As accounts of the times, the *manaqib* provide the blueprint of a communal moral history through which Benaadiris tried to make sense of the global political and economic changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries within the realm of their own cosmological world.

Urban Woes and Pious Remedies: Sufism in Nineteenth-Century Benaadir (Somalia)

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In the Benaadiri region of southern Somalia, saint stories contained within locally compiled hagiographies provide valuable insights into aspects of social history that would otherwise remain unrecoverable. In this article I draw upon these familiar but underused written sources to challenge some commonly held assumptions about the relationship between urban commercial life and Sufism in Somalia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. First I explore the complex linkages between urbanites and Sufi organizations during this period. Then I examine the nature of locally perceived social crises as they were understood within the hagiographical works, particularly the Qadiri work Jawhar al-Nafis *and the Ahmadi collection* Manaqib Nurayn Ahmad Sabr, *and their suggested paths of remedy.*

> And [Shaykh Uways] settled down to the task of bringing God's worshippers to the rightly guided path by land and sea, [both] male and female. Because of this he traveled to distant towns in the land of the Swahili. . . and the land of the Benaadir, [to] its villages, hinterland and towns. If he wished to travel, a great crowd of men, women and children, both free and slave, would accompany him. (Ibn Umar 1964:11–12)

With this statement, from the hagiography of the Somali saint Shaykh Uways al-Barawi, Shaykh Abd al-Rahman b. Shaykh Umar casts doubt on western scholarly interpretations of Sufism in Somalia. Both colonial officials and contemporary scholars have often portrayed Somali Sufism as a rural phenomenon with little impact on the towns of the region. In the words of Tomaso Carletti, a colonial governor, "I did not see much [Sufi] organization, any brotherhoods or *zawiya*,"[1] located in the towns of the coast. "The term, *zawiya*," he adds, is "almost ignored and I have never thought to adopt the term 'ikhwan' [brotherhood] to designate the affiliates

of a religious order [in the Benaadir]"(Carletti 1912:68–69). Certainly Carletti's interpretation was extreme, but while not denying their existence in urban areas, subsequent investigators such as the Italian official Massimo Collucci, the British anthropologist I.M. Lewis, and the historians Lee Cassanelli and Said Samatar have addressed Sufi manifestations in rural areas alone (Colucci 1924; Lewis 1955, 1956; Cassanelli 1982; Samatar 1983).[2]

A careful examination of locally compiled religious texts, written primarily in Arabic, including theological works, Sufi manuals, and hagiographies, reveals a great deal about Sufism in the urban milieu. Until recently, scholars have used these religious texts primarily for their biographical data regarding the "learned classes" or *ulama* (Ar. sing. *alim*), or to examine the theological positions of various religious leaders (Martin 1976; Pouwels 1987). In his seminal work *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth Century Africa*, B.G. Martin, for instance, uses hagiographies, poetry, and other religious texts solely to outline the lives and theological and political positions of the famous Qadiriyya and Salihiyya leaders Shaykh Uways al-Barawi and Sayyid Muhammad Abdullah Hasan (Martin 1976). Few have sought to use these sources to fill in the broad outlines of local social and cultural history. Recent works, however, such as R.S. O'Fahey's (1990) history of the Sufi leader Ahmed b. Idris, use locally-compiled materials to enrich our understanding of African Muslim societies. Muhammad Kassim (1995) has begun to outline the place of the *ulama* within the urban communities of the Benaadir using hagiographies and local oral traditions. In this article I draw upon these familiar but underused written sources to explore the importance of Sufism and the *turuq* (Sufi orders) for townsmen in Somalia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A close reading of hagiographies, or *manaqib* (sing. *manqabah*), and urban oral traditions reveals that from the late 1880s the urban-based Benaadiri merchant community, like their rural cousins, maintained a complex and interdependent relationship with local *tariqa* (pl. *turuq*) networks.[3] Local merchants were closely tied to the *ulama* and Sufi leadership through ties of family and patronage, which provided them with prestige and spiritual capital. Many had even more intimate relations with the local religious establishment as members of the important second tier of leadership within the various Sufi orders. However, Sufism in Benaadiri society effected more than the solidification of social bonds. As in most African communities, the profound disruptions of the nineteenth century provoked uncertainty within the Benaadiri merchant community. Many sought to account for the upheaval and consequent social unease of the times. The Sufi orders provided a venue for Benaadiris to consider the sources of their troubles and their solutions.

Scholars such as Michael Gilsenan (1973) and David Edwards (1996) have demonstrated, in Egypt and Afghanistan, respectively, that miracle narratives can tell us a great deal about the communities that produce them. As literature, they argue, miracle narratives may be best approached as stories which "provide an avenue for understanding the cultural significance of Islam" in a given society (Edwards 1996:130). In particular, miracle stories act as a popular "discursive vehicle" through which "a certain kind of ethos and worldview are made real and apparent" (132). In short, hagiographies, in addition to glorifying the life of a given saint, provide the outline of a moral universe.

In the Benaadiri context, miracle narratives outline proper moral and ethical norms. Saints, such as Uways al-Barawi and Nurayn Ahmad Sabr, are held up as moral icons whose pious natures should be emulated. I would argue that the stories contained within local hagiographical collections also serve as a lens for actively interpreting the world around them. The end of the nineteenth century brought great hardship to the urban merchant communities of the coast. Disease, commercial competition, and encroaching colonialism spelled economic disaster for local merchants. For many Somali townsmen the causes of these maladies lay not in external factors such as the vagaries of international economics or epidemiology but in their own moral failings. The *turuq*, which emerged as a popular force at almost the same moment as these calamities and attracted a large following among the urban merchant classes, provided a context for exploring these failings and proposing solutions by means of a renewed moral framework. As accounts of these times, the *manaqib* provide the blueprint of a communal moral history through which Benaadiris tried to make sense of the global political and economic changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries within the realm of their own cosmological world.[4]

This article consists of two parts. In the first, I discuss urban Benaadir society and the crises it faced in the later nineteenth century and sketch out the evidence for the links between the urban mercantile community and the Sufi *turuq* in the late nineteenth century. For the sake of simplicity, I will focus primarily on the role of the Qadiriyya order amongst the merchants of Mogadishu, with additional examples from the traditions of the Ahmadiyya order centered in Barawe. In the second part, I examine the nature of the local crises as understood within the hagiographical works, particularly in the Qadiri work *al-Jawhar al-Nafis* (Ibn Umar 1964) and the Ahmadi collection *Manaqib Nurayn Ahmad Sabr* (Nuur [1925?]).

