

A MODERN TREND IN NIGERIAN ARABIC LITERATURE:
THE CONTRIBUTION OF ʿUMAR IBRĀHĪM

BY

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To Ogunleye, Babatunde, Ayokunu and Onaolapo.
With them, I am able to live in a Nigerian home
while in London.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a research into the growth in Nigeria of Modern Arabic Literature, from the impact of modern secular thought on the medieval Arabic-Islamic literary tradition. In chapter one the spread to Nigeria of Islam and the growth within its cultural context of Arabic literature are discussed in the light of the classical Arabic literary theory. Cultivated as an integral part of Islamic traditional sciences, Arabic literature throughout its development in Nigeria had remained the function of Islamic religion. All the literary men were essentially Muslim jurists (al-fuqahā') writing in a sacred medium. The various aspects of this religious literary tradition, al-taqlīd, are described with illustrations in chapter two.

In chapter three the process of how modern European literature had given birth in Egypt and Greater Syria to Modern Arabic Literature, and its major currents are described. Thus inspired, Modern Arabic Literature is not Islamic but Arab nationalist oriented with very little to offer the non-Arab Muslims in the name of the Islamic Commonwealth. The non-Arab Muslims have accordingly embarked on developing their own national literature in English, French or a vernacular. This phenomenon, seen in Turkey, Iran and Senegal is also demonstrated in Nigeria by the birth of modern Hausa literature instead of Arabic. This development is discussed in chapter four within the context of the Western cultural impact on Islamic Nigeria.

But the study of Arabic and Islamic religion in secular

institutions imposed by modern political order has begun to challenge the existing religious literary tradition. Nigeria has now produced some Arabists, including Christians, in whose literary innovations Arabic language and literature is no longer an exclusive function of Islamic culture. Influenced by neo-classical Arab writers, the most outstanding contribution to this new trend is the dīwān (anthology) of 'Umar Ibrāhīm, the literary exposition of which is made in chapter five. In conclusion, the scope of the literary innovations introduced into Nigerian Arabic literature is highlighted with an attempt to determine its prospect.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	Asian and African Studies
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BSOS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies
HSNBN	Historical Society of Nigeria Bulletin of News
IJMES	International Journal of Middle East Studies
JAH	Journal of African History
JAL	Journal of Arabic Literature
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JARS	Journal of Arabic and Religious Studies
JHSN	Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JRAS	The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
MSS	Manuscript (individually described and located)
NATAIS	Journal of the Nigerian Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies
RBCAD	Research Bulletin of the Centre of Arabic Documentation
WAJE	West African Journal of Education
WASC	West African School Certificate

SYSTEM OF TRANSCRIPTION

The following English equivalents of Arabic letters, based on the new edition of Encyclopaedia of Islam, have been adopted. In some cases, however, Anglicized proper names, except when in Arabic text, are not transcribed.

<u>Arabic Symbol</u>	<u>Equivalent</u>
أ	a
ب	b
ت	t
ث	<u>th</u>
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh

Arabic SymbolEquivalent

ص

s

ض

d

ط

t

ظ

z

ع

c

غ

gh

ف

f

ق

q

ك

k

ل

l

م

m

ن

n

ه

h

و

w

ي

y

Short Vowels: a i u

Long Vowels: ā ī ū

Diphthong: ay aw

INTRODUCTION

Although the origin of Arabic literature (poetry) antedated Islam, its eventual development was primarily motivated by the need to standardize Arabic language for the sake of the Holy Qur'ān. The growth of Arabic literary theory thus proceeded from the codification of Arabic grammar, philology, rhetorics and prosody to which, under the influence of the Aristotelian Rhetorics, the art of poetry was reduced. It was then incorporated, like Rhetorics in medieval Trivium, into Islamic traditional sciences as a craft in which form it had been diffused through Egypt, North Africa and the Maghrib into Nigeria.

Introduced in this form, Arabic language and literature had remained the perquisite of only the learned malams, composing in Arabic, 'the very language of God'. All the writings in verse or prose, accordingly, had remained exclusively the function of Islamic culture until the contact of Islamic Nigeria, this century, with Western culture. Under the influence of modern political order to which the Sokoto Caliphate had given way, this old literary trend is now being challenged by the study of Arabic and Islamic religion in secular institutions. A number of secular oriented literary innovations have also emerged the discussion of which is the central theme of this study.

This study is, therefore, an extension to Nigeria of the processes of modernization and secularization of medieval Arabic literature, which has marked the Arab world since the middle of the

last century. Unlike most of the previous studies of Arabic literature in Nigeria, it is secular oriented having been inspired by secular thought. It is written, therefore, neither within the medieval Islamic cultural context nor with the goals of promoting or demoting Islam, an impression which its secular orientation might wrongly convey. More or less a revolt against the existing religious tradition, this study is critical in its descriptive approaches. It is equally analytical with most of its inferences and conclusions derived from the 'mother of the books'.

This study aims at highlighting the process of secularising Arabic in Nigeria so that it is possible to be studied in a secular context alongside English, French, Hausa, Yoruba and other languages and literatures in Nigeria. It would favour the view that Arabic language and literature should be studied for its own sake and not for the sake of the Arabic Qur'ān which can now be understood in English or different Nigerian languages. This secularisation is arguably the only hope for the survival of Arabic language and literature outside a religious context in Contemporary Nigeria.

Being secular oriented, this approach constitutes a departure from most of the previous studies on Nigerian Arabic literature. Without those works which take a 'religious' view, however, the undertaking of this study would have been practically impossible since any modern trend must have proceeded from the old. In all respect, therefore, this study is born of all the previous studies and to them all, it is indebted. Formost among such works is Dr. 'Alī Abūbakar's study¹ described by 'Umar Jah² as an indispensable book on Nigerian history, religion, literature and other non-material.

African culture. It is in this book that I had my first acquaintance with 'Umar Ibrāhīm whose dīwān, Ḥadīqatu 'l-azhār,³ I have used in this study, to illustrate the main modern trend in Nigerian Arabic literature.

There are a large number of historical and religious studies⁴ most of which are essential to the understanding of the development of Islamic culture in Nigeria. But only a few literary studies of major importance have so far been undertaken, since literary art is more or less a secondary characteristic of Nigerian Arabic writings. Those few indispensable studies include the works of Shaikh Ādam 'Abdullāh al-llūrī,⁵ Professor M. Hiskett,⁶ Dr. A.D.H. Bivar⁷ and Professor S.A.S. Galadanci.⁸ A number of unpublished theses⁹ on Arabic literature have also been written in addition to a few literary articles which have begun to appear in some of the Nigerian academic journals.¹⁰ These are the main source of my knowledge of the growth of Arabic-Islamic literary tradition in Nigeria.

Making use of a number of classical and modern works on Arabic poetics and literary theory,¹¹ this study has described how poetry had been reduced to mere rhetoric and incorporated into Islamic traditional sciences in which form it had come to Nigeria. The classical concepts of literary aesthetics, creativity and the various methods of playing the sedulous ape, by which Nigerian scholars have learnt to be poets, are discussed with illustrations mainly from the Shaikh 'Abdullāh's poetry.¹² Other aspects of literary traditionalism in Nigerian poetry are also highlighted. The poetic theme, language, style and imagery are all subjected to strict Islamic tradition and ṣūfī ethos since the writers as observed by most of my predecessor-writers, are not

poets but Muslim jurists (al-fuqahā'). While panegyric and elegy for the Prophet and his best friends flourished very well for example, bacchanalian verses were simply unknown.

Other prominent features include the opening and closing of verses with a doxology, extensive quotation from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, acrostic compositions and chronogram tradition. Prosodic rules are strictly adhered to except in a very few cases such as when the qāfiya is repeated (al-'iṭā') or the enjambment (al-tatmīm) violated. With a very few exception, the ideas, emotions and images are generally poor, conventional and trite, a phenomenon which can be traced to the limited scope of the curriculum allowed by the strict orthodox scholarship tradition.

The main source of literary inspiration was pre-Islamic poetry¹³ which were studied not as creative writings but mainly as classical references for grammatical expositions (lughā). The Nigerian poets also cultivated most of the early Islamic verses such as the poems of Ka'b b. Zuhayr, Ḥasan b. Thābit and al-Khansā'. They were in contact, of course, with the bulk of the religious poetry of the Age of Decadence, Ibn Durayd, al-Būṣīrī and al-Fāzāzī's works being outstanding examples. But they were not generally influenced by most of the Umayyad and Abbasid poetry of which orthodox Islam has not approved. The identification by Dr. Sambo¹⁴ of the influences of such poets as 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a and al-Jarīr in Nigerian verses must, therefore, be considered exceptional.

The Maqāmāt of al-Ḥarīrī were also cultivated but the archaism of this work, and such profanity as dramatised by Abū Zaid al-Sarūjī,

could not have impressed any puritan. Its influence, accordingly, was limited to the strange vocabularies which are employed to meet the demand of rhyme. Rhymed prose, except in opening or closing doxology, titles and religious sermons, was unknown. Indeed, following the classical tradition, Arabic literature in Nigeria can be said to be apparently confined to poetry. The only prose writings which may be considered belles-lettres are a few correspondences, literary history including biography (al-sīra) to which 'description' may be incorporated. All these features are vividly described in chapters one and two of this thesis.

The second major section of this study is the modern trend in Islam and Arabic literature the available materials on which in Arabic, English, French and German, are inexhaustible. It can indeed be said that the various discussions on the growth and development of modern Arabic literature have virtually been exhausted by the Arab and Oriental literary critics and historians.¹⁵ This study is indebted, for most of its conclusions and inferences, mainly to the Arabic and English sources to which references are duly made. Since modern Arabic literature is a conscious imitation of modern European literature, all I have attempted here, after describing the contemporary political culture, is to highlight the ideological and literary differences between classical Arabic and modern European (English) Literature. It is thus possible to determine the exact elements of the European literary tradition in modern Arabic literature and the extent to which Nigeria has also imitated such modern elements.

Dr. 'Alī Abūbakar, Shaikh al-Ilūrī and Professor Galadanci among others have treated the impact of Western education on Nigerian Arabic-Islamic Culture (literature inclusive) as subthemes in their studies from which I have proceeded. Of these works, only Professor Galadanci's study can be said to have discussed the response of Nigerian Arabic poetry to Western education, with little reference to the modern literary movement in the Arab world. According to him 'the wind of the literary renaissance which began to appear in Egypt with al-Bārūdī and which later become fruitful with the succeeding generation prominent among which was Aḥmad Shawqī' did not reach Nigeria early enough.¹⁶

Apart from the obsolescence of this observation, the study was written in Arabic which has limited its readership. And as hinted above, the study was undertaken within the context of medieval Islamic thought which makes his approach to be diametrically opposed to the present study. Above all, the impact on Islamic Nigeria, of such major events as the Renaissance, Reformation, Industrial Revolution and Enlightenment, which have radically transformed the life of mankind, in our own view, deserves an independent study of this type. In this respect, this study is also indebted to a number of works on contemporary Nigerian history, politics, religion and education¹⁷ most of which have proceeded from the impact of Western culture on Nigeria.

Above these contemporary sources is the fact that the history of Arabic-Islamic literature in Contemporary Nigeria constitutes a part of this writer's biography. It is a drama in which he has remained an actor since nearly three decades. Born in 1951 under

the full light of the colonial regime, this writer had attended both the Qur'ānic, as well as the secular school for his primary education. He had proceeded to one of the modern Arabic schools¹⁸ after graduating from which he also attended a secular Grammar school¹⁹ where Arabic and Islamic religion were taught. He later attended University of Ibadan with all its secularising potentialities described in chapter four. After graduating from Ibadan University, he had since 1977 moved to the Islamic North, where he remains to date between Ahmadu Bello and Bayero Universities as an Arabic-Islamic scholar.

Inspired by its contact with modern European (secular) literature, the traditional concepts of Arabic poetry, prose, literary aesthetics, style, diction, images, vocabulary and prosody in modern Arabic literature have all been systematically transformed. In poetry, narrative, epic and dramatic verses were introduced to the existing lyric which in itself has been subjected to romanticism, realism, commitment and surrealism. In the process of this transformation, the classical prosodic definition of poetry was criticized, ridiculed and destroyed. The conspicuous qaṣīda form, in which a line (bayt) of poem is often made of two hemistichs (al-ṣadr and al-^cajuz), after a series of experimentation described in chapter three, was eventually eliminated. It was replaced by a single line (al-Shaṭr) the length of which is left to be determined by poetic emotion.

The early attempt to abandon the traditional rhyme and metre schemes altogether failed; eight instead of the sixteen traditional metres with strophic rhyme scheme are now employed. Like the length,

of poetic lines which they often determine, the feet (tafā^cīl) of these eight new metres are not combined in the traditional rigid formulas but subjected to the length of proposition as propagated by Nāzik al-Malā'ika. This new prosodic metre scheme is described in some details in chapter three.

Encouraged by language Academies, journalism, translation and adaptation of European literary masterpieces, modern prose had developed very early to replace the time-honoured rhymed prose. Having lost their sanctity to secular thoughts, most of the narratives in the Qur'ān were reduced to Islamic mythology and legends the imitation of which were no longer sacrilegious. The elimination of this religious barrier made it possible for creative writings in ordinary prose in particular to be raised to the modern literary standard as short stories, novels and plays. These modern prose genres which are vividly described in chapter three can be said to have overshadowed poetry today in Arabic literature.

The main current which has generated this literary revolution is the impact, on Islamic thoughts, of modern secular education which, in Islamic Nigeria, has continued to be resisted even at the university level. But even if the Nigerian malams had sufficiently cultivated it, they would certainly have directed its advantages towards developing a national, rather than religious literature as it did happen in the growth of modern Hausa literature. As a part of its resistance to Western education, Islamic Nigeria had clung to the conservative movements in contemporary Islam and of course, to its medieval literary heritage. Discussing the failure of the late Sir Ahmadu Bello to attempt a modernization of Islam in Nigeria,

this study has attempted in chapter four, to identify the reason for the tenacious attachment of Islamic Nigeria to medieval Islamic tradition to the extent of parting with the Arab modernists.

With the Islamic North apparently being consumed by the encroaching violent wave of nationalism and agitation for decolonization unleashed from the south, Western education could no longer be resisted. It indeed became a sine qua non for Islamic North if it must exist as a political entity in the proposed independent Nigeria. Thus compelled by political pressure, some Nigerian Arabic scholars had to cultivate Western education from which they eventually learnt to differentiate between territorial nationalism and pan-Islamica. They were also encouraged by Dr East,²⁰ a colonial education officer, to direct the advantages of their Western education towards evolving modern Hausa literature instead of modernizing Arabic. Modern Hausa literature has accordingly replaced, today, the medieval Arabic in Islamic Northern Nigeria. But there are a few other Western educated malams who have proceeded despite the traditional resistance, to modernize Arabic literature as described in Chapter four.

Incidentally, the pace of modernization of Islam and the Arabic-Islamic studies has been more rapid in the South than in the North. Traditional Islam had not matured in the South before the introduction of Christianity and Western education. The Muslims, for economic, social and political reasons, at the cost of their faith, had thus plunged into cultivating secular education. The most compelling force was perhaps, the Christian dominated political and economic atmosphere which was fast reducing the Muslims to

second-class citizens. Other modernizing currents include the advent of the Ahmadiyya movement and the return into Yorubaland of some Western educated Muslim ex-slaves from Brazil through Sierra-Leone. There was above all, the establishment of the University of Ibadan which since 1962 had continued to allow Christians to study Islam and Arabic language. All these forces, which were unknown in the Islamic North, had compelled the course of medieval Islam in Yorubaland to proceed in the light of Western civilization. In these circumstances, the Islamic South with virtually no pre-colonial record of Arabic literature has now begun to play, like the Greater Syria in the Arab world, the leading role in modern Nigerian Arabic-Islamic culture.

Imposed by national economic and political developments on Islamic Nigeria, Western education has continued to be gingerly cultivated in such a way that it has not penetrated beyond the skin of most of the Muslims. Modern secular thought therefore, has not been able to influence considerably the medieval Islamic tradition which has inextricably mixed with the indigenous Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, Nupe, Yoruba and other cultures. The traditional Arabic-Islamic education was modernized through the establishment of the Kano Law School and similar ones all over the country. Arabic and Islamic studies have also been introduced in secular institutions including the universities. But the fact remains that the secular impacts of this education have continued to be swallowed up by the overwhelming influence of the medieval Muslim community. An attempt is made in chapter four to describe how most of the Nigerian universities offering Arabic and Islamic studies have been torn apart by the inherent conflict in their secular, against the religious orientation

of the Muslim communities they are meant to serve. The spirit of the medieval Islamic thought which Muḥammad ʿAbduh had sought to modernize in Egypt; which Muḥammad Iqbāl had sought to reconstruct in India, and which Kemal Ataturk had virtually destroyed in Turkey has, accordingly, continued to wax stronger and stronger in Islamic Nigeria.

It is from this apparently fossilized medieval Arabic-Islamic literary culture that ʿUmar Ibrāhīm has dramatically emerged. Born in Zaria around 1922, ʿUmar had some acquaintance with English education through which, by sheer personal efforts, he managed to acquire 'the key' to Western secular thought. But his formal education took the traditional way. After his traditional Islamic education, he had graduated not from Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello, Bayero or any other university. He only attended the Kano Law School where he was trained as a Qāḍī since 1942. It was here that ʿUmar became acquainted with some of the classical Arabic masterpieces to the study of which religious tradition had not hitherto allowed him an access. He was also introduced to the modern trend in the Arab world through the works of the neo-classical and the pre-romantic Arab writers.

Through these modern Arab writers, ʿUmar was further encouraged to cultivate modern secular education. He has since then thrown himself headlong into the study of Greek mythology, Western philosophy, classics, natural sciences, astronomy, modern history, political theory and English literature, all of which he has displayed in his anthology. His works, to which chapter five is devoted, and those of a Christian Nigerian Arabist and a few other

contributions, constitute the main examples of modern Nigerian Arabic compositions.

In conclusion an attempt is made to summarise the main literary innovations introduced into Nigerian Arabic literature by 'Umar and his contemporaries. Considered as a process of secularizing Arabic language and literature, this new trend is diametrically opposed to the existing religious literary tradition in Nigeria. It has been provoked by modern secular thought which had also transformed the socio-political and the economic life of Islamic Nigeria to a considerable extent. The main development imposed is the nationalist oriented political order which has sought to divorce Arab nationalism from Islam. Under its educational programme, it is possible to know Islam today without necessarily being proficient in Arabic language.

If the initial cultivation of Arabic language and literature in Nigeria, as discussed in chapter one, had essentially been motivated by Islam, this religious motive does not exist today any longer. The modern political and economic order has also replaced Arabic with English in which case Arabic cannot as well be cultivated for political or economic reasons. What future then has Arabic in Nigeria? Can Dr Muḥammad Ṭāhir Liman convince Islamic Nigeria to transfer its political allegiance from pan Islamism to territorial nationalism? Can 'Umar Ibrāhīm succeed in checking the resurgence of the medieval Arabic-Islamic educational system in Nigeria? Can he persuade Islamic Nigeria to cultivate, in the name of literary art, the pagan Greek mythology, classics, modern European or even the secular Arab nationalist oriented modern Arabic literature? Is Nigerian national education policy ready to treat Arabic like other languages in Nigeria?

If by a miracle, our answers to the above questions were to be in the affirmative, Arabic must then have successfully been secularised and reduced to a common foreign language like French or English. Considering that English as a literary medium, after playing its part, is now finding its exit from Nigeria to give way to an indigenous literature in an indigenous language, what chance has Arabic then to compete with Hausa or Yoruba at cultural level? Answers to this and other questions can be found in the course of this study and in its conclusion.

Certain nomenclatures, to the meaning of which no emotional religious connotations are attached, have been used in this study. But such terms, unless explained, may be misunderstood especially by religious men. By 'Nigerian Arabic literature' is meant any literary artistic compositions in Arabic language, produced by Nigerians, the subject matter of which also deals with life in Nigeria. It is on this account that the works of Al-Maghīlī and other immigrant contributors²¹ to the growth of Arabic literature in Nigeria have been excluded. This term, however, does not rule out the use of 'Arabic literature in Nigeria' as in the last sentence where this is demanded by style and clarity.

The term 'Arabic-Islamic literature' had earlier been proposed for describing Nigerian Arabic literature since it is generally ruled, until recently, by Islamic spirit. But this term was dropped when my supervisor called my attention to the fact that Arabic literature, in general, since the advent of Islam, has continued to be ruled by its spirit. Nevertheless, I have been obliged to use this term whenever 'Arabic' or 'Islamic' alone cannot adequately convey my

intended signification. Similarly, the term 'Nigerian Islam' has been used here to define Islam not from the point of view of its principles which are one and the same everywhere. But the socio-political institutions in practice vary from one culture zone to another, a trait which this term intends to emphasize. The term, 'political Islam' has also been used in a similar manner since in Yorubaland, for example, Islam had not acquired a political force until the advent of the British.

There should be little misunderstanding in the use of the term 'Islamic Nigeria' which simply draws a line between the Nigerian Muslims and non-Muslims. In order to distinguish the Islamic cultural heritage before al-nahḍa (the Arab Renaissance) after which the term, 'modern' is introduced, I have employed the term 'medieval' or 'classical' almost interchangeably. Since modern thought is essentially secular, I have considered the distinction between 'modernization' and 'secularisation' as a matter of the degree to which the medieval thought (essentially religion) is subjected to modern thought. These two terms, therefore, have also been used almost interchangeably.

But a similar term, 'Westernization' has been avoided as much as possible because of its wider connotation. In the Islamic world, no distinction is often made between 'Modern secular thought' and 'Western culture or civilization' which is essentially a compromise between secular thought and medieval Christianity. This is the form in which secular thought was introduced to the Muslim world by the Christian missionaries, aided in most cases, by the colonial administrators.

I have followed the method of transliteration adopted by the Encyclopaedia of Islam, the system of which is prefaced to this thesis. Efforts are also made either to give in parentheses or footnotes the meanings of most of the Arabic technical terms employed for precision or want of an English equivalent. But the extensive quotations in Arabic has made any special glossary a formidable task. It is hoped, however, that both the context and footnotes would further guide most of the readers to understand such passages which are restricted to purely literary discussions. In other discussions, quotations are given in translation. Above all, the translations of most of the Arabic verses quoted in chapter five are also appended to the thesis.

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. 'Alī Abūbakar, Al-thaqāfatu 'l-^Carabiyya fī Nayjīriya (Cairo, 1972).
2. 'Umar Jah, 'A Review of 'Alī Abūbakar's Arabic Culture in Nigeria', Kano studies, NS I, 2 (1974/75), pp. 69-73.
3. Mss in the author's and this writer's private collection. See chapter five for more details on this work.
4. They include the works of Aḥmad Bābā of Timbuktu, 'Abdu 'l-Rahmān al-^{Sa}dī, Muḥammad Bello b. 'Uthmān, 'Abdu'llāh b. Muḥammad Fūdī, 'Abdu'llāh (H F C) Smith, J F A Ajayi and M Crowder eds, J O Hunwick, Murray Last, M A Al-Hajj, H R Palmer, J S Trimmingham M Hiskett etc to which references are duly made.
5. A A al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāḥu 'l-dirāsāti 'l-adabiyya fī 'l-diyāri 'l-Nayjīriya (Agege, n.d.).
6. M Hiskett, 'Material Relating to the State of Learning among the Fulani before their Jihad' (being an edition and translation of 'Abdu'llāh b. Muḥammad's ^{Ida}'l-nusūkh), BSOAS, XIX, 3 (1957), pp. 550-78; ed. Tazyīn al-Waraqāt by 'Abdu'llāh b. Muḥammad (Ibadan, 1963). Because of the frequent reference to it, this work will henceforth be referred to, simply, as the Tazyīn.
7. A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, 'The Arabic Literature of Nigeria to 1804: a Provisional Account', BSOAS, XXV, 1 (1962), pp. 104-48; 'Arabic Documents of Northern Nigeria', BSOAS, XXII (1959), pp. 324-49.
8. S A S Galadanci, Ḥarakatu 'l-lughati 'l-^Carabiyya wa'ādābiḥā fī Nayjīriya (Cairo, 1982).
9. Including: H K Bidmus, 'A Literary Appraisal of the Arabic Writings of the Yoruba ^Culamā', M A Thesis (Ibadan University, 1972); S W Junaidu, 'Madḥu 'l-^Cuzamā' fī Wilāya Ṣukka', M A Thesis (University of Khartoum, 1979), 'The Sakkwato Legacy of Arabic Scholarship in Verse between 1800-1890', Ph D Thesis (London University, 1985); R D Abubakre, 'The Contribution of the Yorubas to Arabic Literature', Ph D Thesis (London University, 1980).
10. They include Dirāsāt ^CArabiyya and Kano Studies, both from Bayero University, Kano; al-Fikr and The Research Bulletin of the Centre of Arabic Documentation, both from Ibadan University; The Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ilorin and the Journal of the Nigerian Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies. References have been made to all these journals.

11. My classical sources include the Holy Qur'ān, the works of Ibn Qutayba (d. 889 AD), al-Jāhiz (d. 869 AD), Abū Hilāl al-Askari (d. 1005 AD), Qudāma Ibn Jāfar (d. 922 AD), Ibnu 'l-Rashīq (d. 1064 AD), Ibnu 'l-Mu'tazz (d. 908 AD), al-Bāqillānī, (d. 1012 AD) 'Abdu 'l-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 1078 AD) etc. to which references are duly made in the thesis. On some of my sources on modern Arabic literature see below, note no. 15.
12. The Tazyīn, passim, being generally acclaimed the most classical example in Nigeria.
13. Of Imru' u 'l-Qays, Nābigha al-Dhubyānī, ^CAntara Ibn Shaddād, Ṭarafa Ibnu 'l-^CAbd, Zuhayr Ibn Abī Sulmā and Alqama b. ^CAbd, the influences of whom have been identified on Nigerian verses in most of the studies above mentioned.
14. S W Junaidu, 'The Sakkwato Legacy', op cit, pp. 61, 62, 68.
15. This study is particularly indebted to the works of Professors H A R Gibb, G E Von Grunebaum, R A Nicholson, A J Arberry, S Moreh among other orientalisists, and to those of Taha Hussain, al-^CAqqād, Mikhā'il Nu^Caima, ^CUmar al-Dasūqī, Muḥammad Mandūr, Maḥmūd Taymūr, Muṣṭafā Badawī and Nāzik al-Malā'ika among other modern Arab writers.
16. S A S Galadanci, op cit, p. 177.
17. Such as the works of Professors J F A Ajayi and E A Ayandele on the advent of Christianity into Nigeria; R A Adeleye on the fall of the Sokoto Caliphate; J S Coleman on the growth of Nigerian nationalism; J N Paden on the impact of Western Culture on religion and politics in contemporary Kano; T G O Gbadamosi on the growth of Islam and its clash with Christianity in Yorubaland; S F Graham and Babs Fafunwa on Education in modern Nigeria; and Albert Gerard on the growth of the contemporary Nigerian literature in English, Yoruba and Hausa.
18. Arabic Institute of Nigeria, Ibadan est 1963 as an offshoot of Adam al-Ilūrī's Arabic Training Centre, Agege, est 1952.
19. Ansar-Ud-Deen High School, Saki est 1967 by the Muslim community in protest against the conversion of their children by the only existing Baptist High School in the area.
20. See: R P East, 'A First Essay in Imaginative African Literature', Africa, IX, 3 (1936), pp. 350-57.
21. Such as discussed in A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, 'The Arabic Literature in Nigeria to 1804', op cit, pp. 106-113; A al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāh, op cit, pp. 10-19.

CHAPTER ONE

THE GROWTH AND MATURITY OF ARABIC LITERARY TRADITION
IN NIGERIA

I. The Penetration of Islam

The phenomenal expansion which took Islam within a century of its evolution to North Africa and the Maghrib came to a halt at the northern frontiers of Bilādu 'l-Sūdān.¹ By the time its further expansion was resumed three to four centuries later, the formative period of Islamic thought was believed to have been over. Among other things, the development of its legal and theological theories had been completed and a ban placed on further development. Its pristine strength and unity which had sustained its early revolutionary zeal had also been rent by sectarian disputes. Rationalism, above all, had given way to ascendancy of ṣūfī ethos and uncritical faith in tradition (al-taqlīd). These two spirits had remained the main current of Arabic-Islamic thought until its contact in the last century with Western culture.

As early as the ninth century AD, Islam must have penetrated Kanem-Bornu through its commercial interaction with the Ibadite Berbers of Tahert.² Writing around 1067 AD, the Spanish geographer, al-Bakrī, reports the presence in Kanem of some Umayyad descendants who still preserved their Arab customs.³ Al-^cUmarī (d. 1349 A D) later reports that Islam was introduced to Kanem by one of these Umayyads, al-Hādī al-^cUthmānī.⁴ But the dynastic conversion, which took place during the reign of Mai Umme Jilmi (c. 1086-97) has been

attributed by the Bornu Mahram Tradition⁵ to one of the Ibadite Berbers, Muḥammad ibn Mānī.

Islam could not penetrate Hausaland from Kanem-Bornu as their geographical proximity would lead one to assume.⁶ Neither could it spread into the region from North Africa because, the caravan routes from the north which linked Kano and Katsina, if available, were not active until later in the sixteenth century.⁷ This explains why Hausaland, compared to Kanem-Bornu had remained unknown for quite some time to most of the Arab geographers. So the only channel through which Islam could penetrate Hausaland before the fifteenth century was its western region from which it eventually did. This study, however, does not rule out some possible individual contact between Kanem and Hausaland as some writers have in fact observed. But the earliest historical contact so far known between Hausaland and Bornu did not go beyond the fifteenth century A D if legend and folklore are ignored.⁸

The earliest Islamic penetration into Hausaland has therefore, more appropriately been traced to the commercial and missionary activities of the Mande Dyula and the impact of the romantic pilgrimage of the famous ancient Mali Emperor, Mansa Musa between A D 1324 and 1326.⁹ It was about this time that the ruler of Katsina, Muḥammad Korau (1320-55 A D) is reported to have been converted probably by some 'Wangara divines from Mali and Jenne',¹⁰ About half a century later, (c. 1380 A D), another or the same Wangarawa mission is reported to have brought Islam to Kano during the reign of Ali Yaji (1349-1385 A D).¹¹

Through commercial and military contacts with Hausa, Bornu, and Songhay Muslim neighbours, Islamic influences must have diffused into Nupeland as early as the fifteenth century.¹² But the dynastic conversion did not seem to have taken place until the seventeenth century when the name, Abdu Waliy (A.D 1679-1700) appeared as its first Muslim ruler.¹³ The Nupe Tradition, however, puts the advent of Islam to a later date, during the reign of Etsu Jibrilu (d 1770), the twelfth king after Tsoede, the legendary ancestor of the Nupe people. At any rate, Islam did not become popular until early in the nineteenth century during the reign of Etsu Mu'azu (d 1818). It was then that Malam Dendo came into the land as a Dan Fodio's flag bearer, and successfully made Nupeland a vassal state of the Sokoto Caliphate.

While linguistic and literary evidences¹⁴ indicate an earlier advent of Islam into Yorubaland, it was not until after the jihad that Islam became established in Ilorin.¹⁵ And, quite unlike in Northern Nigeria where the advent of Islam was often marked by dynastic conversion, no Alaafin of Oyo is known to have embraced Islam at such an early date. By 1840, however, according to Dr Gbadamosi, Islam had been established in many Yoruba towns. But Islam could not penetrate the middle belt areas of Nigeria, the Jos Plateau and the Benue river basin, inhabited mainly by the Jukuns or Kwararafa, the Tiv and Idoma. The Southern Zaria province was raided by Nagwamatse in the mid nineteenth century (c 1859) but he failed to Islamise the area. Apart from Yorubaland and Etsako Division of Bendel State,¹⁶ Islam did not penetrate the south and south eastern Nigeria until the advent of the British.

With the British occupation, more effective means of both local and international communications opened up new areas of the country which had hitherto remained inaccessible. The British socio-economic and political activities also inspired mass labour movement and all sorts of internal migrations. Propagated mainly by the itinerant native Muslim preachers, Islam has now become widespread across the country. But the introduction of Christianity into those areas where it had not earlier penetrated has largely limited its popularity only to the Hausa, Fulani, Nupe, Yoruba and a few other Nigerian peoples. Inspired mainly by political or economic advantages, the process of Islamisation is still being witnessed in Nigeria today especially in south eastern Nigeria as the result of the effective missionary activities of Saudi Arabia.¹⁷

II. The Cultivation of Arabic Language Through Islamic Scholarship Tradition

Arabic language and literature until recently was indebted, for its world status, mainly to Islam which more than any other factors had continued to spread it all over the world. It was the first literate culture to be introduced since the middle ages into many areas where it had remained the medium of higher education, commerce and even administration. It has remained above all, the liturgical language all over the Muslim world. Arabic in these circumstances has successfully invaded such world languages as Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Swahili and Hausa in Nigeria over 50 per cent of whose vocabulary it constitutes.¹⁸ Its script, like that of Latin in medieval Europe, is also adopted in writing those languages whose literatures are also modelled on that of the classical Arabic. In the wider Muslim world today, Arabic is identified with Islam much more than the Arab League, the

Palestine Liberation Organization or any other contemporary Arab socio-economic or political movement.

Consequently, the study of Arabic language and literature, especially by the non-Arabs throughout the medieval period, was often inspired by Islam. In other words, Arabic has remained over the ages, the sole cultural medium by which Islam has continued to be transmitted in form of the Arabic Qur'ān to the non-Arab world for which the faith is also believed to be meant. In this context, the religion, according to a modern Arab writer, has thus preserved the language and the language preserved religion:

But for Islam the Arabic language would have changed like others, and as it had itself changed previously. But for Arabic, the different interpretations of Islam would have grown apart from each other and it would have split into a number of faiths with the adherents of each accusing the others of infidelity... Thus the Arabic language is not the private property of the descendants of Qahtan; it is the language of all Muslims.¹⁹

But when Islam was introduced into Nigeria, little was it realised that Arabic language, its literature and civilization were being cultivated. And no substantial distinction between Arabic as a language or literature, and Islam as a religion was ever made until today, when this trend is being challenged by modern secular thought.

The growth of Arabic literary culture in Nigeria, therefore, had remained essentially the growth of Islam. It was similar to the growth of traditional Islamic sciences of the classical age in which the Qur' ān had constituted the nucleus, provided the necessary inspiration and dictated the direction. In Nigeria, it was the desire to know the Arabic Qur'ān rather than to be literate for its own sake

that constituted the greatest incentive to learning. To what extent then is the cultivation of Arabic language for the sake of Islam a desideratum for non-Arab Muslims?

If the choice of an Arab prophet and therefore of Arabic language for Islam is viewed purely as a matter of chance, a question might then be raised: Could not the Prophet have been a Nigerian or Pakistani speaking Hausa or Urdu? Arabic then becomes a means to an end and not the end in itself that some Arabs have tried to make it.²⁰ If Islam on the other hand is viewed from socio-linguistic and cultural perspective, the Arabic Qur'ān is definitely not addressed to the non-Arabs who do not understand Arabic. Its messages in translations, however, might be extended to them. The Qur'ān makes this point very clear.

We have not sent any messenger except
in the languages of his own people so
that he might make plain to them his
message.²¹

Whatever the case may be, Arabic and Islam have inextricably fused into an organic unity at least, within the Islamic cultural context. It may not, therefore, be rewarding for anybody to embark on the impossible task of dearabizing Islam as attempted by Turkey.²² It is on this basis that the cultivation of Arabic language by non-Arab Muslims may be justified. Other Arab customs and traditions after all, are zealously cultivated in form of prophetic sunna. The very creed formula (Kalimatu'l-shahāda) by which an outsider is initiated into the umma is traditionally uttered in Arabic. Apart from ritual prayers (ṣallā) which are specifically observed in Arabic language, there is hardly any aspect of Islamic worship which is absolutely free from the use of Arabic. Above all these, however, is the need to understand the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and fiqh, all of which were originally

written only in Arabic. The principal disciple of Muḥammad 'Abduh, Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā makes the following remarks:²³

Islamic thought could not flourish unless the Arabic tongue flourished: it was the only language in which Islam could be properly studied and expounded, and therefore it was the duty of any Muslim who could do so to learn Arabic. Moreover there could

be no deep unity in umma unless it was a unity of language, and in the Muslim Umma, this could be none other than Arabic. No non-Arab had ever been able to serve Islam unless he knew Arabic.

This intrinsic truth was, however, overshadowed by the traditional sentiment that Arabic, having been chosen for Islam, has become superior to all world languages. It is the language of the Angels by which the godly peoples will be communicating in heaven. It is supernatural. A unique motivation was thus inspired by spiritual enthusiasm to acquire the very language of God with all the attendant mystical and material advantages. The Cambridge anthropologist, Jack Goody describes a pagan chief in Northern Ghana who 'saw in the Muslim's capacity to write, a more effective means of supernatural communication.'²⁴

the very fact that writing enables a man to communicate over space and time makes it more effective as a way of getting in touch with distant deities.

Apart from this primary religious impulse, the socio-political privilege and economic opportunities concomitant to the acquisition of Arabic language equally stimulated learning. The immigrant Muslims were identified with the ruling class in which most of them performed as scribes, physicians, astrologers political advisers and religious teachers. Since most of the members of this new community were also

merchants, the chance of business expansion was also possible with the acquisition of literacy in Arabic. In fact, the mere ability to read and write in a predominantly illiterate culture had remained one of the greatest aspects of Islamic civilization in pre-colonial Nigeria and Africa as a whole.²⁵

Prompted by these reasons, the process of learning Arabic took off in Qur'ānic Schools from oral recitation of some short chapters and verses of the Holy Qur'ān which were felt to be mostly needed for ṣallā. Having memorised a few short chapters, the converts would then be taught the techniques of reading and copying which were often practised by copying and reading through the whole of the Qur'ān. This process might take three to five years after which a convert would be able to read vowelless Arabic text without necessarily understanding it. He was also expected to have learnt, usually by rote, some other socio-religious duties which would enable him practise his faith.

In addition to the Qur'ān, the Wangarawa had also brought with them to Hausaland, the books of Law (al-fiqh) and Tradition (al-Hadīth) on which further studies had simultaneously commenced. Similar development had earlier been recorded in the Mahram of Umme Jilmi²⁶ of how the successive Mais of Kanem-Bornu had learnt the Qur'ān. After reading from sūratu'l-baqara to 'wa 'l-nās' (sūratu'l-nās) for example, Mai Umme is reported to have also

read the Risāla²⁷ twice and gave Mānī one hundred pieces of gold, one hundred pieces of silver and one hundred of slave; all because of the reading and instruction he derived from him.

III. The Maturity of Arabic-Islamic Literature in Nigeria

After the launching of Arabic-Islamic education, its gradual development was nursed by progressive cultural contacts with outside Islamic world through pilgrimage, commercial activities and migration of the itinerant African scholars. In Bornu, such contacts were encouraged by the active participation of all the successors of Mai Umme Jilmi. His son and successor, Dunama (1098-1150 A D) performed Ḥajj twice and was drowned in the Red Sea the third time.²⁸ As early as the thirteenth century, Mai Dunama Dibbalemi (1221-59) had established economic, diplomatic and cultural relations with Egypt and Tunisia.²⁹ In Egypt, a Maliki school, to which a hostel for students and pilgrims was attached, is also reported to have been built by him.³⁰ And by the twelfth century, the voice of a Kanem poet, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Ya^cqūb al-Kānamī is said to be heard vibrating in the presence of Almoḥad Caliph, Ya^cqūb al-Manṣūr.³¹

Historians are yet to account for this remarkable development which culminated in such an early emergence to Islamic civilization of this first Sefawa dynasty.³² Apart from the early information of the advent of Islam, the dynastic conversion and the introduction of the Risāla, this process of literary development which dramatically turned out a poet within a century was shrouded in mystery. At any rate, it indicated that the foundation of Islamic scholarship must have been laid before the end of the thirteenth century when Kanem, like the Contemporary Middle East, was plunged into dynastic warfare.

The eventual development of Arabic-Islamic literature in Hausaland was largely due to the outstanding experience of the Fulanis who arrived in the fifteenth century into Nigeria from

Futa Jallon areas. Held as the oldest custodians of Islamic Scholarship tradition throughout West Africa, they introduced books on 'Divinity' (tawḥīd) and 'Etymology' (lugha)³³ in addition to Jurisprudence and Tradition which before were only known. According to Professor Galadanci, the book referred to as 'lugha' was likely to be poetry of the Mu^callaqāt which were often studied and memorised in stock for linguistic exposition.³⁴ Apart from introducing a new dimension into Arabic-Islamic Curriculum, it was the Fulanis who gradually nourished Islamic education to maturity after a few centuries.

In addition to the Fulanis, the influences of the Sankore mosque in Timbuktu were also predominant. It was indeed through its scholars and the Fulanis that the Maghrib scholarship tradition was transmitted to Nigeria.³⁵ By the fifteenth century, the Andalusian Islamic Scholarship tradition, through Fez and Walata, was already strong in Timbuktu as confirmed by the emergence of Aḥmad Bābā (1357-1427 AD). It was, however, the active patronage later given to Islam by Askia Muḥammad Ture I (1493-1528 A D) that transformed Timbuktu into the citadel of learning from which Islamic sciences had continued to spread to the rest of the Sudan.

Some of the Timbuktu scholars who came to Nigeria included Shaikh Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Aqīt who visited Kano on his return from Ḥajj around 1487 A D. On his return from Ḥajj in 1510 A D , Shaikh Aida Aḥmad al-Tazakhtī, who had earlier visited Takedda where he received instructions from al-Maghīlī, also settled in Katsina. He was soon honoured by the Sarkin Katsina, who appointed him as the Qādī of the town in appreciation of his contributions to the growth

of Arabic and Islamic literary culture. He was in Katsina until his death in 1529 A D. Shaikh Makhlūf al-Bilbālī (d 1533 A D) was another peripatetic teacher who visited Kano and Katsina, after travelling about in the Sudan, before he returned to Timbuktu.³⁶

There were also a number of individual scholars from Egypt, Tunisia, North Africa and Morocco, who had contributed to the growth of Arabic-Islamic literary tradition in Nigeria. Foremost among them was the celebrated North African Mālik jurist, Imām Ibn ‘Abdi ‘l-Karīm al-Maghīlī who may be described as the founding father of political Islam in Nigeria.³⁷ He visited Kano and Katsina (c 1499 A D.) where as a teacher, he taught Grammar, Jurisprudence, Theology and Tradition. He also introduced Logic into Nigeria over the teaching of which al-Suyūṭī had disagreed with him.

His greatest contribution was no doubt the laying of the foundation of an Islamic state by his political treatises³⁸ which he bequeathed to Nigeria through Muḥammad Rimfa of Kano and Sarki Ibrāhīm Maje of Katsina. The nineteenth century jihād in particular must have remotely been encouraged by his militant and intransigent attitude to those Muslims he identified as the foul malams (‘ulamā’u ‘l-sū’). No wonder, his Ajwiba (legal answers) to Askia Muḥammad had constituted one of the juridical authorities by which the jihād was justified.³⁹

Contrary to the views held by many scholars including Shaikh Nāṣiru Kabara and Ādam al-Ilūrī, Imām al-Suyūṭī (d 1505 A D) did not visit North Africa or the Maghrib let alone Nigeria.⁴⁰ This misconception arose, no doubt, from his contributions to the growth

of Arabic-Islamic literature in West Africa. In addition to teaching a number of West African pilgrims who often brought home scores of his books, the Imām had also contributed specifically to the legal development of Islam in West Africa. In his book, al-Taḥadduth bi-ni^Cmati'llāh,⁴¹ al-Suyūṭī describes how more than twenty of his books, on three different occasions, were brought to Takrūr by different scholars after receiving instructions from him. Like al-Maghīlī in Songhay Empire, his answers to legal questions in form of epistle, Risāla ilā Mulūki 'l-Takrūr⁴² which he addressed to among others, Muḥammad b. Settefen of Agades and Sarki Ibrāhīm of Katsina, is still in Nigeria. But the most relevant to this study of his contributions has been a verse correspondence in form of the classical naqīda,⁴³ between him and al-Maghīlī, over the teaching of Logic. Still in circulation among Nigerian traditional scholars, this correspondence was likely to have introduced to Nigeria this literary form, which was later employed in the jihād literature.⁴⁴

The opening of the route between Gwanja and Bornu via Hausaland early in the fifteenth century and the declining fortunes of Gao prompted the caravan route which linked Katsina from Agades into action. In due course, the commercial prosperities of Songhay began to drift eastward into Hausaland. And by the end of the sixteenth century (1591 A D) when the Empire finally collapsed before the Sa^Cdian Empire of Morocco, Hausaland had virtually gained most of its intellectual and economic losses. Both Gao and Timbuktu reincarnated in Kano and Katsina which subsequently developed into 'the main terminus of the trans-Sahara caravan route and the entrepôt of the whole Hausaland'.⁴⁵

This commercial prosperity was attended by influx of immigrant scholars, pilgrims and merchants since every route then led to Hausaland. This period also coincided in Bornu, with the emergence to world fame of Mai Idris Aloma (1570-1619 A.D) who had also transformed Ngazargamu to another Baṣra.⁴⁶ Together with Kano and Katsina, these three centres with the neighbouring cities of Kebbi, Zamfara, Zaria, Gobir, Baghirmi, Ahir, Agades and Tekidda were able to provide suitable atmosphere for intellectual and literary developments. But unlike in other Muslim countries where mosques had developed into great learning centres, there was no such definite institution as the Sankore in Timbuktu, the Zaitūn in Tunis, the Qarawiyyīn in Fez or al-Azhar in Cairo. This situation, no doubt, must have contributed, in Nigeria, to the peripatetic tradition of Arabic-Islamic Scholarship.

At its individual levels, however, this tradition⁴⁷ had, by the seventeenth century, matured into a remarkable standard as demonstrated by Professor Hiskett's edition of Īdā'u 'l-nusūkh.⁴⁸ This and similar pre-jihad literary production reveal that most of the major Islamic traditional sciences were being cultivated in Nigeria. They include the Qur'ān and its interpretation (al-tafsīr), Tradition (al-ḥadīth), Jurisprudence (al-fiqh), Theology (al-tawḥīd), Morphology (al-ṣarf), Syntax (al-naḥw), Rhetorics (al-bayān), Prosody (al-^carūd) Literature (al-'adab), History and Biography (al-ta'rīkh wa'l-sīra), Logic (al-mantiq) and Occult sciences (^cilmu'l-hurūf wa'l-awfāq).

In due course, the impacts of this intellectual progress began to accelerate the pace of Islamic Cultural assimilation and conflict.

A literate social class, not only in Arabic but also in vernacular was born. Kanuri, Fulani, Hausa and some other Nigerian languages were for the first time committed to writing in Arabic script.⁴⁹ At the same time, the rate of the gradual diffusion of Arabic into these languages must also have increased.

Not unexpectedly, this new breed of Muslim intelligentsia, among them jurists, poets and chroniclers, began to agitate for an improvement in the standard of Islam. They would want to harmonize the existing divergencies between Islamic principles and its practices. The result was a series of cultural conflicts against which the ʿulamā could not reach a legal consensus. Apart from differences in the standards of their education, they were rent by adherence to sufism, royal patronage, political ambition and tribal loyalty to a certain extent. It was this stage of Islamic cultural development that produced the first generation of Nigerian literary men.

If we disregard most of the early literary works of the immigrant scholars attributed to Nigeria by Shaikh al-Ilūrī, Dr. Bivar and Professor Hiskett,⁵⁰ the earliest surviving literary product of Islamic Nigeria dated back to the late sixteenth century. It is likely to be the works of Imām Aḥmad ibn Fartuwa, the famous chronicler of Mai Idrīs Aloma. Apart from being a descendant of Muḥammad ibn Mānī, very little is known about his birth and education. All that can be said of him is that he was a contemporary of Idrīs Aloma (1570-1619) and a participant in most of his campaigns, the record of which he faithfully kept. His works include

Ta'rīkh Mai Idrīs wa-ghazawātih and Dīwān Salātīn Barnū both of which have been edited together by H.R. Palmer.⁵¹

Between this time and the outbreak of the jihād, a number of scholars emerged but most of their literary productions were of little literary interest. Some of the literary compositions include the panegyric ode composed for Mai Ali (1644-84) in celebration of his defeat of the Kwararafa around A D 1650. The poem was composed by a Katsina based scholar, Muḥammad ibn Sabbāgh, known in Hausa tradition as Dan Marina (d 1655).⁵² In Bornu, the contribution of Shaikh al-Ṭāhir b Ibrāhīm al-Fallātī, who became the poet laureate during the reign of Mai Ali b. Dunama (1750-91), is also significant. He later fell out with the Mai against whom he composed the earliest surviving satire verses in Nigerian Arabic literature.⁵³

This trend of literary production had continued until the outbreak of the nineteenth century jihād. Precipitated by the various tensions which had built up between Islam and traditional culture over the past centuries, the jihād was able to provoke enough crises and conflicts out of which has emerged an encyclopaedic compilation of religious literature. Indeed, the literary production is so overwhelming that the jihād itself has been described as an intellectual revolution.⁵⁴ The author of the jihād, Shaikh ḤUthmān dan Fodio (d 1817), a renown jurist and a ṣūfī saint, has been credited with over a hundred works including some fifty assorted poems in both Arabic and Fulfulde.⁵⁵ His brother and immediate Wazīr, ḤAbdullāh dan Fodio (d 1829), is credited with about seventy-eight works, all in Arabic.⁵⁶ He is generally considered the greatest Nigerian poet in classical Arabic literature. The third

commander of the jihād, Muḥammad Bello b. ʿUthmān (d 1837), who became the first Sultan of Sokoto has also been described as a political historian. His literary works numbered up to ninety-seven including some thirty-nine poems.⁵⁷

Unlike the Sokoto leaders who had to justify the jihād, Shaikh Amīn al-Kānamī (d 1837) who emerged in Bornu as the jihād critic was probably less motivated to writing. In addition to certain correspondence records including his famous jihād critique, only a few poems are credited to him.⁵⁸ Among those who have also contributed significantly to the jihād literature may be mentioned Asmā' bint ʿUthmān (d 1864), Shaikh ʿAbdu 'l-Qādir b. Muṣṭafā (d 1863/4), and Muḥammad al-Bukhārī b. ʿUthmān. Other major contributions have come from the Waziri family whose industry has kept the traditional scholarship alive up to the present time.⁵⁹

Thus in form of Islamic religion, Arabic literary tradition took off in an illiterate, pagan and predominantly oral literary culture. As would have been the case, neither the host nor the guest literary culture could be of mutual benefit, their religious orientations being diametrically opposed to each other. There was a variety of indigenous oral literary genres, rooted in paganism the recording by Arabic of which would be too sacrilegious. Is Arabic not the very language of God? In the subsequent pages of this study, it will be shown how literary composition had continued to remain a function of Islamic religion until its contact with Western culture.

IV. The Concepts of Aesthetics, Creativity and Criticism in Classical Arabic Literary Theory^A

A. Poetry

In pre-Islamic Arabian culture, poetry had evolved as soothsayers' utterances (saj^u 'l-kuhhān) from which it developed through the Hudā' (the camel driver's lyric) in rajaz metre, into the Qaṣīda proper. Together with eloquence (al-faṣāḥa), poetry had constituted the sole artistic sensibility among the Arabs. Like in other cultures, the Arabs held that poetry was normally inspired by the jinn and satans - the pagan supernatural forces. It was this pagan concept of poetry that eventually drove it into a head-on collision with the Holy Qur'^{ān}. As far as the pagan Arabs were concerned, there was no difference between the Prophet's unseen God Who inspired the Qur'^{ān} in him, and their own unseen 'muses' who inspired poetry in them.

Thus conceived as inspiration (al 'ilhām) or vision (al-ru'yā), poetry became a formidable threat to Islamic concept of revelation (al-wahy), the very basis to which the claim to prophethood anchored:

I swear by all that you can see, and
all that is hidden from your view, that
this is the utterance of a noble
messenger. It is no poet's speech;
scant is your faith! It is no soothsayer's
divination; how little you reflect!
It is a revelation from the Lord of
all creatures.⁶⁰

In the ensuing conflict, Islam stood undaunted. It persisted and won. Heathenism collapsed in Arabia and with it collapsed the

concept of poetry as inspiration, intuitive imagination or creative vision. But its cultural vehicle, the literary Arabic (al-fuṣḥā) was not destroyed. It was adopted by the Holy Qur'ān in which the language became not only enriched but also 'consecrated and superior in points of style and aesthetics, to other world languages.'

In the predominantly non-Arab population of Baṣra and Kūfa to which the centre of Islamic culture had moved from Medina, the state of error and solecism in Arabic (al-laḥn) had gradually evolved with its adverse effects on the meaning of the Holy Scripture. In order to nip the problem in the bud, the early Muslim philologists were constrained to revive and draw upon the pre-Islamic literary heritage, despite its heathen orientation, for documenting their linguistic expositions. Thus collected under Islamic intellectual climate, Arabic poetry could not have regained its supernatural forces over which it had earlier clashed with the Holy Qur'ān.

Henceforth, no poetic exuberance was to rise above responses to ordinary emotional excitement or sensation.⁶¹ Nobody might again be truly inspired even as another prophet as canonized by the concept of Khātamu 'l-nabiyyīn.⁶² Apart from literature, it is to this fact that the perennial conflict of sufism with Islamic orthodoxy can always be traced. For through its pantheistic tendencies, its emphasis on intuitive perception or gnosticism, sufism had always encroached upon the concept of prophecy, which most of the ṣūfī saints are always at pains to explain.⁶³

Classifying poetry according to its linguistic purity,

this exercise turned out to be the emergence of literary theory and criticism in Arabic literature.⁶⁴ Accordingly, the attentions were focussed not on poetic contents or ideas (al-ma^Cnā) but on its rhetorics, language and prosody. This concentration of attention on form as the standard of literary criticism soon became canonized in the subsequent intellectual development especially provoked by the emergence of the half-Arab secretary class (al-muwalladūn) and the cultivation of Greek philosophy.⁶⁵ The Muwalladūn with their non-Arab literary heritage, led by Abū Nuwās had begun to criticise pre-Islamic poetic tradition into which they introduced certain stylistic features. The Sunnis would like to ~~refute~~, through the i^Cjāzu 'l-Qur'ān (inimitability), its createdness which the Mu^Ctazilites asserted. The Mu^Ctazilites in turn, would also want to convince the Sunnis, through the tropical and ordinary usages of the Qur'ān (al-majāzī wa'l-ḥaqīqī), that it would not be possible to see God face to face as suggested by certain anthropomorphic passages in the Qur'ān.

Meanwhile, the Arab philologists in their emphasis on linguistic purity as a criterion for literary standard had begun to load the balance against the half-breed Arab poets. They also criticised them for introducing new artifices (al-badī^C) into poetry and for deviating from its tradition. Not unexpectedly, the reactions of the Muwalladūn (later, al-muhdathūn) assumed a racial outlook in form of a popular movement known as the shu^Cūbiyya.⁶⁶ But the accession to the Abbasid throne of al-Ma'mūn (d 813 A D) and the active patronage he gave to intellectual pursuit, championed mainly by the Muwalladūn gave them an upper hand over the Arabs.

The so-called new stylistic artifices gradually became integrated into the canon of the Arabic literary theory. Influenced by Aristotelian Rhetorics, this concept of al-badī^C developed systematically to constitute aesthetic and creativity in Arabic literature.

Most of the early endeavours on this development such as the Tabaqātu 'l-shu^Carā' by al-Jumhī (d 845 A D) and the Qawā'idu 'l-shi^Cr of al-Tha^Calab (d 904 A.D.) had eventually crystallised in al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn of al-Jāhīz (d 869 A D). In a paper, La Rhetorique Arabe de Djahiz à Abd el Kaher, presented by Dr. Taha Hussain (d 1973) at Leiden in 1931, it was established that al-Jāhīz was the first significant Arab literary critic to address himself to the issue of stylistics in Arabic literature.⁶⁷ Inspired by the Arab course, al-Jāhīz attacked the shu^Cūbiyya and introduced the term, al-badī^C (new; innovation) to disparage the new artifices they had introduced into Arabic poetry.

Al-Jāhīz denied any external influences on the origin of Arabic stylistics (al-bayān) which according to him was peculiar to Arabic. It was introduced by the Holy Qur'^{ān} by virtue of which Arabic has become superior to all languages.⁶⁸ This view, however, has been criticised by Dr. Taha Hussain in his edition of Naqdu'l-nathr.⁶⁹ And Dr. Salāma Ibrāhīm, in his work, Balāghatu Aristū bayna 'l-^CArab Wa'l-Yūnān, was able to identify in the Arabic stylistics, what was specifically Hellenic, Arabic or common literary heritage.⁷⁰ Al-Jāhīz identified the various badī^C devices under the term, al-bayān and discussed among other things, the relationship between form and content. Practical criticism,

however, did not rise beyond its philological level,^B probably encouraged by the special attention devoted by Jāhiz to Arabic phonology.

By the end of the ninth century A.D, Ibnu 'l-Mu^Ctazz (d. 908 A.D) wrote his Kitābu 'l-badī^C in which al-badī^C, for the first time, was treated as a literary aesthetic feature. Quoting from classical literature including the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, he was able to show that al-badī^C was not, after all, a new invention.⁷¹ By the middle of the tenth century A.D, Qudāma b. Ja^Cfar (d. 958 A.D.) also wrote his Naqdu 'l-shi^Cr in which, it is generally agreed, he attempted to apply Greek logic to the study of al-bayān (stylistics). He arrived at four main features of poetry on the basis of which it could be criticised. These include al-lafz (word or sound), al-ma^Cnā (meaning or theme), al-wazn (metre) and al-qāfiya (rhyme).⁷²

But it was Abū Hilāl al-^CAskarī (d. 1005 A.D.) who finally threw content (al-ma^Cnā) to the street and placed literary importance (aesthetics) on form and verbal embellishment:⁷³

وليس الشأن في إيراد المعاني، لأن المعاني يعرفها
العربي والعجمي والقروي والهدوي، وإنما هو في جودة
اللفظ وصفائه وحسنه وبهائه ونراهته ونقائه
وكثرة طلاوته ومائه مع صحة السبك والتركييب،
والمخول من أود النظم والتأليف...

Thus, in addition to emphasising the form as the criterion for aesthetic and creativity, the concept of al-ma^cnā (content, idea or meaning) as a common property was also emphasised.

In a bolder reaction, ^cAbdu 'l-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 1078 AD) blamed this excessive concentration of poetic genius on verbal embellishment. He then advocated that sounds alone could not constitute literary aesthetics:⁷⁴

فإذا رأيت البصير بجواهر الكلام
يستحسن شعرا أو يستجيد نثرا ،
ثم يجعل الثناء عليه من حيث
اللفظ فيقول: حلور شيق، وحسن أنيق،
وعذب سألح، وخلوب رائع فاعلم أنه
ليس ينبئك عن أحوال ترجع إلى
أجراس الحروف وإلى ظاهر الوضع
اللغوي، بل إلى أمر يقع من
المراء في فؤاده وفضل يقتدحه
العقل من زناده

Making theme his own standard of criticism and aesthetics, 'Abdu 'l-Qāhir identified two types of al-ma^cnā which he distinguished as al-^caqlī (mental) and al-takhyīlī (imaginative or fantastic). According to him, both of them were possible in poetry. The first one, generally true, was often addressed to the intellect; the second, generally untrue, was often addressed to the emotion. The first was of limited scope and application; the second was not. Hear the rest of the story from the horse's mouth:⁷⁵

وأما القسم التخيلي فهو الذي لا يمكن أن يقال إنه
صدق وأن ما أثبتته ثابت وما نفاه منفي. وهو مفتن
المذاهب كثير المسالك لا يكاد يحصر إلا تقريبا ولا
يحاط به تقسيما أو تبويبا...

It is this type of poetic genius that often develops into inspiration, vision or mysticism. Identified in psychology as aesthetic imagination, it consists essentially in the idea of building castles in the air, referred to by Plato as the 'Muses madness'. But once subjected to any form of standard or restriction, it becomes affected and can then be described as imitative imagination which had continued to rule Arabic poetry since the advent of Islam. This fact explains why the most sensational verses in non-ṣūfī Arabic poetry are by rule, not composed by pious men whose emotions are perpetually subjected to the control of the Islamic ethos.

Under these two types of al-ma^cnā, 'Abdu 'l-Qāhir further examined some popular critical verdict such as 'Khayru 'l-shi^cr

asdaqahu' as opposed to 'Khayru 'l-shi^Cr akdhabahu',⁷⁶ Emotionally charged as they were, these vox populi soon brought 'Abdu 'l-Qāhir face to face with vox Dei before which he was dramatically impelled to revise his concept of literary aesthetics. For his insistence on the takhyīlī as generally untrue would have meant an outrage on the metaphorical usages of the Qur'ān. Towards the end of his book, Dalā'ilu 'l-i^Cjāz, 'Abdu 'l-Qāhir eventually admitted the exquisiteness of form as an aspect of literary aesthetics.⁷⁷

واعلم أنا لا نأبى أن تكون من ذاق الحروف وسلامتها
 مما يشغل على اللسان داخلاً فيما يوجب الفضيلة
 وأن تكون مما يؤكّد أمر الإعجاز، وإنما الذي
 ننكره ونفيل رأى من يذهب إليه أن يجعله
 معجزاً به وحده ويجعله الأصل والعمدة.....

The specific contribution of the concept of the inimitability (i^Cjāzu 'l-Qur'ān) of the style of the Qur'ān to literary theory as exhibited by al-Bāqilānī⁷⁸ is more of theological, rather than literary interest. But it may be emphasised that the Qur'ānic factor had remained constant throughout the development of the theory. It was indeed the main axis around which the badi^C concept in particular had continued to rotate. Combining both literary and religious dimensions, the badi^C has therefore eventually become 'canonized' as

rhetorical embellishment which is consciously sought after by the poets and thus gradually evolves as a principle of art rather than a mere instrument of it.⁷⁹

Among the practical consequences of this theory may be mentioned the problem of sifting didactic from literary themes^C since a most didactic theme could, in the hand of al-Ḥarīrī, for example, display a wealth of verbal embellishment. Didactic as it is, the Alfiyya of Ibn Mālik (d. 1273 A D) is still poetry by our theory since both metre and rhyme are present. This reduction of literary aesthetics to mere rhetorical devices had also facilitated the incorporation of poetry, like Rhetoric in medieval Trivium, into traditional Islamic sciences to be consciously studied.^D In this process, the traditional themes, poetic diction and even imageries had all become formalized as they passed from generation to generation. Apparently locked up within its literary convention, the poets could not help repeating one another, a phenomenon which has given Professor von Grunebaum the impression 'that everybody copied everybody and that literary theft was universally practised and condoned'.⁸⁰

Beginning by memorising thousands of carefully selected classical verses, an apprentice poet would proceed to compose through a number of poetic techniques which left little room for any independent contribution. Particularly famous among such techniques are Mu^Cāraḍatu 'l-kalām (the matching of a discourse) and al-^Caqd, described by Ibn Rashīq as the most splendid plagiarism.⁸¹ Known collectively as al-ihtidhā', al-'akhdh, al-isti^Cāna or al-istimdād, other poetic techniques of playing the sedulous ape include al-iqtibās, al-tadmīn, hallu'l-manzūm, al-ta^Crīb, al-tashtīr and al-takhmīs.⁸² Most of these techniques will presently be illustrated from Nigerian compositions in which they have been applied.

Despite all these encouraging approaches to plagiarism, the literary critics have sought to establish criteria by which a poet could be charged of it. Differentiated as husnu 'l-akhdh or qubhu 'l-akhdh (good or bad copying), plagiarism (al-sariqa) has provoked considerable debate among the critics as they sought to define the frontier between genuine imitation and real theft. The earliest charges of plagiarism had involved, for example, al-Nābigha who was accused of stealing from Wahb b. al-Hārith. Both al-Jarīr and al-Farazdaq had also accused each other of theft. In the Abbasid era, both al-Buhturī and al-Mutanabbī were also accused of plagiarising Abū Tammām. And among the neo-classical poets, al-Bārūdī has been accused of stealing from Abū Nuwās while Shawqī is known to have woven on al-Būṣīrī's loom.⁸³ Indeed, as long as poetry remained a craft, no medieval poet, even in European literature, is known to have been completely free from imitating a predecessor.^E

With poetic themes reduced to everybody's property, it had also become virtually impossible to speak of aesthetic originality which was confined only to various verbal manipulations. Accusation of plagiarism in criticism had therefore become ridiculous. Accordingly, the only standard of criticism⁸⁴ had remained scholastic with emphasis on correct grammatical, rhetorical and prosodic rules. A variety of subjective standards of criticism, dictated very often by emotions and situations, are also known to have sometime been applied: Likulli maqām maqāl. In such a criticism, the extent to which literature has reflected their socio-political, economic and religious environment was often the focus of attention. Poetry,

after all, has remained the Dīwān of the Arabs.

B. Literary Prose

Distinguished mainly from poetry by the absence of metre and rhyme, prose had no independent existence in classical Arabic literary theory which considered both of them as al-kalām.⁸⁵ The Kalām was often described as rhymed prose if it retained some regular rhyme without metre. Stripped of these two features, it was known as free or ordinary prose (al-nathru'l-mursal). In form of an ordinary 'speech', free prose had to depend very much for its survival on writing which did not develop until the end of the Umayyad Caliphate (c. 750 A D). Rhymed prose on the other hand was consciously avoided at first since its open cultivation might be tantamount to a parody of the Qur'ān. It, however, lingered on in some form of Khutba within Islamic cultural context.^F

Popular tradition credits the emergence of belles-lettres in Arabic literature to 'Abdu 'l-Hamīd b. Yahyā al-kātib, the secretary of the last Umayyad Caliph, Marwān II (d. 750 A D): 'Budi'ati 'l-kitāba bi 'Abdi 'l-Hamīd wa Khutimat bi 'bni 'l-'Amīd'.⁸⁶ From its epistolary form, belles-lettres was further developed by Ibn al-Muqaffa^C (d. 757 A.D) to accommodate apologues and Indian fables such as he translated into Arabic as the Kalīla wa-Dimna. With the standardization of prose writing, most of the pre-Islamic oral tradition in circulation were eventually recorded. They include proverbs, maxims, parables, anecdotes and the stories of the pre-Islamic days, Ayyāmu 'l-'Arab.

