some connection with Ethiopia; p. 85 to a clan from Zayla' who moved across to Luḥaiya and settled there; pp. 94–95 refer to a Hadrami who died in Ethiopia (some time before 1487) and visited an African village inhabited by the "Sanakim" and give an interesting anecdote about it; p. 96, a Hanafi scholar from Jabarta who settled in Zabid; p. 100, a Shadhili leader (see p. 7 below), and, finally, on pp. 121–23, an account of the "Lord of Kamaran Island," Muhammad ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Abdawayh (d. 525/ 1130–31), who had trouble with a Sulayhid ruler who was interfering in a succession struggle in Ethiopia, helping one candidate against his cousin. In the course of this affair, Ibn 'Abdawayh fled to Kamaran Island, just off the coast of Yaman, and slightly north of Hudayda.

[21]Sharji, *Ṭabaqat*, p. 25.

[22]Al-Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, 2 (Cairo: 1958), p. 861. *Jizya* is a kind of head tax. The identification made by the editor of this text (note 3, p. 861) of the *'abd salih* with Qadi Ṣalih is certainly incorrect. Tamrat, "A short note," p. 138, refers to an old Kushitic cult of a serpent-god, which might have some relevance to the second part of this story.

[23]Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-Ilman bi-akhbar man bi'l-ard al-Ḥabasha min muluk al-Islam*, ed. G. Zaydan (Cairo: 1895), p. 13. Also quoted by Trimingham, *Islam*, p. 74.

[24]Sharji, *Ṭabaqat*, pp. 37–39. There is also more information about the Jabarti *shaykhs* on p. 195.

[25]Sharji, *Ṭabaqat*, p. 100. The Qadiri and 'Alawi brotherhoods also might have participated in these conflicts.

[26]Budge, *A History*, vol. 1, p. 302.

[27]Cerulli, "L'Islam etiopico," p. 123.

[28]R. B. Serjeant, *The Portuguese off the South Arabian Coast* (Oxford: University Press, 1963), cites this *nisba*, which possibly refers to some village in Somaliland.

[29]Cerulli, "L'Islam etiopico," pp. 117–19.

[30]*Ibid.*, p. 118.

[31]Demoz, "Moslems and Islam," pp. 6–8.

[32]Thomas Hodgkin, "Mahdism, messianism, and marxism in the African setting," in *Sudan in Africa*, ed. Y. F. Hasan (Khartoum: 1971), pp. 109–27.

[33]Hodgkin, "Mahdism," p. 122.

[34]Trimingham, *Islam*, p. 83. Trimingham gives no source for this interesting information.

[35]Trimingham, *Islam*, pp. 84–85.

[36]Serjeant, *The Portuguese*, p. 20, cites 1542 as the date of the Imam's death; Cerulli, "L'Islam etiopico," p. 128, notes it as 22 February 1543.

[37]Shihab al-Din Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Qadir, known as 'Arabfaqih, *Histoire de la conquete de l'Abyssinie*, ed. R. Basset (Paris: 1897), vol. 1 (Arabic text), p. 13, includes comments on the friendly relations between Abu Bakr al-'Aydarus, a great saint of Aden (d. 914/1514) and the Imam Ahmad; pp. 81–82 notes the involvement of Sharif Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Shaṭiri and 'Alawi b. 'Ali al-Shaṭiri, as well as another *sharif*, 'Ali b. 'Umar al-Husayni, also one Hashim ibn al-Zafa'i, a person described as a *sharif*, p. 216. There is mention of a Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Marzuq, also a *sharif*. Muhammad al-Marzuq was given a fief by Ahmad Gran at a place called Bab Sari in Dawaro. He was of Mahri origin (an area on the south Arabian coast between Hadramawt and 'Uman) and had with him a contingent of Mahri volunteers for the "holy war." Muhammad al-Marzuq is also mentioned in Shakib Arslan, *Ḥadir al-'Alam al-Islami*, vol. 3 (Cairo: 1352/1934), p. 166, which comments on his tomb in Dawaro as being "well-known," perhaps a place of local pilgrimage?

[38]Shakib Arslan, *Ḥadir*, vol. 3 pp. 165–67, includes a long list in great detail of these participating *ashraf* and *sayyid* families. There is much similar information to be had from 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mashhur, *Shams al-Ẓahira* . . . (ms. kindly made available to me by R. B. Serjeant), and Muhammad Abu Bakr al-Shilli Ba 'Alawi, *Al-Mashra' al-rawi fi manaqib al-sadat al-kiram Al Abi 'Alawi* (Cairo: 1319/1902–1903).

[39]See Arslan, *Ḥadir*, vol. 3 p. 165, for a Yamani *sharif* of the Banu Qudaym line.

[40]At the time of the wars of Ahmad Gran, the *Sharif* of Mecca was a certain Abu Numayy (ruling c. 1525–1584). Although there is no mention of Ethiopia in the biography of him in Ahmad b. Zayni Dahlan, *Khulasat al-Kalam fi bayan 'umara al-Bilad al-Haram* (Cairo: 1305/1877–1888), pp. 52–56 (to take one source at random), his energetic defense of Jidda against the Portuguese in 1541–1542 (p. 53) shows that he was no friend of the Ethiopians.

[41]Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire* (London: 1938).

[42]Michel M. Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Safavids* . . . (Wiesbaden: 1972).

Migrations, Islam, and Politics in the Somali Benaadir, 1500–1843

Lee V. Cassanelli

This article discusses the emergence and interaction of two rather distinct Islamic traditions in southern Somalia as they appear in Somali oral sources.[1] Very simply, the two traditions can be labelled as *theocratic* and *mystical*. The former emphasizes the legal, administrative, and scholarly aspects of Islam; the latter stresses the personal, psychological, and supernatural aspects of the faith.