The Benaadir in the Nineteenth Century

The region of the southern Somali coast known as the Benaadir was the northernmost extension of the East African trading coast that included the ports of Mogadishu, Marka, and Barawe. The area had been an entrepôt of international trade since antiquity. One of the earliest mentions of the coast occurs in the much cited *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, an anonymously composed merchant's guide written between A.D. 50 and 60 that refers to the entire region as the "Land of Punt," a country renowned for

the production of frankincense, myrrh, and other valuable commodities (Periplus 1980:62, 64). The southern coast reached its zenith during the middle ages as referenced by a number of well-known Arab geographic works which cite the region's essential role in Indian Ocean commerce. The most detailed and effusive of these works is the account provided by the fourteenth-century Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta, who visited Mogadishu in 1331. He described the town as a cosmopolitan center of international commerce, built on trade between the interior and the wider Indian Ocean as well as religious scholarship (Hamdun and King 1994). By 1800, Mogadishu, and the coast in general, retained but a shadow of its former prosperity. Much of Mogadishu was in ruins, and the ports, once hubs of East African commerce, were minor backwaters of the Indian Ocean trade. This decline was apparently due to a combination of the Portuguese intrusion into the Indian Ocean and pastoral expansion from the Somali interior into the urban sphere.

The coast's initial decline coincided with the arrival of the Portuguese at the end of the fifteenth century. Although the early European adventurers made no attempt to subject the Benaadir to their authority permanently, Vasco da Gama shelled Mogadishu on his return voyage from India in 1499, and a force led by Tristan da Cunha sacked and burned the town of Barawe in 1507. Such raids, in and of themselves, probably did not lead to the direct decline of Benaadiri economic influence. However, Portuguese disruption of Indian Ocean sea-lanes and the shifting of commercial traffic further south to Malindi and Mombasa robbed the Somali coast of much of its economic importance (Puzo 1972:32–35). In the case of Mogadishu, economic decline was exacerbated by disruptions in its commercial hinterland. During the seventeenth century, pastoralists of the Hawiyya Abgaal clan from the interior made inroads into the commercial economy and town life. By 1700, the Yaquub lineage of the Abgaal had seized control over Shangani, the northernmost quarter of the city. The result of this invasion was the abandonment of several areas of the town and the clustering of the remaining inhabitants in the town's other main quarter, Xamarweyn (Reese 1996; Alpers 1983:442).

At the start of the nineteenth century, the coastal towns were inhabited by a variety of kin groups or clans whose structure closely mirrored the segmented lineage organization of the pastoralists in the interior. Some of these groups laid claim to foreign origins. The Hatimy of Barawe, for example, claimed to be the descendants of refugees from al-Andalus, or Islamic Spain; the Waili also claimed Arab origins although from Yemen. The Shanshiyya of Mogadishu contended that their ancestors migrated to Africa from southern Iran. The towns were also home to a variety of lineages known as the Ashraf, who claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad through one of his two grandsons, Hasan and Hussayn, and who laid claim to more or less pure Arab ancestry. Other urban clans, however, claimed either local Somali or mixed origins. The Morshow clan of Mogadishu, for instance, claimed to be descended from Arab immigrants and elements of the Ajuraan clan that ruled much of southern Somalia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Bendawow held that their sole progenitor was a certain Amin Khalifow, a member of the pastoral Hawiyya clan who settled in Mogadishu alongside the Morshow around the time of the town's founding (Reese 1996:167; Cassanelli 1982: 100–101). Finally, groups who were far closer to their pastoral roots lived in each of the major towns. As mentioned above, from around 1700 the Abgaal clan of the Hawiyya inhabited and ruled the Shangaani quarter of Mogadishu along with a number of smaller or newly arrived clan groups. Barawe was similarly home to elements of the Tunni clan, while parts of the Biimal lived in Marka. Both groups were entrepreneurs who had grown wealthy through the emerging commercial agriculture sector along the Jubba river during the first half of the century and obtained residence in the towns through their business connections with settled townsmen (Reese 1996).

The merchants of the Benaadir were primarily regional middlemen. Urban merchants specialized in obtaining agricultural and pastoral goods (e.g. ghee, hides, and livestock) from Somali communities in the interior and exchanging these for imported products (e.g. cloth, tobacco, and beads) with Arab and Indian traders in the coastal ports. Others participated in a modest regional export trade dealing in cattle, ivory, and ambergris among the ports of the coast as far south as Zanzibar (Reese 1996; Alpers 1983). By the second decade of the nineteenth century, the flagging commercial fortunes of the coast began to revive due to the rise of commercial agriculture in the Jubba-Shabeelle river valley and the gradual expansion of coastal commercial networks into the more distant interior.

The emergence of commercial agriculture in the Benaadir was due primarily to the fortunes of geography. As Cassanelli points out, the Benaadir was the only part of the East African coast with a fertile riverine plain in its immediate hinterland. The coastal plain created by the Shabeelle river is only a few miles wide at any given point. However, it continues, running parallel to the coast, for two hundred miles, and in some places the river banks are higher than the plain, which provides optimal conditions for irrigated agriculture (Cassanelli 1982). The easy accessibility of fertile land provided a ready source of food for the major towns from their founding. The transformation of agriculture into a commercial enterprise, however, was due largely to the arrival of a number of migrant pastoral groups in the early years of the nineteenth century. Following their arrival, each of these groups, the Tunni near Barawe, the Biimal in Marka and the Geledi in Afgooye just outside Mogadishu, established ownership rights to the fertile riverine land and within a short time made the local cultivator groups their clients. By the mid-nineteenth century, pastoral entrepreneurs, using these client cultivators and imported slave laborers from southern Ethiopia and elsewhere in East Africa, were producing large amounts of grain, sesame, and, later, cotton for commercial markets (Cassanelli 1982:162).

Although the urban residents of the coastal towns did not at first own agricultural land in the interior, they still benefited from agricultural growth through their control of the ports. While pastoral entrepreneurs controlled the means of production in the interior, they lacked both the facilities and commercial contacts to export their goods to a wider market. They needed to maintain amicable relations with the urban merchants, who could provide access to shipping and commercial contacts and guarantee a favorable overseas market for their produce, which included grain and sesame as well as other pastoral products, including livestock, ghee, and hides, all of which were shipped south to Mombasa and Zanzibar and across the Gulf of Aden to southern Arabia (Cassanelli 1982:162; Reese 1996).

Benaadir merchants also broadened their economic horizons by extending their commercial interests inland in search of "luxury" goods such as ivory and slaves. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the so-called "ivory-frontier" of Somalia extended to the near hinterland of the towns. Some traditions suggest that at this time elephants and other beasts roamed freely about the country "to the edge of the sea" (Ibn Sharif Ali 1954:58–59). Population movements, sedentarization, and continued hunting, however, gradually forced merchants and hunters further inland in search of ivory, rhino horn, and other valuable low bulk goods for the Indian Ocean trade. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, many coastal traders had settled in the interior either to trade on their own or to act as agents for a larger coastal merchant. Most settled in one of the inland towns such as Luuq, Bardheere, or Buur Haqaba or used them as bases of operation for deeper forays into the territory of the Boran and Arussi peoples in present day Ethiopia (Ferrandi 1903:314). Coastal merchants prospered by controlling the flow of slaves and ivory toward the Benaadir towns. Many also made substantial profits in the local grain and livestock markets of the interior (Reese 1996).

