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Edited by Jon Woronoff

Historical Dictionary of Somalia

New Edition

Mohamed Haji Mukhtar

African Historical Dictionary Series, No. 87

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Lanham, Maryland, and Oxford
2003
To my son,
Suleyman Mukhtar,
who died at age eleven from the indiscriminate shelling in Mogadishu in 1990, and to all the innocent young people who suffered the same fate.
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Series Editor's Foreword

When Somalia became independent in 1960, there was some doubt whether it could achieve its ultimate goals of expanding into a greater Somalia and bringing together all the Somalis who had been artificially divided by colonialism. But there was no cause to expect that the opposite would occur, that the state would splinter into smaller entities, that rather than there being five points on the star (as represented on Somalia’s flag) there would not even be two. Alas, the unexpected happened, among terribly tragic circumstances, and the tragedy is still not over. It is hard to explain exactly what happened, let alone why it happened, and that is frankly not the purpose of this book. Its purpose, one it certainly does fulfill, is the broader goal of presenting the Somalis, primarily those within the bounds of the former Somali Democratic Republic but also many living further afield, and helping us understand who they are, who they were prior to the collapse of the state, and even who their ancestors were. It concedes the dark side, much of it political and economic, but also shows what is good and hopefully enduring in the culture and arts of Somalis.

This new edition of the Historical Dictionary of Somalia replaces an earlier edition, written in happier times, and brings the story up to date. It also expands the coverage substantially in a dictionary section that includes many more persons, places, events, institutions, and traditions, with a special concern for the arts and culture. Among these entries are more, not fewer, on foreign influences that were sometimes decisive. The chronology traces the path downward, then upward, and over the past decades back down again with little sign of recovery. The introduction helps put all this in context. A particularly comprehensive bibliography allows readers to find the inevitably missing details as well as varied explanations of what went wrong, despite so much effort expended in making things turn out right.

As the author explains in other contexts, writing about Somalia and the Somalis is not easy. Much of the ancient and even more of the recent precolonial history is not written, and what was written during the colonial period cannot really be trusted. Multiple views exist on what has happened since independence, depending on who is trying to prove what. So piecing together the story and presenting it in an objective manner is a daunting task. Even harder is
expressing criticism of the Somalis rather than blaming others, especially if one is a Somali. So the very least one can say is that Mohamed Haji Mukhtar has done an admirable job in extremely difficult conditions.

Born in Somalia, raised bilingual in Somali and Arabic, fluent also in English and Italian, he was able to tap the existing resources and has, indeed, been doing so for many years already as a student and research fellow in Somalia, Italy, Tunisia, the United States, and Egypt (where he obtained a doctorate at Al-Azhar University, at the Islamic world’s oldest and most venerated school of Islamic studies). Dr. Mukhtar has taught about Somalia and, more broadly, Africa at the Somali National University, the National University of Malaysia, and Savannah State University, where he is presently professor of African and Middle Eastern History. Over the past decade, he has returned frequently to Somalia for visits and field research, all the while contributing actively to Somali causes, as among other things editor of Demenedung, the newsletter of the Inter-Riverine Studies Association, of which he was the chairperson, and chairperson of the Somali Committee for Peace and Reconciliation. This historical dictionary is in its own way a contribution to understanding without which peace and reconciliation will be harder to achieve.

Jon Woronoff, Series Editor
Acknowledgments


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who devoted much of his time to reading and editing the manuscript, and to Lee Cassanelli, who read most of the manuscript and provided critical suggestions that helped fine tune the dictionary. Special thanks to Daniel Lockwood of Savannah State University, who helped in the design of the maps. I am grateful to Robin Owens for typing parts of the manuscript. I am indebted to Mohamed Hussein “Mutawa” of the University of Um al-Qura, Mecca, Saudi Arabia, for his contribution in providing some Arabic manuscripts on the life of some Somali Ulema. I would like to express my gratitude to Jan Hartman for her support in the preparation of the work.