The theocratic tradition, which harkens back to the early Muslim caliphates, aims at the creation of the ideal Muslim state whose members are united and governed in accordance with the Shari'a, the Muslim law. The officials of the state — usually *imams* ("leaders of the faithful"), *amirs* (military commanders), and *qadis* (judges) — are, in theory, religious specialists and form, in fact, an administrative elite.

The mystical tradition in Islam goes back to the ninth century A.D., if not earlier. Commonly known as Sufism, it is the Muslim manifestation of that universal religious tendency to personalize and internalize a faith which, at the societal level, has been defined through institutions, hierarchies, and laws. The mystical tradition aims at the individual's ascent toward union with the Divine, usually through a series of steps including self-mortification, meditation, and ritual recitation. This tradition also has its specialists — the "saints," or Sufi teachers — whose task it is to aid ordinary mortals in approaching ultimate Truth. The political milieu in which the mystic works is of less importance than his followers' readiness to receive spiritual insights. For this reason, the mystical tradition finds expression in a great variety of social contexts. Sufism generally is associated with the popularization of Islam, although it should be stressed that the true Sufi masters are few.[2]

Recent writing on Islam in Africa has commented on the complementarity of as well as the opposition between these two traditions of Islamic experience and action. The poles are represented by different figures: the most commonly drawn dichotomy is that between scholars and saints, between the urban sheikh and the rural mystic.[3] The heretofore little discussed history of southern Somalia offers an example of how these two

religious paradigms reveal themselves concretely. Without attempting at this stage to determine how closely the Somali situation approximates the ideal types of theocracy and mysticism, one can, I think, illuminate these basic concepts by looking at the evolution of Benaadir society. I will attempt to demonstrate how the two strains of Islam appear in Somali oral accounts; how their manifestations in the Benaadir coincide roughly with two distinct phases of the Somali migrations; how they relate to the political order existing at the time; and how they confronted one another in the course of the Bardera *jihad* (holy war) of the 1830s.

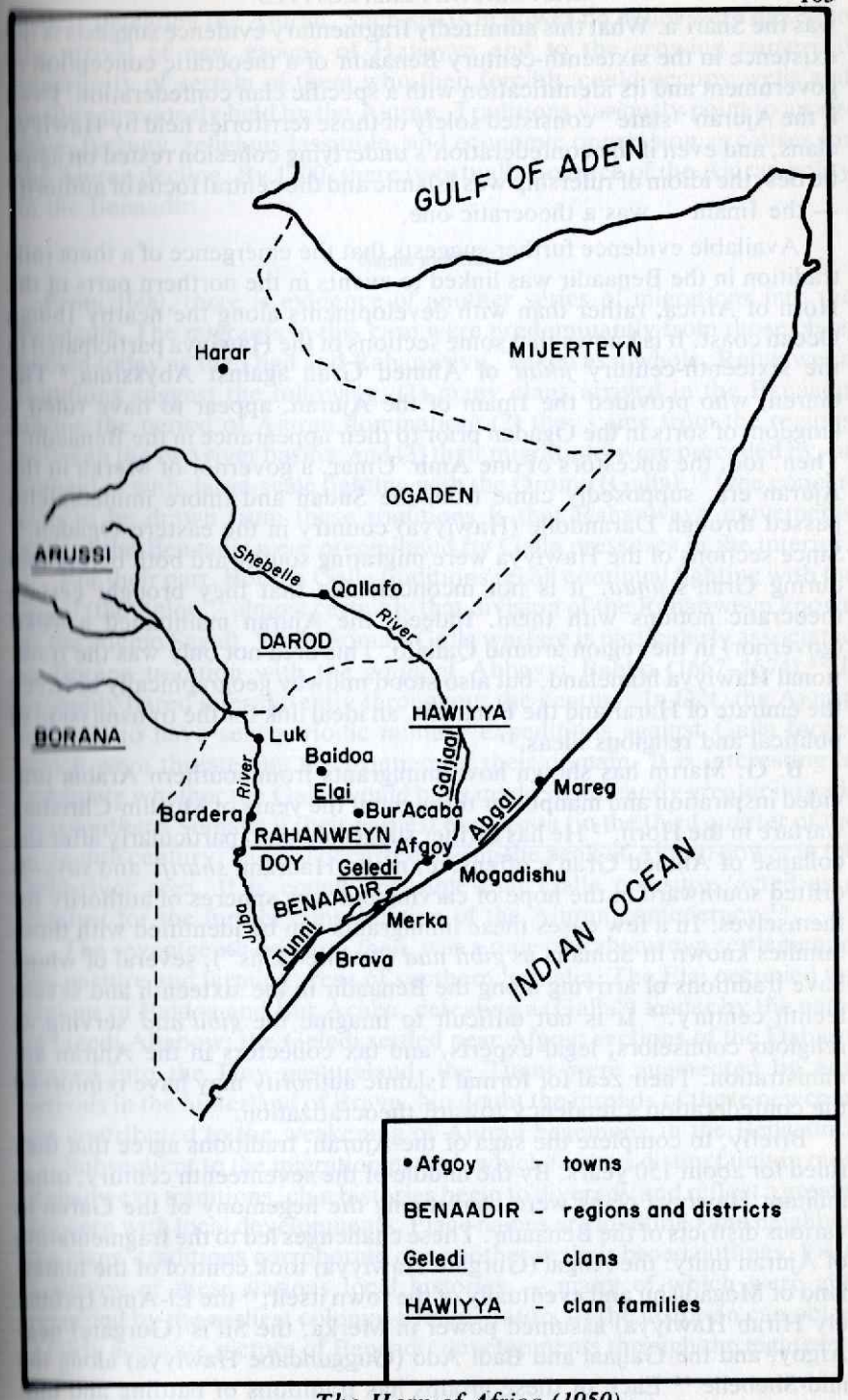
The Ajuran: A Theocratic Polity

About 1500, there rose to power in the Benaadir interior a group known as the Ajuran. Traditions say that the Ajuran governed from Qallafo,[4] on the upper Shebelle River, to the Indian Ocean coast, and from Mareg, in the extreme north of the Benaadir, to the Juba River in the south. To this legendary people are attributed a great variety of technological marvels: large stone wells, many of which still are used throughout the southern Somali interior; systems of dikes and dams for irrigation along the Shebelle; and huge houses and fortifications of stone. It is said that the Ajuran leaders were the first to impose a regular system of tribute on the surrounding population. The Ajuran had a powerful army and may have employed firearms toward the close of their period of domination (c. 1650).[5]