In the final decade of the nineteenth century, Benaadiri merchants faced challenges to their renewed prosperity. Before, urban dwellers and their pastoral allies were able to safeguard their economic prosperity by defeating external threats (Cassanelli 1982; Reese 1996). During the last two decades of the century, however, a number of crises threatened Benaadiri economic well-being. Some of these calamities were natural, most notably the drought and rinderpest epidemic which struck much of East Africa during the 1880s. Others were created through human agency, in the form of Indian financial leverage, Arab mercantile adventurers, and encroaching Omani and European imperialism.

The severe difficulties of urban coastal East Africa during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century are a widely documented phenomenon (see Cooper 1977; Sheriff 1987). The Benaadir coast was hardly an exception to these hard times. Rinderpest, as elsewhere in East Africa, decimated local livestock herds in the mid–1880s. The epidemic crippled local exchange between nomads and the smaller coastal merchants that was based largely on pastoral products such as hides and ghee (Ferrandi 1903:11–12). To make matters worse, the Benaadir region also found itself the object of first Omani and then European imperial designs. In 1876, the Omani sultan of Zanzibar Sayyid Barghash sought to establish control over the Benaadir by placing governors and garrisons of troops in each town along the coast. Then, in 1890, under political pressure from the British, the Sultan agreed to lease his Somali possessions to the Italian Company which received the ports of Mogadishu, Marka, Warshaykh, and Barawe and their hinterlands (Hess 1965).

The political impact of the Omani and European presence was initially limited (Reese 1996), but their presence did have a severe economic effect on the local merchant community. Additionally, an influx of Indian merchant capital flooded the region. Indian and Arab merchants were present in the Benaadir from at least the middle of the century (Alpers 1983), but their involvement was limited primarily to activities on the coast as importers and exporters. By the last decade of the century, the influence of these groups had grown alarmingly throughout the region. In 1899, British officials in Kismaayo reported that the Indian monopoly over the ivory trade was so strong that government intervention at the local level was necessary to prevent the impoverishment of local traders (Kenya 1899). Their solution—providing Somali traders free transportation to markets in Lamu and Mombasa—seems to have done little to arrest Indian and Arab influence. By 1911, that same Kismaayo administration reported that Arab traders were gaining an increasing foothold in the local cattle market and that virtually all agricultural commerce with the cultivators of the Jubba river was in the hands of Arab merchants (Kenya 1911–1913:38). In 1914 an Italian commercial official reported that small scale Arab and Indian merchants had established bases as far inland as Balcad trading in all manner of local goods including grain, ghee, locally grown cotton, and sesame (Cuffino 1916:16; Kenya 1924).

As Ferrandi (1903) points out, Benaadiri merchants became increasingly indebted to these new arrivals. Foreclosures were a regular feature of dealings with Indian creditors in particular. One eighty-year-old informant from Mogadishu noted that during his grandfather's time countless urban merchants lost both their property and their livelihoods through usurious deals with South Asian merchants who regularly confiscated the real estate of traders who defaulted on loans (Sokorow 1994). Italian colonial records cite one such instance in the case of Abdullah Nasr, a minor Mogadishu merchant, who was foreclosed upon by his Indian creditors for a debt of M.T. $70. The *baraza*, a council consisting of local elders, the Zanzibari governor, the Italian resident, and the chief *qadi* declared that the merchant had two weeks to make good his debts or have his goods and slaves auctioned and the proceeds turned over to his creditors (Sorrentino 1910:64–65). For the Benaadir, most of the nineteenth century was an era of prosperity, hope, and security. It was ending, however, with a period of crisis, pestilence, and trauma.

Merchants and Ulama, Blood and Patronage: The Urban Sufi Phenomenon

At the same time that the Benaadiri community began to experience the crisis of the late nineteenth century, organized Sufi *turuq* gained popularity in the towns of the coast. From the last quarter of the nineteenth century through the middle of the twentieth, the various *turuq* played a central role in Somali society. While Sufism was known in Somalia before that time, it was largely the preserve of a few ascetics; it only emerged as a prominent social movement under the guidance of charismatic preachers after 1880. The efforts of these clerics were so successful by the beginning of the Second World War, it was estimated that virtually all Somali males identified, at least nominally, with one of the local schools of Sufism: the Qadiriyya, Ahmadiyya, or Salihiyya (Trimingham 1965).[5]

Modern scholars of Somali history and culture have amply demonstrated the importance of rural saints, shaykhs, and local preachers, or *wadaads*. In addition to their spiritual roles, these men frequently acted as advisors, mediators, and even political leaders amongst the clans of the interior (Lewis 1998). An examination of the *manaqib* and urban oral traditions reveals that the townspeople of the Benaadir coast also participated in a vibrant mystical culture and, as I will show below, played a pivotal role in Sufism's expansion.

A number of influential shaykhs of the period made their mark in the largely urban milieu of the coast. Foremost among these was the Qadiri shaykh Uways b. Muhammad (1847–1909). Born in the southernmost Benaadir town of Barawe, Shaykh Uways is credited by his followers with the almost single-handed revival of the Qadiriyya order in East Africa. Accounts of Uways' childhood, education, and travels have been widely documented: between 1880 and his death in 1909, the Shaykh succeeded in spreading what became known as the Uwaysiyya branch of the Qadiriyya throughout southern Somalia and along the East African littoral as far south as Tanganyika (Martin 1976; Samatar 1992). The writings of most western-trained scholars concentrate on Uways' activities among rural and disadvantaged peoples. Qadiri oral and written traditions emphasize the attraction the Shaykh held for all segments of society, rural and urban, elites and non-elites. As the quote at the beginning of this article clearly indicates, Qadiri disciples viewed Uways as an important presence in the towns of the Benaadir as well as its villages and hinterland.

The Shaykh's influence among the urban mercantile classes is demonstrated in numerous written and oral *manaqib*. His first miracle is said to have been performed in Mogadishu among the merchants of the town whom he "saved" from their reputedly immoral ways and initiated into the path of the Qadiriyya.

> And among his first miracles. . . which were related to me by the transmitter Shaykh Nur al-Din Hajj Yusuf al-Qadri from Shaykh Tahir Abu Bakr al-Bantui who said: When Shaykh Uways al-Qadri came from Baghdad he stayed in the house of Imam Mahmud b. Benjamin al-Yaqubi,[6] who received him and honored him, and the office of the Qadiriyya was installed upon him [by Shaykh Uways]. There was in that time in Mogadishu a disgusting practice called *hirkow*, which was followed by two factions; one was called *almugh* and the other *shabili*. Each was a powerful party, being composed of people from Xamarweyn and Shangaani [the two principal quarters of the town]. The members of each faction aided each other with their assets. Among them were the Ashraf, merchants, notables, clan elders, rulers, patrons, and people of the ships. All of them assisted and participated in this abominable practice until the breasts of the *ulama* contracted [with anguish] and they were incapable of forbidding them from it. Hajj Abi Bakr Muhdhar emigrated nine times from the town, finally moving to Warshaykh on account of this abomination and others, living there until his death. . . . As for Shaykh Abd al-Rahman b. Shaykh Abdullah, known as Hajji Sufi, he did not leave. He preached to them and exhorted them night and day and they continued in their abomination and did not listen even though he preached and exhorted until the arrival of Shaykh Uways al-Qadiri in Mogadishu. When they heard of his arrival in Mogadishu and his presence in the house of the Imam they took counsel in their meeting place and said: Tomorrow, God willing, we will meet in the Friday mosque in Shangani and face the Shaykh Uways al-Qadiri so that we may repent before him of the abominations. They met in front of the mosque, performed ritual ablutions and went before Shaykh Uways. They greeted each other, and their leaders said, "O Shaykh Uways al-Qadiri, we repent of the abomination and fraud and abandon it. May God grant us victory and guidance. . . ." And . . . they abandoned the repulsive practice and other abominations with his blessing. (Ibn Umar 1964:111–112)[7]

