



ORIENTATION COURSE

(for Foreign Experts working in Somalia)

PERSPECTIVES on SOMALIA

P.O. Box 964 Mogadiscio

Andrzejewski's Comment

This is one of the most important contributions Muuse Galaal made to our understanding of the Somali modes of thought. Unfortunately the copy from which this photocopy was made is very faint in some places and consequently there are some lacunae.

I have filled them in pencil¹ where I was confident about what the text should be. In some places I was not sure and I put question marks on the margin.

I suggest that some Somali experts should be consulted and their versions added, with appropriate annotations.

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¹ In italic in the text.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON SOMALI CULTURE

Musa Galaal

Introduction

In attempting to discuss the Somali *cultural* tradition, the following serious difficulties are encountered:

- 1. The Somalis, although basically *homogeneous*, are divided into several regional subdivisions, and are also spread in such vast areas of East Africa, thus, no doubt, causing some variation in their basic way of living.
- 2. Due to the absence of an alphabet for our language, our culture and traditions are preserved only in the memory of Somali poets and story tellers, who, owing to the long descent of these traditions in oral forms, present the same *items* of culture in slightly different forms each time they are transmitted. As a result, the works of earlier researchers of Somali studies are often under constant challenge from all corners. This is why I should like to advise the readers of this study to be ready to accept slight variations now and then in different parts *of the* country.

Tradition is said to be the "oral transmission of information, beliefs and customs," being handed down from ancestors to posterity. According to my understanding, this is unlike the methods of recording history in written forms.

Although a number of foreign authors have attempted to study and analyze Somali cultural traditions, the number of works so far published in the field, in fact, does nothing more than scratch the surface, in relation to what is still unrecorded. Of course these foreign authors who contributed towards the preservation of our culture are all to be commended, although parts of their works may not meet the approval of serious Somali nationalistic sentiment. They, in fact, helped to lay down the basis for future research by future Somali scholars.

The aim of this study is to outline concisely some aspects of the traditions of our people, with a view to illuminate some of the intimate factors that lie beyond the track beaten by the previous foreign authors, and which, owing to my experience as a nomad during the first twenty years of my life, and because of the opportunity I had in the field while in Government service during the subsequent twenty-five years, I have been fortunate enough to have the chance to learn myself. This first presentation will, then, be an attempt at a general outline of the culture as a whole. The second presentation, scheduled for next week, will be a more detailed study of one aspect of the culture. The reader may thereby obtain a general idea of the Somali culture and a detailed study of one aspect of it.

Because of the broadness of this present study, the text has been presented in topic outline form. More complete work would, indeed, become a complete book in itself.

The reader will observe that some of the topics are discussed in more detail than the others. The reason is twofold. I have tried to include items in detail that have been neglected by researchers in the past. Also, I myself have simply not found the time to collect enough materials in some areas. I should like to discuss broadly the chief components of our basic culture in accordance with the tree chart on the first page. This chart is my own creation, and, although the basic outline could not be considered exhaustive, at least an attempt has been made to approach the topic from the most reliable angle known so far, which is through the oral tradition.

A tragedy to point out in this connection is that the great poets, sages and story-tellers who have preserved our beautiful oral literature in their memories are passing away daily, one by one, taking with them everything they preserved. But now the reader will say, "But have they not transmitted their knowledge to their posterity?" The fact is that our modern youth are less interested

in memorizing this vast body of oral traditions and literature. We must record as much of it as possible before it disappears foverer.

The transcription of the Somali literacy items and excerpts in this paper is, again, my own invention, and its purpose is simply to illustrate that the examples are actually from the Somali folk traditions and nowhere else. As far as the Somali Government is concerned, no characters have been yet accepted for the language.