Evidence to be published elsewhere suggests that the Ajuran were in fact a group of allied Hawiyya clans.[6] Moving from the southern Ogaden into the inter-river area, these Hawiyya groups gained control of several important chains of wells. They also occupied stretches of the alluvial plains along the lower and middle Shebelle, plains previously cultivated by Bantu-speaking farmers. By dominating the critical watering sites and river crossings, the Ajuran controlled the trade routes which ran from the Juba and Shebelle basins to the Benaadir coast. Taxes collected from nomads, farmers, and caravan traders provided the bases of Ajuran wealth and power.

For our present purposes, what should be noted is the terminology employed in oral accounts (predominantly Hawiyya) to describe the leadership of the Ajuran. The key figure was the Imam, who was chosen from the family of Garen within the Jambelle section of the Hawiyya. This is one of the rare instances where a leader in southern Somalia is recalled with the title of *Imam*, rather than with a Somali title (*ugas, waber, islao*) or with the more amorphous *suldaan*. The Garen Imam apparently fulfilled the traditional Islamic role, for one account says that "the Imam of Ajuran was in the mosque, preaching the *khudba*, when the war began."[7]

Traditions dealing with the Ajuran also refer to *wazirs, amirs,* and *naibs* who held various positions in the Ajuran administration. (Such titles sometimes are preserved in Benaadir place-names such as *Awal-el-amir*, "tomb of the emir.") Most of my informants asserted that the law of the Ajuran



The Horn of Africa (1950)

was the Shari'a. What this admittedly fragmentary evidence suggests is the existence in the sixteenth-century Benaadir of a theocratic conception of government and its identification with a specific clan confederation. Even if the Ajuran "state" consisted solely of those territories held by Hawiyya clans, and even if the confederation's underlying cohesion rested on agnatic ties, the idiom of rulership was Islamic and the central focus of authority — the Imam — was a theocratic one.

Available evidence further suggests that the emergence of a theocratic tradition in the Benaadir was linked to events in the northern parts of the Horn of Africa, rather than with developments along the nearby Indian Ocean coast. It is known that some sections of the Hawiyya participated in the sixteenth-century *jihad* of Ahmed Gran against Abyssinia.[8] The Garen, who provided the Imam of the Ajuran, appear to have ruled a kingdom of sorts in the Ogaden prior to their appearance in the Benaadir.[9] Then, too, the ancestors of one Amir 'Umar, a governor of Merka in the Ajuran era, supposedly came from the Sudan and (more immediately) passed through Darandolle (Hawiyya) country in the eastern Ogaden.[10] Since sections of the Hawiyya were migrating southward both before and during Gran's *jihad,* it is not inconceivable that they brought certain theocratic notions with them. Indeed, the Ajuran maintained a *wakil* (governor) in the region around Qallafo. This area not only was the traditional Hawiyya homeland, but also stood midway geographically between the emirate of Harar and the Benaadir, an ideal link for the transmission of political and religious ideas.[11]

B. G. Martin has shown how immigrants from southern Arabia provided inspiration and manpower throughout the years of Muslim-Christian warfare in the Horn.[12] He has further suggested that, particularly after the collapse of Ahmed Gran's offensive, many Hadrami *sharifs* and *sayyids* drifted southward in the hope of carving out new spheres of authority for themselves. In a few cases these immigrants can be identified with those families known in Somalia as *gibil'aad* ("white-skins"), several of whom have traditions of arriving along the Benaadir in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.[13] It is not difficult to imagine the *gibil'aad* serving as religious counselors, legal experts, and tax collectors in the Ajuran administration. Their zeal for formal Islamic authority may have reinforced the confederation's tendency toward theocratization.

Briefly, to complete the saga of the Ajuran, traditions agree that they ruled for about 150 years. By the middle of the seventeenth century, other militant Hawiyya clans were challenging the hegemony of the Garen in various districts of the Benaadir. These challenges led to the fragmentation of Ajuran unity: the Abgal (Gurgate Hawiyya) took control of the hinterland of Mogadishu and eventually of the town itself;[14] the El-Amir (probably Hirab Hawiyya) assumed power in Merka, the Sil'is (Gurgate) near Afgoy, and the Galjaal and Badi Ado (Guggundabe Hawiyya) along the mid-Shebelle.[15] Each of these groups has traditions of battling and ultimately defeating the Ajuran. Such shifts in power no doubt were linked to the arrival of new groups of Hawiyya and to the growing numerical superiority of certain of them who then forcibly could occupy wells and pasture previously held by the Ajuran. Traditions variously point to arrogance, tyranny, religious lassitude, and economic oppression as causes for the Ajuran decline. By 1700, there is virtually no trace of the Ajuran polity in the Benaadir.

Saints and Sufis

From 1600, there is evidence of another series of migrations into the Benaadir. The migrants in this case were predominantly from those clans known today as the Digil and Rahanweyn. Taken as a whole, Rahanweyn traditions suggest the following: (1) many clans arrived in the Benaadir during the period of Ajuran domination; (2) they came from the regions between the two river basins; and (3) their migrations were preceded by, or coincided with, large-scale fighting with the Oromo (Galla).[16] One conclusion to be drawn from these traditions is that Rahanweyn movements toward the Benaadir were precipitated by Galla pressures in the interior.