From Somalia, I would like to express my gratitude to Sharif Hassan and to Yusuf Badiyow of the relief agency al-Ahli, Baidoa; to Ahmed Sheikh Muhyiddin; and to Awes Sheikh Muhyiddin, who assisted me in finding people to interview in Bur Hakaba and the Baidoa area. Kar Yere, Abdi Mad Mayow, Malak Abiikur Ibdow, Ibdow Manuur “Korkoor,” Abdi Muse Mayow, Abdulkadir M. Adan “Zoppo,” and Malak Mukhtar Malak provided important data and information about the early history of Somalia. My special thanks also go to Sharif Salah, who generously supported my research, beyond the call of duty.

And, finally, I am extremely grateful to my family: my parents, and siblings, who encouraged me to seek knowledge no matter how long it might take or how far I would need to seek, and my children, Saida, Salah, and Subeida, who were very patient and supportive during their transition in the United States.
Reader’s Notes

As I noted in 1987 in *History in Africa: A Journal of Method*, “most Somali government publications, if not all, appear in Arabic and one, or sometimes more, European language as well as in Somali since the advent of a Somali script in 1972. Therefore, if a Somali wrote anything, whether privately or officially, it was normally written in Arabic. Only in the late 1970s did Somali writings in non-Arabic languages begin to appear in any number.” Since then, many Somali scholars have published not only in Somali and Arabic, but also in other languages, especially English. Scholarship hitherto had been based on too little knowledge or had been subject to censorship by a totalitarian regime.

In 1997, when I began writing entries for this dictionary, I faced the dilemma of what to include and what to leave out and also how to transcribe certain sounds in Somali languages and dialects that the official script for Af-Mahaa, which is after all only one of many Somali languages, does not accommodate. I also agreed with the publisher to work on this new edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Somalia* without borrowing materials from the previous edition by Professor Margaret Castagno. I therefore used Castagno’s entries only for updating or for reinterpretation and revision in the light of recent scholarship. I am grateful for Castagno’s first edition as a useful guide, but readers should remember that the two volumes are entirely different in content.

I have focused on historical events, figures, and places that have significantly influenced Somali history without neglecting lesser-known figures, such as women and minorities, who have played significant historical and cultural roles. I have attempted to create a pluralistic record, so that no one element in Somali history and culture is emphasized over another. The use of the script officially adopted in 1972 imposed one language, Af-Mahaa, over others. Of course, each colonial language, Italian, English, and French, sounded and spelled Somali words differently. Uniform spelling of Somali names and places is rare even now. Thus, I have chosen to use the spellings that are conventional in the British and American press, for example: Aideed instead of Aidiid (Italian) or Caydiid (Af-Mahaa); Baidoa rather than Baydhowa (Af-Maay) or Baydhabo (Af-Mahaa); Mogadishu instead of Mogadiscio (Italian) or Muqdisho (Af-Mahaa).
Somalis do not use family names or surnames, but nicknames are common. For example, the former president, Mohamed Siad Barre, who in the Western media is known as Barre, was known in Somalia as Afweyne (Big-Mouth) or by his personal names, Mohamed Siad. So in situations like this, sometimes two entries were inserted, with the nickname cross-referenced in bold. Three religious titles derived from Arabic are frequently used: maalling or ma’allin (Qur’anic school teachers) for any teacher; haji, a person who has performed pilgrimage to Mecca and visited the holy places of Islam in Medina and Jerusalem; and sheikh, a man of religion. Political titles such as malak, ugas, islaw; and boqor indicate chiefly or royal rank in a clan or confederacy of clans. Some clans employ Arabic titles, such as suldaan (from “sultan”) and imam (spiritual leader), for the head of the clan. Somalis who claim descent from the household of the Prophet Muhammad use the title sharif for male and sharifa for women. Some dynasties, such as the Ajuran, used Islamic titles such as amir (emir) and na’ib (vice emir) in their administration.

The collapse of the Somali state raised questions about governance, the principle of national sovereignty, the culture of power in the modern state, and the concept of humanitarian intervention. Most importantly, it called for the reappraisal and reexamination of Somalia’s culture and history. This volume therefore addresses these issues.

