

The Arabic Sources on Somalia

MOHAMED H. MUKTAR

London

In recent years scholars of different nationalities (including Somalis) have devoted much time and effort to acquiring information about the Somali past using various means and through the available sources on the region. However, the Arabic written sources of information on Somalia have long been neglected.

The purpose of this paper is to call attention to the need for a more comprehensive reading of Arabic sources, and to show that Arabic sources have much to contribute to the knowledge about Somalia.

It is quite impossible to cover this issue in one paper, therefore, I will try to put the emphasis on the Arabic sources related to Somalia which are written by Somali nationals, and to point out the importance of Arabic language and its impact to the Somali culture and heritage.

The Role of Somalis in Writing their Heritage

The Somalis share with the Arabs common ancestors, common physical features, a common geographical region, a common nomadic heritage, and above all a common religion. Islam is considered the most important factor in the close links between Somalis and the Arabs. Since the adoption of Islam Somalis began recording their affairs in the Arabic language, and for centuries Arabic was the only language that Somalis could write. This is very clear from Somali business contracts, inheritances, waqfis, etc.

The *Duksi* (Koranic schools) prepared many *Ma'allimis* (Koranic teachers) who played a significant role in diminishing the ratio of illiteracy, as well as in the diffusion of Islam throughout the region. The development of the schools was followed by the gradual formation of many Somali Muslim centers, such as Mogadishu, Merca, Barawa, Bardhera, Bali, Harar, etc. Islam has a strong belief in education, supported by many Hadiths where the Prophet enjoins the faithful to search for knowledge from the cradle to the grave, even if it entails travelling to the furthest place imaginable. Following this tradition, Somalis often travelled considerable distances from one Islamic center to another, and even joined a *Rir* for immigrant students in centers outside Somalia, such as those in Mecca, Medina, Baghdad and Damascus. A *Riwaq* (portico) in Al-Azhar Mosque and a section of the mosque of the Umayyads at Damascus were reserved specifically for students from Zeila.¹

¹ Muslim scholars use « Zeilais » sometimes to refer to all the Muslims of East of Africa, just

Knowledge in Somalia was obtained largely in the context of Islamic studies, subjects such as theology, philosophy, Arabic grammar, the traditions of the Prophet and history. The sole authoritative book on the Hanafī school of thought of Islam, called *Tabyin al-Ḥaḡā'iq li-Sharḥ Kanz al-Daḡā'iq* (On the Hanafī Theology) is a work written by a well-known Somali theologian of the Eighth Century of Islam, Shaykh Uthman bin 'Alī al-Zayla'ī (d. 743 A.H.). This work is in eight volumes and was printed in Cairo.²

Of the Traditions of the Prophet Mohamed, called *Ḥaddith*, 'Abd Allāh bin Yūsuf bin Muḥammad al-Zeila'ī is one of the best editors. He was a Somali student of the above-mentioned Shaykh Uthmān bin 'Alī al-Zayla'ī. His book is called *Naṣb al-Rāyah fī Takhrīj Aḥādith al-Hidāyah* (On the Traditions of the Prophet), and comprises four volumes, printed by Dā al-Ma'mūm, Shubra in Cairo in 1938. This was sponsored and edited by the Bureau of Scientific Council, Dabhi, India.³

Jabarti was a nickname given to the students from East Africa, and among those who left outstanding works are Shaykh 'Alī al-Jabartī (1492 A.D.) who served the Egyptian Mamluk government in different administrative and religious positions, and also Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Jabartī, the great-grandfather of the famous Egyptian historian al-Jabartī, who served as a judge in Cairo, and was also the President of the « Riwaq al-Jabartī » in al-Azhar.⁴

In the field of literature Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Zeila'ī was considered the man of his age (1299 A.H.).⁵ His works were numerous but unfortunately

as they use « Abyssinia » for the same region or « Sudan » for all of the black Africa. However, since the majority of the Muslims of the region are predominantly Somalis and the city of Zeila itself is located in the Somali territory, the majority of « Zeilai » students would be Somalis. See Mukhtar M.H. about the Riwaqs, in his *Habka Cilmiga ee Baarista Taariikhda*. (Methodology of writing history - the case of Somalia), Lafoole College: 1978, pp. 50-51. And also Tiringham J.S., *Islam in Ethiopia*, F. Cass. third impression, London 1976. p. 62.