For their part, Borana Galla traditions recall continual fighting with the *sagal* (the "nine," almost certainly that division of the Rahanweyn known as the Alemo Sagal). While Somali-Galla warfare is particularly associated in Borana tradition with the *gada* of Abbayyi Babbo (1667–1674),[17] it probably flared intermittently throughout the century. In fact, the Ajuran are said to have sent periodic military expeditions against Galla forces which were threatening the frontiers of their domain. It is interesting to speculate whether the Galla would have made significantly greater inroads into southern Somalia if their earliest expansion (in the third quarter of the sixteenth century) had not occurred during the peak of Ajuran power in the inter-river area. It is equally possible that Galla pressures acted as a catalyst for the further consolidation of the Ajuran confederacy.[18]

The seventeenth century, then, was a time of Rahanweyn settlement in the pasture and farming areas of southern Somalia. The Elai occupied the regions of Baidoa and Bur Acaba, defeating a (Galla?) leader by the name of Geedi Ababow; the Geledi settled near Afgoy; sections of the Dabarre moved into the Doy pastureland; the Tunni were augmented by new arrivals in the hinterland of Brava. No doubt the inroads of these newcomers contributed to the weakening of Ajuran hegemony in the Benaadir.

Subsequent to the migration period, which forms a distinct unit in most Rahanweyn traditions, clan histories begin to diversify and reflect a greater concern with local developments. Place names are identified and neighboring clans' traditions corroborate one another in their broad outlines. From a survey of these various local histories — many of which were ably recorded by the earliest colonial administrators — the historian can obtain a fairly accurate picture of Benaadir developments through the eighteenth century.

Three trends are of special interest. The first involves the sedentarization of many previously pastoral peoples. The Geledi, the Elai, the Tunni, the Shan Dafet cluster, and the Bimal (who are part of the Dir clan family settled near Merka) took up agriculture to supplement their animal husbandry. Certain sections of these clans either farmed the land themselves or incorporated into their economies families of riverain farmers previously in the area. Somali settlement on the land and their increasingly greater reliance on farming in the Benaadir parallel the processes which occurred among the Galla expanding into the Ethiopian highlands.[19]

The second trend which appears in the majority of post-migration traditions deals with the displacement of the once dominant Hawiyya clans. Just as later Hawiyya arrivals challenged Ajuran rule in the seventeenth century, Rahanweyn and Dir challenged the Hawiyya in the late seventeenth and eighteenth century. Through warfare, clientship, and genealogical assimilation, the Tunni, Bimal, and Geledi acquired political dominance in the districts of Brava, Merka, and Afgoy, respectively. Hawiyya clans were either physically displaced or made politically subordinate to these new clan confederations along the lower Shebelle River. Only the Abgal Hawiyya retained control of coastal territory, north of Mogadishu. As a glance at a clan distribution map shows,[20] most of the Hawiyya related clans today occupy land adjacent to the middle Shebelle River.

A third thread running through most local histories deals with a realm of experience somewhat removed from settlement and warfare. It is the experience of the "saints," the holy men who helped spread Islam through the Somali interior. Stories dealing with the lives of the saints, their miracles, prophecies, and piety, are common in Somali folklore. Many of these holy men go back to the early centuries of Islam, when the faith first reached the northern coast. Some are reputed to be clan ancestors. Still others appear to be timeless, probably earlier Cushitic heroes who have been transformed in popular tradition into Muslim saints.[21]

From the proliferation of saint stories, one gathers that the Benaadir witnessed a great influx of these wandering teachers and prophets in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Their tombs can be found throughout the interior; their genealogies show them to have lived anywhere from eight to fourteen generations ago. Among them are Sheikh Hassan Buraale (tomb at Jesira); Sheikh Osman Gondersha (buried on the island of Aw Garweyn); Sheikh Daud of Afgoy and Sheikh Mumin Abdullahi of Bur Acaba; Omar "Arag" and Abdullahi Isaaq further up-country. These men worked along the frontier of popular Islam, among the recently arrived Rahanweyn, Dir, and Hawiyya clans. Unlike the earlier Ajuran immigrants from the Ogaden, who had brought to the Benaadir an Islamic tradition derived, we have suggested, from the theocracies of the north, later immigrants from the Juba basin brought with them at best only a passing acquaintance with the faith.

Following the passing of the Ajuran, the saints became the main representatives of the "great tradition" of Islam in the Benaadir interior. Setting out from the religious centers of the coast, where the Qadiriya brotherhood was probably established by the early eighteenth century,[22] the saints mediated the faith to the nonliterate peoples of the bush. However rudimentary their knowledge of Arabic, this religious knowledge and their connections with the wider Arab world at the coast set them apart from the mass of believers. They did not seek to establish a state, for their numbers were small. They worked, rather, within the context of the evolving territorial confederations of Rahanweyn and Hawiyya settlers.

The saints served as protectors of the land and the herds, assisting at the *roobdoon* (rain-seeking) ceremonies; they mediated in clan and lineage disputes and helped to assess payments of blood compensation. By consulting their sacred books, they helped to determine the most propitious times for clan and individual undertakings. Their expertise was not in the Shari'a, but in *asraar* (religious secrets), *ta'adad* (sacred magic), and *wardi* (divining). Their books contained astrological lore and Sufi fables rather than legal treatises and tax records.