Three maps are provided: the first, following the spelling used in this edition, indicates historic sites, cities, and regions; the second shows the historical location of the major clans; and the third maps Somali languages and dialects.
# Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFIS</td>
<td>Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana della Somalia (Italian Administration on the Trust Territory of Somalia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.H.</td>
<td>anno Hegirae (in the year of the Hegira)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Assemblea Legislativa (Legislative Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN</td>
<td>Assemblea Nazionale (National Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASMAEI</td>
<td>Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri Italiano (Historical Archives of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUNEP</td>
<td>Afis UNESCO Nomad Educational Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEAP</td>
<td>Buur Ecological and Archaeological Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>British Military Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.P.</td>
<td>before present (before 1950 B.C.E.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAFS</td>
<td>Commander Australian Forces Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARE</td>
<td>Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDI</td>
<td>Centro di Documentazione, Istituto Agronomico (Florence, Italy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTCOM</td>
<td>Central Command (Tampa, Florida, United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFM</td>
<td>Council of Foreign Ministers of the Allies (during and after World War II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Criminal Investigation Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINCCENT</td>
<td>Commander in Chief, Central Command (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIVPOL</td>
<td>Civilian Police (UNOSOM II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMIO</td>
<td>Chief Military Information Officer (UNOSOM II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMOC</td>
<td>Civil Military Operations Center (UNITAF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMOT</td>
<td>Civil-Military Operations Team (Australia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPSU</td>
<td>Communist Party of the Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Conciliation Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Congressional Research Service (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSS</td>
<td>Council of Secretaries of State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Consiglio Territoriale (Territorial Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DART</td>
<td>Disaster Assistance Response Team (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHA</td>
<td>Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMSGC</td>
<td>Digil-Mirifle Supreme Governing Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DOD  Department of Defense (United States)
DPKO  Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
EC  European Community
ECH  European Community Humanitarian Office
ENE  Ente Nazionale Elettrica (National Electric Company)
EU  European Union
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
FAST  Fleet Anti-Terrorism Support Team (United States)
FFP  Food for Peace
FGM  female genital mutilation
FLCS  Front de Libération de la côte Somalie
FO  Foreign Office (UK)
FP  Feeding Point
FRUS  Foreign Relations of the United States
FSAU  Food Security Assessment Unit (UN)
G-12  Group of 12 factions
GHAI  Greater Horn of Africa Initiative
GS  Governo della Somalo (Somali government)
GSL  Greater Somalia League
GTZ  Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Society for Technical Cooperation)
HDM  Hizbiya Digil-Mirifle (Digil and Mirifle Party)
HDMS  Hizbiya Dastur Mustaqil al-Sumal (Somali Independent Constitutional Party)
HOC  Humanitarian Operations Center (UNITAF)
HRO  Humanitarian Relief Organization (UNITAF)
HRS  Humanitarian Relief Sector (UNITAF)
ICITAP  International Criminal Investigation and Training Assistance Program (United States)
ICRC  International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC  International Federation of the Red Cross
IGAD  Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IMC  International Medical Corps
I MEP  First Marine Expeditionary Force, based at Camp Pendleton, California (United States)
INGO  international nongovernmental organization
IO  Bureau of International Organizations (United States)
IOM  International Organization for Migration
IPR  Institute for Practical Research
IRC  International Rescue Committee
IRIN  Integrated Regional Information Network (UN)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISA</td>
<td>Inter-Riverine Studies Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCS</td>
<td>Joint Chiefs of Staff (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JESS</td>
<td>Juba Environment and Socioeconomic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTF</td>
<td>Joint Task Force (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPI</td>
<td>Life and Peace Institute (Sweden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARFOR</td>
<td>Marine Force (UNITAF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCC</td>
<td>Mennonite Council of Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEF</td>
<td>Marine Expeditionary Force (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Military Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPL</td>
<td>Majerteen Progressive League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC</td>
<td>Military Staff Committee (UN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSF</td>
<td>Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCO</td>
<td>Noncommissioned officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Executive Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFD</td>
<td>Northern Frontier District (Kenya)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGDO</td>
<td>nongovernmental development organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>nongovernmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPPP</td>
<td>Northern Province People’s Progressive Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSC</td>
<td>National Salvation Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSS</td>
<td>National Security Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUF</td>
<td>National United Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organization of African Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Overseas Development Administration (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFDA</td>
<td>Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIC</td>
<td>Organization of Islamic Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSALA</td>
<td>Oromo-Somali-Afar Liberation Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSD</td>
<td>Office of the Secretary of Defense (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDD</td>
<td>Presidential Decision Directive (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTT</td>
<td>Police Technical Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVO</td>
<td>Private Voluntary Organization (United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 RAR</td>
<td>1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCs</td>
<td>Regional Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDC</td>
<td>Regional Development Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REDSO/ESA</td>
<td>Regional Economic Development Services Office for East and Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRA</td>
<td>Reewin Resistance Army</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SACB Somali Aid Coordination Body (UN)
SAIS Società Agricola Italo-Somala (Italo-Somali Company for Agriculture)
SALF Somali Abo Liberation Front
SAMO Somali African Muki Organization
SAREC Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation (with developing countries)
SCF Save the Children Fund (UK)
SDA Somali Democratic Alliance
SDM Somali Democratic Movement
SDU Somali Democratic Union
SEPADO Somali Environmental Protection and Anti-Desertification Organization
SG Secretary-General (UN)
SGC Supreme Governing Council
SIDA Swedish International Development Authority
SLA Somali Liberation Army
SNA Somali National Alliance (USC splinter)
SNAI Società Nazionale per l’Agricoltura e l’Industria (National Company for Agriculture and Industry)
SNC Somali National Congress
SNDF Somali National Democratic Union
SNF Somali National Front
SNL Somali National League
SNM Somali National Movement
SNU Somali National Union
SOCOM Special Operations Command (Tampa, Florida)
SONNA Somali National News Agency
SORSO Somali Relief Society
SPL Somali Patriotic League (exclusively Usman Mohamud clan)
SPM Somali Patriotic Movement
SPMAGTF Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (United States)
SR Senate Resolution (United States)
SRC Supreme Revolutionary Council
SRRP Somali Rural Relief Program
SRSG Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UN)
SRSP Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party
SSA Somali Salvation Alliance
SSDF Somali Salvation Democratic Front
SSIA Somali Studies International Association
SWDO Somali Women’s Democratic Organization
SYC  Somali Youth Club
SYL  Somali Youth League
TCDC  Transitional Charter Drafting Committee
TNA  Transitional National Assembly
TNC  Transitional National Council
TNG  Transitional National Government
ToT  Training of Trainers
UN  United Nations
UNAC  United Nations Advisory Council
UNCIVPOL  United Nations Civilian Police
UNCT  United Nations Coordination Unit
UNDOS  United Nations Development Office for Somalia
UNDP  United Nations Development Program
UNDRO  United Nations Disaster Relief Office
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNGA  United Nations General Assembly
UNHCHR  United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF  United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNIDIR  United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNITAF  United Task Force
UNOSOM I  United Nations Operation in Somalia I
UNOSOM II  United Nations Operation in Somalia II
UNPOS  United Nations Political Office for Somalia
UNSCR  United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNTAC  United Nations Transitional Assistance Commission
UNVMTTEA  United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in East Africa
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
USC  United Somali Congress
USF  United Somali Front
USIS  United States Information Service
USLO  U.S. Liaison Office (UNITAF-UNOSOM II)
USP  United Somali Party
USR  United Somali Roots
WFP  World Food Programme
WHO  World Health Organization (UN)
WO  War Office (UK)
WSLF  Western Somali Liberation Front
WSP  War-Torn Societies Project (Somali Program)
WV  World Vision
Figure 1. Somalia, Regional Divisions until 1991
Figure 2. Major Clans and Their Historic Locations

