

On Consonants in Somali Metrics¹

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1. Introduction

The study of Somali metrics has come a long way since the days in the early seventies when the two pioneers of the subject, Maxamed Xaashi Dhamac 'Gaarriye' and Cabdullaahi Diiriye Guuleed, wrote their seminal articles in the newspaper *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 'October Star'². Work has continued in the Horn of Africa, the United States and Europe on Somali metrics which has led to a greater understanding of the metres of individual genres of poetry. This work has recently developed further through the investigation of the way in which the metre of the words interacts with the metre and rhythm of the traditional musical performance of the poetry³. Other recent work on Somali poetics considers the historical development of some metres (Banti 1996), and discussion of the creative use of metre and other stylistic devices (see Ahmed 1984, Mohamed-Abdi 1996, Orwin 2000).

In the field of Somali metrical studies as a whole, one fundamental assumption is underlying, that is that metre is based on the number and pattern of vowel units, and vowel units only. All the works mentioned above acknowledge and accept this assumption, and no role is given to consonants in metrical patterning. All, that is, except one: Maxamed 1976a⁴. Interestingly this is the first article devoted to the then new ideas relating to Somali metrics and it is curious that what Gaarriye says in his article on the role of consonants has not been followed up in the subsequent literature. The main aim of this article is, therefore, to bring his ideas on the role of consonants in Somali metrics to the attention of the community of scholars with an interest in this field and to look at them in a little more detail.

We shall begin with an exposition of all the ideas Gaarriye presents in his article and follow this with a section that considers the analysis of two example poems which leads to some more details of his ideas on consonants being clarified. The article concludes with a look at some of the implications of his ideas on Somali metrical studies and Somali phonology, but a full assessment of these will be left to further research.

¹ I am grateful to Cabdulqaadir Xaaji Cali and to Ruqiya Maxamed Faarax for assistance on some aspects of the language of the poems considered in this article.

² See Johnson 1979: 53-4 or Lamberti 1986: 33-4 & 61 for references to all of these articles.

³ For references to research undertaken in the Horn of Africa see Orwin and Riiraash 1997, for research on music and metre in Somali poetry see Johnson 1996 and Banti & Giannattasio 1996.

⁴ In the bibliography the reference is given under Maxamed Xaashi Dhamac 'Gaarriye'. However, since he is known generally as Gaarriye, and as he is so central to this article, I chose to use this name in the body of the article, other than when giving a bibliographical reference such as here.

2. The basis of Somali metrics as generally accepted at present

Before looking at what Gaarriye says, the assumptions and ideas relating to Somali metrics as generally understood at the present time will be set out and exemplified by looking at the *jiifto* metre (since this is the particular metre which Gaarriye discusses in his article). These ideas are based on the body of work which has developed since the mid-1970's, particularly that of Johnson, Banti & Giannattasio, which is founded in turn on that of Gaarriye and Cabdullaahi Diiriye Guuleed. Although the details of individual metres are revised as scholars learn more, as is the relation of metrics with the traditional musical performance, what is presented here is not contentious in any way and reflects the present generally accepted view of the fundamentals of how Somali metre works.

Somali metre is quantitative, a line is considered metrical if the vowels in the line fulfil the requirements of the template for that particular metre. As things stand at present consonants are not considered to play any role. This is in contrast to the quantitative metres of languages such as Classical Arabic or Latin in which syllable final consonants do play a role. In other words, a heavy syllable in Somali metre is one which incorporates a long vowel, a syllable comprising a short vowel and a coda consonant is not heavy from the point of view of metrics. A diphthong may be counted as long or short according to its context. In an open syllable it may count as either long or short, whereas in a closed syllable it must count as long. These basic facts were set out in Johnson 1979: 48, and the matter of how to capture this more formally and how it relates to accent assignment in words with diphthongs was discussed in Orwin 1994: 206-216 and Orwin 1996: 61-5. A further matter which must be borne in mind when considering Somali metrics is the way in which certain morphemes, which incorporate grammatically long vowels (and which are not open syllable diphthongs), may count either as long or short. A full list of such cases is given in Banti & Giannattasio 1996: 86-7. Briefly, these are: the subject verbal pronouns *aan* 'I', *aad* 'you' and *uu* 'he', the negative particle used in subordinate clauses and in focus constructions *aan*, the focus marker *baa*, the positive declarative mood classifier *waa*, the conjunction particles *oo* and *ee* and the past tense/anaphoric definite article suffix *-kii/-tii*. They also present a list of possible contractions found in general language use which may be found in poetry. Taking the *jiifto* metre as an example, let us see how this metrical system works in practice.