The following two traditions provide some idea of the way in which these saints are remembered:

> Omar "Arag" [lit., the seer] wandered throughout the country pointing out places where the people should dig wells and *war* [natural basins coned out to collect rainwater]. He could see into the future and used *aziimo* [sacred knowledge] to help the people make decisions. He buried four black oxen, one in each direction, to protect the people from the Abyssinians [probably the Galla] who raided the area almost every year.[23]
>
> Sheikh Abdullahi Isaaq wrote religious poetry. Before the *tariqas* [religious brotherhoods] people knew nothing about *dhikr* [the remembrance of *tariqa* liturgy], so they used his poems to beseech God. The Sheikh loved Islam and worshipped Allah, and sought to extend *'ilmi* [religious knowledge] in the country. He was a man who could speak of future events.
>
> [There follows in the account a poem in Somali which foretells the coming of the white *gaal* (infidels) to Somalia.][24]

The religious aura surrounding the holy men, particularly after their deaths, led commonly to the development of veneration cults and periodic pilgrimages to the sites of their tombs. The territorial focus of these saint cults made them particularly appropriate vehicles for integrating peoples of diverse genealogical origins, as members of the evolving Benaadir confederations frequently were.

The descendants of the saints, to whom passed much of their *baraka* (grace) and *karamat* (ability to perform miracles) usually formed sheikhly lineages. Sometimes these lineages were incorporated into the genealogical structures of the clans in whose territories they lived; in other cases they remained outside that structure, serving the needs of several clans. In one notable instance, a sheikhly lineage, the Gobron, came to stand at the political core of an entire confederation of lineages and subclans, that of the Geledi centered at Afgoy. The Gobron sheikhs supplied the hereditary

suldaan for the confederation. At one point in the early nineteenth century, the Geledi *suldaan* was the most powerful leader in the Benaadir. He not only could call upon a warrior force in excess of 20,000 men, but also was reputed to be an expert in *ta'adad* (sacred magic usually applied for military ends), a repute which was considerably enhanced by his string of stirring military victories.[25]

The transmission of Muslim culture through saints rather than scholars, through sheikhly lineages rather than states, is not uncommon in Muslim Africa. In Somalia, as traditions suggest, the spread of the mystical tradition coincided with the settlement of new migrants on the land and with the eclipse of Ajuran political supremacy. It is scarcely surprising that these coincident developments contributed to a subsidence of the theocratic impulse in southern Somalia.

Post-Ajuran Benaadir traditions do not mention *imams, wazirs,* and *amirs* (excepting the Imam of Abgal). The clan leaders of tradition are *ugas, islao,* and *suldaan*. As far as we know, in the 1800s, Shariatic courts headed by *qadis* (Islamic judges) operated only along the coast. In the interior, Somali customary law (*heer*) prevailed and was interpreted by special lineage elders known as *akhyar* and *wayel*. There is no indication of the existence in the nineteenth-century Benaadir interior of any religio-administrative hierarchy paralleling the *imam, wazir,* and *amirs* of Ajuran times. Rahanweyn and Hawiyya clan heads did not (and do not) preside over weekly public worship at the mosque, as seems to have been the case under the Ajuran and their immediate successors.

The transition from a theocratic idea toward a distinctly local political tradition can be seen in the modified political status of the *gibil'aad* (white-skins). As has been suggested, these families of purported Arab descent had reinforced an Islamic administration in Ajuran times. By 1800, although still retaining a residue of religious prestige, the *gibil'aad* participated only minimally in Benaadir political life. Groups like the Adawiin and the Abagabil took part in clan assemblies merely as advisors; they could not propose or veto legislation. They paid blood compensation to their warrior neighbors, but seldom intermarried with them. Just as they commonly lived in separate communities on the fringes of Somali clan territory, so did they stand on the political margins of the clan. They had no position in clan genealogies and no ritual status among the clan's component lineages.[26]

In place of the *gibil'aad,* the Somali saint became the main link between the sacred and the secular. Devotion to the saints enabled clansmen to accept the mystical and liturgical aspects of Islam without its legal and administrative paraphernalia. The saints' perceived ability to call on supernatural forces gave them the prestige to mediate between man and God and between man and man. They attended to daily needs as well as eternal ones. Just as they could pray for the fertility of a marriage and the recovery of a sick son, so could they help ensure the cohesion of the clan as

a political unit. Dispersed throughout the country, integrated into the economic, social, and (frequently) genealogical fabric of clan life, the saints complemented rather than challenged the existing political order.

The Bardera *Jihad*

The extent to which the popular strain of Islam had become supportive of traditional clan politics in the Benaadir is revealed in the circumstances surrounding the Bardera *jihad*. This nineteenth-century attempt at religious reform was inspired by a group of Somali zealots who in 1819 founded a small agricultural *jama'a* (religious community) at the Juba River town of Bardera. From its modest beginnings as a retreat for fewer than a hundred pious believers, the *jama'a* steadily grew in numbers and influence. Drawing adherents from a great many Benaadir clans, the movement at its peak probably counted 20,000 supporters.[27] As part of its self-imposed regimen, the Bardera community outlawed the use of tobacco, abolished popular dancing and excessive social intercourse between the sexes, induced its women to go veiled, and terminated the ivory trade through Bardera (considering the elephant to be unclean, *hharam*).

In 1836, the movement entered a militant phase, first under Sheikh Abiker Aden Durow, then under the renowned sherifs Abdurahman and Ibrahim. Expeditions of armed warriors overran villages in the *doy* pastures and the *adableh* (farmland) around Baidoa. The reformers had as their main targets the saint cults and the various local liturgies which they felt were pervaded by paganism and anthropomorphism. To ensure the suppression of such practices, the reformers sent *naibs* to the newly occupied areas to supervise daily prayers and Koranic instruction. In 1840, Brava was sacked and its inhabitants forced to submit to the new regulations. This attack is significant in that Brava was a center of Sufi learning to which aspiring Benaadir sheikhs came for study. Among them had been the young Ahmed Yusuf, son of the *suldaan* (hereafter sultan) of Geledi.