This incident will be discussed more fully below. Here it is important to note that according to oral and written hagiographies, following this incident, hundreds of townsmen from all social classes, "both free and slave," flocked to the side of the Shaykh and joined the Qadiriyya as *muridun* (sing. *murid*).[8] These new adherents included many of the local *ulama*, including Shaykh Abd al-Rahman b. Abdullah al-Shanshy, known more commonly as Shaykh Sufi; members of the political elite, most notably Imam Mahmud b. Binyamin al-Yaquubi, leader of the Abgaal clan, the dominant political force in the Shangani quarter of the city; and many members of the merchant class (Ibn Umar 1964:8–24).

Although less dramatic than the arrival of the Qadiriyya in Mogadishu, the appearance of the Ahmadiyya also attracted ready adherents

from the urban peoples of the Benaadir. The advent of the Ahmadiyya on the coast is credited not to the emergence of a single charismatic holy man but to the efforts of a number of shaykhs deputized to spread the word of the order by an Ahmadi leader from Arabia, Shaykh Mowlan Abd al-Rahman.[9] According to most oral accounts, Shaykh Mowlan came to the Benaadir coast a few years before the return of Shaykh Uways and installed five pious men as representatives of the order. These five then proceeded to spread the teachings of the order along the coast and up the Jubba valley (Bana Funzi 1994). While never as numerically large as their Qadiriyya counterpart, the Ahmadiyya had, by the end of the nineteenth century, spread throughout the Jubba valley, making it, by some accounts, the preeminent *tariqa* along the river (Mataan 1994). During the same period, large Ahmadiyya followings formed in the towns of Barawe and Marka under the leadership of Shaykhs Nurayn Ahmad Sabr and Ali Maye respectively (Nuur [1925?]; Cerulli 1957:190). A small Ahmadiyya community also formed in Mogadishu, although some contend that membership there consisted primarily of immigrants from the other two towns (Ahmad 1994).

Exact data for the numbers of townsmen attracted to the various *turuq* are non-existent. Family histories suggest that by the turn of the twentieth century most men claimed at least nominal attachment to one of the main *turuq*, the Qadiriyya, Ahmadiyya, or, more rarely, Salihiyya (Dheere 1994; Shaykh bin Shaykh 1994; Hajj Ali 1994).[10] Similarly, an early Italian administrator in the interior trading center of Luuq in the 1890s noted the prominence of *tariqa* membership among the community of merchants from the coast (Ferrandi 1903:241–242).

One of the distinctive features of the *turuq* in the towns was the extent to which the lives of religious practitioners and merchants were closely intertwined. While it was possible to find among the mercantile inhabitants of the Benaadir towns those who were concerned only with commerce and others who followed purely religious pursuits, the social lines between these groups were hardly distinct. The lives of religious practitioners and lay people were closely linked. Their worlds intersected through ties of *tariqa* affiliation, kinship, and patronage. Sometimes individuals were both religious practitioners and merchants.[11]

Few urban lineages were exclusively religious in character. An exception was the Reer Faqih, also known as the Banu Qahtan, of Mogadishu, a clan of religious scholars, who, until the advent of colonial rule, held a local monopoly over the position of *qadi*, or judge (Cerulli 1957). In general, however, urban families and lineage units tended to be involved in both religious and secular spheres of society. Many families, in fact, counted both *ulama* and merchants among their members. While urbanites claim that this was a custom carried out from "time immemorial," evidence of its practice can only be dated to the later nineteenth century and is largely connected to the rise of the *turuq*.

During this period, most merchant families hoped ideally to direct at least one of their sons to religious pursuits and the study of *ilm* (the religious sciences), while the others took up commerce or various trades. Such was the case of Faqih ("jurist") Yusuf, of Mogadishu's Shangani quarter during the early twentieth century. According to family traditions related by his grandson, the Faqi and several other brothers dedicated their lives to study, supported by several younger siblings who became small merchants and tailors (Shaykh Muhammad 1994). Occasionally, this strategy produced a noted scholar or holy man. Shaykh Ahmad Nurayn, a respected nineteenth-century jurist and early leader of the Ahmadiyya *tariqa* from Barawe, for example, was a member of the notable Hatimy clan of merchants. Similarly, Shaykh Abd al-Rahman Sufi (d. 1904), poet and early Qadiriyya leader in Mogadishu, came from the commercial Shanshiyya clan (Nuur [1925?]; Sokorow 1994).

Obviously, not every family or lineage could hope to produce a scholar or holy man of prominence. For merchants who lacked a prominent relative among the ranks of the *ulama*, or Sufi leadership, supporting religious institutions such as mosques or student hostels through endowments of *waqf* or patronizing individual religious notables were the most common means of acquiring spiritual capital. In Mogadishu, as in most places in the Islamic world, notables regularly provided funds for the construction and maintenance of mosques and other religious structures. Evidence from epigraphs demonstrates that from as early as the eleventh century, local personages, including a number of women, supported the construction of mosques in the oldest sections of the town. The Italian ethnologist Enrico Cerulli noted that one of the earliest inscriptions found in Mogadishu's main *jami* or Friday mosque indicated that it was constructed around 1238 and endowed by a local notable, Kululah b. Muhammad (Cerulli 1957:8). Similarly, the Somali historian Sharif Aydrus b. Ali provides a detailed list of prominent mosques built and maintained by local persons of note through the mid-twentieth century (Aydrus 1954:39).

In the hagiographies and oral traditions of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mention of such endowments is rare. Rather than endowing centralized institutions, benefactors subsidized the activities of individual Sufi masters, students, and scholars. The funding of scholarly activities could take a variety of forms. The most direct of these was the distribution of personal largesse. Local benefactors, for instance, might present regular or occasional gifts of cash, livestock, or other foodstuffs to a shaykh or *alim* in order to help finance the latter's study and instruction of students or, more rarely, the practice of traditional/Islamic medicine. Alternatively, a merchant might provide an *alim* with a quantity of goods, such as cloth, spices, coffee beans, which the latter could sell to finance his activities. Merchants are also said to have helped members of the *ulama* finance larger trade ventures toward the same end (Sokorow 1994; Tahir 1994).

