطب الرباني ، أبو صالح عبد القادر الحسني الحسيني الجيلان
 فهو طور ماله من مزعزع ، وبملابس الشرف والعز متبرقع
 ولأشار جده المصطفى صلى الله عليه وسلم مصنف ومتبوع .
 وكماله يغنيه في التعریف عن الإكثار كالشمس المضيئة في نصف النهار."

"He is the master, the noble scholar and the high mountain.
 He is the leader of the erudite scholar, the crown of the
 knowledgeable 'Imams, the head of the believers in their
 righteous deeds, and the possessor of the rein of virtue
 and pride. He surpassed all those existing while he is

one of them. And that is no exaggeration like sapphire which is one of the collections of stones of the mountains and Laylat al-Qadri which is one of the chains of the nights.

Thus he is unanimously the leader of the mystics and the scholars, the bearer of the flag of the sufis and the spiritual pivot, 'Abu Salih ^cAbd al-Qadir, descendant of Hasan ^cibn ^cAli on his father's side and Husayn ^cibn ^cAli on the mother side. He is a high mountain, which nothing could shake. He is the one who bestows the clothes of honour and might on others. He is the follower of his grandfather, the Prophet, may peace and the blessing of Allah be upon Him. His perfection makes him in need of no elaborate eulogy, like the shining sun in the middle of the day."¹⁸

One of the significant Zayla^ci's books is a morphological work entitled Hadiqat al-Tasrif (The Garden of Morphology). It consists of one hundred and fourteen verses composed on the Rajaz metre, with commentary entitled Fath al-Latīf ^cAlā Sharh Hadiqat al-Tasrif. This work was written at Harar as a substitute for another morphological textbook, Durāt al-Lu'lū' which had been in use. Hadiqat al-Tasrif was soon to become a popular textbook not only in Somalia but also in East Africa and the Middle East. Even some of his admirers claim that it is much better than the famous morphological work of 'ibn Mālik: Lāmiyyat al-'Af^cal.¹⁹

These two works, al-Fath al-Rabhanī wa al-Fayd al-Rahmanī and Hadiqat al-Tasrif are published among the Qulunqul collection.

The third book by al-Zayla^ci, which is still a manuscript, is Sharh al-Shatibiyyah, an annotation on the popular phonetic book entitled Hirz al-'Amani wa Wajh al-Tahani Fi al-Qira'at al-Sab^cah, by Muhammad ibn Firah al-Shatibi (d.590/1193). Abd al-Rahman al-^cAli refers to Zayla^ci's books in his panegyric poem, saying:

وَصَنَفَ فِي فَنَّوْنَ الْعِلْمِ كِتَابًا * كِشْرَحَ الشَّاطِبِيِّ الْمُسْتَجَادِ
هَدَانَا فِي عِلْمِ الْحُرْفِ هَادِي
بِنْظَمِ حَدِيقَةِ التَّصْرِيفِ هَادِي

"He (Zayla^ci) wrote many books on different branches of knowledge, like the excellent commentary on Shatibi.

He guided us in morphological studies by versifying the good guidance, Hadiqat al-Tasrif."²⁰

C - The Content and the Themes of His Poetry:

As we stated earlier, there are seven poems of al-Zayla^ci's poetical production. All these poems have gained such wide popularity and circulation in Somalia that at least one of them is recited at almost every social or religious function, even in the nomadic Somali villages. Their popularity is not confined to the learned but also has reached the common people. For instance, it is a convention among the Somalis until today to recite his poem

Hadiyat al-'Arwāh between the Maghrib and Ishā', prayers, while his Kanz al-Haqā'iq and Jawharat al-Wasīlah are recited after the Subh prayer. Four of his poems are among those selected by Qāsim al-Barāwī for the composition of his Takhmīs. These four poems form in fact a substantial proportion of Qāsim's famous collection.

Zayla^{c.i.}'s poems are highly valued by the Somalis not only for their ethical and didactic values, but also, like any artistic production, for the pleasures derived from reciting them. Zayla^{c.i.}'s available poetry covers the following themes:

1. Tawasul (Intercession): This is a supplication to God through the intercession of the Prophet and his Saints. This theme seems to have developed from eulogizing the Prophet to become an independent theme. Two poems of al-Zayla^{c.i.} are devoted to this theme. In spite of the religious controversy about whether or not Tawasul should be practised in Islam, al-Zayla^{c.i.}, being the leader of traditional Qadiri Brotherhood, considered it not only permissible but highly desirable as indicated in this extract:

عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْمُفْضِلِ	يَقُولُ راجِي عَفْوِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِ
نَعْمَهُ بِأَمْرِهِ التَّوَسُّعِ	الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي قَدْ أَسْجَلَ
سَمِينَهَا "جَوْهَرَةُ الْوَسِيلَةِ"	وَبَدْ ذَنْبِي أَرْجُورَةُ جَلِيلَةٍ

"The One seeking after the forgiveness of his Exalted Lord,
the Worshipper of the One who is Merciful, Beneficent and
and who excels all others (the poet himself) says:

'Praise be to God who provides blessings to his worshippers
by ordering them to seek intercession to Him.'"²¹

And thereafter here is a poem on Rajaz metre which I have

entitled *Jawharat al-Wasilah* (The Jewel of Intercession)".

The two poems of al-Zayla^{c-i} on intercession are:

(i) Jawharat al-Wasilah: This poem is made up of 32 verses composed on Rajaz metre. It could be classified into the following three sections:

(a) The introduction: The above-mentioned extract acts as an introduction of Jawharat al-Wasilah poem.

(b) The main body of the poem: This is devoted to the intercession through the Prophet, his family, Companions and the righteous saints whom the author considers as the offsprings of the Prophet. The quotation below is extracted from this part of the poem:

تَوَسُّلِي بِاسْمِ الْأَللَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ * وَبِالنَّبِيِّ الْمَاهُضِ الْمَاجِدِ

وأبي بكر وسیدی عمر * كذلك عثمان الذى حاز الفخر

وبعلی صلحۃ زبیر * سعد سعید الفاضل التحریر

بِقَاسِمِ أَكْبَرِ أُولَادِ النَّبِيِّ رُقِيَّةُ فَاطِمَةُ وَزِينَبُ بْنَى

بِأَمْ كُلْثُومْ وَعَبْدُ اللَّهِ أَبْدَ رَاهِيمْ خَتْمَهُمْ فَدَا أَمْرُ نَدْبَ

بام كثوم خديجة كما * عائشة بنت رئيس الكرة

ميمونة وحفصة صفيحة * ورملة جويرية وسودة

* بزینب هند وزینب فلی فائق الرجاء فیک الرجاء

"My intercession is made through the name of the only God,
and the noble Prophet from Hashimite family.

And 'Abī Bakr, my master ^cUmar and 'Uthmān who obtained the pride.

And ^cAli, Talhah, Zūbayr, Sa^cd and Sa^cid, the noble and learned man

And through Qāsim, the eldest among the Prophet's children as
well as Ruqayyah, Fātimah and Zaynab.

And 'Umm Kalthūm, ^cAbdullāh and Ibrāhīm, the last child among them

This is an important information deserving to be known

And through Hamzah and his colleague, al-^cAbbās, the two uncles
of the Prophet who educated mankind.

And through [']Umm Kalthūm (the daughter of Fātimah)

Khadījah and ^cA'ishah, the daughter of the head of the noble.

And through Maymūnah, Hafṣah, Safiyyah, Sawdah and Juwayriyyah

And through Zaynab, Hind, ²²Zaynab through whose intercession
I seek your forgiveness.

And thereafter through (Ibrahim) al-Dusūqī and ^cAbd al-Qādir
(al-Jilāni), the Shaykh of the Universe and the possessor
of all the good qualities."²³

(c) The conclusion: This is a direct request to the family
of the Prophet to intercede. He says:

يَا أَلِّي بَيْتِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ أَنْتُمْ ذَخَائِرِي وَأَنْتُمْ عَصْدِي

أَنْتُمْ مَفَاتِيحُ لَبَابِ حِجَّتِكُمْ أَسَاسُ اِيمَانِ الْأَنَامِ حِبْكُمْ

أَغْفِرُ لِهِنَّى كُلَّمَا قَدِمْتُمْ بِهِمْ وَسَهَلْ كُلَّمَا طَلَبْتُمْ

هُوَنْ عَلَيْنَا سَكَرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِهِمْ نَفْسُنَا عَنْ كُرْبَةِ الْقَبْرِ بِهِمْ

تتسکوا بذی فانتم غلب

ان حاربتكم شدة أو كرب

على النبي العربي أهتم

شم الصلاة والسلام سردا

السالكين سبل النجاة

وآلہ وصحابہ الہمدادۃ

ما ناح صافر على غصن شجر

"O family of my master, Muhammad! You are my treasures and my pillars.

You are the keys of your grandfather's door. The foundation of
faith of all peoples is your love.

Through them, forgive all the sin I have committed, Oh my God
and grant all my requests

Ease for us the agony of death through them! Open up the
constraints of the graves for us through them!

If you run into difficulty or face a problem, then you should hold fast to this, and surely you will overcome.

Then may the blessing and peace (of God) be continuously upon
the Arab Prophet 'Ahmad

Likewise upon his family and Companions who follow the path leading to safety.

As long as a whistling bird sings on a tree branch, and as long
as a dove rejoices at the dawn time."²⁴

(ii) Kanz al-Haqā'iq (The Treasure of Realities):

This poem consists of 52 lines written on Rajaz metre too.

It could be divided into the following sections:

(a) The introduction: The author begins this poem with a short introduction which adequately reflects that our poet believes in the mystical doctrine known as al-Haqiqat al-Muhammadiyyah (the Reality of Muhammad). He points out the main aspects of this sufi doctrine which emphasises that the Prophet is the first manifestation of God's glory, that he is the absolute intermediary (al-Barzakh al-Kulli) between God and his creation, that he is the most noble among the human race, that he is the reality and the centre of the faith ... etc. We have no doubt that our poet was influenced in this sufi outlook by earlier well-known sufis like 'ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240 A.D.) and Ibrāhīm al-Dusūqī (d. 1277 A.D.) as evidenced by his references to them in this poem.

Here is the introduction of the poem:

والفضل والاحسان والكمال	* أَسْأَلُكَ اللَّهُمَّ ذَا الْجَمَالِ
والبرزخ الكلى ذى النسوان	* بِمَظَاهِرِ الْجَلَالِ وَالْجَمَالِ
ومجتمع الحقائق اليمانية	* وَأَشْرَفَ الْخَلَاقَ الْإِنْسَانِيَّةَ
لب الباب قائد الأماثل	* حَمْدٌ وَسِيلَةُ الْوَسْعَاءِ

"I supplicate to you, Oh my Lord, the possessor of mercy, generosity, beneficence and perfection.

Through the manifestation of your glory and beauty,²⁵ the absolute intermediary between God and creation and the possessor of the generosity.

The best man among mankind and the centre of all the true and real belief.

Muhammad, the reason for the creation of all beings, the chosen personality among the best people and the leader of their ideals."²⁶

(b) The body of the Poem: The author continues here his main theme of intercession, following up the Prophet by his most important Companions, then by the exegetes, traditionists, jurists and sufi leaders right from ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī and down to al-Zayla^ci's spiritual teacher, al-Shaykh Isma'īl al-Mogdashi. All in all, al-Zayla^ci makes a list of fifty-six intercessors in this part of the poem. Following the Prophet, he cites the four orthodox Caliphs, some eminent personalities of the Prophet's family and his intimate servant, ^cAbd al-Rahmān 'ibn Sakhr (widely known as 'Abū Hurarāh, d.676 A.D.) who narrated a substantial number of Prophetic traditions. As for the jurists, al-Zayla^ci mentioned the four originators of Islamic schools of law, namely, 'Abū Hanifa al-Nu'man (d.767 A.D.), Mālik 'ibn 'Ānas (d.795 A.D.), Muhammad 'ibn Idris al-Shāfi'i (d.819 A.D) and 'Ahmad 'ibn Hanbal (d.835 A.D.). In addition to these, al-Zayla^ci lists two other erudite jurists, al-Imām Yahya 'ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (d.1277 A.D.) and al-Imām al-Rafi'i whose works on Islamic jurisprudence are intensively used in the Somali traditional curriculum.

But he devotes a large proportion of his list to the mystic

leaders, commencing with the name of Shaykh ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d.1166 A.D.), the founder of the first Islamic Sufi Order²⁷ whom al-Zayla^ci considers as the pivot of the Universe (Qut al-Zamān).

He also lists, among those sufi leaders, ^cAbū al-Hasan al-Shādhili (d.1258 A.D.), the founder of the Shādhiliyyah Sect which is widely spread in North Africa, 'Ahmad 'ibn ^cAli 'ibn 'Ahmad al-Rifa'i^c (d.1783 A.D.), the Originator of the Mystic Order called al-Rifa'iyyah (whose members engaged in some strange activities such as swallowing glowing embers and glass or passing the knives and needles through their bodies),²⁸ Ibrāhīm al-Dusūqī (d.1277 A.D.), 'Ahmad al-Badawī (d.1269 A.D.), 'Umar 'ibn ^cAbū al-Hasan (widely known as al-Fārid, d. 1235 A.D.) and Muhammad al-Busīrī (d.1297 A.D.) whose poetical productions together with those of ibn al-Fārid have influenced the development of Somali Arabic poetry, including that of Zayla^ci. Among the important sufi leaders that al-Zayla^ci list contains is the prolific writer and the leader of pantheistic sufi school, Muhyī al-Dīn 'ibn al-Arabi (d.1240 A.D.) whose sufi doctrine of al-Haqīqah al-Muhammadiyyah has influenced tremendously our poet as previously stated.

Moreover, this list of saints includes two Somali eminent scholars, Shaykh Yūsuf al-Kawnayn and Shaykh ^cAbdullah Zayla^ci. The former was an educationist of the 11th century A.D.

While the latter was a historian and politician of 14th century A.D.

Al-Zayla^ci concludes this list with the names of the officers in the hierarchy of the invisible spiritual kingdom (Rijāl al-Ghayb), where the Ghawth or al-Qutb occupies the top of the hierarchy, supported by the four 'Urāfa' or 'Umadā' (Knowledgeable or Pillars), followed by the seven 'Anjāb' or 'Umana' (the nobles or honests), then by forty 'Abdāl' (substitutes) and finally by the Nuqabā' (the Heads). The latter occupy the base of this pyramid. They number exactly 300 saints. Immediate and systematic replacement is made whenever any member of these various groups died except the Nuqabā whose replacement is usually made from the common Muslims. The mystical theory behind this is that the sufis suggest that the whole Universe would have run into difficulties if the intercession of the Rijāl al-Ghayb were non-existing and that it is only through their intercession to God that it is kept in peace and prosperity.²⁹

The list of the intercessors referred to above, after the Prophet, is shown in the following extract:

وبعلی سید الفرسان	*	و بالعتيق عمر ر عثمان
و حمزة ليث الوفى والباس	*	و بعمر نبينا عيسى ماس
أعنى ابن عباس كبير القدر	*	و بآئن هريرة والعبير
والآل والاتباع فى المنهاج	*	بسائر الاصحاب والازواج

- * بالقطب عبد القادرى الجيلان والشاذلى الشيرازى العرفان
- * وشيخه عبد السلام المقتدى والشيخ مسحاد الجلى راس المهدى
- * يلقيوس العدنى ذى الشان والجوهر الصفى ذى الايقان
- * ومصطفى البكرى لالسمان واحمد الدرديرى الربانى
- * وبابن احمد أى التباعى وباين مدین وهو المفرب
- * وشيخه ابن العربى والبدوى عمر بن الفارض الميقان
- * وبابن عطاء الله صاحب الحكم وبابن ادهم مع الشبلنى
- * وبابن يزيد البسطانى واليافعى وشيخه على
- * وبالجروينى وابنة عبد الملك وبابي حنيفة النعمان
- * وبالشيخ يحيى صاحب البيان وبابي منصور المشتهر
- * وبالزريق الفاسى الميقان وبالمالك جنيدهم والأشعري
- * وبالبرعى العشاق والبصيري والرافعى والنوى جبلى هندي
- * بالشيخ أحمد ابن ادريس الذى صار لأهل الشرب كالمسك الشذى
- * وبابن صالح المشتهر تلميذه الرشيد زين السير وبالبدلا والنقما والأنجباب
- * والعرفا والغوث والأقطاب

"And through the one exempted from Hell-fire (i.e. 'Abū Bakr),
 Umar, 'Uthmān and through ^c'Alī, the master of the Knights.

And through the Uncles of the Prophet, ^cAbbās and Hamzah, the
 hero of the war and battle field.

And through ^cAbū-Hurayrah and the great scholar, that is ^c'ibn ^cAbbās
 And through the rest of the Companions, Families, relatives and
 the followers.

And through the pivot, ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī and the renowned
 al-Shādhili, the possessor of the divine knowledge.

And through his teacher, the leader ^cAbd al-Salām³⁰ and Shaykh
 Mimshād, the head of the guidance.

And through the important ^cAydarus³¹ from the city of Aden and
 the beloved and devoted al-Shaykh Jawhar.³²

And through Mastafa al-Bakri al-Sammānī³³ and 'Ahmad al-Dirdirīyyī,
 the devoted sufi.³⁴

And through ^cAbī al-Su'ud, al-Rifa'i and ^c'ibn 'Ahmad i.e. al-
 Tuba³⁵.

And through ^c'Alī al-Khawās, al-Shārānī³⁶ and the devoted ^cUmar
^c'ibn al-Fārid,

And through his teacher, ^c'ibn al-'Arabī, al-Badawi and Abī
 Madyan i.e. al-Maghribī.³⁷

And through ^c'ibn 'Atā'i Allāh, the author of Kitāb Lata'if
Minān³⁸ and his teacher, al-Mursī, the source of wisdom.³⁹

And through the proof of Islam,⁴⁰ al-Sayyadi⁴¹, al-Dusūqī⁴² and
 al-Haddad.⁴³

And through 'ibn 'Adham,⁴⁴ al-Shiblī, al-Yāfi^cī and his teacher ^cAli.

And through ^cAbī Yazidal-Bistāmī⁴⁷ and the noble ^cAbī Tālib.

And through al-Juwainī, his son, ^cAbd al-Malik and ^cAli al-Yamānī,
the worshipper of the Lord.

And through the eloquent, Shaykh Yahyā⁴⁸ and 'Uways al-Qarānī al-Yamānī⁴⁹.

And through ^cAbi Hanīfah al-Nu'mānī, al-Shāfi^cī and 'Ahmad al-Shaybānī.

And through Mālik, Junayd⁵⁰ and al-'Ash'arī^c and the famous 'Abī Mansūr⁵¹.

And through al-Zayla^cī, Shaykh Yūsuf al-Kawnayn and al-Zarūq al-Fāsi⁵², the devoted sufi.

And through the most devoted sufi al-Bura^cī, al-Busīrī as well as ^cAli al-Wafā⁵³ and al-Dumayrī.

And through al-Bukhārī and Muslim, the two high mountains for the guidance as well as al-Rāfi^cī and al-Nawawī, the two mountains of guidance.

And through Shaykh 'Ahmad 'ibn Idrīs who became sweet drinks for the Godly men.

And through the famous ^cAbi-Sālih, the student of Ibrāhīm al-Rahīd, the ornament of the history.⁵⁵

And through the (Rijāl al-Ghayb) such as al-Budalā, Nuqabā, al-Anjāb, al-'Urafa, al-Ghawth or al-Qutbi

(c) The Conclusion: Al-Zayla^ci concludes this poem with the following prayers which he wishes to be granted through this long list of intercessors:

واخلع علينا خلع الودار	:	أسلك بنا مناهج الرشاد
واسقنا من عندك الشراب	:	والق في قلوبنا الصواب
عتب وقد تشارعوا لعذبها	:	اعنى بنا الخمر الحلال ما بها
عبد مضاف لا سفك الرحمن	:	يا ربنا اغفر للعبيد الجانبي ..
اليه ربنا وكل مسل	:	ولشيه وحده وكل منتم
وكل اسم ظاهر ومحبتي	:	فأقبل توسلي بلطفك الخفي
على النبي والهوى المهدى	:	شم الصلاة والسلام سرمدا
أسألك اللهم ذا الجمال	:	ما قال راق لذوى الكمال

"Lead us to the ways of guidance, Oh Lord, and bestow the robes
of your love upon us.