The following is the KEY to the system used:

Galaal's Symbol Linguistic Description International Phonetic Alphabet (I.P.A.) Symbol

A. (Consonants			
	C, c	voiced, very fortis, glottac fricative	/9/	
	Dh, dh	post-alveolar, retroflexed, voiced stop		
	G, g	velar, voiced stop (never pronounced as j)	/g/	
	Hh, hh	voiceless, pharyngeal fricative	/h/	
	J, j	voiceless (sometimes voiced in Southern Somalia) alveolar affricate	/v/	
	Kh, kh	velar, voiceless fricative	/x/	
	Q, q	post-velar, voiceless stop	/q/	
	R, r	trilled, voiced, alveolar liquid	/r/	

Note: Long consonants are doubles, as in hadda, amma.

voiced, lenis, glottal stop

B Vowels

i, e, a, o, u	short vowels	/i/ , /e/ , /a/ , /o/ , /u/
ii, ee, aa, oo, uu	long vowels	/i:/ , /e:/ , /a:/ , /o:/ , /u:/
iy, ey, ay, ow, aw	short diphtongs	/iI/ , /eI/ , /oU/ , /aU/
iiy, eey, aay, oow, aaw	long diphtongs	/i:I/ , /e:I/ , /a:I/ , /o:U/ , /a:U/

/?/

Note: the remaining symbols used in this transcription have the same, or nearly the same, linguistic value as they do for English

The basic Somali Culture is founded on:

- 1. Pure nomadic pastoralism in which the economy is derived from the:
 - a. Rearing of camels and flocks of sheep and goats (<u>Reer Oodeed</u>). This type of grazing is long range, and takes the nomad far into the hinterland.
 - b. Rearing <u>Nugul</u>, i.e. cattle, flocks of sheep and goats, horses, mules and donkeys within close range of watering centers (<u>Reer Nugul</u>).

- 2. Shifting agricultural system in which the basic economy is *derived* from:
 - a. A primitive kind of farming.
 - b. Rearing of Nugul animals, i.e. sheep, goats, cattle, horses, donkeys and mules.
 - c. Sporadic movement from one agricultural area to another, movement itself being a part of Somali system of basic economy.

The chief components of the basic Somali Culture are shown in the chart of the tree of Somali Culture found on the next page. On the following pages, an attempt has been made to give a clear outline of the details of each component on the basis of Somali literary traditions.

1. HHEER: BINDING INSTRUMENTS

What is <u>Hheer</u> and how is it established? In my opinion, <u>Hheers</u> are articles of binding instruments formulated by each clan in assembly on the common problems of their day to day affairs. I shall try to mention the commonest problems met by the Somali nomads and upon which <u>Hheers</u> are formulated. At the same time, I shall try to give relevant examples of each article from our folk literature.

PURPOSE OF THE HHEER:

- 1. To encourage virtuous action taken by an individual member of the clan or community.
- 2. To discourage all unjust and immoral actions.
- 3. To assist the needy.

Mahmah: Wahha tol loo yahay, nin qalloocan qabashadi, nin qumman la qurweynti, iyo nin qumman wahh siintii.

Proverb: All men are bound together under the following rules: the *checking* of unjust actions; the encouragement of right and virtuous actions; and the assistance of *weak* and needy persons.

4. To feed and care for guests.

Hees-Cayaareed, alliterated by M:

Saddehh hal wayga maan dedan:

Ninka maranti doorale, e tu kale u maraca tegey,

Ninka maal addunyo leh, e marti nebi ka dhabandhigay,

Garta laba markhaati leh, e mooyi mooyi laga naqay.

Dance Song: Three things astonish me:

A rich man failing to feed Moslem guests in his home,

A man with a charming wife, hunting for other women,

And the failure of a man to win a law case after having obtained two witnesses on his behalf.

5. To recognize the reciprocity of all assistance.

Gabay, alliterated by W:

Reerkeennu waynoo waraar, kama wahh dooneene,

Wahhaygiyo wahhaagaba aan cuno, waalli soow ma ahaa.