Among others, the famous Kitābu 'l-Aghānī of Abū 'l-Faraj al-Isfahānī (d. 967 A D) has generally been held as the most comprehensive record of the Jāhiliyya prose and even poetry. It is described by Ibn Khaldūn as the archive of the Arabs and 'the ultimate goal to which a litterateur can aspire, and where he must stop as though he could ever get so far'.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, the cultivation of rhymed prose had gradually reestablished itself in written form, superimposing itself on ordinary prose. This resurgence was largely encouraged by many religious and political addresses, the development of al-badī^c as an aesthetic device, and the inherence of rhyming devices in Arabic language. It has also been established, above all, that the style of the Qur'ān was not rhymed prose but 'repeated verses' (al-mathānī).⁸⁸

So by the eleventh century A.D., rhymed prose had become popularised in a unique genre known as the Maqāmāt. The pioneer of this genre was al-Hamadhānī (d. 1007A D) who was copied and excelled, according to popular view, by al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1122).⁸⁹ Written in beautiful cadencies, the Maqāmāt are a collection of short narrative account of a series of dramatic episodes which largely portray the contemporary community in which the writers lived. These two works, among others, came to be particularly admired for their elegant but highly affected style. Their contents, however, had always remained suspected by strict orthodox Islam.⁹⁰

Historical romances, such as the stories of Antara, Sayf bn Dhī Yazan, Majnūn Laylā, etc. culminating in the Alf laila wa laila were later introduced into Arabic literary prose.⁹¹ But the

relatively late development of this belles-lettres and, possibly, the involvement of its origin in non-Islamic culture could not sufficiently integrate it into classical standard of prose writing.^G The verbal embellishment emphasised by literary theory in particular is always lacking in ordinary prose which is often written without rhyme. Consequently, most of the classical belles-lettres could not completely rid themselves of rhyme and similar badī^C devices. Without these, however, prose art would have thrived on creative ideas, fiction or literary invention which our theory had ignored. Lewis Cheikho has included al-mathal, al-mukātaba, al-munāzara, al-riwāya, al-waṣf and al-ta'rīkh in what was held to be the Arts of Composition (Funūnu 'līnshā') in classical prose.⁹² But most of the peculiar features by which they were defined could not sufficiently distinguish them from purely didactic compositions.

This virtual absence of any elaborate literary fiction or failure to integrate them into Arabic literature can also be traced to religious control to which literary tradition had remained subjected. It may be recalled that most of the stories in the Holy Qur'ān, of the past prophets and their religious adventures had been condemned by the Meccans as legends of the old:⁹³ 'idhā tutlā 'alayh āyātunā qāl asātīru 'l-awwalīn'. The art of story-telling, like the concept of inspiration in poetry, had thus become another threat to the authenticity of the Qur'ānic stories. One of the contemporaries of the Prophet, Nadr b. al-Hārith, who was later captured in the battle of Badr, is reported to have told a congregation of the Quraysh that

if Muḥammad tells you of ^CĀd and
Thamūd, I will tell you of Rustem and
Isfendiar and the Chosroes⁹⁴

It had, therefore, become a major pre-occupation of the literary theory to vindicate the truthfulness of the Qur'ānic stories by discouraging similar tales which might falsify them. On the other hand, the divine truthfulness of the Holy Qur'ān's narratives could be imparted to similar stories within Islamic cultural context. Apart from animal fables where episodes were regarded as al-kināya or al-'amthāl (mytonymy or parables), no narrative was to be recognised wherein the events so narrated had proved fantastic.⁹⁵ But this did not rule out the incorporation into biographical accounts of Islamic mythology, pious romances, legends or folk belief as al-mu^Cjizāt, al-karāmāt and al-^Cajā'ib.^H

Professor von Grunebaum⁹⁶ has also indicated the theological concept of creation as a barrier not only to creative writing but to fine arts in general. According to this concept, the attribution of any creative power to man is tantamount to polytheism. Only God, the Omnipotent, 'Who created the Heavens and the Earth and what is between them' reserves the power to create. 'When he wills a thing, he simply says to it: 'Be' and it is'.⁹⁷ Man on the other hand, and those they 'invoke besides Allah could never create a single fly though they combine to do this'.⁹⁸

On the day of Judgement, God will ask those who create images to inhale life into their works; but they will fail and be consigned to eternal punishment.⁹⁹ Consequently, the Islamic Arts have largely been confined to calligraphy, geometric and architectural

designs. These are some of the underlying factors why literary inventions are not recognised by classical Arabic theory. A modern Arab writer, Maḥmūd Taymūr makes the following remarks:¹⁰⁰

إنّ مؤرّخي الأدب ونقاده لا يذكرون ذلك للميراث
 القصصي إلا لمحا. فالأدب نثر وشعر. والنثر
 محدود بخصائص في اللفظ والأسلوب وبإلاغة
 في الجملة والتعبير، وفي نطاق هذه الحدود
 المرسومة للنثريتها في تاريخ الأدب العربي عن
 تلك الخلايا الحيّة من تراثنا القصصي.....
 (ف) دعائم النثر الفني هي عند نقاد الأدب ومؤرخيه
 الخطب، والرسائل، والأمثال، والمواعظ،
 والوصايا، فأما القصص من أسمار وأخبار،
 ومن أساطير وخرافات - فليس لها بين
 النثر كبير مقام، ولا جليل اعتبار.....

V. The Classification of Nigerian Arabic Writings

Since the advent of colonial government, the pre-colonial history of Nigeria especially the nineteenth century jihād has continued to attract attentions of different scholars. In the course of such studies, the overwhelming literary output of the jihād which constitutes the primary source of its history could not have escaped attentions. Accordingly, it has received criticism and counter-criticism from which the following two extreme cases have been selected:

Commenting on the literary production of the jihād, Professor Trimingham observes that

from the nature of their (scholars) reading it is not surprising that their religious compositions are stilted unnatural, couched in legalistic language and entirely unoriginal in thought. 'Uthmān dan Fodio his brother 'Abdullāh, and his son Muhammed Bello were copious compilers¹⁰¹

After quoting Dan Fodio's Sirāju 'l-ikhwān as an example of such a compilation based on al-Maghīlī's Ajwiba which in turn is a compilation of citations from earlier authorities, he admits that the literary output is impressive but only on paper. He then concludes by absolving the scholars from blame, attributing their lack of originality to their scholarship tradition which treats any departure from the norm as bid'ā. Reacting to this criticism, Professor 'Abdullāh Smith, another prominent Islamic historian disagrees radically with Trimingham. He takes into consideration the environment in which the works were produced and quotes as examples, the historical works of the jihād writers, their poems, sermons and

political correspondences. These, he describes as 'the extraordinary outpouring of Arabic writing'.¹⁰²

With the above review of the Arabic literary theory, it would be sufficient here to remind the readers that the concept of originality in classical Arabic literature does not consist in creative ideas which it considers as everybody's property. Cultivated as one of the traditional Islamic sciences, Arabic poetry in Nigeria is both studied and learned. It is not natural. In addition to the various conventional themes, Professor Galadanci has demonstrated with illustrations how poetic concept, imageries, style and language, like in classical tradition, are frequently exchanged and freely copied.¹⁰³ There is above all the spirit of uncritical faith in religious tradition (al-taqlīd) identified by Professor Trimingham, which has continued to cast a shadow on individual poetic talents.

Both Dr. Abūbakar and Professor Galadanci in their studies of Nigerian Arabic poetry have observed that there are no natural poets in Nigeria in the sense in which we have the Arab poets:¹⁰⁴

إنَّ أوَّلَ سؤالٍ يتبادر إلى ذهن المرء... هو: النيجيريا
شعراء قرضوا الشعر باللغة العربية؟ والجواب
على هذا السؤال بديهي وهو أنه ليس لها
شعراء على هذا المفهوم، وإنما لها علماء.
وهؤلاء العلماء هم الذين قاموا بدور الشعراء.

Indeed, the Nigerian writers themselves were not unaware of the literary tradition in which they were composing. None of them, except Shaikh 'Abdullāh has, therefore, claimed originality. It was consciously avoided as much as possible since such original ideas, even in pure literary works, might infringe on the legal opinions of the venerable ancestors. In one of his books, Najmu 'l-ikhwān, Dan Fodio makes it plain that ¹⁰⁵

وتأليفنا كلها تفصيل لما أجمل في تأليف العلماء
 للمتقدمين، وتأليف العلماء المتقدمين تفصيل
 لما أجمل في الكتاب والسنة

Shaikh 'Abdullāh, however, in his Tazyīn claims to be a natural poet (al-shā'iru 'l-maṭbū' calayh) despite the training he undertook to become one. He also claims originality in spite of the mu'ārada status of some of his poems. In the conclusion to his book, he cautions the readers as follows:¹⁰⁶

وليعلم الواقف على هذا المجموع أنني لم أقتد أحداً
 فيما كتبت فيه ولا نظرت إلى كتاب أحد ولا
 حكيت فيه ما سمعت من أحد وإنما كتبت
 فيه ما حضرني في وقت مما شهدت وعلمته
 مع أشغال غالبية وهموم ناصبة. فما كان منه
 صواباً فمن الله وله الحمد وما كان خطأً
 فمنّي واستغفر الله منه

It is easy to see in most of the verses of Shaikh 'Abdullāh and a few others, some genuine artistic potentialities which, having been bounded here and there by convention, could not rise above tradition. Disappointed at the aberration of the jamā^ca, the Shaikh had an occasion to be ruled by his emotions and to be touched by the 'Muses madness'. Acting apparently under this, and similar genuine emotive crises elsewhere, Shaikh 'Abdullāh had composed a number of poems which demonstrated his poetic genius in spite of some of them being mu^caradāt. Such verses would probably have been more sensational had his emotions been given full reins. This situation recalls Farazdaq's lament over being prevented by tradition from becoming a stallion of poetry, and lends weight, on the other hand, to the Shaikh's claim as a natural poet.

A major problem bequeathed to Nigerian poetry, however, has been the task of separating didactic from literary themes. As hinted earlier, this distinction was unknown in classical theory¹⁰⁷ which considered as poetry every speech (al-kalām) in metre (mawzūn) and rhyme (muqaffā). And in belles-lettres as well, the aesthetic emphasis placed on verbal embellishment at the expense of imaginative ideas could not distinguish scholastic from creative writing. Above all, such verbal embellishments are not uncommon even in purely didactic works.

In Nigeria, therefore, most of the non-traditional themes in verses such as al-tawassul, al-tahānī, al-murāsala etc., could not, by this standard, be easily classified. Professor Galadanci for instance, identifies al-madīh, al-rathā', al-hijā', Shi^cru'l-jihād, al-wa^cz wa 'l-irshād, al-hikam wa 'l-amthāl and al-tawassul as the

seven major themes in Nigerian poetry.¹⁰⁸ He then singles out the three most traditional themes - al-madīh, al-rathā' and shi^cru 'l-jihād - and sweeps the remainder, together with such verses as on al-fiqh, al-hadīth or al-nahw, under didactic theme. (al-shi^cr al-ta^clīmī).

But another writer on Nigerian Arabic poetry, Dr. 'Alī Abūbakar includes al-wasf, al-fukāha, al-wa^cz wa 'l-irshād, al-zuhd and al-hikam wa'l-amthāl under literary theme together with al-madīh and al-rathā'.¹⁰⁹ He thus restricts the didactic theme to the versification of traditional subjects such as al-nahw, al-sarf and al-fiqh. Shaikh al-Ilūrī, however, does not attempt any separation of didactic from literary both of which, in deference to literary theory, he must have considered literary.¹¹⁰ Since Bivar and Hiskett's work is confined to the pre-jihad literature which is essentially its growing stage, no such distinction could yet be made in view of the didactic orientation of Arabic-Islamic literary tradition in Nigeria as above explained.

Influenced by modern Arabic literary theory, Professor Galadanci has also ignored the classical standard of belles-lettres and reduced all Nigerian prose works, including al-ta'rīkh, al-wasf and al-murā-sala, to didactic themes. According to him, there was no belles-lettres in Nigerian Arabic compositions for a number of reasons he has given.¹¹¹ But Dr. 'Alī Abūbakar, in contrast, has identified correspondence (al-murāsala) as a belle-lettre (al-nathr al-fannī) for which the letters between al-Kānimī and Muḥammad Bello are given as an example.¹¹²

Although no comprehensive critical study of Nigerian literary composition has so far emerged, the absence of a practical objective standard of aesthetic criticism constitutes a potential problem. And, in a predominantly illiterate culture where the mere graphical representation of sounds and ideas constitutes some form of art if not sympathetic magic, the application of Ibn Qutayba's Likulli maqām maqāl is of little help. There is, above all, the inextricable emotional involvement of religion and ethnicity in Nigerian Arabic literature. In this respect, the only objective scholastic standard of criticism might also be tantamount to Islamic or ethnic criticism.

Taking all the above factors into consideration, this study has divided the whole Nigerian Arabic compositions into two: The first category is the didactic encyclopaedic works on the various Islamic traditional subjects. They include the bulk of Nigerian compositions mainly in free prose and rajaz metre, from which, the following are principal examples. The Ihyāu 'l-sunna wa ikhmādu 'l-bid'a by 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, the Ḍiyā'u 'l-hukkām by 'Abdullāh b. Fūdī, the Muḥammad Bello's Sabīlu 'l-salām fī 'l-imāma and a work on prosody in rajaz, Fathu 'l-latīf al-wāfī li 'l-ḥilmī 'l-ḥarūd wa 'l-qawāfī, composed by 'Abdullāh b. Fūdī. Apart from the exordia and titles of most of these prose compositions which are often decked in rhymed prose, and the fulfilment in rajaz verses of rhyme and metre, this category has no pretension to literary aesthetics.

The second category consists of compositions in both prose and verse which, although steeped in religious tradition, are of considerable literary interest. In poetry, they include all the traditional Arabic poetic themes such as panegyric, elegy, satire,

boasting, gnomic and love verses. I have also included here, verses on such topical themes as correspondence, hymns and prayers, homiletics, riddles and jokes, asceticism and sufism. In ordinary prose writing, they include correspondence, description and history or biography. Written very rarely in verses, correspondence is the first form of belles-lettres in Nigerian literary history the earliest example of which dated back to the fourteenth century.¹¹³ The last three forms which have virtually merged into history have, however, constituted the main examples of Nigerian belles-lettres. Until recently by ‘Umar Ibrāhīm, religious tradition had not allowed any attempt to imitate the Maqāmāt. But rhymed prose still survives mainly in religious khutba and exordia of most scholastic works. Composed within the Islamic cultural context, this second category constitutes the creative writing and the main artistic venture the specific traditional traits of which we now proceed to examine.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. 'The country of the Blacks' is the name by which the present West Africa was known to the Arabs before the British occupation. Another name used by Muḥammad Bello, probably introduced by al-Suyūṭī is Bilādu 'l-takrūr. See: al-Suyūṭī, al-taḥadduth bi-ni'mati 'llāh, II, ed, E M Sartain (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 155-59.
2. According to al-Ya^cqūbī, Al-Ta'rīkh, ed, Houtsman (Leiden, 1883), I, p. 219 cited by T Hodgkin, Nigerian Perspectives (London 1975), p. 87. See also A Smith, 'The Early States of the Central Sudan' in J F A Ajayi and M Crowder, eds. History of West Africa, I (London, 1971), p. 168.
3. al-Bakrī, Kitābu 'l-mughrib (Baghdad, 1857), p.11.
4. Cited by al-Qalqashandī, Subḥu 'l-a^cshā, V (Cairo, 1913-19), p. 218.
5. According to H R Palmer who has translated most of them into English, Mahrāms are 'letter patent or grants of privilege, given by various Mais from the earliest times of the Kanem Kingdom to certain learned or noble families, which owe their preservation to their descendants.' See H R Palmer, Sudanese Memoirs (Lagos, 1928), 3 vols; The Bornu Sahara and Sudan (London, 1936) for translations of various Mahrāms.
6. See eg A L Mabogunje, 'The Land and Peoples of West Africa', in J F A Ajayi and M Crowder, eds, I, op cit, p. 21.
7. A Smith, 'The Early States', op cit, pp. 161-2.
8. cf. Y B Usman, 'A Reconsideration of the History of Relations between Borno and Hausaland before 1804', in B Usman and N Alkali, eds, Studies in the History of Pre-Colonial Borno (Zaria, 1983), pp. 175-210. The Bayajida legend indicates an earlier contact. See also J H Greenberg, 'Linguistic Evidence for the Influence of the Kanuri on the Hausa', JAH, I, 2 (1960), pp. 205-12.
9. H R Palmer, Sudanese Memoirs, III, op cit, pp. 96-7.
10. Ibid, p. 79
11. Ibid, pp. 104-5. A later document, Aṣlu 'l-wanghariyīn, puts the arrival of the Wangarawa and the dynastic conversion at the time of Muḥammad Rimfa (1463-99 AD). See: M Al-Hajj, 'A seventeenth century Chronicle on the Origin and Missionary Activities of the Wangarawa', Kano Studies, I, 4 (1968), pp. 7-42.

12. In addition to the military conquest by Queen Amina of Zaria, in Kwararafa and Nupeland, Bussa is said to be invaded by Askia Dā'ud between 1536 and 1556. See: H R Palmer, Sudanese, III, op cit, pp. 81 and 109.
13. S F Nadel, Nupe Religion: Traditional Beliefs and the Influence of Islam in a West African Chiefdom (London, 1954), p. 232.
14. One of the 17th century scholars from Katsina, Muḥammad b. Massani is reported by M Bello to have written a treatise, Azhāru rubā, concerning the Yoruba Muslim jurists of that time. See: M Bello, Infāqu 'l-maysūr, ed, A 'Abdu 'l-^Cazim et al. (Cairo, 1964), p. 48. Moreover, the term, 'Esin Imale' (Religion of Mali), by which Islam is called by the Yorubas also suggests that Islam might have reached them earlier from the ancient Mali Empire.
15. For a romantic account of how the establishment of Islam at Ilorin had contributed to the collapse of the ancient Oyo Empire, see T G O Gbadamosi, The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba 1841-1908 (London, 1978), pp. 1-21.
16. I A B Balogun, 'The Influence of Islam amongst Etsako People of Bendel State of Nigeria', NATAIS, II, 1 (Dec 1980), pp. 28-36.
17. Its scholarship award has recently been extended to the very few Muslims of this predominantly Christian areas, to study in Saudi Arabia. See A R I Doi, 'Islam in Iboland', Nigerian Journal of Islam, 11, 2 (1972-74), pp. 41-54.
18. J H Greenberg, 'Arabic Loan Words in Hausa', Word, III, 192 (1947), pp. 85-97.
19. Rashīd Riḍā, al-Khilāfa (Cairo, 1341 A H), p. 88 cited by A Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939 (London, 1970), p. 300.
20. cf. al-Zarqānī, Manāhilu 'l-^Cirfān fī 'l-^Culūmi 'l-Qur'ān (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 143-72; al-Bāqilānī, I^Cjāzu 'l-Qur'ān, ed, A Ṣaqr (Cairo, 1963), passim.
21. The Qur'ān, 14:5.
22. See Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey (London, 1966), pp. 406-410.
23. Al-manār, XII (1909-10), p. 904, cited by A Hourani, op cit, pp. 299-300.
24. J Goody, 'Restricted Literacy in Northern Ghana', in J Goody, ed, Literacy in Traditional Societies (Cambridge, 1968), p.201.

25. Cf J O Hunwick, 'The Influence of Arabic in West Africa: A Preliminary Historical Survey', Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, VII (1964), pp.24-41; 'Literacy and Scholarship in Muslim West Africa in the Pre-Colonial Period', Occasional Paper (Nsukka University, 1974).
26. H R Palmer, Sudanese, III, op cit, p.3.
27. The Risāla, written by ^CAli ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (d 996 AD) is a well known Māliki law book in West Africa.
28. H R Palmer, The Bornu, op cit, p.91.
29. Ibn Khaldūn, Kitābu 'l-'Cibar, VII (Cairo, 1284 AH), pp. 310-11.
30. O A R El-Nagar, 'West Africa and the Muslim Pilgrimage', Ph D Thesis (University of London, 1967), p. 127.
31. al-Nāṣirī, Kitābu 'listiqṣā' li akhbār duwali 'l-Maghribi 'l-'aqṣā (Casablanca, 1954-5), p. 103.
32. See: A Smith, 'The Early States', op cit, p. 175, where the information of its political structure is said to be fragmentary; J E Lavers, 'Islam in the Bornu Caliphate: A Survey', Odu, NS No 5 (April 1971), pp. 27-53.
33. H R Palmer, Sudanese, II, op cit, p.111.
34. S A S Galadanci, op cit, p. 76.
35. See A D H Bivar , 'Arabic Documents of Northern Nigeria', BSOAS, XXII, 2 (1959), p. 324 for the Maghrib influences on writing in particular.
36. J O Hunwick, 'Religion and State in the Songhay Empire 1464-1591', in I M Lewis, ed, Islam in Tropical Africa (Oxford, 1966), pp. 305-6.
37. On al-Maghīlī's contributions to Nigerian Arabic literature see A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, 'The Arabic Literature of Nigeria to 1804', op cit, pp. 106-9.
38. They include 'Ta^Crīf fīmā yajib ^Calā 'l-mulūk' translated into English by T H Baldwin, The Obligation of Princes (Beirut, 1932); 'Mukhtaṣar fīmā yajūz li 'l-ḥukkām fī rad^Ci 'l-nās ^Cani 'l-ḥarām' for which see H R Palmer, 'An Early Fulani Conception of Islam', Journal of the African Society, XIV (1914-15), pp. 53-9.
39. See ^CUthmān b Fūdī, 'Sirāju 'l-ikhwān' in MSS, Ahmadu Bello University, Northern History Research Scheme Library.
40. al-Ilūrī, al-Islām fī Nayjīriya (Beirut, 1971), p.89. E M Sartain has called our attention to the inevitable error of reading 'sāfarat' as 'sāfartu' in al-Suyūṭī's Husnu 'l-muḥādara to which the Shaikh in fact refers. Quoted in part, the phrase involved reads as follows:

...وبلغت مؤلفاتي إلى الآن ثلاثمائة كتاب... وسافرت بحمد
الله إلى بلاد الشام والحجاز واليمن والهند والمغرب والتكرور...

al-Suyūṭī, Husnu 'l-muḥādara, I (Cairo, nd), p. 141; Jalālu 'l-dīn al-Sūyūṭī, I, ed, E M Sartain (London, 1975), pp. 40-41, 50-52.

41. al-Suyūṭī, al-Taḥadduth, II, op cit, pp. 155-9.
42. See J O Hunwick, 'Notes on a Late Fifteenth Century Document Concerning al-Takrūr' in C H Allen and R W Johnson, eds, African Perspectives (Cambridge, 1970), p.13.
43. For these verses, see al-Ilūrī, al-Islām, op cit, pp. 89-90.
44. by Shaikh Muṣṭafā al-Barnāwī and Shaikh 'Abdullāh b Fūdī. See: The Tazyīn, pp. 28-9.
45. R A Adeleye, 'Hausaland and Bornu 1600-1800', in J F A Ajayi and M Crowder, I, eds, op cit, pp. 491-2. On the collapse of Songhay and the rise of Hausaland, see: J O Hunwick, 'Songhay Bornu and Hausaland in the Sixteenth Century' in Ibid, pp. 202-39.
46. Cf the 'Literary Account of Ngazargamu' written by one Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ b Ishāq in 1658, in H R Palmer, The Bornu, op cit, p.33.
47. On Traditional institutions and system of learning in Nigeria, see: A Abūbakar, al-Thaqāfatu 'l-ʿarabiyya, op cit, pp. 147-200; A B Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (London, 1982), pp. 55-64.
48. M Hiskett, 'Material Relating to the State of Learning' op cit, pp. 550-78; see also A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, 'The Arabic Literature', op cit, pp. 105-48.
49. The adoption of Arabic script for writing the vernaculars must have begun at private levels as early as the fifteenth century. The earliest record of it, however, seems to be its appearance in a commentary of the Qur'ān in form of glosses written in Kanembu. See A D H Bivar, 'A Dated Koran from Bornu', Nigeria Magazine, No. 65 (June 1960), pp. 199-205.
50. The attribution of such works to Nigerian writers is likely to becloud the development of proficiency in Arabic as an index for maturity of Islamic culture. One does not expect Islamic culture in Nigeria, within a century, to have matured enough to produce such works. For instance, Professor Fafunwa has concluded, from a 14th century AD letter written, most likely,

by an immigrant scholar, that by then, Nigerian Muslim scholars and poets had achieved a very high standard in the writing of the classical Arabic language. How many Arabic scholars and poets had Nigeria in the 14th century? See: A B Fafunwa, op cit, p.53. On such foreign works, see: al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāḥu 'l-dirāsāti'l-adabiyya, op cit, pp. 10-19; A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, 'The Arabic Literature', op cit, pp. 106-113.

51. A Fartuwa, Ta'rīkh Mai Idrīs wa ghazawātih, ed, H R Palmer (Kano, 1932).
52. See A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, op cit, pp. 113-14 for his biography and contribution to Nigerian literature. For the English translation of this ode, see H R Palmer, The Bornu, op cit, p. 246.
53. For these verses, see A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, op cit, pp. 137-9 and below, p. 90.
54. by H F C Smith, 'The Islamic Revolution of the Nineteenth Century', JHSN, II, I (1961), pp. 175-6; see also, T Hodgkin, 'Uthman dan Fodio', Nigeria Magazine (1960), pp. 75-82.
55. M Bello, op cit, pp. 209-10. Note that most of these works are of the size of a contemporary standard article or even smaller. For Dan Fodio, the nineteenth century jihad and the most comprehensive list, so far, of the entire jihad literature, see M Last, The Sokoto Caliphate (London, 1967), pp. 236-54.
56. See: The Tazyīn, passim.
57. A number of works most of which include his biography have been done on Muḥammad Bello. But see M T M Minna, 'Sultan Bello and His Intellectual Contributions to the Sokoto Caliphate', Ph D Thesis (London University, 1982). His poems have also been collected by Wazīr Junaid as the 'Ifādatu 'l-ṭālibīn' in mss, Waziri's private library, Sokoto.
58. On Shaikh Amīn al-Kānamī, see L. Brenner, The Shehus of Kukawa (London, 1973). His literary contributions are scattered here and there. See M Bello, op cit, pp. 155-98; D Denham, et al, Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa (London, 1826), pp. 171-3; al-Ilūrī, al-Islām, op cit, p. 64; A Abūbakar, op cit, p. 294.
59. For the list of the contributors to the jihad literature, see: S W Junaid, 'Madḥu 'l-Cuzamā', op cit, pp. m-s; see also M Last, op cit, pp. 145-226 for the Waziris' contributions.
60. The Qur'ān, 69: 40-42; 37:36.
61. Ibn Rashīq, al-Umda, ed, M M Abdu 'l-Ḥamīd, (Cairo, 1955), p. 120 traces the emotional responses in poetry to al-rahba (desire), al-rahba (fear), al-ṭarab (delight) and al-ghaḍab (anger) from which have emanated the traditional poetic themes.

62. The Qur'ān, 33:40. See also I A B Balogun, Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria (Beirut, nd), pp. 86-99 where this concept is extensively discussed as the bone of contention between the Ahmadist and the Sunni Islam.
63. Many ṣūfī saints including ^CUthmān dan Fodio in Nigeria, have made several unsuccessful attempt to distinguish between the Prophet's waḥy and mu^Cjizāt on the one hand, and their own kashf and karāmāt on the other. Only Imām al-Ghazālī (d.1111 AD) has been able to call a spade a spade. See al-Ghazālī, al-Munqidh mina 'l-ḍalāl, ed, M Jābir (Cairo, nd), pp. 43-57.
64. On the growth of Arabic literary theory, see S A Bonebakker, 'Poets and Critics in the Third Century A H' in G E von Grunebaum, ed, Logic in Classical Islamic Culture (Wiesbaden, 1970), pp. 85-111; G E von Grunebaum, 'Arabic Literary Criticism in the 10th Century AD', JAOS, LXI (1941), pp. 51-7.
65. See de L O'Leary, How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs (London, 1948).
66. On this movement, see: H A R Gibb, Arabic Literature (Oxford, 1963), pp. 55ff; 'The Social Significance of the Shuubiya', Studia Orientalia Ioanni Pedersen dicta (Copenhagen, 1953), pp. 105-114.
67. I Salāma, Balāgha Aristū bayna 'l-^CArab wa'l-Yūnān (Cairo, 1952), p. 64.
68. The Qur'ān, 55:1-4; see: al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn ed, A M Hārūn, IV (Cairo, 1950), pp. 55-6.
69. Qudāma b. Ja^Cfar, Naqdu 'l-nathr, ed, Taha Hussain (Cairo, 1939), cited by I Salāma, op cit, pp. 69-71.
70. See I Salāma, op cit, pp. 64 ff.
71. Ibnu 'l-Mu^Ctazz, Kitābu 'l-badī^C, ed, I Kratchkovsky (London, 1935), for the analysis of which see I Salāma, op cit, pp. 91ff.
72. Qudāma b. Ja^Cfar, Kitāb Naqdi 'l-shi^Cr, ed, and introd, S A Bonebakker (Leiden, 1956), pp. 2ff. See also Ibn Rashīq, al-^CUmda, I, op cit, p. 119.
73. al-^CAskarī, Kitābu 'l-ṣinā^Catayn, ed, A M al-Bajāwī and M A Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1971), pp. 18, 63-4.
74. al-Jurjānī, Asrāru 'l-balāgha, ed, H Ritter (Istanbul, 1954), p. 4, see also Dalā'ilu 'l-icjāz, ed, M A Khafājī (Cairo, 1969), pp. 425-7.
75. al-Jurjānī, Asrār, op cit, pp. 3-9.

76. Ibid, pp. 250-3.
77. al-Jurjānī, Dalā'il, op cit, p. 455.
78. al-Bāqilānī, I^Cjāzu 'l-Qur'an, op cit, passim.
79. W Heinrichs, 'Literary Theory: The Problem of Its Efficiency', in G E von Grunebaum, ed, Arabic Poetry, Theory and Development (Wiesbaden, 1973), p. 25.
80. G E von Grunebaum, 'The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory', JNES, II (1944), p. 234. The same observation is made by T Hussain, Hāfiẓ wa Shawqī (Cairo, 1933), pp. 140-41.
81. Ibn Rashīq, al-^CUmda, II, op cit, p. 293.
82. On these and similar terms in plagiarism in Arabic Literature, see Ali al-Jurjānī, al-wasāṭa bayna 'l-Mutanabbī wa Khusūmih (Cairo, 1945), p. 14; al-Amīdī, Kitābu 'l-muwāzana (Constantinople, 1287 A H), p. 194; B Ṭabāna, al-Sariqatu 'l-'adabiyya (Beirut, 1974), pp. 52-63; G E von Grunebaum, 'The Concept of Plagiarism', op cit, pp. 234-53.
83. On these and more startling examples, see B Ṭabāna, op cit, pp. 43-4, 37-8, 120ff.
84. See G E von Grunebaum, 'Arabic Literary Criticism', op cit, pp. 51-7; Ahmad Amīn, al-Naqdu 'l-'adabī, I (Cairo, 1963), pp. 1-22 for the problem facing traditional Arabic literary criticism.
85. Ibn Khaldūn, The Muqaddima, transl. F Rosenthal, III (London, 1958), p. 373.
86. On the role of 'Abdu 'l-Ḥamīd al-kātib in the growth of belles-lettres, see A H Zayyāt, Ta'rīkhu 'l-adabī 'l-arabī (Beirut, 1978), pp. 215ff; see also H A R Gibb, 'Khawāṭir fī 'l-adabī 'l-arabī', Al-Adab wa 'l-Fann, I, 2 (1943), pp. 2-18; III (1945), pp. 2-12.
87. Ibn Khaldūn, The Muqaddima, III, op cit, p. 341.
88. Ibid, pp. 368-9.
89. al-Hamadhānī, Maqāmāt, ed, Muḥammad 'Abduh (Beirut, 1889) and F Steingass, The Assemblies of Ḥarīrī (London, 1897) are the two most famous Maqāmāt literature.
90. See below, p. 100 for how the Maqāmāt had competed unsuccessfully with al-Burda and al-^CIshriniyāt in Nigeria.
91. On these and similar medieval Arabic prose narratives which are not recognised by classical literary theory, see Maḥmūd Taymūr, Fannu 'l-Qaṣaṣ (Cairo, 1948), pp. 34-48; Al-shaykh Sayyidu 'l-^CAbīṭ (Cairo, 1926), pp. 2-47.

92. L Cheikho, Ilmu 'l-Adab, I (Beyrout, 1886), p. 170. To these genres may be added al-khitāba and al-waṣiyya.
93. The Qur'ān, 68:15; 6:25.
94. T Chenery, The Assemblies of al-Ḥarīrī, trans. from the Arabic with introd, I (London, 1867), p. 31.
95. cf. L Cheikho, I, op cit, p. 170 where al-imkān (feasibility of the episodes described in classical narratives) is made an essential condition.
96. G E von Grunebaum, 'The Aesthetic Foundation of Arabic Literature' in G E von Grunebaum, Comparative Literature, IV (Oregon, 1952), pp. 323-340.
97. The Qur'ān, 13:16-17; 50:37-8; 40:68-70.
98. The Qur'ān, 22:73.
99. al-Bukhārī, al-Ṣaḥīḥ, ed, L Krehl, IV (Leiden, 1862-1900), p. 104 (nos. 89, 90), p. 106 (no. 97).
100. Maḥmūd Taymūr, Fannu 'l-Qaṣaṣ, op cit, p. 69; see also G E von Grunebaum, Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation (Illinois, 1946), p. 287.
101. J S Trimingham, Islam in West Africa (Oxford, 1959), pp. 82-83.
102. H F C Smith, 'Arabic Manuscript Material Bearing on the Western Sudan', HSNBN, III, 4(1959), pp. 1-2; 'The Islamic Revolution', op cit, pp. 175-6.
103. S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp. 126-52.
104. A Abūbakar, op cit, p 327; see also S A S Galadanci, op cit, p. 126.
105. Quoted from M Bello, op cit, p.23.
106. See The Tazyīn, pp. 25, 83, and 10-12 for the examples of his Muḥarāḡa verses.
107. Professor Wolfhart indicates that the Zuhdiyyāt in the course of the development of the literary theory attains the status of shī'r why al-taṣawwuf does not. This observation, whatever its source might be, does not suggest a change of principle since no criteria had yet been defined for making such a distinction. See W. Heinrichs, 'Literary Theory', op cit, p. 35.
108. S A S Galadanci, op cit, p. 128.
109. A Abūbakar, op cit, pp 327ff.

110. A A al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāḥ, op cit, pp. 29-46 identifies nine themes.
111. S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp. 159-60.
112. A Abūbakar, op cit, pp. 324-5.
113. Written in flowery idiom with a rather prolix introduction, typical of the Age of Decadence style, the letter was sent from Mai^C Uthmān b. Idrīs (1392-1425 AD) of Bornu to the Mamlūk Sultān, Barqūq in 1391/2 AD. See al-Qalqashandī, VIII, op cit, pp. 116-118.

ADDITIONAL FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

- A The following review of the medieval Arabic literary theory, in the light of which the Nigerian Arabic literature is discussed, is intended to give it a purely literary, as opposed to its previous religious orientation.
- B Despite its further development after al-Jāhiz beyond this level, literary criticism in Nigeria had remained confined to grammar, prosody and rhetorics. (cf. A.N. Suwaid, 'Tazyīnu 'l-waraqāt li 'l-Shaikh 'Abdillāh', Dirasāt 'Arabīyya, III (1977), pp. 41-54; S.A.S. Galadanci, op. cit., pp.39-40) This is due, apparently, to its involvement with Islam in which case, literary criticism might be tantamount to religious criticism. But see pp.49-50.
- C as the result of which, for example, in Nigeria, it has become rather difficult to distinguish the purely literary, from didactic writings. See pp. 52-3.
- D not necessarily as a literary art in Nigeria, for example, but as a means of improving the standard of Arabic language, for the purpose of understanding the Arabic Qur'ān. Arabic literature had thus remained in Nigeria, an integral part of Islamic religion. See pp.65-8.
- E Since the method of Arabic-Islamic learning in West Africa as a whole was based on Taqlīd, (cf. I.Wilks, 'The Transmission of Islamic Learning in the Western Sudan', in J. Goody, ed (1968), op.cit., pp. 162-97) accusation of plagiarism was unknown among the Nigerian Arabic writers. See pp. 49-52; 68-74.
- F until recently in Nigeria, the use of rhyme prose was confined to religious sermons. See pp.100-101.
- G Consequently, most of these medieval literary fictions were not incorporated into the curriculum of the Arabic-Islamic scholarship tradition in Nigeria. See A. Abubakar, op. cit., pp. 147-200.
- H as contained e.g. in the biographies of Shaikh 'Uthmān Dan Fodio, 'Abdullāh Dan Fodio and Muhammad Bello, written by the Waziris. See p. 104.

CHAPTER TWO

TRADITIONALISM IN NIGERIAN ARABIC LITERATURE

I. The Islamic Orientation of Arabic Literature

Introduced into Nigeria as an integral part of Islamic scholarship tradition, Arabic literature, throughout its development, had remained an exclusive function of Islamic culture. It had further been endowed with Islamic features by the religious status of the literary men who were also the fuqahā' (jurists), the wuzarā' (viziers) and the umarā' (emirs) - the spiritual and political leaders of the Muslim community. The sacred force of Arabic, the literary medium, had also gathered a new momentum in a non-Arabic speaking and illiterate culture to which both Arabic and Islam were the same. Whatever writing existed in Arabic was held and treated almost as sacred as the Arabic Qur'ān.

In these circumstances, the exhausted literary tradition transmitted to Nigeria from the Age of Decadence was further subjected to the Islamic tradition of Taqlīd. It became more impoverished not only in themes but also in language and imagery having been filtered through a simple puritanical tradition which did not know a rival orthodox school let alone sectarianism.¹ But viewed as an accomplished skill (ṣinā'a), Arabic poetry in Nigeria was to a large extent a model of the classical qaṣīda. Most of its prose composition too, the correspondences and literary history in particular, are not inferior to similar medieval works elsewhere.

Since literary Arabic did not rise to a spoken level until recently, oration was not known except in some form of a mechanical imitation of this pre-Islamic Arabian virtue: Religious sermons in rhymed prose were often and still delivered in public worships to the non-Arabic speaking Muslims. Not unexpectedly, such sermons were often appreciated not as an address or injunction but as a part and parcel of the ritual worship. It is remarkable, however, that in spite of the environmental and phonetic constraints, some of the leading scholars are reported to have spoken Arabic.²

As a sacred language, Arabic could not have been used for purposes other than the propagation of Islam and the welfare of the Muslims themselves. In the course of composing poetry, therefore, the jurist-poets had always done their best to direct, not only the themes but also the language and imagery, towards achieving this goal. In fact, the study of poetry in the first instance, was aimed primarily at achieving competence in Arabic so that Islamic culture might be promoted. And even on such occasions as the Prophet's Birthday (Mawlidī 'l-nabī), the Night of Power in Ramaḍān (Laylatu 'l-qadr) or similar celebrations, the acts of chanting and listening to the Prophet's panegyrics (al-madīh) were not a mere entertainment. They have been raised to a meritorious service and 'one of the purest devotions' by a popular stanza in the Takhmīs of al-Fazāzī's (d. 1230 A.D.) al-Ishrīniyāt:³

مدیح نبی اللہ اذکی التعبد لما حاز من فضل وفخر وسود

أعشر من يُدلى له بتوُّدٍ تعالوا فعندى للنبي محمد
 مديح كأزهار الخمائل طلت

The poets were made up of the intelligentsia class which, with a very few women, constituted the leadership of the community. In this group were the very few whose Arabic-Islamic knowledge was actually prodigious. They include some of the pioneers above mentioned, the three jihad Generals in Sokoto, al-Ḥājj al-Kānāmī in Bornu, the viziers and a few other outstanding doctors of the faith. At the other extreme were those christened by al-Maghīlī as the ʿulamāʾu ʿl-sū, whose competence in Arabic was always wanting. Since they could not command the sacred tongue, most of them had eventually discovered a soft spot in a manageable alternative, the Ajami, the writing of the vernacular in Arabic script. Generally speaking, the members of the intelligentsia class were all trained poets and jurists. And with the Holy Qurʾān and Ḥadīth in their bosoms, the Mukhtaṣar of Khalīl⁴ in the right hand, the ʿIshrīniyāt in the left, it was they who determined the poetic trend in Nigeria. It was their Islamic scholarship training that had fixed the Nigerian poetic conventions the brief survey of which we now undertake.

The Holy Qurʾān, it may be recalled, unequivocally frowns at poetic frivolities and idealism as opposed to Islamic piety and realism:

Poets are followed by none save erring
 men. Behold how aimlessly they rove
 in every valley, preaching what they
 never practise.⁵

The attitude of the Hadīth is, however, flexible depending on whether the poetry is for or against Islam. One tradition is reported to have seriously warned the believers that

it would be better for everyone of you
to have his stomach filled with pus than
having his mouth filled with poetry.

But another popular tradition has also commended poetry and stylistics:

Indeed, there is a charm in stylistics
and a wisdom in poetry.⁶

II. The Traditional Methods of Composition

A. al-^cAqd and Hallu 'l-manzūm

Composition in prose or verse had begun in the pre-jihād Nigerian Islam in form of commentaries, compilations and by other techniques of imitation (al-ihtidhā'), by which the art was normally taught as a craft.⁷ An example is al-^caqd⁸ by which Shaikh Muḥammad b. 'Abdi 'l-Rahmān al-Barnāwī has put the Mukhtaṣar of al-Akhdarī into verses:⁹

فهذه منظومة قد احتوت	على علوم الأخرى اشتملت
لكونها أيسر للصبيان	ومن يريد الحفظ من شيخان
وزدت فيها حيث ما قد ساحت	قررتي فيدا به تكاملت
أعيذها بالشفع ثم الوتر	والفجر ثم والليالي العشر
من شتر كل حاسد محتال	معاند وجاهل مغتال

A reverse method of this style, the example of which I have not stumbled upon so far in Nigeria, is Hallu 'l-manzūm. It is the prosification of an existing verse by which Ibnu 'l-Athīr has decomposed Abū Tammām's poetry into prose;¹⁰ In medieval Arabic literature, there are many examples of al-^Caqd of which the versification of the famous prose work, the Kalīla wa Dimna in al-rajazu 'l-muzdawij (rhyming couplet) by Abān Lahīqī (d 815 AD), may be cited.

Originally evolved as a method of composing poetry, al-^Caqd has since acquired a definite poetic function as a mnemonic device in Arabic-Islamic scholarship tradition. We are all familiar with the Alfiyya of Ibn Mālik in which Grammar is versified in order to facilitate its memorisation. In a growing literary tradition of Nigeria, this art has particularly been encouraged by the desire to teach and memorise different subjects. It had indeed become relatively easier for most Nigerian malams to have their thoughts 'strung' (manzūm) rather than having them 'scattered' (manthūr) on papers. This phenomenon had partly contributed to the unusual proliferation of 'poets' in Arabic literature in general. In Nigeria the palm went to Shaikh 'Abdullāh dan Fodio who had hardly left any traditional subjects unstrung, in didactic verses.¹¹

B. Mu^Caradatu 'l-kaḷām

In Nigeria where poetry is cultivated as a craft, the mu^Carada as a method of composition is a rule to which only a very few verses may be an exemption. Like pastiche in European literary tradition, it is a deliberate imitation in points of metre, rhyme and subject matter of a successful qaṣīda by another poet, after memorising it and being deeply influenced by it;¹² Since no quotation marks are used, however, it is often difficult to differentiate the original sound from its echo. But

some of our predecessor-writers on Nigerian Arabic literature have identified what they often described simply as mere influences of one poetry on the other.¹³

The elegy of Shaikh 'Abdullāh, composed for Muṣṭafā, his Bā'iyya ode inspired by the aberration of the jamā'a and his famous jīmīyya may all be considered mu'aradāt of some early verses.¹⁴ Shaikh 'Uthmān dan Fodio, Muḥammad Bello, Shaikh Muṣṭafā and many others have also composed mu'aradāt of different poems which they had memorised in the course of their training.¹⁵ Encouraged by the concepts of poetry as a craft and of ideas as a common property, the mu'arada was a common practice throughout the medieval and even in the neo-classical poetry. As hinted above, this method encourages plagiarism towards which the attitudes of the poets and critics were at variance. But it is definite that no clear distinction can be made between it and plagiarism.

One of the original kalām (verses) the mu'arada of which Shaikh 'Abdullāh had composed is the dāliyya poem of the North African poet, Abū 'Alī al-Yūsī. Being a madīh, this poetry had provided Shaikh with an incentive to compose a similar madīh, which adopted from al-Yūsī's poem, not only its themes imagery and vocabulary, but also its thought.¹⁶ Indeed, it is only 'Abdu 'l-'Azīz al-Jurjānī¹⁷ who could probably absolve the Shaikh from plagiarism in this composition. But al-Āmidī¹⁸ would not certainly spare him as he did not spare al-Mutanabbī. Commenting on this style, Professor Hiskett says that the echo of al-Yūsī's thoughts in Shaikh 'Abdullāh's lines are incidents in a poem which is essentially his own creation.¹⁹ The following pairs of parallel lines, quoted from different kalām and its mu'arada by different Nigerian poets, tell the rest of the story.

al-Yūsī: كم سنة أحييت بعد إماتة وضلالة أخذت بعد توقد
'Abdullāh: كم سنة أحييتها وضلالة أخذتها جمرًا ذكي يتأجج

أمن تذكّر جيران بندي سلم مزجت دمعاً جرى من مقلة بدم
 ما بال عينيك طول الليل لم تنم تبكى دماً بدموع فيض منسجم

aI-Būṣīrī:
 M Bello

حلفت فلم أترك لنفسك ريبة وهل ياتمن دوامة وهو طائع
 حلفت ولم أفسد وداك بالقلبي وكيف وأن لا تذبك طائع

aI-Nābīgha:
 Sa^cd:

ومهما تكن عند امرئ من خليقة
 ولو خالها تنفى على الناس تعلم

Zuhayr:

ومهما تكن عند امرئ من خليقة
 ولو خالها قد جاء في أجود الشعر

Ibn Ishāq:

فتى كملت أخلاقه غير أنه
 جواد فما يبقى على المال باقياً

aI-Nābīgha:

فتى كملت أوصافه غير أنه
 جواد فلا يبقى من المال من ذر

Ibn Ishāq:

C. The Iqtibās and Tadmīn

An offshoot of mu^cārada is the iqtibās to which the tadmīn is closely related. Separately defined, the iqtibās is the

incorporation of some phrases or verses of the Holy Qur'ān or Hadīth into one's composition. The tadmīn, hardly distinguishable from mu^cārada, is the incorporation of another person's composition into one's own.²⁰ Aside from being methods of composition, the function in both cases is like in modern quotation, to confirm one's own ideas by the incorporated phrases. But it is often difficult to know the extent of such quotations if identified at all since quotation marks are not used. In Nigeria, this style was encouraged by the status of the writers as muqallīdūn (those imitating the predecessors) who would want their views sanctioned and popularised by an early juristic authority. More than half of Nigerian literary composition, not to mention didactic works, are therefore of this style. Here are some examples.²¹

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | نصحتكم بكلام الله مولانا | تعاونوا بينكم بالبر والتقوى |
| 2. | عند الإله وعند الناس أتقاكم | توبوا إليه جميعا إن اكرمكم |
| 3. | ومظهره ميزانه اليوم راجح | ومنكر هذا الدين قد خف وزنه |
| 4. | طريق من القرآن باد صماح | وامر بمعروف ونهى لمنكر |
| 5. | بجاه رسول الله عزبه الكل | يسير رباح النصر شهرا أمامهم |

D. The Tashtīr and Takhmīs

The Tashtīr (tarbī^c) and Takhmīs styles, frequently cultivated in Nigeria, also exemplify the traditional method of imitation. The Tashtīr (lit. rendering a hemistich a line) is achieved by composing a new second (al-^cajuz), to the first (al-ṣadr) hemistich of the line the tashtīr of which is intended. This first two hemistichs

are then rendered four (Tarbī^C) when a new first (al-ṣadr), is composed to the second half (al-^Cajuz) of the existing line. The original metre and qāfiya are maintained. A classical example of this style is contained in the poetry of ʿAbdu ʿl-Ghanī al-Nāblusī.²² And in Nigeria, Shaikh ʿUmar b Abī Bakr has composed a Tarbī^C of Kitābu ʿl-Zuhd attributed to Imām Zaynu ʿl-^CĀbidīn, ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusain. Here are the opening lines of the original poem (A), and their tashtīr (B).²³

A	i	تفرد بالجلال وبالبقاء	تبارك ذو العلاء والكبرياء
	ii	فكلّهم رهائن للفناء	وسوى الموت بين الخلق طرا
	iii	وطال بها المتاع إلى انقضاء	ودنيا ناوإن ملنا إليها
B	i	توحد بالكمال وبالسناء	تبارك ذو العلاء والكبرياء
	ii	تفرد بالجلال وبالبقاء	تنزه عن شريك أو فناء
	iii	فكلّهم رهائن للفناء	وسوى الموت بين الخلق طرا
	iii	ولذ بنا المآكل في الإناء	تقيًا عابدا بل أو شقيا
		وطال بها المتاع إلى انقضاء	ودنيا ناوإن ملنا إليها
			وهبنا قد وجدنا كل وطر

Literally, the Takhmīs is the rendering of two hemistichs five.. It is a method of composition by which an apprentice poet imitates an existing poem to compose an additional three to the two hemistichs of the poem the Takhmīs of which is intended. Such

original poems are usually a masterpiece which the student has adopted for memorisation in the course of his training.²⁴ In the process, the Carūd of the original verse becomes the qāfiya of the first two lines of the Takhmīs. But its original qāfiya is maintained in the fifth hemistich of the Takhmīs, written separately below.

One of the earliest examples of the Takhmīs in Arabic literature dated back to the fourteenth century. It was composed by the Syrian poet, Safiyyu 'l-dīn al-Hillī (d 1350 AD) on the poem of Qaṭar b. al-Fujā' al-Māzinī.²⁵ In Nigeria, the Kano based scholar, Shaikh 'Umar b. Muḥammad of Kebbi is reported by Shaikh al-Ilūrī to have composed a Takhmīs on the Bānat Su'ād of Ka'b b. Zuhair.²⁶ As a poet in training, Shaikh 'Abdullāh had also composed a Takhmīs of Dan Fodio's Dāliyya from which the following lines have been quoted:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ بَدَأْتُ قَوْلِي شَافِعًا بِمَدِيحِ خَيْرِ الْعَالَمِينَ وَصَادِعًا
مُسْتَفْهَمَانِيْلِ الْوَصُولِ وَزَادِعًا هَلْ لِي مَسِيرٌ خَوْطِيْبَةٌ مَسْرَعًا
لَا زُوْرَ قَبْرِ الْهَاشِمِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ

.....

قَدِّمِ مَا قَدِّمْتِ مِنْ تَخْيِيْسِهَا يَوْمَ الْخَمِيْسِ بِجُودِ رَبِّي جُئْتِهَا
وَبِحَوْلِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ نَظْمَتِهَا وَبِحَمْدِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ أَتَيْتِهَا
وَجَعَلْتِ عَدَّتِهَا كَسْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ

III. The Poetic Techniques

A. Traditional Rhyme and Metre Schemes.

Cultivated within the Islamic context, Arabic poetry in Nigeria has enjoyed the literary tradition of 'Taqīd'; the imitation of most of its traditional features apparently raised to the legal status of 'the emphatic sunna'. In the use of Arabic, a remarkable degree of proficiency has been displayed. In poetic technique, an outstanding competence has also been demonstrated. The erotic prelude, the polytheme, the independent character of each line in sense and construction, and the intricate metre and rhyme schemes of a typical qasīda are all displayed.²⁷ As much as possible, the traditional lyric form was maintained. But most of the descriptive jihād verses may be described as narrative which was not unknown in classical Arabic poetry.²⁸

Of the sixteen traditional metres, ten have been identified in Nigerian verses.²⁹ These include the Basīṭ, Kāmil, Khafīf, Mutadārik, Mutaqārib, Rajaz, Ramal, Sarī^c, Tawīl and Wāfir. The Tawīl is the most popular metre among not only the scholars but the Muslims in general. It was the metre in which al-Fāzāzī had composed his famous prophetic panegyric, al-^cisshrīniyāt, a number of whose verses have diffused into indigenous Islamic folksong chanted regularly by street beggars as supplication. Among the scholars, however, al-rajaz was most frequently employed in most if not all of their didactic verses.

The Basīṭ had also been popularised by al-Burda particularly among Yoruba Muslim women who often adapted its intonation to compose

religious songs (waka) in vernacular. The Wāfir and Kāmil were also fairly common in most of the jihād panegyric and elegy verses while the rest were only sparingly employed. The Nigerian poets had avoided using such non-traditional metres as al-muwashshahāt, al-zajal, etc, but invented a new one, known as al-karīm.³⁰ Rather than through their foot components or scansion, these various metres were usually identified through the various local distinct intonations by which they were often chanted.

Conspicuous poetic faults such as the interchange of al-rawī and its vowel, al-majrā, known technically as ikfā' or ijāza, and the iqwā' or isrāf respectively, were generally avoided.³¹ In traditional verses, efforts must also have been made in vain to avoid committing enjambment (al-tatmīn). This fault was therefore fairly common, investing most Nigerian verses with a narrative outlook. Apart from the jihād verses which are essentially narrative, a number of lines in panegyric or elegy could not be transposed without distorting their meanings.³²

Such faults as the interchange of the vowel preceeding the rawī (al-sinād), and the various simple and violent poetic licences of which, even the classical Arab poets could not be absolved, were frequently committed.³³ Grammatical errors, lack-lustre expressions, weak poetic diction, shallow poetic imagery and foreign style of expression have all been identified in Nigerian Arabic poetry.³⁴ A frequently committed fault which seemed to have assumed a literary aesthetic sunna was al-ītā,³⁵ probably introduced by Shaikh ʿUthmān. In his Dāliyya, the same word, Muḥammad; is virtually repeated throughout the ode as its qāfiya. In literary theory, a qāfiya may be repeated only after an interval of seven lines unless the word repeated conveys different significations. Consider the following lines from

the Shaikh's poem:³⁶

هل لي مسير نحو طيبة مسرعا	لأزور قبر الهاشمي محمد
لما فشار ياه في اكتافها	فتكمش الحجاج نحو محمد
غودرت منهمل الدموع مؤبلا	شوقا إلى هذا النبي محمد
أقسمت بالرحمن مالي مفصل	إلا حوى حب النبي محمد
أحكى المصاب بشوقه لها عرى	مالي لذيد العيش دون محمد

This fault has also appeared in many other verses conspicuous among which is the Ta^crīb (rendation into Arabic) by Shaikh ‘Abdullāh of one of the Dan Fodio's poems, al-Qādiriyya, originally composed in Fulfulde. In addition to repeating the name, ‘Abdu ‘l-Qādir throughout the poem as the qāfiya, a number of ‘ajuz are also repeated which invests the poem with a folk musical outlook:³⁷

يارب من شمس القيامة نجني	يارب من درجات عبدالقادر
ربي كتابي من يميني آتني	يارب من درجات عبدالقادر
يارب يسر لي حساب قيامتي	يارب من درجات عبدالقادر
يارب ثقل لي موازيني غدا	يارب من درجات عبدالقادر
يارب جوزني صراط جهنما	يارب من درجات عبدالقادر

This peculiar style is no doubt due to the popular nature of this poem having been first composed in the vernacular. Dedicated to the founder of the Qādiriyya Brotherhood, the poem is equally reminiscent of a typical ṣūfī litany by means of which ecstasy is often induced. In addition to the condition above mentioned under which a qāfiya can be repeated, Arabic literary theory also recognises certain repetition provided it is confined to the first hemistich. Exemplified in the ode of ^CAntara,³⁸ such a repetition, known as al-bayān bi 'l-takrār, is also frequently seen in Nigerian poetry.³⁹

B. The Opening and Closing Doxology

A conspicuous Islamic traditional feature in Nigerian compositions is the opening and closing of poetry and even prose with doxology. Such pious phrases, the origin of which is traceable to the early influence of Islam on literature, include al-basmala, al-hamdala, al-ṣalsala and similar forms of doxology.⁴⁰ The Basmala has its root in the Holy Qur'ān the whole chapters of which, except chapter nine, are opened with it. The Qur'ān has also enjoined the believers to always bless and greet the prophet⁴¹ while al-hamdala is traditionally considered the best form of prayer.

These utterances along with many others have diffused into the registers of the various Muslim peoples all over the world. They have indeed become an aspect of Islamic social customs and habits each of which is uttered at various social circumstances. It is traditionally held that no major undertaking during which the names of God and His Prophet are not invoked may be successful. One of the

verses of anonymous writers in circulation among Nigerian scholars warns that:⁴²

إذا ما شئت في الدارين تسعد
فكثر بالصلاة على محمد
وإن صليت فابغ الأجر فيها
وشفع بالصلاة على محمد
وإن نشئت القبول لها يقينا
فتختم بالصلاة على محمد
وفعلك كله عقباه خير
إذا صليت فيه على محمد

In poetry, this feature is identified only with most of the verses on topical themes. But classical themes such as al-madīh or al-marthiya are often free from it. Here are some opening and closing lines from the verses of Shaikh 'Abdu'līh.

i Some opening lines⁴³

بسم الإله بدأت قولي شافعا
بمدح خير العالمين وصادعا
بحمد الله أبدأ ما أقول
على نعم علينا لا تزول
على خير الورى صلوات ربي
شفيع الخلق إذ هالت حبول
بدأت بحمد الله والشكر يتبع
على قمع كفار علينا تجمع
ليستأصلوا الإسلام والمسلمين من
بلادهم والله في الفضل أوسع

ii Some closing lines⁴⁴

عليه وآله صلوات ربّي مع التسليم ما هبت قبول
وجعل صلواته بدأ النظام وختمها في القبول لنا فقول

فأله ينجينا معاً من شرها بمحمد فيعمنا الأنوار
صلوا الإله عليه مع أصحابه ما ثمت بسلامهم أشعار

يوافقنا المولى بجاه نبيّه بسنته حتى تجيء الفوادح
عليه صلاة الله ثمّ سلامه وأصحابه مارزّ تال ورائح

C The Art of Playing upon Lettersi Acrostic Verses:

Another traditional feature, bequeathed by the Age of Decadence to Nigerian poetry in which it had flourished, was the art of playing on letters. It was probably introduced into Nigeria by the Ishrīniyāt and many other books including the Maqāmāt. In the pre-jihād era, the Katsina based scholar, Dan Masani (d. 1667) is reported to have composed verses in which dotted letters were avoided altogether. This work which has survived only in name is known as 'Juz' laṭīf manzūm wa laysa fīhi ḥarf manqūṭ fawqāniya wa lā taḥtāniya'.⁴⁵ There is, however, a surviving example of this style, dated to the same period. The verse, according to al-Ilūrī, is composed in the non-traditional metre, al-karīm, by Sayyida

Ruqayya to whom the invention of the new metre is also attributed. It is contrived in such a way that every successive line of the verse from its maṭla^c begins with Arabic letters in their alphabetical order. Its opening lines read as follows:⁴⁶

ا- الكبرير يقبل تائباً أتاه	لا يخاف بخس كل من رجاه
ب- بالعذاب يجزي من عصي ويجزي	لا ينال عزا من تبع هواه
ت- ثبّ لعلّ ترجم يا أخى فاعلم	أنّ في جهنّم سجن من عصاه
ث- ثم من تمرّد في اللظى يصفد	من عصي صحبها هكذا جزاه
ج- جبره يكسر عيشه يكدر	خيره يفتقر قد عظم بلاه

Many Nigerian poets have tried their hands on this style in various forms. Among others, the following lines are extracted from the single acrostic composed by Ibn Ishāq in praise of the Caliph Aḥmad Rifā^cī (1867-73) whose first name, the letters beginning both the Ṣadr and ajuz, have spelt out.⁴⁷

أ- أصبحت في فرح كثير	أرجو معافاة الأمير
ح- حاجاتنا مقضية	حقا وحاجات المدير
م- مال الأنام خليفة	مثل الرفاعي المجير
د- دامت سعادة قطبنا	دوم الرواسي والشبير

ii The Chronogram Tradition

In addition to entertaining its readers, the art of playing on letters has acquired a more important literary function - the chronogram tradition. It is a style of composition in which the abjadiyya numerical values are ingeniously exploited in dating events in verse compositions. In classical tradition, the use of the abjadiyya numerical values was confined to Astrology and similar esoteric sciences. It was extended, however, to poetry in medieval age probably by the Jordanian poet, 'Abdu 'l-Ghanī al-Nablusī who uses it in his poem for chronogram, and describes its methodology.⁴⁸

Adopted later by the Maghrib poets, this device had been diffused into Nigeria where it became very popular. Almost every poet, especially in the nineteenth century, employed it in dating their compositions. An example is contained in the last stanza of the Shaikh 'Abdu'llāh's Takhmīs of Dan Fodio's ode above quoted.⁴⁹ Based on the Maghrib abjadiyya numerical values which vary slightly from the classical Eastern example,⁵⁰ the above quoted Takhmīs have been rendered by Professor Hiskett, with certain insertions by this writer, as follows:

On the 23rd (كج) of Shawwāl to him
who has understood.

In the year 1198 (1100+98= شق بعد ضم)
therefore know!

May God bless the Prophet and give him
peace

In the year 1188 (1100+88= قش بعد فح)
therefore understand

From the hijra of him who leads aright,
the Prophet Muḥammad.

IV Themes in Nigerian Poetry

In spite of its maturity which provoked that much altercations at the Mai's court in Ngazargamu, and those famous polemics including anti-jihād critiques, it is striking that Nigerian Islam has successfully protected its internal religious unity against sectarianism. Such names as the Shi'ite, the Kharijite or the Mu'tazilite were known only in textbooks if they were ever known.⁵¹ Apart from in Shaikh 'Uthmān and probably some few others, simple asceticism hardly attained gnosticism let alone rationalism. Primitive piety was the general rule.

This situation is understandable since in that part of the world, there had never existed any such great civilizations as the Sasanian, the Indian, the Aryan or the Graeco-Roman legacies which would have challenged Islamic dogmas and compelled an evolution of complex theological or philosophical speculations. The cultural crises provoked by the existing pagan civilization could not attain intellectual level since Islam, in some respect, has proved superior to it. Admittedly, the second great world civilization to be known simultaneously in Islamic Nigeria with Islam, was the Judaeo-Christian culture. But this could not then precipitate any intellectual conflict. Apart from these two cultures being essentially Semitic, both have also been introduced by the Qur'ān and within Islamic cultural context. Above all, the terms, al-naṣārā, al-yahūdī or ahlu 'l-kitāb by which Judaeo-Christian culture was introduced, made it to be only vaguely comprehended. And to many Nigerian malams before the contact with Western Culture, which reintroduced

Christianity, the Naṣārā and Yahūdī were more of the Ād and Thamūd than the living Christians and Jews.

Neither could the nineteenth century Islamic Nigeria be influenced by the contemporary world Islamic civilization which was then being plunged into intellectual and cultural confusion by its contact with the West. Bornu was certainly in contact with Egypt and North Africa while the annual pilgrimage to Mecca was never interrupted. But apart from the Tijāniyya ṣūfī order and later, the Mahdist movement from the Sudān,⁵² no traces of contemporary Islamic world influence were visible.

Sufism provided not only the currents of thoughts but also the socio-political and human ideals to which an average Nigerian Muslim then aspired. Knowledge and piety (al-taqwā) were often crowned by the sighting in vision of the 'best of the mankind' (Khairu 'l-warā). Upholding the sunna and turning away from the worldly gauds and vanities (ḥuṭāmu 'l-dunyā) constituted the main virtues for which an individual might be praised. In this type of atmosphere, it would be difficult for the classical erotic prelude (al-nasīb) to rise to the level of love poetry. There could be no room for ^CUmar b. Abī Rabī^C with his majūniyāt or al-Jarīr and Farazdaq with their scathing satire. Nor is it conceivable that Abū Nuwās with his Khamriyāt or Abū 'l-^CAlā' al-Ma^Carrī with his religious scepticism and sacrilegious parody of the Holy Scripture would ever be patronized. Making this observation, Dr. Kamāl Badr says:⁵³

إنه لا نتوقع من شاعر لم تتعد ثقافته بعض أشعار الجاهليين
 و صدر الإسلام و كتب التفسير و الفقه و الحديث و النحر و الصرف شعرًا يشتعل
 بجملة الحب كشعر جميل بثينة ولا المجون كشعر الوليد وأبي نواس ولا با
 لإستخفافى بالعقائد السماوية كشعر المعرى ولا بالشك كشعر إيليا
 أبو ماضى ولا بالدعوة لانتهاز اللذة كشعر الخيام، ولا يمكن أن نتوقع
 شعرًا يتسم بالتجديد فى شاعر تلك ثقافته و ذلك أسلوبه فى الحياة
 وإنما الذى نتوقعه شعر تقليد يافقها أزهريًا صفا!

Viewed within the Islamic cultural context, the following
 themes have flourished to a certain extent. Panegyric and Elegy,
 both of which were often linked with Homiletic (al-wa^cz) and Ascetic
 (al-zuhdiyāt) verses, were the most popular. But the Zuhdiyāt,
Taşawwuf, Amthāl wa hikam, which normally thrived independently with
 some philosophical touches could not properly thrive in Nigeria.
 They could not rise above traditional sermons or hymns. Other
 topical themes which have survived include Description, Correspondence
 (polemics), Congratulatory verses, Riddles and Jokes.

Since Boasting, Satire and Love verses are viewed by strict
 Islamic tradition with suspicion, these themes have survived only as
 sub-themes of a more orthodox theme. To boast is to lie or 'walk
 proudly on earth'; to compose a satire is to 'treat men with scorn';
 and to compose a love poem is to commit obscenity (al-fahshā'). All
 these themes run counter to the ideal and social ethics of Islam.⁵⁴
 Consequently, the views of most of our predecessor-writers on these

themes have also remained at variance.