Cast the right ideas in our hearts and grant us a drink from you.

That is the halal (allowed) wine which does not contain any devil,

and which the devoted people have competed for its sweetness.

Oh Lord forgive your weak sinning worshipper whose name

is

(^cAbd = slave)/coupled with yours, al-Rahmān

Likewise all his teachers, relatives and all the Muslims.

So, accept my pleas through the intercession of your kindness,

and of all your known and unknown names.

Then may everlasting peace and blessings be upon the Prophet
and his Family, the possessor of the right guidance.
As long as the one ascending towards the Perfect recites
I beseech thee, Oh You God, owner of all beauty!" 56

2. Panegyric Theme

Al-Zayla^{cT}'s panegyric poems could be classified into the following:

(i) The Eulogy of the Prophet Muhammad:

Zayla^{cT} wrote on this theme two poems entitled Muhayyijat al-'Afrāh (The One Guiding the Souls). The former poem, consisting of one hundred verses, is the one we select for a detailed review. It was composed on a request message from the Prophet himself. One of Zayla^{cT}'s disciples saw the Prophet in a dream requesting that their teacher should praise him in a poem of one hundred lines. On being informed of this, Zayla^{cT} began to compose this ode. This episode is explicitly given at the end of this ode⁵⁷ as we shall see below.

Nevertheless, this poem may be divided into the following sections:

(a) Longing for the Holy Lands:

The poet devotes a substantial proportion of his poem to the expression of his vigorous religious sentiment and profound cravings for various places in the holy lands, particularly al-Medina. The verses below are examples of this section:

دموعي وفى قلبي يزيد تولعى	:	اذا ذكروا جهان سلح تسابقت
شجوني وأشواقى الى خير مربع	:	اذا ما صبا هبت بتجدد تزايدت
تمايل صب والع ذو توجع	:	اذا ذكروا وادى المقيق وهاجر
تذكى سكان الحمى والأجبر	:	اذاغرت ورق الحفام بائلةة
لكى نشتفي من كل داء صوجع	:	ألا يها البرق الحجار الا انجلج
بذى سلم أصبو الى خير مربع	:	أحسن الي وادى العقيق وهاجر
تقر عيوني او تجود باردى	:	منى بيقبع في حمى هنراتكم

"Whenever they mention the neighbours of Sal^c (a place), my tears would increase and the burnings in my heart would intensify.

Whenever the north wind blows from Najd, eagerness and longing to the best tomb would heap up

Whenever Wādī al-^cAqīq and Hajir are cited, the infatuated lover (of the Prophet) with his pains would swagger

Whenever the white dove sings in the forest, it reminds the citizens of Madina and ^cUjayra^c places

Oh the lightning of Hijāz, kindly shine so that we may be cured of any paining sickness.

I am hankering for Wādī al-^cAqīq and Hājir at Dhī Salam;

I am longing for the best of tombs.

When would I rejoice or let my eyes pour down my tears in the
protected zone of Your Presence."⁵⁸

(b) Nasib Verses:

These are scattered throughout the ode. In these erotic verses, Zayla^ci depicted politely the beauty and the beloved women, with their various names: 'Umaymah, Su^cad, ^cAzzah and Laylā, the names frequently found in love as well as in sufi poems, symbolising the object of love. Obviously, Zayla^ci was following the traditional customs of the panegyrists of the Prophet in the decadent period as one may observe in the following verses:

أشمس نبدت أم تجلت أميمة فيالبني أسعى إلى خير مربع :

سقط عزة راح الهوى كل عاشق غدا من حميا الحب هيeman لا يعي :

اذا ما بدت ليلى تحر ذيولها بوارى النقى ييدو شدا ذو شفوع :

أبدر بدا أم وجه ليلى اضاء لنا فامست ليالي الكون ذات تشفع :

"Is it the sun manifesting itself or is it 'Umaymah appearing?

Oh how I wish to set off to the best spot on earth!

^cAzza has offered the wine of love to every lover, who has

fallen, unconscious because of the passion of his love.

Whenever Laylā appears, dragging the tails (of her long dress)

at the Nuqā valley, a sweet smell of penetrating **fragrant**
appears with her.

Is it the full moon or Layla's face that has so illuminated our area, that the nights of our world became shining bright?"⁵⁹

(c) The Prophetic Noble Characters:

The bulk of this poem has been devoted to the virtues of the Prophet, his miracles and his importance to mankind in particular and the whole universe in general. The poetical extract below is an attempt by the poet to personify the Prophet's virtues:

هيا عاشقا خير الأنام محمدًا	*	هلموا الى مدحى لعلية واسمع
هو النعمة الكبرى هو الرعمة التي	*	تجلى بها الرحمن للخلق أجمع
هو المحتبى عم البرايا نوالله	*	ولجأنا فى كل هول ومفزع
هو الذهب الابريز اكسير قلبا	*	هو المرحم الشافى لكل تفجع
هو الضيف المهاوى هو اللبى للهدى	*	ومهلك أقوام طغات ورضا
هو الهاشمى المصطفى الطاهر الذى	*	شريعتم سمحاء ذات توسيع
محمد الهدى الى خير منهج	*	سراج الهدى ماح بنور مشعشع
عذمت الى مدحى لعلية رائصا	*	بذلك أن أحظى بنظر المشف

"Oh you the one loving him who is best among mankind - Muhammad

come and listen to my praise of his exalted characters.

He is the greatest blessing and he is the mercy which the

Merciful One has provided all his creation.

He is the chosen One, whose grace has extended to all mankind.

He is our refuge whenever horror and dismay hit.

He is the pure gold, the elixir of our hearts and curative balm

for every sickness.

He is the voracious lion, the carnivorous beast against all enemies.

He is the one bringing annihilation to all aggressive and
tyrant peoples.

He is the chosen Hashemite, the pure one whose divine law is
tolerant and spacious! He is Muhammad, the guide to the
ideal system of life, the lamp of guidance, and the eraser
(of darkness) by his shining light.

I am aiming at his praise all the time. But that I may obtain
a favourable glance of intercessor."⁶⁰

Zayla^{c.i} goes on to emphasize that the Prophet's praise and love
are religious obligations on every Muslim and that the Prophet has
many praiseworthy qualities which no panegyrist could fully cover:

بها امن الہی فھی افضل صبح + محبته فرض علی کل مسلم
وتوصلہ اعلا مقام ومرتاج + محبته تعلی الحب مبارکة

وأفهم معنى لفظه كل مبدع + وكل عقول الحلق عن فهم شأنه
 وفي فمه نور بدا بتسطيع + حكى لفظه في الحسن درا منظما
 بلاغته قد أدهشت كل مصقح + فصيح بلغ معجزا القول مبدع
 وأوصافه قد أدهشت كل عارف + مما بينوا منها بتفسير مقنوع

"His love (the Prophet) is an obligation upon every Muslim. So
 bless me, Oh Lord, with it for it is the best paved path.
 His love gives the lover great dignity and leads him to the
 highest position and place.

The intellects of mankind have fallen short of comprehending his
 essence. The meaning of his word has silenced all the
 talented innovators.

His words are like well-arranged pearls. From his mouth comes
 a ray of light, appearing brilliant.

, He is an eloquent, outstanding orator whose creative compositions
 are imimitable and whose eloquence has amazed all the excellent
 orators.

His praiseworthy qualities have astonished all those who know
 them and, therefore, they have not been able to give any
 convincing explanation to them."⁶¹

(d) Al-Zayla^ci's Doctrines

Zayla^ci has explained his own views on a number of Islamic controversial issues such as the Isrā', and Mi^crāj (the Prophet's miraculous journeys to Jerusalem and Heaven respectively), opposing those who believe that the whole thing was a dream, Our poet insists that the Prophet has physically ascended while he was fully awake to the heavens, and that he has seen there the Supreme Being visibly. Also his belief in the sufi doctrine, al-Haqīqah al-Muhammadiyya (which holds that the Prophet is the centre and raison d'etre for the creation of the whole universe) is expressed:

وأسري به رب السموات يقظة *

الى قاب قوسين البهی المشفع *

وقد خصه المولیٰ يقرب مرفع *

ولا كان ذکر للعذیب ولعلی *

وشهلان مع حیف حنین وینبع *

وچار بجود هاطل ذی تھمع *

ولادم مع موسی وعیسی وتبع *

"The Lord of heavens has made him ascend while fully awake to the glorious favoured place of only bows length (from the magnificentre corresponding Majestic Throne)

He has seen clearly with his own naked eyes the Supreme Being 'Allah. Surely, 'Allah has given him a special position of exalted nearness.

Were it not for you (the Prophet) neither the places of Thawr nor that of Qubā would have ever been mentioned, nor would ^cUdhayb and La^cla^c would ^{have} ever occurred Thawr, ^cAyr and ^cHira were proud of being the Prophet's land as well as Thahlān, Hunayn, Hayf and Yanba^c.

May God water to saturation these abodes and peaks. And may he pour over them enormous rains of continuous flow.

Were it not for Him (i.e. Prophet Muhammad), Abraham, Yunus, Adam, Moses, Jesus and the King of Yemen would ~~not~~ have been created."⁶²

(e) The Physical Description of the Prophet:

Zayla^cī goes on to describe the Prophet physically. He depicted him as a possessor of deep black eyes, beautifully arched eyebrows and bright face. He also pictured him as possessor of thick beard, wide chest and medium height. In fact Zayla^cī, in this approach of praise had imitated the well-established traditional system of Prophetic panegyric. Initially, Ḥassān 'ibn Thābit, the Companion of the Prophet who has been acclaimed as Šā'ir al-Rasūl (the Prophet's poet), had described the Prophet physically in the following verse:

وأجمل منك لم تلد النساء * واحسن منك لم ترقط عيني

"My eye never saw a better man than you, and women never gave birth to a more beautiful one than you."

It is also related that 'Umm Ma^cbad, an aged woman living between Mecca and Medina at the advent of Islam, described the Prophet physically when, accompanied by 'Abu-Bakr, he passed her tent in their secret journey to Medina.⁶³ 'Umm Ma^cbad's long physical description

and Hassan's poetry are considered the basic foundation of this type of the eulogy of the Prophet. Carrying this tradition on, Zayla^ci says:

وَبِيَنْتَ لَوْنَ شَرْبَ الْحَمْرَةِ اسْمَعْ	* وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مَسْرِيُونَ قَاسِمَةً
وَوَاسِعَ فَمَ صَدْرَهُ ذُو تَوْسِعٍ	* لَهُ هَامَةٌ عَظِيمٌ كَذَاكَتْ لَهِيَةً
أَزَالَ الصَّدَا بِنُورِهِ الْمُتَلْمِعَ	* وَكَانَ مَلِيعُ الْوَجْهِ صَلَتْ جَبِينَهُ
غَيَاثُ الْوَرَى مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ صَفَرَعَ	* أَزَجَ وَأَقْنَى أَكْحَلَ الْطَّرْفِ أَصْدَقَ

"The Messenger of 'Allah was of a medium stature and of a white complexion, mixed with red, so hearken!

He possessed a big head, a thick beard, a wide mouth and a chest of great broadness.

He was with a fine face while his forehead was smooth and shining. He could remove any rust by his dazzling light.

He was with nicely curved eyebrows and black eyes as if antimony was applied to them. He was the most truthful, the one to rescue the world from any frightening calamity."⁶⁴

(f) The Conclusion:

Finally, Zayla^ci ends this long poem with the conventional conclusion of citing his name and the name of his poem and with prayers for blessings, and peace upon the Prophet, His family and the Companions:

غلامك هذا الزيلعى مؤمل : نوالك يا خير البرية أجمع
 حمان مقالى قد توقف ها هنا : وما نلت فى مدحى له قيد وأصعب
 مهيبة الافراج نسمى قضيتها : وفت مسأة أبياتها فافهمن وع
 بایما النبي في نظمها لى نظرها : برؤيا حكاها بعض الاخوان فاسمع
 اذا ما بها شد الحداة تمايلوا : يوجد الى نحو الحبيب مزعزع
 عليه صلاة الله ما لا ح بارق : وباتت عيون المزن تبكي بأدمى
 وال وصحاب أهلى مجد ورفقة : ألا يا رسول الله كن دائما معنى
 "Your servant, this al-Zayla^c is hopeful to obtain your
 generosity, Oh you the best of mankind entirely.

The horse-power of my composition has come to a halt here, while I have not been able to panegyrize him even to the measure of one finger.

My poem which is called *Muhayyijat al-'Afrāh* (the one exciting joy), has its verses completed one hundred. So please try to understand and comprehend.

NUVEL
It was on the instruction of the Prophet to me to compose that
I have composed it, according to a dream narrated by some
friends. So please listen.

If with it the caravan leaders start singing, they would shake
with affection to the beloved one.

The blessings of 'Allah be upon him as long as the lightning
flashes and the clouds pour down the tears of their eyes
throughout.

Likewise upon his family and companions who are the people of glory and dignity! Oh the Messenger of 'Allah be with me always."⁶⁵

(ii) The Eulogy of al-Jilānī

Zayla^cī composed, on the praise of al-Jilānī, two poems entitled: Rūh al-Āshiqīn (The Spirit of the Lovers) and Sirāj al-Uqūl (The Light of the Intellects). Both are concentrated on the narration of the numerous miracles ascribed to al-Jilānī; whether or not these could be authenticated is not for us to decide here. Besides these doubtful miracles, Zayla^cī attributes to al-Jilānī the general virtues and of right guidance, piety, devotion, generosity, leadership, nobility

Although there is nothing new in these poems, in terms of concepts, his manner of presentation reflects a high degree of poetical talent on the part of our poet. Yet, one feels that Zayla^cī panegyrized the Prophet more sincerely, but praised al-Jilānī only to fulfil the social and religious obligations towards the founder of Qadiriyyah Order in which Zayla^cī was an eminent leader.

Furthermore, in spite of the fact that the two poems are composed on different poetical metres, there are so many obvious similarities in their contents, that one of them could suffice to reflect the nature of Zayla^cī's praise of al-Jilānī. Here is Rūh al-Āshiqīn (the soul of lovers) which, being difficult to divide, is presented as a whole:

لنا قطب علاء أوج الصالى
امام الکل في طرق الوضال
لسان الحال أغنی عن مقال
عظيم الشأن مخطوط الصالى

... /

لله في الـسبـاحـاتـ حـسـامـ
لـهـ التـصـرـيفـ وـالـتـمـكـينـ حـقاـ
وـمـغـنـاطـيسـ أـهـلـ الصـدـقـ حـقاـ
وـيـعـسـوبـ لـأـرـبـابـ الـقـلـوبـ
مـتـاهـلـةـ صـفـتـ لـلـوارـدـ يـمـنـ
فـكـ اـهـدـىـ الـورـىـ مـنـ كـلـ غـيـرـ
اـذـاـ تـلـيـتـ مـنـاقـبـهـ بـأـرـمـهـ
وـتـنـشـرـحـ الصـدـورـ وـتـسـتـرـيـعـ
وـمـاـ عـنـدـىـ سـوـبـهـ زـادـ
وـلـوـ أـنـىـ لـرـوـضـتـهـ سـهـيـتـ
هـوـ الجـيلـيـ ذـوـ الفـخـرـ الجـلـيـ
شـأـبـ الرـضـىـ تـهـمـىـ عـلـيـهـ
اـذـاـ مـاـ رـمـتـ وـصـلـاـ لـلـمـحـالـىـ
يـفـقـ الـطـرـقـ طـرـاـ فـيـ صـفـاـ
وـسـبـدـؤـهـ اـنـتـهـىـ لـلـغـيـرـ فـاصـخـ
وـجـدـ السـيـرـ فـيـ مـسـتـصـراـ
وـغـصـ فـيـ قـعـ أـبـحـرـ دـوـاماـ
وـكـنـ ثـبـتاـ بـسـيـرـكـ يـاـ خـلـيـلـ
وـكـعبـةـ حـجـكـ اـجـعـلـهـ دـوـاماـ
كـفـانـاـ شـيـخـنـاـ الجـيلـيـ فـخـراـ
اـذـاـ مـاـ خـفتـ مـنـ كـرـبـ شـدارـ
تـرـىـ نـفـحـاتـهـ تـأـتـىـ بـسـرـعـةـ
اـلـاـ هـيـمـواـ بـخـمـرـ الـحـبـ فـيـهـ
فـانـ فـاقـ الـأـنـامـ وـكـانـ مـنـهـ
فـعـطـفـاـ مـنـكـ يـاـ زـيـنـ الـمـحـافـلـ
اـلـهـ اـرـحـمـ عـبـيـداـ زـيـلـعـيـاـ
وـأـيـدـهـ بـرـوحـ مـنـكـ وـاسـقـةـ
كـذـاـ الـأـصـحـابـ وـالـأـحـبـابـ طـ
صـلاـةـ اللـهـ عـلـىـ زـيـنـ الـقـيـامـ

"We are proud of having a dignified pivot, occupying the highest

religious position, and leading all the people to the right way.

He is of great importance and high-ranking. His real position is enough for him, and therefore he is in no need of any more praise.

He has been loved by all the people and respected especially by the eminent ones of them.

You have an excellent ability in the management of affairs, as you were born as a noble origin, Oh my master.

He is the magnetic centre for all the believers definitely and their elixir of life in all the cases.

He is the chief of all mystics and their spiritual balm.

Therefore stop your argument.

His spiritual springs are always opened for all the seekers of guidance, therefore his spiritual cold water has been given to numerous sufis.

Countless people have been guided by him as he promoted many of them into the highest religious position.

Whenever his praise is recited in a land a breath of fragrance diffuses over this area.

The hearts are pleased and rejoiced whenever his virtues are recited accompanied by heavy music.

I have no provision, but his love. What a perfect provision is mine for the better future!

I would like to set off to his tomb on my feet and not by riding camels, so that I may be rewarded more.

He is from Jīlān District, surely a dignified saint, a pillar
of Islam and a leader of Godly men.

Downpour of blessing may shower upon him, through the intercession
of his grandfather, the soul of the perfection

If you want to reach the highest religious position then you have
to adhere to his approach continuously.

His order is super to all other orders and sects by the unanimity
of the elite and laymen.

The beginning of his religious position is where the others end,
therefore listen to what the reliable source has reported.

Adhere to his sect sincerely, in order to obtain closeness to the
master of all the masters.

Plunge into the deep part of his sea, then surely you will find
precious materials like pearls.

Be steady in your adherence to his sect and don't listen to the
sayings of devil people, Oh my intimate friend.

Make the visiting of his tomb always as important as Pilgrimage
without any hesitation.

Our Shaykh is enough for us in terms of pride, as his sword is
enough for us during war.

If you are afraid of hard calamities, then stress his name and
say: Oh dignified Shaykh.

Surely you will find that his help will reach you quickly and
that will save you from calamity.

Oh people allow yourselves to be enchanted with the wine of
his love for our aims can be achieved only at his wineshop!
If he surpass all mankind while he is one of them, it should
not surprise anybody since Musk is surely a part of the deer's
blood.

Be kind to us Oh the ornament of the gatherings and the medicine
of the incurable sickness.

Oh my God shower your mercy upon Zayla^ci through the intercession
of this pivot.

And support him by guiding him to the right path and giving him
the water of connection, Oh my Lord, the possessor of the glory.

Likewise upon all the intimate friends and the beloved colleagues.