² Details about the biography of Shaykh Uthman al-Zayla'ī are well preserved in Ibn Hajar al-'Asqallani's *al-Durar al-Kamīnah fī Akhbār al-Miyah al-Thāminah* (A Biographical Dictionary of the noted men of the Eighth Century of Islam), IV vols., Haydar Abad: Matba'at Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-Uthmaniyyah bi-al-Hind, 1348 A.H., Vol. III. Tarjumah No. 2596, pp. 61-62. And also see Muhammad 'Abd al-Hayy al-Laknawi *al-Fawā'id al-Bahiyyah fī Tarajum al-Hanafiyyah* (the Biographies of Hanafī Sheikhs), Cairo: Matba'at al-Sa'adah, 1324 A.H. pp. 115-116. For more specific accounts on Zeilai figures see Shaykh Abi Muhammad al-Tayyib bin 'Abd Allah. *Qiladat al-Nahr fī Wafayāt A'yan al-Dahr* (the remembrance of noted men), VI vols. MS. Dār al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, No 167 (Tarikh).

³ See Ibn Hajar, *ibid.* pp. 310-311, Tarjumah No. 2250, Vol. II. and also al-Suyuti. *Husn al-Muhadarah* Vol. I. p. 151. And also Taqiyyu al-Din Abu Bakr al-Tamīmī. *al-Tabaqat al-Sunniyyah* (the Biography of Sunni Men) IV. Vols. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, MS. No. 540 (Tarikh).

⁴ For more details about Jabartis see Muhammad Qandīl. *Tarikh al-Jabartī* (the history of al-Jabartī), Cairo: Matabi al-Sha b, 1958. And also Muhammad Muḥamad al-Sayid. *Jabrah Wa Jabart* (Article on the life of Abdurrahman al-Jabartī the Historian), Cairo: 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabartī Dirāsah wa Buhūth, 1976. It seems that Riwaq al-Jabartī was exclusively for the Somali students rather than Riwaq al-Zeila, for they were representing the majority as we mentioned above in note no. 1 of this paper, or may be the two Riwaqs were integrated some time before the 19th century under Riwaq al-Jabartī, as the Jabartī family dominated the presidency of this Riwaq. For further details see 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabartī. *'Ajā'ib al-Athar fī al-Tarajum wa-al-Akhbār*, known as *Tarikh al-Jabartī* (history of Jabartī), Cairo: 1905. The name of this Riwaq was then changed into « Riwaq al-Sumaliyy in » and its chairmanship eventually was given to a Somali national from the beginning of this century. For other details about this issue see *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyyah* (Encyclopedia of Islam), Vol. VI. pp. 278-280, and the English edition of 1983 see Vol. II pp. 355-357, and Vol. IV. Of 1934 edition pp. 483-488.

⁵ Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman Ahmad Nurow Roobow known Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Zayla'ī,

most of them have been lost. The few which have been published concern Arabic language, grammar, syntax and morphology. *Faṭḥ al-Latīf Sharḥ Ḥaḍīqat al-Taṣrīf* (The Syntax of Arabic Language) is one of the best books in this field. It was printed in Cairo by Maṭbaʿat al-Ḥalabī, 1938. In addition, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was a poet, and has numerous collections on Islamic issues, most of which have come together in one volume, *Majmūʿah Mushtamalah* (A Complete Collection), published in Cairo by Maṭbaʿat al-Ḥalabī. The last edition was in 1959.

The writings of Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh al-Qutbī (1879-1952), are well known in the fields of theology and philosophy. His book *al-Majmūʿah al-Mubārakah*, known as *Nasr al-Muʾminīn fī al-Raddi ʿAlā al-Maradah wa-al-Mulḥidīn* (Victory of the Believers over the Rebellion of the Heretics), was written in response to the appearance of new Western ideologies, and new religious orders and sects within the Muslim World, among them the Wahhabiyyah and Salihiyyah. This book is in two volumes, and was printed in Cairo by Maṭbaʿat al-Mashhad al-Husaynī (n.d.).