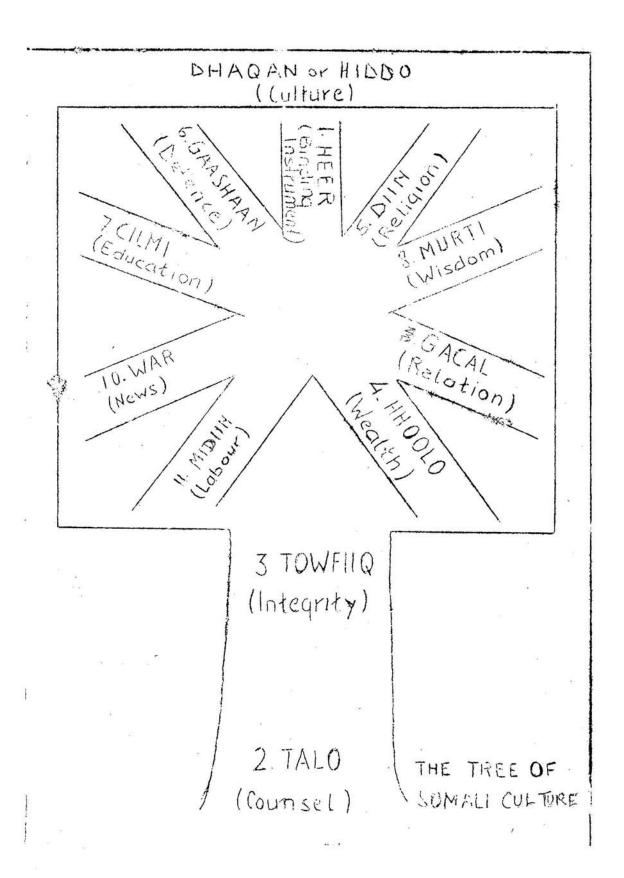
I do not object to the idea of sharing our property together,

What I object to is (your idea of) eating what is mine as well as what is yours.

6. To ensure the safety and return of any lost property to its owner.

Mahmah, alliterated by B:

Baadi Islaameed bahalka ka hheree.



Proverb: Keep all the lost property safe from wild beasts.

7. To arrest thieves.

Odhaah: Tuug baa la hhiddhaa.

Saying: It is the thief that is chained (not me).

8. To ensure the safe return of any borrowed property at the appointed time.

Gabay, alliterated by the vowel sounds:

Ayaan iyo wixii laba ka badan, eregtu waa ceeba.

English text: It is shameful to retain sorrowed property for more than a day or two.

9. Never to disclose to the foreigner the weakness of your own people.

Odhaah: Shisheeyena halkaaga adag baa la tusaa, sokeeye na halkaaga jilicsan.

Saying: To the foreigners, show the strong points of your people, to your kinsmen, show the weak points.

10. To protect your <u>magan</u> (the people committed to your charge)

Gabay, alliterated by M:

Magan niman ka dhiman hhilihi waa, meher la'aadaane.

A man who fails to defend his own subjects is not worthy for a noble girl to marry.

11. To join all rallies for joint actions by clans.

Odhaah: Nin magan kabihiisaa dhaama.

Saying: A man who makes himself absent from the rallies of his clan, is not worthy his own shoes.

12. To defend the common property of your own clan (i.e. livestock, wells, grazing lands, wives, etc.) from all attacks and infringements.

Gabay, alliterated by T:

Is taageerid bay laha gacmood, tamar ka yeeshane, Tiskaa wahha la qaadaa markay, tiirisaa bidihhe, Hadday midigtu keli taagantahay, tahar ma gooseene.

Two arms only achieve success when they help *each other*. Men can not carry a heavy hundle of thorny branches alone. For it the right hand were alone, it could not even cut the smallest membrane.

13. To maintain public order.

Hees-Cayaareed, alliterated by D:

Diraddire-cadaabeedow, Dadka nabada kala daa.

Dancing song

O you evil-monger, let people live together in peace.

14. To refer all injustices to the <u>Hheer-Beegti</u> (Law-Keeping Elders), and to abide by their decisions.

Odhaah: Hhaajo hadday qorrahhooto, guddiday hadh-gashaa.

Saying: If justice gets overheated in the sunshine, it goes to the judges for shade.

- 15. To show due respect to leaders, women, children, the aged, and the weak.
 - a. Gabay, alliterated by C:

Nin cirrale caddabkiina waa, lagala caasaaye.