In addition to the distribution of largesse, merchants and other notables also subsidized members of the *ulama* and Sufi shaykhs through

acts of hospitality. This often took the form of feasts provided for shaykhs and their followers on various holy days or the provision of permanent or semi-permanent housing. The provision of hospitality to scholars, saints, and students is a motif that appears constantly in both written hagiographies and oral traditions. Merchants might make their homes available to learned individuals on an ad hoc basis. During the 1920s, for example, a hide merchant and follower of the Qadiriyya named Uways Nuur, from the Bendawow lineage, often hosted a certain Shaykh Ooyey al-Qadiri from Jawhar along with his followers. His hospitality usually consisted of providing them with food and occasionally lodging during their stay. Similarly during the 1930s, Hadi al-Barawi, a Barawe merchant living in Bardheere, frequently offered passing scholars lodging for a night or two in exchange for prayers of blessing or lessons in *ilm* (Nuur 1994; al-Hadi 1994).

Hospitality could also take the form of more long-term and concrete investment. Two vivid examples of this are recorded in the oral traditions of Barawe. The first centers around the Ahmadiyya shaykh and *alim* Mahmud Waciis, who settled in the town of Barawe from the Ogaden during the later nineteenth century: "Shaykh Mahmud Waciis came to Barawe in the middle of the night and encountered Shaykh Nurayn Ahmad Sabr and said 'I am here at the order of God. Take me to the house of Suudow Abrar [the pious wife of a wealthy merchant].' Shaykh Nurayn escorted him there and when they arrived at the correct house the former shouted out to her that he had a guest. At this she is said to have replied, 'Is it Shaykh Mahmud Waciis?' And both Shaykhs were filled with wonder at her foreknowledge." The Shaykh is reputed to have remained in the house of Suudow Abrar until his death some years later (Funzi 1994).

Another example of relatively large-scale largesse was the case of the wealthy Barawe merchant Abd al-Qadir b. Shaykh Ismaan, known more commonly as Shaykh bin Shaykh. Oral traditions about the Shaykh b. Shaykh family state that following the death of the Qadiri leader Shaykh Uways Muhammad in 1909, no one dared buy his house in Barawe for fear that it was inhabited by *jinn* or spirits. As a result it remained unoccupied for months after his death. One night, however, Shaykh Uways came to Shaykh b. Shaykh in a dream and instructed him to buy the house. Shaykh b. Shaykh, who was not then as wealthy as he was to become, borrowed a large amount of money from his relatives and purchased the deceased holy man's house. Following this, it became the principal place of residence for all Qadiri *ulama* visiting Barawe, who stayed as the guests of Shaykh b. Shaykh for both long and short periods of time (Shaykh bin Shaykh 1994).

Finally, merchants and notables also made long term financial and material commitments to the education of future *ulama* and religious notables. In addition to entertaining and housing religious practitioners, some urban merchants provided extensive aid to students who came from other parts of the region to study with local scholars. These patrons paid for the subsistence of the students during their stay and built and maintained special student hostels where students resided during the course of their studies (Sokorow 1994). In addition, a local notable might establish a *waqf* or endowment to finance the education of an individual student. The creation of a *waqf* for an individual rather than an institution, such as a mosque or school, is unusual and the extent of this practice in the Benaadir is unknown. However, there is at least one recorded instance of such an individual *waqf*. The hagiography of Shaykh Nurayn Ahmad Sabr indicates that on at least two separate occasions the Shaykh initiated endowments for the purpose of financing the religious education of the future children of two Mogadishu Sharifs (Nuur [1925?]). Given the well-established connection between merchants and religion, it is not surprising that Sufi ritual became an integral part of urban life.

Urban Dwellers and Sufi Leadership

In the towns of the Benaadiri coast the *tariqa* and Sufi ritual became an integral part of urban life from the 1880s onward. Members met weekly, or even nightly, between the *maghrib* (evening) and *asha* (night) prayers to perform the *dhikr*. This consisted of the formulaic recitation of poems, Quranic verses, and other sacred rituals aimed at raising the spiritual awareness of individual participants, bringing them, hopefully, closer to God. Each *tariqa* was composed of a general membership, known as *murids*, led by a *khalifa* with the assistance of a number of *naibs*, or deputies.[12]

Merchants and town notables were more than the followers and patrons of the Somali Sufi movements of the late nineteenth century. Many were also intimately involved in the leadership and propagation of the *turuq*, providing the important second tier of leadership within the movements. In the urban setting, only a few of the *tariqa* leaders or members were "professional" religious practitioners. Instead, many were men (and in some cases women) who combined religious study with their lives as merchants, artisans, and laborers. Both oral and written traditions provide ample evidence of merchants or members of mercantile families who were appointed as local *khalifas*. Many of these were older, well established individuals who, according to one informant, "had reached an age where [they] could be supported by their sons and so could devote [themselves to religious pursuits]" (Hamza 1994). Among the most notable of these was Sharif Alawi b. Habib El Alawi, a wealthy Ashraf merchant, who was the first *khalifa* appointed by Shaykh Uways in the town of Barawe and recognized locally as the leader of the Qadiriyya following the latter's death (Hajj Ali 1994; Ibn Umar 1964:18).

Sharif Alawi was not the only merchant to hold a leadership position in the Somali Qadiriyya. Evidence of urban mercantile involvement in the leadership of the Qadiriyya is also present in the hagiography of Shaykh Uways, *al Jawhar al-Nafis*. This collection contains a list of 150 *khalifas*

appointed by him during his lifetime. The *nisbas*[13] of those on the list indicate that over fifty of them were members of urban lineages. Twenty of these hailed from various urban Ashraf lineages (lineages that claim direct descent from the Prophet Muhammad). Over half of these bore clan *nisba*s such as al-Alawi and al-Aydrus, lineages with deep commercial connections. An additional thirty-two had *nisba*s with clear urban connections connoting either a town of origin (e.g., Shaykh Alim b. Umar al-Maqdishi and Shaykh Umar Heirali al-Barawi) or a particular urban lineage (e.g., Shaykh Muhammad b. Faqih Yusuf al-Shanshi and Hajj Ahmad b. Umar al-Dubbarweyni). Conversely, only twenty-nine of those on this list have *nisba*s clearly denoting rural origins (Ibn Umar 1964:18–24).

The presence of merchants within the Qadiriyya leadership appears to have continued after Uways' death. During the 1920s, Sharif Alawi b. Habib appointed a Barawe merchant from the Waili clan as a *khalifa* in the Lower Jubba. As late as the 1960s, the Qadiri *khalifa* in the inland town of Baidoa was a Marka merchant named Sharif Aw Ahmad (Hajj Ali 1994; Dheere 1994). While this list does not allow us to determine the exact size and scope of Qadiriyya influence within the urban community, it does suggest that urban elites played a significant role in the order's organization.