Note: Clan boundaries are not necessarily authoritative
Figure 3. Major Languages and Dialects

Note: Languages in bold are spoken throughout the local region.
### Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4000 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Jiddu presence in the Horn (proto-Somali I).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Emergence of Proto-Somali II or pre-Rendille and Garre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000 B.C.E.</td>
<td>During the fifth dynasty, Egyptian documents record the earliest known Pharaonic expedition to Somalia, the Land of Punt, for frankincense and myrrh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 B.C.E.</td>
<td>The Tunni group occupy the lower Shabelle valley. Early herding communities in the Horn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1475 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Illustration of Queen Pharaoh Hatshepsut’s expedition to the land of Punt in the queen’s temple at Deir el-Bahri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Proto-Somali III speakers, including the Garre and the Tunni, occupy the Juba valley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Ptolemies of Egypt move into the Horn to get elephants to be used against their rival Seleucids in the east, who are using Indian elephants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Himyarite (South Yemen) presence in the coastal towns. Sultan As’ad al-Himyari rules Mogadishu and environs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>632</td>
<td>The exiles of the Riddah (apostasy wars), mainly from Oman, settle in Banadir and later move to the hinterlands through the waterways of the Shabelle and the Juba, laying the foundation for the early Islamic centers of Afgoy, Bali, Harar, and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>695</td>
<td>Migration of an Omani group led by brothers Suleiman and Sa’id of Juland to settle on the East African Zanj coast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700</td>
<td>Caliph Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan of the Umayyads sends an expedition to the East African coast to conquer Mogadishu and secure its kharaj, or annual tribute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>739</td>
<td>The first Shi’ite emigrants arrive on the East African coast.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abu Ja’far al-Mansur, of the Abbasids, appoints a *na’ib* (viceroy) to collect taxes and supervise the teaching of Islam in Mogadishu.

