

STANISŁAW PIŁASZEWICZ

'We Thank the Lord God'.

A Hausa Poem from the IASAR/160 Manuscript

The poem from the IASAR/160 manuscript, like many other Hausa texts in the *Ajamī* script, has no formal title. For practical purposes, however, it was given a conventional name *We Thank the Lord God*, which is the translation of the first three Hausa words of the poem. This poem comes from the Arabic Collection of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. In the provisional and so far unpublished catalogue of the Institute's manuscripts it is described in the following way:

IASAR/160 — Hausa

Accession date: June 1963

Author —

Title —

Description: Admonition

Date of work —

Ms from: Malam Abū Bakr b. al-Ḥājj 'Umar of Kete

Krakye, 7 folios, 17,5 × 22 cms, 15—25 years [old].

The fact that the manuscript, whose xerox copy underlies the present edition, was obtained from al-Ḥājj 'Umar's son made some people think that it was al-Ḥājj 'Umar himself, the famous Hausa poet, who had written this poem¹. The careful analysis of the Hausa *Ajamī* text reveals, however, that it constitutes a shortened version of another Hausa poem published at the turn of the XXth century by Ch. H. Robinson². Although the poem under consideration has only 176 verses and that published by Ch. H. Robinson as many as 256 verses, the content of both of them is the same. The only difference is that the poem from the

¹ See for example D. E. Ferguson, *Nineteenth Century Hausaland*, University of California, Los Angeles, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, pp. 35—36.

² Ch. H. Robinson, *Specimens of Hausa Literature*, Cambridge University Press, 1896, pp. 68—101.