The striking success of the reformers ultimately provoked a reaction. A counteroffensive was mounted. Its focal point was Yusuf Mohamed, sultan of Geledi and lineal descendant of that Gobron sheikh who had ousted the last of the Hawiyya from Afgoy district in the mid-eighteenth century. Setting out from Afgoy in 1843, Yusuf's army swung in a great arc through Rahanweyn country, gathering allies from virtually every clan along its route.[28] Traditions say that an army of 40,000 arrived at the Juba and pitched camp outside the walled town of Bardera. After a seige which lasted several days, Yusuf's army stormed the town and burned it to the ground. With the deaths of Abdurahman and Ibrahim Sherif in battle, the one major instance of *jihad* in the Benaadir came to a swift close.

The rise and decline of the *jihad* lends itself to several interpretations.[29] Commercial interests unmoved by the religious message of Bardera were clearly alarmed by the threat it posed to the ivory trade. As a result, the merchants of Luk and Bur Acaba rallied to the side of Yusuf of Geledi.

Then, too, the semisedentary populations of the Benaadir feared a large-scale invasion by immigrating camel herders. Although most of the leaders in Bardera were members of southern Somali clans, the warriors they put into the field consisted largely of Darod nomads from the Ogaden and Mijerteyn. These nomads, whose nineteenth-century migrations carried them ultimately to the Tana River in modern-day Kenya,[30] were situated in the vicinity of the Juba precisely during the epoch of the *jihad's* expansion. Whatever their commitment to religious reform, they did not hesitate to cash in on the spoils of war. Their presence helps explain why the reformers enjoyed their greatest success in the villages on the margins of the *doy* pastures.

Whether or not commercial and clan factors bore on the eventual outcome of the *jihad*, it is clear that factors of a politico-religious nature militated against Bardera's success. Because saint veneration and mystical mediatorship had become embedded in the existing political culture of the Benaadir, the reformers' attacks on these practices were in essence attacks on the existing political order. Moreover, the reformers apparently envisioned the construction of a new theocracy, which did not sit well with the established religious and political authorities.

First, leadership in the Bardera community was elective; during the lifetime of the reform movement, the successive head sheikhs of Bardera came from five different clans. By adhering to this early theocratic ideal of elective succession, the reformers tacitly condemned the leadership of the saints, who inherited both *baraka* and their sheikhly office. Second, the reformers also sought to centralize religious authority through a chain of command passing from the head sheikh through the *wazir* to the local *naibs*. This was in marked contrast to the existing diffusion of religious authority symbolized by the multiple tomb-centered cults of the saints. Finally, by imposing taxes and a program of strict socio-legal reform on the districts they conquered, the Barderans were setting themselves up as an independent political administration, thus challenging the secular clan leaders.

It is hardly coincidental that while the Arabs of the coast and several *gibil'aad* families along the Shebelle supported the *jihad*, the lineages of saints and most clan heads opposed it. The former groups, it will be recalled, stood at the periphery of clan politics, with little to lose from the clan's subordination to a higher authority. On the other hand, clan leaders and traditional sheikhs felt threatened by a movement which obviously aimed at a major political and religious transformation.

Perhaps even more significant than the question of politico-religious status is the participants' differing perceptions of the confrontation. In this regard, it is useful to note the manner in which the reformers appealed to the Benaadir people for support. The following excerpt is taken from a letter written by an ally of the Bardera sheikh to the inhabitants of Brava. It urges them to throw off their allegiance to the sultan of Geledi.

> Now certainly our dead will go to Paradise while theirs will go to Hell, according to God's words: They will be afflicted by the same sorrows as you, but you will be able to hope from God that which they will not be allowed to hope . . . . If you follow the sectarian crowd of the unbeliever Yusuf, there will no longer be bonds between our families . . . . Greet for us your learned ones, who fear God, those whom he does not turn from the true way and who do not join with the sect of that ravenous son of an ass.[31]

The appeal is made in the language of Muslim reform and urges a return to the true way. As one informant told me, Sheikh Ibrahim of Bardera wanted to make a *sameen* (peace offering) based not on the traditional agreement between clans, but on the common bond of Islam. In proposing this "pax Islamica" the Bardera leader offered his opponents copies of the Koran and other religious books (perhaps versions of the *hadith*).[32]

An oral account from the Geledi side reveals a different perspective.

> The people of Bur Acaba and Baidoa feared the constant magic of the Bardera diviner, who always foretold when an army was coming to attack the *Iberay* [the robed ones, as the reformers were known by the upcountry people] . The people went to Afgoy to find one of the Gobron practitioners [of *ta'adad*]. This man they brought to the Bur, and he told them to place some red earth on a camel's back and told one of them to sit backward on the camel.
>
> When the diviner of Bardera saw the camel he said, "That man is still in the region of the red earth [near the coast] and is riding in the other direction." In this way, the *Iberay* were deceived and ultimately defeated.[33]

Here the perceived struggle was not the classical Islamic one of corruption versus reform; rather, it was a contest between rival Muslim "practitioners" to see whose *baraka* and whose *ta'adad* was superior. For the opponents of Bardera, who clearly considered themselves Muslims, Islam was not at stake in the war, but the prestige of their saints and their saints' *ta'adad* was. Thus, instead of receiving the books from Ibrahim Sherif, the Gobron sheikhs consulted their own books and their own "secrets." Ignoring the reformers' call for a *sameen* based on Islam, Sultan Yusuf of Geledi attacked them with an army drawn from his traditional clan allies.

Thus the Bardera wars represent not only the rivalry of two leaders but also that of two religious traditions and, indeed, of two views of politics. Without pushing the parallel too far, it might be said that the Bardera *jihad* marked the resurrection in the Benaadir of the theocratic tradition which first surfaced in Ajuran times. Like the Ajuran leaders, the Bardera reformers drew their inspiration and outlook from impulses for reform in the wider Islamic world. In contrast, the Geledi confederation represented a politico-religious tradition whose roots lay in the post-Ajuran milieu. Geledi's political system (and that of its allies) rested on clanship and notions of territoriality. The system was reinforced by a popular variant of mystical Islam which was able to accommodate astrology, divination, and magic under its roof and which stressed the notions of heritable lineage

baraka and mystical mediatorship. In the end, the latter tradition won out. Its victory proclaimed the success of the marriage between mystical Islam and Benaadir politics.