The *jiifto*, as a genre of poetry (rather than just the metrical pattern) is mentioned by Andrzejewski & Lewis (1964: 47) as one of the types which is "most noble and best fitted for dealing with serious and important matters". Interestingly it is mentioned by them as "tend[ing] to be of the same length as the *gabay*, if not shorter. The average line consists of between 11 and 16 syllables, divided towards the middle by a caesura". As we can see when looking at the template below, this cannot be the same metre as that labelled *jiifto* here, and indeed that to which

Andrzejewski & Lewis refer to a genre also known as *masafo*. This metre and its variations, particularly as used by Sayyid Maxamed Cabdille Xasan, have been discussed extensively by Banti & Giannattasio (1996: 89-98), where they also discuss the use of the terms *jiifto* and *masafo* in Somali. The metre of the *masafo* line may be viewed as essentially two *jiifto* metre lines side by side (with differences only in some of the possible variations, particularly in the second half-line of the *masafo*). The *jiifto* metre itself has become an important metrical form in recent times as it is one of the most popular metres used in modern *hees*.⁵ The metrical template of the *jiifto* line is as follows:

Diagram 1. Basic metrical template of the *jiifto* line



In this diagram ∪ indicates a short vowel position and ⏟ indicates a position which may be filled by either a long vowel or two short vowels. Following Banti & Giannattasio 1996: 91, we shall label the positions in this metre P1 ... P5 (P = metrical position) as indicated under the template. A line of poetry following this metre must begin therefore with a long vowel or two short vowels, followed by a long vowel or two short vowels, followed by a short vowel, followed by a long vowel or two short vowels and finally a long vowel or two short vowels. Below, as an example, are some lines from a *hees* using this metre by Maxamed Ibraahim Warsame 'Hadraawi' entitled *Beledweyn* (the name of a town on the Shabeelle river). For the reader unfamiliar with Somali, short vowels are written with a single letter and long vowels with a double vowel letter, thus the metrical pattern may be seen quite easily:

Webigoo butaacoo	the river bursting its banks	
beeraha waraabshoo	watering the fields	
dhulka baadku jiifoo	as pasture lay on the land	
dhirta ubaxu buuxshoo	trees which the flowers fill	
canabkii bislaadoo	the grapes ripened	
badarkiyo galleydii	and cereal and maize were	
laga tuuray baalkoo ⁶	winnowed of the husk ⁷	

w b
 o w
 ah b u
 dh u b
 c o
 d p
 x t b

⁵ *Hees* is a term which is used to refer to 'songs', originally being used to refer to work songs, *hees hawleed*, or to dance songs, *hees ciyaareed*, etc., it is now generally used for modern poems/songs sung to a musical accompaniment composed specifically for a particular lyric. This particular style of performance developed first in the 1940's and 1950's with the *belwo* and *heello* genres of poetry (see Johnson 1974 for an extensive discussion on the development of the *heello*).

⁶ Text taken from Maxamed Ibraahim Warsama 'Hadraawi' 1993: 88. In these lines the poet is setting the scene before he meets a beautiful woman. The imagery reflects good times following rain which allows the crops to grow in this agricultural area.

⁷ All translations from Somali are by myself.