Grant favour to all of them, Oh my Lord.

Blessing of 'Allah be upon the ornament of the Day of Resurrection,
Muhammad, the one designated with perfection."⁶⁶

3. Appeal for Aid:

Al-Zayla^ci composed on this theme, as far as we know, a short
ta'^ciyyah poem consisting of only ten verses. It is the shortest one
among al-Zayla^ci's seven poems. Apparently, he wrote this poem to
urge the wealthy people to provide for the member of Hirta 'Ula Madaw
with their needs specially the coffee, which al-Zayla^ci himself was
immensely fond of. The content of this short poem is so weak that

it may have been attributed wrongly to our poet. Indeed al-Qutbi has admitted that the addition of more lines without further specification.

Here is an extract from this short poem:

فجد يا رحيم العالمين بجنة	:	ومن حارتنا في كل يوم بقهوة
لباسا وألبانا وشاما كحلوة	:	كذا كل من حارتنا بمحبته
كتحل ودهن ورقة وكعنة	:	كبن وسكر طي THEM وكعونه
بولد وخيرات وصرف البليمة	:	كذا صاحب الاكرام والمعز جده
وبالأنبياء والأولياء الأعزـة	:	بحاه الإمام الهاشمي له والله

"Whoever provides us daily with coffee, may the Merciful One to the whole world, grant him the Heaven

Likewise everyone who donates to us amicably clothes, milk, tea and sweet.

As well as coffee beans, sugar, fragrance, scent, honey, grease, money and wheat.

May God grant more issues and pleasures to those who generously and friendly donates to us, and may He keep them from all calamities.

Through the intercession of Hashimite leaders and his family as well as all the Prophets and beloved saints."⁶⁷

(d) The Form of Zayla^ci's Poetry

Zayla^ci employed in his poetical works the most popular metres in classical Arabic poetry such as Tawīl, Kamil, Wāfir and Rajaz.⁶⁸ It seems that he paid a great deal of attention to maintain the peculiar restrictions of the metre and rhyme. Hence one finds that most of his poetic output are well-balanced and rhymed according to the main rules of this art. He however resorted to the use of *in some of his* poetic licences^r verses. An example of this is his changing the name of Kawnayn into Yūsuf al-'Akwan in order to maintain his rhyme.⁶⁹ Similarly, he has dropped the vowel in walad making it wald.⁷⁰

Quite frequently, we find in al-Zayla^ci's poems some words or phrases which are used merely to balance the metre or preserve the rhyme. Note the repetition of wa^ci and 'Isma^ci in (2)(i) above. Zayla^ci also resorts frequently to the use of zihāfs and cilal (acceptable irregularities in a metrical foot). For instance, Zihāf al-^cAsab (changing the fifth vowel into consonant) occurs repeatedly in the verses of Hādiyyah al-^cArwāh; Zihāf al-Idmār (changing the second vowel into consonant) in the verses of his poem Siraj al-^cUqūl, and Zihāf al-Qabd (omitting the fifth consonant) in the verses of Muhayyah al-'Afrāh.

However, since all these Zihafs are permissible, they do not represent any serious deficiency in Zaila^ci's poetry. The majority of Zayla^ci's poems are mono-rhymed. His only multi-rhymed poems are

Jawharat al-Wasilah and Kanz al-Haqā'iq, which are both written on the Rajaz metre where each verse contains two hemistiches rhyming with one another. Al-Zayla^c has apparently been inclined to al-Qafiyah al-Mutlaqah (the Loose Rhyme); the overwhelming majority of his poems are written on this rhyme. It is only in a few verses scattered through his multi-rhymed poems that al-Zayla^c composed on Qafiyah Muqayyadah (fettered Rhyme).

It seems that our poet had not applied the post-classical metres such as al-Takhmis and al-Tarbi^c although these forms were very common in his days and were used intensively by his colleagues and disciples.

Al-Zayla^c's vocabularies and constructions are generally grammatically sound, clear and carefully chosen. This is no doubt due to the fact that our poet was competent in Arabic. As stated earlier, he wrote a number of books on Morphology and on the phonetics of Qur'anic recital. This enabled him to develop a high degree of discriminating ability in the selection of the most suitable words for his expressions. This can be noted in most of his poems; the only exception is his Ta'iyyah as mentioned previously,

There are also a few other cases where Zayla^c applies ambiguous and poor structures. An example of such weak expression is the following sentence: نَفْسٌ لَنَا عَنْ كُرْبَةِ الْقَبْرِ بِمَهْمَهٍ . This is grammatically wrong owing to the fact that the verb Naffis

is a transitive verb and to make it grammatically sound the

expression should be rearranged as follows:

نفس كربة القبر عنا بهم .

As for the rhetoric, this poet employs a great deal of rhetorical types, especially Tashbih Baligh, where one finds six expressions of it in two lines of Muhayyijah al-'Afrāh poem (12, 13); Tasbīh Dimni as in line 26 of Rūh al-Āshiqīn.

He must have been influenced by the great Arab poet al-Mutanabbi (d. 965 A.D.) from whom he copies this expression. Al-Zayla'i at times quotes his lines and inserted them in his poems. He also makes use of the stylistic ornament.

Finally our poet shows a high degree of artistic ability in his poetry. He must have made great efforts to successfully refine and polish his poetical diction and to decorate his style with a variety of rhetorical embellishments. At times he goes to excess in this artificial ornaments to the detriment of the contents of his composition.

SECTION II

HAJJ SUFIA - His Life History and His Scholarship

He is ^cAbd al-Rahmān 'ibn ^cAbdullah 'ibn ^cAbd al-Rahmān the Qutb (Pivot) of the Somali Coast and one of the most prominent religious scholars in Somalia.¹ Born in Mogadishu in 1245/1829 to an important family, he developed to become an intelligent and devoted scholar² whose contributions to the development of Arabic and Islamic culture in Somalia are still highly appreciated by the educational circles in the country. As a recognition of his role in the educational field, a number of educational institutions, scattered throughout the country, are named after him.

Hajj Sufi became as well a renowned and a prolific poet in Arabic. It is said that he composed poems on all the sixteen Arabic metres and their varieties. His poetical anthology, entitled Dalīl al-^cIbād 'Ilā Sabīl al-Rashād, most probably contains the greater part of his poetic output.

His father, al-Shaykh ^cAbdullah, was an excellent religious scholar and teacher of Shāfi'i jurisprudence. Also his grandfather, al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahmān (d. 1257/1847), was a jurist too, and an intelligent scholar. It is reported that he surpassed all his colleagues at the age of fifteen.³ He was an outstanding Arabic

Calligrapher and scribe. The family possession preserves until today thirty volumes written by his hand, each representing one chapter of the holy Qur'ān.

Thus we can see that Hajj Sufi was brought up in the type of educational and intellectual environment which must have shaped him to become a true representative of this learned famous family. He attended the Qur'ānic school at his early age, where he memorized substantial portions of the Qur'ān. Thereafter he went to Hirta³ school where he began to learn the conventional courses of the traditional school curriculum in Somalia. There, he became a close associate of the eminent poet and revered scholar, al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahmān al-Zayla^cī. In fact, it was Hajj Sufi, as mentioned earlier, who acted as Zayla^cī's host in Mogdishu. Both of them attended the Hirta school which was run by the devoted scholar, al-Shaykh ⁹Abū-Bakr Mihdār. Apparently, Hajj Sufi attained most of his training and education from this sagacious scholar.⁴ There is no hint that he travelled outside of Mogadishu for any further education.

When Hajj Sufi graduated from this school around 1850s A.D. he was given the highest educational and religious title of al-Shaykh. Soon, Hajj Sufi established his own Hirta school and began to teach the various curricula subjects on Arabic and Islam.

His circle seems to have attracted a considerable number of students because of his devotion and vast knowledge. Elaborating on Hajj Sufi's position as a devoted scholar, his disciple, Qásim al-Baráwí said: "He was a jurist, an ascetic, a pious scholar, knowledgeable in various types of arts and devoting most of his time to teaching. Many students attended his educational circle, majority of whom became, like him, scholars as well as ascetics. Among them are Shaykh Muḥammad 'ibn ʻUthmān al-Yaqūbī and Shaykh Hajj ʻAbdullah al-Qutbī, the editor of the Qulunqūl collections".⁵ Some of his admirers claimed that there was no recognized scholar in Somalia who did not benefit from Hajj Sufi's vast scholarship directly or indirectly. That claim may not be an exaggeration since Somalis until today bow their heads as a sign of honour, respect and appreciation whenever his name is mentioned.⁶

As for the branches of knowledge he mastered, Hajj Sufi himself enumerated them in the following verses:

وعلمني الہی من عل	و من النّحو المجلّ و من عروض	و من صرف و قافية و فقة
و من قرین	و تجوید و غيره من ق	و من علم الطریقة والأصول
و بیت الجسم خال عن عروض	و بیت	و

"My God taught me various sciences of the glorious grammar and of prosody.

And of morphology, rhyme, of jurisprudence as well as tajwid (the science of Qur'anic recital) and the art of composing.

And of sufism and theology. Yet my house is devoid of valuable property."⁷

It seems that Hajj Sufi did not live in great affluence. It is said that he had contacted al-Shaykh 'Uways al-Bārāwī for the sake of essential requirements for his children.⁸ So it may not be just for the sake of contrasting his vast knowledge and little means that the poet is alluding that his house is devoid of property in line three of the above extract. He was, however, known to be content, satisfied with the little he possessed and quite proud of being a good scholar. There is no trace that he communicated with any ruler of his period for the sake of material gains, unlike his contemporary and close friend 'Uways al-Barāwī, who was accustomed to visit al-Sayyid Barghash and 'Ali al-Thuwaini, then the rulers of Zanzibar and southern Somalia respectively, seeking their gifts. Hajj Sufi used to look down upon those scholars who run after the rulers for material gains. This verse expresses his view:

أعوذ بالله من جری الجبابرة + للجهال العائر الجرى * كالحجر

"I seek refuge with 'Allah from the attitude of great scholars who seek the favour of the ignorant, oppressor and cruel ruler with a heart like stone."⁹

Besides his educational profession, Hajj Sufi was known for his zealous involvement in social service and Islamic missionary activities. He endeavoured to preach the pure teachings of Islam

and to eliminate a number of social ills which were prevailing in Mogadishu during his time such as the gambling game called Minias or *Hijko* which used to be held between two social clubs, calanbulg and Shabelle. Each of these clubs had in its enrolment a good number of the wealthy men including rulers, princes and other elites in the city. Businessmen especially in the shipping industry were patronizing either of the two clubs until almost all the important people of Mogadishu engaged in this obnoxious gambling game. The religious scholars worked hard against it, yet without much success. The continuation of the game annoyed the religious scholars to the extent that some of them went out of Mogadishu on self-exile. Shaykh ⁹Abū-Bakr, the teacher of Hajj Sufi was among those scholars who migrated from Mogadishu for this reason. Hajj Sufi remained in Mogadishu resisting the game. At that time, he composed a number of poems in which he attacked uncompromisingly the game and its players and bitterly criticized the religious scholars who preferred to migrate rather than fight against this game.¹⁰ So he remained all his life in Mogadishu until he finally died in 1323/1905 at the age of 78 years.¹¹ Immediately after his death, he was honoured by building a high dome on his tomb to which was attached a *zāwiyah* (a small mosque-school) where conventional education continued to be conducted until recent times.

B - The Content of His Poetry

Although Hajj Sufi was listed among the Somali competent prose writers, no significant prose writings by him are available to us. The only prose work of Hajj Sufi, that we know about, is a short recital of less than two pages, which is said to have been his special prayers. Hence, the bulk of Hajj Sufi's literary output is in verse. While the imagery, concept and meaning of his poetry are simple and conventional, our poet displays his ability to present his simple concepts in clear, sound and well-structured poetical form. This poetry covers a variety of themes which are predominantly religious. These themes could be classified into the following:

1. Panegyric Theme:

This is the main theme which dominates the poetic heritage of this poet. In fact more than half of his poetic anthology is devoted to the panegyric theme praising the Prophet, Jīlānī and some other individuals. We will now review selections of his three types of panegyric poems:

First Praising the Prophet

The eulogy of the Prophet Muhammad represents the greater part of Hajj Sufi's panegyrics. Al-Qutbī, Qāsim al-Barāwī and ^cAbd al-Rahmān al-^cAli have stated that our poet has panegyritized the Prophet.

in sufficient poems as to cover all the sixteen Arabic metres. This is quite possible, since Hajj Sufi was the most prolific Somali Arabic poet. Besides, this type of panegyric flourished in Somalia due, as we have explained in Section III, to political and social as well as religious reasons, during the nineteenth century.

However, Hajj Sufi has ascribed to the Prophet, the praiseworthy qualities that are employed traditionally by Arab panegyrists particularly the authors of the popular religious eulogies such as Būsīrī. He also attributes to him the stories, miracles and events that are narrated by the writers of the biography of the Prophet, especially the Mawālid authors. But our poet was relatively moderate and less exaggerating than his two contemporaries, al-Zaylā'ī and 'Uways al-Barāwī. His poetical anthology contains fifteen poems devoted to the praise of the Prophet. These poems, which are the longest and most impressive amongst Hajj Sufi's poems, are very much similar in their poetic content. Hence his poem, Mirqat al-Wusul, which we are choosing for special analysis, seems to be a good representative of his prophetic eulogies. This poem can be divided into the following sections:

(a) The Introduction:

The author introduces the poem with a series of vocative calls on the Prophet, describing him as the beloved one of God, the

best one among mankind and the one most supreme. He goes on to assert that whoever praised him would be promoted to the highest religious and social position, no matter how lowly he used to be. Giving himself as an example, the poet discloses that before his eulogy of the Prophet he was very obscure and inferior to all his colleagues. Here is the first part of the poem:

يا حبيب الله يا خير الورى	÷	يارفيع القدر اسمى من سرى
فيك قد عز وضيع القدر يا	÷	سيد السادات يا ذخر الورى
واعتلاد زرورة مجد وارتـقى	÷	مرتقى من كان ذا رشد درى
واكتسى في ظاهر ثوب العلاـ	÷	مثل وال وأمير أمـرا
صرت حقـاً بعد كوني خاماـ	÷	ووضـعا عالـيا مشـتاـهـرا
مستـحـبا مـؤـلـفا محـترـما	÷	مـكرـما مـولـى منـيفـا وـقـرا
ليس لـى ما يـقتـضـى ذـاك ولا	÷	كـتـ عبدـا عـابـدا قـد شـمـرا
غـيرـ أـنـي اـصـطـفـيتـ المـصـطـفـى	÷	سـارـحا صـمـعـذا صـدـخـرا

"Oh the beloved one of 'Allah, the best one of all the people,
the exalted and the most honourable among those who walked
about.

Because of you many a lowly person has become powerful,
Oh you the leader of the masters and the treasure of mankind
And has ascended to the top of glory and climbed up to the

position of those who are mindful and realizing

And he becomes dressed up appearing in the garment of the
high class like rulers or an authorized prince.

I have definitely become after obscurity and modesty a man
of high rank and fame.

Amicable, congenial, respectable, an exalted master, with a
rising dignified stature.

Although I do not possess any qualifications to that position,
nor am I a devoted pious worshipper to earn it.

All I have done is choosing the Prophet's praise, finding this
enjoyable and investing it."

(b) About Drought:

It seems that Hajj Sufi composed this poem during a terrible drought. Hence a considerable section of it is devoted to a description of the horrors of it and a sincere supplication to God through the Prophet to bring it to an end. The poet ascribed this unfortunate situation to the acts of the ignorant members of the society who are disobeying their Lord and yet seeking his mercy. He suggests that the only way out of this alarming situation is to seek the intercession of the Prophet to God, and set up collective prayers in all the villages:

يارسول الله ان الخلق قدر احمدوا جوعا وقاموا سري

بِمَعْاصِيْنَ قَدْ جَنَاهَا الْجَهَنَّمُ	لَا	وَذَنْبٌ مِنْهُمْ قَدْ صَدَرَا
رَانَ مِنْهَا الْقَلْبُ مَنًا قَاسِيَا	بِـ	كَالْأَصْمَمِ الصَّلْدُ مِنْ صَفَوْا سَرَا
وَبِـ يَدِ عَوْنَ رِبَا أَغْضَبَـ وَا	بِـ	وَعَصَاهُ جَلْهُمْ مُسْتَشْعِرَا
لِيَتَهْمِمُ لِلَّهِ تَسَابِبُوا ثَدَمَا	بِـ	فَهُوَ الْفَقَارُ يَعْفُوْ مِنْ عَرَا
حَبَّسَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَطَرَهُ	بِـ	مِنْ سَمَاعِ عَلِيْنَ يَسْتَفِرَا
فَاقَامُوا فَوَسِطَادُوا عَنْ تَسِيدَا	بِـ	مَا أَنْشَنُوا مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ وَالْأَسْتَرا
حَارَ أُولُو الْفَقْلِ مِنْهُمْ وَالنَّسَرِ	بِـ	فِيهِ كَالْهَائِمِ حِيرَانَ سَرِي
أَوْ كَسْكَرَانَ الدَّى لَا يَهْتَدِي	بِـ	لِسْبِيلِ الرَّشَدِ أَضْحَى مَصْعَرَا
لِيَسْ غَيْرِ الْالْتِجَاعِ مِنْكَ لَنْسَا	بِـ	وَابْتَهَالَ وَدَعَاءَ فِي الْقَرَى
قَمْ وَيَادَرَ وَادِعَ مُولَانَا بَأْنَ	بِـ	يَكْشَفُ الْكَرْبَ وَأَنْ لَوْ يَغْفِرَا

"Oh the messenger of Allah, people have been terribly affected by starvation and famine, which are widely spread.

Because of the sins committed by the ignorant ones, and misdeeds
carried out by them.

The hearts became hard because of it (sinning), just like a huge stone extracted from a hard and barren rock.

By this heart they supplicate to the Lord, whom most of them
displease and disobey with their full awareness.

I wish they would repent to 'Allah sincerely, for He is the forgiving one, ever ready to forgive sinners.

'Allah has prevented His showers from them, and kept it in His
Heavens, for this may remind them to seek forgiveness.

But they continue on, and adamantly procrastinate, never
abstaining from their straying and quarrel.

The intellectual and wise people among them are so confused that
they have become like aimlessly wandering people, at night.

Or as the intoxicated person, who does not know the right path,
for he has already lost balance.

No hope is left for us, except to take refuge in You and to
persistently supplicate and pray, in all the villages
Do please, rise, take a quick action and pray our Lord to clear
the distress, and to forgive me!"¹³

(e) The Conclusion:

The poet ends his poem with the conventional conclusion of
most Somali Arabic poems, namely, by supplicating God through the
intercession of the Prophet to forgive him and grant him and his
associates their requests:

ما حنينا من ذنب يا جترا	وادع مولانا لنا أن يغفروا
بك فضلا ومنا من حضرنا	وبأن يعطينا مسئولتنا
ويخص الناظم المفترقا	من محب واح والمنتسب
حي أو مات مثابا مسوجرا	عبد الرحمن بمحفو رائيم
وين أرض لنا والفقرا	ويا صل ش فرع مؤمن
ما دجا ليل وما ساد سرى	فعليك الله طلى دائمـا

"And pray our Lord to forgive the misdeeds we have committed boldly,
And to grant us and all those present our requests as a favour
from Him, through your intercession.

Those amongst whom is a well-wisher, a brother and a relative
especially favouring the poor versifier,

Who is ^cAbd al-Rahmān, with continuous forgiveness and a signifi-
cant reward, be he alive or dead.

This is his believing ancestors, and decedents, as well as for
those friends who asked us and for all the poor ones.