Even Allah abstains from punishing a grey-haired man by putting him in hell.

b. Odhaah: Rag wahha kuugu sita ninkii hhantaadana wanaaja, hhaaskaagana wahh siiya.

Saying: The best friend you can have is the one who speaks well of you in your absence and who helps your family when they are in need.

	DHAQAN		CULTURE
1.	HHEER	=	INSTITUTION
2.	HHUKUN		JUDICIARY
3.	GUURTI	=	LAW-KEEPERS
4.	GUDDI	=	JUDGES
5.	HHAQ = JUSTICE	≠	BAADDIL = INJUSTICE
6.	SHARCI = SHARIA	≠	HHISTI = COMMON LAW
7.	GAR = LAW CASE	≠	MUSLAHH = ARBITRATION
8.	GURAD = PRECEDENTED	≠	UGUB = UNPRECEDENTED
	LAW	+	LAW
9.	MUDDUCI = PLAINTIFF	≠	MADDACALEY = DEFENDANT
10.	? MILLAD = OATH	≠	MARKHAATI = EVIDENCE
11.	DEEDIFO		DISQUALIFICATION
12.	LUG-KAABTO		MENDING A BROKEN LEG
13.	JILIB-CARRO		READY PAYMENT

This chart gives a rough idea about the order of the principle steps or order of presentation.

Finally the entire idea of <u>Hheer</u> may be summed up in the Odhaah: Tol hheer lihi caydh ma leh.

Saying: A clan with (a sound system of) Hheer has no poor members.

2. TALO: COUNSEL

Another important phenomenon of our culture is the <u>Talo</u>, which is a system by which every member of a clan makes himself subject to the counsel, discretion, and directions of the law-keepers (<u>Guurti</u>). A clan with strong <u>Guurti</u> and submissive clan members is said to be <u>qabiil talo leh</u>, "an effective clan."

The responsible elders, or <u>Guurti</u>, (and remember that not every elder is considered responsible), give counsel to their clan, for they know:

- 1. The binding instruments (<u>Hheer</u>) of the clan, which are preserved in the folk literature of the people, as there is no written language;
- 2. The social etiquette of the people;
- 3. The history and natural sciences;
- 4. The literature; and, above all
- 5. The art of eloquence, self-expression.

For these reasons, the counsel is well received and obeyed.

a. Odhaah: Rag talo lihi ma iisho.

Saying: Man with a proper system of counselling, never fail.

b. Mahmah: Talo haddaan tol loo geyn ma turunturo beesho.

Proverb: Problems not referred to the clan leaders must go unsolved.

c. Odhaah: Haddaad talisoo la diido in la *jabo* ma jeceshahay?

Saying: If you give (your people) a sincere counsel, and it is rejected, would you not like to see an evil result?

d. Gabay, alliterated by C:

Haddaan talo cashada ay egtahay, cidina yeelaynin, Maantay cidhiidhiga gashay, coliyo qaad joogto, Ceeb Waayo Hhoorrow qabiil, soo calaalaye.

If the proper counsel, given at the right time, is rejected, then what is the use lamenting over the evil result of the rejection?

e. Odhaah: Talo adaa ku-nool *a*, iyadu kuguma noola. Saying: Talo gives you service; and not you, it.

3. TAWFIIQ: INTEGRITY

Next to <u>Talo</u> comes <u>Tawfiiq</u>, which is best translated by the word "integrity." Mahmah, alliterated by T:

Tol aan tawfiiq lahayn, Tigaad aan biyo lahayn, Toodimo aan faras lahayn, Tawin aan ido lahayn, Tadcaar aan riyo lahayn, Naag aan tashiil lahayn, iyo

Boqor aan tudhaal lahayn, midna laguma tafantoof gooyo.

Proverb: No value is derived from:

A clan without integrity,

Prosperity without an abundance of water,

A rally without horses (to speed up sending messages),

An ill person without a flock of sheep (to help him recover),

A tadcaar in which no goats are slaughtered,

A wife without a sense of thriftiness,

And a king without a sense of mercy.