Both Dr. 'Alī Abūbakar and Shaikh al-Ilūrī did not acknowledge the existence of these three themes at all in Nigerian Arabic poetry.⁵⁵ Professor Galadanci did not acknowledge the presence of boasting but he identified traces of satire and affected love poems.⁵⁶ As hinted above, most of what this study has considered to be boasting and satire verses are also included in what the Professor had treated as shī^cru'l-jihād.⁵⁷ The fate of such themes as al-khamriyāt and al-majūniyāt in this type of literary tradition is a forgone conclusion. But curiously enough, Shaikh 'Abdullāh has included boasting (al-iftikhār) as one of the themes in his Tazyīn.⁵⁸

A Panegyric

The panegyric poetry in Nigeria and that of Sokoto in particular has received a definite study.⁵⁹ From this study, two major categories of those praised may be identified. The first category includes the Almighty God and 'His best friends', the Prophet and the ṣūfī saints (Awliyā' Allāh).

Panegyric was probably at its best when the Prophet, with his conventional honorific epithets,⁶⁰ was being praised. The second category includes the Muslim intelligentsia and the ruling class (ahlu 'l-ḥaḥl wa' l-'aḥd): Among them were the Commander of the faithful, the Emirs, the Viziers, the Qādīs, distinguished military personnel and jurists. They were usually praised for their justice, erudition, piety, generosity and bravery through which the sunna was always upheld and the bid'a demolished.

Cultivated within the small circle of the jurist-poets, panegyric could not thrive very well; its social functions having

been disorientated, its unique aesthetic feature (hyperbole) having been destroyed. All the previous studies on Nigerian Arabic poetry are agreed that the art of panegyric did not flourish in Nigeria. This was because the poets, being the ruling class, could not engage in poetry as a lucrative venture.

In pre-Islamic Nigeria, the traditional court panegyric, the Kirari or Yabo (Hausa) was meant, not for the Patricians. It was the duty of the Plebeians who also performed as tribal chroniclers, royal jesters and boon companions. It was very difficult, therefore, for the Muslim community to confer on their leaders such social functions which tradition has assigned to the mendicants. The effects of the absence of exaggeration is discussed below but suffice it here to indicate that it has robbed panegyric of its most essential feature. Such traditionally inherent sensations in panegyric as are usually capable of firing the imagination of the praised, and moving him sometimes to tears and ecstasy, were generally unknown. Here is an extract from a panegyric modelled on qaṣīda by Muḥammad Bukhārī in praise of Shaikh ‘Abdullāh dan Fodio.⁶¹

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | أصحوت أم هاجت هواك منازل | عنى معارفها البلى وهو اطل |
| 2 | بتلاتامى أوبجن فما بها | الا نعام ترتعى وفراعل |
| 3 | دار عهدت بها الحلول وكل من | أهوى معى والعيش غرض باجل |
| 4 | ولقد وقفت برسمها مستخبرا | عن أهلها والدمع منى سائل |
| 5 | لله درك هل وقوفك نافع | برسومها أم هل لدمعك طائل |

- 6 فدح الديار و ذكر أخذان الهوى وخرائد في مشيها تهايل
 7 واسلك طريق أولى الهداية واعتنم فرصا تمر وأنت منها غافل
 8 وازهد عن الدنيا فإن نعيمها أضغاث أحلام وظل زائل
 9 وابع السيادة بالعلوم فما استوى في المجد ذو علم ومن هو جاهل
 10 ولقد حباك الدهر شيخا ماله في العلم في تلك الأراض ما مثل
 11 أعنى إمام العصر عبد الله من ساد الشيوخ النبيل مذهو شابل
 12 شيخ العلوم خديمها تبعها خذن التقى الحبر النبيل الكامل
 13 علامة القرآن حاوى السبق في علم الحديث وفي البلاغة كافل

B Elegy

A typical elegy opens with an ascetic prelude in which the poet enjoins his brothers to abstain from this temporal life and its vanities. The deceased is then introduced, usually by his name, his virtues highlighted and praised. Considering death as a decree from God, the community is satisfied or expected to be so. But it could weep sore over the collapse of one of its axes. The poet then prays for the deceased to be drenched in a shower of forgiveness (ghuyūth ^cafw) and concludes the theme in ascetic verses.

The current of the wa^cz which runs through the elegy and even the panegyric in form of zuhdiyāt is deeply rooted in Islamic

doctrines of life, contrasted with death. It consists mainly in setting up the vanities of the fleeting life against heaven and its eternity. The hereafter, which is to be craved through Islam, learning, piety and asceticism, leads to eternal bliss; the present life, to be shunned, through heathenism, ignorance, corruption and lewdness leads to inferno. All these opposing forces have provided sufficient emotional conflict which gave rise to the efflorescence of elegiac verses. It may indeed be said that elegy, in this form, has remained the most sensational theme in Nigerian Arabic poetry from which Shaikh al-Ilūrī makes his sarcastic remark:⁶²

Among their themes is elegy; and they
bemoan their learned and emirs after
their death more than they were praised
while alive

Here is an extract from Shaikh 'Abdullāh's elegy for Muṣṭafā:⁶³

1	بفعالها من أنها غدار	آن اوعواؤك إذ أراك الدار
2	فرحاً بدار صفوها أكراد	دار يموت بها حبيبك لا ترم
3	مرضينا وأميننا المختار	فالمصطفى من بيننا هو كاسمه
4	لكن رضينا ما قضى الجبار	إن الرزايا فقدنا أمثاله
5	تقوى وخلق يرتضيه الجار	سبحان من قد خصه بالعلم وال
6	في الحى تسخره بها الفجار	كم واجبات في الضياع أقامها
7	نرضى بما جاءت به الأقدار	نبكى عليه ترخماً مع أننا

- 8 فسقاه من رب غفور راحم غيث المحبة والرضى المدرار
 8 به فسقاه من رب غفور راحم غيث المحبة والرضى المدرار
 9 م سبحان من قهر الخلائق كلها بالموت وهو الواحد القهار
 10 وما ترتجى في هذه الدنيا التي ما تأتلى تزكوبها الأخطار
 11 فالدار مثل جهامة وسفاسط أو قل سراب ريثها آوار

C Boasting and Satire as Sub-themes

The earliest surviving satire verses dated back to the pre-jihād Islamic Nigeria when Shaikh al-Tāhir (d. 1776) had a genuine emotive occasion to deride the Kanuri people. Having once enjoyed the Bornu court patronage, he was soon turned out of it as a result of a calumny against him the source of which he traced to his subject of ridicule.⁶⁴

إن كانوا كانوا أهلقهر واعتلاء
 فالأراجيفالديهم كأراجيز الثناء
 والأساطير إليهم ذو أساطين البناء
 والاكاذيب إليهم من أعاذيب الحناء
 والأساطير أراجيز بساتين الفناء
 يابنى كانوا هذا من فنون الإزدراء

After the jihād, satire and boasting verses began to co-exist in most of the verses composed in celebrating or mourning the jihād

encounters. A jihād poem opens with doxology or melancholy depending on whether the encounter in question was won or lost. After praising the heroes or mourning the martyrs, the poet proceeds to describe the march across thicket, river and many fortresses which took the Muslim army to the abode of war. In the ensuing clash between the Muslim army and the 'Pharaohs', the 'Qudārs' and the 'Shayātīn' of the pagan forces, the victory of the believers was often contrasted with the defeat of the pagans, a contrast which simultaneously produced boasting and satire.

In Islamic history, most of the decisive military successes recorded were often owed not so much to superior tactics or arms, as to the high morale imparted to the living war-machines. This morale consists in the traditional pride and spiritual ambition to die as a martyr and secure an automatic visa into the Kingdom of Heaven, with 'diplomatic immunity':

You must not think that those who were
slain in the course of Allāh are dead.
They are alive, and well provided for by
their Lord; pleased with His gifts and
rejoicing that those whom they left
behind and who have not joined them have
nothing to fear or to regret; rejoicing in
Allāh's grace and bounty. Allāh will not
deny the faithful their reward⁶⁵

The more of the unbelievers a Muslim kills the higher is his heavenly rank (daraja); the more of the Muslims an unbeliever slays the lower is his infernal pit (daraka). Loading the scale further against the unbelievers was the fact that only the voices of the Muslims were ultimately heard even when they lost the battle. They were in most cases, once the jihād had taken off, on the offensive,

winning, killing and taking the unbelievers prisoners. This situation reduced the unbelievers to the objects of a caricature in the verses composed by the victorious, proud Muslims. The following extract from Shaikh 'Abdu'llāh's verses composed in celebration of the victory at Kwotto is a typical combination of boasting and satire.⁶⁶

1	فجزت فؤوس راسه يتقطع	وكم ذى جلال صرعته أكفنا
2	وأسيافنا واره طيرو أضيع	وكم من كفى جدلته سهامنا
3	لهم غير غييل في دجى الليل مفزع	طردناهم وسط النهار ولم يكن
4	بريم على الايماء والشمس تطلع	فجمع ظهري مع عشائه ينفهم
5	بدا ليووم الجمع لا يتجمع	لكل الجهات قد تفرق جمعه
6	على رغمهم والله يعطى ويمنع	فخلولنا أموالهم ونساءهم
7	ولسنا بشىء غيره نترفع	ونحن على الإسلام جمع تناصروا
8	وراجعكم بالعز والمال يرجع	فقتلاكهم في جنة الخلد دائما
9	ولا تهنوا فالصبر للنصر مرجع	فيا أمة الإسلام جدوا وجاهدوا

D Amatory Verses

The peaceful and tolerant atmosphere which had dominated the growth of Islam in Bornu was reflected in its poetry. In a rather liberal attitude, Shaikh Amīn al-Kānamī had composed a ghazal, Nasīmu 'l-sabā, in celebration of his victory and the recovery of his

favourite wife. The original Arabic of this poem is not available to me but Major Denham's (c. 1828) description of the 'song' as containing 'some very beautiful and ossianic expression'⁶⁷ has aptly described the verses. Apart from this, love poetry was unknown in Hausaland except in form of its mechanical imitation as attempted, for example, by Muḥammad Bello and Muḥammad al-Bukhārī.⁶⁸

V. Language and Imagery

The fortunes of language and imagery, like the theme from which they unfold, fluctuate in accordance with the literary taste of the jurist-poets. Considered within the medieval Islamic literary usage, the images, mainly in conventional forms, are quite enriched. Otherwise, they are generally sterile, trite and affected. In addition to being subjected to Islamic standard, most of them have been worn out by time. It should not be expected, after all, that the Waziri should be 'building his castles in the air' or 'wandering aimlessly in the valley saying that which he does not practise.'

The incorporation of foreign words (al-dakhīla) into Arabic composition is discouraged by literary theory.⁶⁹ Such exotic words and usages together with archaic and colloquial Arabic are not eloquent and should, therefore, be avoided. Accordingly, only vernacular names, of persons and places are frequently incorporated into Nigerian Arabic verses. But indigenous phrases such as idioms, images, proverbs and maxims are rarely consciously employed. In many cases, however, the vernacular styles of expression are found to have superimposed themselves on Arabic. A good example of such verses, stuffed with names of local heroes and their conquered

localities is the poem of Shaikh 'Abdullāh, composed on the victory of Kebbi.⁷⁰

While this virtual absence of al-dakhīla might have been encouraged by rhetorics, the Islamic status being enjoyed by the Holy Arabic might also have discouraged its indiscriminate mixing in usage with Fulfulde or Hausa. It may be recalled here that the identification of some words of non-Arabic origin in the Arabic Qur'ān had generated wild reactions among some Muslim jurists. In a spontaneous reaction, Abū 'Ubayda, for example, had left the impression that God does not understand any other language.⁷¹

Whoever pretends that there is in the
Qur'ān anything other than the Arabic
tongue has made a serious charge
against God

However, the use of extremely strange words, probably inspired by poetic exigencies or the poets' inclination to impress his readers, is not uncommon. And it has become another literary tradition for the poets in Nigeria, like elsewhere, to append a glossary to their poem. On the other hand, there are simple words and clear usages. Contrast the following pair of extracts from

'Abdullāh'⁷²

عج نحو أضواج الأجنة من مج	وأشرب من الأنتعاج ماء الزعاج
ثج الدموع على منازلهم بها	وأشف الجنان من الهموم الدمج بج
قف عندها سل من بها فحسى تجب	حوجاء اولوجاء ترضى من شج مج
وادع دلاص العزم فوق قلاصه	بمزاد صبر في الموامى مثلج ج
بسرى وادلاج معا وتهجر	وتأوب حتى تزيل شبي الشج ج
بسرى وادلاج معا وتهجر	وتأوب حتى تزيل شبي الشج

B

بلغ شريف شريف أصل كاسمه	عنى لشيخ كاسمه المختار
أزكى سلام شيب مسكانه	ريح النسيم تهب فى الاشجار
أخبره أنا لائذون بذيله	أبدوا وان كنا بذى الأقطار
متعلقين به نروم دعاءه	ونشيم منه سحائب الأمطار
انا وان كنا بأرض لم تكن	للمسلمين نقيم فى الكفار
لسنا نخالطهم بشىء بل لهم	دين لنا دين النبى المختار

In addition to the common attributes of God and the conventional praise epithets of the Chosen Prophet, every learned man is a sun, a full moon (al-badr), a heavy shower, a sea or a fruited tree. He is always among his students, the stars to whom he imparts his knowledge very generously like the sun the light; the sea or the shower the water; the full moon the brilliance and the trees the fruits. Every soldier or emir is a lion in the course of the jihād with the Qur'ān in his left hand, 'the sword in the right.' Both the Qur'ān and sunna are the daylight before which the darkness of paganism must flee.

The world is always the greens of the dunghill (Khadrā'u 'l-dimn), a snake in the grass, a mirage or a hag, decked in expensive make-ups to ensnare the inexperienced youngmen. A true believer, who is departing from it, is congratulated for escaping from the abode of delusion (dāru 'l-ghurūr) to the abode of felicity (dāru 'l-na^cīm). And with the hope that he would be soaked in a shower of forgiveness, the bereaved ones are consoled, tears of

blood flooding their eyes. Compare in the following extracts, the brilliant images contrived by Shaikh 'Abdullāh in the first eight verses, with the hackneyed ones in the last verses from different Nigerian poets:⁷³

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | فأبيض وجه الدين بعد محاقه | وأسود وجه الكفر بعد تبلج |
| 2 | والدين في عز ونهج منهج | والكفر في ذل ونهج منهج |
| 3 | والسنة الغراء أصبح ينجلي | والبدعة السوداء ليل يدج |
| 4 | طمست معالمها وأخلق ثوبها | والدين في درخ يمس مدبج |
| 5 | وتفجرت للدين من بركاته | عين الحياة تزل ماء الحشرج |
| 6 | فجرى مذائب للمشارب أفهقت | ماء يقول صفاؤه هل من يج |
| 7 | حتى تبرج مثل بدر طالع | بليال صحوا أو صباح مبلج |
| 8 | أوروضة ضحكت بها أزهارها | تزهى بها عذبات غصن عسلج |
| 9 | بدر سراج منير في الدجى وبلا | دالغرب ضاءت به والحق مقبول |
| 10 | شمس استضاء به البلدان واقتخرت | بضوئها البيتني في ذاك موصول |
| 11 | بحر محيط يستخف الفلك في | نحو وفي الاصلين نغيت وابل |
| 12 | وجاحح علماء يجلب رفسهم | كل كبحر في العظام متوج |

- 13 ما بال عينك طول الليل لم تنم تبكى دما بدموع فيض من سحيم
- 14 يقودهم بل في خيل وفي رجل بين الليوث كليث نائر حزار
- 15 حتى أناخ على ساحات دارهم فاصبحوا مثل عصف حط في النار

The absence or social malfunction of panegyric and boasting in particular has left only scanty metaphors. Practically, the choice of the Almighty God and 'His friends' for praising on the one hand has limited the use of images to pious horizons. Aesthetic imagination in this respect could not interplay since the images produced thereof might be too sacrilegious. On the other hand, the use of fantastic exaggerations (al-ighrāq, al-ghuluww, al-mubālagha) is discouraged by literary theory⁷⁴ since such hyperboles might attribute to the creature, certain qualities exclusively reserved for the Creator.

Attentions may be drawn here to the customary appendage of the word, ^cAbd as idāfa (genitive construction) to the ninety-nine beautiful names of God (asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā) before such names are lawfully addressed to man. A man cannot, by strict Islamic tradition, be called Allāh or Raḥmān but ^cAbdullāh or ^cAbdu 'l-Raḥmān (the servant or slave of...). Professor Hiskett has also observed in Hausa poetry that the malams could not praise the Sarakuna (Sultans) because, those boastful epithets of the courts, the kirari, were tantamount to polytheism.⁷⁵

A fairly common literary style is the use of allegories, literary allusions and symbols (al-talmīh). They include references to historical or legendary personalities and events, maxims and principles, proverbs, parables and 'Islamic mythology'. Not unexpectedly, they were normally derived within Islamic cultural heritage. Employed mainly in form of antonomasia (al-kināya), the name of a distinguished person is often substituted for the class, age, character or ideology for which he or she was famous. We are all familiar with such Biblical names as Solomon, Thomas, Judas, Samson etc. as symbols of wisdom, scepticism, betrayal and gallantry respectively. In Arabic-Islamic literary tradition, names such as Shaiṭān, Namrūdh, ʿĀd, Thamūd, Firʿawn, Qudār, Ibn Muljam etc. have similarly become popular symbols of mischief. Here are some examples from the verses of ʿAbdullāh dan Fodio.⁷⁶

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | وهل لم ينف من بين البواد | سلوا شيطان قوبر وهو ينف |
| 2 | فكان قد اهر وهو كعاد | تولى كبره بغضا لدين |
| 3 | وقضية عاصت على تنفج | ولكل فرعون طغى موسى سطي |
| 4 | كصاحب ناخة أصل الفساد | ولا تسأل عن أصحاب الضلال |
| 5 | قد انكشفت عن شمس الإسلام تلح | فلم يك إلا ان رايت جهامهم |
| 6 | ببدر يجمع ملل الانك يجمع | بنصر الذي نصر النبي على العدا |
| 7 | جزانها ترمى بنصل سلمج | فاستنسرت بغثانها وتثمرت |

- 8 فليس بما تبني يد الله هاد م وليس لأمر الله إن جاء مدفع
- 9 وإن قرين سوء يعدى قرينه بما فيه اعداء الصحاح الأجارب
- 10 فيا أمة الإسلام جدوا واجهدوا ولا تهنوا فالصبر للنصر مرجح

In general, most of the traditional figures of speech, the tashbīh (simile), 'isti'āra (metaphor), tajnīs (pun), tarsi^c (internal rhyme), tibāq or muqābala (antithesis), talmīh or kināya (allusions or metonymy), tawriya (double entendre) etc. can all be identified in Nigerian poetry. Personification (al-tashkhīṣ, al-istiḥdār, al-kināya), in form of poetic fallacy and apostrophe, are particularly common. But vision or mysticism as a figure of speech, not unexpectedly, is not known. On a few occasions, the poets were constrained to improvise images from grammar and prosody, a style which is very common in the Maqāmāt of al-Ḥarīrī. Read the following lines:⁷⁷

وخاصة علماء يجلب ردهم كل كبر في العطا متموج
 ولهم مكان ومبتدأ في جارهم عمل لغيرهم كلم أو في يج
 ولربما عملوا كما من كفا من يعدو وتقوية الضعيف الملتج
 وقد كنت ارجو كثرهم بمقامنا فخاب رجائي في لعل وفي عسا

وقد كملت أبيات الفقير وبغيته من المولى قبول
 نظمنا بوافروزي يقول مفاعلتن مفاعلتن فعول

VI. Literary Prose

Like poetry, prose composition in Nigeria has also followed Islamic scholarship tradition the impacts of which on belles-lettres have been discussed. As hinted above, most of the medieval Arabic historical romances, legends, fables, anecdotes or similar narratives were not incorporated into Islamic scholarship tradition.

Accordingly, the Nigerian scholars were not influenced by such books as the Kalīla wa Dimna, Ḥayy bun Yaqazān, Sīratu^c Antara, Alf layla wa layla etc. which, if ever known at all, are not popular. Of the classical Arabic prose, only the Maqāmāt of al-Ḥarīrī in particular were often cultivated and memorised for their elegant and bombastic cadencies apparently to meet the rigid demands of the rhyme-scheme. But the Maqāmāt could not compete with al-^cIsḥrīniyāt and al-Burda for a place of honour, influence and piety. Apart from archaism and the attendant difficulty which some Nigerians actually overcome, the Qur'ānic prestige enjoyed by al-^cIsḥrīniyāt, for example, could not have been extended by strict Islamic tradition to such frivolities and hypocrisy as dramatised by Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī.⁷⁸

At any rate, rhymed prose can hardly be eliminated in any Arabic-Islamic literary tradition where Arabic is actively studied and the Holy Qur'ān regularly chanted. In Nigeria it has found a

stronghold in religious sermons and similar 'Khutba' which was often read as an opening or closing ritual in most socio-religious occasions. In its characteristic pious phrases, this 'khutba' has acquired a literary force in the exordia of most scholastic writing which it often invested with Islamic outlook and orientation.

Apart from the literary tradition's discouragement of prose narratives, the socio-religious status of the jurist-writers could hardly have allowed the cultivation of the story of tortoise and spider which African tradition has reserved for children and their grandmothers. But in actual fact, the Waziri would have made no bones about singing the Nursery Rhyme if the attitude of the Holy Qur'ān to fiction had encouraged it. In apparent condemnation of folktales, the Qur'ān has charged that

some there are who would gladly pay for
a frivolous tale so that in their
ignorance they may mislead others from
the path of Allāh and make fun of it⁷⁹

In the absence of rhymed prose or imaginative writing in ordinary prose, the latter, at least in form, automatically merges into didactic theme. In Nigeria, therefore, ordinary prose writing was generally associated with scholastic composition while rhymed prose and versification was associated with literary composition. Demonstrating this fact, Shaikh 'Abdullāh, for instance, did not pretend to have his papers adorned in Tazyīnu 'l-waraqāt with ordinary prose which he normally employed in his scholastic writings.

This situation left us with the above identified four

literary prose genres which fluctuate, by modern literary standard, between didactic and literary themes. They include correspondence, Description, History and Biography. The earliest advantage to which literacy in Arabic had been put in Nigeria and in West Africa as a whole was communication and record keeping which has been raised by Islam to a religious obligation.⁸⁰

O you who believe, if you contract a
debt for a fixed term, then record it
and let a scribe write it down before
you in equity

On the influence of Arabic in West Africa, Professor Hunwick makes a similar observation:⁸¹

The spread of Islam is accompanied by a
spread of literacy which, however
humble, provides a means of opening up
communications and expanding trade in
a way not possible to illiterate
people.

This was soon developed into descriptive works which have continued to exist as a sub-theme in history. There are a few works which might also be described as biographical most of which, by medieval literary tradition, have equally merged into history.

i Epistolography

Taking off since the fourteenth century with the letter sent from Bornu to Egypt, epistolography had continued to flourish until the nineteenth century. It then culminated in the correspondence between Sokoto and Bornu⁸² over the legality of the jihād against the latter. Composed in ordinary prose, interspersed with rhyming phrases, this correspondence alone seems to have fulfilled most of

the classical features of epistolary as an artwork. In addition to the general eloquence (al-faṣāḥa) which is fulfilled by Shaikh al-Kānamī in particular, such literary features as simplicity (al-sadhāja), clarity (al-jalā'), brevity (al-ījāz), elegance (al-ṭalāwa) and suitable levels of communication between the two ends (al-mulā'ama) are all demonstrated.⁸³ The correspondence also fulfils the conditions of a polemic but not a literary debate (al-munāzara) for which it might also be mistaken. Apart from being precipitated by sword rather than pen, such an endless theological controversy unlike other literary debate can only be submitted to a divine verdict. There are now hundreds of letters which have been collected and translated⁸⁴ except that most of them fall below literary standard.

A major literary contribution to the art of epistolary, however, has been made by a Kano based scholar, Shaikh Umar bn Abī Bakr when in 1886 he wrote his Manual for Arabic letter-writing, al-sarḥatu 'l-warīqa fī 'l-ilmī 'l-wathīqa.⁸⁵ Written in ordinary prose with occasional pretensions to rhymed prose, this work is modelled on classical style. In addition to the traditional opening doxology; pious phrases from the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and Jurisprudence are its main feature. Due to the time in which it was written, this model of Arabic letter has not exerted much influence on Nigerian scholars. Apart from those written by leading scholars, most of Nigerian Arabic correspondences in general, as observed by Professor Galadanci, are of little literary interest.

ii. Literary History, Biography and Description

The earliest historical work in Nigerian prose writing is Ahmad ibn

Fartuwa's Ta'rīkh Mai Idrīs wa ghazawātih and Dīwān Salātin Barnū both of which dated to the sixteenth century. Published together in one volume, these historical works include both the description of Idrīs Aloomā's various encounters. It also contains his biography as well as those of the various sultans. But their language and style, not unexpectedly, are more didactic than literary.

During the jihād, this trend became very popular and a number of historical works⁸⁶ were written. Outstanding among such writings is the Infāqu 'l-maysūr (c.1811) which has become the most authoritative historical source of the pre-colonial Nigeria. Some of these works which might be described as biographical include the Waziri Gidado's (d 1851) Rawdu 'l-jinān in which the biography of Shaikh 'Uthmān and his karāmāt are celebrated. He also wrote al-kashf wa 'l-bayān in which the biography of Muḥammad Bello equally features. A similar work, al-anīsu 'l-mufīd has also been written by Waziri 'Abdu 'l-Qādir in which he treats the biographies of the three Major Generals of the jihād with some elegies on the jihād martyrs.

It has indeed become a literary tradition for the respective Waziri, as observed by Professor Smith,⁸⁷ to publish the annals of the ruling dynasty. And as late as 1951, the current Waziri also published his Dabtu 'l-mulṭaqatāt along the same tradition. Written in ordinary prose, the primary objective of these works is historical to which artistic motive if any, is only secondary. The following extract, a descriptive passage from the Infāqu 'l-maysūr,⁸⁸ illustrates the extent to which similar works are a piece of literary art:

وصف برنو وسكانها

... ويليه من جهة المغرب بلد برنو بفتح الباب واسكان الرء وضم
النون، بعدها واو. وهي بلدة ذات أنهار وأشجار ورمال واسعة عامرة بما
لسكنى قبل هذا الجهاد. ولم تكن بلدة في هذا القطر أوسع منها وأكثرها عمارة ويسكنها
البربر والعرب المذكورون والفلاتيون وفيها مما يليك البربر كثيرا ...
وقد انتشر الاسلام فيها انتشارا بين سلاطينهم ووزرائهم
وعامتهم بل لا يوجد في هذه البلاد عامة إلا معتنون بقراءة القرآن وتجويده
وحفظه وكتابته ولم تنزل العامة هكذا حتى قام هذا الجهاد.
لكن حدثونا أن لسلاطينهم وأمراءهم مواطنين يركبون إليها ويذبجون
بها ويرشون بالدماء على أبواب قريتهم، ولهم بيوت معظمة فيها حيات
وأشياء يذبجون لها ويفعلون للبحر كما كانت تفعل القبط للنيل أيام الجاهلية!
ولهم في ذلك أعياد يجمعون فيهاهم وقراؤهم وسلاطينهم وعامتهم
ولا يجضرها غيرهم، ويسمون ذلك عادة البلاد وينتمون أن ذلك صدقات
يستعينون بها على جلب المصالح، ودرء المفاسد، فإذا لم تفعل تلك
العادة بطلت معاشهم وقلت ارزاقهم، وضعفت شوكتهم وتوارثوا
هذه العوائد كابر عن كابر...

The above exposition represents the literary limit to which compositions in Qur'ānic Arabic at the peak of its development could be stretched. Arabic language rose to become the bureaucratic medium of the Sokoto Caliphate but its literature could not rise

above mediocrity. Composed only by the few jurists, Arabic literature was able to reflect only the religious life of this social class of the community. As for their secular life and those of the common Muslims who did not command the sacred Arabic, they were expressed in Fulani or Hausa, written in Arabic script. It is to this manageable alternative known as Ajami that popular literary interest was eventually transferred.

Evolved since the seventeenth century,⁸⁹ this system had, by the outbreak of the jihād, outclassed Arabic in popularity. The most popular literature during the jihād was, by rule, that which was composed in Hausa or Fulani. As the nineteenth century wore on, Arabic was becoming increasingly secluded like some Muslim women from the public. And by the end of the century, it was clear that Arabic could not compete with the Ajami in which most of the contemporary secular and even religious themes have begun to be celebrated.⁹⁰

With the emergence of this indigenous literature in Hausa, written first in Arabic script for which Latin script, under European influence, was eventually substituted, literary attentions were directed from Arabic to Hausa. The abstinence of the malams from secular education and other socio-economic and political activities of the new 'Christian' oriented life, further kept Arabic in its sacred temple. But Arabic, after some time, is now being brought out into secular life paradoxically by the impacts of Western Education. This is the process to be examined as this study continues. Meanwhile, let us go to the Arab world and see what

Western Civilization has made of the medieval Arabic-Islamic cultural heritage including literature.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. The leading scholars certainly knew scholastic theology from which, like Dan Fodio in his Hişnu 'l-afhām (Cairo, 1959), they have sought to keep their students away for likely consequences. See The Tazyīn, p. 7 n.5 where Hiskett refutes Trimingham's assertion that scholastic theology was unknown in West African Islam; J S Trimingham, Islam, op cit, p. 49.
2. See: H. Clapperton, Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa (London, 1829), p.81.
3. al-Fāzāzī, al-wasā'ilu 'l-mutaqabbala (Cairo, n.d.), p.16. This book is henceforth referred to, simply, as the Ishrīniyāt.
4. One of the earliest and most popular textbooks on Māliki law in West Africa. It was written by Abū'l-Şafā' Khalīl b. Ishāq b. Mūsā al-Jundī (d. 1365 AD).
5. The Qur'ān, 26: 221.
6. al-Zayyāt, op. cit, p. 119.
7. On poetry as a craft and the systematic training towards mastering it, see in particular Ibn Khaldūn, The Muqaddima, III, op. cit, pp. 369-71.
8. al-^Caqd is a method of composition by which an existing prose work is 'knitted' (^Caqada) into verses. Its reverse, known as Ḥallu 'l-naẓm, is also practised.
9. al-'Akhḍarī is another textbook of the Māliki law in West Africa, written by Abdu 'l-Raḥmān b. Sīdī (Sayyid) Muḥammad al-Şaghīr (d. 10th century AH). The verses are quoted from A A al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāh, op cit, pp. 37-8.
10. L Cheikho, I, op cit, pp. 244-6.
11. See: A Abūbakar, op cit, pp. 264-84 for examples.
12. S Moreh, 'The Neoclassical Qaṣīda' in G E von Grunebaum, ed, Arabic Poetry, op cit, p. 167.
13. See for example, A Abūbakar, op cit, pp. 335-341; The Tazyīn, pp. 10-12.
14. The elegy (Tazyīn, pp. 46-9) is a mu^Cāraḍa of that of Abū 'l-Ḥasan with which it shares the same metre, al-kāmil, the same rhyme, al-mu'assasa, the same rawī, al-rā', and of course, the same theme, al-rathā'. The Ba'īyya is also a mu^Cāraḍa of al-Nābigha's poem with which the above features are also common. See: A. Abubakar, op cit, pp. 335-41 for illustrations..

15. Shaikh ^CUthmān has composed a mu^Cārada on Ka^Cb b Zuhayr's Bānāt Su^Cād; Muḥammad Bello on 'Antara, Tarāfa and al-Buṣīrī; Abdu 'l-Qādir Muṣṭafā on Shaikh Abdullāh, etc see S W Junaid, 'Madḥu 'l-^Cuzamā' op cit, pp 92-101; S A S Galadanci, op cit, P; 138;
16. See The Tazyīn, pp. 10-11.
17. He had once defended al-Mutanabbī from the charges of plagiarism levelled against him by his adversary. See: Alī al-Jurjānī, al-wasāṭa bayna 'l-mutanabbī wa khuṣūmih (Cairo, 1340 AH), pp. 141-151.
18. See above p. 43
19. The Tazyīn, p. 12.
20. L Cheikho, I, op cit, pp. 101-3.
21. Lines 1 and 2 have incorporated ideas from The Qur'^{ān}, 5:2 and 49:13 respectively. For more details on this, see S W Junaid, 'Madḥu 'l-^Cuzamā', op cit, pp. 160ff. Lines 3 and 4 also incorporate ideas from The Qur'^{ān}, 101:8 and 3:114 respectively. See The Tazyīn, p. 42. The ṣadr of line 5 is borrowed from al-Fāzāzī, who himself has derived the idea from a Tradition. See the Isḥrīniyāt, p. 20.
22. L Cheikho, I, op cit, pp. 324-5.
23. al-Fāzāzī, al-Qaṣā'idu 'l-^Cashriyāt (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 158, 179.
24. See: Ibn Khaldūn, The Muqaddima, III, op cit, pp. 369-71 for more details.
25. L Cheikho, I, op cit, pp. 321-2.
26. al-Iluri, Miṣbāh, op cit, p. 44.
27. For more details and examples, see: The Tazyīn, passim; S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp. 128ff; S W Junaid, 'Madḥu 'l-^Cuzamā', op cit; see below pp. 87-8 for a few extracts.
28. Examples of narrative poetry in classical Arabic literature include Abū Tammām's ode, composed on the conquest of ^CAmmuriya in 838 AD; Ibnu 'l-Rūmī's (d 889 AD) elegy on the invasion of Baṣra by the Zanjī in 871 AD; see: G E von Grunebaum, 'Growth and Structure of Arabic Poetry AD 500-1000', in The Arab Heritage ed. Nabih A Fares (Princeton, 1944), p. 134.
29. by Professor Hiskett in the Hausa Islamic verses which must have adopted them from Arabic verses. see: M Hiskett, A History of Hausa Islamic Verse (London, 1975), p 176.
30. According to al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāh, op cit, p. 24, this metre was introduced by Sayyida Ruqayya in her qaṣīda, al-karīm for which see below, p. 81. The feet of this new metre is given as Fā'ilun fa^Cūlun fā^Cilun fa^Cūlun for a hemistich.

31. For more details on these terms see: E H Palmer, A Grammar of the Arabic Language (London, 1874), pp. 373-6; W Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language, II (London, 1875), pp. 377-386; L Cheikho, I, op cit, pp. 314-16.
32. In addition to most of the jihād verses, see Shaikh 'Abdullāh's elegy for Muhammad Thambu in the Tazyīn, pp. 39-40.
33. On the various poetic licences, see: W Wright, II, op cit, pp. 403-22.
34. S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp. 240-41.
35. The repetition of a qāfiya in a single poem without fulfilling its conditions. see: W Wright, II, op cit, pp. 385-6.
36. quoted from A Abūbakar, op cit, p. 330.
37. The Tazyīn, pp. 51-4.
38. L Cheikho, I, op cit, p. 42:

يدعون عتروالرماح كأنها أشطان بئر في لبنان الأد هم
يدعون عتروالسيوف كأنها لمع البوارق في سحاب مظلم
يدعون عتروالسهام كأنها طش الجراد على مشاع حوم

39. For which examples see: S A S Galadanci, op cit, p. 153; S W Junaidu, 'Madḥu 'l-^cuzamā', op cit, pp. 118ff.
40. According to Qudāma b. Ja^cfar, Naqdu 'l-nathr, ed, Taha Hussain, op cit, pp. 95-6, any Khuṭba in which the name of God is not invoked is defective.
41. The Qur'an, 33:56.
42. quoted from al-Ilūrī, ed, al-fawākiḥu 'l-sāqīṭa (Cairo, n.d.), p. 12.
43. The Tazyīn, pp. 26, 30, 50.
44. Ibid, pp. 31, 49, 45.
45. A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, op cit, p. 116.
46. quoted from al-Ilūrī, ed, al-fawākiḥ, op cit, p. 8.
47. S W Junaidu, 'Madḥu 'l-^cuzamā', op cit, pp. 128-9.

48. A al-Nablusī, Nafaḥātu 'l-azhār, I (Cairo, 1881), pp. 336ff.
49. see above p. 74.
50. The differences in numerical values are set out in this table:

Values	60	90	300	800	900	1000
Eastern letters	S	Ṣ	Sh	ḍ	Z	gh
Maghrib letters	Ṣ	ḍ	S	Z	gh	sh

51. See above note 1.
52. The Tijāniyya order was first introduced into Nigeria by al-Ḥajj 'Umar al-Fūṭī (d 1864) during the reign of Muḥammad Bello (1813-37). But the violent wave of Mahdism inspired by the European conquest in the Sudan, came around 1885 to reactivate its existing notion.
53. K Badr, 'Al-ṣhi^Cru 'l-^CArabī fī Nayjīriya fī 'l-qarni 'l-^Cishrīn', Dirāsāt ^CArabiyya, No. 4 (1978/79), pp. 1-15.
54. See: the Qur'ān, 31:18.
55. See their classification of the Nigerian poetic themes: al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāḥ, op cit, pp. 29-46; A Abūbakar, op cit, p. 327.
56. S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp. 127, 158.
57. Ibid, pp. 142-51.
58. The Tazyīn, p. 25.
59. S W Junaidu, 'Madḥu 'l-^Cuzamā', op cit, passim.
60. Some of the conventional praise epithets for the Prophet, the Master of the nation, include Shamsu'l-ḍuḥā, Nūru 'l-hudā, Baḥru 'l-nadā, Tāju'l-Warā, Khayru 'l-warā, Badru 'l-dujā, Kahfu 'l-barāyā, Shafī^Cu 'l-warā etc.
61. quoted from S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp. 128-130; translated into English by Professor Hiskett, Tazyīn, pp. 23-4. Note the traditional qaṣīda features in these verses on which, for further analysis, see the above references.
62. al-Ilūrī, Miṣbāḥ, op cit, p. 46.
63. The Tazyīn, pp. 46-9.
64. A D H Bivar and M Hiskett, op cit, pp. 137-9; see also M Bello, Infāq, op cit, pp. 36-8.

65. The Qur'ān, 3:169-71.
66. Line 4 of these verses has particularly been emphasised by Professor Hiskett as a satire. see The Tazyīn, pp. 56-9.
67. See: D. Denham et al, op cit, pp. 171-3 for the translation of this poem into English.
68. for which see: S A S Galadanci, op cit, p. 158; S W Junaidu, 'The Sakkwato Legacy', op cit, p. 62.
69. L Cheikho, I, op cit, p. 4.
70. The Tazyīn, pp. 62-5.
71. On the presence of foreign words in the Qur'ān and the various reactions, see al-Suyūṭī, al-muzhir fī 'ulūmi 'l-lughā, ed, M H Zanātī, I (Cairo, 1325 AH), pp. 157-67; G E von Grunebaum, Medieval Islam, op cit, p. 345; A Jeffery, The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān (Baroda, 1938).
72. Both are panegyrics in the same metre, al-Kāmil; the first is addressed to his teachers, Shaikh Jibrīl and Co; the second to the famous West african Ṣūfī leader, Mukhtār al-Kuntī. See the Tazyīn, pp. 32, 49-50.
73. Contrast the poetic fallacy-personification and apostrophe - in lines 2, 4, and 6; the antithesis set up in 4, and the metaphor in 5 with the trite and hackneyed figures in lines 9-15.
74. L Cheikho, I, op cit, pp. 39-40; I. Salāma, op cit, pp. 135ff.
75. M Hiskett, A History of Hausa, op cit, pp. 18-19.
76. Shaitān, Qudār, 'Ād, Faraoh, Moses and 'Alī are employed in the first three lines as definite symbols. The owner of the she-camel (line 4) is also the Qudār b. Sālif who is believed to have slaughtered the 'Allāh's own camel': the Qur'ān, 91: 11-15. Line 6 refers to the battle of Badr (624 AD). The last four lines allude to an Arab proverb-Inna 'l-bughātha bi ardīnā yastansir (7); the Islamic doctrine of predestination (8); and popular maxims and principles (9 and 10).
77. For more details on the first 3 lines, see: S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp. 133-4. The 'ajuz of line 4 is al-iqtibās from the Takhmīs of 'Ishrīniyāt by Abūbakar b al-Muhib. See the 'Ishrīniyāt, p. 133. cf similar usage by al-Ḥarīrī, in F Steingass, op cit, p. 16.
78. It may be recalled that the morality of the Maqāmāt had been criticised by al-Fakhri (d 1300 AD), a criticism which al-Ḥarīrī had anticipated in the introduction to his works. see F Steingass, op cit, pp. 6-7; R A Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs (London, 1907), pp. 30-31.

79. The Qur'ān, 31:6.
80. Ibid, 2:232.
81. J O Hunwick, 'The Influence of Arabic', op cit, p.25.
82. the record of which is kept in M Bello, op cit, pp. 155-98; A Abūbakar, op cit, pp. 475-511.
83. L Cheikho, I, op cit, p. 208.
84. See A D H Bivar, 'Arabic Documents', op cit; H F Backwell, The Occupation of Hausaland (Lagos, 1927) for examples of such letters.
85. This work, which is included in al-Fāzāzī, al-Qaṣā'idu 'l-ʿashriyāt, op cit, pp. 198-212 has been translated with introduction by I A Ogunbiyi as The Thornless Leafy Tree Concerning the Knowledge of Letter-writing(Ibadan, 1975).
86. See M Last, op cit, pp. XXVIII-XLV for their brief reviews.
87. H F C Smith, 'Arabic Manuscript Materials', op cit, p.1.
88. M Bello, op cit, pp. 33-4.
89. See A D H Bivar, 'A Dated Koran', op cit, pp. 199-205, where certain glosses in Kanembu, written in Arabic script, is shown to have appeared on al-Qurṭubī's Jāmiʿ Ahkāmī 'l-Qur'ān.
90. See M Hiskett, A History of Hausa, op cit, passim.

CHAPTER THREE

MODERN LITERARY TRENDS IN THE ARAB WORLD

I. The Contact of Islam with Western Civilization

The Arab-Islamic world since the fall of Baghdad in AD 1258 had lost its traditional control of the Caliphate in succession, first to the Persians and later to the Ottoman Turks. It had since then waited impatiently for an opportunity which might restore the Islamic political hegemony to its traditional custodians. No wonder the famous Wahhabi (1703-89) revolt which broke out in Central Arabia has been interpreted¹ as essentially Arab in consciousness, aimed at achieving this end. But Turkey, since 1538 had managed to hold together the various Islamic territories until the last century when they began to be wrested from her by Europe. Dazzled by the superior military tactics displayed by Europe and Russia in particular, in their systematic occupation of the various Muslim territories, Turkey had interpreted her military subjection as a red light to which she spontaneously reacted by cooperating with Europe with a view to modernizing her military force. This policy has brought the ~~central~~ Islamic world, since the last century, under the full impact of Western civilization.

The first phase of the process of modernization of the Arab-Islamic world with particular reference to Egypt was launched by the Napoleon expedition during its three year (1798-1801) occupation of the country. Lavishly sponsored by Muḥammad 'Alī (d 1849) who came to power in 1805, the various processes of modernization had begun

to yield results by the time of Khedive Ismā'īl (1863-79), another active patron of Western civilization. The Arabs, in less than one century of their contact with the West, learnt the bitter truth: that the Islamic world was backward. But they could not form a common political front against the non-Arab Ottoman Caliphate which they held to be partly responsible.² The Egyptian or Arab nationalism which was advocated as the only solution, by some of the early Western educated Arabs such as Rifā'a al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (d 1873)³ was not acceptable to many Arab Muslims who were still loyal to the Ottoman Caliphate. And for the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, the Arab world remained torn apart between Arab Nationalism and pan-Islamism for which al-Afghānī was famous.

The failure of al-Afghānī's mission on the one hand, and that of the 1882 ^CUrābī nationalist rebellion on the other, led to the British occupation and landed many Arabs in exile. These major events changed the course of modernization in Egypt in particular and the Arab-Islamic world in general. Shaikh Muḥammad ^CAbduh (d 1905), for example, after his return from the exile, made a U-turn to cooperate with the British regime which, in collaboration with al-Afghānī, he had once criticized. He had also begun to criticise Constantinople⁴ which he held responsible for the backward state of Islam.

This criticism of Turkey by such a religious celebrity as ^CAbduh with his full weight behind Lord Cromer, in the hope of reviving Islam as well as securing national Independence, flung open the gate into active Arab-Egyptian nationalist activities. Overcome by the spirit of secular nationalism, the division of loyalty

between Arabism and pan-Islamism was virtually removed, and to the latter, an end was put forever. But the Arabs had to wait until World War I had decided the fate of the Ottoman Empire and its territories before the idea of modern nationalism became firmly entrenched.

Sparked off in Egypt by the 1919 revolution, this period of active nationalist movement opened the second stage of modernization. It continued through the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty, World War II and to the 1952 revolution. Iraq in 1922 was separated from geographical Syria which was divided into Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Transjordan. Syria and Lebanon were placed under French Mandate; Iraq, Palestine and Transjordan under the British while Saudi Arabia was left alone.⁵ The history of how each of these and similar Muslim countries had pursued her own nationalist struggle to Independence is beyond the scope of this study.⁶ Suffice it here to say that the remains of both the Caliphate and Sultanate were eliminated in 1924 in what is known as the Turkish revolution led by Muṣṭafā Kemāl. In 1935, Atatürk (Father of the Turks) was substituted for the Sultan while in the 1924 Constitution, Islam had finally been eliminated as the state religion.⁷ This revolution brought to an end, the Caliphate founded in 622 AD by Prophet Muḥammad, the leader of the nation.

Following a series of world Islamic conferences, there have emerged a number of world Islamic movements which have continued to promote the interest of Islam at international level. They include the Supreme Council of Muslim Welfare in Cairo, the Muslim World League in Mecca, the Organisation of Islamic Conference in Jedda,

the Islamic World Conference in Karachi, and the Conference of the Islamic Research Academy in the Azhar. It is to these movements that the various Muslim minorities in different countries have since transferred their pan-Islamic allegiances.^A

The third and contemporary trend of development was heralded by the impacts of World War II on the world political scene in general. Britain ceased to be a dominant World power, a situation which accelerated the loss of her overseas colonies and the subsequent polarisation of the world into two major opposing super powers. After obtaining their independence, most of the Asian and African former colonies disassociated themselves with either of the two blocs and constituted themselves into a non-aligned movement. This neutral policy gave them the opportunity to benefit from the two super powers as the result of which the Marxist-Communist and Socialist ideas have found their ways into most of the modern Arab states. Since the end of World War II, major political developments include the 1952 'Abdu'l-Nāṣir revolution, the formation of the Arab League, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), the Arab-Israel sporadic warfare to which the Iraq-Iran war may also be added. This, in brief, is the political background of modern Arabic literature.

II. The Growth of Modern Arabic Literature

Inspired by Western secular thought and European literature in particular, modern Arabic literature is essentially not Islamic in spirit.⁸ Its outlook and orientation are therefore, not of Islam but of the Arab if not Egyptian nationalism. In addition to

its revolt against the Qur'ānic oriented classical literary theory, the active involvement of the Arab Christians and the use of colloquial Arabic have all continued to emphasise its non-Islamic orientation. Modern Arabic literature, therefore, has been most successful only in the predominantly non-Muslim Syria, Iraq, the partially secularised Arab Muslim states such as Egypt, Tunisia and Sudan to some extent, or in Western countries such as Europe and America, thousands of miles away from Mecca. In other Arab, not to mention the non-Arab Muslim countries,^B it has remained unpopular especially among the fundamentalists to whom the whole Western civilisation is nothing but a cold crusade.

Like the socio-religious and political climate which has continued to breed it, modern Arabic literature has been revolutionary. It has passed very rapidly, in less than two centuries of its inception, through successive stages of development having broken loose from religious shackles to identify itself with those 'fluctuating tides in the affairs of man'. In its response to the changing events of life, Dr Badawi observes how

the poet as a craftsman in the Arabic classics has given place to the spokesman of society in Neo-classicism, how in pre-Romanticism the spokesman has been replaced by the man of sensibility, who is above society, and in Romanticism he has become the seer, the prophet, but without losing his passivity, his talent for suffering. In the last phase of the development of Arabic poetry, the poet has become once again identified with his own people, but he is no longer the spokesman: he is the hero who in his personal salvation seeks the salvation of his people⁹

According to this view, modern Arabic literature, poetry being its standard, has so far passed through the stages of Neo-classicism, Pre-romanticism, Romanticism and the Socialist realism.¹⁰ In his own study, the famous Egyptian critic, Dr Muḥammad Mandūr has identified only three main literary currents in contemporary Egypt: Neo-classicism, Romanticism and Socialist realism.¹¹ This division, which corresponds with the three major stages of political development above described, however, has been reduced here to the stages of the Growth and Maturity of Modern Arabic literature. The stage of Growth, which is now being discussed, coincides roughly with the first stage of the political development while the period of its Maturity extends from the 1920s up to the present time.

A The Pioneers^c

Characterised by the revival of the classical literary traditions upon which some modern elements were engrafted, the Neo-classical stage was able to lay the foundation upon which the subsequent developments were built. In Egypt, the pioneers include Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (d 1904)¹² whose concept of poetry is said to have anticipated the romantic views. Others include Aḥmad Shawqī (d 1932) and Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm (d 1932) both of who have remained the target of criticism for the romantic writers. In his assessment of these two poets, Taha Hussain has this to say:¹³

We have writers among us who have made innovations in prose, and writers who have renovated the classical prose-style: these writers have two merits, the merit of innovating what never existed before, and the merit of renovating what time had put into oblivion. We also have

poets: but they have innovated nothing, they have invented nothing, they have produced nothing new. They have only acquired their personality from antiquity, and borrowed their literary glory from the ancients. They have only one merit - the merit of renovation: they continue to lack the complementary merit of innovation and creation

But despite this and similar damaging criticism, both Shawqī and Ḥāfiz were not only poets but also pioneers of modern Arabic novel¹⁴ while the growth of drama, without Shawqī's contribution,¹⁵ would have taken a different course.

Other pioneers in Egypt include Ibrāhīm al-Muwaylihī,¹⁶ Husayn Haykal¹⁷ and Muṣṭafā Luṭfī al-Manfalūṭī¹⁸ who may be described as the founders of modern Arabic short stories and novels.¹⁹ About three decades after it had taken off in Syria, the Jewish Egyptian nationalist, Yaḥyā Ṣanū²⁰ who was nicknamed the Molière of Egypt, emerged in 1876 as the pioneer of modern Arabic Drama.²¹ He was soon joined by Salīm Naqqāsh and Adīb Ishāq from Syria, and Muḥammad ʿUthmān Jalāl (d 1898)²² who is described by al-ʿAqqād as the father of the Egyptian national theatre.

In Syria the poetic revivals of Jamāl Ṣidqī al-Zahāwī (d 1936) and Maḥmūd al-Ruṣāfī (d 1945) were virtually overshadowed²³ by the active involvement of the Christian Arabs in the process of modernization. Being in an earlier contact with Western civilization, they were always found to be the avant-garde of every modern literary innovation. Among them was Nāṣif al-Yāzījī (d 1871) who is more famous for his revival of the Maqāmāt literary style,²⁴ than he is for his poetic revival. Others include Buṭrūs and Salīm al-Bustānī

who, among the first Arab journalists, produced their alfinān in 1870 and wrote the first modern Arabic Encyclopaedia, Dā'iratu'l-ma'ārif. Mārūn al-Naqqāsh (d 1855)²⁵ was the first to introduce Arabic drama in 1847 while (Aḥmad) Fāris al-Shidyāq (d 1887) was also the first to attempt poetry in blank verse. Salīm al-Bustānī is also known to have produced in 1870, the first Arabic novel, an example which was soon followed by Jurjī Zaydānī and Farah Anṭūn.²⁶

After taking off successfully in Syria, these Christians were soon impelled by economic and political pressures to migrate to Egypt and America²⁷ where they had continued with their active secularisation of Arabic literature. Beside their early contact with Western thought, the Christian faith of these Arabs, compared to Islam, had constituted no serious obstacle to secularisation. They had, therefore, made no scruple in pulling down the medieval Arabic literary edifice on the ruins of which new secular oriented literary theories were often set up. Above all, they had constituted the minority in the moribund regime and so had nothing to lose but everything to gain in the success of the Arab nationalism which they actively propagated and urged the Muslims to support. Their participation, therefore, has remained a basic characteristic of modern Arabic literature which has continued to emphasise its secular and Arab nationalist orientation. It is indeed very difficult to imagine the success of the modernization of Arabic literature without these Arab Christians.

B The Roles of the Printing Press and Translation ^E

Among other currents of modernization, the contributions of the printing press and translations to the growth of modern Arabic literature²⁸ are too crucial to be omitted in this study. Following the introduction of the first Arabic printing press by the Christians at Aleppo in 1706, and that of the Napoleon in Egypt, the number of the printing press in Egypt alone had risen steadily to 217 by 1927.²⁹ Books in due course were soon made available throughout the Arab-Islamic world the revolutionary effects of which were comparable to those of the printing press in Europe during the Renaissance. But the unique contribution of the printing press is not in the publication of the classical and the modern works, but in the introduction of journalism.

In his survey of the growth of modern Arabic literature, 'Umar al-Dasūqī³⁰ commends the absolute freedom enjoyed by the press under Lord Cromer. According to him, the number of journals and newspapers had risen from about 20 in 1883 through 176 in 1903, to reach the maximum of 326 by 1950. While their establishments were often motivated by politics until later, these journals have remained the sole media in which most of the literary innovations, in essay form, were often first published. It is through journalism above all, that the new modern prose diction, which is capable of expressing modern literary thoughts and political concepts, has gradually evolved. It is not surprising, therefore, that most of the pioneer Arab novelists, Ḥusayn Haykal, al-'Aqqād, al-Māzinī, Taha Hussain etc., like Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Steele and Addison in English

novel, were all successful journalists.

Assisted by the language academies, it was through translation that the complete adaptation of the classical Arabic to the various modern linguistic demands have been accomplished. In addition to modern concepts and ideas, phraseology, style, idiom, punctuation and foreign letters of the alphabet, especially from Italian, French and English, are all transferred into Arabic. But no attempt, so far, has been made, of introducing capital letters into Arabic or writing it from left to right! With no exception, all the literary innovations introduced into Arabic literature have also proceeded from either the translation or adaptation of particular Western literary masterpieces which are later imitated in writing original works.³¹ Today no clear demarcation can be made between translations, adaptations and original compositions in modern short stories, novels and plays the growth of which it would have been difficult to conceive without these translations.

But despite these tremendous efforts aimed at modernizing the classical Arabic, some of the linguistic demands of modern Arabic literature cannot be met. The colloquial Arabic, therefore, has continued to be used side by side with literary Arabic especially in drama.³² And in recent publications,³³ the use of the colloquial Arabic in 'modern poetry' has also been advocated. This usage of colloquial language in modern Arabic literature should also be seen as another feature which emphasises its Arab nationalist outlook. The non-Arab Muslims, who are not expected to understand colloquial Arabic, have automatically been cut off from the readership of such works. How, then, could they have imitated such works in the name of Islam?^F

III. Some Fundamental Differences between European and Arabic Literary Tradition

It is generally agreed upon that the oldest form of literary art is poetry for which, unlike in Arabic, no practical definition in modern European literature has successfully been evolved.³⁴ Its origin in religion and mythology, however, is incontestable. Thus the origins of the earliest forms of Western classical literature, the Homeric epics, the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, the Comedies of Aristophanes and other lyrical forms, are all steeped in Greek mythology.³⁵ To this general rule, Arabic poetry is no exception. Hence its origin in pagan soothsayers who were believed to be in league with spirits, jinn and Satan. The (Arabian) pagan Shā^cir, says Professor Nicholson, is the oracle of his tribe, their guide in peace and their champion in war.³⁶

This involvement of the classical literature in religion had eventually driven it into a head-on collision with Judaeo-Christian and Islamic religious tradition which had subjected it to a parallel development in both European and Arabic traditions throughout the middle ages. But while the pagan oriented Western literature had matured before its eventual contact with Christianity, the pagan Arabic literature was subjected, right from the beginning, to the Islamic influences under the intellectual atmosphere of which its poetry and prose were in fact compiled. This explains why no such things as hymns to idols which, according to Professor Nicholson, must have existed besides fountain-songs and war-songs in the earliest times, could not survive along with al-mu^callaqāt. Indeed, some of the surviving utterances attributed to the pagan soothsayers

are not of pagan but Judaeo-Christian origin.³⁷ Environmental factors aside, the survival in Western classical literature of pagan tradition, which was later revived at the Renaissance, and the impacts on it of the Enlightenment, contrasted with the predominant influence of Islam throughout the ages on Arabic literature, can be held basically responsible for most of the ideological differences in these two literary traditions.³⁸

In Western classical literature, the Alexandrian age marked the beginning of what is equivalent, in Arabic, to the Age of Decadence, the spirit of which was here sustained by Christianity throughout the middle ages. Most of the Latin Fathers, Tertullian and Jerome for example, are reported³⁹ to have condemned literature: To the former, literature is 'foolishness in the eyes of God' and to the latter, 'poetry is the food of devils'. Under this religious climate which the attitude of the Qur'ān to poetry recalls, literature was reduced to mere rhetorics and incorporated, like in Arabic, into the syllabus of the medieval Roman School.

It was this literary thought in Aristotelian Rhetorics that had in fact assisted the Arabs to evolve their own literary theory. By raising the literary style of the Qur'ān above the attainment of the mortal,⁴⁰ the concept of literary aesthetics in Arabic is equally reduced to rhetorics or verbal subtleties (al-badī'iyāt) as described in the first chapter of this study. From that time until the Renaissance both literary traditions had continued to share the same features as can be seen in the following description of the medieval Western literature in which,

....sound subject matter and orderly arrangement of thought were ignored; and demands were made for mere ingenuity of expression, for the use of fixed patterns and for structural purposes. In this way, the value of coherent structure, that organic quality inherent in all good prose, or the importance of psychological factors in all matters of expression were neglected.⁴¹

Another spectacular similarity beside concept and style has been the absence of drama which, according to Atkins, was often viewed by the Latin Fathers with special abhorrence. After Lucius Seneca (d AD 65) whose work was revived at the Renaissance as the classical model of the Latin tragedy,⁴² no similar writer of tragedy was again known from the time of Emperor Constantine (d AD 337) until the Renaissance. Practically nothing was therefore preserved of the classical dramatic legacy apart from the Comedies of Plautus and Terence which are said⁴³ to be only imperfectly understood.

This was the situation when Arabic literature came in contact with the Greek classics in Syriac translation. But even if the Aristotle's Poetics, like his Logic and Rhetorics, had been made available to the Arabs at that time, it might not have been translated for its pagan orientation. This is how the whole episode is laconically presented by a contemporary Arab writer:⁴⁴

The Arab nation did not know drama for the simple reason that they were not Greeks. Those ancient pagan cults and beliefs which often compelled idol worshipping, among the Greeks, were also not found among the Arabs. The Arab nation did not translate the Greek drama for the simple reason that it was buried in monasteries, churches and books at the time when they were translating other Greek works....The

Arab nation, furthermore, did not know the Iliad and the Odyssey for the simple reason that these works were not publicised. They were considered among the works of paganism which Christianity forbade. It was unlawful for anyone to read them.

When Christianity at the Renaissance was eventually overthrown, drama was revived in Europe but some of the scholastic literary traditions in poetry and prose had persisted until the birth, in the nineteenth century, of the romantic movement. In his study of comparative literature, Professor von Grunebaum⁴⁵ observes that studied literature had reigned in Europe with the Alexandrians, the humanists of the Renaissance, and their heirs, the classicists of the 16th and 17th centuries. However,

it is extremely significant that learned literature declines in Europe, and even comes to be considered pedantic, in proportion as the role of imagination in literary production is realised, faith in human creativeness grows, and writing is valued for its psychological expressiveness.

This modern psychological literary concept identifies two major poetic imaginations: the absolute and the relative dramatic visions. According to Theodore Watts-Dunton,⁴⁶ the absolute dramatic vision, seen at its highest in the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Shakespeare and to some extent in Homeric epics, is characterised by being unconditioned by the poet's lyrical emotions. On the other hand, the relative dramatic vision, seen at its highest in Pinder, Dante, Milton, Sappho and Shelley, is often more or less conditioned by the poet's lyrical impulses. Ruled by 'the law of conflict' or 'destiny' in Mahmūd Taymūr's⁴⁷ word, the absolute

dramatic vision, being a common heritage of man, could not have been unknown to the Arabs. But the poetic imagination in Arabic literature, for some of the reasons above explained, had remained lyrical throughout the middle ages and up to the last century. The destruction of this medieval literary concept and the introduction of the absolute dramatic vision into Arabic literature have, therefore, constituted the corner stone of the processes of its modernization.

Major structural differences include the role of rhythm, rhyme and metre, in both prose and poetry and the relationship between them. Rhythm in Western literature is a basic characteristic in both prose and poetry but in classical Arabic tradition, it is present but not important except in music.⁴⁸ Metre in both traditions,⁴⁹ is the main poetic feature which distinguishes poetry from prose. But Arabic poetry is further distinguished by a complex rhyme-scheme (al-qāfiya) which, in Western poetry, is purely ornamental and non-essential.⁵⁰ According to Henderson,⁵¹ rhyme was employed as poetic ornament

by the rymours of Normandy, the troubadours
of Provence, the minnesingers of Germany
and the monks of the medieval church.

Most of the Western classical narrative, epic and dramatic poetry, above all, were also composed in blank verses. The use of rhyme is, therefore, generally considered post classical.

Apart from the extension of its usage to prose in Arabic, no metric composition without rhyme is considered poetry. In its classical definition, poetry is 'metered and rhymed speech' (kalām mawzūn wa muqaffā). Moreover, a poem is traditionally named, not by

its metre as in Western tradition, but by the rawī,⁵² the most essential part of the rhyme, if not by its subject matter. Indeed, rhyme and metre are considered the only link between individual lines of a poem which must be independent of one and another in sense and in construction.

In Western poetry, both the metric and emotional rhythms are expected to be inherently united in the subject matter, themes, ideas, thoughts and emotions believed to be inspired in a poet. Thus in classical poetry, hexameter, in its usual dactyl feet, was associated with epic and drama, while pentameter in dactylic or spondaic feet was often used for elegiac couplet, lyrical poetry and choral hymns. And in modern poetic metre, the iambic pentameter is employed mainly for epic, dramatic and sonnet verses.⁵³ This feature is in contrast with the qaṣīda in which its multiple themes and different subject matters (al-'aghrād) may be composed in any metre other than al-rajaz, which is mainly but not exclusively used in didactic verses.

The history of literary prose has been parallel in both traditions except that Arabic had evolved rhymed prose which is unknown at any time in Western literature. There is also an emphasis on emotional rhythm in Western prose which, as hinted above, is virtually unknown in Arabic classical prosody. Apart from these structural differences, if literary history and travel account in Western prose can boast of Herodotus and Thucydides, classical Arabic prose has also produced Ibn Ishāq, al-Ṭabarī, and Ibn Baṭūṭa to mention but few. The greatest Athenian orator, Demosthenes, was not

probably more eloquent than the semi-legendary pre-Islamic Saḥbān ibn Wā'il. And the name of 'Abdu 'l-Ḥamīd al-Kātib is always reminiscent of Cicero's contribution to epistolary in Western classical literature.

This similarity had continued until after the Renaissance when in 1678 John Bunyan (d 1688) published his 'Christian oriented allegorical narrative', The Pilgrim's Progress. Particularly encouraged by translations especially of some popular Italian and Spanish imaginative works⁵⁴ into English, a new phase of development in this history of the Western prose narrative was opened. This new trend had continued to develop until the birth, in the eighteenth century, of journalism under the impact of which, in forms of fiction and romance, it attained maturity. In 1719, Daniel DeFoe (d 1731) published his immortal novel, the Robinson Crusoe,⁵⁵ followed in 1726 by a similar novel of international repute, the Gulliver's Travels, written by Jonathan Swift (d 1745). By the nineteenth century when it came in contact with Arabic literature, the Western novel had perfected its various themes in the hands of a legion of modern writers. Jane Austen, Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Sir Rider Haggard, Thomas Hardy, George Orwell etc etc to mention but few, are some of the English novelists whose novels have contributed to the growth of modern Arabic novel.

Considered as a conscious imitation of Western literature, modern Arabic literature cannot be fully understood without this basic differences from which the modern Arab writers have taken their cue. Armed with modern Western literary theory, these Arab writers have sought to transform the existing lyrical poetry, to

which new forms-narrative, epic and dramatic - are also introduced. The medieval standard of literary prose was also overturned, most of the divine narratives, legends, romances and myths having lost their traditional sanctity to modern secular thought. These changes in subject matter have wrought corresponding changes in form, language and style, the processes of which we now highlight.

IV. The Maturity of Modern Arabic Literature

A. Romanticism

The Romantic movement was born and bred by the volatile political and intellectual atmosphere which was sparked off in Egypt by the 1919 militant nationalist protest, the raging storm of which never temporarily abated until the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty. Among its immediate impact was the British concession to a partial independence and the 1923 Constitution out of which Sa^cd Zaghlūl (d 1927) had emerged as the first Prime Minister. But the struggle for a total independence had just begun. Under this climate, the various cultural tensions which had continued to build up since the time of Muḥammad ʿAbduh became subjected to a deeper appreciation of Western secular thoughts. The result was a violent explosion of a number of iconoclastic literary outbursts most of which were precipitated by the currents of European romantic movement.