Clearly, Sufi *turuq* enjoyed a far greater presence in urban Somali society than previously thought. The question is what explains the appeal of mystical Islam within the largely pragmatic commercial community? One possible answer is provided by the *manaqib*, which provide a window onto how at least some urbanites understood the economic and social dilemmas of their time. The *turuq* provided the opportunity for townspeople to discuss the root causes of their difficulties and to suggest ways to resolve the crises facing their community through moral discourse and spiritual remedy.

Urban Woes and the Social Lens of Hagiography

One way to explain the proliferation of the *turuq* and the *manaqib* that grew up around them is to consider them a way for adherents to discuss the problems of society in relation to the crises of the period. Rather than constituting purely laudatory accounts of the miracles of various holy men, the literature produced by the *turuq* was a genre that presented the sacred as a remedy for secular ills. The use of *manaqib* as eulogistic literature dates to tenth- and eleventh-century Maghreb, where the first biographies dedicated to ascetics and martyrs appeared. From this point onward in Islamic history the genre became a favorite vehicle of religious orders, especially Sufi *turuq*, whose adepts wished to venerate their founders and more distinguished adherents using the written word. The founders of the Qadiriyya and Ahmadiyya orders, Shaykh Abd al-Qadir Jilani (d.1166) and Ahmad b. Idris (d.1837), were memorialized in such compilations. This genre remained a hallmark of Sufis through the nineteenth century. Thus it should come as no surprise that with the appearance of well-organized Sufi congregations in the Benaadir came the production of the first locally composed *manaqib* (*Encyclopedia of Islam* 1990:6).

The emergence of *manaqib* as a written genre of literature in Somalia appears to be directly linked to the local renaissance of the Qadiriyya and Ahmadiyya Sufi orders during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The earliest known collections are dedicated to the first generation of scholar-saints, who are credited with the Sufi revival. According to current Sufi leaders and adherents, these collections served to memorialize the saints and to educate new initiates about the *tariqa*. As such, they were generally recited during weekly, or even nightly, meetings, known as *dhikr*, and during annual ceremonies, known as *ziara*,[14] held to mark the anniversary of the death of a particular saint (Sokorow 1994; Bana Funzi 1994; Ibn Umar 1994). Recitals also occurred on a much more informal basis, however, taking place during what B.W. Andrzejewski described as "ad hoc situations, round the evening camp fires in the interior," or "at parties in private houses in towns" (Andrzejewski 1974:18). These were written exclusively in Arabic, which Somali urbanites considered the only proper language of public oratory. Running translations into Somali were generally provided at all such events for the benefit of less-educated adepts and casual observers.[15]

Andrzejewski suggests that such oral performances provided the *manaqib* with a public audience that went far beyond the boundaries of an individual *tariqa*. He notes that while hagiographic stories were often heard during religious events, they also found their way "into ordinary conversation, especially when people discuss some difficult or unusual situation or reminisce about similar things in the past" (Andrzejewski 1974:18). Andrzejewski's comments highlight two important aspects of the genre. First, it existed as a distinct form of oral literature, which was widely known and used in both rural and urban society. Second, and more importantly, individual stories could be used to illuminate particular social problems.

The observations put forward by Andrzejewski were based on evidence gathered during the 1950s and 1960s. However, the presence of hagiographic accounts in Somali oral literature can be demonstrated for a much earlier period. One of the earliest examples comes from Richard Burton, who, in his 1856 *First Footsteps in East Africa*, related a story told to him by a local *alim* about the saint Sayyid Yuusuf al-Baghdadi, who vanquished the infamous magician Bucur Bacar, supposed progenitor of the Yibir group of outcasts (72–73). Several other nineteenth-century European writers also noted the existence of oral hagiographies, albeit usually about somewhat mythical saints (Robecchi-Brichetti 1899; Pantano 1910; Cerulli 1923).

These early accounts point to the possibility that a hagiographic tradition was present in Somali oral literature before the Sufi revival of the late nineteenth century. The emergence of the *turuq* and their tradition of

written hagiography, therefore, seems to have provided a new vehicle of transmission, written text, for an already existing genre of literature.[16] Oral versions of many of the stories recorded about the scholar-saints in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries appear to have circulated widely before they were committed to paper. Shaykh Abd al-Rahman Umar noted that the *manaqib* of the Qadiri shaykh Abd al-Rahman Zaylai contained in *Jala al-Aynayn* were "drawn from the learned, and the mouths of men, and the loving brothers of the *tariqa*" (Umar [1954?]:2). Similarly, in other collections, the oral roots of the *manaqib* are presented as validating their authenticity. In each work the compiler provides a chain of transmission, *silsila*, for every story. Such chains begin with the person from whom the compiler received the story and proceeds backward in time, listing each transmitter of a *manqabah* and ending with the person who is said to have witnessed the actual event. Such chains are modeled upon similar chains, known as *isnad*, used to validate the pedigree of *hadith*, the sayings of the Prophet.[17]

The social utility of various oral genres among the Somali has been amply demonstrated by numerous researchers. The late B.W. Andrzejewski and Said Samatar have demonstrated the various political and social uses of Somali oral poetry, while Lee Cassanelli has illustrated the uses of historical tradition and the histories of individual clans in the definition of social relationships and identities among pastoral groups (Andrzejewski 1964; Samatar 1983; Cassanelli 1982). If, as Andrzejewski maintains, *manaqib* are simply another category of oral literature within the Somali repertoire, then it can be argued that they, like other genres, also hold social meaning. Many of the issues confronted and remedied by the saints of the *manaqib* were physical threats to both urban and rural society: famine, physical insecurity, and epidemic illnesses such as smallpox. In other instances, the issues were moral in character, involving social concerns such as public morality and local tradition versus Islamic "orthodoxy."

Many stories in the hagiographic literature center on public morality and piety. Such episodes invariably pit pious saints against impious, or at least morally misguided, townsmen. This could be viewed merely as the moral invective of holy men against the apparent evils of the secular world. An examination of these stories within the social and economic context of the late-nineteenth-century Benaadir coast suggests that they may also mirror a widespread belief of the time that local society was suffering from a genuine moral and social crisis, one which could only be remedied by turning to God and religion. This is demonstrated by the first miracle recorded in the hagiography of Shaykh Uways b. Muhammad, *al-Jawhar al-Nafis*, which is quoted above. The written *manaqib* does not state the exact nature of the abomination known as *hiikow*. Oral versions suggest that it was a licentious dance which was performed either by the townspeople or by their slaves. In the latter case, according to oral sources, merchants used the event and the carnival-like atmosphere that surrounded the weekly performances to attract customers (Kassim 1995). The written version links this immoral behavior directly to members of the urban elite, especially those involved in commerce: "Among them were the Ashraf, merchants, notables, clan elders, rulers, patrons and people of the ships. All of them assisted and participated in this abominable practice until the breasts of the *ulama* contracted [with anguish]" (Ibn Umar 1964: 111). It was only the appearance of Uways, according to the hagiographer, that led to the immediate and miraculous renunciation of "the abomination" by the parties concerned, the reconciliation between merchants and *ulama*, and the adoption of the Qadiriyya *tariqa* by the townsmen.