Tawfiiq is allied with Talo in the literature.

Odhaah: Talo iyo Tawfiiq

Saying: Counsel and abiding by it.

$4. \underline{\text{HHOOLO}} = \underline{\text{WEALTH}}$

In Somali life, wealth is divided into:

- 1. Mood, which is the non-living property, which is money, buildings, farms, gold, etc., and
- 2. Nool, which is livestock.

Of these two categories, the latter is considered more important.

Gabay, alliterated by Hh (By Cabdullaahi Muuse):

Soomaali wahhaw haasil-gala, hhoolo dibadeede,

Hhawyaanka nool baan innagu, hhagan naqaannaaye,

Wahh kaloo la hharadhaamiyaa, hhero ma yeeshaane.

English text:

To the Somali, real property is livestock

It is through animals that we learn to subsist.

Anything else we try to rear will be in vain.

The idea that livestock is the basic wealth of Somalis is of course not subscribed to by the Somali farming community, who think that it is the farms that keep up the country. In this way livestock herders and farmers are irreconcilable.

A shepherd poet, ridiculing the life of a farmer, once composed a Gabay, alliterated by D:

Cirka meel dushaada ah illayn, *doohhid* lama gaadhin, Illeyn looma doog-dhabo hadhuudh, roob aan kugu *?duadan*, Illayn meel an dani kaa wadayn, lagama doolraaco.

One would not be able to pierce the sky overhead for water.

Nor would one chase a farm (with the *speed* of the camels) to quench its thrist with the rain that has fallen nearby, and return home again.

Still worse, one could not leave (his farm), which is property affixed in one spot, making it his destiny to remain in the same place forever.

The farmer retaliated by saying:

Odhaah: Ninkaan dhulka meel ku lahayni, cirkanakuma leh.

Saying: A man who has no place on the land, will claim none in heaven.

A good clan is the one, not only well off, but also with a good sense of looking after their property. Thriftiness, as has already been seen, has a high place in Somali traditions. You will remember the view in the proverb, alliterated by T, under <u>Tawfiiq</u>: Naag aan tashiil lahayn, "a wife without thriftiness." Here are a few more examples:

a. Gabay, alliterated by H (by Salaan Carrabay):

Laba la hinjiy ba waa hunguri, kii horraynjiraye.

Of every two problems that are discussed, the first must be on the subject of subsistence.

b. Gabay, alliterated by Dh (Cabdullaahi Muuse):

Inkasttuu dhabcaal gudhan yahuu, dharabo kaa gooyo, Isagoo dharaar _____ kuluu, dumar wahh kuu dhiibo, Dhanaad uga dhacdoba maal ku hhiga, waad dhadhamisaaye waa dhaawac kugu yaal hhigtada, dhaqasho diiddaaye.

Although a kinsman is a dry misar who would not give you a bit of food,

His wife may one day reed you as a needy relative.

In any case, the wealth of a relative could one day reach your mouth,

But be careful of a relative who refuses to administer his own property and therefore loses it and becomes poor, he is like a permanent wound in your mind.

c. Odhaah: Geesi aan tol lahaynow haygu dirinin, deeqsi aan hhoolo lahaynowna wahhha hay siin.

Saying: You, the brave warrior without support, do not fight for me. You, the poor me, do not give anything.

5. DIIN = RELIGION

One of the most important pillars of our culture is the religion of Islam, to which all Somalis profess. In addition to its religious function, Islam also acts in the Somali society:

1. As an important means of economy. The following system of gifts and endowment are practised:

a. Sako

b. Sadaqo,c. Waqaf,The giving of alms,Service for the poor,

d. Siyaaro,
e. Ibdar,
f. Qaraamaad,
An offering in memory of the dead,
Special milking of the camels,
Another kind of milk.

- 2. As an important instruments or shield against evil practices, i.e. theft, adultery, lying, slavery, *hoarding*, etc.
- 3. As an important vehicle of unity.
- 4. As an important instrument of initiating an adventure.
- 5. As a strong deterrent against colonialists and invasion.