Conclusion

From this cursory and rather schematic presentation of 350 years of Benaadir history, some implications may, I think, be drawn. First, it has been suggested here that the Somali migrations involved considerably more than the occupation of greener pastures. Without denying an underlying economic rationale, one can assert that population movements in the Horn implied a movement of ideas. New arrivals not only tended to challenge or reinforce or modify existing political practices, but also extended the lines of ongoing religious communication between, in this case, north and south, and interior and coast. The emergence of certain theocratic and mystical ideas in the Benaadir almost certainly was linked to the two distinct series of pastoral movements into the area from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century and to the dispersal, first, of Hadrami *sayyids* and *sharifs* and, then, of peripatetic saints. This is not, of course, to deny the contribution of existing political and religious notions to the ultimate working-out of political constitutions and belief systems.

The paradigms presented in this article also may illuminate some aspects of more recent Somali history. When the great movement of Muslim resistance to colonialism in the Horn of Africa blossomed in 1899, it started and spread, not surprisingly, from the north. Sayyid Mohamed Abdille Hassan's call for religious reform and for a Somali unity transcending clan ties never received much support in the Benaadir, although several southerners eventually became "dervishes," as the Sayyid's followers were known.[34] Where entire Benaadir clans did oppose the Italian occupation, the reasons were as much local as pan-Islamic. The failure of the *jihad* to ignite the Benaadir population has been attributed variously to the dervish leader's lack of genealogical allies in the south, to the opposition of the Qadiriya brotherhood (the Sayyid was a leader of the Salihiya), and to the greater economic stake of the largely agricultural southerners. Each of these was no doubt a contributing factor. However, it also seems possible to view this failure in the context of Benaadir religious history, as the result of that mutually beneficial accommodation between Benaadir political thought and popular Islam. Many inhabitants of the region had risen in 1843 to defeat one reformist *jihad* which had sought to alter radically the nature of Benaadir society. Is it surprising that they had little enthusiasm for another?

This brings us back to the initial distinction between the theocratic and mystical traditions. In suggesting that a particular tradition conditioned the Benaadir Somalis' response to appeals for politico-religious reform, this article hints at the possibility of sketching an intellectual history of the Benaadir. By looking at various clusters of traditions — first Hawiyya and

Rahanweyn, then those of Bardera and Geledi — one discovers not only different interpretations of events, which is predictable, but also that there existed more than one conceptual framework through which events were viewed. In the case of the Bardera *jihad,* it appears that a scholarly, "international," and theocratic Islamic perspective saw the struggle in quite a different fashion than did a popular, local, and supernaturally oriented one. Insofar as conceptual frameworks help mold as well as define events, the dichotomy has more than a retrospective importance.

If indeed the majority of the Benaadir's long-time inhabitants saw the Bardera conflict as a rivalry between two sources of mystical knowledge, two sets of mystical practices, and not as a choice between politico-religious reformation and moral stagnation, then opting for Geledi leadership was not a case of standing against the intellectual mainstream of Islamic reform. The Benaadir Rahanweyn had their own intellectual mainstream — perhaps moving toward the notion of the traditional clan head as supreme master of the mystical arts. Their choice was made within the intellectual parameters of the mystical tradition, that is, which "saint" possessed the superior *baraka* and *karamat,* and not within the parameters of a theocratic tradition whose goals were political and administrative change. In rooting themselves in the Somali environment and society, the two Islamic traditions had contributed to the evolution of two distinct idea systems whose interplay consequently informed much of recent Benaadir history.

NOTES

[1]Most of the information presented here comes from interviews conducted during a year of field research in southern Somalia (1971) and from Italian reports and monographs surveyed at the Archivio Storico dell'ex-Ministero dell'Africa italiana (ASMAI) and at the Istituto per l'Africa, both in Rome. Oral informants are given full citation in the author's doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1973.

I am especially grateful to B. G. Martin and Louis Brenner for helping to clarify some of the obscurities in the literature on Islam. The resulting generalizations and simplifications are mine alone.

When speaking of the "Benaadir," I intend not only the coastal towns traditionally known by that name (Warsheikh, Mogadishu, Merka, Brava), but also, by extension, the hinterland of those towns, extending inland some 75 miles.

[2]The analytical distinction drawn here should not be taken to imply that the two traditions exist independently or in constant opposition. Frequently, the reformers who sought to establish theocratic states in Africa were mystics whose *jihads* were preceded by *hijra* (retreat), during which meditation and prayer provided the source and strength of future actions. Likewise, the mystical tradition has been institutionalized in the religious orders, which have their own internal hierarchy and set of regulations. See, for example, J. S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

[3]For example, Nikki R. Keddie, editor, *Scholars, Saints and Sufis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), introduction and chapters by L. C. Brown, E. Gellner, and V. Crapanzano.

[4]Unless otherwise noted, "traditions" refer to accounts collected by the author in the field, usually from a number of informants. Where a single source has provided the information, the informant is cited.

[5]See Enrico Cerulli, *Somalia: Scritti v ari editi ed inediti* (Rome: 1957, 1959, 1964), vol. I, pp. 62–64; vol. II, p. 247.

[6]Michele Pirone and Lee Cassanelli are preparing an article which analyzes the available evidence for the Ajuran.

The various clan-families mentioned here are described and located in the total Somali genealogy by I. M. Lewis, *Peoples of the Horn of Africa* (London: 1955, 1969).

[7]From a document in the possession of Sheikh Abow Yunis Sheikh Ashir of Mererey, translated for me from the Arabic by Ahmed Sheikh Osman and Mohamed Rinjele. The document is a compendium of earlier oral tranditions which were written down probably in the mid-nineteenth century.