May the blessings of 'Allah be upon you continuously, as long
as the night darkens and the night-travels obtains."¹⁴

Second - The Eulogy of 'Al-Jīlānī:

As far as we know, there is only one poem written by Hajj Sufi entitled ^cAlam al-Qādiriyah (The Flag of the Qadiri Sect) eulogizing Jīlānī. This poem, which is popular in Somalia, is usually recited at the beginning of the popular sufi traditional religious ceremonies called Hadro or Dhikr. School pupils learn this poem by heart at their early school age in order to recite it at Hadro performance. The poetic merit of this ode is high, it is smooth, elegant and appropriate for singing. ^cAbdullah al-Quṭbī, a disciple of this poet, described this ode as one of the most effective panegyric poems on al-Jīlānī.¹⁵ This poem could be divided into the following sections:

(a) The Praiseworthy Qualities of Al-Jilānī

This portion of the poem is devoted to enumerating the virtues of al-Jilānī as follows:

شُيُّلَّهُ يَا عَبْدَ قَادِرَ	وَ مَحْيَى الدِّينِ فِي الْقَلْبِ حَاضِرٌ
شُيُّلَّهُ لِلَّهِ يَا عَبْدَ قَادِرَ	الْمَدُورُ يَا عَبْدَ قَادِرَ
أَنْتَ شَمْسُ الْأَطْقَيَا	أَنْتَ بَدرُ الْأُولَى
أَنْتَ سَرُّ الْأَصْفَيَا	أَنْتَ نَبْرَاسُ الدِّيَابَارَ
أَنْتَ شَيْخُ الْمَرْشِدِينَ	وَصَرِّيْبُ السَّالِكِينَ
وَمَفِيدُ النَّاسِكِينَ	وَمَنْيَلُ كُلِّ تَاجِرَ
أَنْتَ قَطْبُ الْكَائِنِينَ	أَنْتَ فَرَرُ الدَّاخِفِينَ
أَنْتَ غُوثُ الثَّقَلِينَ	كَنْ لَنَا يَا عَبْدَ قَادِرَ

"We exclaim at the greatness conferred on you by Allah, Oh you ^cAbd al-Qadir, the reviver of the religion, who is ever present in our hearts

We exclaim at the greatness conferred on you by Allah! hasten with support to us, Oh you ^cAbd al-Qadir!

You are the sun of the pious ones and the full moon of the Saints.

You are the innermost of the chosen ones and the lamp brightening our darkness.

You are the master of the preachers and the educator of those en-route(to sufism).

You are the one giving beneficial information to the ascetic worshippers and helping learner of the Order achieving their aim.

You are the pivot of the two worlds and the unique one both in the East and in the West.

You are the salvation of both humans and Jinnis , so please support us, Oh you "Abd al-Qādir."¹⁶

(b) The Importance of the Qadiri Sect:

The poet now turns to discuss the significance of the Qadiri Sect. As an eminent member of this Order, Hajj Sufi has one immense praise for it, and regarding it as the best sufi order. He refers to the numerous miracles attributed to Jīlānī, and congratulates those who joined his Brotherhood:

فاز من حـاز الحـقـيـقة	÷	واقتـاـكم فـي الـطـرـيقـة
قـارـرـيـة وـشـيقـة	÷	نـسـبـة لـعـبـد قـارـر
كـم خـوارـق ظـهـيرـة	÷	وـكـرـامـات شـمـبـيرـة
وـصـارـف غـزـيزـة	÷	مـنـك يا شـبـل الـحـيـارـار
طـبـت نـفـسـا اـذ دـخـلـنا	÷	سـلـكـم ثـم اـنتـظـمـنا
فـيـه مـعـك وـانـفـصـنـا	÷	فـيـه هـدـاكـم غـيـر غـارـار
...../		

"Success is for those who obtained the truth and followed you in your Order.

It is the reliable al-Qādiriyyah Order which is attributed to ^cAbd al-Qādir (its founder)

Many clear supernatural events and famous miracles As well as immense knowledge are derived from, Oh you, the cub of lions.

I felt happy when I joined your Order and became a regular member of it.

In it we unite with you in your rightly directed guidance without any deceit."¹⁷

(c) The Conclusion

Hajj Sufi concludes his poem with his view on the controversial historical issue of the origin of Jīlānī. He claims that al-Jīlānī was an offspring of Prophet Muhammad. He even compares the position of al-Jīlānī among saints to the position of Muhammad among prophets, implying that Jīlānī is the greatest saint:

أحمد حامي الرعایا	:	جَدْكُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرَّا
مثله في الأنبياء	:	فَضْلُكُمْ فِي الْأُولَى
من يساوى في مآثر؟	:	دَانِي فِي عَلَاءٍ؟
وبكم ترفع البلايا	:	فَبِكُمْ تَحْسِي الْخَطَا
وبكم تزكي البارادار	:	وَبِكُمْ صَرْفُ الرِّزَا
صلوات تعنتيك	:	فَعَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْكَ
	...	م

ما همی مزن مساطر :

وسلام پخت وید

"Your grandfather is the best one amongst mankind. He is 'Ahmad, the protector of the massive communities.

Your position among the saints is exactly like his position among the prophets.

Who then could compete with him in his height, or equal him in his heritage?

Through you, our sins are wiped off, and our calamities are eradicated

Through you misfortunes are undone and through you harvests increase tremendously

May the blessings of Allah be especially upon Him and upon you, And may peace envelope both of you as long as heavy clouds pour down their rains."¹⁸

Thirdly - Other Panegyrics:

Our poet wrote two poems in praise of his teacher, al-Shaykh ⁹Abū-Bakr Mihdar, and his grandfather al-Shaykh ^cAbd al-Rahmān al-Sufi. One can easily see that his poem on his grandfather is much more forceful and sincere than that on his teacher. Hence, it would suffice here to review the former which could be divided as follows:

(a) The Introduction:

This poem commences with three introductory verses indicating, after praising Allah, the aim of its composition, and its metre:

فهـا بـعـيدـ الـحـمـدـ لـلـهـ قـطـعـةـ
جـوـهـرـةـ فـي وـصـفـ جـدـيـ مـحـرـراـ

لـصـفـوتـهـ سـرـاـ بـصـوـفـيـ وـظـاـهـراـ
قـدـ اـشـتـهـرـ اـسـمـاـ عـبـدـ الرـحـمـنـ لـقـبـاـ

أـغـوـصـ مـرـيدـاـ مـنـ طـوـيلـ جـواـهـراـ
فـهـذـاـ أـوـانـ الـخـوـضـ فـي بـحـرـ نـفـتـهـ

"After thanking 'Allah, here is a piece of precious poetic composition written on the description of my grandfather. Surely, he was well-known by his name ^cAbd al-Rahmān, as well as by his nickname Sufi (the pure), because of his purity, openly and secretly.

For this is the time to delve into the sea of his qualities, where I dive seeking jewels, on the Tawil Metre."¹⁹

(b) The Body of the Poem:

The poet ascribes to his object of praise, in a conventional style and imagery, the praiseworthy qualities that are commonly used by traditional Arab eulogists. The praised one is an outstanding, devoted and well-known scholar. He is also a generous, tolerant and sincere leader. His clan attained through him a great fame throughout the country:

فـي صـفـرـ فـاقـ الـأـمـاثـلـ وـارـتـقـىـ
إـلـىـ رـتـبـةـ الـعـبـادـ وـالـسـوـءـ هـاجـرـ

وأوثى بعد خمسة عشر حكمة + بها استثار قلبه وتنورا
 علا صيته إذ ذاك شرقا ومغربا + واضحى الوري من النواحي مباررا
 اليه لحاجات همن المهاجس + فوّطن نفسا قاضيا متشمرا
 نحو نعوه السيدات من كل ناحية + مناهم منه جوده ليس ضامر
 وأحسي نفوسا كن للموت مشرفة + بفضل أتاه الله جل الذى برا
 معين لطهوف صفيث الملتجى + محب اليتامي والذراري مسيرا
 سخى سخوح مخبث متخلص + صبور شكور ناصح متخرجا
 به استهرت شاشية ومن انتهى + اليهم في أقصى المدائن والقرى
 وسادت على السيدات في كل معلم + وفاقت على الأشكال خلقا ومنظرا

"In his young age, he surpassed all the exemplaries, and was promoted to the status of ^cUbbād (devoted worshippers) for he then deserted all evils.

He was given, at the age of 15 years, a wisdom through which his heart was highly enlightened.

His high fame, even then, reached East and West and the people began to rush from various places,

They used to come to him seeking answers to problems which worried their thoughts. So he equipped himself as a zealous arbiter.

To him, the elites came from every direction, desiring from him his generosity which was never exhausted

He brought back to life the souls which were well-nigh
dying by the favour which Allah - may the Creator be
exalted - had provided him.
He is a supporter of any troubled, a helper to any refugee and
a passionate lover of orphans, and to all children he is
a pleaser.
He is a generous, tolerant, humble, devoted, patient, grateful
and an experienced adviser.

Through him, the Shashiyyah Clan and those related to them in
the farthest cities and villages have become famous.
They have masters of masters in every assembly. They have
surpassed, in their manners and appearance, all those who
are the likes of them."²⁰

(c) The Conclusion

The author concludes this ode with the traditional prayers
for God's forgiveness and favourable response to forgive and grant
his requests. He has, however, added to this some historical
information about the praised, giving the date of his death and
burial:

ففي مائتين بعد ألف وسبعين	+	وخمسين أرخوه فكن متذكرا
لليلة اثنين لشعبان ستة	+	وهشرون مقبرا هنيئا مؤقرا
فيا رب يارحمن نسألك الرضى	+	وعفوا عيمما يا متذكر
وفي جنة الطفوى اجعلن مستقره	+	وأنقذه من هول القيامة مؤجرا

مسى بلقب جده واعف واسترا

بفضلك يازا الطول جد بعذلك الـ

شرور البغاء الحاسدين أولى المرا

به اغفر لنا ما جنفناه واكفنا

لذهبتي به دنيا وأخرى موفرا

نصلى على المعمود في الأرض والسماء

"His death occurred in the year two hundred after one thousand
and fifty-seven. Thus they date it, so remember it!

He was buried on Monday the twenty-sixth of Sha^cban restful
and dignified

So, my Lord, the Merciful One, we seek your satisfaction, and
a comprehensive forgiveness, Oh you the One displaying
greatness.

Make his settlement in the refuge of Paradise and save him from
the trouble of the Day of Judgment, rewarding him (generously).

By your grace O the Powerful God, be generous to your little
worshipper, named after his grandfather. Forgive him and
cover him (with your protection).

Through his intercession, forgive for us the sins we have
committed and defend us against the evils of those who are
tyrannic envious and argumentative.

We offer our blessings to the praiseworthy one both in this
earth and in Heaven (i.e. Muhammad). So that we may be
lucky to enjoy the abundant reward of it in this world
and in the Hereafter."²¹

2 - Asceticism (Zuhd):

Although the bulk of Hajj Sufi's poetry is panegyric, particularly eulogizing the Prophet, a substantial proportion of his poetry, about ten poems, is devoted to asceticism (Zuhd). These poems generally warn the people not to be deceived by the attractions and pleasures of this world. They also urge them to fear God, to live the ascetic life and to invest good deeds which represent the only help in the Day of Judgement. He frequently blames the human soul for running after the limited pleasures of this life and not planning for the Hereafter. He clearly states that devotion to God and purification of the soul are the only ways through which one could attain the highest religious position. This view is explicitly given in his Daliyyah poem, which appears to be one of the best odes that Hajj Sufi wrote on asceticism. Hence, we have chosen to introduce an extract from it as an example of Hajj Sufi's ascetic poems:

صبرا وصبرا نفس سوو وارتاضي خ ما حل فياك ورأس رفع أخففني

—
—
—

سُوقَتْ تِوْرِيْتْ اَتَلَ الْوَعْدَ وَكَذَبَ

ورغبت رضوان الرؤوف وروحه

سُوّدَتْ صَبَحَ الْقَلْبُ ثُمَّ لَتَدْعِيَ

فَكُلْتُمَا الْمُنْهَاجَةَ فِي الْعَالَمِ

لندن، ایشان ایشان ایشان

هیئات ما تسامین و لمتحبی

يَةً وَالْتَّدْنِي مِنْ وَدودِ مُرْتَضى	+	أَبْذَا تَظْنِينَ النَّهْيِ نَالَوا النَّهَا
عَنْ غَيْرِ مَرْضِى الْرَّبِّ فَالْطَّرْفُ اغْضَبَنِى	+	لَا بَلْ بَطْوَعَ دَائِمٍ وَيَقْصُمُ
بِأَوْلَا اِقْتَدِى وَلَمَا تَحْبَبَنِى اِرْفَضَنِى	+	فَتَطَهَّرَ مِنْ رَانِ ذَنْبٍ مُبَعَّدٍ
مِنْ حَسَنَ مَا نَأْمَلَنِيهِ فَارْكَفَنِى	+	فَرِى الْمَحَابَ لِمَاعِبَ اِلْتَعَجَّرُ
غَسِّرَا وَنَجَّحا وَالْتَّيْسِرَ قَيْلَخَنِى	+	يَارَبُّ عَوْنَى عَنْ ذَهَ الأَمْسَارَةِ
يَشْكُو وَيَرْجُو فَكَ قِيدَ الْمَأْبَضِ	+	وَارِحَمْ عَبْدَكَ عَبْدَ رَحْمَنْ أَتَى
وَالْأُولِيَا يَدْعُوكَ رَبِّ فَارْتَضَ	+	مَتَوَسِّلاً بِالْمُرْسَلِينَ وَالْأَنْبِيَا

"Be patient, and be patient, Oh my wicked soul, and be satisfied with what happened to you and lower down your high head

You have delayed your repentance, because of the confidence you have in the promise and the generosity of God.

Therefore you have not rejected the evil passions.

You have wished the favour and mercy of the Merciful ('Allah) by pleasing the cursed devil, and by not holding to His firm ties!

You have turned the brightness of the heart dark and then you are still claiming the love of his genuinely beloved One (i.e. Muhammad)

You lie, Oh you foolish soul, when claiming this love.

How can you love while you are failing to purify your sin?

Far it is that which you hope for and you are getting farther from pleasing or reaching these conditions which are already close to you.

Do you think that those of intellect have reached the highest position and closeness to their satisfied Lord by this?!

Nay, it is by constant obedience and avoiding every thing that does not please the Lord. Therefore lower your eye.

So purify yourself from the rust of sin separating you from your Lord, and imitate those and reject that which you are inclined to.

Surely you will see marvelous, admirable and great result that you are wishing. So hasten to it.

Oh my Lord support me against this soul with evil urgings. Grant forgiveness, success and ample easing of our difficulties.

Forgive your worshipper, ^cAbd al-Rahmān who came to you complaining and hoping you to untie the shackles on his knee.

He supplicates to you, through the intercession of the Prophets and saints, praying to you, Oh Lord! So accept." ²²

3 - Social Criticism

A number of social ills and sinful manners of behaviour spread widely among the citizens of Mogadishu during Hajj Sufi's period. Apparently, the most dangerous one among these was Minias or Hiiko gambling game which, as we stated earlier, used to be contested between two social clubs, Calanbuuq and Shabelle. Religious scholars worked hard against this obnoxious game. Hajj Sufi was the head of those who devoted themselves to the elimination of Minias game in particular and all the forms of social ills in general. As a part of his efforts on this, he composed three relatively short poems; one on the criticism of his clan for not being strictly adherent of the noble characters of their ancestors; the second on the religious scholars for not discharging their religious obligations sincerely, and the third on the people of Mogadishu not abstaining from Minias game and other hateful acts to Islam. The last poem seems to us to be more significant than the others for its content and other poetical values. Hence it may represent the poetic features of this theme. In this poem, the author criticizes the people of Mogadishu bitterly for their disregard of the religious duties, moral characters and the essential profession, on which they mostly depend for their livelihood. He also attacks a number of unislamic customs such as gambling and smoking as well as the manners of dressing:

الهـي اهـد أهـل مـقـدـيشـو اـنـهـم أـبـوا + أـمـرـا بـها أـتـى الرـسـول مـحـمـّـدـ

كستر لمحورات الرجال وللنّسا
وَحْجَبَ لِهُنَّ مِنَ السَّوْءِ يَقْصَدُ
أَكَانَ آيَةُ الْحِجَابِ أَنْزَلَ رِسْنَا
سَمَاسَرَةٌ قَدْ أَهْمَلُوا الْحُرْفَ الَّتِي
بِأَهْوَاءِ قَوْمٍ قَدْ أَضْلَلُوا تَمْسَكُوا
بِمِسْلِكِ مُثِيَّسٍ وَسَامِرَةٍ رَضَوْا
وَشَارَوْا عَلَىٰ مَنْ قَامَ لِلَّهِ نَاهِيَا
وَوَاهَوْا بَذِي دِينِ الرَّسُولِ وَأَضْعَفُوا
وَانْ يَؤْتَ فِيهِمْ مَا يَوْافِقُ عَادَةَ
فَذَاكَ وَاللَا فَالْمُخَالِفُ فَنَّدَوا

"Oh God, guide the people of Mogadishu for they rejected the
instructions that Muhammad gave

Such as covering the private parts of the men and women; and
keeping women away from those who may have ~~evil~~ motivations
about them.

As if the Qur'anic verses on purdah were revealed to other nations (not to them). Surely they are rebelling in blindness and deafness.

Being brokers, they have neglected the profession that their livelihood depends on and therefore they spoiled the market.

They adhere to the evil passions of the people who strayed,
as they have imitated the straying ones of their ancestors.

They are pleased with the practice of Minias game and other obnoxious acts. Even they regarded it as if it is much better than the religion of our Prophet.

They revolt against those who stand up advising them for the sake of 'Allah. They even threaten and frighten them.

They have weakened, by doing so, the religion of the Prophet, they have brought the devil closer and kept the good people away.

If anything that agrees with their customs is performed they happily welcome it. But if it disagrees with it, they criticize."²³

D - The Form of His Poetry

Hajj Sufi appears to have had a prolonged training in and experience with Arabic versification that led in the end to polishing and refining his poetic talent. This, perhaps, enabled him to feel that he has reached the peak of knowledge in Arabic prosody; hence he has enough justification to make his famous statement: "Anā ḥākim al-^cArūd" (I am the master of Arabic prosody). As stated earlier, it is asserted that he has composed poems on all the sixteen Arabic metres and on their varieties, such as *Mashtur*, *Majzū*, *Manhūk* and *Murabba*.²⁴

His poetic anthology entitled Dalil al-^cIbād 'Ilā Sabīl al-Rashād contains 14 short poems and 49 long poems. The majority of these are written on mono-rhymed and mono-metred forms. In the composition of these poems, the author had employed the sixteen metres and their different branches with the exclusion of Mu^cdari^c, Muqtadab and Sari^c - some of the less popular Arabic metres.²⁵ It is possible that he applied these metres on other poems which are not published in this *Diwan*. So his claim of being the master of this art may not be untrue.

Although our poet pursued his poetic experience generally within the framework of the conventional Arabic Qasīdah, he has occasionally violated the mono-rhyming system. He had employed the post-classical poetic forms, which gained wide circulation in the latter part of the decadent period, such as Muzdawaj, Murabba^c, and Mukhammas. Hajj Sufi is the first Somali Arabic poet who, as far as we know, used the Takhmis form. He applied it to the famous poem of 144 verses on an ascetic theme written by ^cUmar ibn ^cAbd al-^cAzīz al-Warrāq during the 17th century, where he added three hemistiches to each original bi-hemistich verse. He also composed on Murabba^c form-a unit or stanza in the poem contains four hemistiches, the first three internally rhyming and the fourth rhyming with other stanzas. His popular poem, 'Alam al-Qādiriyyah, which we already discussed, is

an illustrative example of his Murabba^c poetical form. He also employed the Muzdawaj form, where each unit consists of three hemistiches rhyming with each other but not with other units as the following extract composed on Manhūk of al-Munsarih metre illustrates:

الله معطى الرزق	الله منشى الخلق	الله بدئ الحق
وجوده عميم	وفاته عظيم	احساناته عميم
فهو لها طيب	نفوس والقلب	ذكره طيب

"Allah is the one who initiated the truth. Allah is the One who created the universe. Allah is the One who provides sustenance.

