Abstract

This paper builds on the brief introductory comments by both Donez Xiques and Margaret Laurence in *A Tree for Poverty: Somali Poetry and Prose* to show that while the *belwo*—a genre of romantic Somali lyrical poetry created and sang by young men—is simple, it is not frivolous, immature or simplistic as it has been accused of being. Instead, it is accomplished in form and universal in content.

Key Words: *belwo*, figurative language, Gorki, love, Laurence, Marvell, oral discourse, persona, poetry, protagonist, Pushkin, rhetorical questions, Shakespeare, Somali, universal, Xiques