The following are items from our literature showing the impression of Islam on our cultural traditions:

a. Odhaah: Geri Ilaah bay taqaan.

Saying: Everyone knows justice, but justice knows only Allah.

b. Mahmah, alliterated by D:

Wahhaan diinta ahayni ama daacad ahayni, dabaday ka hhumaan.

Proverb: Anithing not based on the principles of Islam will eventually fail.

c. Religious phrase from Arabic known by many Somalis:

Al bakhayl cadawu Laah.

English text:

A miser is the enemy of Allah.

The following phrases and sayings are also frequent in our colloquial language:

a. Haddii Alla idmo = If Allah wills. b. Insha Alla = If Allah wills.

c. Haddii Eebbe idankeeda leeyahay = If Allah allows it to come about.

d. Magan Alla = Subject to Allah.

e. Eeboow adaa weyn = Oh Allah, the great one.

f. Sameeyow same ka weel = Oh Creator, make it a success.

6. <u>GAASHAAN</u> = <u>DEFENCE</u>

The following list shows the Somali chief means of defence:

1. Tol, = Clanship

2. Hhidid, = Relation through marriage.

3. <u>Qaraabe</u>, = Relation through indirect lines of connection.

4. Bulsho, = Institute of training (now extict)

5. <u>Gaashaan-buur</u> = Alliance (also known as <u>Dan-wadaag</u>, <u>Baho</u>, <u>Tol-weyne</u> and

Yibadhaalo).

The following is a famous legendary dialogue from northern Somalia, believed to have taken place between a warrior and a councillor. It clarifies some of the aspects of the Somali defence system. In it the warrior, whose clan was, at the time, engaged in a prolonged feud with a related clan of equal power, sought advice from a wise councillor:

Warrior: I come to ask your advice as to how we may best defend ourselves against "so-and-

so" clan.

Councillor: Which of the two clans has the greatest number?

Warrior: Ours.

Councillor: Which has stronger relations through marriage?

Warrior: Theirs.

Councillor: Which lives in the direction of the water centers, and towns where water, clothes, and

food stuff are available?

Warrior: Theirs

Councillor: Seek peace from them, for they have the upper hand.

Here are a few more literacy items on mutual defence pacts among the pastoralists:

a. Gabay, alliterated by M:

Nin walaalki la miidhay,

Oo soo miliiliciwaayay,

Isna waa la masaal,

Middiduu ku dhufaanayna,

Midigtuu ku sitaa

A man whose kin is humiliated and who fails to assist them,

Is himself humiliated,

And will one day,

Reap the evil consequence of the castration of his kin.

b. Mahmah, alliterated by M:

Wiilkaagu maalinbuu hiil kaaga baahanyay,

Maalintaasuna waa maalintaad hooyadi guursanaysaa.

Proverb: The day your son needs your assistance most, is the day you are marrying his mother.

c. Odhaah: Tol waa tolane.

Saying: Clan members are stitches sewn together.

7. CILMI = EDUCATION

To the Somali way of thinking, there are three different kinds of knowledge, all of which are essential to accept.

These are:

1. <u>Cilmi wadaad</u> = Religious knowledge.

2. <u>Cilmi habreed</u> = Old woman's knowledge.

3. <u>Cilmi abwaan</u> = The knowledge of the sage, elder, or wise man.

The following common proverb shows what will happen to you if you do not accept these three kinds of knowledge.

- 1. Cilmi wadaad ninkii diida, cadaab baa leh,
- 2. Cilmi habreed ninkii diidana carruur la aan baa leh,
- 3. Cilmi abwaan ninkii diidana cuud la'aan baa leh.
- 1. He who refuses to accept the knowledge of the religious man, will go to hell;
- 2. He who refuses to accept the knowledge of the old woman, will lose his children;
- 3. And finally, he who refuses to accept the knowledge of the wise man, shall be without livestock.