In 1921 al-ʿAqqād (d 1964) and al-Māzinī (d 1949) jointly published al-Dīwān,⁵⁶ a critique of Shawqī, Ḥāfiẓ and Manfalūṭī, as well as an exposition of a romantic literary theory. In 1923, M. Nu^caima produced his critical Ghīrbāl⁵⁷ which he applied to sieve every traditional literary concept. Two years later, ʿAlī

ʿAbd al-Rāziq published his attack on the Sharīʿa⁵⁸ which cost him his job. The leading Culamāʾ of al-Azhar pronounced him unfit to hold any public function. In 1926, Taha Hussain exploded a bombshell on al-muʿallaqāt⁵⁹ with an immediate explosion the spirit of which never ceased to haunt him until he passed away. He also published a series of critical essays on contemporary Arabic literature, which he later compiled into books.⁶⁰ To these revolutionary works must be added the Qāsim Amīn's two early publications on women emancipation,⁶¹ the implementation of which was actively promoted by this turbulent atmosphere. Led by Hudā Shaʿrāwī (d 1947), the Egyptian women took part in the 1919 open demonstration and constituted themselves into the Feminist Union in 1923. On their return, the same year, from the International Feminist Conference held in Rome, they removed their veils for the first time.⁶²

This was the intellectual crossroad from which Khalīl Muṭrān (d 1949) had emerged as the precursor⁶³ of the romantic movement which became crystallised in the succeeding generation. The two authors of al-Dīwān, together with ʿAbdu ʾl-Rahmān Shukrī (d 1958) subsequently became identified with the early romantic school,⁶⁴ whose literary thoughts were spontaneously nursed to maturity by two other romantic schools. These include the Arabs in America, al-mahjar, and the Apollo⁶⁵ to which most of the Arab romantic writers belonged.

Since the Arabs came in contact with the West through the impact of the 18th Century Enlightenment and the subsequent 19th century political revolution, it is logical that they were influenced by the literary spirit of the age. Characterised by naturalism,

individualism, humanism and a revolt against the existing scholastic literary tradition, the heroes of this new trend include the great French writers among them, Montesquieu, Molière, Corneille, Racine, La Fontaine, Voltaire, Rousseau etc, all of who are often considered the forerunners of modern literary thought. These pioneers were later succeeded by Victor Hugo, Mathew Arnold, the German romantic writer, J W Goethe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lord Byron and Percy Shelley. Others include Thomas Carlyle, Lord Tennyson, Hazlitt, Robert Browning, G B Shaw, the English-American Wilt Whitman, T S Eliot and many others to whom references are made as this chapter progresses.

These are some of the great Western poets and critics whose views are of immediate effects on the growth of Modern Arabic romantic thoughts.⁶⁵ But the shadows of most of the great classical minds including Homer, Sophocles, Terence, the Italian Dante Alighieri, Shakespeare, John Milton, Alexander Pope etc, whose masterpieces have been translated into Arabic, can also be seen everywhere. On the leaders of the romantic schools, the influences of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Hazlitt through The Golden Treasury,⁶⁶ a text book in Dāru 'l-Culūm, are particularly overwhelming. Here is al-Caqqād acknowledging the indebtedness of the modern Arab writers to Western literature and to some of these literary men:⁶⁷

As for the spirit and generation which grew up after Shawqī, they were a product of a school which bore no resemblance to other previous schools in the history of modern Arabic literature. It was a school which had penetrated deep into the reading of English literature. Its reading of French literature at the same time, was not confined to some parts alone as characterised by those literary men who

grew up in the East at the end of the last century....Towards the end of the eighteenth, and the early nineteenth centuries, the dominant school in the English-American literary idea was that (specific) school....the stars of which included Carlyle (d 1881) John Stuart Mill (d 1873), Shelley (d 1822), Byron (d 1824), Wordsworth (d 1850)... It was later succeeded by another school....that of Browning (d 1889), Tennyson (d 1892), Emerson, Longfellow, Poe, Whitman (American writers), Hardy (d 1928) and others.... A wealth of ideas from these literary men have passed to those Egyptian poets who rose up after Shawqī and his contemporaries...

B. Modern Lyrical Poetry

In their new concept of poetry, all the three romantic schools acknowledge the involvement of poetry with religion, mysticism and psychology. Nu^caima defines a poet as a prophet, a philosopher, a painter, a musician and a priest. Hear from the 'Juhaina'

himself:⁶⁸

الشاعر نبي وفيلسوف ومصوّر وموسيقى وكاهن: نبي - لأنه يرى بعينه الروحية ما لا يراه كل بشر. ومصوّر - لأنه يقدر أن يسكب ما يراه ويسمعه في قوالب جميلة من صور الكلام. وموسيقى - لأنه يسمع أصواتاً متوازية حيث لا نسمع نحن سوى هدير ووجججة... وأخيراً - الشاعر كاهن لأنه يخدم إلهها هو الحقيقة والجمال . هذا الإله يظهر له في أشياء مختلفة وأحوال متنوعة . لكنه يعرفه أينما رآه ويقدم له تسابيح حيثما أحست روحه بوجوده.....

A member of the Apollo School, 'Alī Maḥmūd Ṭāhā (d 1949) also describes a poet as one who

descended on earth like a ray of celestial
light bearing the wand of a magician and
the heart of a prophet⁶⁹

Another romantic critic from Tunisia, Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Shābbī
considers a poet as

a prophet and messenger who brings life
to the children of the world lost in
the paths of time⁷⁰

With the Holy Qur'ān in this context, apparently reduced to poetry and the Prophet to a poet, the religious foundation of the classical literary theory was destroyed. The restrictions which had hitherto been placed on emotions and creative imaginations, so as to prevent them from overflowing into what might be considered heresy, were also removed. Modern poets are thus able to emphasise the involvement of psychology and creative imagination in the concept of literary aesthetics in contrast with the classical badī'īyyāt. They are also able to advocate the spirit of humanism and individuality, faithfulness to nature, truth and simplicity against the predominant artificialities and gaudiness.

Criticising the prosodic definition of poetry which had reduced it to a craft and the poets to craftsmen, the romantic writers disparage the traditional school of poetry and most of its poets who, according to Nu^caima, would have been more skillful as tailors and clerks.⁷¹ He also attacks the traditional concept of literary aesthetics which he scornfully reduces to an acrobatic feat:⁷²

فانقلب الشاعر بهلوانا، وأصبح الشعر ضرباً من الخلع والجمر والمشى
على الأسلاك والإنتصاب على الراس ورفع الأثقال بالأسنان
ولف الرجلين حول العنق، إلى ما هناك من الحركات التي تجيدها
القرديما إجادة. من ذلك الألغاز الشعرية، وحل الألغاز. والمنظومات
التي بعض مفرداتها أو كلها منقطة، وبعضها أو كلها مهملة، أو حرف
منقط فيها يليه حرف مهمل، والتشطير والتسبيط والتخميس الخ...

Mahmūd al-ʿAqqād also calls the traditional poets the prosodists (al-ʿarūdiyyūn), who often waded into composing odes simply because they considered versification a right or duty on whoever learnt prosody, rhetorics, badīʿ and similar principles of the craft.⁷³ With these criticisms, the classical prosodic definition of poetry has been destroyed but no simple modern standard definition has, so far, been set up on its rubble. For modern Arabic poetry, like in Western literature, can no longer be defined in just a few words. It has, therefore, continued to be characterised by different currents of thought. These include romanticism, realism, symbolism, and surrealism each of which has produced its own definition of poetry.⁷⁴

The conventional themes and the time-honoured socio-political function of poetry as the register (Dīwān) of the Arabs are also ridiculed. Criticising Shawqī, Ḥāfiẓ, al-Jārim and ʿAbdu ʿl-Muṭṭalib for turning poetry to journalism, Taha Hussain⁷⁵ laments the absence in Arabic, of what he considers 'the true poetry which are often composed for their own sake.' ʿAbdu ʿl-Rahmān Shukrī also observes that⁷⁶

the poet yesterday was the kings' boon companion and an embellishment of the courts. But he is today, the messenger of nature, who has been equipped with sweet melodies to polish and move the souls and thereby increase their light and fire.

Consequently, the traditional poetic themes, al-madh, al-rithā, al-fakhr, al-hijā' al-ghazal etc have gradually been replaced in modern lyrical verses by miscellaneous themes the scope of which, in Nu^caima's word, is as infinite as life itself.

Most significant of all has been the modern disparagement of the conventional poetic diction, method of composition by playing the sedulous ape, style, phraseology, imagery and achaism. Taha Hussain criticizes al-mu^cāraḍa and accuses Shawqī of comparing Muṣṭafā Kāmīl to Khālīd b. al-Walīd when the World War has produced hundreds of modern commanders.⁷⁷ In the same vein, Ḥāfiẓ is criticized, of translating Victor Hugo's Les Misérables into archaic Arabic, and of employing images and metaphors, the glammers of which time has worn away.⁷⁸ While 'Abdu 'l-Rahmān Shukrī contends that 'poetry is not hunting for words in dictionaries', Mīkhā'īl also derides the idea of dedicating a space for 'translating Arabic to the Arabs':⁷⁹

There is no merit for any writer or poet in searching for dead languages or abandoned phraseology from linguistic tombs unless he wants to surprise us with his command of the language

C. Narrative and Epic Verses

In their onslaught on the conventional mono-rhyme and the rigid monometric scheme, the romantic writers deplore those features as

fetters, which have always prevented the poets from giving free reins to their emotions. Rhyme in particular is generally held responsible for padding, verbiage, monotony, repetitiveness and restriction of thought, which characterise most of the medieval Arabic poetry.⁸⁰ The independent tradition of each line of a poem, which has encouraged the absence of, or failure to recognise narrative verses in Arabic poetry, is also attributed to the rule of rhyme which forbids an enjambment (al-tatmīn). Added to this has been the persistence of the polythematic convention, which has always been associated with the erotic prelude, despite the classical revolt by Abu Nuwās, Bashshār and al-Buḥturī.⁸¹

Criticising these conventions, the Dīwān school, under the influences of Carlyle, Coleridge and Goethe, introduced the concept of the organic unity of theme and form.⁸² This structural innovation, which was perfected by the Apollo and the Mahjar schools, introduced narrative, epic, and even dramatic verses into Arabic poetry. But both narrative and epic in modern Western poetry have fallen out of favour⁸³ since the growth of modern novel and drama, which are considered better forms for literary narratives and romances. In Arabic literature, therefore, little attention has also been paid to these forms but their potentialities have been directed to the growth of dramatic verses.

As early as 1887, Sulaimān al-Bustānī (d 1925) had embarked on the translation into Arabic, of the Iliad in strophic verses, which was published in 1904.⁸⁴ Other classical Western epics such as the Virgil's Aenied, and Dante's Divine Comedy are not unknown, while a part of John Milton's Paradise Lost has been translated by

Ibrāhīm al-Māzinī.⁸⁵ Apart from these translations, most of the modern Arabic poetry including lyrics have generally been invested with a narrative outlook since the introduction of the run-on lines. And, in addition to some individual narratives,⁸⁶ the most outstanding epic is perhaps Aḥmad Muḥarram's versification of all the prophet's raids and battles (al-maghāzī), which popular taste has labelled the Islamic Iliad.⁸⁷

D. Realism and Commitment

Since the end of World War II, Marxist-socialist thought, which had earlier been advocated by Salāma Mūsā (d 1958),⁸⁸ began to reflect in literature. Reinforced by the influences of the twentieth century European anti-romantic writers such as Ezra Pound, Abercrombie, Jean-Paul, Sartre and Keats, this socialist realism or committed literature soon developed into symbolist and surrealist expressed by the new concept of modern poetry (al-shiʿru'l-ḥadīth).⁸⁹ In his essay on 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', T S Eliot⁹⁰ attacks the romantic idea of emphasising individual personality in poetry as advocated for example, by Taha Hussain⁹¹ and al-ʿAqqād.⁹² Arguing that 'the poet has, not a personality to express but a particular medium', he concludes that:

poetry is not a turning loose of emotions
but, an escape from emotion; it is not
the expression of personality but an
escape from personality.

Influenced by this and similar thoughts, the Arab writers criticize their own romantic school for being escapist and unrealistic.⁹³ They then call for what they describe as 'committed

literature' (al-'adab al-multazim)⁹⁴ which addresses itself to the political and socio-economic realities of the people. This literary spirit has continued to be expressed in modern novels, drama and in new modern poetry, signified in 1947 by the emergence of Louis^CAwad's Plutoland.

This 'modern poetry' shares the elements of the realist poetry on the one hand and the romantic elements on the other, both of which it also criticises.⁹⁵ Like the romantic school, it upholds the concept of poetry as 'vision' (al-ru'yā) as well as its traditional 'spontaneous overflow of powerful (but not subjective) feelings'. It is also against everything traditional in Arabic poetry arguing that the romantic school has never constituted a radical departure from classicism.⁹⁶ In addition to condemning the idea of introspection or subjectivity in romanticism, this modern poetry also considers the absolute commitment in poetry 'harmful to art and distorts its nature'.⁹⁷ Turned between romanticism and realism, this new poetry has been able to evolve a definite poetic form, to be presently disussed, which one of its exponents Nāzik al-Malā'ika has continued to impose unsuccessfully on contemporary Arab poets.

E. Drama

The early growth of modern Arabic theatre is directly or indirectly indebted to French and Italian influences.⁹⁸ The first comedy to be staged by Marūn, al-Bakhīl, was an adaptation of Molière's L'Avare. Most of the series of comedies produced by Ya^Cqūb Ṣanū^C, according to ^CUmar al-Dasūqī, were also adapted from Italian plays.⁹⁹ This

trend had continued until the emergence of the ^CUthmān Jalāl's al-Shaykh Matlūf, a popular comedy which he adapted from Molière's Tartuffe. He also adapted four other plays from the same French playwright and three others from Racine in colloquial verse, al-zajal.¹⁰⁰

The change in political situation after World War I, the deeper appreciation by the Arabs of Western drama, the increasing level of women participation in public life, the introduction of cinema and television, and above all, the active patronage of the theatre by the government have all contributed to the maturity of modern Arabic drama.¹⁰¹ Since the new intellectual atmosphere was stimulated by the British occupation, the source of inspiration automatically shifted from Italian and French playwrights to Sophocles, Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare, Bernard Shaw and other English dramatic celebrities.

By the end of the first decade of this century, most of the early translations and adaptations of Shakespeare had crystallised in Muḥammad ^CIffat's translation of Macbeth (1911), Muḥammad al-Sibā^Cī's translation of Coriolanus and Khalīl Muṭṭarān's translation of Othello (1912), The Merchant of Venice, Macbeth and Hamlet. These works are said by Dr Abdul-Hai¹⁰² to have marked 'the beginning of a new phase in the reception of Shakespeare in Arabic'. Other Shakespeare's plays which have been translated or adapted include The Tempest by Abū Shādī,¹⁰³ a scene from Julius Caesar by Muḥammad Ḥamdī,¹⁰⁴ Antony and Cleopatra by Aḥmad Shawqī¹⁰⁵ and Romeo and Juliet by ^CAli Aḥmad Bākathīr.¹⁰⁶ As for the playwrights who have contributed

to this development, they are legion. But Muḥammad Taymūr, Farah Anṭūn, ^CAzīz Abāza, ^CAlī Aḥmad Bākathīr and Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm may be mentioned among the next generation after the pioneers. Others include Farīd Abū Ḥadīd, Ṣalāḥ ^CAbdu 'l-Ṣabūr and Sa^Cdallah Wannūs in Syria among contemporary playwrights.

In composing their own original comedies and tragedies, the Arab playwrights have drawn inspiration from both European and Arab-Islamic classical history and literature. They have also continued to draw inspiration from the various contemporary events: the impact of Western civilization on traditional socio-economic, religious and political institutions. In addition to the French and Italian sources above identified, Shawqī's Masra^C Kilyubātra and Tawfīq's Malik Ūdīb are echoes of Shakespeare, Bernard Shaw and the Sophocles's classical tragedy, Oedipus the King. The Marūn's comedy, Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Mughaffal or Hārūn al-Rashīd is derived from the Alf Layla, Shawqī's Majnūn Laylā¹⁰⁷ from Kitābu 'l-Aghānī while Tawfīq's Ahlu 'l-Kahf¹⁰⁸ is adapted from Sūratu 'l-Kahf (chapter eighteen) of the Holy Qur'ān. Some of the plays which derive their themes from Islamic history also include Muḥammad by Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm,¹⁰⁹ Maqtaḥ Sayyidina ^CUthmān by Farīd Ḥadīd¹¹⁰ and Ma'sātu 'l-Ḥallāj by Ṣalāḥ ^CAbdu 'l-Ṣabūr¹¹¹ to mention but a few.

Apart from these familiar Islamic themes, the very law of conflict, the universal law of cause and effect, the inevitable intervention of the gods in human destinies, which rule most of the Western great tragedies are also derived from Islamic theological teachings.¹¹² The Islamic doctrine of creation, the concepts of

free-will and predestination, the relationship between God and Satan on the one hand, and between Satan and man on the other, are all full of conflicts. Satan is portrayed by the Qur'ān as the arch-enemy of God whose plans, including the destinies of man, the former is always out to frustrate or destroy. Through woman, wealth, wine, power and even knowledge, Satan is always capable of seducing man including the prophets of God.¹¹³

Thriving within this Islamic cultural context, modern Arabic drama has met with very little religious opposition. The earliest criticism was, perhaps, what the conservatives have considered to be sexual immorality arising from the women's involvement, either in acting on the stage or among the mixed audience. In 1918 Shaikhu 'l-Islām is, therefore, reported to have issued a decree to forbid women from performing on the stage.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, a Shaikh from al-Azhar, Muḥammad 'Abdu 'l-Fattāḥ is known to have written a tragedy, Laylā, for Yaḳūb Ṣanū's theatre.¹¹⁵ It is interesting indeed that despite its puritanical orientation, the Ikhwānu 'l-muslimīn has employed modern Arabic drama in its religious propaganda not only against Western civilization but also to promote the course of traditional Islam.¹¹⁶

A major obstacle which has constituted dilemma in the growth of Arabic theatre, however, has been the problem of diglossia.¹¹⁷ Considered a literary art, drama ought to be written and read in literary language since colloquial Arabic has never been traditionally used for literature. But when it is considered a play meant to be performed before an audience, colloquial Arabic ought to be employed since literary Arabic is not spoken by the Arabs except on formal

occasions. In this situation, however, both reading and speaking are involved and so, the Arab playwrights could not agree on a choice.

In the ensuing debates¹¹⁸ which were probably sparked off by Farah Antūn in the introduction to his play, Miṣr al-jadīda,¹¹⁹ the scale became obviously loaded against the colloquial Arabic. Apart from other distinguishing features being enjoyed by literary Arabic, it is the only unifying cultural force among the various Arabs whose colloquial Arabic are not mutually intelligible. Above all, the Holy Qur'ān, for the sake of which Arabic has been standardized, must be protected, at all cost, from sharing the experience of the Vulgate in modern Christianity. The outcome of this is that some of the plays are in literary Arabic, some in colloquial while others have mixed the two varieties. How, then, can non-Arabs like the Nigerian Muslims understand such plays let alone imitating them in the name of Islam?^H

F. The Transformation of the Qaṣīda

The most revolutionary aspect of modern Arabic literature has remained the systematic attempts made by the poets to transform the classical poetry.¹ In addition to the general encouragement generated by the rhymeless European poems being translated into Arabic, John Milton had particularly attacked rhyme in English poetry.¹²⁰ The influences of the French writers of vers libre such as Gustave Kahn, and of such English writers as Wordsworth and Robert Browning have also been demonstrated by Muṭṭarān and the members of the Dīwān in their various attempts to evolve a new poetic form. After his return from England in 1922, Abū Ṣhādī also demonstrated the

influences of the English American verslibristes, Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington and Hilda Doolittle.¹²¹

But the particular method of mixing different metres within a single poem which Abū Shādī eventually popularised has been traced to the more immediate influence on him of the A C Swinburne's literary thoughts.¹²² Since the end of World War II, the protracted experiment on modern poetic form has begun to crystallise into a definite form under the new 'modern poetry'. As hinted above, this eventual accomplishment has been due largely to the influence of T S Eliot on such contemporary poets as Lewis ḤAwad, Ghālī Shukrī, ḤAli Aḥmad SaḤīd (Adonis) Muḥammad Nuwayhi,¹²³ Muṣṭafā Badawī,¹²⁴ Badr Shākīr Shayyāb¹²⁵ and Nāzik al-Malā'ika.¹²⁶

Since rhyme is not essential in Western verses, it can also be eliminated in Arabic. In Western poetry, metre is indispensable; it cannot, therefore, be eliminated but can be transformed in Arabic. In European verses, lines are neither divided into two hemistichs, nor are they independent of one another in sense and construction. Accordingly, the division of lines into two hemistichs, in Arabic can be eliminated and the enjambment introduced. Monostrophic verses are not unknown in European poetry while other forms such as the sonnet, and stanza can always be met by the muwashshahāt. And, in imitation of the Western heroic couplet, al-rajaz al-muzdawij can always be employed.

Thus the modern Arab poets knew exactly what to do but knew not how to do it. While parallel analogy was successfully drawn from Western rhyme and the arrangement of lines, no such one-to-one

mapping can be drawn in the metre-scheme. The transformation of the classical metre and its harmonization with other structural changes have therefore remained subjected to the process of trial and error until recently, when a definite form began to emerge.

The first stage of structural innovation in modern poetry began in Syria from the revival of the strophic forms which had been introduced in Andalusia in an earlier protest against the classical monorhyme. But these forms have existed unrecognised by the classical theory. Encouraged by the translation of the Christian hymns and Psalter most of which were in quatrain, this method soon became popular in Syria from where it spread to Egypt and America. It distinguishes itself from the classical form by varying its rhyme, and metre in rare cases, from one stanza to another. In Egypt, it was employed by some of the prominent neoclassicists, the members of the Dīwān and Appollo schools while a good number of the Mahjar poems are in this form.

The second attempt at evolving a new poetic form was probably first made in 1905 by the Mahjar poet, Amīn al-Riḥānī (d 1940).¹²⁷ This method, accordingly, had become very popular among the mahjar poets, the members of al-Rābiṭa al-qalamiyya, from whom it spread to Egypt and Syria. Based on the use of prose rhythm of no specific rule, and with neither rhyme nor metre, this form known as al-shi^cru 'l-manthūr (poetry in prose) was virtually doomed, ab initio, to failure. In their protest against its usage, many Arabs including some members of the Dīwān and Appollo Schools argued that metre is an indispensable poetic feature.¹²⁸ It cannot, therefore, be eliminated.

Convinced that rhyme has been the greatest impediment on the poets' thoughts, the modernists' next attempt was to compose rhymeless verses (al-shi^cru'1-mursal) using the old metre-scheme. Al-^cAqqād attributes the introduction of this form to three Egyptian poets: al-Zahāwī, ^cAbdu '1-Rahmān Shukrī and Tawfīq al-Bakrī.¹²⁹ But Dr Mureh has indicated an earlier experiment by a Christian Arab, who later embraced Islam, Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq (d 1887). In his book, al-sāq ^calā '1-sāq¹³⁰ described by Hourani as part autobiography part socio-political criticism, al-Shidyāqī was the first to attempt blank verse in Arabic. It was then employed by Rizqu '1lāh Ḥassūn (d 1880) in his versified translation of the eighteenth chapter of the Book of Job.¹³¹ Under the influence of English blank verse, this form was propagated, defended and popularised by the Apollo School through whose founder, Abū Shādī, it gradually developed into free verse (al-shi^cru'1-hurr or al-shi^cru '1-muṭlaq).

In his various experiments, Abū Shādī had attempted mixing different metres in a single poem with or without rhyme and the traditional division of lines into two halves.¹³² Written in single lines, this form soon became popular as the most suitable poetic form for epic, dramatic and narrative verses. It also became known as free verse (al-shi^cru'1-hurr) on account of its being free from rhyme and the rigid traditional metre-scheme. Among those who had popularised it beside Abū Shādī may be mentioned Aḥmad Shawqī who had inevitably been led into it by dialogue in his play, Riwayāt Qambīz.¹³³ Free verse has also been employed by Farīd Abū Ḥadīd in his play, Maqṭal Sayyidnā ^cUthmān; ^cAli Aḥmad Bākathīr in his translation of the Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet; and Muṣṭafā Badawī in his Rasā'il min

Landan. The forms of these early free verses, five different types of which have been identified, ¹³⁴ had been left, like the contemporary English free verse uncoded, to the genius of individual poet until the emergence by 1947 of a codified form.

This new form, which is yet to be generally accepted by every poet, is based on the use of those traditional metres whose hemistich is made up of repetition of a single foot (taf^cīla). On this basis, Nāzik al-Malā'ika, who has remained one of its active exponents, has identified six of the traditional metres:¹³⁵

القانون الأول في الشعر الحر أنه يرتكز إلى وحدة التفعيلة التي
لولاها لم يستطع الشاعر أن يتحرر من نظام الشطرين القديم...
تري أن البحور التي كانت تتنوع تفعيلاتها كالبحر البسيط
والطويل معقدة... وأما أسهل البحور فكانت ولا ريب هي
البحور التي أطلقنا عليها اسم "الصافية"... وهي بحور ترتكز إلى
تفعيلة واحدة. وإلى هذه البحور الصافية يرتكز الشعر الحر.....
إن الأوزان الحرة لا تصاح للموضوعات كلها، وإنما بطبيعتها تجابه
مجالضيقاً من جهة أبحرها... وهذا لأنها تقوم على ستة
أبحر وحسب من الأبحر العربية الستة عشر.

To this six, according to Dr Moreh,¹³⁶ are sometimes added other two metres, whose hemistich has only its last foot different from the rest of it. This brings the number of the traditional metres involved in

this modern Arabic verses to the following eight of the classical sixteen: al-kāmil, al-ramal, al-hazaj, al-rajaz, al-mutaqārib, al-mutadārik to which al-sarī^c and al-wāfir have been added.

Unlike the early forms of the free verse some of which, like in Shawqī's play, still retain two hemistichs, the line of this new form must be written in single. And, the length or the number of feet in each of such lines is to be determined not by any fixed metre formular but the unit of proposition. In this way, the classical prosodic taboo of enjambment is automatically broken by run on lines, which are necessarily introduced by the overflowing emotions and ideas from the previous to the succeeding lines. Similarly, the choice of any of these eight metres is also left to be determined by the rhythm of the poet's emotions and inspiration inherent in his subject matter. But such lines must be arranged in monostrophic verse of a definite rhyme-scheme which is also left to be determined by the poet:¹³⁷

إن إصطلاحنا "الشعر الحر" يتناول الشكل الموسيقي للقصيدة
ويتعلق بعدد التفعيلات في البيت ويعنى بترتيب الأقطار
والقوافي وأسلوب إستعمال التدوير والزخاف وغير ذلك
مما هو قضايا عروضية بالحنة .

Based apparently on the English monostrophic form, the Cowleyan irregular ode (verses irreguliers) employed by some nineteenth century English romantic poets, or the 18th century Arabic al-band form,¹³⁸ this style can be said to have restored rhyme to the

Arabic verse. It has consequently been employed with little regards to its various prosodic restrictions very much to the disappointment of one of its exponents, al-Malā'ika.¹³⁹ Worse still, it is criticised and abandoned for manageable alternatives which are provided by the early romantic experiments: 'It is strange,' protested Jabrā' Ibrāhīm Jabrā' criticising al-Malā'ika's Qarāratu'l-mawja,¹⁴⁰

that the poem of Nāzik al-Malā'ika should be called free verse while it is actually chained by many structural rules which the poetess seeks to impose on her verses in pursuit of form.

G. Some General Characteristics of Modern Verses

Apart from its exotic metre and rhyme-scheme, the secular and Christian orientation of modern Arabic poetry have continued to alienate it from the Arab Muslims. Under its temporal climate, every sacred belief and sentiment is violated; every traditionally respectable institution is profaned; every consecrated object is desecrated. The sanctified stories in the two Holy books concerned, having been reviled as the ancient Jewish or Arabian mythology, are adapted into verses side by side with Greek mythology. In his introduction to Ahlu 'l-Kahf, Tawfīq al-Hakīm states that¹⁴¹

My purpose was not to take a story from the Glorious Book and to cast it in dramatic form (but) rather to look at our Islamic Mythology with the eyes of Greek tragedy (hence) bringing about a fusion of the two mentalities and literatures

The use of mythology, the traces of which can be seen even in some of the neoclassical poetry has thus become a main feature of

modern Arabic verses. Venus and his lover, Adonis, together with Cupid have virtually become conventional symbols of love.¹⁴¹ The resurrection of Jesus Christ is identified with that of Tammūz, both of which are invoked as symbols for the Arab revival.¹⁴² In a similar vein may be mentioned the invocation of the ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses, historical and cultural heroes, natural climatic features and different mythical objects of antiquity. The Nile, Tigris, Pyramids, Sphinx, Phoenix, and the Lebanese Cedar are all introduced as symbols, in modern Arabic verses.

Another outstanding feature, the beginning of which has been traced to Khalīl Muṭrān, is the use of dramatic elements,¹⁴³ including soliloquy or interior monologue, slogans and ejaculations. Most of the traditional figures such as personification, quotations, and parallelism which survive in modern verses have also been given secular outlooks. Beside being trite, most of the traditional metaphors and similes are considered manifestation of external description and shallow appreciation of life. But modern poetry has sought to penetrate the core of life which it now expresses in a more complex metaphor. Some of the new figures introduced include different forms of repetitions which are facilitated by the abolition of al-'īṭā', the use of parenthesis and other punctuation marks, onomatopoeic and what T S Eliot describes as 'objective correlative'.¹⁴⁴

Along with divine utterances from the Bible and Qur'ān are often quoted similar human utterances from Plato, Terence, Shakespeare, Alexander Pope, Thomas Carlyle and other world great minds. Despite the persistent objection and criticism from the conservatives, the

use of colloquial Arabic in writing verses is being actively sponsored by the modern poetry. And even in most of the verses in literary Arabic, popular sayings, slangs and slogans in colloquial dialects are not uncommon. But in spite of the iconoclastic tendencies of this new poetic experiment, it is closest in structure to the classical prosody. This is a significant feature which, in accordance with optimism already expressed by some Arab poets, might ensure its ultimate success.

H. Short Story and Novel

The style, diction and content of the early modern Arabic prose narratives betrayed, not unexpectedly, the literary spirit of neoclassical period: the grafting of some Western elements on the classical Arabic literary tradition. Apart from the predominant use of rhymed prose, the traditional attitude which had frowned at story writing as either a challenge to similar divine stories or a frivolous exercise had persisted.^K Thanks to the influences exerted in Syria by Jurjī Zaydān¹⁴⁵ and in Egypt, by Muṣṭafā Luṭfī al-Manfalūṭī. His series of Western oriented short and tragic stories, al-^Cabarāt are composed in such a language and style 'that the ignorant should learn of them than that pedants should approve of them.'¹⁴⁶ The efforts of the early romantic writers such as Ḥusayn Haykal, Taha Hussain, al-^CAqqād al-Māzinī, Muḥammad Taymūr and Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm have also been commended by Maḥmūd Taymūr.¹⁴⁷ For it was largely through their various translations, adaptations and original compositions that the traditional prejudice against prose narratives was removed and the short story and novel raised to a modern literary standard.

Like in drama, the inspiration came from Western novels and short stories most of which were often translated directly or modified and later imitated or even appropriated in some cases. Of the nine short stories of al-Manfalūti's al-^Cabarāt, for example, only three are said to be original; one is an adaptation while the remaining five are translations with or without modifications, from French works.¹⁴⁸ Other early examples include al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's translation of Fenelon's Les Aventures de Telemaque,¹⁴⁹ Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's translation of Victor Hugo's Les Miserables and the translations by both Farah Anṭūn¹⁵⁰ and ^CUthmān Jalāl¹⁵¹ of the Saint-Pierre's Paul et Virginie. Both Taha Hussain and al-^CAqqād are known to have also translated a number of Western novels into Arabic.¹⁵²

Meanwhile the maturity of Arabic journalism had proclaimed the end of neoclassical prose writings with the emergence in 1914 of Zaynab. It is the first real Egyptian novel which, according to Professor Gibb¹⁵³

broke away decisively in language, style, subject, and treatment from anything that had gone before in Arabic literature....Zaynab, however, is not only the first effort of a young man, but the first effort of a young literature, and must be judged accordingly.

Written in modern viable prose diction, not surprisingly, by a veteran journalist, Dr Ḥusayn Haykal, this style can be said to have eradicated, in modern prose, the use of the time honoured rhymed prose. But the problem of diglossia, especially in dialogue, like in

drama, has continued to linger along.¹⁵⁴

In its subsequent development, modern Arabic short story and novel have continued to be fed by contemporary socio-economic, religious and political consequences of the impacts of the West on the Arab-Islamic traditions.¹⁵⁵ Biographical works, description and historical novels of both contemporary and ancient Egyptian or classical Islam, are also cultivated. In most cases, the Holy Qur'ān and the Arabian Nights constitute the main traditional sources. But some of the medieval Islamic romances such as the 'Antara¹⁵⁶ and Jamīl Buthaina¹⁵⁷ are also being revived. Such revivals have, in fact, been extended to the compilation of the Arab folk narratives,¹⁵⁸ encouraged by Folklore¹⁵⁹—the study of cultural revival which took off in Europe in the last century.

Examples of the modern Arabic novel on some of the major themes include Taha Hussain's al-Ayyām,¹⁶⁰ al-Aqqād's Anā¹⁶¹ and his series of biographies of the Prophet and the Righteous Caliphs.¹⁶² These and some others¹⁶³ may be included in modern biographical novels. Historical novels include Taha Hussain's al-wa^cdu 'l-ḥaqq,¹⁶⁴ al-Fitnatu 'l-kubrā,¹⁶⁵ and a hundred of similar works. On contemporary events, Tawfīq al-Hakīm's al-Uṣfūr mina 'l-Sharq or 'Awdatu 'l-rūh,¹⁶⁶ Alī Ahmad Bākathīr's al-Thā'iru 'l-aḥmar¹⁶⁷ and Najīb Mahfūz's Awlād Ḥāratina¹⁶⁸ are representative.

It can be seen from the above brief survey that the medieval literary standard and themes in Arabic prose have all given way to prose narratives, which exist mainly in forms of fiction, romantic or realistic. Themes such as epistolary, debate, address or oration,

etc. still exist today but nobody, outside colleges, accords them any literary recognition. Literary history on the other hand, in forms of description, biography and travel account, has survived in modern novel, along with literary essay, to which the classical religious treatises have been transformed. Translation as a literary art is also a modern development to which journalism may be added. Like in modern European literature which it has sought to imitate, modern Arabic prose in novels and plays can be said to have now overshadowed poetry as a literary art in modern Arabic literature.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. by A Hourani, op cit, p. 38.
2. On some of the reasons advanced for the backwardness of Islam, see al-manār, ix(1906-7), pp. 357ff.
3. al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, Manāhiju 'l-'albāb (Cairo, 1912), p. 99.
4. M^ʿAbduh, Risālatu 'l-tawhīd (Cairo, 1361 AH), pp. 134ff.
5. A Hourani, op cit, pp. 290-91.
6. See: D E Smith, Religion, Politics and Social Change in the Third World (London, 1971) on this subject.
7. On the Turkish 'Attack on the Theocracy', see B Lewis, op cit, pp. 256-66.
8. cf P Cachia, 'In a Glass Darkly : The Faintness of Islamic Inspiration in Modern Arabic Literature', Die Welt des Islams, ns xxiii-xxiv (1984), pp. 26-44.
9. M M Badawi, 'Convention and Revolt in Modern Arabic Poetry', in G E von Grunebaum, ed, Arabic Poetry, op cit, p. 205. See also M M Badawi, A Critical Introduction to Modern Arabic Poetry (Cambridge, 1975).
10. A more detailed classification into neo-classicism, romanticism, realism, symbolism and surrealism, has been made by Nāzik al-Malā'ika, Shazāya wa ramād (Beirut, 1971), p. 5.
11. M Mandūr, 'Tayyāratu 'l-'adab fi Miṣra 'l-mu^cāṣira', al-Ādāb, No 2 (Feb 1958), pp. 9-11.
12. On al-Bārūdī, see: ^cUmar al-Dasūqī, Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (Cairo, n d), pp. 39-44 for his literary traditionalism; M M Badawi, 'Al-Bārūdī: Precursor of the Modern Arabic Poetic Revival', Die Welt des Islams NS xii (1969-70), pp. 228-44.
13. T Hussain, Hāfiẓ wa Shawqī, op cit, p. 9. The translation is quoted from A J Arberry, 'Hāfiẓ Ibrahim and Shawqī', JRAS (Jan 1937), pp. 41-58.
14. Hāfiẓ Ibrāhīm translated Victor Hugo's Les Miserables into al-Bu'asa' (Cairo, 1923) while he wrote a number of 'novels' including Layālī Satiḥ (Cairo, 1907). Shawqī also wrote a 'novel', Riwayāt 'Adhrā' al-Hind (Alexandria, 1897).
15. On Shawqī's contribution to Arabic drama, see A J Arberry, 'Hāfiẓ Ibrahim and Shawqī', op cit, pp. 50-58; ^cUmar al-Dasūqī, al-Masrahiyya (Cairo, nd), pp. 51-70, 425-41.

16. His famous work, Ḥadīth Cīṣā ibn Hishām (Cairo, 1970), is held to have pioneered modern Arabic novel.
17. On his work, Zainab (Cairo, n d (1914), see below, p.153 for more details.
18. He is also the author of two major pioneer works on prose: a collection of essays, al-Nazarāt, 3 vols (Cairo, 1925-6), and a collection of short stories, al-'Abarāt (Cairo, 1926). On his contribution to modern Arabic literature in general, see: H A R Gibb, 'Manfaluti and the New Style', BSOS, V,3 (1929), pp. 445-66. See also below, p. 153.
19. On the growth and development of short story and novel in modern Arabic literature see: H A R Gibb, 'The Egyptian Novel', BSOS, VII, I (1933), pp. 1-22; M Manzalaoui, ed, Arabic Writing Today I: The Short Story (Cairo, 1968); H Kilpatrick, The Modern Egyptian Novel (London, 1974); M Taymur, Fannu 'l-Qaṣaṣ, op cit, passim.
20. On his pioneer contribution to modern Egyptian theatre, see: A Ghunaim, Ṣanū': rā'idu 'l-masraḥi 'l-miṣrī (Cairo, 1966).
21. On the growth and development of drama in modern Arabic literature see: U al-Dasuqī, al-Masraḥiyya, op cit; M Manzalaoui, ed, Arabic Writing Today II: The Drama (Cairo, 1977); M Taymur, Ḥayātunā al-tamthīliyya (Cairo, 1922); F Abdel Wahab, Modern Egyptian Drama: An Anthology (Chicago, 1974); N Barbour, 'The Arabic Theatre in Egypt', BSOS, VIII (1935-7), pp. 173-87, 991-1012; P Chelkowski, 'Islam in Modern Drama and Theatre', Die Welt des Islams, NS XXIII-XXIV (1984), pp. 45-69.
22. On his five comedies adapted from Molière, chosen and introduced by M Y Najm, see: M C Uthman Jalāl, al-Kumīdiyat (Beirut, 1964). For his general contribution, see: A M al-'Aqqād, Shu'arā' Miṣr (Cairo, 1937), pp. 111-18.
23. For the contributions of these two poets, see M M Badawi, A Critical Introduction, op cit, pp. 47-62.
24. Nāṣif al-Yāzījī, Majma'ū 'l-baḥrayn (Beirut, 1885).
25. On the contribution of Marūn Naqqāsh, see: M M Moosa, 'Naqqāsh and the Rise of the Native Arab Theatre in Syria', JAL, III (1972), pp. 106-117.
26. See H A R Gibb, 'The Egyptian Novel', op cit, pp.1-22 for the contributions of these writers. See also A Hourani, op cit, pp. 253-9 on Farah Antūn.
27. Where they constituted themselves into literary societies, al-rābiṭa al-qalamiyya (1920) in the U S A and al-'Uṣba al-Andalusiyya in Brazil. They are collectively known as the

Mahjar or Emigrant poets. See: M M Badawi, A Critical Introduction, op cit, pp. 179-203; Wadi' Dīb, al-Shi'ru 'l-'arabi fi 'l-mahjari 'l-amriki (Beirut, 1955).

28. cf. J Heyworth-Dunne, 'Printing and Translation under Muḥammad 'Alī of Egypt: The Foundation of Modern Arabic', JRAS (1940), pp. 325-49.
29. George Young, Egypt (London, 1927), p. 284.
30. 'Umar al-Dasūqī, Fi'l-adab al-Ḥadīth, II (Cairo, 1955), pp. 63-6; 166-7.
31. See below pp.140-1 for examples.
32. See below pp. 143-4 for more details on the use of colloquial Arabic in drama.
33. eg Ghālī Shukrī, Shi'runā 'l-Ḥadīth... Ilā Ayn? (Cairo, 1968), p. 33 reports that some of Lewis 'Awad's poems are composed in colloquial Arabic. see: Lewis 'Awad, Plutoland (Cairo, 1947).
34. cf. I A Richard, Principles of Literary Criticism (London, 1955), pp. 6-7 on the various attempt made by Western literary critics, at characterising English poetry.
35. I am indebted for my general knowledge in classical and modern English literature to an encyclopaedic compilation of a series of essays on various modern subjects, The New Popular Educator ed, J A Hammerton (London, nd). On the origin of Western classical literature, see pp. 43-4, 96-7.
36. See: R A Nicholson, op cit, pp. 71-3 for the origin of the Qaṣīda.
37. Since Quss b. Sā'ida to whom many pre-Islamic Arabian literary style, including many of such ejaculations, were attributed, was not a pagan priest but the Bishop of Najrān. See Ibid, pp. 135-6.
38. cf. H A R Gibb, 'The Reaction in the Middle East against Western Culture', Translated from 'La Reaction Contre la Culture Occidentale dans la Proche Orient', Cahier de l'Orient Contemporain, yr 8, fasc. 25 (Paris, 1951), pp. 1-10.
39. by J W H Atkins, English Literary Criticism: The Medieval Phase (Cambridge, 1934) pp. 16-17.
40. cf. al-Suyūṭī, al-Muzhir, II, op cit, pp. 234-245.
41. J W H Atkins, op cit, pp. 26-7.
42. J A Hammerton, ed, op. cit, p. 707.

43. by J W H Atkins, op cit, p.14.
44. M M Yūsuf, Shu^Carā' Murītāniya (Beirut, 1962), pp. 152-3. For similar views see Tawfiq al-Ḥākīm, al-Malik Udīb (Cairo, 1949), pp. 9-54; M Taymūr, Fannu 'l-qaṣaṣ, op cit, pp. 75-77; H A R Gibb, 'Studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature: The Nineteenth Century', BSOS IV,4 (1928), pp. 745-60.
45. G E von Grunebaum, 'The Aesthetic Foundation of Arabic', op cit, p. 326.
46. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th ed (1875-89), S V 'Poetry'.
47. Fannu 'l-Qaṣaṣ, op cit, pp. 83-6.
48. cf Muḥammad al-Ahwānī, Ibn Sīnā (Cairo, 1962), pp. 85-6; Zakariyā' Yūsuf ed, Jawami' 'ilmi 'l-musiqa (Cairo, 1956), pp. 122-3.
49. In English poetry, there are four principal feet (taf^Cīla), Trochee, dactyl, iambus and anapaest, to which amphibrach and the classical spondee are sometimes added. But the equivalent of their rigid combinations into the sixteen metres of the classical Arabic prosody are found only in classical verses. In modern verses, these feet are employed in single or combined, in twos, threes, fours etc as monometer, dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, etc dictated by the unit of proposition in question. On the English metre, see B L K Henderson, The English Way (London, 1925), pp. 305-309; Enid Hamer, The Metres of English Poetry (London, 1930).
50. Except in lyrical poetry such as the sonnet, elegy, satire ode, psalm, hymn, ballad and other stanzaic form to which the bulk of Arabic poetry belongs. Rhyme in those verses is considered a major aesthetic feature.
51. B L K Henderson, op cit, p. 310.
52. Rawī is the letter of the alphabet in which a poem rhymes. On this basis, a poem is called Bā'iyya, Jīmiyya or Lāmiyya if it rhymes in Bā', Jīm, or Lām respectively. See W Wright, II, op cit, pp. 350-58 for Arabic rhyme.
53. J A Hammerton, ed, op cit, pp. 96-7.
54. eg The Decameron by Boccaccio; Lazarillo, often disputedly attributed to Hurtado de Mendoza; and the famous Don Quixote by Cervantes. See Ibid, p. 1130.
55. M Taymūr, Fannu 'l-qaṣaṣ, op cit, p. 40 suggests the possible influence of Ibn Tufayl's Ḥayy bīn Yaqzān on this work. But this case is now weaker than it once was.
56. A M al-^CAqqād and Ibrāhīm al Māzinī, al-Dīwān: Kitāb fi 'l-Naqd wa'l-'adab, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1921).

57. M Nu^Caima, al-Ghirbāl (Beirut, 1964).
58. A^CAbdu 'l-Rāziq, al-Islām wa 'Uṣūlu 'l-ḥukm (Cairo, 1925).
59. Taha Hussain, Fi'l-shi^Cri 'l-jāhilī (Cairo, 1926) (withdrawn from circulation).
60. eg Taha Hussain, Hāfiẓ wa Shawqī, op cit; Hadīthu 'l-'arbi^Cā, Vols I-III (Cairo, 1925-45).
61. Qāsim Amīn, Tahrīru 'l-mar'a (Cairo, 1899); al-Mar'atu-'l-jadīda (Cairo, 1901).
62. See: Ann Carol, 'The Role of Women in Egyptian Society' The Egyptian Bulletin, No. 11 (Dec 1984), pp. 17-19; Majorie Hall, 'The Position of Woman in Egypt and Sudan', PhD Thesis (London University, 1977).
63. The pioneer role of Khalīl Muṭrān in the Arabic romantic movement is generally upheld except by al-^CAqqād. See his book, Shu^Carā' Miṣr, op cit, pp. 199-200. On the leadership of Muṭrān, see: Isma^Cīl Adham, Khalīl Muṭrān (Cairo, 1939); R C Ostle, 'Khalīl Muṭrān : The Precursor of Lyrical Poetry in Modern Arabic', JAL, II (1971), pp. 116-126.
64. Known as the Dīwān School; See: A M K al-Zubaidī, 'The Dīwān School', JAL, I (1970), pp. 36-48. One of the characteristic features which marks this school off from the succeeding romantic schools was its insistence on the correct usage of classical Arabic (not achaism), the only point over which al-^CAqqād has disagreed with Nu^Caima in the introduction to al-Ghirbāl written by the former; See: M Nu^Caima, al-Ghirbāl, op cit, pp. 10-12 for al-^CAqqād's view, and pp. 97-8 for Nu^Caima's view on the use of language.
65. The Apollo society was formed in 1932 by Dr Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī (d 1955), a medical doctor, after his return from England where, during his ten-year sojourn, he had also studied English literature. He is particularly influenced by Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and Heine in his romantic views. Along with the society was also established a review, Apūllū, which came to an abrupt end in 1934 after its twenty-fifth issue. See: M M Baḍawī, A Critical Introduction, op cit, pp. 116-178; Abdu'l-'Azīz, al-Dasūqī, Jamā'atu Apūllū wa atharuhā fi 'l-shi^Cri 'l-ḥadīth (Cairo, 1960); A M K Zubaidi, 'The Apollo School's Early Experiments in "Free Verse"', JAL, V (1974), pp. 17-43.
66. ed by F T Palgrave and published in London, 1861.
67. A M al-^CAqqād, Shu^Carā' Miṣr, op cit, pp. 192-3; See also M Abdel-Haj, 'Shelley and the Arabs: An Essay in Comparative Literature', JAL, III (1972), pp. 12-89; Tradition and English and American Influence in Arabic Romantic Poetry (London, 1982), pp. 1-51.

68. M Nu^Caima, op cit, pp. 84-5.
69. A M Tāhā, Shi^Cr wa dirāsa ed, Suhayl Ayyūb (Damascus, 1962), pp. 634-82 cited by M M Bādawi, A Critical Introduction, op cit, p. 139.
70. Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Shābbī, al-Khayalu'l-shi^Cri Cinda 'l-^CArab (Tunis, 1929), pp. 105ff, M M Bādawi's translation. For more details on the romantic concept of poetry as inspiration, vision and mysticism see M Abdul-Hai, Tradition and English and American Influence, op cit, pp. 52-82.
71. M Nu^Caima, op cit, pp. 86-9.
72. Ibid, p. 120.
73. A M al-^CAqqād, Shu'arā' Miṣr, op cit, pp. 8-9.
74. cf M Nu^Caima, 'Māhiyatu'l-adab wa-mahammatuh' in M Taymūr ed, Fi 'l-adabi'l-^Carabi 'l-ḥadīth. (Cairo, 1954), pp. 3-18; see also, M Nu^Caima, al-Ghirbāl, op cit, pp. 76-8; A M al-^CAqqād, Dīwānu 'l-^CAqqād, (Cairo, 1928), Introduction; A A S Adonis, 'Muḥāwala fi ta^Crifi 'l-shi^Cri 'l-ḥadīth', Shi^Cr, No 11 (1959), cited by Ghālī Shukrī, op cit, p; 110.
75. Taha Hussain, Hāfiz wa Shawqī, op cit, pp. 149-50.
76. A A Ghurāb, 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmān Shukrī: Ārā'uh al-naqdiyya', Dirāsāt 'Arabiyya, II (1976), pp. 52-76.
77. Taha Hussain, Hāfiz wa Shawqī, op cit, p. 26.
78. Ibid, pp. 87-89, 109-110.
79. M Nu^Caima, al-Ghirbāl, op cit, p. 202.
80. M C Lyons and P Cachia, 'The Effect of Monorhyme on Arabic Poetic Production', JAL, I (1970), pp. 3-13; M Nu^Caima, al-Ghirbāl, op cit, pp. 63-4; S Moreh, 'Neoclassical Qaṣīda', op cit, pp. 160-2.
81. Ibn Rashīq, al-^CUmda, I, op cit, pp. 151-3.
82. A M K al-Zubaidī, 'The Dīwān School', op cit, p. 45.
83. B L K Henderson, op cit, p. 324.
84. This classical epic was translated into 11,000 Arabic verses of varying metres and rhyme (strophic form) with a comprehensive introduction. See: Sulaimān al-Bustānī, Ilyādha Humirūs (Cairo, 1904).
85. Ibrāhīm al-Māzinī, Dīwānu 'l-Māzinī, II, (Cairo, 1917), pp. 170-2.

86. eg A M al-^CAqqād, ^CĀbiru 'l-Sabīl (Cairo, 1937).
87. A Muḥarram, Dīwān Majdi 'l-Islām (Cairo, 1963). See: M M Badawi, 'Islam in Modern Egyptian Literature', JAL, II (1971), pp. 154-77, for the assessment of this work as an epic.
88. On his marxist thought as a theme in modern Arabic Literature, see: T J Le Gassick, Major Themes in Modern Arabic Thought: An Anthology (Ann Arbor, 1979), pp. 54-9.
89. For the growth and characteristic of this anti-romantic movement in Arabic Literature, see: M M Badawi, A Critical, op cit, pp. 204-260; Ghālī Shukrī, op cit, passim.
90. T S Eliot, Selected Essays (London, 1958), pp. 13-21.
91. Taha Hussain, Hāfiz wa Shauqī, op cit, p. 109.
92. A M al-^CAqqād, Shu^Carā' Miṣr, op cit, p. 163.
93. cf Muḥammad M al-Shūbāshī, 'Al-Adabu'l-dall', al-thaqāfa, XVII, 577 (Dec 1951) cited by M M Badawi, A Critical, op cit, p. 207.
94. On this subject, see: M M Badawi 'Commitment in Contemporary Arabic Literature', Journal of World History, XIV, 4 (1972), pp. 858-79.
95. See Ghālī Shukrī, op cit, pp. 16, 22, 114.
96. Ibid, p. 112.
97. According to M Badawi, Adonis (Ali Aḥmad Sa^Cid) is the most articulate apologist of the New poetry for which, see: A A S Adonis, Zamanu 'l-shi'r (Beirut, 1972).
98. The first modern theatre was introduced by the Napoleon conquest with the Comedie Francaise after the departure of which French and Italian plays had continued to be shown in the theatre. But according to Farouk, these did not produce any spontaneous reaction in Egypt. See: F Abdel Wahab, Modern Egyptian Drama, op cit, p. 18.
99. ^CUmar al-Dasūqī, al-Masraḥiyya, op cit, pp. 21, 26.
100. See above note 22.
101. For a more detailed description of the role of each of these factors, see M Manzalaoui, ed Arabic Writing Today, II, op cit, pp. 26-34.
102. M Abdul-Hai, Tradition and English and American Influence, op cit, p. 19.
103. al-^CĀṣifa (Cairo, 1930).

104. Riwāyāt Yulyūs Qayṣar (Cairo, 1928).
105. Maṣra^c Kilyūbātra (Cairo, 1929).
106. Rumiyū wa Julyīt (Cairo, 1946).
107. Cairo, 1931; see ^cUmar al-Dasūqī, al-Masraḥiyya, op cit, pp. 425-441 for its literary appreciation.
108. Cairo, 1933.
109. Cairo, 1936.
110. Cairo, 1927.
111. Cairo, 1966; trans. into English by K. Semaan, Murder in Baghdad (Leiden, 1972).
112. For more details on this theme, see P. Chelkowski, 'Islam in modern Drama and Theatre', op cit, pp. 45-69.
113. Examples of such prophets include Ādam whom he seduced to eat the forbidden apple; Ibrāhīm, whom he attempted to dissuade from sacrificing his son, Ismā'īl and the Prophet Muḥammad in whose revelation he is known to have intervened. The first two examples are popular traditional themes; for the third example see: the Qur'ān 22:52.
114. al-Muqattam, 2/9/1902 and 24/9/1902 cited by Peter, C op cit, p. 52.
115. M. Manzalaoui, op cit, p. 22 n.25.
116. See: R. P. Mitchell, The Society of the Muslim Brothers (London, 1969) cited by Peter C op cit, pp. 64-5.
117. According to C. A. Ferguson, 'Diglossia', Word, XV (1959), pp. 325-40; diglossia is the use, by some speakers in many speech communities, of two or more varieties of the same language under different conditions. See also S. J. Altoma, The Problem of Diglossia in Arabic (Cambridge 1969).
118. This is, perhaps, the most hotly debated issue in Modern Arabic Literature to which hardly no writer has not contributed. See: Jurjī Zaydān, Ta'rīkh Adabi 'l-lughati 'l-arabiyya, IV (Cairo, 1914), pp. 152-5; Muḥammad Taymūr, Hayatuna, op cit, pp. 22-6, 47, 112; Taha Hussain, Ḥadīthu 'l-arbi'ā', III (Cairo, 1957), pp. 200-201; M. Mandūr, al-Masraḥu 'l-Nathri (Cairo, 1959), pp. 57-8, 71; ^cUmar al-Dasūqī, Fi'l-Adab, II, op cit, pp. 61-2; M. Taymūr, Fannu 'l-qaṣaṣ, op cit, pp. 269-77.
119. cited by ^cUmar al-Dasūqī, al-Masraḥiyya, op cit, pp. 35-6.
120. John Milton, The Paradise Lost ed, A. W. Varity (Cambridge, 1952) p. 4.

121. See his work; Qaḍāyā 'l-Shi^Cri 'l-mu^Cāṣir (Cairo, 1959).
122. The most comprehensive work on this theme has been Dr Shmuel Moreh's series of studies on which this study has mainly depended. They include S Moreh, 'Strophic, Blank and Free Verse in Modern Arabic Literature', PhD Thesis (University of London, 1965) unpublished; 'Blank Verse (al-shi^r al-mursal) in Modern Arabic Literature', BSOAS, XXIX, 3 (1966), pp. 483-505; 'Poetry in Prose in Modern Arabic Literature', IJMES, IV, 4 (1968), pp. 330-60; 'Free Verse (al-shi^r al-ḥurr) in Modern Arabic Literature: Abū Shādī and His School, 1926-46', BSOAS, XXXI (1968), pp. 28-51; 'Nāzik al-Malā'ika and al-shi^Cr al-ḥurr in Modern Arabic Literature', AAS, IV (1968), pp. 57-84; 'The Influence of Western Poetry and Particularly T S Eliot on Modern Arabic Poetry (1947-1964)', V (1969), pp. 1-50. On Abū Shādī's experiment on free verse, see: 'Free Verse', op cit, p. 35.
123. His work, Qaḍiyyatu 'l-shi^Cri 'l-jadīd (Cairo, 1964) is said to be based on T S Eliot's article, 'The Music of Poetry' in T S Eliot's, Selected Prose, ed, J Hayward (Penguin, 1963), pp. 53-64.
124. In Addition to his other various intellectual contributions to which references are being made in this study, Dr M Muṣṭafā Badawī, a lecturer at the Oxford University is a contemporary Arab poet who has contributed to the evolution of this new form through his work, Rasā'il min Landan (Alexandria, 1956).
125. Through his masterpiece, Unshūdatu 'l-maṭar (Beirut, 1960).
126. In addition to the Shazāya, op cit, her major contribution, beside essays, include Qaḍāyā 'l-shi^r 'l-mu^āṣir (Beirut, 1962), Qarāratu 'l-mawja (Beirut, 1960); Diwān Nāzik al-Malā'ika, 2 vols, (Beirut, 1970-71).
127. al-Hilāl, XIV, 2 (1905), pp. 97-8.
128. Abū Shādī, Ihsān (Cairo, 1927), p. 127; M M Badawi, Rasā'il, op cit, p. 10.
129. A M al-^CAqqād, Yas'alūnak (Cairo, 1946) p. 64.
130. Paris, 1855, p. 369; see: S Moreh, 'Blank Verse', op cit, pp. 487-8; Ghālī Shukrī, op cit, p. 106 for the verses in question.
131. Rizqu 'Ilāh Ḥassūn, Ash^Caru 'l-shi^Cr (London, 1869) pp. 31-3.
132. An example includes his poem, 'al-fannān', as analysed by A M K Zubaidi, 'The Apollo School's Early Experiment in Free Verse' op cit, pp. 17-43. See also, Majallah Apūllū, II, 10 (1934), p. 900; I, 8 (1933), pp. 846-7.

133. Cairo, 1931. This Shawqī's experiment has, curiously enough, been criticised by none other than Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād. See his book: al-Qambīz fī 'l-mīzān (Cairo, 1931).
134. by S Moreh, 'Free Verse', op cit, p. 47.
135. N al-Malā'ika, 'al-^Carūd wa 'l-shi^Cru'l-ḥurr', al-Ādāb, II (Feb, 1958), pp. 6-7.
136. S Moreh, 'Nāzik al-Malā'ika', op cit, p.3.
137. N al-Malā'ika, 'al-^Carūd', op cit, p. 6; Examples of rhyme-scheme as used in her poem, 'al-kulīra' are given in her work, Shazāyā, op cit, pp 17-18; see also: S Moreh, 'Nazik', op cit, pp. 77ff.
138. On al-band, see: Muṣṭafā Jamālu'l-Dīn, 'al-Band wa 'l-shi^Cru 'l-ḥurr', al-Aqlām, I, 6 (Feb. 1965), pp. 120-30; Muhammad al-^CAbta, 'al-Band fī 'l-adabi 'l-^Cirāqī', al-Risāla, No. 933 (May, 1951), p. 585.
139. She complains that 'our poets have continued to play with the free verse metre-scheme in the way a child would perforate a currency note of a high value'. See: N. al-Malā'ika, 'al-^CArūd', op cit, p. 6.
140. Beirut, 1960. On this criticism, see, Shi^Cr, I, 4 (1957), p. 113. See also Ghālī, S, Shi^Crunā, op cit, p. 53.
141. F AbdeI Wahab, Modern Egyptian Drama, op cit, p. 30; see also: As^Cad Razūq, al-'Uṣṭūra fī 'l-shi^Cri 'l-mu^Cāṣir (Beirut, 1959).
142. On the use of symbols in modern Arabic verses, see: I J Boullata, 'The Poetic Technique of Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb 1926-1964', JAL, II (1971), pp. 104-115; M Abdul-Hai, Tradition and English and American Influence, op cit, pp. 126-163 on Greek Mythology in Arabic Romantic Poetry.
143. M Mandūr, Muḥādarāt ^Can Khalīl Muṭrān (Cairo, 1954), pp. 23ff.
144. For examples of these various figures and style, see: S Moreh, 'The Influence', op cit, pp. 11-41.
145. through his work, Mukhtārāt Jurjī Zaydān (Cairo, 1920).
146. M L al-Manfalūṭī, al-Nazarāt, III, op cit, p. 145.
147. Maḥmūd Taymūr, Fannu 'l-Qaṣaṣ, op cit, pp. 52-3. His own series of modern short stories have also constituted a landmark.
148. T J Le Gassick, op cit, p. 47. Four of such French sources, according to H A R Gibb, 'Manfaluti', op cit, pp. 311-22, include, Rostand's Cyrano de Bergerac, A Karr's Sous les Tilleuls, Coppee's Pour la Couronne, and Saint-Pierre's Paul et Virginie.
149. T J Le Gassick, op cit, p. 9 claims that the Greek mythological feature was introduced into modern Arabic literature through this work.

150. Paul wa Varjini. (Alexandria, 1926).
151. 'Al-^Cuyūn al-yawāqiz' cited by al-^CAqqād, Shu^Carā', op cit, p. 113.
152. See: ^CUmar al-Dasūqī, Fī 'l-adab, II, op cit, pp. 172-3 for examples.
153. H A R Gibb, 'The Egyptian Novel', op cit, pp. 1-22.
154. Z N Abdel-Malek, 'The Influence of Diglossia on the Novels of Yuusif Al-Sibaa^Ci', JAL, III (1972), pp. 132-141.
155. A typical example is Tawfiq al-Ḥakīm, Yawmiyāt Nā'ib fī 'l-aryāf (Cairo, 1937) transl. A S Eban, The Maze of Justice (London, 1947). See also: H Kilpatrick, op cit, pp. 41-51 for more examples.
156. cf. H T Norris, The Adventures of Antar (Warminster, 1980).
157. A M al-^CAqqād, Jamīl Buthayna (Cairo, 1944).
158. A popular example of such narrative is the series of comic anecdotes woven on the adventures of Juhā, a cultural buffon. See: A M al-^CAqqād, Juhā (Cairo, 1959); Fārūk Sa^Cd Juhā wa nawādiruh (Beirut, 1982).
159. On the growth of folklore in modern literature, see: R M Dorson, African Folklore (Bloomington, 1972), pp. 3-6; S 'Abdu 'l-Ḥakīm, al-Fuḵlūr wa 'l-'asāṭīru 'l-'arabiyya (Beirut, 1983).
160. Taha Hussain, al-Ayyām, I (Cairo, 1929), II (Cairo, 1939).
161. Cairo, 1964.
162. eg A M al-^CAqqād, ^CAbqariyya Muḥammad (Cairo, 1945); ^CAbqariyya ^CUmar (Cairo, 1943).
163. eg H Haykal, Ḥayātu Muḥammad (Cairo, 1935) for a discussion of which see: D O S Noībī, 'Haykal's Biography of the Prophet - a Desideratum', NATAIS, II, 1 (Dec, 1980) pp. 51-60.
164. Cairo, 1950.
165. Cairo, 1947.
166. Cairo, 1933; a portrayal of the Egyptian nationalist struggle.
167. Cairo, 1953; a portrayal of the struggle between the Muslim Brothers and the Communist group in the post World War II Egypt.

168. Cairo, 1959; written on class struggle in contemporary Arab society. This book has been compared to George Orwell's Animal Farm by Dr J A Abū Haiḍar in a paper, 'An Arabic 1984: Awlād Ḥarātīnā by Najīb Maḥfūz', presented at the post-graduate seminar, Dept of the Near and Middle East, SOAS, University of London on 28 Nov 1984.

ADDITIONAL FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- A Islamic Nigeria e.g., was represented by the late Sir Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto, who became the Vice President of the World Islamic League in 1965. See J.N. Paden, Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto (London, 1986), pp. 529-78; and below pp. 184-6.
- B See pp. 168-171.
- C Encouraged by the Nationalist spirit, most of those Western educated Nigerian Malams who could be held equivalent of these Arab pioneers had turned their literary attentions not to the modernization of the medieval Arabic but to the growth of modern Hausa literature. See pp. 206-8.
- D The secular education imposed by the modern political order, has also produced in Nigeria, some Christian Arabists one of whom, at least, has launched the process of secularising Arabic in Nigeria. See pp. 219-223.
- E In Islamic Nigeria, printing press, translation and journalism were directed mainly towards the development of Hausa, instead of Arabic literature (see p.207) which was virtually left within the medieval Islamic context and usages.
- F Whereas the cultivation of the classical Arabic literature was motivated in Nigeria by Islam, modern Arabic literature lacks such a religious motive. It could not, therefore, be similarly cultivated.
- G Studied within the Islamic cultural context, Arabic literature in Nigeria is generally cut off from these modern European secular and literary thoughts except among some few individuals (see pp. 208-9, 218-19) who have been encouraged by the works of some modern Arab writers to cultivate them. The literary innovations of those Nigerians, however, have not matured into romanticism or realism. But some elements of the modern lyrical and narrative verses, translation and literary essays, have all been introduced. See pp. 219, 259, 278-282.
- H Arabic drama, therefore, cannot develop in Nigerian modern Arabic literature.
- I Apart from al-shi'ru 'l-manthūr and al-muwashshahāt discussed on pp. 215-17 and pp.283-4 respectively, none of the following prosodic experiments has emerged in Nigeria. See p. 259.
- J See p.260 for the use in modern Nigerian poetry of the Greek mythology.
- K This fact, among others, has contributed to the absence of modern Arabic short story and novel in Nigeria. See pp.217-19, 290-91.

CHAPTER FOUR

MODERN ARABIC LITERATURE IN NIGERIA

I. Modern Arabic Literature in the Contemporary Muslim World

Dominated by Western secular thoughts, the European literary tradition and the spirit of modern Arab nationalism, modern Arabic literature is not simply a revolt against traditional literary convention.¹ It is a complete rebellion against the whole medieval Islamic heritage upon which the classical literary theory was founded. Its development, therefore, has continued to be resisted, criticised and condemned as a threat to Islam and Arab civilization. The whole Western civilization is indeed, nothing but 'imperialist plot' which is often sardonically referred to as the twentieth century jāhiliyya.² In his studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature, Professor Gibb has identified what he describes as the psychological factor behind this Muslim resistance to modern Arabic literature.³

The Canons of Arabic literary style were laid down by Muslims on Islamic literary models, above all on the Koran and the Traditions. It was neither possible, nor was it desirable, that modern Arabic literature should completely sever itself from the Islamic past, however far it might proceed on the path of adaptation to new conditions.