In the field of Tarājum (biographies), Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān bin Shaykh ʿUmar (1313-c1401) is a major author, with his biographies of the Qadiriyyah Saints. He collected the Sirah (the life) of Shaykh Aways al-Qadiri in a book called *al-Jawhar al-Nafīs fī Khawās al-Shaykh Aways* (The Precious Jewel about the Distinctive Characters of Shaykh Aways). This not only describes the life and times of Shaykh Aways, but gives detailed accounts of how Qadiriyyah spread throughout Somalia, as well as into other parts of East Africa. It was published in Cairo by Maktabat al-Mashhad al-Husayni, in 1964. A similar collection of information, written as a biography of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Zaylaʿī was also written by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān under the title *Rāhat al-Qalb al-Mutawallīʿ fī Manāqib al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān bin Aḥmad al-Zaylaʿī* (On the Biography of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Zaylaʿī). His best collections on two prominent Shaykhs of Qadiriyyah, Shaykh Aways al-Barawī and Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Zaylaʿī come together in one volume *Jalaʿu al-ʿAynayn fī Manāqib al-Shaykhayn; al-Shaykh al-Waliyyi Ḥājī Aways al-Qādirī wa-al-Shaykh al-Kamil ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Zaylaʿī* (On the Deeds of the Two Shaykhs: Shaykh Aways al-Qadiri and Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Zaylaʿī). This book was printed in Cairo by Maṭbaʿat al-Mashhad al-Husayni (n.d.), but we know that Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān finished his manuscript for this book in 1374 A.H.⁶

Shaykh Aways's life and poems are also treated in a valuable book called *Majmūʿat al-Qasāʾid* (a collection of poems) by Shaykh Aways al-Qādiri, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Shāshi, and Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Zaylaʿī in praise of Allāh, of the prophets, and of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilāni, edited by Shaykh Qāsim bin Muhyī al-dīn al-Barawī, printed in Cairo by Maṭbaʿat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī in 1949. Besides the poems that Shaykh Aways wrote in Arabic, he also

born at Godlevillage in the region of Bakool (formerly Alto Giuba) Somalia. For the purposes of al-Haj (Pilgrimage) he went to and from Hijaz via Harar. He remained there teaching Islam, and moved to the south-west preaching and teaching, undertaking Qulunquul as his Headquarters. He died there in 1879 (5th Rabi al-Awwal 1299). His students and followers continued spreading his gospel for the Qadiriyyah Order under a branch named after him « al-Zeilaiyyah ».

⁶ See Shaykh ʿAbdī ʿIli, *Rāhat al-Qalb al-Mutawallīʿ*, *ibid.* p. 87.

composed many poems in the Mai dialect of the Somali language, five of which were written with an Arabic script.⁷

Kifāḥ al-Hayāt (The Struggle), by Ibrāhīm Hāshi Mahamūd (d. 1973), is an account of the author's life and his own views on the vital issues of pre-independence Somalia, e.g. how to put the Somali language into a written form, the idea of a Greater Somalia, the power struggle in the Horn, etc. The book was published by the Somali Government Printing Agency in Mogadishu in 1961. Mr. Hashi also published another book called *al-Ṣūmāliyyah bi-Lughat al-Qur'an* (Somali in the Language of Quran) in which he advocated the possibility of writing Somali using an Arabic script. This was published in Cairo by Dār al-Tabā'ah al-Hadīthah in 1963.

A collection of Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān Sūfi's (1245-1323 A.H.) poems in Arabic on many different issues and covering his life story is gathered by his grandson Muḥammad Ṣūfi in a book known as *Dafīl al-'Ibād Ilā Sabīl al-Rashād* (The Guide to the Straight Path) or *Murshid al-Ahbāb Ilā Rab al-Arbāb* (The Guide to Allah), published in Cairo by Matba'at al-Kaylani al-Saghīr (n.d.).

The biography of Shaykh Nūr Husayn, known as « Shaykh Husayn Bāliya » is collected and edited by Hāy Yūsuf 'Abd al-Rahmān in a volume called *Kitāb Rabi' al-Qulūb fī Dhikr Munāqib wa-Fadā' il Sayidna al Shaykh Nūr Husayn* (The Life Story of Shaykh Nur Husayn). This book is bound together with another book entitled *Nuzhat al-Asrār wa-Tahārat al-Aqdār fī Manaqibihī wa-Faḍa'ilihī* (On the Miracles of Shaykh Nur Husayn), printed in Cairo by 'Isā al-Bābī al-Halabī Wa Shurakāh, 1368 A.H.