His beneficence is prevalent. His favour is immense, And His generosity is very close.

In the remembrance of Him, the souls and hearts find satisfaction. For them He is the Healer."²⁶

Furthermore, our poet at times unnecessarily imposes on himself an additional heavy burden by arranging the verses of his poem alphabetically. The first line, in such poem, commences with 'Alif, the second with Bā, the third with Tā and so on, up to the end of Arabic alphabet. As explained earlier, this phenomenon became common in the Arab world during the decadence era and was

imitated by such poets as Hajj Sufi who wrote on this system a good number of his poems. At times he would insist on the appropriate letter, not just beginning the verse, but also each main word in it. An illustrative example is the following extracted from a Prophetic panegyric poem:

امام أصل خلق الله	*	أمين أمن أرضي الله
بـهـ الـوـجـهـ بـدـرـ الله	*	شـيرـ بـارـعـ
تـرـاهـ تـابـعـ الله	*	تقـىـ تـارـكـ الـفـوـ

"Honest He is, the safety of 'Allah's earth, the leader and origin of 'Allah's creature.

He is a bringer of glad tidings, a skilful leader, devoted, bright of face, and the full light of 'Allah.

He is pious, deserter of the useless. You see him following 'Allah's commands."²⁷

As for his language, our poet generally selects suitable words and forms for his expressions. He usually avoids the obsolete vocabularies and ambiguous linguistic structures. He pays much attention to the grammar of his sentences and therefore, most of his expressions are grammatically sound. The exceptions are a few cases where he uses transitive verbs as if intransitive.²⁸

He also uses some strange morphological forms, such as 'Azamūt'²⁹ (the pride). In addition to that, our poet occasionally inserts in his verses a number of words which have no serious function but to balance the metre or provide the required rhyme. For instance, the word Yafsudu (spoil) has been added to the verse below merely for the purpose of rhyming. This verse is extracted from his poem on the people of Mogadishu:

وَمَنْ لَهُنَّ بِلْ مُزَاحَةً لَمَّا يَؤْدِي لِنَكَرْمَا وَفَحْشَ وَيَسْدَ

"And touching them (women) or pushing them to what may lead to some obnoxious action or even fornication (and may spoil)"³⁰

Similarly the words Qad and Badat, have no effective role in the meaning of the verse and hence their function is to balance the metre as could be observed in the following line:

طَلَعَتْ كَوَافِكَ نَبِيَّاتٍ قَدْ بَدَتْ فِي مَقْدِيشِ شَوْفَتْسُورَتْ وَتَمَجَّدَتْ

"Shining stars (i.e. religious scholars) appeared in Mogadishu, so it became illuminated and glorified."³¹

The rhyme of his poems shows that he possessed a considerable mastery of the art of rhyming in Arabic poetry ('Im al-Qāfiyah'). This is shown by the fact that most of his poems are properly rhymed in conformity with the rules of this art.

However, it is observed in some of his lines that he violated these rules by using what would be considered as defective or faulty rhyming. An example of this is noticeable in the following two lines from his rā'iyyah poem already reviewed (p.160)

عَلَى صِيَّةِ اذْ ذَاكَ شَرْقاً وَمُفْرِباً وَأَضْحَى الْوَرَى مِنَ النَّوَاحِي مِبَارِا

فَوْكَنْ نَفْسًا قَاضِيَا مُتَشَمِّراً إِلَيْهِ لَحَاجَاتٌ هُمْنَ الْمُهَاجِسِ

When a verse is grammatically connected to the rhyme of a preceding line, as in these two lines, it contains a defect known in Arabic prosody as al-Tatmīm or al-Tadmīn.

Furthermore, our poet tends to use more of al-Qāfiyah al-Mutlaqah (loose rhyme) as is the case with most of Somali Arabic

poets. It is only in ten out of the sixty-three poems which his anthology contains that he used al-Qāfiyah al-Mugayyadah. (fettered) (See: W.Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language, Cambridge, 1964, Vol.II, pp. 350-358).

As for rhetorical expressions, our poet apparently has not intensified his use of this as his contemporary Somali Arabic poet, Zayla'I did. However, there are considerable rhetoric forms of different types, scattered through his poems. He employed them in some cases, with obvious artificiality. All his rhetorical structures are not original but taken from the commonly used expressions. To our poet, for instance, the praised one is like a full moon in his beauty, like a lion in his bravery and like a sea in his generosity, which are all conventional Arabic similes.

Finally our poet, as he himself has indicated, has managed to master all branches of Arabic linguistic study. His mastery of the language manifests itself clearly in his poetical heritage.

SECTION III

SAYYID MUHAMMAD ^CABDULLAH HASANA - His Life History

Al-Sayyid Muhammad ^CAbdullah Hasan Nūr is the reforming leader, the intellectual scholar and the celebrated bilingual poet, composing eloquently, both in Arabic and in Somali. He is also the founder of the famous nationalistic movement, the Dervishes, for having led the struggle against the colonial power in Somali for more than two decades (1899-1920).¹

The Sayyid was born on 7 April, 1856, at a watering place known as Sa^CMadeeq in the Nugał Region in the East of what was known then as the British Somali Protectorate. His family used originally to live in Western Somalia on the eastern bank of the Shabelle River. His grandfather, al-Shaykh Hasan (1780 - 1875), set off from this area, in search of further education, going towards the North Central Somalia, where he eventually settled down in a place called ^CAsūr, and built a Zawiyah attached to a mosque. There he devoted himself to worship and dissemination of Arabic and Islamic learnings. He married there and had a large number of children (eleven females and twelve males) including al-Shaykh ^CAbdullah Hasan (1836-1913), the father of the Sayyid. ^CAbdullah, too, was a learned man. It

is said that he memorized the whole Qur'an and learned some advanced religious books. But he was less devoted to the knowledge than his father. At the age of 26, he married Timiro bint Sayd (d.1916) from a local tribe in the Nugal Region. They had ten males, the eldest of whom was our man, al-Sayyid Muhammad.²

In this educational and devoted religious environment, the Sayyid was brought up. He attended a Qur'anic school while he was eight years old, and memorized the whole Qur'an within three years. Soon, he became his teacher's assistant in the same school. He shifted later to the Somali Conventional school, Hirta, where he dedicated himself fully to the study of the various subjects of Arabic and Islamic learnings. At the age of nineteen, he became well-qualified to teach and to give Fatwas. As a recognition of his education and piety, he, then, was acclaimed al-Shaykh. But his eagerness for advanced knowledge and education forced him to leave his home and roam (as was the fashion of the learned men of those days, and even in the nomadic areas today), throughout the Somali lands. Initially, he went towards Jijiga and Harar, the centre for Arabic studies, but later moved towards the south and south-west up to Mogadishu, the centre of the study of Shafi'i Jurisprudence.³ The Sayyid spent about ten years, attending the circles of the well-recognized scholars whose number were estimated to exceed seventy. After that, he returned to his home, where he married a woman from his own clan, and set himself up as a teacher

for a while. Hundreds of students then attended his educational circle, Hirta.⁴

Between 1889 and 1890, he set off to the Arabian peninsula to perform Hajj. He was accompanied by thirteen pilgrims, most of whom were either relatives or intimate disciples. This journey lasted for about five years during which he performed Hajj, visited the Prophet's Mosque, and attended the various courses in the Grand Mosque at Mecca. It is stated that he concentrated considerably on both the study of the Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions, and on Arabic literature.⁵ In the course of these five years, he met al-Sayyid Muhammad Salih (c.1854-1917), who was able to persuade him to join his newly established sufi order, al-Salīhiyyah. Soon afterwards, he was confirmed as a new Khalīfa of this Order. Apparently, this Order emerged at Mecca between 1887 and 1890 as a branch of al-Rashidiyyah Order which was established by Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd (d.1874). These two Orders adopted reforming views similar to that of 'Ahmad 'ibn 'Idrīs al-Fāṣī (d.1836). In fact, al-Fāṣī was very much closer to the views of the great reformer of Arabian peninsula, Muhammad 'ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, than to traditional sufism. Hence the germ of the conflict which was bound to develop between the conservative Qādiriyyah and the reformist Salīhiyyah movement,⁶ as we will see later. On his returning from Mecca to

Somalia via Aden, Sayyid landed at Berbera, where he established a branch of Salihiyyah Order and preached its doctrines among the citizens of that city. He then condemned a number of obnoxious customs such as smoking, intoxicating drinks and chewing Qāt (a mild narcotic plant whose leaves are commonly chewed in South Arabia and the Horn of Africa). He also attacked seeking the intercession of saints particularly the deceased ones. His views on these issues seriously annoyed members of the Qādiriyyah Sect, which was then already well-established. As stated earlier, the Qadiris strongly believe an intercession and widely use the Qāt in order to make themselves remain awake at the nights they hold their dikr.⁷ This caused a considerable tension between the Sayyid and the Qadiris. About 1897, an eminent personality in Berbera called a group of religious scholars to discuss with him his theological views and examine his aims. Among these scholars were Shaykh Madar 'Ahmad, the head of the Qādiriyyah Sect in Berbera, and Shaykh 'Abdullah 'Arūs, one of the Sayyid's former teachers. Here, the Sayyid was asked about the nature of the new Brotherhood he was propagating. On this, he stated that "It was laid down in Islam that for each generation, God had provided one pre-eminent Saint (the *Qutb al-Zamān*), and that for this generation this was his master Shaykh Muhammad Salih, whose way he was teaching".⁸

Apparently, the audience accepted the idea of one Qutb for each generation, but disagreed that it was the Sayyid's spiritual teacher. From this time on, the Sayyid began to expose the fact that the founder of Qādiriyah Sect had died long ago and that his teachings must have become no longer suitable to their own generation. The Sayyid concluded by urging all the people to join the Ṣālihiyyah movement, whose founder was then still alive in Mecca.⁹

If the Sayyid's relation with the Qādiriyah was bad, his relation with the British authority was worse. It is narrated that when he was asked to pay a customs dues on his arrival at Berbera harbour, the Sayyid answered the colonial officer "Did you pay customs dues when you landed here? Who gave you permission to enter our country?" The translator tried to assuage the British Officer by telling him that this was a crazy Shaykh. Since then the Europeans began to identify him as "the Mad Mullah".

Another story which contributed tremendously to Sayyid's antagonism towards the British, is narrated as follows: The British governor at Berbera was immensely annoyed by the call to prayer (*al-'**Adhan*) from a neighbouring mosque, which disturbed his siesta. He forbade it and instructed his soldier to arrest anyone who attempted to do it. But the prayer caller challenged the colonial governor by mounting the minaret and making the *'Adhan* loudly.

The governor took a rifle and shot the man dead.¹⁰ The incident convinced the Sayyid that it was time for armed struggle against the colonial unbelievers.

He left Berbera city, which he considered to be a place corrupted by both the colonialists and the Qadiris. He went then to Nugal Valley, the centre of his mother's clan where his father and the rest of his family were still dwelling. There he established his strong nationalistic movement, the Dervishes. He started to create a puritanical religious atmosphere among his followers on the one hand and to inject a feeling of antipathy against all colonial powers on the other. He was soon to gain a great fame and popularity in the whole of Somalia and to assume the religious title of Sayyid (Master).¹¹

About the beginning of 1899, the Sayyid made a call for donations towards the holy struggle that he was planning. The people responded to this call considerably. Among those who reacted favourably was a Somali policeman called Hirsi. Mr. Hirsi, a member of the British Police Forces in Berbera, fled with his rifle to the Sayyid and offered it to him as his own contribution. Getting the information of this, the British governor at Berbera wrote to the Sayyid seeking the return of this rifle. In response to this, the Sayyid wrote on the back of the governor's letter:

"Man, I have stolen nothing from you nor anyone else. Get what you want from whoever has stolen it. Serve whatever you have chosen to serve. Farewell."¹² Receiving this letter, the governor declared the Sayyid a rebel.¹³

In March, 1899, the Sayyid waged the holy war against the colonial powers in Somalia as stated earlier. Jama ^c Umar ^c Isa counted the battles that took place between the Sayyid and the colonial governments (Britain, Italy and Abyssinia) as 26.¹⁴ Although the opposing armies were not equal in terms of weapons and military personnel, the Sayyid was able to defeat their troops several times. He forced the British and Italian troops to withdraw from Nugał, Hawd and eastern coast up to Illig city on the shore of Indian Ocean. These two governments as well as the Abyssinians tried then to persuade him to sign a truce with them. They sent to him an able Italian negotiator, who managed in 1905 to sign with him a Convention at Illig city. The accords of this Convention were:

- (1) "The arms and slave trade in the area controlled by the Sayyid was to cease."
- (2) Fighting between the Sayyid and his British and Ethiopian foes was to halt".
- (3) "A triangular piece of territory, with its point up to Nugal valley and one of its sides paralleled to the Indian Ocean shore was allotted to the Sayyid."

(4) "The Port of Illig was to be the Sayyid's Capital and trading harbour."¹⁵

But the accords of Illig Convention started to crumble within a short period, for the Sayyid regarded it as a tactical manoeuvre on the part of the colonizers. In less than three years, the Sayyid and his enemies were face to face again and military operations resumed.¹⁶

During this period, the British and the Italian governments planned jointly to undermine the Sayyid's prestige. They used the head of the Ṣalihīyyah Sect at Aden, ^cAbdullah Shihri. After he was bribed by the British and the Italian diplomats in Aden, ^cAbdullah Shihri led a group of Ṣalihīyyah leaders to their Qutb, Muhammad Salih, in Mecca. They made a number of serious complaints against the Sayyid and successfully convinced their Qutb to issue a declaration in a form of letter, that the Sayyid was no more Khalīfah or even a member of the Ṣalihīyyah Order. He also declared that the Sayyid was no more a Muslim. When this letter reached the Sayyid's capital (Harun), members of the Ṣalihīyyah Brotherhood split; some remained pro-Sayyid while others turned against him. This had a bad effect on his political and military powers. However, the Sayyid was able to control the situation. He wrote one of his two long letters entitled Qam^c al-Mu^cānidīn ('The Suppression of the Rebels') to his spiritual teacher, Shaykh Muhammad 'ibn Salih,¹⁷ as we shall see below.

After a number of successful military operations, the Sayyid became fully confident that he was in a position to defend himself and his followers. He then decided to settle in Talayh, because of its strategic position. He built here a number of military fortresses, estimated over fifty. Since then, Talayh (Taleh) became his new capital.¹⁸

Now, the Sayyid became fully established locally, but needed to strengthen his position, with more support and recognition from outside. To this end, he communicated with the Turkish commander at Lahj in Yemen, Ali Sa^cid Pasha. Ali Pasha indicated that he was willing to recognize him on the condition that the Sayyid would accept the overlorship of the Ottoman Sultan. The Sayyid accepted and an agreement was signed. He even composed a long panegyric poem in praise of the Sultan Caliph, Mehmed V Rashad to commemorate this occasion.¹⁹

When the first world war was over, the British began to deal with the problems of their colonies. One of the most troublesome among these was the issue of Sayyid and his movement, the Dervishes. The British government then directed against him and his movement a series of combined air, sea and land attacks. It was only through these operations that the British were able to defeat him and destroy his strong military fortress at Talayh. However, the Sayyid with some of his followers managed to escape towards the

Imi city, where he eventually died on 21 December, 1920, without being able to achieve his aim of freeing his people from the yoke of colonialism and of establishing a strong Somali State. In spite of this, he is highly esteemed now by all the Somalis as a great national hero.²⁰ Whenever the title al-Sayyid (the Master) is mentioned alone, it refers to him per excellence.

B - His Learning and Competence in Arabic

The Sayyid appears to have been both an impressive orator and a highly talented prose writer in Arabic. Although it is known that he composed poems in Arabic as well as in Somali, his Arabic literary prose works remained mostly unknown until very recent times. During the last two decades, a considerable number of his prose works in Arabic have been published. But it is believed that more of his prose writings are still in manuscript form.²¹ His available prose works contain his correspondences and his orations. It is not known so far that he has produced any work in a book form. However, the most significant ones among his published works are:

(1) An Oration of Campaign

This is one of the orations that the Sayyid delivered during his long holy struggle for national liberation. In this speech, he urges all the people to actively and sincerely participate in the holy struggle, warning them simultaneously of the serious consequences

that would definitely arise if they neglected this important religious duty, al-Jihad. He explains his own view on those who collaborate with the colonial unbelievers against their fellow-brothers, regarding them as enemies and declaring his determination to fight both indiscriminately. In the end, he states the aim of this war, which is either to liberate the whole country or die as a martyr. This speech shows that he was tremendously influenced by the Arabian reformer, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d.1792) as can be clearly seen from comparing the introduction of this speech to the contents of Kitab al-Tawhid (the Book of Theology). Here is the speech:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ

أَمَا بَعْدَ فَاعْلَمُوا يَا أَخْوَاتِي وَفَقِينِ اللَّهِ وَيَا يَا كُم لطَاءَتْهُ، أَنَّ اللَّهَ تَبارَكَ وَتَعَالَى لَمْ يَخْلُقْ أَحَدًا مِنَا عَبْدًا وَانْصَارًا خَلَقَنَا لِحِكْمَةٍ هُوَ يَعْلَمُهَا وَهِيَ الطَّاعَةُ وَالْعُبُودَةُ لِلَّهِ خَالِصَةٌ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى " وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونَ" (٥٦ : ٥٦)

وَلَا يَخْفَى مَا فِي تَرْكِ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَقَابٍ اللَّهُ وَمَا يَتَرَبَّ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ الْخَسْرَانِ وَالْوَيْلِ أَعْظَمُكُمْ أَنْ تَقْوِمُوا بِوَاجِبِكُمُ الدِّينِيِّ وَأَنْ تَدَافِعُوا شَرًّا هُؤُلَاءِ الْخَسِرَةُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَسْتَحْكِمُ الدَّاءُ وَيَمْسِرُ عَلَيْكُمُ الدَّوَاءُ، فَإِنْ أُبَيِّنَتْ ذَلِكَ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ رَضِيَتُمُ بِالْكُفَّرِ وَلَا يَحْلُ عَذَابُهُ إِلَّا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

ا ان علماء الكفار غزوا بلادنا من أوطان بعيدة يريدون
 أن يفسدوا ديننا وأن يجبرونا على اعتناق مسيحيتهم
 معتقدين على ما لدى حوكمة من القوة والسلاح والعدد .
 فحسبكم من السلاح الایمان بالله وقوة العزيمة ، فلا يروعنكم
 جنودهم قبحوشم ، فالله أقوى منهم وأكثر جندا قال
 تعالى : " وما يعلم جنو ربك الا هو " (٢١ : ٢٤) . وكونوا صابرين
 جلدين على الشدائـد ، فوابكم عند الله على قدر جهدهم
 ومشقتكم . فإذا أصابكم قرحة فقد مس القوم قرح مثله ، فلا
 تهنو في ابتلاء مرضاه الله وابتلاء القوم فإن كتم تألمون فانهم يتألمون
 كما تألمون ، وتصرجون من الله ما لا يرجون . واباكم والصخر اذا
 توالى بكم المهزائم ، فالحرب سجال يوم بيوم ، وقد تكون
 المهزيمة اختبارا على صدقكم ، وقوة عزيمتكم . والله سبحانه
 تعالى يقول " ولنبتونكم حتى نعلم المجاهدين منكم والصابرين"
 (٤٢ : ٢١) . وإذا رأيتم من المسلمين من يعين الكفار بأأن يدلولهم
 على الطريق وأماكن المياه ، ويكونوا لهم عيونا وجوايس فقاتلواهم .
 عانهم ليسوا بمسلمين لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم : " من حمل علينا السلاح
 فليس منا " . ومن أغان علينا الحكومة الانجليزية التي تتطلب بكفيتها المبشرير
 (الباريين) فهو ضدهم . ولا يعنينا من جهادهم مانع ، مستعينين بالله
 ومتوكلين عليه . ولا أعلم ما الله صانع بعد ذلك ولكن الأمل منه تحقيق
 المراد راجيا من الله الفوز والشهادة وطهارة البلاد من دنس
 الكفر

"In the name of God, Most gracious, Most Merciful.