In poetry in particular, the traditional Qur'ānic oriented concept of literary theory and the Qaṣīda form, style and diction, have all refused to give in.⁴ And they are not likely to do so as long as

the Arabic Qur'ān exists. This is not to overlook the various literary innovations and indeed, the achievements above described especially since 1947, of the modern poets and critics. They have struggled tooth and nail to turn upside down, in less than one century, the thirteen-century old Arabic-Islamic literary heritage. They have successfully changed the traditional concept of poet and poetry, literary aesthetics and criticism, poetic themes, style, diction and form. Thanks to the leading roles of the Christian Arabs both at home and abroad, who have less been impeded by religious scruples in their secularist movement. But the various poetic innovations evolved have not simply been able to eliminate traditionalism in all its ramifications.

Apart from the die-hard traditional poetic forms, the romantic concept of poetry popularised by Mīkhā'īl Nu^caima, in which a poet is paraded as a prophet, constitutes an outrage upon the traditional Islamic concept of revelation. It is reminiscent of the early Meccan attack on the Qur'ān as poetry, an idea which no traditional Muslim would have blessed. There is, moreover, the involvement of the Christians in particular, which has continued to be suspected, by some Muslims, in modern literature. As late as 1964, a manifesto was published in Egypt against contemporary literature by the Committee for Poetry of the Supreme Council for Literature and Art.⁵ According to this manifesto, the contemporary poetry was said to be contrary to the Arabic culture and language and to the Arab national spirit.

In these circumstances, there is in modern Arabic literature, very little that can be borrowed by other Muslim nations in the name

of Islam. The survival of Islamic theme⁶ and the continuous use of literary Arabic have both retained some link with the traditional past. But these surviving features are no longer within the context of the medieval Islam. They have been modified in tune with modern thoughts. Their cultivation by contemporary Muslim nations would, therefore, depend very strictly on the extent to which Islam has been modernised in those nations.

Beyond Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, which constitute its melting-pot, the current of modern literary trend is also known in Palestine, Tunisia and Sudan to certain extent.⁷ But it is less popular in the rest of the Arab world let alone the non-Arab Muslim nations. In fact, the modernization of Islam from which such literature ought to proceed, having largely been left to individual Muslim nations, is virtually unknown in many Muslim countries. Cut adrift from the universal Islamic fountain, most of these Muslim nations have been left to die or survive under the pressure of colonialism and the nationalist struggle to which they had all been subjected. Those nations with sufficient Western education have successfully transferred their political and literary allegiance to their own territorial nationalism. But others have continued to look towards Istanbul, Cairo and Mecca for spiritual if not political leadership even after it was clear that these medieval Islamic centres could not ransom them from imperial captivity.

Consequently, the general rule is that both the old and the new literary trends, where the latter is known at all, have continued to co-exist side by side throughout the Muslim world. Sustained by the spirit of pan-Islamism, the old literary trend has continued with certain superficial modernization of themes. But its

literary inspiration has continued to be drawn from the medieval Islamic spirit. Modern literature on the other hand, has continued to draw its inspiration from modern secular and nationalist spirit, both the Arab and non-Arab Muslims borrowing from modern European literary tradition. While the Arabs have their modern literature written in Arabic, the non-Arabs have their own in different national languages if not in French or English.

In Turkey, the emergence of modern literature took off in 1859 with translations into Turkish of some French literary masterpieces.⁸ This trend has continued in other non-Arab Muslim nations including Iran, Pakistan and the Muslim population of Transcaucasia.⁹ In North and West Africa, the same trend is observed in Algeria and Senegal where their modern literatures are written neither in Arabic nor vernacular but in French.¹⁰ This same trend had also emerged in Nigeria since the 1930s when modern Hausa literature dramatically appeared to displace the existing medieval Arabic literature.

The survival, on the other hand, of the traditional trend with some modern elements engrafted on it, are found all over the Islamic world even in Egypt and Syria. In Mauritania, for example, in such modern verses, like in neo-classical Egyptian poetry, modern inventions such as the train, aircraft, radio and motor car are described.¹¹ This attempt to modernize traditional Arabic literary trend by imitating the neo-classical Arab writers without necessarily departing from the medieval spirit, constitutes the main modern trend in most non-Arab Muslim countries such as Nigeria. Meanwhile, we now examine the modernization of Islam in Nigeria in the light of which its modern Arabic literature can best be discussed.

II. The Impact of Western Culture on Islamic Nigeria

A. The General Response to Western Culture

The response of Islamic culture to Western civilization as demonstrated in different Muslim countries varies in theory from complete secularisation to a total abstinence. The first reaction is exemplified by Turkey, the second by Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan.¹² But in practice, no Muslim nation has successfully resisted the material and technological advantages of the West. The Egyptian based monthly Islamic magazine, al-da^cwa, is always full of echoes of characteristic Islamic retort against Western civilization.¹³

There is among the Muslims no one who prefers a stick to the gun or camel to the aircraft.. But it is necessary for every progress to operate in accordance with faith.

Apart from the general spontaneous reaction against imperialism, the specific Islamic resistance to Western culture can always be traced to the mutual rivalry and perpetual hostility between Islam and Christianity which became identified with Western culture. It was simply difficult for the Muslims to believe that Christianity was the first victim of modern secular thought since it was introduced in many Muslim colonies by the Church Missionaries. But when eventually confronted by the choice between riding a 'Muslim' camel and a 'Christian' motor car, the Muslims were able to distinguish between the secular and Christian thoughts in Western culture. This distinction, however, could not detach modern secular thought from its Western cultural orientation since secular thought constitutes a challenge to some Islamic teachings. The fundamentalists

have, therefore, remained hostile to Western civilization despite the efforts being made by the Muslim modernists to dissociate Christianity from modern secular thought.

In Muslim countries, the rate at which Islam absorbs Western culture has always depended on the strength of Islam and the degree of its exposure to Western civilization. In Syria, for example, where the literary reform had largely been championed by the Arab Christians, the pace of modernization was fast. But in Egypt, where al-Azhar had remained the bastion of medieval Islam, the phase of modernization was delayed. This pattern also emerged in Nigeria where in contrast to the Islamic northern resistance, western education was cultivated by the Islamic South where the medieval Islamic culture was essentially immature.

Long before it eventually became colonized in 1903, Islamic Nigeria was well aware of the Ahlu 'l-kitāb, the Naṣārā and the Yahūd - the Banū Isrā'īl, whom God Himself has exalted above the (rest of the) nations.¹⁴ It was also aware of the crusade and the contemporary European bombardment of the Ottoman Caliphate as well as the neighbouring Muslim African states: The Mahdī regime was subjugated in the Sudan in 1898; the Sanūsiyya brotherhood in Libya was crushed in 1898; the militant eastward exodus towards a Mahdī, from the French invasion of the Segu-Tukulor Empire (1890-91) had also reached Sokoto since 1894.¹⁵

So even if secular education had not been introduced to Islamic Nigeria in the form of Christianity, no Saint could have successfully persuaded the malams that the Europeans are not

Banū Isrā'īl; or that Lord Lugard in particular, was not a Christian. On their arrival into Islamic Nigeria, the British were at first addressed as Naṣārā before Turawa (Europeans) was later adopted on the insistence of the colonial officers that they were not all Christians.¹⁶ Indeed, when Clapperton visited Sultan Bello in 1824, he probably read the handwriting on the wall. The Sultan, among other theological questions, is reported to have asked him whether any Christian power apart from Britain was helping the Greek in their revolt against Turkey.¹⁷

In Islamic Northern Nigeria where Islam had inextricably mixed with the native traditions since about the fifteenth century, the reactions to Western culture have been motivated by defending both Islamic and cultural invasions. But in southern Nigeria among the Yoruba where Islam had not yet interwoven with the native customs, the reaction was simply in defence of Islam. It is possible, for example, for the Islamic South to absorb Western culture at the expense of Islam and still retain its traditional customs. But the Islamic North, by so doing, would have destroyed its own cultural identity which is essentially that of the medieval Islamic outlook. This intrinsic fact explains the unusual degree of tenacity with which Islamic Northern Nigeria has continued to resist Western culture.

After the systematic military bombardments of the Sokoto Caliphate which, between 1897 and 1906, crystallised in the British occupation, most of the subsequent political developments were not in the interest of Islam. As a religion, however, Islam has witnessed a tremendous development as the result of this occupation.

The proscription of the jihād halted the southward expansion of Islam. The institution of slavery with its economic and social advantages to Islamic Nigeria was also abolished. The fundamental human rights of the non-Muslim minority within the Caliphate were upheld while a large population of non-Muslims were brought into the Caliphate. Non-Muslim native law and customs as well as common law were accordingly introduced while some aspects of the sharīʿa were also modified.

But the greatest political development of a lasting consequence on Islamic Nigeria was the eventual amalgamation in 1914 of the northern Dāruʿl- Islām with the southern Dāru ʿl-ḥarb. This was followed by the southern Christian - led nationalist agitation for a decolonization and the subsequent imposition of the 'Christian' oriented political system after the gaining of national independence. Islamic Nigeria was dragged into not only participating but also co-operating on equal footing, with the Kūffār and the ahlu ʿl-kitāb, in operating a political system for which it had not psychologically prepared.

By the 1840s when Christian missionary activities began in Yorubaland, Islam had penetrated most of its north western towns as far south as Lagos and Badagry.¹⁸ Ilorin had been transformed since the 1830s into an Islamic centre of learning from which Arabic-Islamic literary tradition had continued to radiate to the rest of Yorubaland. Some literary works mainly of religious interests had also been produced¹⁹ but Islam remained essentially immature. Unlike the situation in the Islamic North, most of the Obas (kings) who embraced Islam could not, for political security, withdraw their allegiance from animism. It was still the faith of a large

proportion of their subjects including some of the Chiefs and traditional kingmakers. Islam had therefore remained a creed of an individual who, in a popular Yoruba adage, 'practises it as he wishes' but not necessarily as it should be. Apart from the overwhelming degree of syncretism, the failure of a standard Yoruba Ajami writing to emerge before the advent of the British may be taken as an index for the immaturity of Arabic-Islamic literary tradition.²⁰

At this individual level, Islam could offer no concerted resistance to the eventual British occupation between 1860 and 1895. It was in fact subjected to compete with the well organised and British backed-up Christianity to which it succumbed helplessly after a gallant struggle. But under the impacts of Western culture to which it became indiscriminately subjected, the Yoruba Islam had developed very rapidly. In 1894, it demanded unsuccessfully from the colonial government to be governed by the Shari^ca. But seven years later, the Native Council Ordinance of 1901 (Indirect Rule) finally nipped its political development in the bud.²¹

It has, however, continued to develop as a religion, not along medieval tradition but in the light of Western civilization encouraged by a number of modernizing currents. The most important of these currents, no doubt, was the Christian dominated economic and political development which had forced the Muslims to demand for an Islamic oriented Western education as early as 1896.²² The arrival into Yorubaland, of some Western educated Muslim ex-slaves from Sierra Leone and Brazil,²³ and the Christian oriented Ahmadiyya modern Islamic sect²⁴ were also crucial. As early as the 1870s,

some Yoruba Muslims had already learnt that it was possible to acquire Western education and still remained Muslim. Finally, the introduction of Western education including the universities where Christians, not to mention Muslims are allowed to study Islam, has virtually desecrated Islam and all its sacred institutions. Today, the Yoruba Islam has virtually been secularised to the point of being suspected by Islamic North. How about the following view of the Yoruba Islam expressed by a Hausa poet?²⁵

ولا عيب في يوربا سوى أن دينهم
كدين النصارى لا كدين محمد

B. Indirect Rule

During the systematic occupation of Islamic North, the surviving religio-political order, unlike in the south, broke the unsteady alliance between the three arms of the colonial power. The Exeter Hall realised the mistake it was committing by allowing its educational programmes to be sponsored by the Church Missionaries.²⁶

The Liverpool business syndicate had also suddenly remembered that economic enterprises were the major British interests in Nigeria.²⁷

Lord Lugard above all had, therefore, learnt to promise not to interfere with Islamic religion. During the installation of the Emir of Adamawa in 1901, the following declaration, which subsequently became the basis of the British Imperial policy in Islamic Nigeria, was made on behalf of Her Majesty:

As long as you (emir) in this wise conform, I do hereby in the name of Her Majesty promise you protection and I do guarantee that NO INTERFERENCE (emphasis, mine) by Government shall

be made in your chosen religion, so long as the same does not involve acts contrary to laws of humanity and oppression to your people.²⁸

In 1907, the Colonial Government introduced Indirect Rule to the chagrin of Dr Miller (1872-1952)²⁹ who had hoped to exploit political and educational opportunities to proselytize among the Muslims. Based primarily on non-interference of the colonial power in Islamic religion, including Native Administration, this policy was of considerable advantage to the British Government. It was, therefore, implemented to the letter in all subsequent developments as the result of which Islamic Nigeria was successfully insulated from Western civilization. Apart from the initial encouragement given to Christianity by Lord Lugard between 1899 and 1906, the two successor governors who came after him between 1907 and 1912 did their best to isolate Islamic Nigeria from the various encroaching Western cultural influences.

Concentrating the local political powers in the hands of the Emirs who were of course responsible to them, both Sir Percy Girouard (1907-1910) and Sir H. Bell (1910-1912) ruled Islamic Nigeria as indirectly as possible. These two governors were particularly encouraged by Lord Cromer's example, who did not allow the Christian missionaries into the Eastern Sudan after the subjugation of the Mahdist regime in 1889.³⁰ While Governor Girouard personally "... would like to see the Missions withdrawn ... entirely from the Islamic North",³¹ ... his successor, Governor Bell considered

all symbols of European civilization detrimental to the sacred institutions of the indigenous society.³²

He would, therefore, want

no violent changes, no transmogrification
of the dignified and courteous Muslims
into a trousered burlesque with a veneer
of European civilization.³³

Pursuing this policy further, the Colonial Administration in deference to the Emirs' wishes,³⁴ did not allow the various non-Muslim Western educated immigrants to 'infect' the holy indigenous Muslim population. The former were, therefore, often settled in a separate quarter outside the ancient cities, a policy which later developed into the contemporary Sabon Gari (new town) settlement pattern characterised of the major Islamic northern cities. While the human rights of the non-Muslim indigenous minority within the Caliphate were upheld by this administration, it would not want them converted to Christians lest they revolted against the existing Islamic political order.

But the same colonial regime made no bones about amalgamating the non-Islamic South with the Islamic North and prevented the latter from participating in the first Nigerian Legislative Council (1922-1947)³⁵ pretending not to appear interfering with its religion. And when towards Independence, a radical group of the Muslims eventually responded positively to the nationalist movement, the colonial regime did its best to preserve the status quo.³⁶ It considered such a response as a revolt against the established order, the Emirate system.

Finally, the 1959 Shari'a reform was another major political impact on Islamic Nigeria. It was precipitated first, by the influx

of the non-Muslims whose socio-economic and political interactions with the native Muslims were inevitable. Secondly, the British Government in not only Nigeria but all over its Muslim colonies had considered inhuman, certain aspects of the sharī^c such as lapidation and mutilation. Following a delegation to Libya, Pakistan and the Sudan, this reform was carried out under the joint supervision of three Nigerian Qāḍīs, the Chief Justice of the Sudan, a judge of the supreme court of Pakistan and a British expert in the Sharī^c.³⁷

The reform consisted in the introduction of the non-Islamic native customary laws and the English Common law into which certain aspects of the Sharī^c were transferred. It is significant to note that rather than resisting or criticizing this major anti-Islamic reform, the late Premier had hailed it on behalf of the Muslims. According to him,

There is nothing in the central recommendation of the panel that a new penal code of criminal law should be introduced into the region that is in anyway contrary to the tenets of our religion. The new code will be almost identical with those which have been in force for years in the Sudan and Pakistan and which have been proved perfectly acceptable to the millions of Moslems among the populations of those countries.³⁸

The colonial government could not help introducing Western education instead of maintaining the existing medieval Arabic-Islamic scholarship tradition in accordance with Indirect rule. But it did its best to ensure that such education was offered within Islamic traditional context. Its main goal was to produce malams who

could only write Hausa in Roman script and speak some English. According to the 'Suggested Policy in Primary and Elementary Education in Kano Province in 1928',³⁹ the standard of such education was to be deliberately made

so low that the boys would not be
alienated from their friends and parents
by too great a sense of superiority.

In order to meet this goal, an educational policy, based not on that of Southern Nigeria but on the Islamic Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, was adopted from 1909 until 1929. But even after this policy had been unified with that of the South, the policy of non-interference in religion remained an obstacle in the curricula of the secular schools.⁴⁰

By the 1930s, this setting-up of Western secular education beside the existing religious system had become a serious threat to the survival of the latter. In addition to the challenges posed by methodology and curriculum, Hausa language instead of Arabic was encouraged to be spoken and written in Roman (boko) script instead of the Arabic characters. Above all, the burgeoning socio-economic and political order was increasingly superimposing English on both Arabic and Hausa especially in Sabon Gari quarters. But from all these challenges, the traditional malams were completely precluded.

C. The Political and Educational Awakening: The Nationalist Current

After World War II, the gradual encroachment of socio-economic and political impacts of Western occupation upon Islamic Nigeria assumed a wild dimension. A number of developments including the militant

nationalist struggle, the rising cost of living, the growth of urbanisation and the social disintegration of traditional customs, had all combined to transform Nigeria. The presence of the white troops en route, during the war and the return after it of about 100,000 Nigerian troops from East Africa, the Middle East, Burma and India were particularly influential.⁴¹ In their Sabon Gari quarters, the Western educated Christians from the south, following the 1945 national strike in particular, had also become increasingly militant and critical of the attitude of Islamic North to national politics. It was this criticism and the involvement of Islamic North in the implementation of the 1946 Richards Constitution that eventually kindled the political awareness of the few Western educated Muslims.

Following the dragging of Islamic North into national political union and competition with the Western educated southern Christians in 1947, it realised for the first time that it was behind the southern provinces in Western education by about seven decades.⁴² The late Premier and other northern Representatives were to compete with the likes of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo, the former, an American trained journalist and political scientist; the latter, a British trained lawyer. In the subsequent political developments among which the 1953 Independence controversy⁴³ was most crucial, Islamic North also learnt that the cultivation of Western education, English language in particular, was a sine qua non if it must exist as a political entity in the then proposed independent Nigeria.

Meanwhile, some of the Western educated youth of the reformed Tijāniyya⁴⁴ including Malam Aminu Kano (d.1983) Sa^Cd Zungur (d.1958),

Isā Wālī (d.1967) Tafawa Balewa (d. 1966) and a few others had begun to perceive by the 1940s the dangers inherent in Indirect Rule. Reacting against the Emirate system, they criticised the Indirect Rule policy for maintaining the traditional status quo. They also blamed the Emirs for their conservative attitude to Western education.⁴⁵

If you become obstinate and cling to
the ways of yesterday, you will sing the
song of if I only knew May God
protect you from having to say so.

In 1950, they constituted themselves into the Northern Muslim Congress with the purpose of modernizing the existing Qur'ānic schools. But this goal had not materialised before the Congress turned into a political party, the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)) led by Malam Aminu Kano.

A similar group of the Western educated malams including some non-Muslims, led by Sir Ahmadu Bello and Dr. Barau Dikko, had also constituted themselves into another political party, the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC). But unlike the NEPU, the NPC proved conservative. Throwing its full weight behind the Emirate system, it did not see anything wrong with Indirect Rule which the NEPU had violently criticized. In the ensuing political propaganda against each other, it was clear that both parties are essentially traditional in their religious views, from which their motives gradually diverged away to national politics. While the NPC, for instance, criticized the NEPU of an anti-Islamic policy by allying, somehow, with Dr. Azikiwe's 'Christian' party, the NEPU also criticized the NPC for tolerating the 'Christian' imperialism. Condemning the Emirs as imperial stooges, Aminu Kano argued that

accepting medals from the Queen was unislamic. He then challenged Sir Ahmadu Bello to separate religion from politics.⁴⁶

Not unexpectedly, the conservative NPC won the 1959 regional election. This victory intrigued many Nigerian Muslims who now believed that Islamic Nigeria had regained its political independence. In addition to Ahmadu Bello, a direct descendant of ʿUthmān Dan Fodio, who assumed the northern Premiership, this impression was further enhanced by the emergence in 1960 of another Muslim, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the first Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. And when in a military coup, the two leaders were assassinated in 1966, the subsequent counter coup and the ensuing civil war received both national and international religious interpretations. Since 1966, Islamic Nigeria, like the early Shīʿa, has continued to search pathetically for a charismatic leader who would revive the Sharīʿa and found a modern Caliphate.

Before his assassination, the late Premier had virtually, from 1954, held the political if not religious reins of Islamic Nigeria to which he did very little to modernize. A member of the conservative World Islamic Conference (Muʿtamaru ʿl-ʿālamī ʿl-Islāmī) where, in 1965, he succeeded Ibrāhīm Niass as the Vice President,⁴⁷ no modernization could have come from him. He was aware of the Turkish revolution and similar reforms in India and North Africa. He was also cognizant of Muḥammad ʿAbduh's efforts to rid Islam of its medieval accretions and reformulate its doctrines in the light of modern thoughts. But his own regime was

focusing attention, not quite on the reformation of Islam but on maintaining

the Islamic traditions as practised
by our forefathers.⁴⁸

A close friend of Jamāl 'Abdu'l-Nāṣir, the Premier pretended not to know that two women in 1956 were elected to the Egyptian parliament, seven months after Al-Azhar had declared that "the Shari'a forbids women to exercise legislative functions". He was, therefore, of the view that women franchise was

so contrary to the customs and feelings
of this region that I would be very
loathe to introduce it myself.⁴⁹

The late Premier also held that modern progress could be achieved only through the Emirate institution, the medieval Islamic aristocracy which the NEPU was out to destroy. We could go on citing similar examples which have led Thomas Hodgkin and many others to conclude that

Northern Nigeria was until recently
more or less isolated from the
political reform movements found
elsewhere in the Muslim world.⁵⁰

Not unaware of his own policy, the Premier charges his critics:

I have been accused of conservatism
because I believe in retaining all
that is good in our old traditions
and customs and refusing to copy
all aspects of other alien
civilization... I have always based
my actions on my inward convictions,
on my conscience and on the dictates
of my religion.⁵¹

In 1955, the Premier made an intensive tour of the Middle East, during which he attempted to improve the condition of the

pilgrimage.⁵² As a part of his political campaign prior to the 1965 elections, the Premier also undertook a successful proselytizing tour of the Islamic North during which about 100,000 pagans were converted.⁵³ And finally, we may include the establishment in 1961 of the Jamā^catu Naṣri 'l-Islām in his contribution to modern Islam.⁵⁴ Born out of the Premier's bid to harmonize the existing doctrinal differences between the various brotherhoods, this Jamā^ca, like its founder, had remained conservative over the years until recently.

The political awakening, however, has improved the general response to secular education. The number of secondary schools had risen from one in 1949 to twenty-one in 1961. By 1967, the number had become one hundred and three.⁵⁵ Accelerated by a number of political policies adopted to 'bridge the gap', the number of higher institutions of learning has also correspondingly increased. In addition to colleges of Education, Arts and Science colleges, School of Basic or Preliminary studies and polytechnics, the university had also increased from one in 1962 to five in 1977.

III. The Modernization of Traditional Arabic-Islamic Scholarship

A. The Modern Arabic Schools

The first successful attempt to modernize Islamic education in the North was prompted by the need to improve the sharī^ca under the Native Administration. After some early attempts at Maiduguri, Sokoto and Kano, between 1927 and 1930, the Northern Provinces Law School, based on Western style, was founded in Kano in 1934.⁵⁶ In 1947, the Law School was taken over by the government for the

training of teachers, after which it became known as the School for Arabic Studies.

Along with this and similar schools in the Islamic North may be considered the various private and community efforts being made by the Yoruba Muslims to modernize traditional Arabic-Islamic education. According to Ādam al-Ilūrī,⁵⁷ the earliest of such attempt took place in Lagos in 1904 through an Arab immigrant, Shaikh Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Afandī . He is also said to have written Miftāḥu 'l-lughati 'l-^Carabiyya, the foremost elementary modern grammar textbook in Yorubaland. In 1922, Shaikh Muḥammad al-Labīb known as Tāju 'l-adab established a similar modern school at Ilorin. This school, by 1964, under one of his pupils, Shaikh Kamālu 'l-dīn, had become affiliated to Al-Azhar which now conducts its examinations and awards certificate to its students.⁵⁸

The third and most successful effort was the establishment since 1952 of Markazu 'l-ta^Clīmi 'l-^Carabī by Shaikh Ādam al-Ilūrī following his tour of modern Arab countries.⁵⁹ Located in a Lagos suburb, this school has remained the citadel of modern Arabic-Islamic education since its inception. In addition to the numerous branches to which it has given rise in the Islamic South, the impact of this school has also transcended Nigeria to the neighbouring west African states.

Apart from operating at private levels under a Christian dominated political set-up, these schools are essentially the same as their counterparts in the North. The methodology and physical organisation are completely modernized but their curricula remain

essentially traditional. In most cases, a veneer of secular subjects, introduced by the elementary Arabic textbooks from Egypt and Syria, with English language, are included. Both classical and modern textbooks are used while Arabic is often adopted as the medium of instruction.

This adoption of Arabic and the employment of Arab teachers in course of time, was able to correct traditional phonetic errors and raised the language to a spoken level hitherto unknown in Nigeria. The existing Maghribi writing also began to give way to the eastern Naskh⁶⁰ introduced by the Arab teachers in these modern schools. Along reading, it is important to note that writing of composition in modern style was also introduced. While most of these schools operate at primary levels (al-'ibtidā'ī), some have recently expanded their curricula to include all the pre-degree stages of learning in Arab countries. It is not surprising, therefore, that most of Nigerian students in Arab universities are always from these schools.

By their application of the 'Christian' educational techniques, these schools have considerably improved the quality of the existing medieval scholarship tradition to which some elements of modern thoughts have also been added. But the adoption of Arabic as the official language and the use of Arabic textbook have not allowed the students any direct contact with Western literary ideas. In addition to those imported from the Arab countries, most of the textbooks compiled by Shaikh Ādam al-Ilūrī for his school also reveal a wealth of modern secular thoughts. But such ideas can only be superficially understood since they are presented to the students within Islamic cultural context. In all these circumstances, no

substantial impacts of Western secular and literary ideas have so far been demonstrated by these modernized traditional schools.

B. Arabic Studies in Secular Schools and Universities

The study of Arabic and Islamic religion in secular institutions would have been the most successful attempt at modernizing these subjects.⁶¹ But this purpose has continued to be thwarted by the inherent relationship between Arabic and Islam. Arabic has lost its linguistic status to Islam and so no substantial distinction is made in secular schools, between Arabic as a language and Islam as a religion. Indeed, the idea of studying Arabic and Islamic religion in 'Christian' oriented schools let alone separating them, is traditionally considered sacrilegious. Worse still is the 'exotic' idea of studying them in a Christian language, English, instead of Arabic.

Subjected to medieval religious treatment, these two sacred subjects have always failed to compete for attention with other secular subjects. In his article on Government and Islamic Education in Northern Nigeria, J P Hubbard gives a vivid account of how Arabic and Islamic Studies, in the Katsina College in the 1930s, had lost gallantly in competition with secular subjects.⁶² This situation has improved considerably over the years with Islamic religion. But Arabic is yet to regain its full language status even at university level.

Between primary and university levels, the only standard Arabic syllabuses are those of the 'O' and 'A' levels of the School

Certificate and the GCE examinations. Faced with the above ideological conflict, the acute shortage of qualified teachers, suitable textbooks, competition for time and attention with other subjects, most of the secular institutions are often handicapped to adequately prepare their students for these examinations. Invariably, only those candidates who have attended private modern Arabic schools, especially in the south, are known to have successfully passed these examinations.

Other pre-degree special syllabuses operating in the North include the Interim Joint Matriculation Board, the Teachers' College and the Higher Islamic Studies examinations. To these may also be added the National Certificate of Education (NCE) syllabus being organised, until recently, by the Ahmadu Bello University. By virtue of the strength of Islamic tradition in the North, however, the studies of Arabic and Islamic religion in these institutions can hardly be said to be under secular influences. For as much as possible, Arabic, wherever it is offered, is usually in Hausa if not in Arabic.

At the degree level, the study of Arabic and Islamic religion was first introduced in 1961 by University of Ibadan with Dr B G Martins, Mr J O Hunwick and Mr M H El-Masri as lecturers.⁶³ It was soon joined in 1963 by Ahmadu Bello University at its Abdullahi Bayero College, Kano.⁶⁴ And from 1976/77, there are thirteen Nigerian universities, six of which offer Arabic along with Islamic studies. In compliance with the universities' secular orientation, the curricula of these subjects are extended to include most of the aspects hitherto discouraged by traditional Islamic education. Different Islamic schools of law and thought, dialectics, philosophy

and sectarianism, became popular for the first time in Islamic studies. In Arabic literature, works of ^CUmar b Abī Rabī^Ca, Jarīr, Farazdaq, Akḥṭal, Abū Nuwās, Jāḥiẓ, Mutanabbī, Abū'l-^CAlā', Ibn Muqaffa^C etc were also introduced. With this secular approach, like in the Egyptian University, one could be led to expect a Muḥammad ^CAbduh or Qāsim Amīn if not Taha Hussain, al-^CAqqād or Mīkhā'īl Nu^Caima. But this, so far, has not happened because of the implicit conflict in the government's attempt to impose secular universities on a medieval Islamic umma which aspired to a model of the fourteenth-century Sankore or al-Azhar Mosque-universities.

Invariably, these universities have been plunged into a confusion in their bid to harmonize the intellectual gulf between their modern secular orientation and the medieval Muslim communities which they are to serve. In a paper presented at the University of Ibadan Arabic seminar in 1965, the former Provost of Abdullahi Bayero College, Professor ^CAbdullāh Ṭayyib identified a host of problems⁶⁵ most of which are rooted in this fundamental conflict. All the pre-degree syllabuses above identified are never coordinated with that of the university. Consequently, there is no uniform standard of Arabic—the GCE 'A' level being virtually ignored throughout the country—by which candidates are admitted into universities. Added to this is the acute shortage of qualified teachers in both Arabic and English, suitable textbooks and the problem of the language of instruction to adopt. Arabic, above all, has continued to be identified with, and studied as an auxiliary to Islam.

In its efforts to meet the traditional demands, Bayero University, for example, has adopted Arabic against the university's English as the medium of instruction. Both classical and modern textbooks are also used but the oriental textbooks are generally discouraged especially in Islamic studies. The university has also drawn up an Arabic syllabus which is not very inferior to that of any Arab university and hopes to apply it successfully in a Nigerian Western oriented university. The department soon learnt its mistake in order to correct which it has adopted a number of measures⁶⁶ aimed at correcting the situation. With Arabic as the medium of instruction, the use of Arabic textbooks and the prevalent medieval Islamic atmosphere, neither secular thoughts nor Western literary influences may be expected from a curriculum, whose Western literary inspiration are drawn only indirectly from Arabic sources and within Islamic context.

At the other extreme has been the University of Ibadan whose secular policy has long been exposed to wild criticism. Modelled on London University, Ibadan University has adopted English as the medium of instruction for teaching Arabic and Islamic religion. The university atmosphere is secular but the department, like Bayero, revolves around tradition and modernism. In compliance with the university regulation, however, oriental textbooks are freely used. Faced with no qualified Muslims for admission, the university had also been impelled to admit Christians, in line with its secular policy, to study Arabic and the Holy Qur'ān 'for the sake of criticising it' according to its critics.

The abnormal situation in which a student picks up a language at a degree level for the first time in his or her life, aggravated by the existing problems, had resulted in a ridiculously low standard of Arabic of most of these Christian pioneers. Like Bayero University, a number of measures have since been employed by Ibadan University to improve the situation. But despite its secular approaches to Arabic, neither the University Senate, the national policy on education, nor the Muslim community, including most of the lecturers, are ready to conceive of any independent existence for Arabic outside Islamic religion. Arabic has, therefore, continued to be studied not in the Language Arts' Department but in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies.

C. Nigerian Students in Arab Universities

During the colonial era, the diplomatic and cultural relationships of Islamic Nigeria with the Arab world and Egypt in particular were carefully controlled. And on few occasions, scholarship awards to study in Arab universities were allegedly rejected. But this policy had changed considerably since the inception of regional government in 1953. After independence, most Arab countries established Embassies and Cultural Centres in Nigeria. In addition to annual scholarship awards and textbook donations, Arab teachers are also sent to Nigeria on secondment to teach in most of the modern Arabic schools above discussed. Moreover, the North had also become fully awoken to the problems of Arabic-Islamic education for which solution has continued to be sought in vain in Arab countries.⁶⁷

Under this cordial relationship, the number of Nigerian students

in Arab universities has continued to be on the increase. Encouraged by the Islamic commonwealth spirit, most of the scholarship awards are directed at studying Traditional Arabic-Islamic sciences to which most of the Arabs themselves are increasingly preferring Western education. But Islamic Nigeria could not distinguish between Islam and modern Arab nationalism. It has, therefore, continued in the name of Islam, to look towards the Arab world for leadership even when the Arabs appeared to be in a confusion. So far, only Shaikh Ādam Al-llūrī has been able to call a spade a spade. In his survey of Western cultural invasion of the Arab-Islamic world, he observes that the Arabs have neglected their traditional leadership role in Islam. They despise their own Arabic and glorify English or French. He continues:⁶⁸

And what shall we tell the children of Arabs who have continued to praise those who learn English or French in West Africa? They shun Arabic and those who study it under the pretext that they are concerned with their livelihood in the future which Arabic cannot ensure. Arabic alone above all, cannot impart to them sufficient civilization in their country. Have we seen an Englishman, or Frenchman who is not an enthusiastic advocate of the teaching of his own language? What then shall we tell the non-Arab children who have abandoned English and French civilizations in their countries, and who went to the Arab world for Arabic culture about which they have become enthusiastic? They then found Arab children, glorifying that which they had abandoned in their own countries, displeased with that which they had come to cultivate. In this situation, there lies a serious misfortune for Arabic.

In these circumstances, no modern literary impacts on the existing medieval thoughts beyond a superficial level may be expected from those Nigerians who study in the Arab world. For they would lack the psychological courage to learn in Egypt, Syria or Arabia, what they had condemned in Nigeria. Since the last few years, however, some of those Nigerians after obtaining their first degrees, have resorted to going to the Western universities for their post-graduate studies. One is apt to think that the Islamic orientation they already acquired is likely to constitute a major obstacle to their absorption of Western secular or literary thoughts. But a post-graduate study in any Western university must leave a definite impact on such traditional minds.

IV. Traditional Resistance and Criticism of Secular Education

By virtue of Indirect Rule, the traditional scholars were successfully precluded from any immediate contact with most of the modern socio-economic and educational challenges. They were equally unaware of the political challenges which had prompted other few malams to cultivate secular education. For no learned traditional scholar of the Waziri Junaid's rank would ever dabble in modern politics which they always view with misgivings. The whole concept of Western political theory: the nationalist decolonization struggle, constitutional government, democracy, partisan politics, women enfranchisement, parliamentary procedure etc., are all foreign to the theory of the Caliphate.

Moreover, the traditional schools have continued to produce Malamai (malams)

from whose ranks, the officers of the Native Administration, the judges of the Native Courts and the exponents of the creed of Islam were drawn.⁶⁹

Consequently, no needs whatsoever were felt for secular education at the local political level where most of the traditional scholars were involved. The Qur'ānic schools in their medieval forms, therefore, rose from 25,000 in 1919 to 27,600 in 1964 while the Cilm schools numbered up to 2,777 within the emirate of Kano alone.⁷⁰ But in contrast, there was only one European oriented secondary school in the whole Islamic North up to 1949.

The traditional scholars were further encouraged by the hypocrisy of their political and mystical leaders who, although fluent

in English or French, have always advocated literacy in Arabic. During one of his visits to Kano, the contemporary west African Tijaniyya saint, Shaikh Ibrāhīm Niass urged the Muslims to stick to traditional Islamic education:⁷¹

We must stick to knowledge concerning Islam. We ^{must} strengthen our knowledge concerning Islam for all civilization can be found in the knowledge of Islam. Western civilization is doing more harm than good and might destroy our spiritual beliefs in the very near future. We must not follow (the west) for if we do, we shall be led astray and found ourselves among the insignificant people.

The late Premier of the former Northern Nigeria, Sir Ahmadu Bello, who may be considered the last political leader of Islamic Nigeria preferred teaching English to Arabic about which he expressed his dismay: 'I was well grounded but worried about the difficulties lying in teaching it'.⁷² But the Premier, until his death in 1966, had done nothing to improve the situation. As the Vice Chairman of the World Islamic Conference, he was in a position to establish a Muslim University like Aligarh College, founded by Sayyid Ahmad Khan in India. This, he could not do. On the other hand, he had welcomed the 'Christian' oriented university in Zaria and allowed it to immortalize his name. His ghost, if present at the 1971 convocation, must have been humiliated when Waziri Junaid 'resisted shyness' to condemn this university as a 'cultural transplant' with its roots in Western civilization.

Apart from the Premier, some other prominent Western educated malams including late Abubakar Imam, also discouraged Western education. They were of the view 'that modern education, being

non-religious, was an enemy of religion.⁷³ They also held that

the greater material incentives and rewards offered by modern training, positively hindered and discouraged Arabic and Islamic education; and the social vices of Europe had spread to northern Nigeria in its wake.

A popular Hausa adage, Ilmin boko yana hana ibada (Western learning hinders devotions) sums up the traditional attitude towards secular education. When Waziri Junaid of Sokoto was asked⁷⁴ whether he agreed with this proverb, he replied that:

it was not the knowledge which was disruptive but the attitudes and individual competitiveness which went with it.

Those Muslims who had for political or economic pressures, cultivated it are technically ostracised from the 'charismatic community'. They have forfeited their membership by imitating the Ahlu 'l-kitāb.

By 1937, only one northern Muslim, Sa^Cd Zungur had gained admission into the Yaba Higher College. The Zaria Fulani Christian convert, Dr A E Barau Dikko was also by 1951 the only graduate in Western education.⁷⁵ After the introduction of the Richard's Constitution in 1946, only 2.5 percent of the total Secondary School enrolment in Nigeria came from Islamic North.⁷⁶ At the time of Independence in 1960, English and secular education in general were still being successfully resisted: The literacy rate in Roman script was only 2 percent against 16 percent in the East and 18 percent in the West.⁷⁷ And as late as 1976, the Federal Government's Universal Primary Education (UPE) was frustrated by some fundamentalists who considered

it a massive Christian propaganda.

The University of Ibadan was criticised for teaching Arabic in English and for allowing 'the enemies of God' to study Arabic and the Holy Qur'ān. It was disparaged for producing Arabic and Islamic graduates some of who could not read unvocallised Arabic passage let alone speak the language. In his address to Ibadan University, Shaikh Ādam al-Ilūrī challenged Arabic and Islamic studies:

If the university was really serious,
it should be able to ensure the
study of Arabic at the various pre-
degree stages from which it could
always draw candidates.⁷⁸

The alternative to this, he proposed, was for the university to be satisfied with offering Arabic at a subsidiary level. Otherwise, he warned,

the teaching of Arabic in our
universities will become a laughing-
stock before the learned men both
within and outside the country.

In addition to most of the modern Arabic-Islamic institutions being suspected as a bid'a, the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) was also criticized. In his speech in 1971 on the acceptance of the honorary Doctorate degree awarded him by the ABU, Alhaj Waziri Junaid attacked its Western orientation. Its root is steeped in a culture which is totally different from that of the society in which it is located. According to him, the ABU was expected to be a continuation of the scholarship tradition nurtured at the fifteenth century Sankore mosque in Timbuktu from where it was transplanted to

the Sokoto Caliphate.⁷⁹

Ladies and gentlemen, I shall be frank with you. In matters such as this, one must resist shyness; I must state that your university, like all others in Nigeria is a cultural transplant whose roots lie in another tradition. Like other institutions to which we have been struggling to adjust, it is part of the cultural baggage bequeathed to us through our association with those traditions. Wise men know that change is part of the necessary processes through which all societies must pass if they are to grow and to survive in an improved state. Wiser men know that change can have other faces whose influence might well lead to the impoverishment of the very society we wish to nourish.

He criticised the university curriculum for giving little place to 'the study of African ideas and moral systems' in Humanities and Social Sciences. The Waziri wondered how Arts and Social Sciences could be taught without a single mention of Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn Rushd or al-Ghazālī. He could not imagine anybody presuming to have understood

the events which have shaped this community without a serious study and discussion of the works of Shehu Usuman dan Fodio, Abdullahi Gwandu, Sultan Bello and a host of Sudanese scholars before them. Their ideas certainly govern the behaviour of this society.⁸⁰

He concluded his address by commending the efforts of the Institute of African Studies of Ibadan University and the ABU's Northern History Research Scheme for Africanising their curricula. But the most decisive step towards regaining 'what we appear to be losing'

remains, according to him, the establishment of the Abdullahi Bayero College about which a few things have been said.

V. Literary Production

In as much as Islamic Nigeria is still largely medieval in both thought and outlook, the currents of modern Arabic literature are still virtually unknown. Both Dr. 'Alī Abūbakar and Professor Shehu Galadanci admit that the twentieth century Nigerian Arabic poetry is not significantly different from that of the last century:⁸¹

لم يتطور الشعر العربي النيجيري في هذه الفترة تطورا كبيرا يجعله مختلفا
عن الشعر في القرن الماضي، فقد ظل العلماء والأدباء يقرضون الشعر على
نفس المنوال الذي ذكرنا في الفترة السابقة. ويتناولون نفس الأغراض
التقليدية كما يستعملون نفس الأسلوب التقليدي في كثير من الأحيان، غير
أنه من الطبيعي أن يتلاشى شعر الحرب والحجاسة، وأن يختفى كذلك شعر
الدعوة والتبشير، الذي كثر في الفترة السابقة. ومن الطبيعي كذلك، أن تضاف
بعض الأغراض الجديدة التي لم تطرق في الماضي، والبيئة الجديدة والحياة السيا
سية الحديثة تستلزمان إدخال شيء ما من التجديد في الشعر في موضوعه، وأسلوبه.

Cut off from every current of modernization all of which have proceeded from Western education, Arabic literature is practically left to die or survive with Islam in their medieval sanctuary. If Islamic Nigeria had been able to draw its modern literary inspiration from Egypt in the name of Islam, this would have stimulated

its interest in Western education. It would also have been urged to cultivate Western classics and modern literature from which modern Arabic literature has directly borrowed. From the study of these two literary traditions, modern Arabic and Western literatures, Islamic Nigeria would also have learnt to transfer its political and literary, if not religious allegiance, from pan-Islamism to territorial nationalism. This has been the modern literary trend in Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia, Iran and Turkey. Arabic language, like Islam in this process, would have been secularised and employed like English, French, Hausa or Yoruba in secular national literature.

This is the only course through which Arabic language and literature could have been modernized in Nigeria. But the secular orientation of even the modern Arabic literature and its critical involvement with Western literary tradition have made its cultivation prohibitive to Islamic Nigeria. In these circumstances, the existing pious literary tradition has consciously been protected from being 'corrupted' by Western education which ironically would have injected a new life into it as it was the case in Egypt and Syria.

The socio-economic and political changes, the establishment of modern Arabic schools, the study of Arabic in secular institutions including universities, the increasing diplomatic and cultural relationship, with the Arab world, the remote effects of the Arab printing press and Arab journalism, and above all, the emergence of Western educated Muslims, have all combined to effect some changes. But the inspirations for such changes have continued to be drawn from medieval Islamic spirit which modern Arabic literary currents have sought to destroy. In these circumstances, most of these changes

even in 'Umar Ibrāhīm, have remained neo-classical in form and content. Unlike the pre-colonial period, three categories of literary men in Arabic have emerged. The first group are the traditional scholars who have decided what-soever, never to gamble with their heavens by having something to do with secular education. Their literary production is still essentially Islamic. But they are important to this study for their radical opposition to all modernizing currents.

In 1954, for example, the reading of the Qur'ān on the radio was suspended by the Islamic North following a letter of protest written by the Emir of Zaria, Alhaj Ja^Cfaru (d. 1959). He had challenged the Emir of Kano, Alhaj Sanūsī for allowing such a bid^Ca and demanded for a juristic authority either from the Qur'ān or legal texts.⁸²

We are asking you to give references from the legal texts which contain proof that reading the Qur'an on the radio is legal. Or can you offer proofs from the Qur'an itself, or from the Hadīth or from the consensus of scholars? We cannot find proof from any of these. Our Culama' have discouraged people from reading the Qur'an over the radio because it will breed a lack of respect for the Qur'an ... For the Prophet has said: every innovation will lead people astray and this will lead people to hell-fire...

This type of conservative opposition from traditional scholars has continued and may remain for the next two or more generations. In a similar reaction, a Katsina based malam is recently reported to have denied 'that claim made by the Naṣārā to have travelled to the Moon.' Such a venture, according to him, constitutes a denial of

scriptural verses:⁸³

As for the journey to the moon which the Christians and those who believe them are saying, the Muslim scholars have disagreed on the issue. Among them are those who hold that it is possible and those who hold a contrary view. But if most of what are said about it are correct, then, this event constitutes a falsification of the Prophet's Ascension (al-isrā' wa 'l-mi'raj). It has rendered it non-supernatural in the eyes of whoever contemplates it. It has also falsified the Qur'anic verses as well as other canonical texts of the religious teachers. It is not proper (lā yanbaghī), on this account, for the Muslims to believe it.

The second group is made up of those who have gingerly cultivated secular education in such a way that its impact did not penetrate beyond their skins. In few cases, the degree of such education, as demonstrated by Shaikh Ādam, for example, is prodigious. But such secular knowledge has not in anyway affected their medieval Islamic thought. Most of the contemporary Qāḍīs in Nigeria and some individual eminent scholars belong to this group. Their literary contribution is essentially neo-classical.

Shaikh Ādam al-Ilūrī,⁸⁴ for example, has contributed in various capacities to the modernization of Arabic-Islamic education especially among the Yorubas and some neighbouring Muslim peoples. He is one of the few Nigerian Muslim scholars who have seriously advocated the cultivation of secular education, the elements of which he always include in the various textbooks he writes for his Arabic school. A desciple of Ḥasan, al-Bannā' (d.1949) and a prominent member of the

major world Islamic movements, Shaikh Ādam is never influenced by Western secular thought despite the depth in it of his knowledge. He has remained a fundamentalist in most of his views on the various controversial themes in modern Islam.⁸⁵ He is, above all, the only Nigerian scholar who has so far raised his voice against the theory of evolution. In this respect, Shaikh Ādam could not have contributed to modern Arabic literature over which he has openly condemned the Arabs for their reckless imitation of Western culture. On Darwin's theory he has this to say:⁸⁶

ويذهب الفيلسوف الإنكليزي الشهير بداروين إلى أن الإنسان الأول
 قد انحدر من القرد ثم تهذب إلى برزخ ما يسمى أورانغ أوتانغ (إنسان
 الغاب) ثم إلى مراتب الزواج ومن هناك ارتقى إلى الإنسان الحالي بناء
 على مذهب النشوء والارتقاء لجميع الأثياء وزعم أن الجنس الأسود
 هو الجنس البدائي للبشر قبل أن يرتقى إلى المستوى الحالي وهو
 رأى مردود عليه من كثير من العلماء الطبيعيين قبل علماء الأديان
 السماوية التي تقرر استقلال الإنسان منذ نشأته عن سائر
 الحيوان وأجناس القرد.

In the Islamic North, the leading contemporary traditional scholar is Alhaj Wazir Junaid of Sokoto whose views and objection to secular education have been discussed. His modern poetic contributions, which include a description of a journey in an aircraft to Khartoum, the World War, and a series of lamentations over the vicissitudes of time, have remained essentially neo-classical.⁸⁷

Indeed, the extent to which he has taken Western education seriously may be illustrated by the following short extract in which some English words are used to contrive qāfiya:⁸⁸

وما الدنيا إلا تديء بعد يستديء	وكل امرئ ما سوف يلقاء وزرديء
ولو لآك عبد الله ما طاب مسكني	بلاغوس وصارت لي تشيها بكنسديء
وليس مقامى وسط لاغوس بسترني	ولست أرى من تعودت سمبديء
ولست لأختار المقام بها ولو	يكون عطائى الف الف بها أديء

A. Displacement of Arabic by Modern Hausa Literature

The third group of literary men are those with remarkable degree of Western education which has considerably affected their medieval Islamic views. Apart from 'Umar Ibrāhīm who, incidentally, has made the greatest contributions, most of the members of this group hold modern diplomas and university degrees. As hinted above, the pioneers of this group had been forced by political pressure to cultivate Western education. Consequently, they were all sufficiently influenced by the spirit of nationalism. Led by Sir Ahmadu Bello, Tafawa Balewa, Aminu Kano, Sa^Cd Zungur and Aliyu Akilu, this group were the equivalents of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, Ḥusayn Haykal, Sa^Cd Zughlūl, Muḥammad 'Abduh, Muṣṭafā Kāmil, Qāsīm Amīn and al-Manfalūṭī, who were expected to modernize Islam if not Arabic literature. Professor Galadanci was probably disappointed because that has not happened.⁸⁹

Influenced by the nationalist spirit, these pioneers had turned

their literary attention to Hausa, instead of Arabic literature. Written in Roman script instead of Ajami, this modern Hausa literature had taken off by the collection of Hausa/Fulani oral tradition, folk narratives, songs and poetry.⁹⁰ Its development was soon encouraged by the establishment in the early 1930s of the Translation Bureau, which was turned into Literature Bureau and later still, into the Gaskiya Corporation (NNPC) by 1954. In addition to its main objective of providing Hausa textbooks by translations from classical Arabic and modern English literature, modern Hausa novel, drama, poetry and even journalism were also encouraged to develop.⁹¹ Since 1954, the North Regional Literature Agency (NORLA) has also been established along with the Gaskiya Corporation both of which have continued to encourage and publish creative writing, not in Arabic but in Hausa.

Examples of literary works translated into Hausa include Alf Layla,⁹² Shakespeare's Twelfth Night⁹³ and George Orwell's Animal Farm.⁹⁴ Most of the first Hausa novels of the 1930s such as Gandoki, Shaihu Umar and Ruwan Bagaja were written respectively by Ahmadu Bello, Tafawa Belewa and Abūbakar Imām, all of who were competent Arabists. Both Abūbakar Imām and Aminu Kano were competent Qur'ānic exegets, but they had also written their travel accounts of Europe, not in Arabic but in Hausa.⁹⁵ Abūbakar Imām has also been credited with the introduction in the 1930s of not modern Arabic, but Hausa drama which, by the 1950s, has become very popular.⁹⁶

Having been much involved with the classical Arabic literary tradition,⁹⁷ modern Hausa poetry is still medieval in form. But the

secular status of Hausa in contrast to Arabic has facilitated its adaptation to modern secular life. Apart from the various socio-political developments in Islamic Nigeria which have found their medium of expression in this poetry, most of the Western literary spirit have been directed towards its development.⁹⁸ Sa'ad Zungur is very famous for his nationalist poetry by which he had successfully aroused the political awareness of Islamic Nigeria. Both Mu'azu Hadejia (d.1958) and Aliyu Akilu have also composed poems on contemporary politics, modern education and moral decadence. On a purely secular theme, Naibi Wāli's (b.1929) description of rainy season, Wakar Damina⁹⁹, may also be singled out as an example. To all these examples, there is no equivalent in Arabic compositions which have been devoted only to religion.¹⁰⁰

The above brief review is the main current of modern national literature in Islamic Nigeria the trend of which is comparable to modern Arabic literature in Egypt. Inspired by Western secular thought and nationalist spirit, it has borrowed from both classical Arabic and Western literary traditions. Its champions were and are still loyal to medieval Islam and Arabic from which they had quietly transferred their literary allegiance. But those who happen to remain in the study of Arabic have become entangled in the web of traditionalism: They could not launch any bold modernization of Arabic literature. But they are well acquainted with modern literary trends in the Arab world and would have no objection to its gradual extension to Nigeria.

Among this group are most of the contemporary Nigerian

university lecturers including a Christian from the Islamic South where the phase of secularisation had been more rapid. In addition to the overwhelming influences of Western civilization on the Muslim, the secular impact of the University of Ibadan is particularly significant. Apart from allowing Christians to study Arabic and Islamic religion, most of its Muslim graduates have always stood the chance of becoming potential heretics before leaving the lyceum. For they are indiscriminately exposed to scholastic theology, comparative religion, modern secular and political thoughts, and above all, the orientalist's views of Islam.

This is the role expected of most of Nigerian secular universities but in most cases, these two subjects and their students are often isolated and subjected to sacred treatments. The study of Arabic literature, for example, within the medieval Islamic cultural context, has constituted the greatest impediment to its modernization. Studied as an auxiliary to Islam, it has not taken the study of any contemporary modern literature into account. Unlike Dānu 'l-Cuīūm for instance, where The Golden Treasury, an anthology of English poems is a textbook, Arabic literature in Nigerian universities is cut off from modern English literature. It is hardly necessary to repeat that this has remained the main source of literary inspiration in the growth of not only modern Arabic literature but also contemporary Nigerian literature.

In most cases, a Nigerian student of Arabic literature graduates without having ever heard of such names as Shakespeare, Bernard Shaw, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift

etc. let alone reading their works. It is true that Bayero, Ibadan, Ilorin, Jos and other Nigerian universities have included the study of modern trends in Islam and Arabic literature. But no deep insight into modern Arabic literature, by my personal experience, is usually imparted to students for obvious reasons: Modern Arabic literature cannot be fully understood without some basic knowledge of modern secular thought, European classics and modern literature. These are nowhere included in the Arabic syllabus of any Nigerian university. Added to this has also been the Islamic attitude towards indigenous Oral Tradition and folk-literature from which such students could have drawn material to indigenise or enrich their Arabic.

It is not surprising, therefore, that no translation into Arabic of any modern European or indigenous Nigerian literature has so far been undertaken. Nor has any modern Arabic literary work been translated into any Nigerian language. How then can we expect modern Arabic literature, in forms of modern lyrical poetry, narrative verses, short story, novel and drama, to evolve in Nigeria? Since the 1970s some Nigerians, led by a Christian Arabist have begun to translate into Arabic, some of the indigenous folk narratives and poetry from oral and recorded tradition in English or vernacular. This is, no doubt, a significant development in Nigerian modern Arabic literature. Its secular orientation aside, the involvement of a Christian in such a literary innovation which we shall presently discuss in brief, should be seen as a turning point in the history of Nigerian Arabic-Islamic literature.

B. The Nationalist Spirit in Modern Nigerian Arabic Poetry

Apart from 'Umar Ibrāhīm, Dr Muḥammad Ṭāhir Abubakar's^A poem on the last Nigerian civil war, the inspiration for which is derived not from Islam but from national patriotism deserves attention.¹⁰¹

Composed in 1970 in Cairo and by a graduate of Dāru 'l-^Culūm, the very college which had produced such modern Arab poets as 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmān Shukrī, Ibrāhīm al-Māzinī and many others, this poem may be considered a model of neoclassicism. It is written in the traditional metre, al-ṭawīl, with all sorts of deviations (al-ziḥāfāt wa'l-^Cilal) which are either familiar or foreign to the Arabs, according to Dr Muḥammad himself, despite the various modern poetic forms. In addition to all the traditional attributes of the qaṣīda except the erotic prelude, the poetic diction, style and metaphor of this poem, are essentially traditional. Above all, the poem is generally ruled by Islamic ethos as indicated by frequent use of pious phraseologies, and the traditional closing doxology.

The Nigerian army are soldiers fighting on behalf of God. They are all lions led by the fiercest of lions, among them Brigadier Shuwa, Benjamin Adekunle and Murtala Muḥammad. The latter is compared to Khālīd ibnu 'l-Walīd, the very simile on which Taha Hussain had criticised Shawqī. Indeed, the eventual victory of Nigeria over Biafra had been ensured 'in the honour of our prophet Muḥammad'. These, no doubt, are some of the traditional features criticized by the romantic writers in Egypt where Dr Muḥammad was composing his poem. His failure to be radically influenced by modern poetic currents even when he was right in its laboratory should, therefore, be interpreted as the culmination of the conservative attitude of Islamic Nigeria.

At any rate, Dr Muḥammad could not have remained absolutely unaffected by the whole currents of contemporary world politics. They have engendered in him the spirit of territorial nationalism which, like Rifā^c al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, he has sought to reconcile with pan-Islamism. 'Patriotism' he says, 'is a part of devotional duty of my people, and whoever is devoted to a mother (country-Nigeria) has obeyed our book'.¹⁰² Under the impact of secular humanism he has also defined religion 'in its simplest form, as the recognition of the humanity of man' (al-i^ctirāf bi 'insāniyyati 'l-'insān). Consequently, man, according to him, 'has been made to govern the earth as vicegerent of God'.

To Dr Muḥammad, Nigeria is the mother of all, the beloved of all, and the hope of today and tomorrow. This nationalist spirit must have inspired him to compose his ode of 140 lines on a major national and international crisis. Discussing the international dimension of the civil war, Dr Muḥammad points to the religious interpretation given to it along which foreign aids seemed to have run. Apart from religious sympathy, foreign aids and supports were also inspired by what he calls 'new imperialism' in Black Africa from Western power against which stands the Soviet Union in support of the third world.¹⁰³ He also praises the Nigerian Army, the Muslims, Christians, pagans, of different ethnic groups altogether, and calls for a more viable constitution which is capable of protecting the integrity of our national sovereignty. I do not hesitate to think that Dr Muḥammad might be awarded a National Honour if the poem had been composed in English.

The unique contribution of Dr Muḥammad Ṭāhir lies in his

attempt to involve Nigerian Arabic literature in the national political current from which it has hitherto remained isolated. He has also raised, perhaps for the first time in Nigerian Arabic literature, the question of employing Arabic purely as a language, the use of which he compares, in Nigerian literature, with the use of English or French. He wonders the extent to which such Nigerian literatures in foreign languages are truly Nigerian. In the same spirit, Dr Muḥammad would want the style and poetic diction of his ode to remain in as much 'Nigerian Arabic' as possible. He had, therefore, gratefully rejected an attempt by an Arab Professor to interfere with the ode. He would prefer a Nigerian to criticise or praise his poem, a task which is beyond the scope of this study.

Like ʿUmar Ibrāhīm, Dr Muḥammad has, therefore, succeeded in introducing a secular dimension into Nigerian Arabic literature. It is the nationalist spirit which, as we know, is opposed to pan-Islamism. It also includes the idea of Nigerianization of Arabic language and literature,¹⁰⁴ a phenomenon which tradition might consider a bidʿa. Consequently, he has made no bones about invoking the names of the semi-legendary ancestors of the various Nigerian peoples all of who are 'brothers from Ādam and Hawwā'. In contemporary Nigerian politics where national unity has continued to be threatened by ethnic chauvinism and religious loyalty, Dr Muḥammad is favourably compared to Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, the Egyptian nationalist poet. His poetic vision of a united Nigerian advocated in Arabic should be interpreted as the transfer of political allegiance from pan-Islamism to territorial nationalism. It is, therefore, a new chapter, not only in Nigerian Arabic literature but also in contemporary

Nigerian politics. Here are some very few lines of the ode,
transposed, to illustrate most of its features we have indentified.¹⁰⁵

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | فمن ذا الذى أولى به فى بلادنا | سلامى إلى الأبطال من جيش أرضنا |
| 2 | ودمر شر الانفصال بشرقنا | جهادهم قد صان توحيد أرضنا |
| 3 | فلا عاشت الأحران من بعد يومنا | بيافرا- لا أبكى بموتك لحظة |
| 4 | على قومه إلا اهتزازا لأمننا | أوجو كوضيع المارقين فما جنى |
| 5 | فولتو بأدبار أمام جنودنا | ولكن جنود الله صدوا لكيدهم |
| 6 | ترى منهم أبناء باوا وبللونا | قباصرة لا يرهب الموت عنزهم |
| 7 | يليههم رجال أسسوا فضل مجدنا | وأجدادهم من الكنىمى وقبله |
| 8 | وأبناءؤه قد شاركوا فى نضالنا | أدودوا من أجداد أبناء أرضنا |
| 9 | ملوك عظام من رجال بلادنا | وأيتنوا وتؤتيت فى وكارى أكوغما |
| 10 | بياجدلا ينسأه تاريخ شعبنا | وكنتنا كما مؤدبوا آدم منهم |
| 11 | وأبناءؤه قد نوروا خط سيرنا | ملوك بينين والإفى ثم زارينا |
| 12 | إلى كسب نصر ذاع صيت بلادنا | سلامى إلى الجنرال الذى قاد جيشنا |
| 13 | غوقون كان يعطى اهتماما بأمرنا | تولى زمام الجند وسط صراعنا |
| 14 | تراه أمام الجند قيصر بعصرنا | وأن شوا أسد الأسود جميعها |
| 15 | وذاك محمد مرتضى من رجالنا | أرى خالد ابن الوليد بجيشنا |
| 16 | وأذهل نكسونا وويلسون وأبياننا | وفزنا بنصر هنر روما ومن بها |

- 17 وقد مكرنا ومكرا وبمكر ربنا فجاء لنا نصر بجاه رسولنا
 18 جميع القبائل والشعوب فإخوة ومن جدنا آدم وحواء أمنا
 19 لنا من رجال ساسة في بلادنا وقد قاسموا الأبطال في كسب نصرنا
 20 فيارب أيدهم بنور محمد وعيسى بن مريم، أنبياء لرشدنا
 21 بلادي بلادي يا حبيبة روحنا فدينك بالغالي وكل دمنا
 22 نيجيريا يا أم البلاد جميعها في الجنة الفردوس من فضل ربنا
 23 تغانيت من حبى لأمتى وجنتى فلو لك ما صليت يوما لربنا
 24 وحب البلاد من عبادة أمتى ومن برأ ما قد أطاع كتابنا
 25 فلا تغضبوا في أمر نيريرى برهة جزاء سنما رجدير بذكرنا
 26 نريد سلاما تحت حكم عدالة ودستورنا حر يصون حدودنا
 27 نعيش كأبناء لأم ووفية نيجيريا يا الله! تلك أماننا!!
 28 عليه صلاة الله ثم سلامه نبي الهدى قد جاء حقا لخيرنا

Another poetic innovation introduced by this writer has been the translation into Arabic of some Yoruba folksong and poetry, including proverbs, myths, legends and tales, in prose form, which are included in an MA thesis.¹⁰⁶ My secular secondary school experiences in English, and contemporary Nigerian literatures in English and vernacular had enabled me to compare them with Arabic literature which I had earlier studied in one of the modern Arabic schools. In addition to being apparently confined to religious poems there had

been no single Nigerian oriented prose fiction or a novel comparable to Achebe's or D. O. Fagunwa's works to which we were then familiar. At the university level, the situation remained the same as the result of which I had decided to write my long essay on the development of prose writing in Arabic literature.¹⁰⁷

With the emergence in 1975 of Professor Ogunbiyi's translation of some Yoruba folktales into Arabic, I was encouraged to translate these pagan aspects of Yoruba folklore into Arabic with a view to secularise the sacred language. But I could not embark on it until Shaikh 'Alī Nā'ibi Suwaid had agreed to supervise the work. The secular nature of this work considered, this consent, from a graduate of Al-Azhar and a respectable scholar, is significant for the growth of modern literature in Nigeria. In a similar spirit, this Shaikh has also contributed to the growth of modern Arabic language by his famous critique on the traditional grammarians,¹⁰⁸ a theme, which is beyond the scope of this study.

With my poor command of the sacred language and the absence of any similar prose or poetic diction to follow, this translation has little literary merit. Thanks to the efforts of Shaikh 'Alī who was able to make some of the translations more intelligible. Translated line by line as in its Yoruba form, this work is able to introduce, unconsciously, a new form into Nigerian Arabic literature. It is what may be called 'poetry in prose' (al-shi'ru 'l-manthūr) which makes use of neither rhyme nor metre. The following lines is an extract from Ijala, the praise epithet of the Yoruba god of war, the Greek equivalent of Ares.¹⁰⁹

يَا أُوْغُنَّ لَكَا آيَمِيَّ (Ogunlakaaye) رَبِّ الْآلِهَةِ
 يَا سَيْدِي أُوْغُنَّ، مَلِكُ "إِيرِي"
 وَلَيْسَ "إِيرِي" بِمَنْزِلِ "أُوغُنَّ"
 وَإِنَّمَا وَقَفَ فِيهِ لِشَرْبِ الْخَمْرِ
 يَا "أُوغُنَّ" يَا ذَا الْبَيْتِ الْمَالِي وَالطَّرِيقِ السَّلْمِي
 يَا صَاحِبَ الدَّرَزَاتِ الْأَرْكَانِ الْعَدِيدَةِ فِي السَّمَاءِ
 يَا مَنْ يَغْتَسِلُ بِالْدمِ وَفِي بَيْتِهِ مَاءٌ
 يَا مَنْ يَتَدَثَّرُ بِالسَّعْفِ وَفِي بَيْتِهِ ثُوبٌ
 وَيَوْمَ عَوْدَتِهِ مِنْ رَأْسِ الْجَبَلِ
 تَدَثَّرُ بِالنَّارِ وَتَقْمِصُ الدَّمُ
 وَضَعُ فِي السَّقْفِ وَأَتْلَفُ السَّقْفِ
 وَوَضَعُ فِي مَخْبَأِ الْغُرْفَةِ فَجْرَحُ الْوَلَدَ جِرْحًا عَمِيقًا
 وَإِذَا مَا خَانَ الطِّفْلُ فَلْيَجْتَنِبْ مَا لِأُوغُنَّ فِيهِ شَأْنٌ
 فَيُخَانَةَ أَيِّ إِنْسَانٍ لِأُوغُنَّ أَمْرٌ مَحْظُورٌ.

C. Modern Prose

The impact of the early growth of modern prose diction in Arab countries, through journalism and the printing of modern and classical textbooks was felt in Nigeria. Such books, through the various Arab

Embassies, in addition to individual or group purchases, have been pouring into most Nigerian Arabic schools where they were taught, in most cases, by the Arab teachers. Under these circumstances, modern literary Arabic soon became the medium of instruction. Modern short stories, novels and plays, in form of readers, were also introduced along with historical, . . . and other secular subjects, while magazines and newspapers also found their ways into the country. The outcome was the increasing number of those Nigerians who speak literary Arabic, but the prose diction, despite the introduction of the classroom essay (al-inshā'), remains essentially traditional in style and vocabulary.

