

Why is Gaariye Silent about the role of Abdullahi Diirye Guled in co-exploring the Somali Prosody?

I like Somaliland websites. So much lively discussion is going on. This column aims digest to what I have read in 'Somali owned websites" and share with you. I read an article in Jamhuriya website on a meeting held in honour of the Somali poet and educationist, Professor Mohamed Hashi Dhamac Gaariye. Undoubtedly, Gaariye had a big role in exploring the Somali prosody. Jamhuriya story contains incomplete information about Gaariye's scholarly achievement, the product of timely collaboration with Professor Cabdulalahi Diiriye Guuled(Carraale).

In 1977 I read article Gaariye co-authored with Diriye in Xiddigta Oktoobar in which they argued that poets are born but can also be made. The late poet and writer Ibrahim Haji Awad (Kholli) wrote in New Era about Gaariye and Diriye's achievements. "Let us see if the first batch of graduates from Gaariye and Diriye's school will be able to become poets," he argued.

Back in 1988 I listened to a BBC Somali Section interview with Gaariye. He talked about the influence Arabic poetry has on his poems. I think Gaariye feels uncomfortable when all credit is given only to him on the basis of collaborative scholarly achievement. The Jamhuriya story does not make mention of Abdullahi Diriye Guled who has recently published a book on the Somali prosody.

In a foreword to the book (Miisaanka Maansada Soomaaliyeed) Cismaan Xuseen Abokor (Cismaan Xamari) writes: " professor Carraale is the first scholar who laid foundations for the Somali prosody." (Page 13).

BW Andrejewski, the late SOAS professor and linguist, wrote about the scholarly collaboration out of which the Somali prosody emerged:

No until the 1970s were the principles of the scansion system discovered and worked out in broad outline by two Somali scholars."

For the sake of all those who like Somalis and their language and culture, the two scholars – Gaariye and Carraale--, had better acknowledge each other's role in discovering the Somali prosodic systems." We have so much to gain and learn if our men of letters give each other credit deservedly.

Ahmed Keyse Ali,
London
E-Mail: ahmedkeyse98@hotmail.com