[8]Chihabed Din Ahmed, *Histoire de la Conquête de l'Abyssinie* (Paris: 1897), translated by René Basset, vol. II, pp. 168–69. Ahmed Gran assumed the title of Imam about 1527.

[9]Michele Pirone, "Leggende e tradizioni storiche dei Somali Ogaden," *Archivio per l'Antropologia e l'Etnografia* 84 (1954): 120–21.

[10]Sharif 'Aydarus al-Nadīrī al-'Alᵃwī, *Bughyat al-Amāl fī ta'rīkh al Sumal* (Mogadishu: 1955), pp. 100–101. I am grateful to B. G. Martin for locating and translating the relevant parts of this text for me.

[11]In this regard, it is worth noting that direct contacts between Bali and Merka are evident in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, perhaps involving the diffusion of the Shafi'i rite of Islamic law. See Enrico Cerulli, *L'Islam di Ieri e di Oggi* (Rome: 1971), pp. 317–18, 346–48, 352–53.

[12]See the article in this volume. See also "Migrations from the Hadramawt to East Africa and Indonesia, c. 1200 to 1900," presented at the Fifteenth African Studies Association Meeting, Philadelphia, November 1972.

[13]See, for example, Emilio Rovatti, "Mogadiscio" (ASMAI, position 87/1, folder 7); Massimo Colucci, *Principi di Diritto Consuetudinario della Somalia italiana meridionale* (Florence: 1924), pp. 105–106, nos. 7 and 8; and P. Barile, *La Colonizzazione fascista nella Somalia meridionale* (Rome: 1935), pp. 117–19. Despite its title, the latter contains several important historical traditions.

[14]The Abgal, who occupied Mogadishu in the seventeenth century, earlier had claimed the title of *Imam*. The title was retained in the Yaqub family into the present century. The Abgal Imam, however, enjoyed little authority outside his own clan.

[15]Field notes. See also B. Pedrazzini, "Monografia della Stazione di Itala" (ASMAI, position 87/1, folder 6); C. Guillain, *Documents sur l'Histoire, la Géographie, et le Commerce de l'Afrique Orientale* (Paris: 1856–58), vol. 3, pp. 141–42; and Cerulli, *Somalia*, 1, pp. 63–65; 2, pp. 247–57.

[16]Field notes from Afgoy and Dafet. These can be compared with traditions collected by Colucci, *Principi*, pp. 104–10 and 124–40, *passim;* Barile, *La Colonizzazione*, pp. 116, 123; and Gualtiero Benardelli, "Cenno monografico sul paese dei Gherire," Missione del Governo della Somalia italiana (1937), available in the library of the National University, Mogadishu.

[17]I am grateful to Asmarom Legesse for permission to consult his field notes on this point.

[18]Allan Hoben suggested this as a possible interpretation.

[19]Colucci, *Principi*, provides several examples of settlement patterns and reconstructs some of the historical factors that help explain them.

[20]Lewis, *Peoples of the Horn*, end map.

[21]Part of the subsequent discussion on the saints follows I. M. Lewis, "Sufism in Somaliland: a Study in Tribal Islam," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17 (1955): 581–602 and 18 (1956): 146–160; I. M. Lewis, "Conformity and Contrast in Somali Islam," in Lewis, editor, *Islam in Tropical Africa* (London: 1966); and Cerulli, *Somalia*, 1, pp. 204–206.

[22]Personal communication from B. G. Martin.

[23]Provided by Sayyid Haji Nurow Jennay of Baidoa to my assistant, Mohamed Rinjele, 7 August 1971.

[24]Provided by Sheikh Mohamed Nur Massack of Mogadishu, 17 July 1971.

[25]Virginia Luling of the School of Oriental and African Studies is in the process of publishing the results of her field work among the Geledi of Afgoy district. I am grateful to her for much detailed information on the Geledi.

[26]See Michele Pirone, *Sguardo alla società somala* (Mogadishu: 1965); and information supplied by Virginia Luling on the *gibil'aad* of Afgoy district.

[27]The account of the Bardera *jihad*, which I hope to present in greater detail elsewhere, draws on many oral accounts; on an unpublished manuscript containing notes and excerpts from the diary of the Italian explorer and later administrator Ugo Ferrandi, which was found in the Garesa (now National) Museum library in Mogadishu; and on the following published works: Ugo Ferrandi, "Gli scek di Bardera," *Bolletino della Società africana italiana* 11 (1892): 5–7; "Extract from a Journal by Lieut. W. Christopher," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 14 (1844): 90–93; Guillain, *Documents*, 3, pp. 35–39; L. Krapf, *Reisen in Ost-Afrika* (Korntal: 1858), pp. 206–207; and I. M. Lewis, "La Comunita ('Giamia') di Bardera sulle rive del Giuba," *Somalia d'Oggi* 2/1 (1957): 36–37.

[28]Guillain's informant detailed the route. *Documents*, 3, pp. 42–43.

[29]Which will be fully discussed in another article.

[30]I. M. Lewis, "The Problem of the Northern Frontier District of Kenya," *Race* 5/1 (1963): 48–60; C. Zoli, *Oltre-Giuba* (Rome: 1927), pp. 141 ff.; and Cerulli, *Somalia*, 1, pp. 66–68.

[31]Guillain, *Documents*, 3, pp. 143–45, has a French translation of the letter.

[32]Sheikh Yusuf Muhhyeddin of Mererey, 26 August 1971.

[33]This popular account from the Baidoa area was provided by Mustafa Sheikh Hassan of the Ministry of Education, Mogadishu.

[34]Interestingly, the Sayyid's movement did create some enthusiasm among the Darod clans west of the Juba. While Darod participation in the *jihad* may have resulted from their distant ties of kinship with Sayyid Mohamed, it is probably significant that many Darod families had arrived at the Juba during the time of, and probably participated in, the Bardera *jihad*.