This contact with modern prose diction is expected to have developed, through translation into Arabic, and the eventual growth of short stories, novels and plays, as it was the case in the Arab world. But the existing medieval tradition, which frowns at imaginative story writing as a frivolous exercise, was still in vogue.¹¹⁰

In these circumstances, only the medieval prose standard, in forms of epistolary, addresses, essays, description and literary history, has continued to breathe in some new life. In two separate works in free prose, the Waziri of Sokoto gives an account of his travellings to North Africa and the Middle East.¹¹¹ Other prominent Arabic literary historians include Shaikh Ādam al-Ilūrī, Dr 'Alī Abūbakar and Professor Galadanci, the echoes of whose voices can be heard everywhere in this study. To the major works of these writers may also be added a few works on biography and history, especially on contemporary Nigerian Islam, either in manuscript or in local publication.

Modern literary essays have also emerged with the establishment

of some Arabic-Islamic oriented journals in some Nigerian universities. Not unexpectedly, most of the essays written so far are of linguistic, rather than literary interest. Prominent among those who have written a few literary essays include Dr Hārūn Rashīd Yūsuf.¹¹² His comparison of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān with Robinson Crusoe, a popular theme in modern Arabic literature,¹¹³ is a unique contribution. Others include Shaikh 'Alī Nā'ibī Suwaid,¹¹⁴ Dr Muḥammad Ṭāhir A Liman, Dr Abūbakar Bālarabe,¹¹⁵ Dr R D Abubakre¹¹⁶ and Professor Isaac Ogunbiyi. The latter's contributions include a translation from English to Arabic of a modern Nigerian short story which, incidentally, was published not in Nigeria but in Tunisia.¹¹⁷

The emergence since the 1970s of the translation into Arabic of some Nigerian folk narratives is significant from the point of view of modern Arabic literature. A departure from the medieval prose standard, this literary innovation came from Professor Isaac Adejōju Ogunbiyi (b. 1941), one of the Christian graduates of Ibadan University. Having attained a first class honours degree in 1968, he had proceeded, on a commonwealth scholarship award in 1969, to London University where he obtained his Ph.D. in 1972. He wrote his thesis on North African creative Arabic writing with particular reference to Tunisia.¹¹⁸

Before he went for his post-graduate studies, he had been employed by the University of Ife as a Junior Research Fellow at the Institute of African Studies. On his return from London, he was promoted Research Fellow in 1972 in the same institute from which, since 1973, he had joined the teaching staff of his Alma Mater. He

was there until the end of 1983/84 session when the newly established Lagos State University offered him the chair of Arabic in a Department of Languages and Linguistics, the post he currently holds.

In addition to his thesis and a number of similar works on modern Arabic short story,¹¹⁹ Professor Ogunbiyi also chanced to come upon some African tales in Arabic manuscripts, anonymous in their authorship, at the University of Ibadan library. It is probable that he has also come in contact with Shaikh Ādam al-Ilūrī's reference to Yoruba folktale in his work on Nigerian history in which he gives an example of a tortoise tale.¹²⁰ Above all these influences, however, must be placed his inclination to free himself from a predominantly Islamic literary tradition in which his contributions as a Christian, are always suspected. Indeed, he probably could have embarked on a bolder literary secularisation were his thoughts and emotions not held captives by the existing tradition.

The immediate inspiration for his literary innovation, however, seems to have come not from the Tunisian modern short story but from the Kalīla wa Dimna of ʿAbd Allāh b. Al-Muqaffa^c. This classical Arabic prose work had, since 1972, been selected by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) as a textbook for the 'O'level paper in Arabic, in the conduct of which he happened to be involved. It was in the course of his translation into English of a portion of this book,¹²¹ according to Dr Abubakre, that he was probably reminded of similar fables in his own culture to which he eventually turned his attention. And so in 1975, he published a milestone work, a collection

of ten Yoruba trickster tales in Arabic translation.¹²²

A Christian writing mainly for Muslim readership, Professor Ogunbiyi must consciously demonstrate his sympathy for Islam by cultivating the existing Islamic literary convention if he does not want to be the sole reader of his own book. This appears to be the reason why he is obliged to open with al-basmala such a work of non-Islamic orientation. He has, similarly, been motivated to narrate some of the tales in the register of not the pagan but the Muslim Yorubas. Beside his compliance with the religious literary tradition, these tales are equally popular among Yoruba Muslims. The Professor may, therefore, be excused for his exotic usage, in indigenous Yoruba tales of al-salām 'alaykum, wa'llāhi ta'llāh, al-qādī, al-ṭabīb etc.¹²³ Like Ḥusayn Hykal who was impelled by the existing literary standard to conceal his identity in his first edition of Zaynab, the Professor has also successfully disguised his Christianity which his name, Isaac, written as Ishāq in fact presents as Islam.

In contrast to the eloquent style of his translation of a modern short story, Mashī'atu'llāh, the literary style and diction of this work do not sound familiar. One is apt to attribute this deficiency to the circumstances in which the writer has studied Arabic. But this attribution can hardly be sustained by his other translations and writings the eloquence of most of which is comparable to that of any modern Arab writers. Apart from the pioneer status of this Yoruba tale in Arabic, the writer appears to have consciously adopted the Nigerian Islamic literary style along which his training has not proceeded. This traditional style has, therefore, appeared inferior to similar styles of Ādam al-Ilūrī or 'Umar Ibrāhīm who is to

be presently discussed. But scrupulous efforts were made by the writer to rid the work of all semantic ambiguities. Whatever might be its literary defects, this work in Nigerian Arabic literature has already been acclaimed a new trend: Two years after its publication, the WAEC recommended it in place of Kalīla wa Dimna, the relevance of which to Nigeria had earlier been criticized.¹²⁴

This trend of translating indigenous Oral Tradition is, in the meanwhile, gaining currency among Yoruba Arabists. But it has not been cultivated in the Islamic North with its stronger medieval religious tradition. Its adoption, however, in due course is very likely with the acceptance of Ogunbiyi's work as the School Certificate Arabic textbook.¹²⁵ The following extract from the tale of the Tortoise and the Pig¹²⁶ illustrates the literary style of this work:

الغيلم والخنزير

فأعهد بعهد إستلف الغيلم من الخنزير مبلغاً كبيراً لأنهما كانا
صديقين متجاورين. وبعد وقت طويل طلب الخنزير رد دينه ولكن الغيلم أخذ
يماطله مماطلة لانهاية لها. وذات يوم ذهب الخنزير إلى بيت الغيلم فقال له: (أيتها
الكافر بالإحسان، ألا ترد إليّ ما استدنت من المال؟ والله تالده، إني آت
إليك غداً وإما أن تعطيني مالي وإما أن أشكوك إلى القاضي).
لما سمعت السلحفاة تهديدات الخنزير أخذت تبكي لأنها عرفت
أنهما فقيران وليس باستطاعتها ارجاع المبلغ إلى صاحبه
في اليوم التالي. أما الغيلم فتوجه إليها قائلاً: (لا تبكي يا بنت

الناس لاخوف علينا، انا لاندفع له شيئاً ولايشكونا إلى أحد.....

D. Shuwa Arabic Writing

Finally, the emergence in Nigeria since the 1930s of the substance of Shuwa Arab oral folktales collected and published, is a lesser though interesting example of the impact of Western culture on Arabic-Islamic literature in Nigeria. It also deserves a little attention. Written in Shuwa colloquial Arabic, such narratives in prose and verses might strictly be considered to be outside the scope of this study. Indeed, they are confined to the Bornu state of Nigeria where Shuwa Arabic has become one of the indigenous languages. This language, according to J R Patterson, the colonial District Officer who collected the stories,¹²⁷ 'is one of the languages recognised by the Nigerian Government for certain qualifying examinations which officers of some Departments are required to pass'. The stories had, therefore, been 'collected primarily with the intention of compiling from them a Reader for use in schools where Shuwa Arabic is one of the languages spoken'.

From the Nile valley and parts of North Africa, the Arabs and Berbers had begun to penetrate the Chad basin areas of Nigeria from about AD 800. Writing in the eleventh century AD, al-Bakrī reported the presence in Bornu of some Umayyad descendants who, as discussed in chapter one, must have introduced Islam to the area. Between 1360 and 1391 AD, the invasion of Bornu by the Judhām Arabs, apparently in alliance with the Bulala forces, was also reported by Mai Othman (Biri) Ibn Idrīs in his letter to the Mamlūk Sulṭān, Ṣaifu 'l-dīn

Barqūq in 1392 AD. This wave of Arab immigration into Waday, Bagirmi, Darfur, Kanem and Bornu had continued until the end of the last century, and on a small scale up to date.

Some of the earliest immigrant parties must have included those Arabs and Berbers who identified themselves with the descendants of Sayf b. Dhī Yazan who eventually became the legendary ancestor of the first Kanem Empire, the Saifawa Dynasty. Other later immigrants to the areas were either camel ('abbāla) or cattle (baqqāra) nomads who, accordingly, were addressed in Kanuri language as the Shuwa (pastoral nomads) Arabs. They include the Awlād Sulaimān from Fezzan, the Ja^Cliyyīn who formed a merchant class and the Tunjur, both from the Nile region.¹²⁸ Others include the Iesiye group among whom are the Banī Hilāl who are now found chiefly in the Yabiri and Gulumba districts of Dikwa Emirate.¹²⁹ It is this last group that has handed down the story of Abū-Zaid al-Hilālī which has now been recorded in Shuwa Arabic as a part of their own genealogical folk narrative.

Unlike Hausaland, it has not been possible for the historians to trace in details, the historical development of the early Kanem empire before it was plunged into the dynastic warfare.¹³⁰ The extent to which these immigrant Arabs and Berbers, like al-Maghīlī in Hausaland, had contributed to the growth of Arabic literature in Bornu has, therefore, been very difficult to determine. It can be said, however, that since the emergence in the seventeenth century of Idrīs Aloma (d.1619) up to the outbreak of the jihād, no Shuwa Arab is reported to have substantially contributed to classical Arabic literature (al-'adab) in Nigeria. It might be interesting, therefore, to know why these Arabs have made no significant contribution to the

growth of Arabic literature in Nigeria.

The most fundamental reason is certain to be the almost routine and depressingly notorious identification, in Nigeria, of Arabic literature with Islam per se. In this context, none of these Arabs like the Ḥassānis of the Western Sahara, except in some religious capacity, could have made any contributions whatsoever. Secondly, most of these Arab immigrants were pastoralists whose way of life, unlike in Mauritania or Mali amongst Berber nomads, did not encourage the pursuit of religious scholarship. This is the way through which they could have acquired any literary Arabic. It is most likely, as exemplified by the Imām Ibn Fartuwa, that some of these Arab immigrants intermarried with the Kanuri and other natives in which capacity they might have made some contribution. Such a contribution, at any rate, could not have extended beyond the existing religious literary tradition.

Considered against this background, the emergence of Shuwa Arab folk literature is quite significant. Its theme, the Sīra of the Banū Hilāl, which had earlier been written in some literary Arabic, is not the point of our interest. Neither are we interested in its 'curious staccato style with numerous pun', nor in some of its poetic aspects which, surprisingly, are said to have attained a high literary standard.¹³¹ It is written in colloquial Arabic which is complete. And there is no attempt to be 'folkish' in a classical or semi-classical idiom as Ogunbiyi attempts in his work.

A popular story, said to have first been reduced to writing by a Shuwa Arab Malam, the narrative, an extract of which follows, constitutes a departure from the existing Arabic literature in Nigeria.

Its theme, like that of Professor Ogunbiyi's folktale, is what the existing medieval tradition might have considered vulgar. Above all, the colloquial Arabic in which it is written, apart from being unknown before in Nigerian Arabic literature, constitutes an individual aspect of modern Arabic literary revolt against traditionalism even in the Arab world itself. Thus composed outside any religious context, this Arabic narrative should be considered as a harbinger or as a contribution - however small - to the wider process of the secularisation of Arabic literature in Nigeria. Here is an extract in Shuwa Arabic followed by its English translation:¹³²

وابوزيد يوم ولدوه تم سبع ايام ابه جاء اليه ولمسه يريديشيفه
 ومسك اباه من ايده اباه مجزمایشل ايده لاجل هوشد بدمن ابيه
 عنده قوی كثير الام قالت لالاب اصبر كان نعس يخلی ايدك وصبر
 حتى ابوزيد نعس وخل ايد ابه والاب سل ايده مشی يوم مشی جمع
 أهله وقال لهم انا ولد لي ولد من بعد هذا يبتقى سئلاوی
 ياكلني وياكلك يا عيالي بنوا هلال قوموا نجل لنا المكان اخرجو
 قاموا عردوا حلوه مع امه وخادم سعيدی جقنقوت وعبد
 ولد خادم اسمه سعيد زربول.

When Abū Zaid was a week old his father came and touched him. He wanted to look at him. He caught his father by the hand, and his father was unable to withdraw his hand, because he was stronger than his father; he had indeed

greater strength. The mother said to the father, "wait, if he falls asleep he will let your hand go". So he waited until Abū Zaid went to sleep and let go his father's hand. Then his father withdrew his hand and went away. When he had gone he called his people together and said to them: "A son has been born to me, and, moreover, he will become a cannibal; he will eat me and eat you, o! my children, the Beni Hilāl. Arise, and let us run away to another place." They started off and ran away leaving him with his mother and a slave-girl, named Sa'idi Jugongot, and a slave, son of the slave-girl, named Sa'idi Zerbul.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 cf M M Badawi, 'Convention and Revolt', op cit, pp.181-208
- 2 See for example Muḥammad Qutb, Jāhiliyyatu 'l-qarni 'l-^Cishrīn (Beirut, 1981); A al-Ilūrī, al-Islām wa taqālidu 'l-jāhiliyya (Cairo, 1979); M M Shākīr, Abāṭil wa Asmār (Cairo, 1964)
- 3 H A R Gibb, 'Manfalūṭī and the New Style', op cit, pp.311-22; Mikhā'īl Nu^Caima, "Māhiyatu'l-'adab wa mahammātuh", op cit, pp.3-18
- 4 cf S Moreh, 'The Neoclassical Qaṣīda', op cit, pp.155-79; M M Badawi, 'Convention and Revolt', op cit, pp.181-208; T Hussain, Hāfiḡ wa Shawqī, op cit., passim - all of which have discussed this conflict.
- 5 S Moreh, 'Nāzik al-Malā'ika', op cit, p.84
- 6 See for example; M M Badawi, 'Islam in Modern Egyptian Literature', op cit; P Chelkowski, 'Islam in Modern Drama and Theatre', op cit, pp.45-69
- 7 Both Tunisia and Sudan have produced modern writers such as Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Shabbī and Miftāḡ al-Faitūrī both of them, members of the Apollo School.
- 8 B Lewis, op cit, p.433
- 9 P. Chelkowski, op cit, p.49
- 10 See Vladimir Klima, Modern Nigerian Novels (Prague, 1969), pp.21-28; Ibrāhīm al-Kilānī, 'Udabā' minā 'l-jaza'ir (Cairo, 1958).
- 11 M M Yūsuf, Shu^Carā' Mūrī tāniya, op cit, pp.619-59.
- 12 Only these two countries, according to Professor Gibb, have successfully resisted the reformation of their judicial system: H A R Gibb, Modern Trends, op cit, p.89
- 13 Muḥammad al-Khatīb, 'Ghazwatubadr...al-kubrā', al-da^Cwa, No.27 (Aug 1978), p.19
- 14 The Qur'ān: 2:47.
- 15 R A Adeleḡe, Power and Diplomacy, op cit, pp 168ff.
- 16 M G Smith, Government in Zazzau 1800-1950 (London, 1960), p.241; J N Paden, Religious and Political Culture in Kano (London, 1973), p.53
- 17 E A Ayandele, The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914 (London, 1946), p.122
- 18 On the history of the penetration and growth of Islam in

- Yorubaland see T G O Gbadamosi, op cit, passim.
- 19 See Ibid , pp.101-103; H A K Bidmus, ' A literary Appraisal of the Arabic Writings of the Yoruba ^CUlamā',op cit; R D Abubākre 'The Contribution of the Yorubas to Arabic Literature', op cit.
- 20 See: T G O Gbadamosi, op cit, p.37.
- 21 Ibid , pp.107-23.
- 22 Ibid , pp.168-70.
- 23 Ibid , pp.27-31
- 24 On the Ahmadiyya Movement in Nigeria, see: I A B Balogun op cit; Trimmingham, Islam, op cit, pp.230-32. H J Fisher, Ahmadiyya: A study in Contemporary Islam on the West African Coast (Oxford, 1963).
- 25 Malam Zam^Ca b Imām of Bauchi cited by Ādam al-Ilūrī, al-Islām, op cit, p.173.
- 26 E A Ayandele, op cit, pp.137-41.
- 27 West Africa, London (May 1900), p.5 cited in Ibid.
- 28 S F Graham, Government and Mission Education in Northern Nigeria 1900-1919 (Ibadan, 1966), pp 14-15.
- 29 The most famous Christian Missionary in the North, see: E A Ayandele, op cit, pp.117ff for the missionary activities in Northern Nigeria.
- 30 M S Lilian, 'Conflict, Education and New Awareness in the Southern Sudan 1898-1956', in G N Brown and M Hiskett, eds, Conflict and Harmony in Education in Tropical Africa (London, 1975), pp.106-8.
- 31 E A Ayandele, op cit, p.147.
- 32 Ibid, p.149.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 J N Paden, op cit, p.316.
- 35 J S Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (London 1971), P.146.
- 36 See: P H G Scot, A Survey of Islam in Northern Nigeria (Kaduna, 1952), p.4.
- 37 Ahmadu Bello, My Life (Cambridge, 1962), pp.217-18.
- 38 Ibid.

- 39 Cited by J S Coleman, op cit, p.139; see also: S F Graham, op cit, p.XI.
- 40 Northern Provinces Education Annual Report (1931), p.20.
- 41 See: J S Coleman, op cit, pp.231ff for the impact of World War II on Nigeria.
- 42 According to Ahmadu Bello, op cit, p.146.
- 43 For more details on which see: Ibid, pp.118, 133, 136-7; J S Coleman, op cit, pp.399ff.
- 44 See J N Paden, op cit, pp.68-70 on the Ṣūfī reform in Nigeria.
- 45 Sa^cd Zungur, 'Jumhuriya ko Mulukiya', cited in Ibid, p.283.
- 46 Ibid, pp.289-90.
- 47 Ibid, p.144; see also Jacques Baulin, The Arab Role in Africa (London, 1962), pp. 58-65 on this and other relationships.
- 48 Quoted from the Premier's address delivered in Pakistan in Dec. 1963 on 'Northern Nigeria and the Impact of Islam', Muslimnews Karachi (Jan 1964), p.6ff.
- 49 A Bello, op cit, P.232.
- 50 Thomas Hodgkin, 'Tradition and Reform in Muslim Africa', West Africa (Sept. 22, 1956), p.727.
- 51 A Bello, op cit, pp.VIII-IX.
- 52 Ibid, p.171.
- 53 Nigerian Citizen, 28 April, 1965.
- 54 On the formation of this society and its early activities, see: J N Paden, op cit, pp.183ff.
- 55 Albert Ozigi, et al, Education in Northern Nigeria (London, 1981), pp.75-6.
- 56 For more details on this school, see: A B Fafunwa, op cit, p. 65; H Alikali, 'A Note on Arabic Teaching in Northern Nigeria', Kano Studies, no.3 (Jun 1967); A Abūbakar, op cit, pp.218-224; S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp.100-101.
- 57 al-Ilūrī, al-Islām, op cit, p.152.
- 58 Ibid, See also P B Clarke, West Africa and Islam (London, 1982), p.248.
- 59 See: A H Iseyin, Ḥumātu 'l-thaqāfati 'l-^carabiyyati 'l-islāmiyya

- (Agege, 1967), pp. 29-36 for a brief study of Ādam al-Ilūrī;
R D Abubakre, I, op cit, pp.158ff for detailed description of his school.
- 60 On modern Arabic writing in Nigeria, see below, p. 252.
- 61 For a detailed study of Arabic in Nigerian secular schools, see:
I A Ogunbiyi, 'Ta^Clīm wa ta^Callumu 'l-lughati 'l-arabiyya fī
Nayjīriya', al-Faiṣal, 50 (June 1981), pp.77-82.
- 62 J P Hubbard, 'Government and Islamic Education in Northern Nigeria',
in G N Brown and M Hiskett, eds, op cit, pp.158-162.
- 63 1983/84 Prospectus, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies,
University of Ibadan, p.2.
- 64 See: D W Arnott, 'Development at Abdullahi Bayero College (Ahmadu
Bello University), Kano' in G N Brown and M Hiskett, eds, op cit,
pp.472-6.
- 65 ʿAbdullāh Ṭayyib, 'The Teaching of Arabic in Nigeria', Kano Studies,
No.2 (July 1966), pp.11-14
- 66 Including intensive courses in English and Arabic for two different
categories of students, adoption of two standards of syllabuses
and the policy of spending a year in Khartoum, or any other Arab
country.
- 67 See: S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp.252-61 for more details.
- 68 al-Ilūrī, al-Islām, op cit, p.171.
- 69 Northern Nigeria Annual Report (London, 1920) cited by J N Paden,
op cit, p.60.
- 70 J N Eastmond and Adamu, The Place of Koranic School in the
Immediate and Long Range Planning of Northern Nigeria (Kaduna:
Ministry of Education, 1965), pp. 59-60.
- 71 J N Paden, op cit, p.140 translated from Niass, al-kalima (Zaria,
1962), pp.5-7.
- 72 A Bello, op cit, p.36.
- 73 J Schacht, 'Islam in Northern Nigeria', Studia Islamica, Vol. VIII
(1957), p.142.
- 74 by Jean Trevor, 'Western Education and Muslim Fulani/Hausa Women
in Sokoto, Northern Nigeria' in G N Brown and M Hiskett, eds,
op cit, p.25.
- 75 J S Coleman, op cit, pp.133,446 note 51.
- 76 A Gerard, African Language Literatures (Essex, 1981), pp.70-71.

- 77 Ibid.
- 78 S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp.275-6.
- 79 'Acceptance Speech by the Waziri of Sokoto, Alhaji Junaidu at the Convocation of the Ahmadu Bello University', New Nigerian, 9th Dec. 1971 cited by G N Brown and M Hiskett eds, op cit, pp. 467-71.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 S A S Galadanci, op cit, p.179.
- 82 J N Paden, op cit, pp.131-3.
- 83 A A al-Kashnāwī, 'Manāhilu 'l-rashād' (Manuscript) cited by Ibrāhīm Umar, 'Dawru 'l-lughati 'l-^Carabiyya', Dirāsāt ^CArabiyya, No.3 (1977), pp.113-128.
- 84 On his literary contribution, see: R D Abubakre, II, op cit, pp.148-97.
- 85 See for example: al-Ilūrī, al-Islām wa taqālīd, op cit, passim.
- 86 al-Ilūrī, Aṣlu qabā'il Yūruba (Agege, n.d.), p.7.
- 87 al-Wazīr Junaid, 'Dīwān Qaṣā'idi 'l-wazīr Junaid', (MSS), pp.8-10; 49-51; 60-65; see also S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp.187-9.
- 88 I am grateful to the Waziri's son Dr Sambo for this extract. The English words in line one are 'today', 'yesterday', and 'was ready'. Line 2: 'Custody'; line 3: 'somebody'; line 4: 'a day!'
- 89 S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp.176-8.
- 90 Examples of such works include a large number of manuscripts in Ajami collected and compiled by Major Frank Edgar (c.1905) as Tatsuniyoyi Na Hausa, transl. Neir Skinner, Hausa Tales and Tradition (London, 1969), 2 vols; R S Rattray, Hausa Folklore, Customs, Proverbs etc (Oxford, 1913), 2 vols.
- 91 See: A Gerard, African Language Literatures, op cit, pp.58-71; Neil Skinner, 'Norla: An Experiment in the Production of Vernacular Literature 1954-1959', Revue des Langues Vivantes, XXXVI, 2 (1970), pp. 166-175.
- 92 By Mamman Kano, Dare Dubu da Daya (Zaria, 1924).
- 93 By Ibrahim Y Yahya, Daren Sha Biyu (Zaria, 1971).
- 94 By Bala Funtua, Gandun Dabbobi (Zaria, n.d.).
- 95 A A Imām, Al'adun Turawa (Zaria, 1954); Aminu Kano, Motsi Ya fi Zama (Zaria, 1955).

- 96 A Gerard, *op cit*, p. 66; Examples of modern Hausa drama include Shuaibu Makarfi's (1959) Zamanin Nan Namu (These Times of Ours); Muhammad Sada's (1968) Uwar Gulma (Mother of Mischievous Tale-Telling); and Dan Dogo and (Dauda) Kano's (1969) Tabar mar Kunya (Mat of shame). See for more details: N Skinner, 'Realism and Fantasy in Hausa Literature' in Albert Gerard, ed, Black Africa (New York, 1972), pp.167-87.
- 97 On the relationship between Arabic and Hausa Poetry, see M K M Galadanci, 'The Poetic Marriage between Arabic and Hausa', Harsunan Nije. riyayy 1 (1975), pp.1-16.
- 98 See: M Hiskett, A History of Hausa Islamic Verse, *op cit* , pp.150-168 for examples of modern Hausa verses.
- 99 D W Arnott, 'The song of the Rains, a Hausa Poem by Na'ibi Wali', African Language Studies, 1X (1968) pp. 130-47.
- 100 As discussed by Ibrāhīm Ūmar, 'Dawru '1-lughati '1-^Carabiyya', *op cit*, pp.113-128.
- 101 See: M T A Liman 'Min Turāthinā '1-'adabī: Qaṣīdatu '1-ḥarbi '1-ahliyya al-Nayjīriyya', Dirāsāt ^CArabiyya, No.4 (1978/79)pp.39-58. The Civil War took place between 6 July 1967 and 15 Jan 1970.
- 102 See line 24 of the extract below, and pp. 329-31 for its translation.
- 103 See lines 16 and 25 for example.
- 104 As clearly spelt out in another essay he has written: 'Mustawā '1-kitābati '1-^Carabiyya', Dirāsāt ^CArabiyya, No.3 (1977), pp.63-83.
- 105 On 30 May 1967 Lt Col Odumegwa Ojukwu (4) proclaimed Eastern Nigeria the 'Independent Republic of Biafra' (3) but no hostility broke out until 6 July. Lines 6-11 include ancestral names of the main Nigerian tribes: Bawa and Bello (6), Oduduwa (8), Etsu, Tor Tiv , Aku Uka of Wukari (9), Kunta, Modibo Adama, Bayajida (10); the Benin, Ife and Zaria Kings (11). Lt Col (now General) Yakubu Gowon (13) assisted among others by Lt Col Shuwa (14) and Murtala Muhammad (15) was the head of the Federal troop and Military Government throughout the war. The invocation of Jesus, son of Mary (20) along with Muhammad is a symbol of unity (as in 18) between the Muslims and Christians. Foreign intervention is mentioned (16) while the recognition of Biafra by Nyerere of Tanzania in particular (25) is condemned as a requital of evil with good, expressed in a classical Arabic proverb, Jazā'u '1-sinimār. The Federal Govt. had sent troops to protect Nyerere when his army mutinied.
- 106 M G A Raji, 'Ahammu Malāmihi '1-Fūklūr lada '1-Yūruba', MA Thesis (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1981).
- 107 M G A Raji 'The Development of Arabic Prose'. BA Dissertation

- (University of Ibadan, 1977).
- 108 A N Suwaid, 'Asbāb Mashākili 'l-naḥwi 'l-^Carabī' NATAIS, II, 1 (Dec 1980), pp. 61-85.
- 109 M G A Raji, 'Ahammu Malāmiḥ', op cit, pp. 77-80.
- 110 Rupert E East, 'A First Essay in Imaginative African Literature', Africa, IX, 3 (1936), pp. 350-57 describes the difficulty he encountered in persuading Nigerian Muslims to write fiction even in Hausa let alone Arabic.
- 111 See: W Junaid, 'Ithāfu 'l-hādīr bi-marā'ī 'l-musāfir'; and 'Tafriḥu 'l-nafs bi-dhikr ziyāratī 'l-^CIrāq wa'l-quḍus' both in manuscript, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaira.
- 112 H R Yūsuf, 'Wujūhu 'l-shibah bayn Hayy bun Yaqaḗān wa Rubinsūn Krusaw', Dirāsāt 'CArabiyya, No. 1 (May, 1975), pp. 94-101.
- 113 See: Maḥmūd Taymūr, Fannu 'l-Qaṣaṣ, op cit, p. 40.
- 114 'Tazyīnu 'l-waraqāt li'l-Shaikh 'Abd Allāh bn Fūdī', Dirāsāt 'CArabiyya, No. 3 (1977), pp. 41-54.
- 115 'A^Cyādunā', Kano Studies, No. 1 (Sept, 1965), pp. 81-88 and No. 2 (July, 1966), pp. 106-116.
- 116 'The Impact of Kalīlah Wa Dimnah on a Translation of Yoruba Folktales into Arabic', al-Fikr, I, 1 (Dec 1980), pp. 21-7.
- 117 'Mashī'at Allāh' Qiṣaṣ, No. 20 (July 1971), pp. 40-52; 'The Poet Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī's Contribution to Modern Arabic Poetry', al-Fikr, III, 1 (Dec, 1982), pp. 1-31. See below for more examples.
- 118 I A Ogunbiyi 'The Arabic Short Story in Tunisia (North Africa) up to 1970', PhD Thesis (University of London, 1972).
- 119 Such as 'Fukāhah fī Majlis al-Qadā' (Comparative edition of an early Tunisian Arabic Story), Qiṣaṣ, No. 22 (Jan, 1972), pp. 68-77; 'Twentieth-Century Tunisian Arabic Creative Writing; A Study in the Social, Cultural and Political History of the Country', ODU, New Series No. 11 (Jan 1975), pp. 61-73; 'The Birth and Growth of Tunisian Arabic Short Story', The Maghreb Review, VI, 5-6 (London, Sept-Dec, 1981), pp. 94-7.
- 120 al-Ilūrī, Mu'jaz Ta'rīkh Nayjīriya (Beirut, 1963), pp. 30ff.
- 121 I A Ogunbiyi, The Lion and the Bull (translated from (Arabic), the Kalīlah wa Dimnah) (Ibadan, 1975).
- 122 I Ogunbiyi, al-Qiṣaṣu 'l-Sha^Cbiyya 'Cani 'l-sulḥfāt 'Cinda 'l-Yarūbawīyyīn (Ibadan, 1975).
- 123 See: Ibid, pp. 2, 3, 6, 10, 14, 24, for examples.

- 124 By I A B Balogun, 'Arabic Studies in Nigeria: A Survey of the Problems in Post Primary Institutions and the Universities with Suggested Solution', cited by R D Abubakre, 'The Impact of Kalīlah', op cit, p.25.
- 125 It is significant to observe that the Qīṣaṣ of Ogunbiyi has been enlarged and republished by Alhaji M Dantami and Sons, Kano, in 1978.
- 126 I Ogunbiyi, al-Qīṣaṣ, op cit, p.2. Note such expressions as 'Wa'llāhi ta'llāh' and 'yā bīnta 'l-nās', as a display of the influences of Islam and Yoruba language on the author.
- 127 J R Patterson, Stories of Abu Zeid the Hilali in Shuwa Arabic (London, 1930), p.17.
- 128 J S Trimmingham, Islam, op cit, pp.17-18.
- 129 J R Patterson, op cit, pp.13-14.
- 130 See chapter one for more details.
- 131 J R Patterson, op cit, pp.17-18.
- 132 Ibid, Arabic text, p.2, translation, pp.22-3.

AN ADDITIONAL FOOTNOTE TO CHAPTER FOUR

- A One of the Western educated Nigerian Arabists, Dr Ṭāhir Abūbakar Liman hails from Bauchi state. He attended the School of Arabic Studies, Kano, after which he proceeded to Dāru 'l 'ulūm in Cairo where he graduated in 1970. On his arrival in Nigeria, he took up an appointment as a lecturer at the Bayero University's Arabic Department until 1979/80 when he resigned to join the late Malam Aminu Kano's People's Redemption Party.

CHAPTER FIVE

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‘UMAR IBRAHIM'S DIWAN: A LITERARY RESPONSE OF ISLAMIC NIGERIA
TO MODERN SECULAR THOUGHT

I. Family Background

‘Umar was born around 1922 in Zaria of Fulani parents with a long Arabic-Islamic scholarship tradition. His greatest ancestor, identified by oral tradition as Muḥammadu Fatiḥ was the Qāḍī of Kukawa in Bornu from where his great grandson, Aḥmad had come to Zaria during the reign of Mamman Sani (1847-54). Arriving in Zaria after sojourning for a while en route at Misau, Bauchi state, Aḥmad was also made the Galadima in recognition of his scholarship. He was later killed in Hadeja during the famous Bukhari revolt (1848-50) against the Sokoto Caliphate. A martyr fighting on behalf of God, his corpse which could not be traced in the wilderness was believed by popular tradition to have been taken straight to heaven by the angels.

His son, ‘Umar Wālī (d.1897), who had accompanied him to Zaria grew up to become one of the greatest scholars and saints in Nigeria on the eve of the British occupation. Apart from his Arabic-Islamic institution which flourished very well in the last quarter of the last century, ‘Umar Wālī had also made a unique contribution to Nigerian Arabic literature. He had composed in rajaz, very curiously, on Arithmetic, Astronomy, Anthropology and primitive Psychology in addition to the various traditional themes.¹ It is not, therefore, mere rhetoric to conclude that his soul has reincarnated in his great grandson, ‘Umar Ibrāhīm.

One of the Wālī's sons, Aḥmad, who became ʿUmar's grandfather was also appointed the secretary (magatakarda) to Emir Kwasau whose reign witnessed the advent of the colonial regime. After the British occupation, the Emir Kwasau was deposed and Aḥmad, after an appointment as a district head (Turaki), became the Waziri to the new Emir, ʿAlī Dan Sidi (1903-1920). A member of the ruling council which was expected to be loyal to the 'Christian' regime, Aḥmad was soon persuaded by his younger brother, Amīn to relinquish the vizierate and resume his post as Turaki .

This involvement of Aḥmad in politics diverted his attention from learning which was eventually taken up by his son, Ibrāhīm, who became ʿUmar's father. Dr Ali Abubakar reports that most of Wālī's works were infact bequeathed to Ibrāhīm who also took over as a teacher in his grandfather's institute . He also held the public posts of Magatakarda at Lere and Sarkin Ruwa in Zaria. But this involvement in politics did not prevent him, like his father, from academic pursuit. He was a man of considerable learning, who is said to have also written a few verses before he passed away having genetically transmitted the insatiable thirst for learning to his son, ʿUmar.

This is a brief sketch of the chain of the learned ancestors, of whose glorious past, one of their own stock, ʿUmar, has been very proud. But the traditional attitude of Islamic Nigeria to 'boasting' as a poetic theme would not allow ʿUmar to admit that he was boasting. To him, unlike Farazdaq (d.732 AD)² to Jarīr (d.733 AD), boasting with dry clay (al-ṣalṣāl, i.e the decayed ancestors), is a medal only

for the viles. After narrating the above history in heroic verses, he concludes with the following lines:

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | تراهم كسلك الدر في نسق اللآلى | هناك انتهى على بأصلى كلهم |
| 2 | يرى النهب فخر أو مضارب أطبال | فلامنه جبار ولا ظالم ومن |
| 3 | حطام لحب الجمع لاسدّ آمال | ولا شره من غاية الهمّ جمعه الـ |
| 4 | لسبى فلوس الناس شيمة محتال | ولا من يرى التدليس سلم رزقه |
| 5 | تراه نفوس الناس أفزع قتال | ولا ملك يستعبد الناس صائلا |
| 6 | يعلم حسن الخلق أو حسن أعمال | مواهبهم أثار عقل وكل ما |
| 7 | فذاك لقمع البغي لاقتل أقيال | وأحمدنا إن كان للجيش قائدا |
| 8 | تحسنها الأجيال في العصر الخالى | وان ملكوا عبدا. فذلك خصلة |
| 9 | يعامل كالأبناء في كل أحوال | ولكننا المملوك في ظل بيتنا |
| 10 | ولو كنته فاخرت أصحاب ادلال | أولئك آباءى-ولست فرزدقا- |
| 11 | التفاخر بالصلصال نيشان أرزال | ذكرتهم إجلالهم لا تفاخرا |

II. Childhood and Education

Thirty days after his birth, 'Umar lost his mother, Sa^cāda, who was also a Fulani lady. But the warm motherly affection of which 'Umar was robbed found adequate compensation in his paternal grandmother, Sauda, in whose care he was subsequently brought up. The passionate tone of the series of elegies composed for her by 'Umar confirms his deep

emotional devotion to this grandmother of whom he says:

وسودتنا من شؤد صيخ إسمها محاسنها أعت مهارة مشقال
وليس بيتيها من تربب سودة ولو تركته الأم في المهدي والبال

Umar, nevertheless, had occasions to weep over being denied by fortune, the opportunity to know the cheerful face of a mother, a joy which even the wolf-cub is often granted. Poor Umar:

أنت بي فمازادت على الشهر عيشة رفاهة طيب العيش فانت لاجلالى 1
ولم ترني ملأ القلوب. ولن أرى بشاشة وجه الأم من بعد اقبالى 2
أتاح لابن الذئب رؤية أمه ويمنعني الحظ المقدر! أولى لي! 3
ومهما تحيت الزمان وحزنه تراكم في كل المغاصل لبالي 4
ولكن بقاء الكون أحلام نائم- وان سرأ وأبكي- مراكب زوال 5
ولا فرق من بيني ورؤية من رأى بشاشتها: يفتالها كراحوال 6

Two basic historical factors contributed to Umar's eventual cultivation of Western thoughts: . He was born under the full impact of the colonial regime and in Zaria which produced the first Northern Nigerian graduate, Dr Barau Dikko, by 1950. Through the efforts of the Christian missionary, Dr Miller, Western education was gaining currency but Umar as a Muslim could not benefit directly from it. His education, therefore, had to take off the traditional way in one of the Katātib . But Umar eventually had contact with Western education.

After graduating from Makarantar Allo (the Quranic School in

Hausa) which he attended at one Malam Yaro Mai Kiran Salla (mu'adhhdhin), 'Umar proceeded to Makarantar Ilmi (higher Islamic education) at Malam Isyaku Ma'aji (Treasurer) with whom he remained until 1937. In the course of about eight years he spent with this eminent scholar, 'Umar was able to acquire such proficiency in Arabic as to enable him to compose Arabic verses when he was only fifteen. He probably had a unique opportunity in his teacher, Malam Isyaku, whom 'Umar, in his elegy, has described as imām tafarrada fī kulli fann. In these circumstances, 'Umar was able to have a remarkable degree of exposure to the various branches of Arabic-Islamic traditional sciences without having to travel up and down, the traditional peripatetic way.

In appreciation of his tutorship, 'Umar composed for him an elegy, in which he is seen by 'Umar, sometimes as al-Kha'īl Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī (d.778 AD), the founder of Arabic prosody; sometimes as al-Kha'īl bin Ishāq (d.1365 AD), the author of al-Mukhtaṣar, and at yet another time, as the pioneer of the Maqāmāt, Badī' u 'l-zamān al-Hamadhānī (d.1007 AD)³

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | لموت الأديب فريد الزمان | عراني من الهم ما قد كفاني |
| 2. | فصار كشمس الضحى في العيان | إمام تفرد في كل فن |
| 3. | وفي النحو والصرف أو في المعاني | ففي الفقه فرد كذا في الحديث |
| 4. | أشارت أكتف له ببنان | إذا قيل من فاق للدرس شرحا |
| 5. | وطورا أراه بديع الزمان | أراه الخليل وطورا خليلا |

Before he proceeded in 1939 to the Kano Law School, 'Umar had managed, probably secretly through self efforts, to acquaint himself with Western education. One Malam 'Abdu Yari in Zaria had opened in 1937 an evening class of three days a week. In these classes, Roman script, known in Hausa as boko, was being taught to be used in writing vernaculars. In the same year, another Malam Jumare dan Maiunguwa started another evening class every Wednesday where English language was also being taught. These English classes lasted only five months. But 'Umar in these classes was able to acquire a torchlight which has since continued to light his path in his subsequent private studies in Western education. 'Umar worked briefly in 1938 for some six months as Assistant Veterinary Officer, innoculating cattle against rinderpest under some Europeans. This appointment automatically withdrew him from the evening classes including the Wednesday English class before it was closed down shortly afterwards.

In February/March 1939, 'Umar went to the Kano Law School where he was trained for four years as a Qāḍī. After his graduation in 1942, he remained in the college as an Instructor for another four years before he moved in 1946 to the public sector. It was the influence of this school, together with the personal interest he later developed in secular thought, that combined to transform his medieval outlook to that of a typical twentieth century man.

As far as the traditional curriculum was concerned, 'Umar gained very little in this school. But it was there that he became acquainted with modern ideas and developments in the Arab world. It was there that he was introduced to such modern Arab literary men as

Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, Aḥmad Shawqī, ʿAbbās Maḥmūd al-ʿAqqād, Taha Hussain to mention but a few. He also gained access to the works of al-Mutanabbī and Abū'l-ʿAlā' al-Maʿarrī and similar classical literary masterpieces, the study of most of which Islamic scholarship tradition often discouraged. Meanwhile, his interest in Western thoughts were being further stimulated by these Arab writers whose works can hardly be understood without some basic knowledge of European classics and modern literature.

After working for sometime, ʿUmar as the Qādī of Kaduna in 1960 attended a brief course in the Leaders' Exchange Programme in the USA. In 1961, he attended a similar course at the Institute of Administration, later affiliated to the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He was again appointed here as a Senior Instructor during which he was encouraged by the Dean of Law, Alan Milner, to register for a Diploma course. While undertaking this course, ʿUmar was dragged out of the lecture room in 1964 and posted to Maiduguri as an Inspector of the Native Court. This appointment was against his interest as well as that of the Dean who did in vain everything possible to retain him in the course.

This appointment put an abrupt end to his formal education including perhaps, a university degree course. ʿUmar became dissatisfied, the bitterness of which must, no doubt, have sharpened his enthusiasm, will and determination to regain in private what he had lost in public. Hear him weeping over the loss of a university education in compensation for which, at the sametime, he takes consolation in private study.⁴

- 1 أمن فقد علم الجامعات وفوته ومن حبه عيناك تبتدران
 2 فدمعها سكب وسمع وديمة ورش وتوكاف وتنهملان
 3 كأنهما حنفية زال سدّها وما مسهامن مصليها يدان
 4 فصبرجنا نابا لمطالعة التي تريد بها علما - ونعم المجاني

Although ‘Umar was deprived of a formal university education, a careful study of his literary output ranks him among the great scholars and literary men of all time whose erudition cannot simply be quantified in Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate degrees. In a similar situation , Alexander Pope (d.1774) being a Roman Catholic, was excluded from public school and university while William Shakespeare was almost the only Elizabethan dramatist with no university degree. Despite the non-Arab environmental constraints ‘Umar may be ranked, at least in versatility if not in literary out-put, with any of the prominent neo-classical Arab poets. His call as Qādī to which we now turn, no doubt, affords him ample opportunity and time to prosecute his intellectual ambition to a remarkable degree.

III. Career and Travels

At the request of the Emir of Zaria, Ja^Cfaru Isyaku (1937-59), ‘Umar in 1946 left the Law School where he had remained a teacher after his graduation from the school. And for the next ten years (1946-56), he was in the Zaria Native Authority as Assistant of Chief Qādī. Following the birth in 1953 of the regional government, ‘Umar became one of the first Qādīs to be appointed in Kaduna at a regional level,

in 1956. This post, he held until 1961 when he proceeded to the Institute of Administration for Leadership and a Diploma course he was not allowed to complete. He was posted to Maiduguri where he remained for six months after all efforts to persuade the regional government to allow him to complete the Diploma course had failed. From there, he was appointed one of the three Area Court judges and posted to Makurdi, now the capital of the Benue State. From here, he was transferred to Ilorin in September 1965 and two months later, to Kano where he remained as an Area Court judge until 1968. He was again transferred to Kaduna from 1968 to 1971 when he was posted, for another two years, (1971-3) to Kafanchan, and back to Kaduna.

Umar was promoted an Upper Area Court judge in 1974, two years after which in 1976, he was again transferred from Kaduna to Zaria. In September 1978, he was transferred back to Kaduna on a new appointment as a Sharia Court judge, the post he still holds to date (May, 1983). He has, since 1978, apparently settled down at Kaduna from where he attends sessions in most of the major towns of the state. Indeed, the series of appointments I had with him between May and September 1983, were sandwiched between his such various sessions in Zaria, Katsina, Dutsinma, Daura, Funtua and Kafanchan.

Travels

After attending lectures during the Leaders' Exchange programme in Washington DC in 1960, Umar made an extensive tour of almost all parts of the United States. He visited Virginia, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Chicago, Sioux City, Denver, San Francisco, Los Angeles and

Mount Palamar to see the 200-inch telescope, the largest in the world. He also visited among other places, Phoenix in Arizona, Blackstaf, Grand Canyon and New York City. On his way home, he visited London for the first time as a guest to his friend, Malam Haruna Musa, a Nigerian diplomat. Among other tourist centres, he visited the tombs of Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton in Westminster Abbey. He also performed a literary pilgrimage to Stratford-upon-Avon to see Shakespeare's Place and tomb before he returned to Nigeria visiting Spain and Portugal in transit.

On his way to America, he had earlier spent some five days in Ghana during which he was able to visit, among other places, the Guttenbung Castle to see the remains of George Fadamor, a famous African nationalist. After his return from America, he had also visited Niger Republic, calling at Aghades, one of the famous ancient learning centres in the ancient central Sudan. In 1981, Umar paid another visit to England during which he called at Downe, the birthplace of Darwin whose ideas he has professed. He also paid an intellectual homage to the very room where The Origin of Species and Descent of Man were both written. In the same year, Umar also visited Russia including Kazan, Ufa, Teshkent, Samarkand and Imām Bukhārī's tomb at Khartanak where he improvised a few verses in the visitors' notebook.

Towards the end of 1974, Umar also made an intensive tour of the mid-eastern countries visiting Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Saudi Arabia where he performed his Ḥajj. Later in the year, the Egyptian Ministry of Culture, through the Nigerian Ambassador in Cairo, Malam

Haruna Musa, invited him to participate as a literary man in the first anniversary of the death of Taha Hussain. The elegy on Taha Hussain presented by ʿUmar on the occasion was greeted with loud ovation coming as it is from a black African Arabic poet. Before he left Cairo, ʿUmar called on the family of the late Taha Hussain and held, through Ambassador Musa, a long discussion with Mrs Taha Hussain on her late husband.

In 1982 he attended an international multi-religious Disarmament Conference in Russia where he also presented the poem he had earlier composed on the world wars and peace. The audience were also delighted. It goes without saying that all these travel and career experiences have contributed to his education, thoughts and general outlook to life as reflected in his poetry.

IV. Modern Secular Thoughts in ʿUmar Ibrāhīm

Before the exposition of his literary output, it is necessary to examine in ʿUmar the scope of his modern thoughts without which his writings may not be fully comprehended. The dominating factor in ʿUmar's thought has been the marvellous intellectual development of man which has led him to the various scientific discoveries and technological inventions. These, among other things, have facilitated the exploration of the earth as well as the outer space making 'the vast part of the universe to be better known.'⁵

His revolutionary thoughts, like the Renaissance itself, began with the discovery by the Polish monk, Nicolaus Copernicus (d.1543), and the confirmation by the great Italian scientist, Galileo (d.1642),

that the earth after all, is not stationary; it revolves round the sun and rotates on its axis. This discovery, according to ‘Umar, shows that not all what our ancestors taught us was right. It also confirms that the information we receive through our senses and perceptions are not always true.

In his modern thought, ‘Umar has been influenced by a host of great world thinkers, scientists and inventors, writers and poets, leaders and reformers, discoverers and explorers, soldiers and statesmen. Some of those who have left traces on his poetry include, Plato, Aristotle, John Locke, Isaac Newton, J. J. Rousseau, Rene Descartes, Voltaire, Immanuel Kant, James Watt, William Wilberforce, Michael Faraday, John S Mill, Abraham Lincoln and Karl Marx. It can be seen here that ‘Umar is not confined to any particular field of knowledge to the exclusion of others. According to him, he has had a taste of every aspect of knowledge except music.

For ‘Umar, a poet, the complete works of Shakespeare have become another Qur’ān which he has read over and over again for not less than seventeen times. Apart from the panegyric he has composed for this mysterious English literary pride, his ideas and quotations are found everywhere in ‘Umar's dīwān. Like some modern Arab writers, ‘Umar has also been influenced by George Bernard Shaw for whom he has also composed an elegy. To ‘Umar, if Shaw had not married, he would have been called the Abū’l-‘Alā’ of the English. A particularly striking aspect of ‘Umar's thought is his belief in Sir Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution despite its condemnation by both Christianity and Islam. ‘Umar has also dedicated a panegyric to him.

The Theory of Relativity, the facts of Atom Smashing and Space Exploration are singled out by Umar as the greatest scientific achievements of our time. He explained that Einstein's theory, for example, corrects our misconceptions of space and time: 'If you can move in space for forty years at the velocity of about 93,000 miles per second', he proposed to me,

the forty years you spend in the flight
will equal 48004 of the earth years.
And when you return to the earth, you
would find it 47964 (48004-40) years
older than yourself and when you left
it. In these circumstances, the
people who sent you to the space might
be long forgotten.

He also described the potential energy sources of Atom Smashing and held Yuri Gagarin to have immortalised his name by his pioneering excursion into the space. So when in 1979, the first three American Astronauts landed on the moon, a panegyric was composed for the space heroes. Umar also described what he considered the miraculous means of transport and communication, wireless, air-craft, steamship, train, motor cars, television, radio, teleprint, radar, telephone etc, some of which he has singled out as themes in his poetry.

Turning to the dark side of our time, Umar mentioned Hitler's genocidal attempt; the Zionist Machiavellian policy in Palestine; Stalin's totalitarianism, Marxist Socialism and the two world Wars. He also discussed the contemporary polarisation of the world into 'two opposing camps, each headed by a gigantic monster, grinning with nuclear teeth and brandishing its intercontinental missile sting'. In this respect, he lamented, 'man seemed to be worse than he was, and the twentieth century might turn to be dusk rather than

dawn.

Discussing the destructive potentialities of the Hydrogen Bomb and Continental Balistic Missile, he entertained the fear that human species might eventually be wiped out of the earth. He was equally upset by most of the contemporary socio-economic problems the source of which he attributed to materialism and cupidity in a special didactic verse, al-minzār. In a poem apparently inspired by the melancholy of the devastating effects of World War II, he laments the various abortive efforts being made by the United Nations towards achieving world peace. He then threatens that we might be impelled to move to another planet in search of peace.

‘Umar also identified the various modern political thoughts and movements the fundamentals of which, according to him, were sparked off by the American War of Independence (1775), the French (1792-1802) and the Russian Revolutions (1917). The roles of Industrial Revolution and the subsequent developments in trade, industry and agriculture in modern world were also commended. He praised, above all, the eighteenth century Enlightenment, the modern concept and scope of education, the cultivation of which he accused Islamic Nigeria of neglecting simply because it came from the 'Christian' West.

This leads us to his views on Islam and most of the modern developments we have just outlined. According to ‘Umar, the role of religion from time immemorial has been to provide answers to the mysteries of life and teach people to recognise their Creator whom they must obey and worship. It also urges people to be good and

shun evil; to love one another; and to be good citizens so that they may all live together in peace. These roles are still being fulfilled by religion in many countries today. But there have always been crises whenever people attributed to religion, functions other than its own. Hence the Copernicus discovery sparked off a cold war between science and religion as the Christian Fathers tried to claim for religion, what does not belong to it.

Shāikh Umar argued that none of the revealed religions had come to teach Science, Philosophy, Technology, Politics, Economics, Astronomy or even History, a view which has been expressed by many modern Muslim reformers.⁶ When Prophet Muḥammad was asked, for example, how the crescent waxes and, later, wanes, the Qur'ān answers that 'they are seasons fixed for mankind and for the pilgrimage.'⁷ The Prophet, on another occasion, was also asked to explain how menstruation occurs, in response to which the Qur'ān says: 'They are a hurt and a pollution (adhā); keep aloof from women during menstrual periods and do not touch them until they are clean again.'⁸ If the Qur'ān were to teach Astronomy or Anatomy, according to Umar, these subjects would have been treated to the minutest details because they were being taught by God Himself.

On History, he stated that nobody knows precisely, for example, who the Qur'ānic Dhu'l-qarnayn⁹ is, or the name of which of the Pharaohs in history, was connected with Mūsā.¹⁰ In one essay he wrote in Arabic on Democracy, he attempted, like many Muslim modernists, to identify the Medina theocracy with modern democracy. But elsewhere, he cited verses of the Holy Qur'ān¹¹ which, according to him, do not teach any particular political ideology. Comparing politics,

from the Qu'rānic point of view, to farming or carpentry, he argued that no Muslim had ever become a politician in order to obtain reward in heaven. Yet, he held that the Lycugus administration in Ancient Sparta, the Plato's ideal state advocated in his Republic,¹² Monarchy or the Machiavellian politics, were incompatible with Islam.

He is of the view that Islamic Nigeria is still largely medieval in thought and outlook citing among other things, the ascendancy of the medieval educational system and what he considers, like Qāsim Amīn in Egypt, the enslavement of women. His voices, like those of his late friends, Īsā Wālī and Aminu Kano, are yet to make substantial impacts in Islamic Nigeria. Most of the ideas raised here by ʿUmar in modern Islam, are familiar themes which may be taken up in different studies. But this study hopes to present him as a literary figure and a poet in whose poetry can be heard the voices of a pagan priest, a free thinker, a philosopher, a scientist, and above all, a pious Muslim reformer.

V. His Dīwān: Ḥadīqatu 'l-Azhār

The dīwān of ʿUmar is an anthology, mainly of his own verse compositions with a few **essays** in ordinary or rhymed prose. There is one free verse poem quoted from al-^cAqqād's dīwān,¹³ on the first page of the dīwān. A number of verses and short prose in form of laudatory review (al-taqārīḏ), from eminent Nigerian Arabists who happened to have read the dīwān, are also included at the end of the anthology.¹⁴

Unlike most Nigerian traditional Arabic manuscripts, ʿUmar's

dīwān is not in folios. Neither has it been written with the local dark brown ink in Maghribi script, on light brown coarse matt paper. It is written with blue parker quink in Naskh¹⁵ script on a quarto size of modern exercise book. All the verses are fully vocalised but the prose are not. In addition to pagination, modern European punctuation marks, generally unknown in classical Arabic writings, are also introduced by ‘Umar. Brackets, instead of quotation marks, as employed by Shawqī in his dīwān, are used very often to mark foreign names and borrowed expressions. The use of colons, parentheses, exclamatory and interrogatory marks, even in verses, are common, while paragraphing and the use of period are conspicuous in prose. No use whatsoever is made of commas and semicolons in places of which periods are often employed.

The dīwān, which numbers up to 260 pages, contains verses composed on different occasions. It includes ‘Umar's earliest composition when he was just fifteen; his compositions while at the Law School; his compositions after schooling and some vacant pages for verses he is yet to compose. From this dīwān, two major works have been selected by ‘Umar for local publication.¹⁶ They include Khaṣā’iṣu ’l-Mukhtār (The Attributes of the Chosen One), a panegyric of the prophet of about 193 lines in rajaz. The other one is al-minẓār (The Telescope), a socio-political critique of contemporary Nigerian society of about 202 lines, also in rajaz.

Apart from these two works, a number of extracts from this dīwān have also been published to illustrate the twentieth-century Nigerian Arabic literature in two major pioneer works on this subject.¹⁷ Encouraged, no doubt, by ‘Umar's elegy for Taha Hussain in

1974, the Egyptian Monthly, al-'idhā^c a wa 'l-talīfīzyūn¹⁸ has also published some few extracts of this dīwān. Along with some other Nigerian verses, the article in which they are published is entitled al-wān mina 'l-'adabi 'l-'Arabī fī Nayjīriya. It was the Waziri of Sokoto, Junaid b Muḥammad al-Bukhārī, however, in the commendation he wrote on the anthology, that gives it the name, Hadīqatu 'l-Azhār (The Garden of Flowers):¹⁹

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | فرح الفؤاد وقرت العينان | بكتابك الموسوم بالديوان |
| 2 | تبدو المعان في حلاه كأنها | زهر الربيع يلوح في الأغصان |
| 3 | سميته بجديقة الأزهار أو | سميته بتلائد العقبان |

VI. Specific Influences of Modern Arab Poets on 'Umar

It is worth emphasising here that 'Umar's interest in Western thoughts must have further been stimulated by the modern Arab writers, the echoes of whose voices can be heard in his Hadīqa. The dīwān on its first page, is prefaced by the same nine free verses with which al-'Aqqād has also introduced his dīwān. We also read in its introduction, in place of the traditional doxology after al-basmala, another sixteen-line verses quoted from al-'Aqqād's al-ḥubbu 'l-'awwal.²⁰

In his introduction, 'Umar states that the aim of his composition is to entertain himself. He is, however, delighted that he must, in the course of that, have embarked on reviving Arabic which has been abandoned to wallow in utter negligence even some time in Egypt let .

alone in Nigeria. To buttress his point, he quotes from the verses of the Nile poet, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, his response in 1903 to the call made by some officers of the Colonial Government that the colloquial, in place of literary Arabic, be adopted.²¹ According to some British Officers in Egypt, it was this Qur'ānic Arabic, like Latin in medieval Europe, that was responsible for the literary and scientific backwardness of the Arabs.

In addition to frequent quotations from these Arab writers, most of the modern themes on which 'Umar has composed are also found in their various anthologies. Reflecting the influence on him of Western literature, 'Umar has composed an elegy for G B Shaw to whom al-^cAqqād has also devoted a whole volume.²² He also composed a panegyric for Shakespeare, a number of whose works feature very prominently in the anthologies of Ḥāfiẓ,²³ Shawqī,²⁴ and for whom al-^cAqqād has also dedicated another volume.²⁵ Other themes in the Hadīqa which are found in some of these modern Arabs' works include a panegyric for Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh,²⁶ while the description of Cairo, Paris and Tokyo by Shawqī²⁷ also recalls 'Umar's description of Kano. 'Cinematography', 'Outpouring' (al-naftha) and 'Democracy' to which al-^cAqqād has also devoted another volume²⁸ are all themes in the Hadīqa.²⁹

Apart from themes, the use of language, images, styles and ideas, generally derived from modern inventions, secular thoughts and Western classics or modern literary tradition are also common. A particularly exotic feature traceable, no doubt, to the influence of Shakespeare, is the predominance of Greek mythological sub-themes and

images which are also found in the Ḥadīqa. In addition to his poem, 'Venus on the Corpse of Adonis', al-^CAqqād also composed another poem addressed to Venus,³⁰ who is frequently the symbol of love. 'Umar's familiarity with these and the works of Shakespeare, Venus and Adonis, in particular, are likely to have inspired in him, the use of Venus and Cupid as symbols of love in his Ḥadīqa. It is equally interesting, for example, to compare the description by Ḥāfiẓ of a railway journey, or Aḥmad Shawqī's journey in a steamer, with 'Umar's imaginary journey in a train from Zaria to Sokoto.³¹ They can all be described as a modern version of the pre-Islamic poet's journey on a camel, galloping across the wilderness, to the desolate encampment of his mistress:

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | فلا تحسبن أن الطريق قصير | لماذا التواني سائقى لا تسير |
| 2 | ففى كبدى شئء ثقيل كبير | ولا تعذرن هذا القطار بسرعة |
| 3 | فإن لظاه فى الفؤاد تغور | الم ترحبا من هناك يجرنى |
| 4 | أظنك حرباء لبطء قطار | إذا التهبت من حرّ ذلك جوانحى |
| 5 | إلى بلدة فيها جنيد الوزير | فكل منى نفسى المسير بسرعة |
| 6 | تودبها ريش الشوق تطير | فهاهى ولهى من تأخره الذى |
| 7 | حوته لهذا فى الخيال أزور | تعذر زورى فى الحقيقة بلدة |
| 8 | ففيها الشفاما حوته الصدور | ركبت قطار الحب سوكون تو مقصدى |

It is striking, however, to observe that despite the overwhelming influences of these Arab writers on 'Umar, he has not attempted, like most Nigerian traditional poets, to compose a mu^Cāraḍa of any of their

poems. Indeed, whenever, they are quoted, such quotations are often included in parentheses; the voice of 'Umar is always distinctive from the echoes of other poets. Writing on 'Cinematography', for example, al-^cAqqād has the following opening lines which may be compared with 'Umar's verses on the same subject.³² Apart from the metre, al-ṭawīl, which they both share, it is very difficult to see any other point of similarity by which 'Umar's poem may be considered a mu^cāraḍa:

1	أُتَشْبِاحُ جَنِّ تَلْكَ تَظْهَرُ لِلْأَنْسِ	بِرَبِّكَ مَاذَا فِي سَتَائِرِ الطَّلَسِ
2	تَفْرُقُ فِرَارَ الْجِنِّ مِنْ طَلْعَةِ الشَّمْسِ	إِذَا لَمْ تَكُنْ جِنًّا فَمَا إِلَى عَهْدَتِهَا
3	فَنَوَامِئِ الْأَسْرَارِ تَخْفَى عَلَى النَّفْسِ	لَسْتُ وَرَوَ كُنْ يَكْشِفُ النُّورَ عِنْدَنَا
4	مَصَوْرَةَ لِلنَّاسِ فِي عَالَمِ الْحَسِ	كَأَنِّي أَرَى فِيهَا قَرِيْبَةَ شَاعِرِ

The same is true if Hāfiẓ Ibrahim's panegyric for Muḥammad 'Abduh, composed in al-ṭawīl, is compared with that of 'Umar for 'Abduh, which is in al-rajazu 'l-majzū.³³

VII. Modern Literary Innovations in the Ḥadīqa

A. Poetry

If poetry as discussed in chapter three cannot completely free itself from religious tradition among the Arab Muslims, no substantial modernization, therefore, may be expected from Nigeria where Arabic literature has remained, from time, an exclusive function of Islamic

culture. ‘Umar, the only remarkable Nigerian modern poet, so far, has depended above all, for his modern literary innovations, mainly on the neo-classical Arab writers above whose standard it is practically impossible for him to rise. He does not appear to have been influenced by either the Mahjar or Apollo schools whose contributions have nursed romanticism in Arabic literature to maturity. Neither has he reflected in his dīwān, the spirits of the nationalist or socialist realism, committed or surrealist literatures, nor the 'modern poetry' which has lately emerged.

‘Umar could possibly have beaten the Arab neo-classicists since he is in direct contact with Western thoughts as demonstrated by his adherence to Darwinism which most of these Arabs have carefully avoided. But this hope is completely shattered by some major constraints which ‘Umar could do nothing to remove. In addition to the impacts of the non-Arab environment, the modernization of Arabic literature or even Islam, in contemporary Nigerian political culture described in the last chapter, is possible only at individual or secular institutional levels. And even at such levels, the strength of religious tradition, as an obstacle before all modernizing currents, has also been highlighted in the last chapter.

Most important perhaps is that ‘Umar, whose writings we are studying, is a Qādī with traditional Islamic training on which modern secular thoughts have been superimposed. In this respect, his use of Arabic, the poetic diction in particular, the command of which he had traditionally acquired before his eventual contact with Western thought, is another crucial factor which must have preserved

the traditional outlook of his writings. It has not been possible to evolve a brand of 'Nigerian Arabic' while modern poetic diction was still in the making at the neo-classical stage of modern Arabic literature by which he has been influenced.

Apart from the erotic prelude which has virtually been eliminated, most of the essential features of the classical qaṣīda are retained in ʿUmar's poetry. The traditional concept of poetry as a craft to be consciously imitated is reflected in two of ʿUmar's early compositions before his contact with modern literary ideas. These include a Takhmīs³⁴ of a panegyric for ʿUmar Wālī, originally composed by ʿAlī Nāfatī. There is also al^Caqd, meant to be a mnemonic device from another work, Durrātu 'l-yāqūt.³⁵ There is no tarbī^C while my efforts to trace a mu^Cāraḍa are not likely to be rewarded.

This absence of mu^Cāraḍa or similar methods of composing poetry by playing the sedulous ape which disappear in ʿUmar's dīwān after his contact with modern thoughts should be seen as a literary innovation. It is indeed, another aspect of his modern literary feature that whenever quotations (al-taḍmīn, al-iqtibās, al-talmīḥ) are made, they are usually indicated by brackets. Other European punctuation marks have similarly been introduced by ʿUmar into Nigerian Arabic writings. Chronogram tradition, the opening and closing doxology, the art of playing on letters, are all displayed, even in some of his verses on modern themes.

Of the sixteen classical metres, I have been able to identify eight in ʿUmar's poetry. They include, in order of frequency, al-rajaz in all its different forms. This is followed by the heroic metre,

al-ṭawīl and al-mutaqārib. Others include al-kāmil, al-wāfir, al-basīṭ, al-ramal and al-hazaj.³⁶ They are all employed in their traditional forms the only innovation being the introduction by ʿUmar, of the strophic verses (al-muwashshahāt) which were rarely used in Nigerian traditional verses. As much as possible, he has avoided committing such poetic faults as al-ikfāʾ, al-iqwāʾ or al-ʾīṭāʾ. But he has apparently broken through the enjambment (al-taḍmīn) to compose some narrative verses. Grammatical faults, except when compelled by prosody, are very rare.

No traces are seen, however, of blank verses (al-shiʿru ʾl-mursal), poetry in prose (al-shiʿru ʾl-manthūr) or any form of free verses (al-shiʿru ʾl-hurr or al-Shiʿru ʾl-muṭlaq). While ʿUmar is not unacquainted with these modern verses, his failure to attempt using them might be due to many reasons: Apart from personal literary taste, most of these poetic forms were still in the making during the neo-classical and pre-romantic stages of modern Arabic poetry by which ʿUmar had mainly been influenced. It may be recalled here that there are up to five varieties of modern verse forms before the eventual emergence after World War II of the contemporary definite form described in chapter three. And this itself is yet to be finally codified and generally accepted. How then could ʿUmar have embarked on using these new poetic forms?