In another instance of immoral behavior amongst the mercantile elite, rather than a pious Shaykh rescuing townsmen from the path of immorality, irate townsmen plotted the downfall of an overzealous *qadi* and Sufi saint, Nurayn Ahmad Sabr. During the reign of the Zanzibari Sultan Sayyid Barghash (1870–1888), the Ahmadiyya Shaykh Nurayn Ahmad Sabr was appointed *qadi* over the town of Barawe. According to both oral and written hagiographies, the Shaykh favored a strict interpretation of Islamic *sharia* over the use of local customary law, or *xeer*. Oral versions of this story emphasize that this privileging of "orthodoxy" clashed with the customs of certain Barawan lineages which, in contradiction to Islamic law, excluded women from inheriting wealth or property, thus limiting the distribution of wealth to the agnatic line (Jeilani 1994; Shaykh bin Shaykh 1994). Because of this conflict, the written hagiography states, many local notables and merchants wanted to remove the Shaykh from his position of power (Nuur [1925?]). Leading citizens wrote to the Zanzibari Sultan making false claims about his lack of competence in the law and clamoring for his removal. The Sultan resolved to have the *qadi* arrested and brought in chains to Zanzibar for punishment. The Shaykh, by virtue of his *karama*, or holy qualities, avoided the trap set for him by the jealous townsmen and proceeded to Zanzibar in order to refute the charges against him. He was received by the Sultan and tested by members of the Zanzibari *ulama* who proclaimed that he was an erudite scholar worthy of his post. The Sultan then denounced those who had leveled the charges against the Shaykh and ordered his reinstatement as the *qadi* of Barawe (Nuur [1925?]; Bana Funzi 1994).

Shaykh Nurayn's problems apparently did not end here. Another story from the same collection relates that an unnamed town "leader" attempted to assassinate the controversial Shaykh.

> One of the leaders of Barawe, who harbored ill will against the Shaykh, went one night to Balad al-Rahma[18] with ill intent, accompanied by one of his *askaris* [soldiers]. As they drew near to the house of the Shaykh . . . they saw a person appear by the door whose shape was like that of the Shaykh's . . . there was no doubt of it being Shaykh Nurayn. The *askari* fired his rifle and wounded the person, who fell to the ground. The two thought that they had killed him; but they

> had not. It seems that the deceased was a cow . . . And when the leader came to know that he had not killed Shaykh Nurayn with the rifle he began to keep watch on the affair for fear that it would reach the government of the Italian Company. (Nuur [1925?])

Certainly, the above anecdotes cannot be taken as faithful representations of "historical fact." On the other hand, to categorize them as merely religious polemic robs them of their potential value for the social historian. Instead, I suggest, the above *manaqib* constitute commentary on the many social and economic maladies of the late nineteenth century—ills brought about by a perceived immorality and impiety of the urban elite that could only be remedied through a return to piety in the forms of the Sufi *turuq* and the *sharia*.

Conclusion

Urban traditions record the natural and financial calamities of the late nineteenth century: the greed of Indian merchants, the dishonest character of *qadis*, and the economic troubles of the era (Sokorow 1994; Shaykh Muhammad 1994). However, while countless academics, both Western and non-Western, have connected the decline of East African mercantile society to the expanding world economy and encroaching European colonialism, the compilers of the Somali *manaqib* point to a lack of moral fiber.

The *manaqib*, unlike the European commentaries, interpret local social problems as based largely on the moral lapses of the townsmen. The cause of strife in one case was an "abominable pastime," *hiikow*; in another case, "custom" and "orthodox" *sharia* were the basis for conflict. In both cases it is those who earn their living buying and selling who are identified as having deviated from the true path. Oral versions emphasize this connection between moral decrepitude and commerce, indicating that trade and profit lie at the bottom of immoral behavior. Some traditions state that merchants used the carnival-like atmosphere of the *hiikow* ceremonies to fleece unsuspecting nomads who came to town to trade (Kassim 1995). Similarly, oral versions of the Shaykh Nurayn *manaqib* state that the townsmen's opposition to the Shaykh was based on their fears that *sharia* would conflict with the traditional law of inheritance, which prevented women from inheriting property from their fathers' estates. Such an innovation could have been detrimental to merchants who would no longer be able to keep all immovable assets (houses, storage facilities, looms, tanneries, etc.) within the agnatic line (Jeilani 1994; Shaykh bin Shaykh 1994). From a strictly Islamic point of view, however, the traditional practice was inappropriate and the merchants who supported it were clearly guilty of immoral behavior.

Corruption among the merchant elite was certainly no figment of a hagiographer's imagination. The *alim* Sharif Aydrus b. Ali noted in his history of the Benaadir coast that Mogadishu suffered from a general state of immorality during the late nineteenth century (Aydrus 1954). A more detailed contemporary European account, that of Ugo Ferrandi (1903), noted that, for those who had the right connections, in Mogadishu at least, the rule of law was something of a joke. "Customs administration" run by Zanzibari officials, Ferrandi wrote, "was a myth." The majority of large merchants routinely unloaded cargoes from their ships and transported them directly to their own warehouses, bypassing the Omani customs station and "later reporting to the customs officer that which they thought best, but always . . . much less than the truth." Those with connections to the Zanzibari-appointed governor, Ferrandi noted, need not even report their affairs at all. The court of the *qadi*, which handled most matters involving commerce, was apparently no better. "Justice," he concluded, "was a parody." Favorable decisions were sold to the highest bidder, the "testimony of the *sunna* [the practices of the Prophet Muhammad] did not have preeminence," and "lies were accepted as truth." Furthermore, usury, forbidden by *sharia*, seems to have become increasingly common in commercial contracts between merchants (Ferrandi 1903:11–12, 35).

According to the hagiographies, with the abandonment of *hiikow* and the adoption of the *tariqa* in the story of Shaykh Uways, society, and the merchants, returned to an even moral keel and, presumably, prosperity. The resolution of conflict is not nearly as simple in the case of Shaykh Nurayn. At the end of the two *manaqib* quoted above, those who oppose the Shaykh are checked, but it is not clear whether or not they return to the righteous path of Islam. In fact, in the second episode, the perpetrator continues to lurk on the outskirts of proper society, fearful of discovery but apparently not repentant. Later in the same collection, however, the rewards for piety are described:

> Among the Manaqib of Shaykh Nurayn Ahmad Sabr is that related by the righteous brother Muhammad b. Abdullah b. Shaddad from the El Amr Ba Amr. It is about the Sayyid, Ahmad b. Hajj Muhammad . . . who related to him that one day he set out from Barawe with a group of others for Birtirre, having with them twelve camels carrying goods for trade. They were loaded to their capacity and it was not possible to place anything more upon them. After this they set out walking and arrived at a place halfway between Barawe and Birtirre, and in that desolate and dangerous place two of the camels died. This created a problem, as they could not place the loads of the two dead camels on the remaining ten and it was not possible for them to leave the goods where they were for fear of ruin through looting and fighting. So Sayyid Ahmad declared that they invoke the name of Shaykh Nurayn, place themselves in his debt, and ask for help from

their predicament. After they did so, in less than half an hour a man appeared with two camels. He greeted them, although none of the people knew him. They asked him to carry their goods on his camels to Birtirre and he agreed. When they asked him how much he wanted for his services he said, "Pray for me until we reach your destination then all will be well." And they were happy with that.