The Muslims of Bilaad al-Zanj (the land of Zanj), present-day Somalia and East Africa, rebel against the Abbasids and refuse to pay *kharaj* taxation. Caliph Harun al-Rashid sends a punitive expedition.

Al-Ma’mun, the seventh Abbasid caliph, sends 50,000 men to crush the secessionist Muslim towns of Bilaad al-Zanj and force them to pay their back taxes.

A group led by the “Seven Brothers of al-Ahsa,” from the Persian Gulf, settle in Mogadishu and Barawa, Somalia.

Al-Mas’udi (d. 957), a Muslim traveler-historian, in his book *Muruj al-Dhahab wa Ma‘adin al-Jawhar* (The garden of gold and gems), describes the socioeconomic life of Somali cities, both on the Khalij al-Barbari (Gulf of Aden) and the Bahr al-Zanj (Indian Ocean).

Hassan ibn Ali al-Shirazi leads the largest migration from Persia to East Africa.

Oligarchic city governments emerge in Mogadishu and coastal towns of southern Somalia. Mogadishu is governed by a confederation of 39 clans: 12 from the Muqri clan, 12 from the Djid’ati, 6 from the Aqabi, 6 from the Isma’ili and 3 from the Afifi.

Al-Idrisi (1100–1166), a Muslim geographer, reports that Marka (Merca) and Barawat (Barawa) are towns on Bahr al-Zanj (the Sea of the Blacks), that is, the Indian Ocean, and that there are Hawiye settlements on the Banadir coast.

Al-Hamawi (d. 1228), a Muslim traveler who compiled *Mu’jam al-Buldan* (Dictionary of cities), includes entries for Zayla, Berbera, Mogadishu, and Marka. He notes that the inhabitants of Berbera are very dark and speak an unwritten language, but that the inhabitants of Mogadishu are not blacks.

The construction of Jama’ mosque in Hamar Weyn quarter, Mogadishu, is completed.

The construction of Arba’a Rukun mosque in Mogadishu is completed.
1269 The construction of Fakhruddin mosque in Hamar Weyn quarter, Mogadishu, is completed.

1286 Ibn Sa’id al-Maghribi (1212–1286), a Muslim geographer, notes that Mogadishu is Madinat al-Islam, an Islamic center.

1300 Beginning of hostilities between Muslims and Christians in the Horn. Abyssinia requires the sultanates of Bali, Hadya, Harar, Fatajar, Dawaro, and Ifat to pay tribute.

1301 Theocratic rule of the Qahtani dynasty begins in Mogadishu.

1328 Amda Syon I, emperor of Abyssinia (1314–1344), jails Haq al-Din I, Sultan of Ifat, when the sultan refuses to pay tribute.

1330 Abu Bakar bin Fakhruddin establishes the Fakhruddin dynasty in Mogadishu.

1331 Ibn Battuta visits and gives a full description of Zayla and Mogadishu.

1332 Jamal al-Din, the sultan of Ifat, sends an emissary to the Mamluks sultan of Egypt requesting military and political support in the conflict with the Abyssinians.

1333 Haq al-Din II becomes new Sultan of Ifat and declares jihad against the Abyssinians. He fights until killed in battle in 1386.

1341 Sa’d al-Din II (1386–1415), the successor of Haq al-Din II, is assassinated on the island of Zayla.

1445 The exhausted Muhammad ibn Badlay (1445–1471) of Awdal Sultanate (or Adal, which had its capital in Zayla) concedes the payment of an annual tribute to Abyssinia.