A remarkable discussion of the possibilities of writing the Somali language using an Arabic script was produced by al-Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdī Makāhīl in a book entitled *Insha' al-Mukātabāt al-'Asriyyah fī al-Lughah al-Ṣūmāliyyah* (Somali Correspondence Through Arabic Script) published in Bombay in 1353 A.H. by al-Matba'ah al-Karīmiyyah.

A similar study was conducted by Sa'īd 'Uthman Gūlayd in *Alfaz 'Arabiyyah fī al-Lughah al-Ṣūmāliyyah « Baḥṭh Maydānī »* (Arabic Words in the Somali Language: A Field Study) published in Aden by Maṭābi' al-Thawrī, 1973. In addition, Sa'īd has another work entitled *Yawmiyyāt Ṣūmāliyyah* (A Somali Diary) in which he discussed the crucial problems facing the Somali people, such as tribalism, which he felt was a major obstacle to development. This work was also printed in Aden by Dār al-Jamāhīr li-al-Tibā'ah wa-al-Nashr in 1389 A.H. (1969).

In the field of history there is Sharif 'Aydarus (1311-c1380 AD) the author of *Bughyat al-Āmāl fī Tārīkh al Sūmāl* (The History of Somalia). This book contains information about the ancient Somali kingdoms and the Somali institutions in the Eighth Century before Islam. It was published in Mogadishu by the Italian Trusteeship Administration (AFIS) Printing Agency, 12 Shawal 1374 (January 4, 1955).

Aw Jāma' 'Umar 'Issa then published a book entitled *Tārīkh al-Sūmāl fī al-'Usūr al-Wusṭā wa-al-Ḥadītha* (The Medieval and Modern History of Somalia). It is a fine book on the general history of Somalia with a special emphasis on the history of the Dervish movement. The book is published by Matba'at al Imām bi-al-Qal'a, Cairo, 1965. In the same year Aw Jāma' published another book

⁷ The Encyclopedia of Islam. Vol IV. S-Z, p. 487.

called *Tarīkh Zu‘amā’ al-Ḥarakah al-Siyāsiyah fī al-Ṣūmāl* (History of the Founders of the Somali Political Movements: The SYL Case), printed in Mogadishu by the Somali State Printing Agency. The following year, 1966, he published a book on the life of General Daud Abdulla Hirsi, the first Commander-in-Chief of the Somali army who died in 1964, entitled *Tarīkh al-Liwā’Dā’ud*, printed by the Somali State Printing Agency also. After the military took over in 1969 he wrote a book entitled *Thawrat 21 Oktobar, Asbhābuhā, Ahdāfuhā wa-Munjazātuha* (Causes, Objectives and Achievements of the October 21 Revolution), printed in Mogadishu by the Somali State Printing Agency in 1972. Aw Jāma‘’s latest work on Somali history was *Madīnat Muqdisho Maḍihā wa-Ḥādirihā* (History of Mogadishu), printed by the Somali State Printing Agency in Mogadishu in 1982.

On the historical background of the Somali-Ethiopian dispute there is a detailed account by ‘Ali Ahmad Nūr, who was known as « Trabulsi », entitled *al-Nizā‘ al-Ṣūmālī al-Ithyūbī al-Judhūr al-Tarīkhiyyah* (The Historical background of the Somali-Ethiopian Dispute). The most important part of this study is that which deals with the 1977/78 Ogaden War. It was published in Cairo by Maṭba‘at al-Aṭlas in 1978.

Dr. Muḥamūd ‘Ali, known as « Tūryare », has published a book, *Qaḍyyat al Qarn al Ifrīqī* (The Case of the Horn of Africa), which looks at the Somalo-Ethiopian boundary problems as well as the Somali-Kenya dispute from the legal side. This study, printed in Cairo by al Hay’ah al-Misriyyah al ‘Ammah Li al-Kuttāb, was published in 1979.⁸

In 1974 the Somali government published a book by Shaykh Ahmad ‘Abad Allah Rīrāsh called *Kashf al-Sudūl ‘An Tarīkh al-Ṣūmāl wa-Mamālikihim al-Sab‘ah* (A History of Somalia and its Seven Kingdoms) which discusses the medieval Muslim kingdoms of the Horn, and especially those in the interior of the region.