When they arrived in Birtirre they again asked him what his reward should be. He said that he wanted nothing from them, as he had everything that he needed. And when they insisted, he said, "Pray for me, as I have been sent to you." From this it was obvious that he had been sent to us by the Shaykh. Then we presented him a Merkani tob [cotton cloth] and a kilo of bunn [coffee beans]. He took it from us but said, "This is only a present and not a payment." And with that he went on his way. (Nuur [1925?])

As this story illustrates, following the righteous Sufi path led to blessings and prosperity, whereas the earlier episodes reveal nothing but frustration for the impious. There is nothing unusual in the portrayal of the rewards of piety over immorality within the realm of Islamic literature. Within the context of Somali *manaqib*, however, it constitutes more than a mere morality tale.

Many of the leaders and members of local Sufi circles from the late nineteenth century belonged to the mercantile elite. The written and oral stories that criticize the manner in which they earned a living provide social self-criticism and a narrative moral history of the community. Numerous urban traditions recount the economic and natural disasters of the late nineteenth century. It is only the *manaqib*, however, which offer a reason for these calamities and a solution to them. The stories cited suggest that certain elements of the Somali mercantile elite viewed the problems of the period as resulting from their communities' own moral failings, a situation that could only be remedied through a return to the true path of religion and piety. For many, the Sufi way represented the best remedy for their social woes resulting in a remarkable growth of the *turuq* in the towns as well as the countryside.

NOTES

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1 In classical usage, a *zawiya* is defined as a "small cupolaed mosque erected over the tomb of a Muslim saint, with teaching facilities and a hospice attached to it, usually established by a religious order." Carletti, as well as other Italian officials and travelers of the period, used the term not in its classical sense but rather to refer to usually rural communal compounds inhabited by a religious leader and his followers. Significantly, Somalis did not describe these compounds as *zawiya*, a term the Italians seem to have brought from Libya, but rather as *jamaac*, or communities. In urban areas the term *zawiya* was also little used and referred simply to a kind of dormitory for religious students from rural areas usually attached to a mosque (Sokorow 1994).

2 Unfortunately, this is a position Lewis has maintained as exemplified by his recent work *Saints and Somalis* (1998), which consists primarily of reprints of articles published in the 1950s and 1960s, which, although lightly edited by the author, continue to ignore the place of Sufism in the urban milieu.

3 The existence of such a relationship will certainly come as no surprise to scholars of West Africa, where connections between Sufism and mercantile elites have been recognized since the 1960s. See, for instance, Cohen 1969.

4 In recent years, historians of Africa have begun to explore the late precolonial period as a prelude to the colonial era. Foremost among these efforts in East Africa are Feierman 1990 and Glassman 1995.

5 A fourth *tariqa*, the Rifaiyya, was also present in the towns of the Benaadir during this period. However, its membership was limited largely to Arabs from the Hadramaut region of southern Yemen.

6 Imam Mahmud b. Benyamin was the political leader of a section of the Abgal Hawiye, known as the Yaaquubi, who were settled in the Shangani quarter of Mogadishu (Alpers 1983).

7 Another less detailed version of this incident also appears in Abd al-Rahman Ibn Umar's other collection, *Jala al-Aynayn* (1954), where it is referred to as *manyas*.

8 In classical Arabic this term is generally translated as "disciple," however, in the Somali context the term connotes a somewhat looser affiliation better characterized by the less formal term "follower."

9 Earlier scholars have held that the order was introduced by an *alim* from Marka, Shaykh Ali Maye, after his return from the Hejaz around 1870 following several years of study. This version of the *tariqa*'s arrival, based primarily on a short biography of the Shaykh which appears to be no longer extant, is cited by Enrico Cerulli (1957:190) and Trimingham (1965: 242–43). This account, however, is roundly disputed by current Ahmadiyya leaders, who recount the story cited above.

10 Following the death of Shaykh Uways in 1909 at the hands of Salihiyya adherents at his rural retreat of Biyoole, the vast majority of Salihiyya followers are said to have shifted their allegiance to the Ahmadiyya, and the Salihiyya largely disappeared, at least for a time, as an urban movement.

11 It should be noted here that Benaadiri traditions and hagiographies make little or no distinction between members of the *ulama* and Sufi leaders. Both oral and written traditions hold that the nineteenth-century saints were all learned in the Islamic sciences and that all *ulama* were members of one of the *turuq*. Thus, there is no distinction between the ties maintained with members of the *ulama* and those sustained with the *tariqa* leadership.

12 In some locations these titles might be reversed, with the *naib* holding the superior rank and the *khalifa* acting as subordinate.

13 Arabic adjectival noun form which designates a person's place of origin or family affiliation. For example, a person from Barawe would be known as "al-Baraawi."

14 The term *ziara* literally means "visitation" and is used to refer to the pilgrimages to the saint's tomb which generally accompany such anniversaries. However, as many informants pointed out, the death anniversary of a prominent saint was commonly marked by ceremonies in all major urban centers where the saint had adherents. Thus *ziaras* for popular saints, such as Shaykh Uways or Hajj Abd al-Rahman Sufi, were commonly held in more than one place.

15 For the use of Arabic as a mode of public oration during the late nineteenth century, see Carletti 1912:63–64.

16 It is important to note here that *manaqib* of both Abd al-Qadir Jaylani and Ahmad b. Idris are readily available in East Africa. In addition, the manuscript *manaqib* of Shaykh Nurein Ahmad Sabr which I found in Mombasa also contains a long hagiographic section on the founder of the Ahmadiyya.

17 The earliest known written *manaqib* in the Benaadir date from between 1917 and the mid-1950s and are concerned primarily with the lives and miracles attributed to a number of prominent shaykhs associated with the Sufi revival of the late nineteenth century. Among the best known are *Jala al-Aynayn* and *al-Jawhar al-Nafis*. The first is a collection of miracles attributed to the Qadiriyya shaykhs Uways Muhammad al-Barawi and Abd al-Rahman al-Zaylai, which exists in both a manuscript version, known as *Karamat al-awli-ya*, dated 1917 and attributed to Shaykh Qasim al-Barawi, and a printed edition from the mid-1950s, ascribed to Shaykh Abd al-Rahman Umar of Warshaykh. The second is another account from the 1960s of the miracles of Shaykh Uways, which is also attributed to Abd al-Rahman Umar. Another important work is the hagiography of the Barawe leader of the Ahmadiyya Sufi school Shaykh Nurein Ahmad Sabr, found only in manuscript form, compiled by his disciple Shaykh Maalim Nuur during the 1920s. Finally, a manuscript hagiography of the Qadiri saint Qasim al-Barawi was compiled as recently as the mid-1980s.

18 The Shaykh's spiritual retreat outside Barawe.

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