1450 The Persian Zuzni dynasty comes to power in Mogadishu.

1471 Lada’i Uthman, emir of the Awdal, renews the jihad against Abyssinia and defeats two successive Abyssinian military expeditions in 1473/4.

1499 3 January: Vasco da Gama shells Mogadishu, “a large town, with houses of several stories, big palaces in its center, and four towers around it.”

1506 Portuguese fleets burn and loot Barawa.
1507  Portugal establishes a garrison on the island of Socotra at the entrance to the Red Sea.

1517  Lope Suarez captures and burns Zayla. This marks the fall of the Adalite Sultanate.

1518  Saldanha sacks and destroys the port of Berbera.

1518  Muhammad Ibn Azhar al-Din (1488–1518), emir of Awdal, is murdered; civil war follows, as five emirs rule in two years.

1527  Imam Ahmad Gurey, the “left-handed” (1506–1543), also known as al-Ghazi (the conqueror), defeats the Abyssinians decisively at ad-Dir.

1528  Imam Ahmad defeats Somali rivals, restores law and order, refuses to pay the annual tribute to the Abyssinians, and declares a jihad.

1529  Imam Ahmad defeats the Abyssinians at Shimbera Kure.

1542  Ahmad Gurey defeats Abyssinian-Portuguese armies at Afla in the valley of Wafla.

1542  **October:** Galawdewos, the emperor of Abyssinia, defeats Imam Ahmad Gurey at Wayna Daga near Lake Tana. Imam Ahmad is fatally wounded.

1543  **22 February:** Imam Ahmad Gurey dies. His forces retreat.

1551  Amir Nur (1551–1567), Imam Ahmad’s nephew, known as Sahib al-Fath al-Thani (the champion of the second conquest), comes to power and revives the jihad unsuccessfully.

1555  Luug Aw Madow, Sarmaan Aw Umur, and Mereerey Aw Hassan, all theocratic city-states, emerge in southern Somalia.

1560  The Ajuran Imamate in south-central Somalia emerges.

1600  The Muzaffar dynasty replaces the Fakhruddin in Mogadishu.

1670  Ottoman Turks become the rulers of Zayla and parts of north-western Somalia.

1671  Banadir ports support Omanis against the Portuguese in East Africa.

1750  The Geledi Sultanate, later known as Afgoy, emerges in Ay Ulay in the southern Shabelle valley.
1800 Formation of the Majerteen Sultanate in Bandar Alula.

1819 Sheikh Ibrahim Hassan Yeberow establishes a reformed Jama’a in Bardera in the Upper Juba region.

1839 The British establish a garrison in Aden.

1840 Yusuf Ali breaks from the Majerteen Sultanate and moves to Hobyo.

1843 Yusuf Mahamud, sultan of Geledi, captures and burns Bardera. The expedition is a counteroffensive to the political and economic impact of the reforming Jama’a.

1846 Charles Guillain visits coastal Somalia and writes on the socio-economic conditions of Mogadishu, Marka, Barawa and Af-goy.

1848 The sultan of Geledi, Yusuf Mahamud, is killed at Adaddey Suleyman, a village near Marka, in a battle between the Biamaal and the Geledi confederacy.

1869 The Suez Canal opens.

1878 Sultan Ahmad Yusuf (1848–1878) is killed at Agaaran, near Marka, by the Biamaal. The Geledi army retreats.

1884–1885 The scramble for Africa: Europeans sign “friendship” and protectorate treaties with Somali clans.

1886 Britain and Germany agree to recognize the sovereignty of Zanzibar over parts of the East African coast, including some ports of Somalia.

1887 Menelik II of Ethiopia conquers Harar.

1889 7 April: Italian protectorate treaty with sultanates of Alula and Hobyo. 2 May: Italy and Ethiopia agree on boundaries between Italian colonies in East Africa and Ethiopia. 3 August: Agreement between the British East Africa Company and the Italian government transferring control of Kismayu, Barawa, Marka, Mogadishu, and Warsheikh from Zanzibar to Italy.

1891 24 March: Britain and Italy agree on the demarcation of their respective spheres of influence in East Africa, from the River Juba to the Blue Nile. 10 April: European powers accept the boundaries of Ethiopia drawn by Menelik II in his circular letter.