Another good record of the 1977/78 Ogaden War between Somalia and Ethiopia is presented by Ibrahim ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad, nicknamed « Māḥ », in his book called *al Hazīmah al-Thālithah al-Kifāh al-Tarīkhī Li al-Ṣūmāl al-Gharbī* (The Third Defeat: The Historical Struggle of Western Somalia). This study was published in Cairo by Maktabat Al Nahḍah al-Miṣriyyah in 1982.

The writings of Aḥmad Shaykh Mūsā are very important on the economic issues of Somalia. In his book *al-Tharwāt al Dāyī‘ah fī al-Ṣūmāl* (Livestock in Somalia) he discusses the great potential of livestock for the Somali economy. This book was published in Cairo in 1959. Another book by the same author, *al-Qutn fī al-Ṣūmāl* (Cotton in Somalia) focuses on agriculture as another significant resource, and puts special emphasis on the potential of cotton as a prime product. This book was also published in Cairo (c. 1960). In the field of politics the above-mentioned Aḥmed Shaykh Mūsā also left us a valuable book with his *Hizb Allāh Am Hizb al-Shayṭān* (The Party of God or of the Devil), published in Cairo in 1960.

Throughout history, Somalia’s official contact with the outside world was long conducted in the Arabic language. Foreigners were able to contact Somalia solely through the use of Arabic. The best example of this can be found in the fact that all colonial agreements between Somalis and foreigners had an Arabic text

⁸ Dr. Tuuryare has published another valuable book. *al-Ṣūmāl wa-al-Hiyād al-‘Iḡabī*. (Somalia and non-Aligned Movement), (n.d.)

beside the colonial language, be it Italian, English, French, etc., depending on the colonial power involved. The Somali officials or leaders either signed or put their seal on the Arabic version, and this was considered as the original if any misunderstanding later occurred regarding any clause of the Agreement.⁹ In addition, Arabic was the language of correspondance between the leaders of the Somali militant movements, fighting colonial occupation, and the colonial officials (civil or military),¹⁰ as well as between the Somali shaykhs of the different « *tariqa* » orders. And until three decades ago all normal family or friendship letters between Somalis were conducted almost exclusively in Arabic, and the trees of Somali genealogy, births and deaths as well as any other significant dates or issues were all recorded in Arabic.

The importance of Arabic to the Somalis appears in that the colonial media always used Arabic beside the colonial language. The official newspapers of the colonial period such as *Corriere della Somalia* and *Il Popolo* in the former Italian colony always used both Italian and Arabic, with a similar set-up in British Somaliland, *akhbār al-sūmāl* (the Somaliland News), where both English and Arabic were used.

Arabic is also used in the records of the Somali political parties. Their constitutions, by-laws, and petitions were written in Arabic, and even their emblems and names were associated with Arab political organizations and Muslim movements. The Young Somali Movement (SYM) which emerged in Somalia during the early 1940's developed along the same lines as the emergence of the young Arabs' « *Al Fata* » during the 1920s. The sword, crescent and star used in the Hizbiyah (H.D.M.S.) flag are also typical emblems of Arab and Muslim movements. Both the Somali Muslim League and the Somali National League were political movements drawing on Muslim reformists ideology all over the Muslim world reacting against colonialism and Christianization.¹¹ Moreover, the party anthems of these groups were all sung in Arabic, such as « *Ya Ayyuhā Sūmāliyun* » of the Somali Youth League (SYL), and « *Salām ʿAlaykum Yā Sayfu al-Islām* » of the HDMS.

The newspapers of the Somali political parties were also in Arabic, e.g. « *al-Wahdah* » of the SYL, « *al-Shaʿb* » of the SDU and « *al-Qarn al-Ifriqī* » of the SNL. Almost all of these papers were popular and appeared regularly until political parties were banned in 1969 by the Supreme Revolutionary Council after the military take-over. Many of the private papers in Somalia were also in Arabic, e.g. « *al-Talīʿa* », « *Ittiḥād al-Shaʿb* » and « *al-Haqīqah* ».