The blessing of 'Allah be upon our Master, Muhammad.

Thereafter you should know - "Oh my brothers, may Allah guide me and you to his obedience - that 'Allah - May He be exalted and glorified - has not created anyone of us in vain, but for a reason which He knows. And that is to obey and worship Him alone, for the glorious 'Allah says: 'I have only created Jinnis and men, that they may serve me' (Qur.51:56). The punishment of 'Allah, which may be caused by the neglect of this is not hidden from you. Nor is the loss and distress, which may arise from it are hidden from you. I warn you to do your religious duties and to prevent the evil of those losses before the sickness intensify and the medicine of it becomes hard to find. If you deny this, be fully aware that you are accepting disbelief - God's punishment never comes except to those people who are unbelievers.

The scholars of the unbelievers have conquered our country from their remote homelands. They wish to corrupt our religion, to force us to accept Christianity, relying on the armed force of their governments, their weapons and their numbers. You have only your faith in God, your arms and your determination. Do not be frightened by their soldiers or armies: God is mightier than they. And God's armies are more numerical than they.

For the glorious 'Allah says: 'And none can know the forces of thy Lord, except He' (Qur. 31:74). Be patient and steadfast in hardship. For your reward is provided by your Lord according to your efforts and hardship. If you suffer a wound, be sure a similar wound is suffered by the others. So, do not weaken in your seeking the satisfaction of your Lord and after the enemies. If you are suffering hardship, they are suffering similar hardship. But you have a hope from the God and they have none. Never despair if you suffer frequent defeats; for the war is competition with alternate success and failures day after day. One day you may win, the other you may not. Even defeat may be a test of your truthfulness and the strength of your determination. For 'Allah - May glory and exaltation be to Him - says: 'And we shall try you until we test those among you who strive their utmost and persevere in patience' (Qur. 47:31). If you see persons who aid the unbelievers by serving them as guides to water-holes or along paths, they are their spies and agents; attack them. They are not Muslims, for our Prophet - the blessings and peace of 'Allah be upon him - says: 'Whoever bears arms against us is not one of us'. Whoever aid the British government, which is protecting the Christian Missionary against us, is one of them. Nothing could prevent us from their fighting, seeking the help and support of 'Allah. I do

not know what Allah is going to do, but our hope from Him is to achieve our desire. I am praying Him for either victory or martyrdom and the cleaning of the country from the dirt of the unbelievers."²²

(2) Risālat Bimal (Message to the Bimal)²³

After the Illig Convention was signed in 1905 by both the Sayyid and the colonial governments, a ceasefire temporarily prevailed in the Northern and Western parts of Somalia. Being fully aware of the evil events in the other parts, the Sayyid attempted to take full advantage of this opportunity. He wrote in about 1905 this Risālat to the Bimal tribes in the South, between Mogadishu and Merca, who were then waging a war against the Italian forces. This Risālat, which is up to twenty pages, throw light upon his thoughts, beliefs and philosophy. After the long conventional greetings (reminiscent of the decadent period in Arabic literature), he praises the Bimals for their gigantic efforts towards the holy struggle in the course of Allah. Then he discusses twelve issues and gives his own views on each one individually. He begins with the Jihād (holy struggle) which he regarded as an individual obligation (Fard Ayn) on every Muslim at any time, particularly when the unbelievers are occupying a country. Criticising those who consider ritual recitals 'dhikr' as substitute to Jihād, he says: "This is lie ... The fact is that

'Dhikr and other forms of worships are either an individual obligation or not. If they are an individual obligations, then no individual obligation could be a substitute to another; like the prayer and fasting, for instance, where none of them could substitute the other".²⁴ Another point that he discussed in detail is the case of the Muslims who collaborated with the unbelievers. After a long argument and numerous quotations from the Qur'ān and Hadith he comes to the conclusion that they are unbelievers as the following extract explicitly illuminates:

وَظَاهِرُ النُّصُوصِ الْقُرْآنِيَّةِ الَّتِي هِيَ الدَّلَائِلُ الْيَقِينِيَّةُ عَدْمُ
إِيمَانِ مَنْ يَوَالِي الْكُفَّارَ وَيَتَوَلَّهُمْ فِي أَمْرٍ مِّنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَنفَقُوا مَالَهُمْ مَسْأَرُهُمْ .

"The obvious meaning of Qur'anic texts, which represent the concrete evidence, establish the disbelief of those who take the unbelievers as trusted friend and resorts them in their affairs, to the exclusion of the believers, who are their supporters."²⁵

A third controversial issue also discussed seriously is the matter of the Intercession (al-Tawassul). To him, Intercession through the Prophet and his Companions is acceptable, while the intercession through the deceased saints is invalid and unacceptable.

Also, visiting the tombs of the deceased saints for the sake of intercession is not permissible in Islam. This view was the centre of the long arguments between the Ṣalīhiyyah and the Qādiriyyah, as we shall see below. Definitely, 'Uways al-Barāwī was referring to this view in the following verse:

بَكُلِّ شَيْخٍ مُّسَاتٍ كَالْجَنَاحِيَّةِ لَا يَتَوَسَّلُونَ كَالْجَنَاحِيَّةِ *

"To every dead Shaykh like al-Jīlānī, they deny access to God, like Janahuyyah Sect."²⁶

All the points discussed and the judgements given show immense influence of reforming trends which have been going on in the Muslim world since the time of Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328 A.D.).

(3) Qam^c al-Mu^canidīn (Suppression of the Rebels)

As stated earlier, the head of the Ṣalīhiyyah Sect in Aden carried out a mission against the Sayyid when he led a group of Salihis to their Qutb and overall master, Muhammad ibn Ṣālih, in Mecca - a move thought to have been planned by British and Italian governments in order to undermine the Sayyid's position. A letter was obtained indicating the expulsion of the Sayyid from the Ṣalīhiyyah Sect. In an answer to this, al-Sayyid wrote a long apology to Shaykh Muhammad Ṣālih, entitled Qam^c al-Mu^canidīn (the Suppression of the Rebels). It is regrettable that only one-quarter of this is available.

The letter, which was written about 1909, commences with traditional greetings, praising the spiritual teacher of the writer. Then al-Sayyid turns to discuss with his teacher matters of his faith, of the Somalis, of the unbelievers in Somalia, and the matter of the Salihis. The available fragment deals with the first section only, where he defended his personal faith in highly intellectual and scholarly arguments, based mainly on theological views of al-'Ash'ari.²⁷

* * *

The quality of both the content and form of his available Arabic prose proves beyond any doubt not only the very high standard of his scholarship but also the high level of his competence in Arabic.

C - The Themes of His Poetry

As stated earlier, the Sayyid led the holy struggle against British, Italian and Abyssinian governments for more than two decades. He devoted all his faculties for this noble cause. Knowing the effectiveness of words in the time of war, he used to compose a relevant poem almost at every significant occasion. Although the majority of these poems are in Somali, a considerable portion of them are written in Arabic. The Sayyid's Arabic poetry represents the literary school of the Salihiyyah Order. The main features of this school are the spirit of revolution, heroism and endeavours to reform. Contrary to the Qadiri school which is dominated by

Sufism, and self-surrender. In spite of the fact that his Arabic poems are written mostly on the conventional form of Somali Arabic poetry, they are introduced somehow in a fresh imagery and a new conception. They deal with varieties of themes which relate in one way or another to the holy struggle waged against all the colonial powers and their Somali agents. The themes of his Arabic poetry could be classified as follows:

(1) Satire

The plight of occupation and partition of Somalia took place in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Somalis, in return, took arms in order to defend their land. Different religious organizations resorted to different approaches in their struggle against colonialism. This caused considerable tension among Somalis, particularly the two main religious movements: the Qādiriyyah and Sālihiyyah. Members of the Qādiriyyah Brotherhood, which adopted a negative attitude to this struggle, have been of the view that the Somalis are destined to be subjected to colonialism and partitioning. To them, only true supplication to God through the intercession of the Prophet and righteous saints could ease this situation. The Sālihiyyah, on the other hand (who believed in action), have waged a holy war against the enemies and their agents. A controversy was bound to develop between the two.

Al-Qutbī, an eminent member of the Qadiris, composed a poem of 41 verses on the metre of Mushtūr al-Rajaz, in which he attacked the Sayyid for his views over this issue. The poem, which was prepared in a form of the conventional letter, was dispatched to the Sayyid challenging him to respond in poetry on the same metre and rhyme. In response to this poem, al-Sayyid wrote a long satiric ode on the metre of Mujzū' al-Rajaz. This poem, which is considered the longest among the Sayyid's available Arabic poems (containing some 102 verses) could be classified into the following sections:

(i) The Opening Verses

These contain the usual popular Islamic formula of beginning with the names of Allah and thanks to Him followed by praying for the blessings and peace for the Apostle and his followers:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ خَلْقَ أَرْحَمَةِ *

أَبْدَأُ فِي نَظْمِي بِسْمِ

بِسْمِهِ ارْتَقَى إِلَى الْعُمَرِ *

مُشْتِيكًا بِحَمْدِهِ

بِسْمِ نَبِيِّنَا وَسَلَّمَ *

صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ رَبِّنَا

بِسْمِ وَصَاحِبِهِ الْمَدْحُومِ *

وَآلِهِ الْمَطْهُورِ

"I begin my composition with the name of 'Allah, the Merciful One to the Creation.

Coupled by thanks to Him through which I wish to be

promoted to the level of high clouds.

The blessing and peace of our Lord be upon our Prophet
Likewise upon his immaculate Family and his promoted
Companions."²⁸

(ii) Praising the Poem Itself

Ten verses are devoted to the praise of the poem, describing it as perfect and challenging his opponent to comment on the poem fairly, appreciate its contents literarily and circulate it. The Sayyid warns him not to hide his appreciation and admiration. He finally states the metre he employed and the date he composed it:

وَهُدْدَهُكَيَا أَخْنَى جَوابِنَا الشَّمَّا *

فِي جَزْعِ رَجَزٍ سَابِعَ مَطْلَبِ لِيفْحَمَّا *

مَهْدَبٌ وَقَدْ خَلَالَ مِنَ الْزَهَافِ وَصَمَّا *

وَالْخَبْنَ وَالْطَّيِّ خَلَالَ فِيهِ وَجْهُرُ خَرَمَا *

وَشَلَلَ ذَاكَ خَبْلَهُمْ فِيهِ كَثِيرًا هَجَّمَا *

سَوْرَخَا "جَلَ شَفَا" أَوْفَى جَسَارِي كَرْضَمَّا *

وَانْظُرْ بَعْنَ الْأَنْتَهَى فِي صَوْلِ صَمَّمَ *

وَانْشَرَ مَعَانِي رَقَّهَا وَقَلَ لَهَا مَا أَحْكَمَ *

لَا تَطُوهَا فِي رَقَّهَا وَغَصَّدَهَا كَيْ تَكَمَّلَ *

وَالْكَمَدَاءِ فِي الْحَشَا يَا وَيلَ مَنْ تَضَمَّنَ *

"After that, take, Oh my brother, our completed reply.

Composed on Majzū^c al-Rajaz, the seventh metre

It is free from Khabn, Tayyi / and other permissible variations.

Likewise no Khable which, commonly, occurs.

Dated in 1333 A.H. (Jul Shagha).²⁹

Look at it with an eye of justice and comment on it accurately.

Spread the meanings of this poem and say: What makes it so accurate!!

Don't fold it in its envelope to conceal or hide it.

Concealment is a sickness which exists in the heart, Woe unto those who have it."³⁰

(iii) Complaint against His Time:

The poet, then turns to complain seriously against his era, which he describes as the most unfortunate one. The country is plagued with colonialism and partition. The common principles for the moral and religious values have been changed and openly violated. People find truth bitter, and avoid it. The oppression and obnoxious acts are widespread. Hypocrites and colonial agents are defended and respected as righteous Muslims; while the leading intellectual and pious scholars are insulted:

عَفِيَ الْبَلَادُ عَمَّا *

هَذَا زَمَانٌ وَالْبَلَادُ

وَالْمُكْرَفُ فِيهِ قَدْ تَمَّ *

وَالْعَرْفُ فِيهِ مُنْكَرٌ

وَالظُّلْمُ أَمْرٌ نَهَمَّا *

وَالْحَقُّ مَرِيْجَتْنَبْ

فَسْوَقَ أَعْنَى الْمُجْرَمَـا *

وَالْمَذْرُ لِلْجَهَالِ وَالـ

أَقْطَابُ سَما *

كَانُهُمْ أَبْرَارٌ وَ

يَهَانُ ذُو الْعِلْمِ كَـا *

يَهَانُ ذُو الْعِلْمِ كَـا

...../

"This is a vicious time in which misfortune has spread all over the country.

Beneficence has become something forbidden, while deception has become a perfect matter.

The truth is bitter and is therefore, avoided while oppression becomes an enjoyable exercise.

The ignorant and sinful are excused: I mean the criminal ones.

As if they were righteous, and the descendants of great saints

The learned men are insulted exactly as the oppressor should be

insulted." ³¹

(iv) Somalis who co-operated with the Unbelievers:

This is the issue of Somalis who collaborated with infidels. As he already made it clear in Risalah Bimal, the Sayyid regards them as unbelievers for they are their agents and spies. So he attacks al-Qutbi for his defending them. The author devotes to this discussion twenty-four verses out of which we quote this extract:

* يا ويح مادح ثنا على المعنين رجما

* قد أفصح القرآن في ال منافقين المشتمة

* وقال في شأنه صم وعمن يكروا

* يا ويح من ساوي طالحة والصالحين البتمنا

"Woe unto panegyrist who praises the cursed, and the stoned devil (the hypocrites),

The Qur'an has explicitly abused the hypocrites,

It said that they are deaf, dumb and blind.³²

Woe, therefore, unto those who equalized the straying
hypocrites with the righteous Muslims.³³

(v) Accusation of Lack of Poetical Talent

Al-Qutbi has requested the Sayyid to send a reply to him in poetry on the same metre and rhyme, as the following two verses of his poem indicate :

أرسل لنا الجواب في البهرين لما في البين * وفرر المعنى مرتباً رويه بالنور

نظمته باليرجع المشطور * مرتباً رويه بالنور

"Send the reply to us in poetry on the same metre and make the meaning clear.

As for me, I composed it on *Mashṭūr al-Rajaz*, whose rhyme is neatly arranged."³⁴

The Sayyid repulsed him ridiculously, accusing him of lack of poetical ability. Here, he enumerated the defects and imperfections of al-Qutbi's poem such as metrical errors and of weakness compelling him to compose his poem on *Mashṭūr al-Rajaz*:

هذا ومنك وما لا * ما قد أثنا منظم

وكل ما حررت * قد صار عندي مفهوم

لأن كل شطر بيـ * ت فهو شـعـر يـتمـا

.../

وَمِنْ عَجِيبِ مَا تُبَرِّي
أَنْ أَرْعَيْتَ رُوْيَا
وَرْجِزَا وَبَحْرَهُ
بَهْرَانْ رَهْ
مَرْتَبَا فَانْخَرْمَا
أَوْ تَسْمَعُ الْبَحَارْ مَا
"So there has arrived from you that letter which has come
in verse.

All what you have written is surely understood by me.

The defect of this poem is that every hemistich represents the whole verse, therefore it is a reject poetry.

But the strangest thing to see or hear is that you have

claimed that the rhyme of your poem to be neatly arranged,
and yet it is full of metrical errors.

And that you have composed your poem on two Rajaz metres, yet
there is only one Rajaz metre in Arabic prosody."³⁵

(vi) The conclusion

The Sayyid comes to conclude his long poem with a long supplication which takes twenty verses. The supplication is a conventional one and similar to that usually used at the end of Somali Arabic poems. But here the sign of heroism could be observed, when the poet prays Allah to support his armies in the battlefield and to defeat the enemies:

فـسـأـل اللـه الـكـرـيـر
 مـ وـالـمـنـانـ النـعـمـا
 *
 وـأـنـ يـقـبـلـ عـشـرـنـا
 وـزـلـنـاـ وـثـمـمـا
 *
 وـأـنـ يـقـوـىـ جـيـشـنـا
 وـبـالـقـلـوبـ لـحـمـا
 *
 وـرـبـنـاـ يـعـينـنـا
 اـذـاـ الـحـرـوبـ التـحـمـا
 *
 وـاـنـقـمـ علىـ أـعـدـائـنـا
 وـمـنـ عـلـيـنـاـ حـرـمـا
 *

عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَسَلَّمَ * مَلِإِلَهُ الْوَاحِدِ

بِالنَّبِيَّاءِ خَتَّانِ * مُحَمَّدٌ حَبِيبُهُ

إِلَى الصَّانِي المُعَمَّدِ * إِلَّا مَعَنْ مُرْتَقِي

"We pray to Allah, the generous and the benefactor to bestow
His blessings (upon us):

And to pardon our failures and correct our errors,

And to strengthen our army and to make our hearts united.

May Allah support us whenever the warfare intensifies.

Defeat our enemies and those who refuse to co-operate with us.

May the blessing and peace of the only God be upon the Prophet

Muhammad, His beloved one, and the seal of the Prophets

As long as intellects could rise up to understand the hidden
meanings."³⁶

(2) Panegyric Theme:

Quantitatively, the panegyrics of the Sayyid come next to his Satire. On this theme, there are, as far as we know, three poems, the total of which is up to ninety-five verses. These poems are as follows:

(i) In Praise of Muhammad Salih

In this hamziyyah ode, our poet praises his spiritual teacher, the founder of the Salihiyah Brotherhood, al-Shaykh Muhammad Salih (1854-1917). It is said that this poem came to be used by his

followers as a war song in their holy struggle against the colonialists.³⁷ This poem, which is composed on Majzū' al-Ramal metre, is very similar to ^cAlam al-Qadiriyyah poem (the Flag of Qadiri Sect) by Hajj Sufi (reviewed in Section II above), both the poetic form and content. But this poem is less impressive than ^cAlam al-Qadiriyyah in its literary value. The Sayyid must have been influenced by ^cAlam al-Qadiriyyah in the composition of this poem, from which we give the extract:

يا حبيبي يا محمد يا امام الازكـيـاء
 يا حفيظي يا حقـيـبي يا حـكـيمـيـاء
 أنت عـيـدـيـ العـلـمـاءـيـاءـ
 يا كـمـيـنـ الكـيـمـيـاءـيـاءـ
 يا فـتوـحـيـ اـدـرـكـاـ قـبـلـ الفـيـاءـ

"Oh you most beloved one, Muḥammad, Oh you Imām of the wise
 Oh you my preserver, Oh you my guardian, Oh you doctor of doctors.
 You are the feast of the learned; Oh you the greatest of the great.
 Oh you the secret of secrets, Oh you the guardian of the generous.
 Oh you the attainment of those who are knowledgeable ones;
 Come to us before our time is past."³⁸

(ii) In Praise of Ottman Sultan

As stated earlier, Sayyid sent his special representative in 1916 to the Turkish Commander at Lahj city seeking the recognition of the Turkish government. The Turkish commander agreed to recognize

the Sayyid's movement. When this was achieved, the Sayyid composed a long poem (rhyming in Ha) in praise of the Ottoman ruler, Mehmed V. Rashad. The full text of this poem was published in 1967 in Somalia. Here is an extract from it as translated by Martin:

⁴⁶
While horses march in the dawn yet the rider has reined in.