The implication of the above proverb is that the <u>wadaad</u>, woman, and the wise old man are really the chief educators in Somali society. The <u>wadaad</u> teaches religion and morality; the old woman is the best nurse; and the wise man is the master of natural science, marine science, astronomy, calendar science, medicine, philosophy, technology and handicrafts in their relation to Somali society. Of these three kinds of knowledge, only the religious teaching was originated by the Arabs as a systematic discipline. The other two are learned through the oral tradition, being handed down from father to son, the following are important items from our literature on the subject of Cilmi:

a. Odhaah: Cilmi la'aani waa indho la'aan.

Saying: Ignorance means blindness.

b. Mahmah, alliterated by Dh:

Nin aan dhul marini, dhaayo ma leh.

Proverb: A man who has not seen the world is blind.

c. Odhaah (attributed to Biihhi Qaley of Buuhoodle):

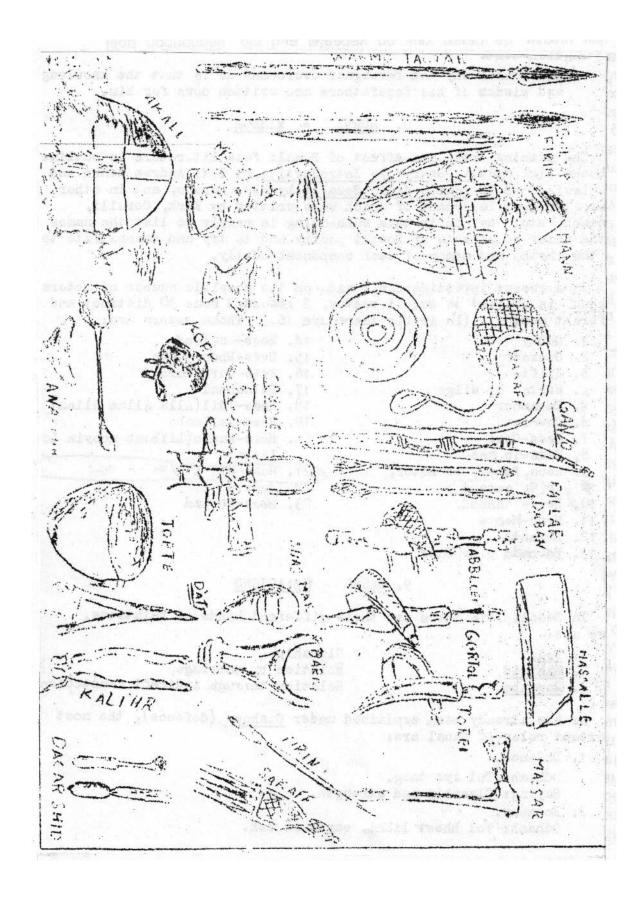
Faranjigu wuhhuu inooga adkaaday maskahhdii awowayaashiis baa u qoran.

The reason why the foreigner overcomes us is that the knowledge and wisdom of his forefathers are written down for him.

8. MURTI = WISDOM

The meaning, role and effect of Somali folk literature is outlined in books like <u>Somali Poetry: An Introduction</u>, by B.W. Andrzejweski and I.M. Lewis, and <u>Il Somalo della Somalia</u>, by M.M. Moreno, and in other works, the most important of which are written by Kirk, Cerulli, Reinisch, etc. My aim in this subheading is merely to list the names of the chief components of Somali poetry and to try and demonstrate to you the rhythm and meter of each component orally.

In a recent investigation I made on the possible number of meters (<u>Buhhuu</u>, in Arabic) in Somali poetry, I recorded some 30 distinct and different meters. (In Arabic there are 16.) Those meters are:



- Gabay
 Geeraar
- 3. Jiifto
- 4. Wiglo, or Wilgo
- 5. Buraambur
- 6. Guurow
- 7. Hees-Geel
- 8. Hees-lo'aad
- 9. Hees, Batar or Botor, or ?Ga aareed
- 10. Hees- caanood
- 11. Hees-Mooye
- 12. Dhaanto

- 13. Barcadd, or Saar
- 14. Hees-Maqleed
- 15. Hees-Hhoog-Weyn
- 16. Hees-Carruureed
- 17. Halaanhal
- 18. Hees-Idil (Alla Allaa Allaa)
- 19. Hees-Tallaabo
- 20. Hees-Kadlo (Liibaab nooyin Lowga laaba)
- 21. ?Hees-Wilwilo
- 22. Hees-....
- 23. Hees-Kebeed

9. $\underline{GACAL} = \underline{RELATIONS}$

In Somali life there are three different kinds of relations.