Traditional images, style and diction, generally predominate but there are frequent uses of words and images derived from modern secular thoughts, technological inventions and Western literary tradition. In certain cases, some of these images, by their secular and pagan orientation, have appeared to undermine Islamic traditional

teachings. Consider the use of the ancient Roman god and goddess of love, Venus and Cupid, as symbols in lines two and seven of the following amatory verses.³⁷

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | وكيف يضر الحسد صفة حبنا | وقد صانه بالحفظ من عنده الحكم |
| 2 | لعنتم بما جئتم من المين حظكم | به البغض من فيثوس والسحق والإثم |
| 3 | أيا حب أنزل من جهات كثيرة | وخذنا أسارى طائعين كد الغنم |
| 4 | وياخل أنزل من رحيقك مشربا | أقبله قد راقني ذلك اللثم |
| 5 | تمنيت على اللثم يمتد دائما | ويبقى بقاء العمر بل فوق لا إثم |
| 6 | فأخي معا إن زار موت نمت معا | نشاطر قبيرا يلثم العظم العظم |
| 7 | فذلك في دين الهوى خير ميتة | إلى عرش - كيوفيدا - لذكومونسيوا |
| 8 | نعم ذاك في شرع الهوى هو منتهى | منى من يقاسى العشق بل نعم الحتم |

In one of the series of elegies composed for his grandmother, Sauda,³⁸ Umar recalls the concept of transmigration of soul (al-tanāsukh) and wishes that the soul of her grandmother reincarnates. Being the underlying belief in the cult of the ancestral worship, this concept is redolent of paganism. Its use, like those of the pagan gods in the above verses, therefore, constitutes a literary innovation and a move towards secularising Arabic literature in Nigeria:

ياموت ما أقساک تح
 هندوس زعموا التنا
 ستار الجميل الغاليا
 سخ ليت ترجع ثانيا

In another elegy for Sauda, the force of the calamity wrought by the event of her death was capable of blowing out Kilimanjaro (5895m), the highest mountain in Africa. At the same time, the heat of the fire erupting from the Etna volcano in Sicily is nothing before it. 'Umar would also want the figure of his grandmother shown in cinema and her voice relayed by phonograph. Along these modern images can also be seen the famous Islamic poetess, Tumādir bint^cAmr (Al-Khansā') who, if she were Sauda's sister, would not have, even once, remembered her brother, Ṣakhr, for whom she had composed her famous elegy. He then laments that human life is not under man's firm control and compares his grandmother's death with that of the medieval Islamic female saint, Rābi^catu 'l-^cadawiyya. Like other Nigerian poets, 'Umar also includes a chronogrammatic verse in this elegy.³⁹

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | ليذهب من زلزله كيليمنجرا | لقد جل هذا الخطب حتى كأنه |
| 2 | وأضحى لهيب النار من حره صفرا | وبركان إثنان تفجر دونه |
| 3 | لما ذكرت في الشعر لومرة صخرا | ولو كانت الخنساء أختا السوداء |
| 4 | لأعطيت من مالي لصاحبها العشر | الا ليتها سيمما ترى فلم تشكلها |
| 5 | فأعطيتك في كل الحروف به أجر | أفانغرا إفا إحك لي مثل صوتها |
| 6 | لقاسمتها حظي وأعطيتها الشطر | الا لوحياة المرء في تحت حكمه |
| 7 | فرابعة العدوئية سكنت قبر | ولكن لها فيه اقتداء بمن مضى |
| 8 | أبدا لكما - لاقتة أي سنة الهجرا | وفي - مرحبا يا سود والدارجنة |

In a panegyric composed for Waziri Junaid of Sokoto, 'Umar has also proceeded to praise him in a modern fashion after the opening verses which recalls the classical erotic prelude. Waziri for example, is no longer bahru 'l-cilm but a larger river than Missouri, a tributary of Mississippi, the longest river in the world. Mixing tradition with modernism in a balanced proportion, 'Umar compares to that of al-Jarīr, the poetic talent of the Waziri in admiration of which William Shakespeare himself would have clapped his hands.⁴⁰

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | ومن دونه طولاً وعرضاً مسوراً | إذا هون نهر كد ما تح مائه |
| 2 | فهو ساء بأمثال الوزير فخور | تمتع سمعى بالقصائد قالها |
| 3 | كما ساقها في الشرق طوعاً جريراً | يسوق المعاني كيف شاء طبيعة |
| 4 | يصدق إعجاباً به شكسبير | ويبتكر المنوال في حوكه بيته |

Both Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm and al-^cAqqād whose influences on 'Umar are proverbial are known to have composed poems on wine⁴¹ but no such theme, obviously for religious tradition, exists in the Ḥadīqa. Boasting, where it exists as a sub-theme, like in those verses in which 'Umar was boasting of his ancestors, is openly denied for the same reason. Pride goeth before a fall. There are also traces in some of 'Umar's amatory verses, of satire, which suffers the same fate for the same reason. Consider the following few lines:⁴²

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | فلا يعتري ما بيننا من هوى عدم | ألا أيها الأعداء موتو بغيبظكم |
| 2 | نجيا فواد إن نوى ذلك الجسم | يقولون هجر أوقلى لا كذبتمو |

3 لقد كذبوا فيما يقولون ثم لا يبالي بنبح الكلب لما سماها النجم
4 وكيف يضر الأسد صفة حينا وقد صاناه بالحفظ من عنده الحكم

But ‘Umar has broken through tradition to compose a successful love poem which tradition would normally have frowned upon as an abomination (faḥshā’). There is no Taṣawwuf or Zuhdiyāt as a theme but gnomic verses exist as sub-themes in didactic verses. Whether the themes are traditional or modern in content, it is important to note that they are generally distinguished by wealth of ideas, from the traditional monolithic compositions ruled mainly by ṣūfī ethos.

Among the modern themes decked in panegyric include Darwin's Theory of Evolution, William Shakespeare, Space Exploration and Muḥammad ‘Abduh's Reform in Egypt. Elegies have also been composed for George Bernard Shaw as well as for Taha Hussain. Technological inventions, the modern world crises namely, the World Wars and the search for peace, have all been described in verses. Reflecting his modern geographical and biological sciences, ‘Umar has also discussed, in form of riddles, the effects of the revolution of the earth, its rotation and some aspects of unicellular organism and asexual reproduction.

A wealth of the knowledge of Western classics and Greek mythology are demonstrated in a number of didactic, gnomic and occasional themes. But a particular curious subject in ‘Umar's erudition is Astronomy, which is likely to have been introduced to him by his great grandfather's work. In his Ḥadīqa, ‘Umar has also

demonstrated this science by not less than ninety verses composed on the Halley's Comet. While most of these poetic themes are still lyrical in form, ʿUmar has also introduced a few narrative, along with descriptive verses. No attempt whatsoever has, however, been made to compose epic or drama verses. It is regrettable that only a few representative extracts of these themes can be displayed, within the scope of this thesis, in the following pages:

A. Panegyric

I. Shaikh Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849-1905)

A particular outstanding modern theme in the Ḥadīqa is the panegyric composed for Muḥammad ʿAbduh, one of the foremost modern Islamic reformers in Egypt. A typical traditional ode in form, diction and image, the significance of this panegyric to this study does not lie, certainly, in its literary appreciation. It is in the role of Muḥammad ʿAbduh which no serious study of modern Islam can afford to ignore. His presence as a theme in the Ḥadīqa must, therefore, be interpreted as the corner stone of its modern trend.

Born in 1849 under the full light of Muḥammad ʿAlī's modern reform in Egypt, Muḥammad ʿAbduh⁴³ came to prominence in 1871 as a disciple of Jamālu ʿl-dīn al-Afghānī (d.1897). Both of them may be included among the founding fathers of modern Islam. Al-Afghānī was famous for his bitterness over the European encroachment on the Ottoman Islamic Caliphate. Moving from Afghanistan to India and from India through Egypt to Constantinople, London, Paris and back to Turkey through Persia, he advocated unsuccessfully, for a world

Islamic State which he thought might check the growing European expansionist foreign policy.⁴⁴

Influenced by al-Afghānī, Muḥammad ʿAbduh had also begun to write articles in al-Ahrām, criticising the Turco-Circassian rule and its British ally in the 1870s in Egypt. He was, therefore, accused of complicity in the ʿUrābī nationalist revolt in 1882. He was arrested, imprisoned, maltreated and sentenced to exile for some three years. While in exile in 1884, he joined forces with his mentor, al-Afghānī, in Paris to launch, for over eight months, an anti-British and pan-Islamic political propaganda through a magazine, al-ʿurwatu ʿl-wuḥqā,⁴⁵ which the British government did not allow entry into Egypt.

Between 1888 when he returned to Egypt and 1905 when he died, Muḥammad ʿAbduh occupied a series of public posts through which he was able to carry out his Islamic reform at various levels. In 1888 he was made a judge in the Native Tribunals from which he was promoted, the following year, to the Mufti of Egypt. In this capacity, he was able to interpret the Sharīʿa in the light of modern thought. A member of the Egyptian Legislative Council, and for ten years, a prominent member of the Administrative Council for al-Azhar, he was able to introduce modern secular subjects which eventually transformed the ancient Islamic Seminary. In addition to his various articles in al-Ahrām, his editorial contributions to al-ʿurwatu ʿl-wuḥqā, and the first Egyptian Government Gazette, al-waqāʿi al-miṣriyya, Muḥammad ʿAbduh's ideas are contained in a special periodical, al-Manār, launched in 1897 by his principal

disciple, Rashīd Riḍā (d.1935) who also wrote three volumes of his biography. He also left a number of works including his famous Risālatu 'l-tawḥīd and an interpretation of the Qur'ān in the light of modern thoughts, jointly written by Rashīd Riḍā.⁴⁶

The leading ideas of his reform movement, which have continued to reverberate throughout the length and breadth of modern Islamic world as summarised by Professor Gibb include: the purification of Islam from corrupting influences and practices generally held to have been introduced by Sufism and the Ottoman Empire; the reformation of Muslim higher education; the reformation of Islamic doctrine in the light of modern thought, and the defence of Islam against European influences and Christian attacks.⁴⁷ Unlike Taha Hussain, however, his literary contributions are generally overshadowed by his religious reform. For this reason, he is remembered today as the fourteenth-century (AH) Islamic reformer, by popular tradition. He has, therefore, according to 'Umar in his panegyric, come in fulfilment of that Prophetic tradition when the community of the Prophet were in a deep slumber from which he woke them up. Reconciling revelation with reason, he revived, like the son of Mary, the corpses of the Muslims and strengthened their will:⁴⁸

- 1 قال النبي أحمد في مائة مجلد
 2 يخرج منكم مرشد ومصالح لتهدوا
 3 أيًا محمد عبدكم فأنت أنت القائد
 4 ووقفت بين الدين والحق عقل استقام الأود

5 بالعروة الوثقى جمع ت شملهم محمد
 6 أيقظتهم من رقدة غطيها مندد
 7 أحيت - كابن مريم - وفات ميت يلحد

ii. Darwin's Theory of Evolution

In 1859, Sir Charles Darwin published his revolutionary works, The Origin of Species, and in 1871, The Descent of Man, in which he applied his Theory of Evolution to the origin of man. Human being, according to Darwin, has descended from the same stock as the old world monkeys of which the primates - gorilla and the chimpanzee - are living examples.⁴⁹ This idea appears to contradict both the Biblical and Qur'ānic concept of creation of the first man from mud.⁵⁰ The theory has, therefore, remained anathema, even in Western culture especially to the religious men.

After it had generated a storm of controversy in Western world, Darwin's theory was diffused to the Arab world where it became popular through al-muqtaṭaf, one of the pioneer educational journals founded in 1876 by two lecturers from the Syrian Protestant College, now the American University of Beirut.⁵¹ Its early exponents in the Arab world, not unexpectedly had, therefore, been among the Christians of whom the Lebanese Dr Shiblī Shumayyil (d.1917) and the Coptic Salāma Mūsā (d.1958) may be mentioned. With the introduction of Western education in Nigeria and the contact with modern Arab world, this theory has also gained currency among some Nigerian scholars

who have reacted, not surprisingly, against it.⁵²

‘Umar, however, does not see any contradiction between this theory and that of the Qur’ān which, according to him, has not come to teach Biology. It is important to point out here that his adherence to Darwinism is not owed to any Arab Muslim writers, none of whom has adhered to this doctrine. ‘Umar also informed me that he was not influenced by either Shumayyil or Salāma Mūsā and that his source has remained the two Darwin's works above mentioned. To ‘Umar, therefore, Darwin is a messenger sent to the whole universe with revelations extended to him by nature. And quite unlike the Qur’ān, no verses of Darwin's messages have been abrogated; so whoever among creatures fails to obey them is doomed to perish.

العلامة الطبيعي دروين

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | تقصير عن تبليغها العرب والعجم | أدروين قد بلغت فينا رسالة |
| 2 | فصدقه الأجسام واللحم والدم | رسول أمدته الطبيعة وحيها |
| 3 | ⁵³ وقبل لقاحوا في الأرض آدم | وأنبأنا عما جرى قبل خلقنا |
| 4 | يدين بها إنس وطير وأنعم | فأثبت من وحي الطبيعة شرعة |
| 5 | بتصديقه في ما يقول ومنجم | وهذي الجبال الشامخات تواترت |
| 6 | فما برحت تدنو إليه وتسلم | كذاك النباتات الثوابت بيننا |
| 7 | فأمن عظم ثم وافقه فم | وما كفرت بالوحي منه هياكل |
| 8 | وما فوقها أضعافها تتجسم | "فروتفلزم" ⁵⁴ أصل لأنواح حيننا |

- 9 نعم وجراثيم المنى ونشرها
 10 تملأ فيه من-أميبا-⁵⁵ وترتقى
 11 توافق دروينا الشرح سؤالنا
 12 نزاع البقاء ثم البقاء لأصلح⁵⁶
 13 فها تيك آيات وما ثم ناسخ
 14 وسل إن تشا الإنسان أسباب ملكه
 15 وسل إن تشا "داينسو"⁵⁷ انقراضها
 16 فلا غرو أن قد صدق العقل قوله
 17 وكرم دروينا ودون اسمه
 9 وطور ترقىها البيان تعلم
 10 إلى صاحبات الندى والخلق أحكم
 11 فمن أين أصل الحى فالأمر مبهم
 12 فهذا اختيار للطبيعة تحكم
 13 محاهها ومن لم يتلمها غاله العدم
 14 فها هو أقوى الحى أعلى وأنعم
 15 لإهاله بالدرس بالعدم ينقم
 16 فقره العلم الحديث وعالم
 17 وأعلن: هذا صار من يعظم

iii. William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Since no contemporary world literature including Arabic has been able to dispense with European classics and modern literature, the inclusion of Shakespeare as a theme in the Hadiqa should be considered another corner stone of its modern trend. 'Umar's elegy for George Bernard Shaw as well as most of his knowledge of the classical history and Greek mythology displayed in his didactic verses should also be seen in the same light. As discussed in chapter three, modern Arabic poetry cannot be fully understood without some basic knowledge of Western classics and modern literature. Finding himself in this situation, 'Umar must have been encouraged to plunge into these European subjects by his craving for knowledge in abundance. He could also have dabbled into cultivating the works of such European romantic

writers as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley or Byron if only he had been encouraged. Coming as it is from a Qāḍī without a formal university degree, this introduction of Shakespeare into Nigerian poetry should be commended as a literary revolution.

A son of an alderman, John Shakespeare, William was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon where he attended a grammar or free school. He could not proceed to university like most of his contemporary Elizabethan dramatists. He is, therefore, variously reported to have been apprenticed to a butcher or served as an attorney's clerk. About the age of eighteen, he got married to the twenty-six-year old Anne Hathaway who bore him three children. Described by one writer as a social failure in his home town, William abandoned his wife and three children for London in search of fortune.

As a youngman, William was acquainted in Stratford with different theatrical performances by itinerant troupes for most of which his father, as a Bailiff, had acted as patron. On his arrival in London in 1592, he joined the Globe Theatre, one of the leading playhouses where he remained as an actor and a playwright until 1611 when he retired to Stratford. He died in 1616 and was buried in the Chancel of Stratford Church where his tomb was visited by 'Umar in 1961.

' An outstanding figure in the history of English literature - and possibly of the world', William Shakespeare wrote thirty-seven plays most of which have been translated into various world languages. His deep understanding of mankind is generally held to have immortalized his masterpieces which, like the Holy Scriptures, have continued to fire the imagination of their readers across the

ages. In his famous tribute to him, his friend and contemporary writer, Ben Jonson says 'he was not of an age, but for all time'. Although William has written both comedy and tragedy in prose and verses, he is famous for his tragedies which are often considered the culmination of the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. His Hamlet , Othello , Macbeth , and King Lear , in particular, are considered the four greatest tragedies in the world.

Having read his complete works for no less than seventeen times, Umar compares their taste to mango which, to him, is the sweetest fruit in Nigeria. He praises the genius of these literary masterpieces, ten of which he mentions 'not because the others are inferior'. Eulogising his peerlessness, Umar contends that William Shakespeare is not a pride only for the English but for mankind in general. And should the inhabitants of the outer space braggingly attempt to claim any superiority over the inhabitants of this earth, his poetry alone would have restrained their haughtiness. Read the following extract to hear more of what Umar has to say about Shakespeare:

شكسبير

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | يدركنهر الخلد" ماشانه سكر | كتابك"منغو" ⁵⁸ ام هو الشهد ام نهر |
| 2 | يعود حسير كلما غاصه السبر | أم الوحى وحى العقل كالبحر كثرة |
| 3 | وأعوز فرسان الفصاحة ذالقعر | وتسكب من نخ غمامة حكمة |
| 4 | من اللفظ والمعنى ولونسجه مر | وتعجب كل القارئيه حلاوة |
| 5 | وتحسب لابل شعره فاقه النثر | وتحسب أن الشعر قد فاق نثره |

- 6 وطلع كد "أثلو" اوكد "سينز" و"جوليت" "كرايلنس"⁵⁹ بددهشكد في لفظها بهر
- 7 "ليا" و"أدونس" نغصب لكريس "مكبث" وهملت ووحلم الصيف⁶⁰ يعجبك القعر
- 8 ومن عجب مهمما قرأت مكررا يزدك من الأفراح من خمره همير
- 9 أشكبير كل العصر والأرض والقلم توافقت الأفكار: قد صعب النظر
- 10 ولو تتغنى الحور في الخلد شعره لزد لحوار العين من نغمه حبر
- 11 ولورام سكان النجوم تفاخرا على أهل هذي الأرض مغزاهم النصر
- 12 نقدم - إن جاءوا - كتابك وحده خيكبتهم عن فخرهم شعرك الشدر
- 13 وطالب بن جونسن⁶¹ أوز بابيعة وارغم كل الناس إعجازك الوتر
- 14 ولا غرو قول الإنجليز اختياره على ملكهم لو خيروا: شعره خير
- 15 قد اشتد تبه الحاسدين فانكروا: أيخدق "بحر الهادئ" الجعفر النزر
- 16 لذا وهبوا "يكون" و"بير"⁶² وغيرهم ولكن عرض الغتر لم يلق السبير
- 17 متى قورنت أشعارهم وكتابه كتابته ميل كتابتهم ختر
- 18 ل"سترفورد"⁶³ بين البلاد فخارة لإيجاد هذي الشمس روضتها قبر

iv. Space Exploration

One of the outstanding scientific achievements of our time has been the space exploration which culminated in the landing of the American Astronauts on the moon in 1969. Like any other person, Umar was sufficiently inspired by this feat to the extent that his poetic muses, after nine years of hibernation, became active once again:⁶⁴

Why wouldn't the July event of this year, being the greatest technological accomplishment of man so far kindle the dullness of poetic feelings? But put aside the kindling of the dullness (of the feelings). I am inclined to think that this marvellous technological feat is capable of reviving the dead or generate feelings from where none had existed.

These are the feelings of 'Umar when he began to compose his single acrostic panegyric verses in al-mutaqārib to spell out the names of the three Astronauts to whom they are dedicated.

Apart from the secular importance of its subject matter which, like Darwinism, has been declared anathema by some Nigerian Malams, the circumstances surrounding its composition is also a modern trend. It established that 'Umar is not among the prosodist-versifiers described by al-^CAqqād; he does not compose simply because he must do so to exhibit his craft of Carūd and qāfiya. Neither does he compose in imitation of a master, a departure from Nigerian literary tradition. Not unexpectedly, however, this brilliant innovation has been presented in acrostic form, a medieval style disparaged by Nu^Caima as a verbal acrobatic feat. The following verses dedicated to Neil Armstrong give the taste of the rest of the acrostic verses:

65

نيل أرمسترونغ

- ن - نزلت..! انزلت بسطح القمر وفيت لـ (جون) ⁶⁶ وعده المنتظر تظر¹
- ي - يليق بنا أن نقوم احتراماً لحق الجليل جليل القدر قدر²
- ل - لـ (نيل) شرف يالها من شرف فباه بحق به وافخرتخر³

- أ - إليك... إليك نزيل القمر
 ر - رفعت بلادك رفعا عظيما
 م - مددت - كما قلت - خطوا قصيرا
 س - سرى البرق بالصوت من فوقنا
 ن - تكلم (نكسن)⁶⁸ بمدح البطول
 ر - رئيس يحيى مجل كبيرا
 و - وهبت لأمریکا قطرا جديدا
 ن - نرى طرق النجم مفتوحة
 غ - غببت الزيارة ذاك المكان
- 4 يسوق التحيات شوقا (عمر)
 5 وفي تحتها قمر استقر
 6 ولكنه وثب جنس البشر⁶⁷
 7 ملئنا سرورا بهذا الخبر
 8 ووجه الرئيس بهما وزدهر
 9 ممثلا آدم سطح القمر
 10 عطاء (كوليبوس)⁶⁹ قليل الخطر
 11 فاعظم بغايتها المقتدر
 12 فيا ليت شعري هل انتصر؟

b. Elegy

i. Taha Hussain (1889-1973)

Two other significant compositions in the Hadīqa include the elegies for Taha Hussain and Bernard Shaw, two literary celebrities in both modern Arabic and English literatures. The pre-eminence of Taha Hussain in modern Arabic literature is comparable to that of Muḥammad 'Abduh in modern Islam. No serious study of modern Arabic literature, therefore, can equally afford to omit his contributions. He was the Professor of Arabic literature and Dean of Arts at the most psychological period when Arabic literature was at the crossroad as discussed in chapter three.

Taha Hussain was born in 1889 two years after which he lost his sight to ophthalmia. After his Qur'ānic education in the village

kuttāb, he attended al-Azhar which was still permeated by medieval literary tradition. Dissatisfied with al-Azhar's scholarship tradition, he studied French and enrolled in the European staffed modern Egyptian University. Here in 1914, he obtained his first degree having submitted a dissertation on Abū'l-^CAlā' al-Ma^Carrī. In 1915, he proceeded, on scholarship, to France where he enrolled for his higher studies at Sorbonne University. He studied Classics, History, French literature and literary criticism with a doctoral thesis on the Social Philosophy of Ibn Khaldūn.

From 1919 when he returned to Egypt until his death in 1973, he was virtually at the centre of all literary and academic movements. He was first appointed the Professor of Classical History and Literature, a course he considered the basis for the European literary culture. In 1925, he was transferred to the Professorship of Arabic literature from which, four years later, he rose to the Dean of Arts. Meanwhile, he had also become the literary editor of al-Siyāsa, a political newspaper founded in 1922 by a newly formed Constitutional Party of which he was a member. During World War II, he was appointed a top Administrative Officer in the Ministry of Education and from 1950 until ^CAbdu 'l-Nāṣir's revolution in 1952, he was the Minister of Education under the Wafd party.

In addition to his educational reform at all levels including his role in founding the University of Alexandria, the first Rector of which he became, the versatility of his literary productions, like that of al^CAqqād, is simply overwhelming. They include translations into and from French works and literature in particular, editorial

reviews and writing of literary essays most of which were later compiled into volumes such as the Hadīthu 'l-'arbi^{cā} and Hāfiz wa Shawqī⁷⁰. He also wrote short stories, historical novels, autobiography, social and political works, most of which are ruled by his critical thoughts for which he is best known.

His criticism of Arabic literary tradition began with his study of Abū'l-^cAlā' in the introduction of which he attacks the methods of teaching Arabic literature in Egypt. His autobiography is also full of criticism of the Kuttāb and the Shaikhs of al-Azhar. In 1926 this criticism climaxed in a work, Fi'l-shi^cri 'l-Jāhilī. Applying historical, linguistic and all the logic and scepticism of Rene Descartes, he was able to prove that most of the pre-Islamic Arabic poetry were forged by the early Muslims:⁷¹

... وأقول شيء، أنجؤك به في هذا الحديث هو أنني شككت في قيمة الشعر الجاهلي وأبحث في الشك، أو قل ألح على الشك، فأخذتُ أبحث وأفكر وأقرأ وأتدبر، حتى انتهى بي هذا كله إلى شيء، إلا يكن يقينا فهو قريب من اليقين. ذلك أن الكثرة المطلقة مما نسميه شعرا جاهليا ليست من الجاهلية في شيء، وإنما هي متحلة مختلفة بعد ظهور الإسلام، فهي إسلامية تمثل حياة المسلمين وميولهم وأهوائهم أكثر مما تمثل حياة الجاهليين... ولا أضعف عن أن أعلن إليك وإلى غيرك من القراء أن ما تقرؤوه على أنه شعرا امرئ القيس

أو طرفة وابن كلثوم أو عنتره ليس من هؤلاء الناس في شيء
 وإنما هو انتقال الرواة أو اختلاق الأعراب أو صنعة النحاة أو
 تكلف القصاص أو اختراع المفسرين والمحدثين والمتكلمين....

A threat to the authenticity of the whole Arabic-Islamic literary tradition as it were, this book was violently criticized by the Shaikhs. As the result of this criticism it was withdrawn from circulation, reviewed, and republished as Fi 'l-'adabi 'l-Jāhili in 1927 with its critical orientation. Some of his critical views on the Arabic literary theory are common references in this study. On the first anniversary of his death, Shaikh Umar, through his friend, Haruna Musa, the then Nigerian Ambassador in Cairo, was invited by the Egyptian Ministry of Culture to participate in the celebration. The following extract is taken from the elegy he presented on the occasion:

1	ولا يرجع الحزن الكبير إذا مرّ	أياد مع قف- لا ينفع الدم لو دُرّ-
2	ولو صبّ من مجراه ما يملأ البحر	أياد ولا يسمع الميت الدفين بكاءنا
3	وإن روض الآداب أنواعها طرّاً	ولا بد ولو كان ذاعقيل كبير كطهنا
4	وإن زينت أنوار أفكاره مصرّاً	ولو وإن كان قهار الظلام بجهدّه
5	فتختار من أزرّت محابره الدرّ	وإن أيا موت ما هذا التافس بيننا
5	فتختار من أزرّت محابره الدرّ	أياموت ما هذا التافس بيننا
6	يقول جميع الناس "طه بها أخرى"	ومن- حينها الآداب تطلب عمدة-

- 7 أفي عالم الأرواح نَمَّ مدارس يصير عميداً ثم يملؤها نورا
 8 أفي برزخ الأموات عصر كجاهلي وآدابه الأرواح لم تحسن الذكر
 9 أثم عصر مثلما هي عندنا فيوسعها شرحاً ويوسعها نشرها
 10 ويأتي بالوان "حديث لأربعاً" ويغمرهم من فيض ما خط ما دتر
 11 أثم وزارة للمعارف تبتغي لذلك تحرير التولية الأمر
 12 فإن صارطه في الثرى متغيّبا فأثارطه في الورى طاول الدهر
 13 أقلتير⁷² مصر الحرا ديت ماوجب عليك استرح لالوم قطولا وزرا

C. Descriptive Verses

Most of the subjects described by 'Umar are related to climatic disasters, modern world wars, technological inventions and discoveries. He also describes Kano which he calls the Paris of Hausaland. Atomic bomb, Telescope, Cinematography and a Wrist-watch which he then calls al-'usturlāb (astrolabe) have all been described. The following extracts are given from his poems on Cinematography, Kano and the Contemporary World Crises.

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i

- 1 حبيبي قم فلنذهبن تيتاترا وتذكرة نبتاعهاك المغانيا
 2 ففيها نرى الأحلام حين منامنا منظمة تغرى إليها الما قيا
 3 نشارك في الرؤيا الدماغ وبؤبؤ وفي غير هذي قط لم يتساويا

4 كثيرا أرى المنام حولي يحبونهم
 5 وكم أنست الرائي مكان قراره
 6 وطورا بميدان القتال تسوقهم
 7 وكم بعثت من مات من بين معشر
 8 وكم سبقت آجال موت امرئ متى
 9 ومستقبل قد عجلته وأحضرت
 10 وكم قربت شيئا بعيدا تظنه
 11 وتلبس إن شاءت ثياب مدرس
 12 وكم ظهرت في ثوب لاه وهازل
 13 وإن لبست ثوب الحداد أمامنا
 14 وإن برزت في الحرب في ثوب فارس
 15 أيا أيها الطراق في النوم مالكم
 16 وعهدى بالأحلام إن زارميت
 17 وفيك يحيب البعض بعضا فقط وذا
 18 أَتَالِي تَفْلِينِ⁷⁴ مسالخير! هذه
 19 أَسْمَاءُ الْقَدَأَبْدَى بِكَ الْعِلْمُ قَدْرَةٌ
 20 وَأَحْسَنُ تَصْوِيرًا - لَذَا النَّاسِ اشْتَرَوْا -
 21 فهِمْتَ لِفِرطِ الْحَبِّ لَوْ قَالَ رَبُّهَا
 مفتحة رقبان ما كان آتيا
 فيحسب نويوزك زار في أرض زاريا
 ترى الدم في كل الأماكن جاريا
 تراه إذا ما فاه بالقول راويا
 أرادت يكن في قبره - قبل - ثاويا
 وكم أرجعت - مها تباعد - ماضيا
 أمامك أو ترمى هنالك دانيا
 فتهدى إلى الخيرات من ظل رايبا
 فتضحكنا والكل يصبح راضيا
 تجد كل قلب ظل بالحسن كاسيا
 تصير جباناً للخافة شاكيا
 أنادى ولا تشخص يحيب المناديا
 يحيب إذا بينت بالقول مايبا
 على مذهب الأحلام ما كان واخيا
 يدي صافحتها أو أكذب عينيا
 فأسجد رغما من جلال مهاريا
 زيارة طيفي⁷⁵ بالذي كان غاليا
 أريد جنينها تقولون ههيا

22 إذا قرعت إنسان عين "نهائية" وأشرف صبح الكهرباء الدياجيا
 23 يسировون نحو الباب بعد إفاقة إلى الصور كبا نأتري البعض ماشيا
 24 يكلم هذا ذاك في حسن حلمه وفي عكسه يشكو: لقد ضاع ماليا

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ii

1 (أباريس) هو ساء عليك السلام جواب من العاشق المستهام
 2 أزجى التحيات شوقا إلى جميل صفاتك بالإكرام
 3 معاملة الغرّ لامعة تكاد تفوق نجوم الظلام
 4 ومن بينها المسجد الفاخر كجامع (ذلهي) جمال النظام
 5 ومأذنة طاوالت إذ بدت نواطع (نوبوزك) بقرب الإمام
 6 ومكتبها قد حكى البرلما ن اللندني⁷⁷ لحسن التمام
 7 وساعتها أشبهت (بغ بن) بد (ويست منستر) مقر السلام
 8 وبيت الشفا بأشعة (ري)⁷⁸ لنفع الأنام وبرئ السقام
 9 (شاهوت) بالعصر (هايدفارك) ومنظر (دال) لك كالأهرام⁷⁹
 10 الأول وجهك غربك كى ترى تل (دو ظلي)⁸⁰ هناك استقام
 11 فذلك قلب شرايينه تروى بهاء الحياة الأنام
 12 (كوري) في التجارة ك (الوست أند)⁸¹ ترى الناس في السير والاقدام

13	أنت من أوتيا ومصر وشام	ترى الطائرات تعاودها
14	⁸² (وزيلندا فيجي) وجار سلام	ومن أنسترا ليا من (صنغ كنغ)
15	خليتها أو كنزور الغمام	فصارت كخجل أنت بعسل
16	بحبل السماء لزور المقام	لها ارتباط بأم القرى
17	تحدث بكثرتها الاملام	ولا تنس إن فهدت - بالعربا
18	فمازت بسلمين بين السهام	(كنو) جمعت علم شرق وغرب
19	وذاك يباشركوب المدام	تجدهم هنا عالما عابدا
20	⁸³ وهذا (الموتيل) وقرن الغرام	ومن بات يلمس سبحة
21	⁸⁴ شمال عليك دواما السلام	(أباريس) هو ساو عاصمة ال

iii. The World Crises

The following poem in al-Kāmil al-majzū' (trimeter catalectic) was composed after World War II when the tension between East and West was very high. It can be divided roughly into four sections each of them dealing with similar crises of our time. The first eight lines describe some of the sophisticated modern weapons with examples of their destructive potentialities as demonstrated in World War II. The next section (lines 9-14) describes natural disasters while the last verses lament the various abortive efforts being made by the UNO towards achieving world peace. An appeal is finally made to the Earth to grant mankind peace before we are compelled to move to another planet in search of peace.

يا هذه الدنيا... هل من سلام!

1	تهدى بنيك طرائق الخير	يا هذه الدنيا فما لك لا
2	فتدمر الأمصار بالجمر	الحرب تتلو إثر ما ذهبت
3	دبابة وبمدفع تجرى ⁸⁵	بالبائرات وبالبنادق أو
4	عمق البحار مثيرة الشر	وبواخر وبها تغوص إلى
5	سمت حكم المروعة في بني البشر	وقد اعتدت وطغت وما حك
6	إذا استمر نهاية الأمر	بقنابل ذرية وبها
7	عينا أبيد بها بلا أثر	زرر (هيزوشيما) ⁸⁶ إذا جددت تجد
8	صارت لسوء الحظ كالقفر	أو (ناغasaki) ترى النواطح قد
9	فيسوق آلافا إلى قبر	وهناك زلزال ⁸⁷ يفاجعنا
10	تنشق من أرض إلى جزر	ويهدد الأرض الكبيرة كى
11	ه عم ما حوليه بالخسر	ولرب بركان يشور نرا
12	أو أغرقت سفنا إلى القعر	هركان ربح دمرت بلدا
13	مصر يبدد شملها المصير	ومرور تيفون السحاب على
14	ر الحرب في حي وفي الغير	يا هذه الدنيا أمالك غي
15	حب السلام بأنفس السعير	وبمجلس الأمن ⁸⁸ العظيم نرى
16	أمم السلام رجاها الدر	بمدينة نيو يورك اتخذت
17	منها وما ذهبوا سوى شبر	وكم التقى الأعضاء واخترقوا

- 18 في (لَيْكِ تَسْكُتِيس) ⁸⁹ النجاح وفي نهج النجاة تصير كالصخر
- 19 هل ذاك بيض للأنوق ⁹⁰ فلا تلقى له في الكون من وكر
- 20 يا هذه الدنيا لنا طلب فاصغى إلى ما قاله شعري
- 21 الأمن والسلام السلام هو الـ مطلوب نشد بنيك في الدهر
- 22 ولأجله انعقدت معاهدة في (سَنَ فَرْتِيسِشَكُو) ⁹¹ رجال النصر
- 23 فإذا تعذر لا نريدك بل نرجو بديك فاقبلي عذري

D. Amatory Verse

Love, like boasting, satire and wine poems, except in mechanical imitation of the pre-Islamic erotic prelude, are traditionally frowned upon in Islamic Nigeria. It is an abomination. Only the Shaikh of Bornu, el-Kānamī, in his characteristic liberal attitude to Islam, had composed a true love poem. In this context, the love poetry of Umar may be seen as a thematic innovation inspired by secular thoughts. It is indeed the only worthy example of love poem in the twentieth century Nigerian Arabic literature cited by Professor Galadanci in his work.⁹² But traces of Islamic tradition can be seen displayed in the use of male, instead of female pronouns for the poet's real or imaginary lover. These love poems exist in the Ḥadīqa under different titles such as ṣawt mina 'l-watīn (Voice from the Heart), al-ḥabīb (Sweetheart) and al-kawn mawāt lawlā 'l-ḥubb (The Universe without Love is Lifeless) from which the following extracts are given.

Like its theme which constitutes a departure from traditionalism,

the following verses in al-ramal are also arranged in non-traditional strophic form, al-muwashshahāt. It is characterised by a partial refrain constantly rhyming in al-bā' at the end of each stanza throughout the poem. The language, images, and style of this composition also constitute, to a large extent, literary innovations in Nigerian Arabic-Islamic literature. There are a number of expressive or complex metaphors sometimes with dramatic appeal some of which, apart from being unknown in Nigeria traditional verses, would have been considered too sacrilegious.

The complex metaphor employed in stanza B, for example, is derived from the secular knowledge of water-cycle. The third stanza (C) also ends with a refrain in which the word ṭayf occurs as a kināya. This use of 'ghost' (ṭayf) instead of rūḥ (spirit) is not traditional because of its pagan connotations. It can be traced, like the use of Greek mythology, above indicated, to the influences on ⁶Umar of Shakespeare. Another expressive image is employed in the fourth stanza (D) in which al-talmīḥ is made to Islamic mythology and eschatology. The main portal of the paradise, bābu 'l-salām, is used here to symbolise the mouth of the lover, portrayed as al-Riḍwān, the portal's guard, who eventually opened the gate of 'the poet's desire'. The dramatic transmutation of the poet to Ādam with no tree before him is also an implicit metaphor suggesting that the poet's desire, the gate of which is opened in the previous line, is likely to be the forbidden apple.⁹³

⁶Umar proceeds to declare in the fifth stanza (E) that love is an ordinance from God, for which purpose, He has made the heart so tender.

The most righteous person, therefore, is the one who fulfils the ordinance of love, the failure to fulfil which is the worst sin. This is true with the plants, birds and even monsters which, if one is not afraid to watch, according to ʿUmar (line 24) one is sure to behold love with one's naked eyes (Stanza F). Finally is the talmīh made in the last stanza (H) to the battle of Badr (624 AD) with all the significance attached to it in the history of Islam: ʿUmar portrays himself here as a truth-bearer (ṣiddīq) and a believer (mu'min) in the religion of love. He is also a martyr on the battles of love, which he considers not less decisive than al-Badr. He has, indeed, been enticed here (in his own Badr of love) to taste death in silence by the hidden comfort in Heaven, which he believes will be extended to him like other true martyrs of al-Badr:

الكون موات لولا الحب

A1 يا حبيبي يا حبيبي⁹⁴ أصغ سمعا للحبيب

B2 هل أتاك اليوم أنت صرت عظما في الشعار

3 ذهب اللحم بخارا صاعدا من حرنار

4 ما تلا فوق سحابا لا أرى ضوء النهار

5 وهولا ينزل مطرا أو يراك بجوار

6 يا حبيبي يا حبيبي هل تبالي بنحبي

7 c إن يطل صدك عني يذهب الحرّ عظامي
 8 أختفي عنك ولا تمد مع من بعد كلامي
 9 إن تشأ ذلك وأخشي عل ثرمي بملام
 10 لو ينادي غير شئء قلت إنعم بسلام
 11 يا حبيبي يا حبيبي طيفك اليوم طيبي

12 D كنت أرجو الزور لها بان ثغر لا بتسام
 13 ورأيت النور حولي قربه باب السلام
 14 ذلك الرضوان ياتي فاتحا باب مرامي
 15 فإذا بي صرت آدم آه! لا شجرأمامي
 16 يا حبيبي يا حبيبي جئت بالأمر العجيب

17 E إنما لب بأمر الر..... ربّ فلتات نعائق
 18 لو أبت ذاك لصاغ الـ قلب وقت العشق آبق
 19 بل تراه وفق صوغ الر..... ربّ للأحباب عاسق
 20 فأبّر الناس معطي الـ حب حقائق فائق
 21 يا حبيبي يا حبيبي نقصه شر الذنوب

- F22 ⁹⁵ هارها من فوق غصن واسأل الأشجار عن أزر
- 23 هاجها حين تغنى واسأل الأطيّار عمّا
- 24 ش تر العشق بعين وارقب الوحش ولا تخف
- 25 ⁹⁶ نة معني حور عين واسأل المنكر في الجب
- 26 أعطني فوق نصيبي يا حبيبي يا حبيبي
- G 27 ⁹⁷ ماؤه كالسلسبيل قربن فاك خليلي
- 28 أسقني غير القليل لشفائي وحياتي
- 29 وكأين من قتيل وكأين من عليل
- 30 الحب أحيي - من سبيل ماله في الروح - لو لا
- 31 أحييني عما قريب يا حبيبي يا حبيبي
- H 32 مات صديقا ومؤمن لأرى ما قيل في من
- 33 حب لاقى القتل مؤقن وتشهيدا في الحروب الك
- 34 لشهيد البدر كما من من نعيم في جنان
- 35 رى ذقت القتل ساكن لكمال الحسن في بد
- 36 في ما بي المستطاب يا حياتي يا خلودي

E. Riddles

A rather didactic but interesting theme is 'Umar's exposition of the practical effects of the earth's revolution and rotation, with a number of biological teachings.⁹⁸ The literary importance of this theme lies in its presentation as a riddle since the modern scientific knowledge displayed here may, in Islamic Nigeria still be marvelled at, suspected, denied, or even condemned for their non-conformity with the teachings of the Holy Scripture. Their novelty or heterodoxy, is portrayed by 'Umār in the poem's maṭla^c: The riddles are described as Islamic legal questions (al-fatāwā) in answer to which none of the contemporary Shaikhs could give (marry) him a single word (daughter). The questions are asked in al-Basīt while the answers, which retain the traditional opening doxology, are al-Rajaz:

الأحاجي

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | ما زوجوني بها بتامن الشفة | هذي فتاوى قد زرت الشيخ لها |
| 2 | ما جاءنا الحر في صيف وهاجرة؟ | فأين يذهب للستر الشتاء إذا |
| 3 | خلف جنوب بلا قصد المدحبة | وقفت مستقبلا نحو الجنوب إذا |
| 4 | أيضا جنوب كلام من فم الثقة! | كذا يميني جنوب واليسار لها |
| 5 | نهار يومى بنصف ثم لم يفت؟ | وكيف يمتد إن نشئت الثبوت به |
| 6 | والنصف ذا من أمور اليوم ممكنة؟ | وكيف أتقص من طول النهار بنح |
| 7 | مؤخر الغد قفزا بالمجاوزة؟ | وكيف أقفز من قبل الغروب إلى |
| 8 | بجمحة الأسر قد عادت واقبلت! | أصبحت في السبت من قبل الغروب إذا |

9 مكثت في ليلتي ثم النهار لها قالوا مكثت بذ النخيل في سنة!
 10 أرسلت تلغرافاً⁹⁹ عصر يومى لك حبيب في صبح عين اليوم قد أنت

أجوبة الأحاجي

1 الحمد لله الذى قد علما بفضل العليم أسما آدما¹⁰⁰
 2 وحث في البحث وفي اعتبار في خلقه لآذاته الجبار
 3 الصيف إن جانصنا الشمالى تهياً الشتاء للترحال
 4 إلى الجنوبى دائماً في المدة تبادلا في السنة كالعادة
 5 سرت شمالا واصل للقطب صارت جهاتى محض الجنوبى
 6 ولم يجد شرقا ولا غربا ولا صوب الشمال من هناك نزل
 7 كذا إذا القطب الجنوبى قدما فالشرق والغرب الجنوبى عدما
 8 إن شئت أن يمتد بي نهارى أذهب نحو الغرب مع طيارى
 9 أظير منزكانو) إلى (بخوتنا) إن له بعد (كانو) ثبوتنا¹⁰¹
 10 وعكس ذا التقصير فعلا تلقى بالسير من غرب سريحا شرقا
 11 سرمنزكانو) بالطيران (أشمرأ)¹⁰² تجدنها راعند ذاك اقتصر
 12 الوثب من يومى ليوم نال وعود أمس بعد ارتحال
 13 مداره خط الدول بـ (فيجي) شرق وغرب خطها (الغربي)¹⁰³
 14 نقدر الشمس هناك ظهرا تكوز في نحو (قوائى)¹⁰⁴ عصرا

- 15 تصير ضحوة الغد الجديد ليومنا السابق (نيوزيلندي) ¹⁰⁵
- 16 من سار من (سدين) لـ (هونولولو) ¹⁰⁶ يؤخر اليوم وجوبا قالوا
- 17 حتما يلى تاريخ (أوسترالى) ¹⁰⁷ وزاد يوما عاكس المثال
- 18 فحماه الليلة والنهار ومن بقطبين ¹⁰⁸ له القرار
- 19 كذلك الليل بهذى يرسو في الستة الأشهر تبقى الشمس
- 20 صباحا يجده ساكنوك (ليمتا) ¹⁰⁹ من كان عصرا من (كانو) كليمًا
- 21 في سبق زور الشمس شرقا خرا في عين هذا اليوم إن السرا

B. Literary Prose

As far as modern literary prose genres are concerned, the overwhelming medieval literary tradition and contemporary political culture have not encouraged Umar to make any remarkable contribution. Apparently confined to religious sectors, Arabic in Nigeria has been excluded from such modern literary developments as translation and journalism which were directed to the various national languages. Prose diction has, therefore, remained essentially Qur'ānic to the extent that most Nigerian traditional Arabic scholars cannot understand modern Arabic newspapers and magazines. Thanks to the modern Arabic schools and similar modernizing currents discussed in the last chapter, by virtue of which modern literary Arabic prose has been known at all in Nigeria. Apart from translations into Arabic of some Yoruba folk

narratives, creative writing in prose is generally unknown.

In addition to the general political culture, the medieval attitude towards fiction or imaginative writing as a frivolous exercise is still in vogue. It has remained so impregnable that 'Umar could not break through despite the influences on him of Shawqī, Ḥāfiẓ and al-^CAqqād, not to mention Shakespeare and Bernard Shaw. But a particularly discouraging factor for not only 'Umar but any potential creative writer in Arabic is perhaps the question of readership even if such works are produced. 'Umar has not, therefore, attempted to translate or adapt into Arabic, any English or even modern Hausa prose writings. Neither has he embarked on writing short stories, let alone novels or plays. His literary prose compositions do not even extend to the revival of all the four traditional genres identified in the last chapter some of which he has done in verses. Indisputably, 'Umar is a poet, not a prose writer.

Only two major prose genres, an address and modern essay both of them rooted in classical tradition have been identified in his compositions. Yet, these two genres to certain extent, constitute a departure from tradition. Public address, hitherto confined to mosques as sermons, has been brought out and given a secular orientation. The medieval religious treatise has similarly been supplanted by modern essay in which secular subjects are discussed. But true to a typical neo-classical writer, 'Umar has found no sufficient literary aesthetic in ordinary prose which, of course in Nigeria, is generally associated with didactic works. He has, therefore, been impelled to write most of his addresses in rhymed prose which in itself is an innovation. As mentioned in chapters one and two, rhymed

prose had hitherto been puritanically restricted to supernatural communications.

In all, three different addresses to his colleagues while in school and six modern essays, three of them outside the Ḥadīqa, have been written by ʿUmar.¹¹⁰ Traditional or modern, the contents of these prose works are intended to be didactic but they all have some stylistic pretensions to literary aesthetics. Essays include a religious polemic, al-Qur'ān: Lā zā'id wa lā Nāqīṣ (The Qur'ān: No More No Less) which constitutes a modern attack on the traditional interpretation of a popular Qur'ānic verse on fasting.¹¹¹ A similar revolutionary essay, al-Kaṣḥ fī 'l-madārisi 'l-ahliyya (Paralysis in Traditional Schools) is also an attack on medieval Arabic-Islamic education which ʿUmar would want modernized in Nigeria.

The third of these iconoclastic essays which are not included in the Ḥadīqa is also an attack on polygamy. Presented in form of a dialogue which intensifies its liveliness, this essay on a popular controversial theme in modern Islam probably has a better literary claim. Under the title, Ayyuhumā 'as'ad: Ṣāhib zawja aw ṣāhib akthar (Which of Them is Happier: a Monogamist or a Polygamist?), the essay is written in simple modern prose with verbal embellishments. It also includes quotations from al-ʿAqqād's verses on Ayna 'l-sa'ada.¹¹²

ʿUmar also wrote an essay on Democracy (al-dīmuqrāṭiyya)¹¹³ which, like most Muslim modernists, he has attempted to reconcile with the early Medina Theocracy. The last essay in this series is entitled al-yawm ya'tī marra thumma lā ya'ūd (Opportunity (Day) Comes But Once). Discussing the value of time and its fleetness, the two-page

essay¹¹⁴ laments the short span of human life which does not allow him to complete most of his progressive projects. Its literary claim includes its dramatic opening sentence in imitation of the Holy Book: Compare

المرآة ما المرآة وما أدرك ما المرآة

with the following first three verses of sūratu 'l-qāri'a (chapter 101)

القارعة ما القارعة وما أدرك ما القارعة

i. Rhymed Prose

The next three essays are of greater stylistic and thematic pretensions to literary aesthetics. Apart from being al-khitāba, a popular traditional literary genre, they are written virtually in rhymed prose. The prose diction, and the style employed, not surprisingly, are favourably comparable to that used by al-Muwailihi in his Hadīth 'l-sā ibn Hishām. Indeed, it may be compared generally to the neo-classical prose style above described such as employed by Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm in his Layālī Satīḥ or Shawqī in his Riwayāt 'Adhrā' al-Hind. An inaugural lecture on the launching of a school club in 1941 and two valedictory addresses in 1942 and 1943, these themes in themselves are far from being imaginative essays. But 'Umar, an artist, has managed to weave into their warp and woof some sensational silk and woolen threads.

Two of these essays open with similar traditional doxology in rhymed prose, the style which is maintained throughout the passages. Here is the opening paragraphs of one of them:

الحمد لله الذي جمعنا من مختلف الأماكن بقدرته . وقد فراقنا
 في وقت معلوم لحكمته . والصلاة والسلام على من استنارت الدنيا بنور
 رسالته . وعلى آله وأصحابه هداة أمته .
 وبعد أردت أن أودع إخواني . ولكن عجز عن الكلام لساني . لهم شديد
 عناني . ولم لا أحزن في وقت يبعد بعده ملاقة خلاني . ولكن آمال
 الشوق إلى حب الوداع عناني . ولذلك أرغبت جناني . بأن أتكلم بها
 عراني . وان كان قليلا كفاف . لاشتغالي بمقاساة أشجاني
 سرني أنكم جاوزتم هذا البحر العميق . الذي قلما وجد جماعة
 يعومون فيه إلا وجد فيهم غريق

The spirit of traditionalism expressed through affectation (al-takalluf) and studied display of rhyming phrases are undisguised in this essay. It has been indicated by Professor Shehu Galadanci in his study of the work. But behind this affectation can be seen displayed the eloquence of Umar, blending tradition with modernism in a style which is by no means inferior to any of the neo-classical Arab writers.¹¹⁵ Considered as an oration, its declamatory tone is similar to those employed by such Arab reformers as 'Abduh or Sa'ad Zaghlul. Such style, according to Taha Hussain, is not free from the traditional studied features. ¹¹⁵ Advocating educational reform

in one of his valedictory speeches, Umar had delivered the following cadencies:

يُحزنُنِي أن أرى وطني العظيم وراء الصفوف. ويخطو خطوة من
يريد الوقوف. وأن بنى ديني العزيز في جميع أنحاء العالم يرون التقدم قبيحاً
لأنه أتى من الغرب. حتى صارت تقدّمهم بطيئاً رغم عدد هم وتعداد
أجناسهم.....
ثم إن الطريقة التي تُذهب هذه العادات المضلّة¹¹⁶ وهذه
الإعتقادات القبيحة المذلّة. والخرافات المنزلة. هي أن نتخذ
المدارس الكثيره. فهي أهمّ سلم لمن أراد الرقي والحضاره. لان المدرسة
هي دوحه هذه الشجرة. وشجرة هذه الثمرة. ومنبج ذلك الماء
العذب. وأم الحضارة التي هي أرحم من الأب. خبني المدارس. و
نبتكر العرائس. ولا نترك هذا المهمل في أيدي الأجانب. أن تقوم بوا
جلك خير من أن تجعله في يد صاحب. ما حك جلدك مثل ظفركه.¹¹⁷
فباشرب نفسك جميع أمرك. ولنجتهد في بنائها اجتهاداً يوافق العصر.
ونقتدى باليابان ومصر. وان لم يدرك الظالم شأوا الضليع.¹¹⁸ وراكب
الدراجة مسافة الطيار السريع. لكن بمحاكاة الكرام تُعدّ
منهم. وبالإقتداء بهم ستكون فيهم. فان المدرسة تربي
ولدها. وترفع بلدها. وولدها يعلو على من لم يكن منها. والأمة
تفوق الأمم بقدر كثرتها.....

The last essay entitled Yawmu 'l-mawliidi 'l-nabī bi Zāriya (The Prophet's Birthday in Zaria) may be considered a biographical apologetics of Prophet Muḥammad and the spread of Islam. It is particularly interesting as a wave in Nigeria of the main current of religious theme in modern Arabic literature. After the contact of the Islamic world with the West, the various religious criticism in Egypt against Islam by the orientalist had eventually narrowed down to the relationship between Islam and Christianity, the concept of prophethood in Islam, and its propagation according to its critics, by 'sword and fire'. Prophet Muḥammad was accused, among other things, of being an impostor, propagating his religion with the Qur'ān in his left hand, the sword in the right.

In defence of these and similar charges against Islam, the modern Arab literary men had embarked on a reconstruction of the history of Islam including of course, the Prophet's biography in the light of modern thought.¹¹⁹ Neo-classical poets such as Aḥmad Shawqī and Maḥmūd al-Bārūdī had also been inspired by al-Burda and similar medieval Prophetic panegyrics to compose their modern versions in defence of Islam and its Prophet. It is not, therefore, surprising to see Umar who has been influenced by these Arab writers, defending, tooth and nail, the use of sword by the Prophet, in Islamic Nigeria of 1955.

Written in ordinary prose interspersed with rhyming phrases, this essay is prefaced by the Maṭla' of Shawqī's al-hamziyyatu 'l-nabawiyya.¹²⁰ It then proceeds to describe the social, economic, political and religious 'darkness' of the pre-Islamic Arabia, nay,

of the whole Mediterranean world. It was on this jāhiliyya that the divine light embodied in Prophet Muḥammad had descended in Arabia from where it radiated to the rest of the world. But 'Umar has always blocked his ears with his fingers whenever he heard the Prophet's enemies saying that he had spread his religion by sword. 'This', he concludes, 'is ignorance, delusion and sophistry'. He then turns to the Prophet and asks him rhetorically:¹²¹

... بأى سيف دعوت أبا بكر بأى سيف دعوت بلالا . بأى
سيف دعوت عمار بن ياسر وبأى سيف دعوت كل من آمنوا قبل
الهجرة - وأهل المدينة قبل وبعد الهجرة ؟ أليست بو عظ
وجحة عقلية ؟ الست مكنت سنوات لا تنقل عن عشرة تدعو
الناس إلى دين الله فصدقك كل ذى عقل سليم وطغى واشماز
ذو عقل سقيم

Quoting more verses from both al-hamziyya and Nahju 'l-burda of Shawqī to buttress his view, 'Umar concludes with complaints to the Prophet that his community after him, has turned his sunna upside down.

In addition to the occasional use of traditional badī'īyyāt, and the frequent quotations from the known and the unknown verses, the main literary excellence of this essay includes its pretension to dramatic appeal. This feature is expressed in the writer's attempt to involve himself and his readers as both eyewitnesses and participants

in the historical events he was narrating:

.... فتعالوا معى نطوى الزمان والمكان. نطوى المكان فنقدّر
الآن أننا فى مكة المكرمة. ونطوى الزمان ونقدّر- أيضا- أننا الآن
فى السنة التى ولد فيها النبى عليه السلام.... تعالوا بنا لنجول فى
البلد ولنبدأ بزيارة الكعبة والطواف حولها: ماهذه الأجرار المنتهبة
التى أحاطت الكعبة بيت الله التى أرى عددًا يفوق ثلاثمائة.....
فهلوا يا إخوانى لنجول فى داخل مكة: نرور للجمع والنوادى
لنسمع ماذا يجرى هناك.... فبينما نحن فى الطريق إذا برجل
يثد ابنته لالذنب جنت بل لأنه يرى أن البنت عار عليه .
ومضينا إلى النوادى ومجتمع الناس -

Another literary feature of this essay is the use of ejaculatory or forensic style which gradually climaxes in a rhythmic repetition that recalls the familiar style of Taha Hussain.¹²² Note for example in the following two extracts, the recurrence of the two words, 'fāsida' in the first and ''idhā' in the second:

A. هذه الدنيا قبيل مولد النبى فاسدة فى اعتقادها الدينى .
فاسدة فى أحوالها السياسية . فاسدة فى أحوالها الإجتماعية
فاسدة فى عطاهرها الأخلاقية . فاسدة فى شؤونها العلمية
والأدبية والروحية بل هى فاسدة فى كل شئء

- B. ...إبتدأ هذا السراج ينير فأحاط به كل عاقل بصير وأراد أن يطفئها كل فاجر شرير. ويأبى الله إلا أن يتم نوره ولو كره المشركون - إذا بهذا النور - في أقل من مائة سنة - يضيء من الهند شرقاً إلى الأندلس والمحيط الأطلسي غرباً. وإذا بنوره تراه - ليست الأعين وحدها بل حتى - القلوب. وإذا بملك الروم والفرس يتبدد دان ويتشتتان وإذا بالمسلمين يملكون أكثر من نصف العالم المعروف في ذلك الوقت في أقل من مائة سنة بسرعة لا يعرف التاريخ مثله - وإذا بالتوحيد يمحو الكفر والشرك - وإذا بالعلم يمحو الجهل والغباوة وإذا بالعدل يمحو الظلم والطغيان وإذا بالديمقراطية تمحو الإستبداد والأرستقراطية والدكتاتورية ¹²³. وإذا بالديانات فتح صفحة جديدة لتاريخ جميل كامل. وإذا بكل شيء يتلأ لأنوار من إنعكاسة تلك الأشعة الغلابة .
- صلى عليك الله أيها النبي الكريم

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 see: A Abūbakar, op cit, pp.295-7 for some of his works.
- 2 Says: أولئك آباءنا فجننا بمثلهم إذا جمعنا يا جريير الجامع
- 3 'Umar Ibrāhīm, Ḥadīqatu 'l-azhār (MSS), pp.20-21 to be henceforth referred to simply as the Ḥadīqa. This poem is in al-mutaqārib.
- 4 Ibid, pp.337-8. The verses are in al-tawīl. Line 2 of this extract is borrowed from Imru'u 'l-Qais for which reason, 'Umar has put it in parenthesis.
- 5 In addition to what he told me, most of the views expressed here are contained in two unpublished articles written in English by 'Umar: "The Twentieth Century" and "Are women in Islam Permitted to be Active Politicians?"
- 6 cf. Muḥammad Iqbāl, Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam (Lahore, 1930), p.33 says: "religion is not Physics or Chemistry seeking an explanation of nature in terms of causation".
- 7 The Qur'ān, 2:189.
- 8 Ibid, 2:222.
- 9 Ibid, 18:83-6 for whom, Alexander the Great (356-23 BC) is often suggested.
- 10 Ibid, 7:103ff. Rameses II (1300-1234 BC) has also been suggested by some opinions. See also: Exodus 1, ii.
- 11 Ibid, 2:38; 3:158; 4:59.
- 12 Muḥammad Iqbāl, op cit, p.231 holds a contrary view; but see: Abū Naṣr al-Farābī, Arā'u ahli 'l-madīnati 'l-fādila, ed, A Nādir (Beirut, 1959) for a philosophical exposition of an ideal Islamic state inspired by the Plato's Republic.
- 13 A M al-^CAqqād, Dīwānu 'l-^CAqqād (Cairo, 1928), p.17.
- 14 The Ḥadīqa, pp.250-59.
- 15 In addition to its distinctive features such as the place and number of the dots on some letters and the generally roundish, as opposed to the Kufic angular shape, 'Umar has also employed ث instead of the conventional تش or چ (Persian) for ch, and ب or ف instead of پ for P. ڤ for V and ظ for ts as in dutse (Hausa) are also employed.
- 16 by the Gaskiya Corporation Ltd, Zaria, nd (1981); see The Ḥadīqa, pp.206-230 and 115-151 for their texts.

- 17 A Abūbakar, op cit, pp.350ff, 581-96; S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp.179ff.
- 18 Vol. 2111 (Aug 1975).
- 19 The Ḥadīqa, pp.37-46.
- 20 A M al-^CAqqād, Dīwān, op cit, pp.37-46.
- 21 M H Ibrāhīm, "Lisān Hāli 'l-lughati 'l-^Carabiyya" in Dīwānu 'l-Ḥāfiẓ, II (Cairo, 1922), pp.16-19; On the call for colloquial Arabic in place of the literary, see: Umar al-Dasūqī, Fi 'l-adabi 'l-ḥadīth, II, op cit, pp.40-45 citing al-Hilāl, 15/3/ 1902; al-Mu'ayyad, 5/3/1907.
- 22 A M al-^CAqqād, Bārnard Shaw (Cairo, 1950).
- 23 M H Ibrāhīm, II, op cit, pp.115-19.
- 24 Aḥmad Shawqī, al-Shawqiyyāt, I-II (Cairo, 1948), pp.5-7.
- 25 A M al-^CAqqād, al-Ta^Crīf bi Shaksabīr (Cairo, 1958); Dīwān, III, op cit, p.233.
- 26 M H Ibrāhīm, I, op cit, pp.34-9.
- 27 A Shawqī, al-Shawqiyyāt, II, op cit, pp.95-98 and 103 respectively.
- 28 A M al-^CAqqād, Dīwān, op cit, p. 58; Vol II, pp. 194-7; al-Dīmuqrāṭiyya fi 'l-Islām (Cairo, 1952).
- 29 See: The Ḥadīqa, pp.40,53, 202-5 respectively.
- 30 A M al-^CAqqād, Dīwān, I, op cit, pp.21-72.
- 31 A Shawqī, al-Shawqiyyāt, I, op cit, p.17; M H Ibrāhīm, I, (1948), op cit, pp.271ff, The Ḥadīqa, p.51.
- 32 See below pp. 278-80 for 'Umar's verses on 'Cinematography'.
- 33 The Ḥadīqa, pp. 93-8 and below p. 266 for the first few lines. See also M H Ibrāhīm, I, op cit, p.43 for the Ḥāfiẓ's version of the panegyric.
- 34 The Ḥadīqa, pp.5-10.
- 35 Ibid, p.49.
- 36 S A S Galadanci, op cit, p.214 n.110 identifies this metre in the Ḥadīqa, pp. 86-9 as Wāfir majzū' (dimeter acatalectic) which by scansion is also correct. cf F Steingass, op cit, pp.53, 81-4 where the same metre used by al-Ḥarīri in his 7th and 11th Maqāmāt is identified as al-Hazaj.

- 37 The Hadīqa, pp.29-31.
- 38 Ibid, pp.16-18.
- 39 Ibid, pp.11-15. Note the use of chronogram in the last verse the expression in parenthesis of whose abjadiyya values sum up to 1366 A H, the year in which the grandmother died.
- 40 Ibid, pp.51-3.
- 41 See: M H Ibrāhīm, I, op cit, pp.124-141; A M al-^CAqqād, Dīwān, op cit, Vol I, pp.74-5
- 42 The Hadīqa, pp.29-31.
- 43 References are a legion on this modern Islamic reformer but some of the most popular works on him include C C Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt (London, 1933); H A R Gibb, Modern Trends, op cit; A Hourani, op cit, pp.130-92; T J Le Gassick, op cit, pp.29-33; M R Ridā, Ta'rikhu 'l-'ustādh al-Imam al-Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh (Cairo, 1344 /1925-1367/1948), 3 vols.
- 44 For more details on al-Afghānī, see all the Ibid, plus al-Makhzūmī, Khāṭirātu Jamālī 'l-Dīn (Beirut, 1931); al-Maghribī, Jamālu 'l-dīn al-Afghānī (Cairo, 1948).
- 45 The volumes of these newsheets were later compiled and published as a book: al-Afghānī and 'Abduh, al-'Urwatu 'l-wuthqā (Beirut, 1328 /1910), 2 vols.
- 46 See M^C'Abduh, Risālatu 'l-tawḥīd (Cairo, 1361/1942-3); M^C'Abduh and M R Ridā, Tafsīru 'l-Qur'ānī 'l-ḥakīm (Cairo, 1346-54/1927-36), 12 parts.
- 47 H A R Gibb, Modern Trends, op cit, p.33.
- 48 The Hadīqa, pp.93-8. The translation of this and other extracts are given in the appendix.
- 49 See: The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th ed. (1943-74), S V 'Darwīn, Charles'. for general information on Darwin.
- 50 The Qur'ān, 15:28-48; 7:189-93; Genesis 2:7.
- 51 T J Le Gassick, op cit, p.34.
- 52 cf A al-Ilūrī, Aṣlu Qābā'il, op cit, p.7.
- 53 This 'Umar's way of reconciling Darwinism with the Qur'ānic concept of creation is open to theological controversy which is beyond the scope of this literary study.
- 54 Protoplasm:abiological term practically unknown in Arabic-Islamic traditional literature - 'It is the main constituent of cells in organisms, the basis of life in plants and animals'.