Borne down by the weight of his burden crushed by the unbelievers
And he turns to his Dear Friend, taking refuge with that pillar of
Religion.

Girded by glory and most firm in dignity a broad spreading tree
of munificence

The distributor of God's benefits, unique he shows himself
towering
Above others, unattainable, looking down over those who
praise him

Sultan of every victory, twister of tyrants
Who strikes out the Eye of Unbelief, who lashes unbelievers
Breaks their power and treads on their necks."³⁹

(iii) In Praise of the Dervishes

The term Dervish refers to the members of the Sayyid's Movement who took it upon themselves to defend the Somalilands and to sacrifice their precious lives. The tremendous success they achieved against their enemies impressed their leader, who praised them in an Arabic poem from which the following is extracted:

هم صاروا سد الباب	*	سلام على الاخوان
بضرب فوق الرقاب	*	رشادوا ببني الدين
في السنين وانتهباب	*	واغارات الخيل
مثل جحوار العباب	*	وجریان الارض
بأليمات المقباب	*	ضيق وأعمال الاعداء
شادوا في حال الشباب	*	ويكثرة الاعذان

"Salutation to the Brothers, who have barred the gate.

They have built the foundations of religion by striking
on necks

And for years of horse expeditions and plunderings (on the
enemies)

And for running all over the lands like a raging torrent
The expectations of the enemy are constrained by their painful
punishment to them

It is because of their successive worries that they have
grown old, while they are still young."⁴⁰

(3) The Theme of War

As we have stated earlier, the Dervishes were defeated at Talch,
the capital of the Dervishes in the eastern part of Somalia. The
Sayyid escaped and went to Imi city in ^{the} western part of Somalia where
he eventually died.

Before his death, he composed an ode in Arabic on the theme of

war. It is said that this poem was the last that the Sayyid composed.⁴¹

In it, he warns that the colonialists will deceive the Somalis by giving them some material aid and disarming them in order to take their property.

The ode is short (eight verses only), yet it is highly impressive. All the verses are well balanced and rhymed. This poem, in fact reflects the high degree of mastery that the Sayyid possesses in the art of prosody. Here is the poem and its translation by Martin:

بني الصومال هبوا من رقاب *

يخار عكم بنو القار لمسا *

فلا ينحركم منهم عطاء *

سينزع من أياديكم سلاحا *

ويندركم بختهم للصواشى *

ويسلب منكم مسالا وأرضا *

لقد جاوزتها نجدا وپمنى *

فكيف الأم يا اخوان فيهم *

فقد نزل البلاء على البلاد *

ضعفتم عن مواصلة الجهاد *

سموم الموت من هذى الأيادى *

لتبقوا كالنساء بلا عتاد *

لتحيوا فى البلاد بغير زاد *

ويحمل فوقكم مثل الجياد *

وأدرا بعد ذلك لابتعاد *

سينزل رقمم فى كمل واد *

"Somalis, arise from sleep, catastrophe has fallen on the land
 The unbelievers have deceived you since you failed to continue
 the jihad
 Do not be dazzled by their gifts. They carry a lethal poison
 They 'll wrest your weapons from you. You 'll be like defenseless
 women
 They 'll take away your livestock, putting their brand on it.
 They 'll live on them alone.
 They 'll snatch your money and your land. They 'll run off
 with it in front of you, like racehorses.
 I left them behind at Imi and Adar on the plateau by banishing
 (myself).
 Brothers, what sort of country can it be where people fall
 into slavery to them on every side?"⁴²

D - The Form of His Poetry

As already stated, the Sayyid has been a bilingual poet, composing the poems both in Arabic and in Somali, perhaps on one and the same occasion and about one and the same experience. Since his audience are Somalis, who definitely appreciate his Somali more than his Arabic poetry, it is natural that he has to direct his poetic talent more to the Somali rather than Arabic poetry. Hence his

poetic production in Somali is much more significant than his poetic output in Arabic. It is for this reason that he is widely known as a great Somali poet and is chiefly remembered for his poetic output in Somali.

The Sayyid's available Arabic poems are very few compared with the numerous poems that he produced in Somali. All in all, there are seven Arabic poems only, the total verses of which are about 225 lines. Four of his seven poems are composed on the conventional forms of the Arabic Qasidah, that is to say on one of the sixteen classical metres or their acceptable varieties. His metres vary; the longest one is composed on Mujzū' al-Rajaz, the second on Mujzū' al-Ramal, the third on Tawil and the shortest one on Wafir metre. These poems represent the bulk of the Sayyid's Arabic poetry. The remaining three poems are written on forms accurately rhymed but broken in their metrical structures. I have endeavoured to determine the type of metre they are composed but failed to arrive at any convincing result.

There is little doubt that the Sayyid was a master of the art of Arabic prosody. Hence he has been able to maintain the rules of this art in the majority of his poems. But his deviation in other poems is difficult to explain.

An example of his balanced and rhymed verses is as follows (the two extracts below were reviewed above):

فَقَدْ نَزَلَ الْمُلَأُ عَلَى الْبَلَار	بَنِي الصَّوْمَالِ حَبِّوا مِنْ رِقَادِ
٥ ١٠١/٥١٤٠١١٥١١٨١١	٥ ١٠١/٣٦١٩٦٥١٥١٥١١
مَفَاعِلَتُنَ فَعَوْلَنْ	مَفَاعِلَتُنَ فَعَوْلَنْ
هَنْفَقْتُمْ عَنْ مَوَاحِلَةِ الْجَمَادِ	يَحَادِ عَكْمَ بَنِي الْكَفَارِ لِمَا
٥ ١٠١/٥١١٥١١٥١٥١١	٥ ١٠١/٥١٤٠١١٥١٦١٢١
مَفَاعِلَتُنَ فَعَوْلَنْ	مَفَاعِلَتُنَ فَعَوْلَنْ

The high degree of poetic talent that the Sayyid shows especially in the short poem from which the above quotation is extracted refutes the assertions made by some writers that he is very weak in Arabic prosody.⁴³

Occasionally, the Sayyid violates some principles of the prosody not for lack of poetic experience but perhaps for inclination to reduce the heavy burden of metrical requirements. Therefore, one finds that some of his poems are not metrically balanced. An example of this type of his verses is this:

سَلَامٌ عَلَى الْأَخْ	وَان	بَاب
٥٥١٥١٥١٥١٥١	٥٥١٥١٥١٥١	٥٥١٥١٥١٥١
فَهُولَنْ مَفَاعِي	لَان	لَان
وَشَادِ وَبَنِي الْدَّيْ	بَضْرَبِ فَوْقِ الرَّقَ	بَاب
٥٥١٥١٥١٥١٥١	٥٥١٥١٥١٥١	٥٥١٥١٥١٥١
فَهُولَنْ فَمَ	وَلَان	لَان

As for the rhyme, our poet is very much sensitive to it, hence the overwhelming majority of his poems are well-rhymed according to the rules of Arabic poetic rhyming; even on the occasion when he breaks the rules of the metres. Four poems out of the seven are written on Qafiyah Mutlaqah (Loose Rhyme), while the other three are composed on Qafiyah Muqayyadah (Fettered Rhyme). As for the Rawi of his rhymes (i.e. the essential letter of the rhyme which determines the name of the poem), our poet selected the letter Mim for two poems, Lam for one, Ba' for one, Hamzah for one and Dal for one.

The Sayyid's poems are grammatically sound, his words are well-selected and his structures are mostly clear. But he usually uses archaic words and obsolete ones. This attitude, though it reflects the good standard of his Arabic language, complicates the meanings of his poems. The Sayyid uses intensively various types of rhetorical expressions particularly simile and metaphor. In praise of his followers, he describes them as a strong gate, as builders of the pillars of Islam and as raging torrent.

Finally, the Sayyid remains the great hero of Somalia, and the most known one amongst the bilingual Somali Arabic poets. Surely, he was the master of the sword as well as of the word!

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As we have seen, Arabic has gradually become a language of education, written literature and various types of communication in Somalia since Islam reached the horn of Africa in the seventh century.

The available Somali Arabic literature, which covers both prose and poetry, is a conclusive evidence of the special position which Arabic has in the country in spite of Somali's attachment to their own Somali mother-tongue. Even, when the Somali language began to be written in an orthography based merely on the Latin alphabet, which accompanied its introduction as the first national language and it was made the medium of instruction in Somalia, Arabic was not dislodged, but continued to occupy its special position of pride in this country. It is now the second official language and a compulsory subject in the Somali school curriculum up to the University level. It is also the medium of instruction in all the ex-Egyptian schools and governmental religious institutions, which represent a considerable segment of the total number of the schools operating in this country.

Somali Arabic literature, in fact, forms a considerable proportion in the Somali cultural heritage. Many of Somali religious scholar have directed their literary talents towards Arabic literature. They have been able to produce a great deal of prose and poetry through

the medium of Arabic. The available majority of that literature is poetical but there is no doubt that the Somali output of literary Arabic prose is immense, although it remains mostly unpublished. Since the Somali's interest is mainly in Islamic thought, it is natural that most of their literary compositions and poems have a clear religious inclination and are written on serious moral, ritualistic and sectarian themes. This is due to the fact that the overwhelming majority of Arabic literary figures in Somalia have, at the same time, been religious scholars. This trend has been enhanced by the fact that the Somali language has always been, and continues to be, used for composition on light and entertaining themes. Thus while pleasure-singing is in the Somali language, sufi group-singing (dhikr) has always been in Arabic. Hence the scope and the themes of Somali Arabic poetry are, to some extent, limited. They are devoted mostly to the praise of the Prophet, saints and scholars. Occasionally, poems are composed on social, sectional and political themes.

Looking at the Somali Arabic poetry critically, it seems that the bulk of this poetry is more of an art of versification than that of poetigality. Since it is mostly void of warm emotional sentiments and exciting feelings, either of an individual or universal nature. The content of this poetry is mainly simple and rather superficial;

the vocabularies are largely clear and explicit. At times, they are even trite and vulgar. Some poets, however, have resorted to the intensive use of archaic words in order to show their linguistic ability and to challenge their opponents. This is as the Sayyid and al-Qutbi have done in their poetical combats. Others are known for the high standards of the vocabularies used in their poetic production. Amongst those are Zayla^cī, Hajj Sufi and Qāsim al-Barāwī

As for the poetic form, Somali Arabic poets are very much concerned with the metrical structure and rhyming system of their poems. Hence the majority of their poems are mono-metre and mono-rhyme according to the principles of the conventional Arabic Qasīda. Some of the Somali Arabic poets, however, have occasionally composed on the patterns of post-classical forms, such as Takhmīs and Tarbi^c. Some of them had even violated the rules of the metre while they maintained the rhyming system. Examples of those poets are the Sayyid and 'Uways al-Barāwī.

Surveying the bulk of the available Somali Arabic poetry, one finds that the overwhelming majority of this poetry was produced during the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century. This is because this period has been a crucial one in the political and cultural history of Somalia. It was during this period that the people of Somalia experienced colonialism and

partitioning of their land. This period also saw the differences, which arose between the people on the method to be adopted in the struggle against the colonial powers. The tension created between the people by the plight of occupation and partitioning must have contributed tremendously to the production of a great section of this poetry.

In spite of the fact that this period, during which the bulk of Somali Arabic poetry was produced, was the same as that of the modern renaissance of Arabic literature in the Arab world, Somali Arabic poetry continued to be dominated by the poetic characteristics of decadence era both in form and content.

During this period, a considerable number of eminent Somali Arabic poets emerged in various parts of the Somali peninsula. The most illustrious representative of these were Zayla^ci (d.1881), Hajj Sufi (d.1905) and the Sayyid (d.1920). These poets were able to produce a good number of long Somali Arabic poems some of which are about 400 verses in length.

Somali Arabic poetry is of great importance for its historical, social and artistic dimensions. It produced to us those marvellous poems, which reflect the Somali society, culture, education and trends of thought during a long period of Somali history. Hence it is very important to those researchers and scholars who are

interested not only in Arabic and Islamic Studies in Somalia but also in the intellectual history of this country.

I would like to repeat in this conclusion that Somali Arabic poetry is worthy of further studies and investigations. I am sure that any effort in this line of research will not be in vain, but will be amply rewarded.

FOOTNOTESPART ISection I

1. The Somali Republic, the British Survey Series, published by the British Society for the International Understanding, Main Series No. 203, February, 1966, pp. 1 and 2.
2. Ibid., p.3
3. Al-'Anwār (A Lebanese daily newspaper, special issue on Somalia), November, 1974.
4. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.2
5. Ibid., p.3
6. Al-Sūmāl al-Jamīlah - a publication issued by the Ministry of Information and National Guidance, Mogadishu, August, 1972, p.45.
7. Al-'Anwār, op.cit.
8. B.W. Andrzejewski and I.M. Lewis, Somali Poetry, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1964, p.5.
9. 'Abd al-Rahmān Y. "Tarikh al-Sūmāl" Cultural Issue (Arabic) of the Egyptian Cultural Centre, Mogadishu, June, 1974, pp. 51-64.
10. Sālah B. "Min al-Watan al-Islāmiyyah al-Sūmāl" Al-Tadāmun al-Islāmi (Monthly Magazine issued by the Ministry of Hajj), Mecca, February, 1977, pp. 85-94.
11. Al-Sūmāl al-Jamīlah, op.cit., p.66.
12. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.4.
13. Sālah, op.cit., p.90

14. Hamzah Ali Loqman, Tarikh al-Juzur al-Yamaniyyah, *Yūsuf al-Jamil Press*, Beirut, 1972, pp.63f.
15. Abd al-Rahmān, Y., op.cit., p.55.
16. Isa, J.U., Tarikh al-Sūmāl (an Arabic account on the Somali history in the Middle and Modern age), Cairo, 1965, p.7.
17. Ibid., p.14
18. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.4
19. Arnold, T.W., The Preaching of Islam, Lahore, 1961, p.362.
20. Ibid., pp. 343f.
21. Abd al-Rahmān, op.cit., p.55
22. Ibid., p.56.
23. Ghayth, F., Al-Islām wa al-Habashah, Cairo, p.341 f
24. Abd al-Rahmān, op.cit., pp. 56f.
25. Ibn Battūta, Rihlah 'Ibn Battūta, Dar al-Sādir, Beirut, 1960, p.252.
26. Abd al-Rahmān, op.cit., p.59
27. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.5
28. Andrzejewski and Lewis, op.cit., p.9
29. Al-Kitāb al'Abyad (The White Book) about N.F.D., published by Somali government, p.4.
30. Andrzejewski and Lewis, p.9
31. Isa, op.cit., p.142
32. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.6
33. Ibid., p.9.
34. Ibid., p.7
35. Andrzejewski and Lewis, p.10
36. Ibid., p.11
37. Isa, J.U., p.54

Section II

1. Andrzejewski and Lewis, op.cit., p.3.
2. "The Revolutionary Development of Somali Language," paper presented by the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture, Mogadishu, at FESTAC 77 Colloquim, Lagos, Nigeria, December 1976, p.10.
3. Report, Newspaper issued by the World Bank, July-August, 1978, p.1.
4. Andrzejewski, B.W. and Lewis, I.M., op.cit., pp.128f.
5. "The Revolutionary Development of Somali Language", p.42.
6. Ibid., p.62.
7. Laitin, D.D., "The Political Economy of Military Rule in Somalia", The Journal of Modern African Studies, 14, 3, (1976), p.450.
8. It is commonly believed among the Somalis that this fragment was composed by Queen Arawaylaw Muusa Galaal, an authority on Somali culture, supported this common idea in an interview broadcast by ~~The~~ the Somali Section of the B.B.C. late in 1978.
9. Ciisa, J.C. Ta'rikh al-Sumal, op.cit., p.40
10. Report, p.1
11. Somali proper names are given in this Section according to the current Somali writing system, unlike the rest of the Dissertation where the conventional transliteration system is used.
12. Report, p.1
13. "The Revolutionary Development of Somali Language", p.47.
14. Laitin, D.D., op.cit., p.460.
15. "The Revolutionary Development of Somali Language", p.19.
16. For a more detailed account on this, see: Andrzejewski and Lewis, op.cit., pp.38f
17. "The Revolutionary Development of Somali language", pp.49f.

18. Ciisa, J.C., op.cit., pp.49-50
 19. Ibid., p.48.
 20. Andrzejewski and Lewis, op.cit., pp.46f.
 21. John William Johnson, "Somali Prosodic System", Horn of Africa, volume 11, number 3, pp.46f.
 22. Richard Corfield was the commander of the British army in the battle of Dul Madobe, which took place in August, 1913. The British army was ^{badly} defeated and their commander, Corfield, was killed in this battle. Al-Sayyid composed this poem immediately after the news of this battle had reached him. See "The Revolutionary Development of the Somali Language", p.59.
 23. This translation is made by the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture in the Somali Democratic Republic, in a paper presented to FESTAC 77.
 24. Any vowel can be regarded an alliterative sound to any other vowel even if they are different like this line.
 25. I have tried to reproduce this poem from my memory. Very likely, it has not been committed to writing yet.
 26. "The Revolutionary Development of Somali Language," p.47.
 27. Andrzejewski and Lewis, op.cit., p.47.
 28. Ibid., pp. 64-66
 29. Ibid., p. 74
 30. Ibid., pp. 74f
 31. Ibid., pp. 128f.
 32. Ibid., pp. 138f.
 33. "The Revolutionary Development of Somali Language", p.48
 34. Andrzejewski and Lewis, op.cit., pp. 146f.
 35. Ibid., pp. 148-9.
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Section III

1. An example of such treaties is that which took place between Yūsuf ^cAli Yusuf, the Sultan of Obbia, and V. Filonard, the Italian Consul in Somalia in the late 19th century. The treaty (which was written in beautiful Arabic hand-writing and in a good Arabic style), authorized the Italian government to pay an annual contribution of 1200 dollars to the Sultan for his acceptance of the Italian protection. Lewis, I.M., The Modern History of Somaliland, London, 1965, pp. 84ff.
2. Another important letter in Arabic is a rare historical document of 12 pages dating back to the early part of 19th century. It was written by Somalis under the leadership of Hajj Ali and Hajj Farah to the Amir of Qawāsim, Sultan ibn Saqr (1818-1866), seeking his help to get rid of the colonialists from their land. See: Rirash, A.A., Kashf al-Sudūl ^cAn Ta'rīkh al-Sūmāl, Mogadishu, 1974, pp. 141ff.
3. Al-Sūmāl al-Jamīlah, op.cit., pp.64f
4. Ibn Battuta, Rihāt ibn Battuta, Dar Sādir, Beirut, 1960, p.253.
5. Kitāb al-Jalālayn refers to the widely circulated Quranic exegesis written by two erudite scholars, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Mahli (d.1459 A.D) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūti (d.1505 A.D.). See al-Dhahabi, M.H., Cairo, 1961, volume I, pp.333f.
6. Al-Baydāwī refers to Quranic exegesis written by ^cAbdullah b. ^cUmar b. Muhammad b. ^cAl-Baydāwi, who died in 1291. See Ibid., p. 296
7. Rirāsh, op.cit., pp.77 f.
8. Qāsim al-Barāwī, Majmū' ^cal-Qasā'id, Cairo, 1955, p.46.
9. Ibn Battūta, op.cit., pp. 253f.
10. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.8

11. Andrzejewski and Lewis, op.cit., p.52.
12. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.5
13. Al-Sūmāl al-Jamīlah, op.cit., p.31
14. Al-Tahiri, H., Qissat al-Sūmāl, Cairo, 1977; p.223
15. Ṣalāḥ al-Bakr, op.cit., pp.85-94
16. Al-Tahir, H., op.cit., p.207
17. Al-Qutbī, A.Y., Nasr al-Mu'minīn, Cairo, 1919, p.163
18. Ibid., p.86.
19. H.A.R. Gibb, Arabic Literature, London, 1963, p.157
20. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p.5.
21. ^cAydarūs, A.A., Bughyat al-'Āmal fi Tarīkh al-Sūmāl, Mogadishu, 1954, p.51.
22. Zaki Mubārak, Al-Madā'ih al-Nabawiyya fī al-'Adab al-^cArabi, Cairo, 1971, p.189.
23. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.46
24. Al-^cAli, A.U., Jalā' al-^cAynayn, Part I, Cairo, p.80
25. Muḥammad Sūfī Qāsim al-Barāwī (ed), Dalīl al-'Ibad 'Ilā al-Rashād, al-Kilani Press.
26. Andrzejewski, and Lewis, op.cit., p.52
27. Rirash, op.cit., p.178
28. Shaykh ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, Muhyi al-Din Abū Muḥammad ibn 'Abu Salih Zengi Dost, lived 470-561 A.H. (1077-1166 A.D.). He is the author of the book entitled al-Ghunya and the founder of Qādiriyya Sect although there are no evidences to authenticate this. He was a jurist and Islamic preacher. His genealogy is traced on the father's side to al-Hasan, the grandson of the Prophet. But this contradicts the foreign name of

his father (Zengi Dost) and the Shaykh himself was known in Baghdad as al-Ajamī (the non-Arab). Therefore, it is believed that this pedigree is fabricated by his grandson al-Qādī 'Abū Salīh Nasr. He was born in Jīlān and he was sent to Baghdad at the age of eighteen years for further studies, by his mother Fatimah Bint 'Abdullah al-Sawmā whose genealogy is traced to Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet. Numerous Karamāt (miracles) are attributed to him particularly in the last days of his life. But his student Muwaffiq al-Dīn, who had accompanied him in his last fifty days has denied seeing any of these miracles. Possibly all these Karamāt were fabricated either by his grandson al-Qādī Nasr or other followers. See Encyclopaedia of Islam, Luzac Co., London, pp.5-7.