These are:

- 1. <u>Tol</u>, Clanship
- 2. Hhhidid, Relation by marriage,
- 3. Qaraabe, Relation through indirect connection

As has already been explained under <u>Gashaan</u> (defence), the most important roles of <u>Gacal</u> are:

1. Defence.

Odhaah: Tol iyo taag.

Saying: Clanship and strenght.

2. Economy.

Odhaah: Tol hheer lihii, caydh ma leh.

Saying: A clan with a good system of hheer has non poor members.

3. Morality and social control.

Odhaah: Kitaab ka ina adeertaa kuu mehershey waa kitaab jaan.

Saying: The religious book which allows you to marry your own cousin is a devil's book.

4. Religion.

Passage from the Qor'aan

"Wa jacalnaakum shucuuban wa qabaa'ila li tacaarafuu"

We have made all you nations and tribes to know one another.

$10. \, \underline{\text{WAR}} = \underline{\text{NEWS}}$

This topic was mentioned in Mr. Suleemaan's address last week. I shall not take up with it hers, except to mention its importance in Somali society.

11. MIDIIDIN = LABOUR

Labour is very important in Somali pastoral society. In fact, it is so important that:

- 1. It is one of the reasons why man marries;
- 2. It is one of the reasons why slavery was practiced in Somalia at one time in her history;
- 3. It is one of the reasons why polygamy is practiced in Somalia;
- 4. It is one of the reasons why some clans exploit others.

The following excerpts from the oral literature show the importance of the labour force:

a. Mahmah, alliterade by M:

Midiidin la'aan waa la midgoobaa.

Proverb: Without the help of a labour force, one becomes a Midgaan.

b. Geeraar, alliterated by the vowel sounds (by Faarahh Nuur):

Ninkaa gaale agtiisa,

Uubta laysu qodaayo,

Ninkii aan afhayeeniyo,

Wiil ka eega lahayn,

Waa la iibsanayaaye.

The affairs of anyone,

Who has no man in the offices of the white man,

And for whom pits are dug

For those who are unrepresented,

Shall be lost.

c. Mahmah, alliterated by B:

Saddehh saddehh waa bishaa, hadday ka bataanna waa bi'iyaan,

- 1. Dhillowyahan dhirtaa waa bilaa, hadduu ka batona waa bi'iyaa,
- 2. Badhiyina haween waa bishaa, hadday ka badatona waa bi'isaa,
- 3. Saarna qabiil waa bilaa, hadduu ka batona waa bi'iyaa.

Proverb:

Three kinds of satellites improve the position of their respective agents, unless the three aree excessive:

- 1. The <u>dhillowyahan²</u> plant adds to the beauty of its host, unless it completely covers and kills it;
- 2. The buttocks improve the beauty of the woman unless the pair is too gigantic;
- 3. The subject clan, living under another, improves the position of the master clan, unless the subject clan becomes greater in number.

1. For further information in this field, consult following references:

- 1. Lewis, I.M. A Pastoral Democracy. London, 1961.
- 2. Lewis, I.M. The Somali Lineage System and the Complete Genealogy, Hargeisa, 1957.
- 3. Hunt, John. <u>A General Survey of the Somaliland Protectorate</u> (known as <u>The Hunt</u> Report) London, 1951
- 4. Cerulli, E. Somalia I, II, III. Rome, 1959.
- 2. For more detailed information on the subject please see, <u>Somali Poetry: An Introduction</u>. By B.W. Andrzejewski and Muuse Galaal. In Neue Afrikanische. Hamburg, 1966.

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² Probably "mistletoe".