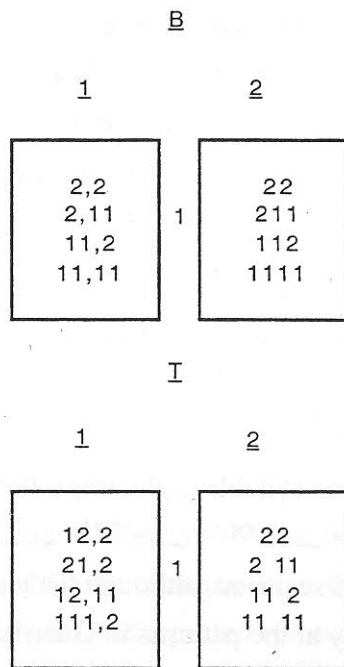
they [vowels] which play the major role in the metrics of the poetry). At this stage in the article, we have a hint that it is not only vowels that play a role, even though they play the 'major role'.

The next section begins with the statement that different types of poetry have different metres and that he will begin with the *jiifto*.⁹ This next part of the article is divided into three sections, each comprising some discussion of a particular point of metrical structure of the *jiifto* line which is then summed up in a condition. We shall look at each of these sections here.

3.1. Condition 1

This section invites the reader to consider the following diagram¹⁰ which is a representation of the various possible manifestations of the *jiifto* line:

Diagram 3. Diagram of possible *jiifto* metre patterns given in Maxamed 1976a



He provides labels for the different parts of the line, calling the sections headed 1 and 2 *meeris* and the vowel in the middle *xundhur* 'navel'.¹¹ As can be seen from the diagram, Gaarriye divides possible *jiifto* lines into two types: B and T types.¹² The B types have nine vowels and

⁹ In subsequent weeks in *Xiddigta Oktoobar*, he goes on to discuss other metres.
¹⁰ In drawing the diagram here I have represented it as closely as possible to Gaarriye's original, including commas where used and spaces between numbers.
¹¹ This is the element which in the Djibouti approach is labelled the *guntin* 'knot' (see Orwin & Maxamed 1997: 85).
¹² B and T are the equivalent of A and B in the Arabic alphabet order which is often used in Somali despite the use of the Latin alphabet in orthography.

the T types have ten. In the ten vowel T types, the 'extra' vowel can only occur in the first *meeris*. Following this exposition, example lines are given to illustrate the points and the section concludes with his first condition which reads as follows:

beyd kasta oo jiipto ihi, waa inuu noqdo sagaalley ama tobanleey ay xundhurtu
isu dheelli tirta

'each *jiipto* line must be of nine or ten, balanced by the *xundhur*'

We see then that this condition relates to the total number of vowels in a line, to the matter of variation at the beginning of the line and, when looked at in conjunction with his table, the patterning of those vowels. When we consider carefully the patterns involving an 'extra' syllable which Gaarriye allows¹³ and those which he does not account for¹⁴ we see that they coincide to a large extent with those that are presented by Banti & Giannattasio in their template for the first half-line of the *masafo* (see diagram 2 above). There are two logically possible patterns which Gaarriye does not account for: 21,11 and 111,11¹⁵. While not explicitly ruling them out, one gains the impression from reading the article that they are not allowed. Looking at Banti & Giannattasio's template, we see that they also do not allow the 21,11 pattern, but do allow 111,11 in their template (UUU, see diagram 2 above). Looking at their example lines, however, it is only one example in their article which displays this pattern:

Hadday daqaqamaano, wuxuun kaa danqaabaan
If they roam around and take something away from you¹⁶
(Banti & Giannattasio 1996: 91).

Given what has been said about open syllable diphthongs, the first half-line in this example may be scanned in two ways: UUUUU ___ or U ___ UUU ___. We can see, then that the line still fits Gaarriye's pattern in the second scansion, although his ideas may be said to rule out the first possible scansion. Looking simply at the patterns in Gaarriye's diagram, what is interesting, is that he seems to rule out the 'extra' short syllable being adjacent to P2 realized as two short vowels.