⁹ For further information and models of these agreements see Mukhtar M.H. *Tārīkh al-Istiḥmār al-Itālī fī al-Sūmāl Ḥattā 1908* (Italian Colonialism in Somalia until 1908). Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Cairo: University of al-Azhar, 1973, pp. 55-58.

¹⁰ See Caroselli F.S., *Ferro e fuoco in Somalia* (Sword and fire in Somalia), Rome: Sindacato Italiano Arti Grafiche, 1931. And Douglas Jardine, *The Mad Mullah of Somaliland*, New York: Nigro University Press., 1969, p. 43. Also Cerulli E., *Somalia Scritti Vari Editi ed Inediti* (Somalia various edited and non edited writings), III. Vols. Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1957, Vol. III. pp. 117-151.

¹¹ The Rabitah Movements are well known in many parts of the Muslim World, e.g. India, Pakistan and Eritrea etc. About the formation of early Somali social and cultural associations see Mukhtar M.H., *al-Sūmāl al-Itālī fī Fatrat al-Wisāyah Ḥattā al-Istiqlāl* (Italian Somaliland from the trusteeship to independence), unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Cairo: University of al-Azhar 1983, pp. 87-106, and also the Official Records of UN Trusteeship Council: one finds that most petitions and presentations from the Trust Territory of Somalia were presented to the UN in Arabic Language.

When the Somalis of the former Italian Somaliland were first consulted about the future of their official language and the medium of instruction in their schools they overwhelmingly chose Arabic.¹² During the colonial period official documents came to be written in both Arabic and the colonial language, and even after independence the tradition continued, with both Arabic and Italian being used in all official documents. The use of Arabic as an official language gradually diminished and it was overtaken by English for a period, though it was used together with English until 1972. But once again it has come back to being the only other official language in Somalia today.¹³

In general, most Somali government publications (if not all) appear in Arabic and in one, or sometimes more, European language as well as in Somali since the advent of a Somali script in 1972. Therefore, if a Somali wrote anything, whether privately or officially, it was normally written in Arabic. Only in the late 1970s did Somali writings in non-Arabic languages start to appear.¹⁴

¹² See the Proceedings of the first Somali Territorial Council 1951, where in February 1951 the Council adopted a resolution that Arabic Language should be the official language of the territory as well as the media of instruction in the schools. For details about this see Mukhtar M.H., *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹³ On February 14, 1974, the Somali Democratic Republic joined the Arab League. As a result the revised Somali Constitution completed after the military takeover clarified that both Somali and Arabic are the official languages of the Republic.

¹⁴ Again literary writings dominate. Mohamed S. Samantar compiled a collection of poems in Italian and French under the title. *La Pioggia è Caduta: Il a Plu* published in Rome: Tipografia Editrice, in 1973. Nuruddin Farah brought out the following novels: *From a Crooked Rib*, London: Heinemann 1970, and *A Naked Needle*, London: Heinemann 1976. These were followed by his trilogy: *Sweet and Sour Milk*, *Sardines*, and *Close Sesame*, published in 1979, 1981 and 1983 respectively, and lastly his *Maps* published by Picador in 1985. William Siad's collections of poems in French are also significant: there are *Khamsine*, *Cantiques* and *Harmoniques*, the first published in Paris by Presence Africaine, 1959, and others in Dakar-Abdijan by Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1976. Then there are Said Sh. Samatar's *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism*, London: Cambridge University Press., 1982, and Yasiin Cisman Keenadiid's *Ina Cabdille Xassan e la sua Attività Letteraria*, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1984, and Omar O. Robleh's *Le Cercle et la Spirale*, Paris: Les Lettres Libres, 1984. In addition, the non-literary work by Raqiya H. Dualeh *Sisters in Affliction*, London: Zed Press, 1982, and Yusuf Dhuhul's *The Israeli Invasion of Lebanon*, Djibuti: Avicenna Press, 1982. To my knowledge, the above are the only books authored by Somalis which have appeared in languages other than Arabic.