- 55 Amoeba: a unicellular aquatic organism believed in the Darwin's theory to be an example of the first stage of development.
- 56 A reference to the Darwin's principle of Natural Selection summed up by Herbert Spencer's phrase: "The survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence".
- 57 Dinasa^ur: an extinct giant herbivorous animal of about 90ft long.
- 58 mango is considered by the poet as the sweetest fruit in Nigeria.
- 59 "Othello", "Julius Caesar", "Romeo and Juliet", and "Coriolanus" are examples of Shakespeare's plays.
- 60 "King Lear", "Venus and Adonis", "The Rape of Lucrece", "Macbeth", "Hamlet", and "The Mid-summer Night's Dream" are also included in the verse.
- 61 Ben Jonson (d.1637) was a friend and contemporary of Shakespeare; a man of prodigious learning a poet and a dramatist. He wrote one of the finest panegyrics for Shakespeare in which he had requested Europe to pay him homage:
Triumph My Britaine, thou has one to showe.
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
- 62 Francis Bacon (1561-1526) and Edwards Richard (1522?-1566).
- 63 Stratford-upon-Avon
- 64 The Hadīqa, pp, 99-107
- 65 Neil Armstrong was the first of the astronauts to land on the moon. Others are Adwin Aldrin and Michael Collins.
- 66 President John Kennedy had expressed in 1962 the USA's hope of sending someone to the moon before the end of 1970. This hope was fulfilled in Neil on 20 July 1969.
- 67 When Armstrong was about to step on the moon for the first time, he said: "A small step for man and giant leap for mankind".
- 68 Nixon was the American president in 1969.
- 69 The Christopher Columbus's discovery (1492-3) of the West Indies or indeed, the American Continent is here subordinated to this venture.
- 70 Taha Hussain, Hadīthu 'l-'Arbi^Cā', op cit, "so called because its contents were originally published in al-siyāsa on Wednesdays; Hāfiẓ wa Shawqī, op cit, is also a compilation of essays on literary criticism, which were earlier published in different journals including al-siyāsa, al-jadīd, al-muqataḥaf and al-Hilāl See Ibid, pp. i-ii.
- 71 T Hussain, Fi 'l-Shi^Cri 'l-jāhilī (Cairo, 1926) quoted from T J Le Gassick, op cit, pp 110-111 (Arabic text)

- 72 Voltaire (1694-1778) is one of the great French thinkers and writers whose influence on Taha Hussain is considerable. His work, Zadig ou la Destinée is among Taha Hussain's translations.
- 73 The following poem in al-tawīl has a narrative outlook; the first four lines being its introduction, the last three, its conclusion. The word sinimatughraf like tiyatira (line 1) and Niuyürk (line 5) constitute, like similar words, new vocabularies in Nigerian Arabic literature.
- 74 Charlie Chaplin: "The English Comedian who won international fame with his portrayal of a pathetic yet humorous little tramp in American made silent films. See: The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, op cit, S V "Chaplin, Charlie". Note the Arabic letter ش employed instead of تش as in وتشاد (Richard) for example.
- 75 This use of "ghost" as a metonymy is an impact of Shakespeare or Greek mythology on Umar. It was not in use in classical, and hence in Nigerian Arabic literature before contact with the West.
- 76 Since the British occupation of the Sokoto Caliphate, Kano, rather than Sokoto, has continued to play the role of Cairo, the melting pot and cultural laboratory for Islamic reform in Nigeria; see lines 18, 19 and 20 of the extract. Umar compares Kano to Paris (line 1), its famous central mosque to that of Delhi in India (line 4) and its minaret to the New York skyscrapers (line 5).
- 77 Its offices are compared to the London (Houses of) Parliament with the Big Ben (line 7) on its tower, in Westminster Abbey.
- 78 "x-Rays" (al-'ash^{CC}atu 'l-Sīniyya, S-rays, since X is not available in the Arabic alphabet).
- 79 Shauci, a famous quarter in Kano, is compared to Hyde Park in London; its historic Dala hill is also compared in antiquity to the Egyptian pyramids.
- 80 Gwauron Dutse (lit a unique stone) is another popular hill in Kano. Note the Arabic letter ظ used for ts.
- 81 Kori, a popular market, is compared to West End in London.
- 82 "From Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Fiji and Jerusalem (Jāru salām instead of the conventional baitu 'l-maqdis, or Urūshalim)
- 83 Note the use of the English word, "Hotel" instead of "funduq".
- 84 in pre-eminence; but Kaduna, about 250Km south was the administrative capital until the creation in 1976 of the Kano State with Kano as the headquarters.
- 85 Light bombers or combat planes, cannon (long range or machine guns), tank, war ships (4) and atomic bombs (6) are all mentioned here.

- 86 Hiroshima and Nagasaki (lines 7-8) are two Japanese cities, the former, about 12 sq. mls, the latter, about three times the size of Kano (pop. 250,000). A third of each were wiped out by a single atomic bomb in 1945.
- 87 Earthquake, volcano (11), hurricane (12) and typhoon (13) are some of the climatic disasters described in these lines.
- 88 The Security Council, an organ of the UNO.
- 89 "Lake Success" in New York is where the UNO used to hold sessions in search of "success". Note this jinās between the place and the purpose of the meeting. But the achievement of success was often as hard as "rock" in contrast to the "softness" of water and the auspicious name of the lake. This figure is known as al-muqābala.
- 90 "The vulture's egg" is a traditional idiom used proverbially for something very scarce if at all it exists.
- 91 San Francisco in California, USA is where, on 26 June 1945, the UN charter was approved by 50-nation delegates, and signed by both the USA and USSR representatives.
- 92 S A S Galadanci, op cit, pp.201-4.
- 93 Apparently guided by the first line of this stanza, Professor Galadanci has interpreted this object of the poet's desire as a visit. See Ibid, p.202.
- 94 Note this partial refrain, which recurs at the end of each stanza throughout the poem.
- 95 Here and in the next, personification in form of an apostrophe or poetic fallacy is employed.
- 96 The Houris of the Islamic paradise are employed here as symbols of love. See The Qur'an, 44:54; 57:60.
- 97 Another traditional simile (al-tashbīhu 'l-mujmal) in which the point of similarity (Sweetness) is assumed between the lover's saliva and the water from salsabīl, a spring in paradise.
- 98 The questions on these biological knowledge have regrettably been omitted for a lack of space. See The Ḥadīqa, pp.38-9, 65-9. The simple title "al-'aḥājī" used in the extract below is found to be more convenient than "كسكى تشمعد الدماغ ف أوان الفراع : ١٤ أسئلة جغرافية وبأيولوجية" originally used by the poet.
- 99 Telegraphic messages and the modern postal services in general are among the impacts of Western culture.
- 100 The invocation of God in form of traditional doxology is significant here considering that some of the contents of the

verses may be incompatible with the teachings of the Qur'ān. So it is God Himself who has enjoined research and contemplation over his creation but not His mighty essence.

- 101 By flying westwards from Kano, Nigeria (8°E) to Bagota, Columbia (74°W), the duration of the day is extended.
- 102 By reversing this journey eastwards from Kano to Asmara (Addis Ababa, 38°E), the duration of the day is reduced.
- 103 The International Date line running through the Fiji islands (180°) and the Greenwich Meridian (0°) are the pivot on which the determination of day and night revolves.
- 104 Hawaii Islands are located 155°W
- 105 New Zealand is located 175°E
- 106 If a traveller leaves Sydney (Australia 151°E) on 10 Friday and arrives in Honolulu (175°W) the same day for example, he finds the people in Honolulu on 9 Thursday!
- 107 Whoever reverses this journey must therefore adopt the Australian date by adding "one" to his date and changing his Saturday, for example, to Sunday.
- 108 The southern and northern polar regions.
- 109 Lima in Peru, S America (76°W). Note the complete jinās the poet has successfully contrived between the word Kalimā (speaking) and the expression "like Lima" in which ka (adātu 'l-tashbīh) is prefixed to Lima.
- 110 See The Ḥadīqa, pp.181-99.
- 111 The verse in question is in the Qur'ān, 2:184 in the interpretation of which "La" is often inserted before the verb 'yutiqunahu'. The original phrase: وعلى الذين يطيعونه فدية طعام مسكين See: Ahmad al-Sawī, Hāshiyatu 'l-^CAllama al-sawī 'alā tafsīri 'l-Jalālayn, I (Cairo, nd), p.83
- 112 A M al-^CAqqād, Dīwān, III, op cit, p.233.
- 113 The Ḥadīqa, pp.202-5.
- 114 Ibid, pp.200-201.
- 115 T Hussain, Ḥāfiẓ wa Shawqī, op cit, pp.77-8.
- 116 Note the unconventional writing of Ö without dots in these phrases as if the writer is transcribing the speech pauses. Employed by Shawqī in his farewell address to his two sons when he was going to the exile, this style is described as poetry in prose (al-Shi^Cru 'l-manthūr) by ^CUmar al-Dasūqī, Fi'l-adābi

- 'l-hadīth, II, op cit, p.244.
- 117 A traditional proverb used very often to encourage self-reliance (Lit: no fingernail like yours could adequately scratch your body)
- 118 "Even if the lame (camel) cannot overtake the sturdy" is another traditional idiom used very often to encourage determination and positive thinking in hopeless circumstances. Umar, in the following sentence, gives its modern equivalent: "even if the cyclist cannot overtake concord".
- 119 See: H Haykal, Ḥayātu Muḥammad, op cit, for example.
- 120 A Shawqī, al-Shawqiyyāt, I, op cit, pp.231-49.
- 121 The Ḥadīqa, pp.231-9.
- 122 See: e.g T Hussain, al-Muḥadḥabūn fī 'l-'ard (Cairo, 1952) p.61 where ḥidhā is similarly repeated.
- 123 These modern political concepts-democracy, despotism, aristocracy and dictatorship - should be included in the new vocabulary introduced into Nigerian Arabic literature by Umar.

CONCLUSION

It is convenient at this juncture to highlight, and to determine the prospect of the main literary innovations introduced into Nigerian Arabic literature by ‘Umar Ibrāhīm and other contemporary writers. Struggling tooth and nail, they could not rise by their various attempts above the medieval literary tradition. But they certainly and successfully initiated a new secular oriented literary wave within the existing religious tradition. These innovations were inspired, no doubt, by Western culture which paradoxically had earlier driven Arabic language and literature into its sacred quarters. What then is the true impact of Western culture on Nigerian Arabic literature? Why, in particular, had Arabic language and literature been supplanted by English and Hausa in Nigeria, whereas they have successfully been revived so as to overthrow French and English in Cairo, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Tunisia, countries which, incidentally, were more receptive to Western culture than Nigeria?

The most radical change, of a lasting effect, introduced by modern secular thought into the Islamic world in general, was the substitution of territorial nationalism for the long existing pan-Islamic political spirit which Al-Afghānī had struggled in vain to restore. It was this resurgence of the nationalist spirit that has continued to destroy the universal Arabic-Islamic cultural heritage all over the Islamic world. In the process of secularising Islam, a distinction has begun to be made by the non-Arab Muslims between Arab nationalism and Islamic religion. The modernization of the medieval Islamic culture, as elaborated upon in chapter four, has

accordingly remained at individual national levels.

Following the introduction of its new political and economic order, the imperialist regime imposed English or French on all its former Muslim colonies in most of which these languages had gradually replaced Arabic as the lingua franca. Islamic Nigeria, therefore, was not the only Muslim nation where English has replaced Arabic. But unlike Turkey or Cairo, Islamic Nigeria had accepted the European conquest as the decree of God. It was the portent of the end of time. Islamic Nigeria has, therefore, continued to resist modern secular thought from which, like Cairo, it could have learnt practically why 'the enemies of God' were able to defeat 'His friends'!

In the subsequent struggle for independence, the Arab Muslims were able to evolve an Arab nationalism based not on religion but common language and territory. It was this Arab nationalism that eventually gave birth to modern Arabic literature as discussed in chapter three. The Arabs in their own national interest were thus able to revive Arabic language and literature despite the influences of French and English.

The non-Arab Muslim world, on the other hand, had also been compelled to recognise their own territorial nationalism during the struggle for independence. Neither Mecca, Cairo nor Istanbul could deliver them from imperial captivity. They accordingly embarked on the modernization of Islam at their own national levels. Not unexpectedly, a major aspect of this process was the separation of Arabic as the language of the Arabs from Islam as a universal religion. With this distinction being made, the religious motive for

the study of Arabic by the non-Arab Muslims; discussed in chapter one, has virtually been destroyed. For it means that Islam can now be studied in different languages, and a non-Arab Muslim does not necessarily have to cultivate the sacred Arabic.

So rather than cultivating the Arab natinalist oriented literature in the name of Islam, most of the non-Arab Muslims have turned their literary attentions to reviving their own national oriented modern literature in their own languages. This has been the situation in Turkey, Persia and of course in Nigeria where modern Hausa, has sprung up to replace the medieval Arabic language and literature. In Nigeria today, nobody outside the colleges and universities, except in traditional religious circles, speaks of Arabic literature. It was virtually unknown before in the South, while in the North, it has given way to modern Hausa literature.

Unlike English or French, Arabic literature, as discussed in chapter one; was introduced in the form of Islam the function of which it had since then remained until recently. It was unthinkable for the non-Muslims to have acquired Arabic, the study of which was normally approached only and solely through the Arabic Qur'ān. Apart from being confined to religion, the inherent difficulty in learning Arabic through a second or third language and its problem of diglossia further restricted its popularity in Nigeria. It may be recalled here that even in the Arab world, the literary (Qur'ānic) Arabic in which literature is often composed is never the popular language. Among Muslims, therefore, proficiency in Arabic, even at the peak of its development, had remained the perquisite of only a very few among

the fuqahā' who constituted the officers of the Emirate bureaucracy. Even if Western culture had not been introduced into Nigeria, it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, for the Qur'ānic Arabic to have attained, for example, the level of popularity which English has attained today in Nigeria.

Today, English is taking care of both the nation's national and international political and economic enterprises while Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba etc are being employed in cultural activities. These include literature and religion for which in the case of Islam, Arabic is no more essential. What chance of survival then has Arabic in Nigeria? The chance of its becoming a political and economic medium is simply impossible even if Islamic Nigeria succeeds today in producing an Ayatollah. Can Arabic then compete on the cultural basis, with such similar foreign languages as French and English, not to mention any of the indigenous Nigerian languages?

In its attempt to answer these questions this study will not take into account the surviving medieval theory of the Caliphate which could not differentiate between modern territorial nationalism, and pan-Islamica. Neither will this study take into consideration, such ultra-conservative views and attitude of, those Nigerian Malams who, on a religious basis, do not believe for example, that Neil Armstrong was standing on the moon on 21 July 1969; or those who have not discovered that most of the contemporary Arab world are being ruled by secular thought. As far as these groups are concerned, the medieval Islamic cultural heritage is still intact. Arabic language in particular is sacred and thus inviolable by any modern corruptive influences. These groups will, therefore, continue to cultivate the

medieval Arabic language and literature as long as the Arabic Qur'ān exists.

On the other hand, no progressive mind can fail to realise that the only chance of survival for Arabic in contemporary Nigeria, in the light of this study, is by recognising the existence, outside the Islamic cultural context, of a non-sacred Arabic. This recognition is possible by recalling that Arabic had existed before the advent of Islam, a secular and pagan language. And that after the advent of Islam, some of the Arabs have since remained Christians and non-Muslims with their Arabic language. This recognition of the secular, may, above all, have nothing to do with the sacred Arabic the study of which, as hinted above, is likely to continue indefinitely. It is only by separating Arabic from Islam in this way that the language could be studied alongside Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, English or French languages and literature in secular institutions. This is the process of the secularisation of the Arabic language and literature which has been set in motion by ʿUmar Ibrāhīm and others, and which this study has considered a modern trend in Nigerian Arabic literature.

Being studied now in most Nigerian secular institutions, its Islamic orientation notwithstanding, Arabic language and literature are no longer a privileged mystery of the ʿulamāʾ only. Nigeria has produced some Christian Arabists above whom has towered Professor Isaac Ogunbiyi who, like the Lebanese Christians, has led the secularisation of prose writing in Nigerian Arabic literature. Arabic language and Islamic religion are no longer cultivated primarily for religious propagation; their curricula have, accordingly, been extended beyond

the traditional orthodox scope as exemplified by ʿUmar Ibrāhīm in chapter five. This development, introduced by secular education, has also compelled a distinction to be made between Arabic as a language and Islam as a religion, a distinction which was unknown in pre-colonial Islamic Nigeria.

Unlike most of his contemporaries, the cultivation by ʿUmar Ibrāhīm of modern Arabic literature has further encouraged him to cultivate English literature the elements of both of which he has introduced into Nigerian Arabic literature. The spirit of territorial nationalism, as opposed to Islamic catholicism has also been introduced by Dr Muḥammad Abūbakar Liman in his poetry on the last Nigerian Civil War. Apart from raising the non-Muslim Nigerians to the same socio-political and human level with their Muslim compatriots in a mother-country, Nigeria, this poem has consciously sought to remain, as much as possible, in "Nigerian Arabic". The translations into Arabic of some indigenous Nigerian folk narratives and poetry, pioneered by Professor Ogunbiyi may also be considered as a national spirit in Nigerian Arabic literature.

With these fundamental changes, Arabic literature in Nigeria has been raised to the neo-classical stage of modern Arabic literature as described in chapter three. It is the stage of transition from tradition to modernism; the main current of thought still being essentially medieval, upon which some modern elements are often engrafted. Apart from Ogunbiyi and other Christians, every other contemporary Nigerian writer in Arabic has received Islamic traditional learning upon which Western education

has later been superimposed.

The concepts of poetry and prose, literary aesthetics, diction, style, imagery, poetic theme, rhyme and metre schemes have all remained essentially traditional as described in chapter two. Within this traditionalism, however, the poetic theme, imagery and vocabulary have been considerably enriched by secular modern or even pagan thoughts and ideas. The influences of the neo-classical and pre-romantic Arab writers, modern technological inventions, scientific and geographical discoveries, with an extensive knowledge of Greek classics, mythology and modern European literature have all featured in modern Nigerian poetry.

In addition to the influence of such classical Arab writers as Abū 'l-^CAlā' al-Ma^Carrī, the influences of Aḥmad Shawqī, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm and al-^CAqqād are simply overwhelming on ^CUmar Ibrāhīm. He has also composed a panegyric for Shaikh Muḥammad ^CAbduh and an elegy for Taha Hussain, the two most preeminent pioneers of modern Arabic-Islamic movement. ^CUmar also dedicates a panegyric to Sir Charles Darwin despite his anti-religious theory of evolution which ^CUmar, in his own way, has reconciled with the teachings of Islam on creation. Panegyrics for William Shakespeare, the first three American astronauts who landed on the moon, and an elegy for George B Shaw are all reminiscences of the influences of European literature on ^CUmar. He has also composed on Cinematography, the Telescope, the Atom bomb, Kano, the practical effects of the earth's rotation and revolution, and Halley's comet, in lyric, descriptive or narrative verses. Boasting and satire as poetic themes are not completely

absent but his sensational amatory verses, hitherto discouraged by religious tradition, is an outstanding thematic innovation.

No conscious attempt has been made to compose in any of the various modern free-verses. But the prose translation of some Yoruba folk poetry by this writer, mentioned in chapter four, may be considered as poetry in prose form (al-shi^Cru 'l-manthūr). The use by 'Umar of the non-traditional strophic verse form, al-muwashshahāt, which was rarely used before in Nigeria, should also be considered as a prosodic innovation. It may be recalled that the systematic transformation of al-qaṣīda discussed in chapter three had taken off from the revival, in Syria, of this poetic form which had earlier been introduced in Andalusia.

Apart from some translations into Arabic of a number of Nigerian folk narratives, the current of modern prose writings is generally unknown. Translation into Arabic of modern short story has been attempted but neither a novel nor a play is so far known to have been translated in Nigerian Arabic literature. Like translation, journalism is unknown but a few literary articles have begun to be published in some of the Arabic-Islamic oriented Nigerian academic journals. There are also a number of Arabic printing presses but most of them are still being used mainly for publishing religious treatises and polemic compositions.

A major obstacle which might discourage a would-be modern Nigerian literary artist and writer in Arabic, is the readership which, as hinted in chapter five, is likely to be very poor. Most of the traditional scholars, even if they become well acquainted

with modern prose diction, are not likely to be interested in reading fictions from which no heavenly rewards are anticipated. The Arabs on the other hand, are not likely to be interested in non-Islamic Arabic writings produced by non-Arabs.

The only hope, however, lies in that the study of Arabic, like English and French, has become firmly established in Nigerian secular institutions. But unlike English or French, the teaching of Arabic in those institutions is fraught with many problems basically because of the non-availability of Nigerian-oriented Arabic literary textbooks. Two years after its publication, therefore, Professor Ogunbiyi's translation of some Yoruba folktales was earnestly recommended in place of the kalīla wa Dimna, in the 'O'level Arabic of the WASC examinations. No other such Nigerian-oriented modern literary book is so far known again in any secondary or higher institutions. To the best of my knowledge, these are in dire need of it. There is little room for doubt, therefore, that if this trend can produce Nigerian-oriented modern short stories, novels, plays and free verse, they would find an adequate readership. Apart from being used as textbooks, there are also a number of individuals who might be interested in such works for their literary values. Necessity, above all, is the mother of invention.

With the above contributions, the seedlings of modern Arabic literature have grown waiting to be nursed to maturity or nipped in the bud. An attempt has successfully been launched by 'Umar Ibrāhīm along the path of imitating not only modern Arabic, but also European literature. By their introduction of the nationalist

spirit, both Dr Abubakar Liman, Professor Ogunbiyi and others have also added the second main requirement for the growth of a modern national literature if Arabic as a foreign linguistic medium is overlooked. They have indeed paved the way towards evolving a brand of "Nigerian Arabic" like English, not to speak of "pidgin Arabic", the emergence of which is to be regretted but is inevitable.

These are the basic requirements whereby through translation, adaptation or direct imitation of other existing literary masterpieces, Nigerian modern Arabic literature can be nursed into its maturity. It has been the trend of modern Arabic literary development in Egypt and Syria, despite the influences of English and French. Modern Arabic literature in Nigeria, however, can be hardly expected to attain the level it has reached among the Arabs for obvious reasons. It may also find it difficult to compete with Nigerian English literature, which has developed along parallel lines. But it would be a sufficient boon and grace that Arabic, both language and literature, has been brought out of the mosque in order to meaningfully compete with other Nigerian languages and literatures.

APPENDICES

A

Translations of the Selected Verses
from the Ḥadīqatu 'l-Azhār

I Shaikh Muḥammad^c Abduh

- 1 The Prophet, Ahmad says: in every hundredth year, there will be a reformer.
- 2 A guide will emerge from you; a reformer, that you might be guided.
- 3 Rise up O Muḥammad^c Abduh; for you are the leader.
- 4 You have reconciled religion with reason; that which is bent has been straightened out.
5. O Muḥammad, you have brought them all together by al-^curwatu 'l-wūthqā.
- 6 You woke them up from a sleep, the snoring of which has been defamatory.
7. You have thus revived - like the son of Mary - the remains of a buried lifeless body.

II The Natural Scientist - Charles Darwin

- 1 O Darwin, among us you have fulfilled a mission in which both the Arabs and the barbarians have failed.
2. (He is) a messenger to whom nature has extended its revelation with which the bodies, flesh and blood have all complied.
- 3 He informed us of what took place before our creation; before Adam and Eve met on earth.
- 4 He has established from nature's revelation, a law to which man, the bird and livestock conform.
- 5 These lofty mountains and depressions have also followed in succession to believe in what he (Darwin) says.
- 6 The same is true, amongst us, of the perennial plants which have continued to approach him in submission.
- 7 The skeletons have not disbelieved the revelation he brings; so a piece of bone believes, and a muzzle agrees with him.

- 8 Protoplasm is the origin of every living organism; whatever is bigger than it is only in its complex form.
- 9 This is true of the microbes of the sperm and their growth; the stage of their development is taught by illustration.
10. Amoeba represents a microbe while others develop (for example in man) to have a breast when the creation becomes perfect.
11. The exposition of our question: Where is the origin of the living being? - the solution to which has remained cryptic - is now consistent with Darwinism.
- 12 The struggle for survival and the survival of the fittest; this is the (Theory of Natural) Selection by which nature is ruled.
- 13 He brings you verses which no abrogator has abrogated; so whoever does not observe them is destroyed.
14. Ask man, if you wish, the reasons for his domination (of other creatures); he is the strongest, the supreme, and the most favoured of all living beings.
- 15 Ask the dinosaur if you like, about its extinction. Its failure to learn has thus been repaid.
- 16 No wonder the intellect has given credence to his statement which modern science and the scientist likewise confirm.
- 17 He has honoured Darwin, written his name and proclaimed: This (man) has become one of those to be for ever exalted.

III Shakespeare

- 1 Your book is mango, honey or wine. Flowing copiously, it is like the non-intoxicating wine of Paradise.
- 2 Or it is the intellectual inspiration, vast like the sea, the depth of which no attempt has been able to fathom.
- 3.. (They are like) hails of wisdom pouring forth from the brain the depth of which, even the masters of rhetoric could not reach.
4. Everyone who reads him is delighted by the melody of sound and meaning even if the plot is tragic.
- 5 You would think that poetry has surpassed its prose; or that, nay, its poetry has been surpassed by prose.
- 6 Read for example, 'Othello', 'Caesar', 'Juliet', or 'Coriolanus' and you are sure to be overwhelmed by their cadences.

- 7 (Read) 'Lear', 'Adonis', the 'Rape of Lucrece', 'Macbeth', 'Hamlet' and 'Midsummer Night's Dream' and you would be surprised by the depth (of their artistic accomplishment).
- 8 It is wonderful that no matter how often you read (him), your joys are always increased by the ever-pouring forth of his wine.
9. At all times on earth, and in writing, opinions are unanimous: the like of Shakespeare is difficult to find.
10. If the houris were to chant his poetry in Paradise, its tune would increase their pleasure.
11. If the inhabitants of the stars should proudly seek to disdain the people of this earth,
12. We present to them, were they to come, your book. Your pearl-like poetry will curb their haughtiness.
13. Ben Jonson requested Europe to pay homage which your inimitability (eventually) compelled the whole of humanity to do.
14. No wonder the English in their statement would have preferred him to their Empire if they had to choose: his poetry is better.
- 15 The envious were bewildered and hence denied: How could a 'pacific ocean' have poured forth from a little stream?
16. They had accordingly attributed (his works) to Bacon, (Edward de Verie and others, but a short span is not equal to a long walk.
17. Whenever their poems are compared with his anthology, his writing is a mile, theirs but a span.
18. Stratford-on-Avon among other towns, in whose garden lies his tomb, also takes pride in producing this sun.

IV Neil Armstrong

- 1 You have indeed landed on the moon surface and fulfilled for John (Kennedy) his expectation.
2. It is seemly for us to rise up in due respect for steadfastness and sublimity.
- 3 For Neil an honour is due; what an honour! So by all means, be proud and boastful of him.
- 4 Longing for you and you alone, the guest of the moon, 'Umar conveys (his) greetings.

5. You have raised your country on high and aloft and underneath it the moon has abided.
6. You extended as you say, 'a small step', but it is a (giant) leap for mankind.
7. The lightening flashes with thunder (clap) above our heads and we are overwhelmed with the joy brought by the news.
8. Nixon has praised the heroes; the President's face, radiant and proud.
9. A distinguished leader hails the great representative of mankind (Adam) on the surface of the moon.
10. You have given to America, a new continent less than which, in magnitude, is the Columbus' gift (of the West Indies).
11. We see opened road to the star; how great is the talent of whoever has opened it up to our gaze!
12. I look forward to visiting that place, if only I might succeed.

V Ṭāhā Ḥusain

1. Stop pouring O tears - for the blood even if it streams does not avail - sorrow cannot bring back the eminent when he has passed away.
2. The burried corpse does not hear our wailing even if what might fill the sea pours forth from its course.
3. Even if he were as erudite as our Ṭāhā; even if he has cultivated all the branches of the Arts.
4. Even if he has overcome darkness by his efforts; even if Egypt has been adorned by the brilliance of his ideas.
5. What, O death! is this rivalry among us for which you now choose him whose inkwells have ridiculed pearls.
6. To whom, when the Arts need a prop, the public say: Ṭāhā is the most suitable (candidate) for it.
7. Are there schools in the world of the spirit that he might become (once again) a Dean and fill the place with brightness?
8. Is there in the limbo (barzakh) an era such as the Jāhiliyya (pre-Islamic), the literature of which the spirits could not understand?
9. Are there as we have here, different (literary) eras that he might explain by interpretation and proclamation?

- 10 And produces all kinds of Ḥadīthu 'l-arbī^Cā that the spirits might be overwhelmed by the flood of his writings as it flows.
- 11 Is there a Ministry of Education looking for that expert, that he might be charged with duty?
- 12 If Ṭāhā has become hidden in the ground, the influences of Ṭāhā have continued to vie with time.
- 13 O the Voltaire of independent Egypt! you have fulfilled your obligation, so stay resting; there is never a blame, there is no sin.

IV Cinematography

- 1 Arise my loved one and let us indeed go to a theatre; and with a ticket which we buy, there are rooms.
- 2 It is there while asleep that we shall experience dreams orderly arranged to comfort eyes.
3. Both the eye and the brain will take part in the dream but in other than this, they are never equal (in participation).
- 4 Many a time I would see around me, those who are sleeping with their eyes wide open watching what was coming to pass.
- 5 How often has it made the spectator forget where he is; and so thinks that he has visited New York while in Zaria.
6. At one stage, it drives you to the battlefield where you see blood flowing everywhere.
- 7 How often has it resurrected among a host, one who has died and you think he is a narrator when he speaks.
- 8 How many a time has it prematurely caused a person to die whenever it wants him to settle down in his tomb ahead (of his actual death).
- 9 How many a future has it hastened and presented; how often has it reversed the past however distant it might be.
10. How often has it brought closer a distant object which you then think is before you; how often has it cast abroad what is close.
- 11 It dons, if it wishes, the garb of a teacher guiding whoever remains watching to prosperity.
- 12 How many a time has it appeared in the costume of an entertainer and comedian amusing us and everyone becomes pleased.

- 13 Whenever it dons the garments of mourning before us, every heart becomes enshrouded in grief.
- 14 If during the war it appears in the guise of a knight, a coward is threatened to suffer out of sheer dread.
- 15 What is wrong with you O night visitors? I call out but there is no one to answer the call.
- 16 My experience in dreams is that if I am visited by a deceased person, he answers (me) whenever I discuss with him.
- 17 But some of you only answer one another, which, according to the way of dreams, is unusual.
- 18 O Charlie Chaplin, good evening! Here is my hand; shake it or I disbelieve my eyes.
- 19 O cinema, the science through you, has demonstrated greatness the splendour of which has prostrated anyone who is in doubt.
- 20 It has developed a picture like the visit of a ghost - which people have continued to buy with that which is scarce.
- 21 I understand that if the producer were to demand pounds, they would say, out of inordinate love for it: here they are.
- 22 When 'THE END' strikes a man's eyes, and the morning flood of electric light brightens the darkness,
- 23 Having awakened, they move towards the door and to the cloudless weather; some riding while others, you behold, walking along.
- 24 This one discusses with that, the excellence of his dream; otherwise he complains: 'my money is gone'.

VII KANO

- 1 Peace be on you O Paris of Hausaland - a message from the beloved who is passionate in love.
- 2 Longing for your lovely features, I extend (my) greetings with honour.
- 3 Your fine sights are brilliant; they nearly surpass the stars of the darkness.
- 4 Among them is the magnificent mosque which, in elegance, is like the central mosque in Delhi.
- 5 And a minaret, which vies in height with the New York skyscrapers, as it shoots forth, next to the Imām.

- 6 Its office resembles in perfection, the London (Houses of) Parliament (Westminster).
- 7 Its clock is similar to Big Ben in Westminster, the abode of peace.
8. A hospital with an x-ray for the benefit of mankind, the treatment of the sick.
- 9 The 'Shauci' quarter in the evening is Hyde Park while your 'Dala' hill is like the pyramids.
- 10 Would not you turn your face westwards to see 'Goron Dutse' hill, towering above its surroundings!
11. That is the heart, the arteries of which give to the people, the water of life.
- 12 'Kore' in trading, is like the West End; there are the people in business transaction and enterprises.
- 13 You would see aircraft coming over it from Europe, Egypt and Syria, again and again.
- 14 From Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Fiji and Jerusalem.
- 15 They became like a hail storm or (a swarm of) bees, bringing honey to their beehives.
- 16 It is connected with Mecca through the cable of heaven by which the Maqama (of Ibrahim or Isma'īl) can be visited.
- 17 And do not forget, when you talk of cars; say that they are a swarm and there is no blame.
- 18 Kano has combined the knowledge of the East and West; it has gained two of the whole lots.
- 19 Here, you would find a devout malam and there, is one helping himself to a cup of wine.
- 20 There is he, who passes the whole night clinging to his rosary; and here is this one in a hotel, a slave to (his) passion.
- 21 O Paris of Hausaland and the capital of the North, on you be peace at all times.
- VIII O this world...Is there any peace at all?
- 1 O this world, why do you not guide your children to the right ways?
- 2 War after war and the cities are destroyed by fire.

- 3 By moving combat planes and rifles or by tank and cannon.
- 4 By steamships stirring crisis, and by submarine in the depth of the sea.
- 5 They have been brutal and oppressive; no consideration for human sense of honour.
- 6 And by atom bombs which, if continues to be used, will bring about the end (of life).
7. Visit Hiroshima if you deny (this); you are sure to find a completely shattered fountain.
- 8 Or Nagasaki and you would see skyscrapers which, unfortunately, have become desolate.
9. And there is an earthquake which makes us miserable by sweeping thousands into grave.
10. It threatens an expanse of land to break forth and become islands.
11. Many a volcano have we seen erupting, causing damage to all its surroundings.
- 12 Many a hurricane wind have destroyed a town or sink a ship to the bottom of the sea.
- 13 And the whirling of the typhoon across a city dissipating all that are in it.
- 14 O this world, have you no other than warfare for the living and non-living things?
- 15 At the great meeting of the Security Council, we witness the love of peace, invaluable.
- 16 It was in new York that the nations have come together with the hope of securing peace.
- 17 (But) how many a time have the members met and dispersed without proceeding beyond a span.
- 18 There is success in Lake Success; but the road to success (in world peace) has always turned rock-hard.
- 19 Is that (attainment of peace) the vulture's egg the nest for which cannot be found in the universe?
- 20 O this world, we have a request to make: so listen to what my poem has to say:
- 21 - Peace and security are the request, the goal of the persistent search of your children in (their) lifetime.

22 And it is for the sake of it that a pact was concluded in San Francisco in anticipation of success.

23 If (the attainment of peace) becomes difficult, we would not want you again; we would desire other than you, so accept my plea.

IX The Universe is lifeless were it not for Love

A 1 O my beloved, lend your ear to the lover.

B 2 Have you learnt that I have today been reduced to a mere piece of bone in the robe?

3 The flesh, from the heat of fire, has melted and vaporized.

4 Condensing as a cloud above me, it prevents me from seeing the light of the day.

5 And it would not rain until it sees you by my side.

6 O my beloved, do you care for my weeping?

C 7 If your turning away from me is prolonged, my bones (which remain) are taken away by the heat.

8 From you I shall then disappear; and my speech again you would not hear.

9 If that is your pleasure; I am afraid, you might be blamed.

10 Were (my) non-existence to call out, I would say: enjoy yourself in peace.

11 O my beloved, your ghost today, is my physician.

D 12 I was contemplating a visit when a front tooth showed itself through a smile.

13 And I saw around me the light beside which is the Bābu 'l-salām (one of the doors to the paradise).

14 And there is Riḍwān (the heaven's porter) coming to open the gate of my desire.

15 And behold! I have become (another) Ādam; But Oh! there is no tree before me.

16 O my beloved, you have performed wonders.

E 17 Love is an ordinance of the Lord; so come and let us embrace each other.

- 18 If He (God) had disdained that, He would have moulded heart to refrain from love.
- 19 But you would see it loving in accordance with how it has been moulded for the lovers by the Lord.
- 20 The most righteous person is he who fulfils the right of love and even exceeds the limit.
- 21 The shortage of it, O my beloved, is the worst sin.
- F 22. Ask the trees of their flowers from above a branch.
- 23 Ask the birds (when they sing) of what has excited them to sing.
- 24 Watch the monster - and be not afraid - then you are sure to behold love with a naked eye.
- 25 Ask him who denies paradise, the meaning of the houris.
- 26 O my beloved, give me more than my share.
- G 27 Move your mouth closer my dear friend; its water is like the salsabil (a spring in paradise).
28. For my cure and my life, give me in abundance to drink.
29. How many ~~are~~ sick; how many ~~are~~ slain,
30. Who would by no means have recovered, had not love revived them (lit, him).
- 31 O my beloved, revive me as soon as possible.
- H 32 So I might behold what is said of him who has died a truth-bearer and a believer.
33. (And who has died) a martyr on the battles of love, convinced of the encounter with death.
34. (That I might behold) of the comfort hidden in a garden for the martyr of al-badr.
- 35 It is in fulfilment of this pleasure in my own badr, that I have tasted death in silence.
- 36 O my life, O my eternity, in my delightful return.

X Riddles

- 1 These are my fatwas for which I have visited the Shaikhs. But they have not wedded me in answer to a daughter of the lip.

2. Where does the winter go for cover when the heat in summer midday comes to us?
3. I stand facing South and behold, my back is also (facing) South - I do not mean to tease.
4. My right (side) is similarly pointing South, the left, also to the South - a statement from a reliable source.
5. How can the duration of my day be extended by half and nothing more if I want it so steady?
6. How can I reduce about half from the length of the day which, today, is a possible task?
7. How can I jump, by crossing over, from (before) sunset to the end of the morrow?
8. I am on Saturday just before sunset and behold, the Friday (of yesterday) has come back again!
9. I spent my night and then a day with it; they say I have spent a year through that change!
10. I sent to a friend in the evening (of my day) a telegram, (the reply of) which came in the morning of the same day!

Answers to the Riddle

1. Praise be to Allah who, in His all-encompassing grace, has taught Adam (all) names.
2. And urges man to investigate and reflect in his creation but not in His essence, the Almighty.
3. If the summer comes to our Northern half (hemisphere) the winter is ready for departure,
4. To the south always during that time - they both interchange as we know - in the year.
5. I travel northwards reaching the pole where my directions from all sides become just the South.
6. Whoever alights there does not find East, West or the direction of the North.
7. The story is the same if to the South Pole one has come; the East, West and South are simply non-existent!
8. If I want (the duration) of my day extended, I travel Westwards (of the Greenwich) with my pilot.

- 9 I fly from Kano (8°E in Nigeria) to Bagota (74°W in Columbia) where after Kano, the day is still steady.
10. The reverse of that is a reduction (in the length of the day) which you will encounter by travelling fast, from West to East (of the Greenwich).
- 11 Travel from Kano by air to Asmara (Addis Ababa 38°E) and you will find an afternoon there brief.
- 12 (As for) jumping from my day to the next, and the return of my yesterday after it has lapsed,
13. Its pivot is the International Date Line at the Fiji Islands (180°) to the East and West of which is the Greenwich (0°).
14. (If) we presume that it is afternoon there (in Fiji) it will be about evening in Hawaii (155°W).
- 15 For our previous day (in Hawaii, eg Friday) New Zealand (175°E) becomes the morning of the new morrow (ie Saturday, although no night has intervened - a day being gained having crossed the Date line westwards from Hawaii to New Zealand).
- 16 Whoever moves from Sydney (151°E in Australia) to Honolulu (175°W) must necessarily lose a day (having crossed the Date line eastwards from Australia to Honolulu).
- 17 He who reverses this (journey, by going from Honolulu to Sydney) gains a day and the Australian date, he must necessarily adopt.
- 18 Whoever his abode is in the two polar regions will have a day and a night for his year.
- 19 The sun remains throughout (the first) six months during a similar period of which the night is also constant.
- 20 Whoever is speaking (eg over radio) in Kano in the evening, the inhabitants of Lima (76°W in Peru, S America) find him speaking in the morning,
- 21 Of the same day; the secret being the early visit of the sun to the (regions) east (of the Greenwich) as it has been established.

XI The Ode of the Nigerian Civil War by Tahir Liman.

- 1 Hail the heroes of our country's force; who else in our country deserve to be hailed?
- 2 Their jihād has purified the unity of our land and destroyed the evil of secession in our East.

- 3 O Biafra, I shall not weep for a moment over your death;
there shall no longer exist sorrow after this day.
- 4 A ready tool in the hands of the defectors, Ojukwu has
shaken our national security.
- 5 But the armies of God warded off their stratagem and they
turned round fleeing before our armed forces.
- 6 They are Caesars whose resolutions are never intimidated by
death; among them are descendants of Bawa as well as of
Bello.
7. Their ancestors were from the Kanem and before it, they are
followed by men who have established the grace of our glory.
- 8 Oduduwa was among the ancestors of our land; his children
have also participated in our struggle.
- 9 The Etsu (of Nupeland), Tor Tiv and Aku Uka of Wukari were all
great kings of our country.
10. Kunta and Modibbo Adama were also among them; our folk history
will never forget Bayajida.
- 11 The kings of Benin, Ife and Zaria - their descendants have
lit up our mobilization plan.
- 12 Hail the General who led our forces to victory; and made the
reputation of our land widespread.
- 13 In command of the armed forces amidst our fighting was Gowon
who was much concerned with our plight.
- 14 And Shuwa was the lion among other lions, leading the army
like the Caesar of our own time.
- 15 I see in our soldiers, a Khālīd Ibnu 'l-Walīd; he is Muḥammad
Murtaḍā among our men.
16. We gained a victory which shook Rome and its inhabitants; it
baffled both Nixon and Wilson.
17. They planned and our Lord also planned; but then, we became
victorious in the honour of our Messenger.
18. All the tribes and nations are brethren from our father,
Ādam, and from our mother, Eve.
- 19 We also have politicians in our country; they have all
assisted the heroes in gaining (our) victory.
- 20 Help them O Lord by the light of Muḥammad and Jesus son of
Mary, the prophets to our right conduct.

- 21 O my country, the beloved of our soul, we ransom you at a high price and by our blood.
- 22 O Nigeria, mother of all cities therein, you are a paradise by the grace of our Lord.
- 23 I have, for the sake of love, dedicated myself to my mother and my paradise; but for your own sake, I would not have said, one day, a prayer to our Lord.
- 24 Patriotism in my community, is a devotional duty; whoever is devoted to a mother country has obeyed our book.
- 25 Do not be angry for a moment concerning Nyerere; our account is typical of the reward of Sinimmār (the requital of evil with good).
- 26 We want peace under an equitable administration, our free constitution protecting our territorial integrity.
- 27 We all live like children of a faithful mother, Nigeria, and that O lord, is our security.
- 28 On him be peace of Allāh and His blessing, the Prophet of the right religion, truly raised up in our interest.

B: al-Qāḍī 'Umar Ibrāhīm (b. 1922)



● الشاعر النجيري عمر ابراهيم من
اشهر شمرء العربية بنيجيريا ●

C. Sample Pages from the Hadiqa: The Halley's Comet

Edmund Halley (1656-1742)

طَلَعَ مَذَنِبٌ أَفْقًا وَعَيْدٌ ١
يَهْدِي بِالنُّزُولِ بِبُرْجِ خَيْسِ ٢

حَدِيثٌ قَبْلَ مِثْرَ زَمَانٍ يَعِيدُ ٣
مِنَ الْقَدَمَاءِ قَبَسًا بَعْدَ قَيْسِ ٤

هَرَاءٌ قُلْتُ لَسْتُ بِهِ رَعِيمًا ٥
أَرَى ذَا الْأَعْيَادِ خِيَالَ حَدِيثِ ٦

جَوَارِهُنَّ لَا تَأْتِي فِيهَا ٧
وَلَا خَيْرٌ وَلَا اسْتِجَابَةٌ تَعِيسِ ٨

وَلَسْتُ سِرٌّ وَقَدْ جَذِبَ الشَّمْسُ كَرَاهًا ٩
وَمَوْفِعِهَا التَّبَعِيدُ يَدُونَ خَيْسِ ١٠

إِذَا يَهْلَى لَوَاجِهُنَّ سَرِيحًا ١١
إِذَا بِالنَّجْمِ أَشْأَمٌ مِنْ طَلُوسِ ١٢

إِذَا بِجَوَادِي عَيْتِيَّتِي بُوَيْسِ ١٣
يَنْهَبُ بِالْإِهْلَاءِ أَوْ خَيْسِ ١٤

يَعْمُ أَوْ عَالِيٍّ أَوْ سَلَايِ ١٥
زَمَانَ شُؤْمَهُ كَسِينِيَّتِي خَيْسِ ١٦

(1) Comet (2) قيس العام نعامه (3) الكلام الكثير الناسد (4) الحدس النظر والوهم
(5) النجم الهلاك نعت عشرة أكبا على وجهه (6) سانس بسانس القناد (7) أي مجازية
الشمس كما قال نيوتون (8) أو لا تبت في مكانه وموقفه فلا بد أن يكون كذلك
كما قال أينشتاين (9) النجم النأخر والانقباض (10) هللى هو Edmund
Halley الفلكي الإنجليزي من 1656 إلى 1742 الذي حسب وتنبأ بقدره هذا
النجم فقدم كما قال: فسبح باسمه. وهذا النجم المذنب يكون في اقربيه من الشمس نصف
شهر مارس السنة الأثنية 1486 (11) هذا الرجل طويس ولا يفهم ما النبي وفطم
يوم مات أبو بكر وبلغ يوم قتل عمر وتزوج يوم قتل عثمان وولدت زوجته يوم قتل
على: كما روى أنه يقول (12) خمس خمس أشد حيدر خمسن سنوز خمس: شدائد

وَكَمْ سَاعٍ لِحَالِهِ قَوِيٍّ يَوْمَهُ رُوِيَ شَرُّ الْمَالِ أَفْثَلَيْتَكَ بِهَيْسٍ¹

وَأَسْعَارٌ نَضًا عَمَّا كُلَّ يَوْمِهِ وَقَائِعٌ أَرَعَمْتَنِي رَبِّبًا نَدَيْسِي²

وَتَعْوَى فِي مَسَارِحِنَا دَعَابٌ³ وَتَخَطَفًا مَا لَشَاءُ وَكَلْبٌ بِحَرَسِ³

عَدُونَنَا فِي مَرِيضَتِنَاهُ وَنَيْسِي فَسَادٌ عِنْدِي يَفُورُ فَسَادَ أَمِينِ

وَتَحْسَبُ لِلْمَالِ لَهَ طَوْلَ يَوْمِهِ كَيَوْمِهِ يَوْمِ صَفِيرِ تَلْوِ حَمِينِ⁴

وَتَيْلٌ مَدْلِهِمْ كَيْلٌ قَطْبِ⁵ طَوِيلٌ عَرَفِيهِ شَرُّ شَمْسِ

فَحَلَّ الْخَوْفُ فِي رَوْحِنَا يَا أَمِينِ وَكَابَدْنَا التُّوحُّشَ الْتَرَانِيسِ

وَهَضَارٌ كَثْرًا أَمِينِ بِدَوْرٍ فَرَّقَ⁶ مَا لَمْ يَحْجُ⁷ وَكَثْرًا يَتُوبُ بُوَيْسِ

(1) الهيس: الاحذ بكثرة وكرها. (2) الندس: الظن والفهم (3) حرسه: حرسا حفته
 (4) يعني: 5 يوم (5) حيث لا تطلع الشمس الا بعد ستة اشهر (6) اي مثل
 ما يسمى Identical Twin (7) منظره وما في الوجه الذي يميز به هذا من
 ذلك.

وَيَفْتَحُ وَيَسْعَا فَمَنْ يَبْجَحُ - لِيَبْلَغَ أَوْ لِيُرْسِلَ عُمُرَ رَمْسِ

بِمَا نَبِيٍّ وَسَعِيهِ مِنْ جَارِحَاتٍ يَسْوِطُ أَوْ يَسْفِي أَوْ يَسْوِسُ

تَرَاهُ أَمَامَ نَمِّ وَرَأَيْمِيًّا - يَتَمَتَّلًا لِأَيْقِيكَ حِجَابَ تَرْسِ

وَأَدْعِيَّةٌ وَأَدْمَعُ دِي خُسُوعٍ وَلَا تَنْدُرُ¹ وَلَا خَضَعَانُ² فَطَسِ³

وَتَنْزُرَكَ⁴ فِي الدُّعَاءِ كَصَمْتِ عَمَافٍ⁵ يَلَانُزُرُ⁶ تَفْوَرُ وَلَا يَطْمِيسُ⁷

شَرِيْعَةٌ أَهْلُ أَدْعَالٍ آخِرًا * * * سَوَادٌ أَمْهَابٍ لِلرَّيْسِ

وَيَأْتِيكَ ذَوْقُ دِي عَقْلٍ سَلِيمٍ لِيَطْمِيسُ أَوْ لِيَعْنِفُ أَوْ لِيَحْوِسُ⁸

وَأَسْتِيرِيًّا⁹ - وَإِنْ تَرَكْتَهُ قَدِيمًا - بَكَتْ مِنْ يَبْسٍ مَا عَرَسَتْ¹⁰ وَتَدْرِسُ¹²

- (1) النذر أن توجب على نفسك ما ليس لواجب من أن تقول إن حصل هذا فإنا انهدق بمائة نيرا. (2) خضع خضعا أو تواضع (3) جمع افطس فصبغة الأنف. يعني به السجود (4) نزر نزال الخ في السؤال (5) العافى الذي أنكف عن السؤال (6) نزر قفل النزر القليل (7) طاس يطيس كثر الطيبس العدد الكثير (8) الأهانة (9) استير ياهي الهمة العدل في اللسا طير الأثنية يقولون إنها تركت الدنيا "Terras Astraea relinquit" (10) هاجرت الدنيا (11) قبل تركها عرست العدل الآن تبيكي من بس ما عرسته (12) درست الدار عفت ودوست.

فَصَارَ الْأَمْرُ جُورًا ثُمَّ قَرَضَنِي رَجَاءَ الْيَسْرِ صَارَ سَيْئًا يَأْسِي

وَيَفْتَكِدُ بِالضَّعِيفِ بِتَأْتِيٍّ بِالْكَوْنِ يَقْرَنُ أَوْ يَضْرِبُ

لَيْسِي فَطَنَهُ أَوْ سَعَى وَاشِي بِالْأَثْرِ مَثِيرٌ قَسَايٌ وَعَبْسِي

وَيَلْدَكَ بِهَا تَمْرٌ صَطَاذٌ نِكَزٌ لَجُوعٌ هَاجَ لَا يُولُوعٌ قَسْرِي

مَحَاكِمٌ لَا تَكَادُ تَرَى تَطِيرًا بِمَحْنِكَ فِي الْمَسَامِيرِ أَوْ بِطَرِي

تَحْدِكَ فِي الْعَجَائِسِ مِنْ جَوَاهِرِهَا يَصْرُجٌ - أَوْ صَبْرٌ نَجَا أَوْ يَهْمِسُ

وَتَزْرَعُ فِي الْقُتُوبِ بِنُورٍ شَكِيٌّ: "نَعِيسٌ هُنَا لِحَيْرٍ أَوْ لِعَكْسٍ؟"

شَهَادَاتٌ تَرِيْبٌ - وَأَوْجَحُنَا - يَقِينِي أَوْ تَيْقُنِي كُلُّ نَرْطِسٍ

* * *

- (1) القلي البعوض (2) تغير الوجه للغضب (3) فرس الاسد فرسته دق عنها (4) صبيتنا بدون تأييد (5) يصباح بشديد (6) همس الصوت اخفاء (7) كذبنا وافكرنا (8) النهس العالم

أَمِنْ شُحْمِهِ خَلَا مِنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ¹ وَذَنْبٍ فِي الْحَيَاةِ بُعِيدَ جَوْسٍ¹
 يُطَهِّرُ غَيْرَهُ مِنْ ذُورِ خَوْقِ السَّلَامِ: لِتَرْكِهِ تُطَهِّرُ نَفْسٍ
 وَهَلْ مِنْ مَنْ يُبَاهِي بِحَارِ هَذَا النُّظَافَةِ - فِي الضَّمِيرِ - كَوَادٍ قُدْسٍ²
 إِذَا هَامَ بَجَدَّةٍ. كَفَاهُ عَارًا يُطَهِّرُ بِالْجَاسَةِ جِسْمَ جَنَسٍ
 تَيْبَتِ أَيْمَانًا فِي الْمَرْتَبِينَ وَقَارِزِ رَجْسٍ مَأْتَمَةٍ بِرِجْسٍ³
 وَبَاعَ يَسْعِيهِ نَعْنَاءَ عَظِيمًا "لَطِيفًا" أَوْ رَجِيمًا يَبْتَغِ بِمُخْسٍ
 وَهَذَا النَّعْنَاءُ ذُرْوَةٌ كَلْفُضِيلٍ وَمَنْزِلَةٌ لِيَبَاقِيهَا كَرُوسٍ
 يَزِينُ اسْمَ ذِي عَرْشٍ وَتَاجٍ⁴ يَضْعِفُهُمَا وَيَضْعِفُ جَمَالَ مَاسٍ⁴

(1) جاس جوس جوسا: طاب به بالمرح والاسْتِقْصَاءُ (2) كوادى المقدس
 طوى (3) العمل القبيح والقذر (4) حجر كريم شديد المعان. اقتبس -

هذا المعنى بتصرف من قول شكسبير: *Mercy... it is mightiest in the mightiest*
 it becomes the throned monarch better than his crown.

Merchant of V, IV. 1. 184-197.

وَقَدْ خَابَتْ بِجَارَةِ كُلِّ سَخِيمٍ تَجَنَّى الشُّوْكَ بَعْدَ مِرَاسٍ وَرَاسٍ

وَعَارِسٍ ذِي الْحَلَاوَةِ الشُّهَاءَ فَعَادَ كَحَذَلٍ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَرَسٍ

فَقَاتَلَتْهُ السَّعَادَةُ بِأَنْعَمًا يَلْوَتْ فِي الْبَصِيرَةِ طَمَتْ طَمْسٍ

وَلَا تُعْجِبُ بِمَنْدُوبِهِ وَصَلْمًا تَعَظَّمُ ذَا فَمَا هُوَ عَيْرٌ نَكِيرٌ

قَوِيٌّ مَنْ تَعَظَّمُ تَمَّ يَعْفُو لِيَطَالِيَهُ وَيَجْعَلُهُ كَدْرَسٍ *

تَعَلَّمَهُ بِبَحْرِ يَبِ مُفِيدٍ نَجَا لَدَغِيْنٍ فِي جِحْرِ يَلْعَسِ

وَيُظْهِرُ كَالْجَبَانِ لَذَا. وَلَكِنْ جَرَى النَّاسِ يَعْفُو وَفَتْ شَخْسٍ

وَيَحْفَلِي بِالْمَوَدَّةِ فِي الْقَلْبِ وَزَيْنَةُ لَدَغِيْنٍ كَحَذَلٍ كَيْسٍ

(1) مارسه عالجها وشرع فيه (2) ال في البصيرة فام مقام الضمير اي بصيرته
 راجع الر غمر (3) الطمت الدنس والفساد و(4) طمس الشيء محاه واهلكه
 طمت هو فاعل بلوت اي دنس محو البصيرة يكدر بصيرته لوث الماء كدره
 ولوث ثيابه بالطين لطمها (5) الرجل الذي لا خير فيه (6) تعظم منه
 شكامنه انظم (8) اشارة الى لا يلدغ مومن في حجر مرتين (9) الحفرة
 (10) لعسه عضمه (11) شخس الرجل اضطررت (12) شخس السكين حده
 اي حد العقل (13) الكيس العقل
 (7) * اخذ هذا المعنى بدخرف منه شكسبر قال

To revenge is no valour, but to bear.

وَذَاكَ هُوَ التَّحْدِثُ لَا طِبَاعٌ كَجَمِيلٍ أَوْ كَلَيْتٍ أَوْ كَأَوْسٍ¹
 طِبَاعٌ وَخَوْشَةٍ فِي عِلَاجٍ وَحَشِيرٍ - وَلَوْ بِنَاهَا يَهْمَا - دَنْسٌ لَوْ كَيْسٍ⁵
 جَمِيلٌ أَنْ تَكُونَ قَتَى قَوِيًّا جَمِيلًا ذَا الْفِطَانَةِ غَيْرَ جَمِيلٍ⁶
 وَلَكِنْ فِيهِ عَارٌ حِينَ تَسْطُرُ - كَجَامُوسٍ - يَهْمُغُطِ أَوْ يَنْهَمِسُ⁷
 وَأَخْتَبْتُ دَابَّةً فِي الْأَرْضِ أُنْشِئُ بِبَيْدَةٍ بَذْرَةً جِنْسًا بِفَيْسٍ⁸
 وَيَكْذِبُ أَوْ يَخُوزُ لِعَصِيدٍ سَيَّرَ يَسِيرُهُ يَسِيرِي يَسِيرِي لَقَيْسٍ¹¹
 وَغَايَةٌ كُلُّ فَعْلٍ قَصْدٌ خَيْرٌ لِحَمِيرٍ الْخَيْرِ لَا لِغُلُوِّ كَرِيْسِي¹²
 وَلَا لِالْمَدْحِ أَوْ لِالْفَخْرِ أَوْ مِمَّا يَسِيدُ الْجَمِّ فِي تَحْمِيلِ قَلْبِسٍ¹⁴

(1) الاوس الذئب والاويس تصغيره (2) وحشش يؤخشن رذل وصار رديعا
 وخواشنة وخواشنة وخواشنة (3) الرجل الضخم القوي (4) يعنى وحششى
 كما يقال حصار وحش (5) النقصر والخسارة (6) الجبان اللئيم (7) النهس
 العض بمقدم الاسنان والنتفبه وعض الحبه (8) التكبر والافتخار بالبال
 يقتل جنسه بالقنابل الذرية ويفخر به (9) يعيب غيره (10) من العوشاية
 التميمية (11) اللقس القيب اى يسير بين الناس يعيب هذا امام ذاك وذلك
 اسام هذا (12) اى لا يزن بجد مكانا ودرجة (13) يهلك الجم الغفير اكثر
 الناس (14) تحمیل فليس اى وجود المال الفلاس المال جمعه الفلوس

⊕ اخذ هذا المعنى بالتصرف من شكسبير
 It is excellent to have a giant's strength
 But it is ~~to~~ tyrannous to use it like a giant.
 measure II 2. 107.

وَلَا حَيْبَ الثَّوَابِ . وَلَا عِقَابًا . يَخَافُ لِأَجْلِهِ . أَوْ خَوْفِ خَفْسٍ^١
 وَهَاجِرٌ فَعَلَّ جُرْمَ خَوْفِ شَرِّ طِيٍّ يَغَائِقُهُ وَجَيْدًا دُونَ لَهْيَسٍ^٢
 وَقَائِلٌ فَعَلَّ خَيْرَ كِيٍّ يُجَازِي^٣ - لِنَزْرِ جَاءَهُ - أَضْعَافَ هَاسِسٍ^٤
 يَهَاجِرُ مَا أَنَاهُ بِدُونَ وَعَدِ الثَّوَابِ . فَخَيْرُهُ شَرُّكَ لِذَيْبِسٍ^٥
 كَثَائِرٌ رَطِلٌ حَبَابٌ طَيُّورًا يَرِيهَا الْجُودُ يَتَّبِعُهُ بِقَفْسٍ^٦
 فَعَفَّلَ الْخَيْرَ لِأَخْوَفًا وَطَلَمَعًا هُوَ الْمُخُودُ مِنْ خَلِيقٍ وَتَوْسٍ^٧
 وَتَدْلَيْسٌ لِمَعْنَى الْخَيْرِ مَهْمَا تَسْمَى فَعَلَّةٌ خَوْفًا يَبْأَسُ
 وَزَيْفٌ لَفْظٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ يَسِيٍّ بِهِ فِعْلًا لِمُغْتَرَفٍ لِرَغْسٍ^٨
 * * *

(١) الخفيس: الاستهزاء أو خوف الكلام القبيح (٢) الدهيس: الحنرب (٣) التزر: القليل (٤) الهلس: الخير الكثير، أي الذي يعمل عملاً نافعاً رجاء أن يجازيها بضعافه إذ لم يوعد بتلك الأضعاف لا يفعل هذا الخير (٥) عمله نصباً فتح ليحتمى العسل الذي يشرب العسل وسكن للشجر أو الذي يشرب عصير العنب عقد بالنار (٦) قفسه أخذه أخذ اشتراع وغصب والسنة ربط قوائمها الأربعة (٧) التوس: الطبيعة كما في القاموس (٨) اغترف الماء أخذه بيده أو بإناء (٩) الرغس: النعمة والنعاء

آيَا أَسْفَى خَلَا قِيمَ عَطَاشٍ وَيَشْرَبُ غَيْرَهُنَّ بِمِثْلِ كَأْسٍ
 تَحْضُرُ بِالصَّنَائِرِ مَشْخَذَاتٍ تَعْدِدُهَا مَهَارَتُهُ الْخَالِيسِ
 تَرَى الْأَطْفَالَ مُتَشَبِّهِينَ بِحِكْمِي جَرَادًا وَقَدْ حَيَّرَ وَقْتُ قَرَسِ
 وَيَجْمَلُ كُلُّ طِفْلٍ فِي يَدَيْهِ إِذَا السُّؤْلِ مَهْلُوعًا بِعَفْسِ
 وَيَضْرُخُ «الْقَرَارَةَ» أَوْ «أُعْثِي» بِصَوْتٍ جَهْلُورِيٍّ مِثْلَ تَيْسِ
 صَبَاحًا أَوْ مَسَاءً أَوْ نَهَارًا وَلَيْلًا لِأَيِّ الْأَيَّامِ
 يُدْرَبُ مِنْ هَيْبَةِ لِكَيْ يَحَاكِي الطَّيُورَ عِنْدَ جِيَاعًا ثُمَّ لَمْ يَسِ
 بِطَانًا حَمُونَ كِيدٍ. إِنْ هَذَا يَكْدُّ وَلَا يَفُوزُ لِسُوءِ حَدْسِ

(1) جمع خلفوم (2) فاعل تعدد (3) خلس الشيء سلبه عاجلا بخاتلة
 (4) البرد (5) بنفسه عن حاجته: رده بدل (6) القرارة ما لصبق
 * كذا في القدر * Kanzo Ko dan (7) الا باليوم (8) كما وصف
 الحديث الطيور "تعدو جياعا وتروح بطانا" او ما معناه بدون
 كيد اي عمل شاق (9) الحدس الذهائى على غير حدس اس لسوء السعي.

* معنى Ko dan Kanzo اس اعطنى ولو قرارة - القرارة وهو سا Kanzo
 و dan = قبيل

يسوى ثوبه المهوزان - يدون هون² لله ولأهليه أو سههم وقس³
 وكم من بالغ أو من قسوي⁴ بلا تقصير ولكن حبه أويس⁴
 يحاكيهم بلا استحياء حتى يلوذ إذا تعذر ذا الحرس⁵
 ومن عجب يراه البعض حمداً قرين دراسة لا قرين بس⁶
 فيليس ذا السؤال لبتا ردين⁷ عريب⁸ حيد من هوس بهوس⁷
 ودل على دروس الخلق جدا وسوء الفهم في درس بر كس¹⁰
 وينذر أهله بكموز¹¹ شيء مضر فيهم موهي¹² لا يس¹³
 بين الأجناب الخراطم السكان وأهليه أو سوء حرس¹⁴

(1) النذل والاحتقار والضعف (2) اللين والسهولة (3) وقس الفاحشة ذكرها
 وقسه بالمكروه فذقه به (4) الأوسن العظيمة (5) الحرس السرقة ليللا
 (6) أي يذهبت معاً والتعلم (7) لا مثل عمل يقال فيه «بس» (8) الهوس
 الجنون (9) لقبيلة هو سا ومن هم كهم (10) ركس الشيء قلبه أوله
 على آخره أعلاه الر أسفله (11) كمن كوزنا: ثوارس واختفى (12) الذي
 يصنعفه (13) الأس: أهل البناء (14) الحرس: الأهراس الزمان .

* كَوْهُوتَيْكُ *

سِرْرَنَا بِاخْتِفَائِكَ "كَوْهُوتَيْكُ" بِضَوِّهِ لِنُرَ وَصَلَتْ - كَفَنُوهُ طَلُوسٌ²
 وَذَلِكَ هَبْلَى، وَهَذِينَ مَادَعْنَنَا لَصِيدٍ وَمَا حَكَمُوا مِنْ سِرِّهِ وَجَسِ⁴
 وَفَقَّتْ هَبْلَى وَلَوْ قَسْنَاكَ مِنْهُ لَجَسَّتْ بِمَا يَسِيْبُ سِرِّ حَسِ⁵
 * * *

وَمِلَّتْ أَقَاوِيلُ انْتَشَرَتْ قَدِيمًا لِنُورِ مَدَنِيَّاتٍ قُرْبِ شَمْسِ¹
 فَصِيدٍ فِيهَا أَوَارِقُضْرُفُضْرُضْبَعِيَّةٌ أَلَى الْأَخْلَامِ فِي بَابِجَانِ نَعْسِ⁶
 وَرَائِي - رَعْمٌ مَا يَغْرِي بِصِيدٍ - بَرَاءَةٌ تَيْكُ مِنْ لُورَانِ نَعْسِ⁸
 أَرَى مَا قِيلَ ضَبَعَتْ خَزَعِيَلَاتٍ⁹ أَعْسُ مِرَاسٍ وَهَمِ كُلِّ عَسِ¹⁰

(1) كَوْهُوتَيْكُ Kohootec اسم من ذئب كبير مضببى فله من حوالج الشمس
 سنواته منهن ولو وصل من قربها الشمس لكان حجمه وخنوءه مثل القمر
 ثم بدأ ان يتلاشى حتى اختفى كلية وما عرفنا من سيره بعد (2) الطوس
 القمر (3) سرد الكلام اجاد سباقه (4) وجس سمع ما فرغ منه
 (5) حسه قنانه واستأصماه والبرد الزرع احرقه (6) النعس النوم
 (7) اهتياج (8) الهلاك (9) الاحاديث الباطلة المستخرقة (10) عس
 الكلام يغسه عليه.

إِذَا مَا حَلَّ نَعُضَرَ النَّاسِ بِنُؤُسٍ إِذَا ظَهَرَتْ. لِيَعْفِرَ خَيْرَ رُغْسٍ^١
 وَيَنْزِلَ صَبْرًا خَامِهًا وَأَوْلِيْدًا يَهَاجِرُ وَحْتَهُ سَابِدًا لِرُمْسِ
 وَقَائِعِ كُلِّ كَلِّ الْعَقْلِ شَرْحًا لِحِجْرَيْهَا وَمُسْتَعْبَةً لِدَرَسِ^٢

(١) الرغس النعمة (٢) المتعب والمتعبية: التعب. الوارو واو المعجبة.
 اي ومع تعب العقل لطيب شرحه قد كل.

لمسك ابراهيم
 ١٥/١٢/٨٥

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