29. Al-Qutbī, A.Y., op.cit., p.164.
30. Zākī Mubārak, op.cit., pp. 264f
31. Trimingham, J.S., The Sufī Orders in Islam, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1971, p.207.
32. Ibid., p.208
33. Majmū' Mawlid Sharaf al-'Anām, Sulīyman Mare Press, Singapore, (n.d.).
34. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., pp. 8f.
35. Majmū' Mawlid Sharaf al-'Anām, p. 154.
36. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.60
37. Majmū' Mawlid Sharaf al-'Anām, p. 126
38. The letter Sad is 90, while Ta is 9. This adds up to 99.
39. Al-Qutbī, A.Y., op.cit., p.135
40. Ibid., p.79
- 41 Ahmad Muḥammad al-Imām and Muḥammad al-Junaydī Jum'a,
Al-Mawrid al-'Adhb fi al-'Adab al-'Arabi wa Tarikhih, Riyadh, p.55.

42. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.19
43. Gibb., op.cit., p.91
44. al-Qutbī, A.Y., op.cit., p.100
45. ^cAbd al-Rahman, Y. "Tarīkh al-Sūmāl, op.cit.", p.62
46. Al-Qutbī, A.Y., op.cit., p.76
47. Al-^cAli, A.U., op.cit., Part I, p.80.
48. This refers to the verse 186, chapter 2 of Holy Qur'ān.
49. Muhammad Sūfī al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.41
50. Al-Qutbī, op.cit., p.170
51. Abd al-Rahman, Y., Tarīkh al-Sūmāl, op.cit., p.62
52. ^cAssāf, A.A., Khulāstu al-'Athar fi Sirati Sayyid al-Bashar
Dar 'Ihya' al-^cUlūm, Beirut, p.20.
53. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.37
54. Muhammad Sūfī al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.35
55. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.8
56. Ibid., pp. 64f.
57. Martin, B.G., Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth Century Africa,
Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 161f.
58. Al-Qutbī, A.Y., op.cit., p.158.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

1. Martin, op.cit., p.164.
 2. Ibid., p. 165
- SECTION I
1. Al-^cAli, Jalā' al-^cAynayn, volume II, op.cit., p.2
 2. Ibid., p.5
 3. Ibid., p.3,
 4. Al-Qutbī, vol.II, op.cit., p.113
 5. Al-^cAli, Jalā' al-^cAynayn, vol. II, op.cit., p.3
 6. Rīrāsh, op.cit., p.159.
 7. Al-^cAli, Jalā' al-^cAynayn, volume II, op.cit., p.18
 8. Zaydān, G., Tarīkh 'Adab al-Lughah al-^cArabiyyah, Dar al-Hilāl, Cairo, volume I, p.244.
 9. Al-^cAli, Jalā' al-^cAynayn, volume II, op.cit., p.14
 10. Ibid., p.42
 11. Ibid., pp.28f
 12. Ibid., p.30
 13. Ibid., p.41
 14. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., p.46
 15. Al-Quṭbī, vol. I, op.cit., p.74
 16. Al-^cAli, Jalā' al-^cAynayn, vol. II, op.cit., p.17
 17. Alin, M.N., "Education and Renaissance of Somali Culture", Heegan (Vigilance), a weekly English publication of the Ministry of Information and National Guidance, Issue No. 10, Monday

18. Al-Qutbi, volume II, op.cit., pp. 133f
19. Baji, M.H., "Min al-'Adab al-'Arabiyyi fi al-Sūmāl" (Arabic Literature in Somalia), Najmat Oktobar (October Star), a daily Arabic publication of the Ministry of Information and National Guidance, Issue No. 1295. 31 1980.
20. ^cAli, Jalā' al-Aynayn, volume II, op.cit., p.56
21. This line refers to chapter 5, verse 38 of the Holy Qur'an which says:
- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ - -
- This verse is usually interpreted as follows:
- "Oh you who believe do your duty to God, seek the means of approach to Him, and strive with might and means in His course. That you may prosper."
- But al-Zayla^cī, as Qadiri leader had translated the word Wasila as intercession to God through the righteous saints and even regarded this verse as a command, which strengthens the case for al-Tawasul (intercession).
22. One of the Zaynabs refers Zaynab Bint Jahshī 'ibn Rithāl from 'Asad tribe, while the other refers to Zaynab b. Khuzaymah, both are wives of the Prophet. ^cAssāf, op.cit., p.352.
23. Al-Qutbī, volume II, op.cit., pp. 131f.
24. Ibid., p. 132.

25. This is referring to the mystical philosophy which claims that God had loved to know Himself, and the outcome of this was the form of the first manifestation, al-Haqīqa al-Muhammadiyya, which took two aspects of Jamāl (beauty) which is the attribute of mercy, and Jalāl (glory) which is the attribute of glory. Therefore, Muhammad is the manifestation of God's beauty, and glory: Mazhar al-Jalālwa al-Jamāl, Khan S. KH., Studies in Tasawwuf, Lahore (Pakistan), 1973, pp. 230f
26. Al-Qutbi, volume II, op.cit., p. 112
27. Hitti, P.K., History of the Arabs, London, 1964, p. 436
28. Al-Qutbi, volume II, op.cit., pp. 148f.
29. Gibb and Kramers, J.H., Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1961, p. 582.
30. This is ^cAbd al-Salām ibn Mashīsh (d.1228 A.D.), the spiritual teacher of ^fAbd al-Hasan al-Shādhili, the founder of Shādiliyyah Sect. ^cAbd al-Salām, who was the disciple of Abu Madyān, had undertaken to spread the mystical teachings of his Shaykh, ^cAbu Madyān. See Trimingham, The Sūfi Orders in Islam, Oxford, 1971, p.47.
31. This is ^cAbū Bakr 'ibn 'Abdullāh al-'Aydarūs (d.914/1509), the founder of 'Aydarūsiyyah Sect which is a branch of Qādiriyyah Brotherhood. It is widespread in India, Indonesia and East Africa. Ibid., p. 73
32. Jawhar refers to the Egyptian sufi of eighteenth century, who founded the Jawhariyyah Sect. Ibid., p.278.
33. Mustafā al-Bakrī: it is not clear whether this name refers to the Syrian sūfi, Mustafa ibn Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bakrī (d.1749 A.D.), who used to visit Egypt frequently to organize a number of Sufi Orders under his name: al-Bakriyya, or to Mustafā al-Bakrī (d.1709 A.D) who had been acclaimed as "shaykh Masha'ikh al-Sufiyya", Ibid., p.77.

34. He is Muhammad 'ibn ^cAbd al-Karīm al-Sammānī (d.1718-75 A.D.), the disciple of Mustafā al-Bakrī. He originated the Sufi Order called al-Sammāniyyah. Ibid., p.77
35. He is 'Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-^cAhmad al-Shārānī (d.1565 A.D.), the Egyptian Sufi, the adherent of Shādhiliyya Order, and the disciple of ^cAli al-Khawās (d.1532 A.D.) Ibid., p.221
37. He is the Maghribi Sufi, al-Shaykh Shay^cayb 'ibn Hasan popularly known as Abu Madyan al-Maghribī (d.1197 A.D.). He established a Sufi Order known as Madyaniyyah. Ibid., pp. 46-48.
38. He is ibn 'Atā 'illah al-'Askandari (d.1309 A.D.), the successor of 'Abū al-Abbās al-Mursi and the author of Kitāb Lata'i'f al-Minan. Ibid., p.49
39. Al-Mursī refers to the Egyptian mystic al-Shaykh 'Ahmad 'ibn Umar 'ibn Muḥammad al-Nasī popularly known as 'Abu al-'Abbās al-Mursī (d.1289 A.D.). He is the Chief Khalifah of 'Abū al-Hasan al-Shādhili in Egypt.
 Husayn, A.S., Al-'Adab al-Sufi fī Misr Dar al-Manārif, Cairo, 1964, p.78.
40. Hujjat al-Islām refers to 'Abu Ḥāmid, Muḥammad 'ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad popularly known as al-Ghazālī, the jurist, philosopher and the best Muslim writer on morals. He wrote more than seventy works mostly on polemic subjects. Because of his significant advocacy over Islamic issues against the philosophers, he has been acclaimed as Hujjat al-Islām (the proof of Islam).
 Sharif, H.M., (ed), History of Muslim Philosophy, volume I, Germany, 1963, p.581. Zaydan, volume III, op.cit., p.105
41. He is ^cIzz al-Din 'Ahmad al-Sayyādi (d.1293 A.D.), the founder of al-Sayyādiyya branch of the al-Rufā'iyya Order, Trimingham, op.cit., p.280

42. He is Ibrahim ibn 'Abu al-Majd 'ibn Quraysh popularly known as al-Dusūqi (d.1288 A.D.). He initiated an independent Order called at first: al-Ibrahimiyya but later on changed to al-Dusuqiyya. Husayn, op.cit., p.133.
43. He is ^cAbdullah ^cAlawi al-Haddad (d.1720 A.D.), the founder of al-Haddadiyya Order. Trimingham, op.cit., p.216.
Al-Qutbi, volume II, op.cit., p.147.
44. He is Ibrahim 'ibn 'Adham (d.777 A.D.), who had been regarded as "the key of the real sufism". He adopted celibacy and poverty as a means of self-discipline. He declared that the true sufi is one who covets nothing but exclusive devotion to God.
Sharif, volume I, op.cit., p. 336
45. Al-Shibli is Abu Bakr al-Shibili, one of the early sufis. He described true sufism as the absolute control of the human faculties and the observation of the life. Trimingham, op.cit., p.195.
46. He is ^cAfīf al-Dīn ^cAbdullah 'ibn 'Asad al-Yafī ^ci (d.1367 A.D.), the founder of Yafi'iyya Order in Yemen as a branch of Qadiriyya Brotherhood. Ibid., p. 173.
47. Abu Yazid al-Bistani is the Persian sufi whose ancestors were Zoroastrians. He was initially jurist of the Hanafi school of thought, but later on shifted to sufism. He wandered in the Syrian deserts for about thirty years observing the nature and living on scant food and drink. He expressed explicitly that the real mysticism is the observation of the breaths. He died in 874 A.D. Ibid., p.195. Sharif, volume I, op.cit., p. 342

48. Shaykh Yahya possibly refers to Yahya al-Shirwāni (d.1460 A.D.), the author of Khalwati wird al-Sattār (the recitals of Khalwāfiyyah Order). The information about the origin of this Order is obscure, but it spread initially in 'Anatolia, and extended later on to Syria, Egypt and Hijāz. Trimingham, op.cit., pp.74, 75.
49. Ūways ibn Ḥāmir al-Qarānī al-Yamānī is a pious Tābi'ī in spite of the fact that he was a contemporary of the Prophet, for he did not communicate with the Prophet during the latter's lifetime. The place and the date of his death are uncertain. Muhammad ibn 'Ālem al-Sadīq, Dalīl al-Falihīn, volume II, Muṣṭafā al-Bād al-Halabī Press, Cairo, 1955, p.235.
50. Junayd refers to 'Abū al-Qāsim al-Junayd al-Baghdādī (d.910 A.D.), the great scholar, jurist, theologian and leader of the Sufi Orders. It is reported that he expressed his indebtedness to Ali ibn 'Abū Tālib for his mystical knowledge. Trimingham, op.cit., p.4. Shatīf, volume I, op.cit., p.344.
51. Ūbū Mansūr refers to Husayn ibn Mansūr al-Hallāj al-Baydāwī. Because of the allegedly blasphemous mystical doctrines, al-Hallāj was condemned to death and executed in March 1922, A.D. Sharif, volume I, op.cit., p.346
52. Al-Zarrūqī is 'Abū al-'Abbās 'Ahmad ibn al-Burnusī, popularly known as al-Zarrūqī (d.1494 A.D.). He established the Zarrūqiyyah Order, branch of Shādhiliyya Order. Trimingham, op.cit., p.87.
53. He is Ali ibn Shams al-Dīn ibn 'Ahmad al-Wafā (d.1404), the Egyptian Sufi whose father, Shams al-Dīn (d.1359 A.D.) had originated al-Wafā'iyya branch of the Shādhiliyya Order. Ibid., p.4

54. 'Ahmad ibn 'Idrīs is the great reformer of the 19th century, who based his sufi doctrine on the two main sources of Islam, that is Qur'ān and Hadīth. He established the 'Ahmadiyya or Idrīsiyya Order, which is regarded as one of the reforming movements in the modern Islamic world. He was born in North Africa, but roamed in Egypt and the Arabian peninsula until he eventually settled down in Sabia in the 'Asir Region in the Southern part of Arabian peninsula where he died in 1837 A.D. Ibid., pp. 114-116
55. Abū Salīh is Muhammd ibn Salīh, the nephew of Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd who is said to have claimed that he is the real successor of 'Ahmad 'ibn Idrīs. Muhammad ibn Salīh branched out from Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd and founded his new Order al-Salihiyya which spread in Somalia and became one of the two main Muslim Brotherhoods in the country. Ibid., p. 121.
56. Al-'Ali, Jalā' al-'Aynayn, volume II, op.cit., pp. 53f.
57. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., pp. 62f.
58. Ibid., p. 59
59. Ibid., p. 58
60. Ibid., p. 47
61. Ibid., p. 50
62. Ibid., p. 52
63. Zāki Mubarak, op.cit., pp. 39-43.
64. Qāsim al-Barāwī, op.cit., pp. 61f
65. Ibid., pp. 62f
66. Ibid., pp. 15f.
67. Al-Qutbī, volume II, op.cit., p. 189
68. Qanawī, M., al-Kāmil fī al-'Arūd wa al-Qawāfi, Cairo, 1969, pp. 214f.

69. Al-^cAli, Jala', al-^cAynayn, volume II, op.cit., p.53.

70 Al-Qutbī, volume II, op.cit., p. 189.

SECTION II

1. Al-Qutbī, op.cit., volume II, p. 170.
2. Qāsim al-Barawī, M.S. (ed), Dalil al-^cIbād 'Ilā Sabil al-Rashād, Hajj Sufi's Diwan, al-Kilāni al-Saghīr Press, p. VI
3. Ibid., p. 121
4. Al-Dīwān, op.cit., p. VI.
5. Al-^cAli, Jala', al-^cAynayn, volume I, op.cit., p.13
6. Al-Dīwān, op.cit., p. V.
7. Ibid., p. 45
8. Al-Ali, al-Jawhar al-Nafis, Cairo, p. 40
9. Al-Dīwān, op.cit., p. 14
10. Al-Ali, al-Jawhar al-Nafis, op.cit., p.119.
11. Al-Dīwān, op.cit., p. VI
12. Ibid., p. 77.
13. Ibid., p. 78
14. Ibid., p. 79
15. Al-Qutbī, volume I,op.cit., p.145
16. Al-Dīwān, op.cit., p. 115
17. Ibid., p. 116
18. Ibid., p. 117

19. Ibid., p. 120.
20. Ibid., p. 120
21. Ibid., p. 121
22. Ibid., p. 94
23. Ibid., pp. 112f
24. Al-Qutbī volume II, op.cit., p. 170
25. Qanawī, M., op.cit., pp. 214f.
26. Al-Dīwan, op.cit., pp. 23f.
27. Ibid., p. 86
28. Ibid., p. 45
29. Ibid., p. 16
30. Ibid., p. 112
31. Ibid., p. 114.

SECTION III

1. Martin, op.cit., p. 179
2. Marzūq, A.S., Thā'ir Min al-Sūmāl, Cairo, 1964, pp. 13f
3. Somali Poetry, op.cit., p.53
4. Marzūq, op.cit., p.15
5. ^cIsa, op.cit., p. 55
6. Martin, op.cit., p. 179
7. Ibid., pp. 180f.
8. Lewis, I.M., The Modern History of Somali Land, London, 1965, pp.66f..
9. Rīrāsh, op.cit., pp. 194f.

10. Ibid., pp. 184f. Martin, op.cit., p. 181
11. Brockelman, G., Ta'rikh al-Shu'ub al-Islamiyyah, Beirut, 1968, p. 649.
12. Martin, op.cit., p. 182
13. Ibid.
14. ^cIsa, op.cit., p. 71
15. Martin, op.cit., pp. 186f.
16. Ibid., p. 188
17. Ibid., p. 189; also see ^cIsa, op.cit., pp. 96f.
18. ^cIsa, op.cit., p. 109
19. Martin, op.cit., pp. 191f
20. The Somali Republic, op.cit., p. 7; see also Martin op.cit. pp. 193f
21. The Somali Poetry, op.cit., p. 55
22. ^cIsa, op.cit., pp. 59-60.
23. Two-thirds of Risālat Bimal was published for the first time in ^cIsa, Tarikh al-Sūmali, pp. 146-164, but the full text of this Risalah appeared in Somalia II, 1967, pp. 7-26 (series ed. by Kenadid). See Martin, op.cit., pp. 236f.
24. ^cIsa, op.cit., pp. 149f.
25. Ibid., p. 158.
26. See Section III, Part I, p. 91
27. ^cIsa, op.cit., pp. 99-104.
28. Rīrāsh, op.cit., p. 193.

29. The Somali Arabic poets, like the Arab poets of decadent period, employed, for dates of their poems, the old semantic numeral alphabets known as al-Hurūf al-'Abjadiyyah. For instance Jul Shagha refers to the date which the Sayyid composed this poem, 1333 A.H. (Jim = 3, lām = 30, shīn = 300, ghayn = 1000).
30. Rīrāsh, op.cit., p. 193
31. Ibid.
32. This refers to verse 18, chapter 2 of the Qur'ān
33. Rīrāsh, op.cit., p. 193
34. Ibid., p. 192
35. Ibid., pp. 193f.
36. Ibid.
37. Somali Poetry, op.cit., p. 150
38. Ibid. The translation of this extract was originally made by the authors of this book.
39. Martin, op.cit., pp. 192f
40. Ibid., p. 188
41. ^c Isa, J.U., op.cit., p. 126
42. Martin, op.cit., p. 194.
43. Ibid., p. 180

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