¹³ These are the following, in his terms: 12,2 21,2 12,11 111,21.

¹⁴ These are the following in his terms: 21,11 111,11.

¹⁵ Note that Antinucci and Axmed 1986: 36 do account for these patterns in their template (given in footnote 8 above) which shows the possibility of an anacrusis in the *jiipto* metre either before P1 or after it and where P1 and P2 may be realized either as a long vowel or as two short vowels.

¹⁶ This is line 80 from the *masafo* by Sayyid Maxamed Cabdille Xasan *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay* analysed in the appendix to the present article.

3.2 Condition 2

Turning to the next section of Gaarriye's article, we see that this is concerned with the specific position of vowels in a line and the way that this relates to words. He presents two example lines (I have added labels a and b for convenience):

- a) Waase lagu waayee *not ok*
 2 1 1 (1) 2 2
- b) Waa laguse waayee *ok*
 2 1 1(1) 2 2

Translation of both: 'But one failed with it' or 'But you were missed'¹⁷

He states that the first example (a) is a *jiifto* line according to his first condition, however, despite following the rules he has set out thus far, the line is perceived as being unmetrical. He alters the line slightly resulting in line (b),¹⁸ stating that this is a correct metrical *jiifto* line. He explains the difference between the two lines in terms of the structure of each saying of (a) that the first three vowel units go together in terms of pronunciation and that the next two vowel units, of which one is the *xundhur* go separately together. Whereas in (b), the first four vowels go together as pairs whilst, from the point of view of pronunciation, the *xundhur* is separate. Without looking into the matter in any further detail, he concludes this section with the second condition:

shaqalladu iskama filiqsana. Waxay isu raacaan hab go'an

'vowels are not just thrown together. They follow a specific system'

3.3 Condition 3

It is this third condition and section of Gaarriye's article which is our main consideration here, as this condition is concerned solely with consonants in the metre of the *jiifto* line. Gaarriye's discussion begins with four example lines repeated below:

- ok* 1b) Cabdi ma laha saaxiib 'Cabdi doesn't have a friend'
 1 1 1 1 (1) 2 2
- not ok* 1t) Saaxiib ma laha Cabdi 'Cabdi doesn't have a friend'
 2 2 (1) 1 1 1 1
- not ok* 2b) Lama oggola hadaloo 'Speech / speaking is not allowed'
 1 1 1 1(1) 1 1 2

¹⁷ Both of these translations are possible, the difference depending on the meaning of *ku* in the cluster *lagu* (where the /k/ is voiced). It may be the instrumental preverbal prepositional particle (pronounced with accent in speech) or the 2nd person singular object pronoun (pronounced without accent in speech).

¹⁸ The alteration here does not provide any difference in meaning, both translations given are still valid. The conjunction enclitic *-se* 'but' has simply been added to the preverbal cluster *lagu* rather than the mood classifier *waa*.

ok 2t) Hadal lama oggola oo 'Speech / speaking is not allowed'
 1 1 1 1(1) 1 1 2

With regard solely to the vowels, all of these lines scan metrically, however, Gaarriye states that only 1b and 2t are actually correct metrically. He explains why each example is either correct or false metrically, stating that it is the position of the consonant clusters in the words *Cabdi* and *oggola*¹⁹ which is the crucial point. He states the following in relation to each of the example lines:

1b) The two consonants 'bd' in the word *Cabdi* are between the two first vowels and are not therefore problematic.

1t) The two consonants in the word *Cabdi* are between the last two vowels, a position which breaks the metre.

2b) The two consonants 'gg' in the word 'oggola' are between the second two vowels, that is to say between the third and fourth short vowels in the line which breaks the metre.

2t) The two consonants 'gg' in 'oggola' are between the xundhur and the following vowel which is fine.

On the basis of these examples and his comments on them, Gaarriye presents his third condition:

|| shibbanayaasha isxigsada ama labanlaabmaa meelo gaar ah ayey ku leeyihiin
 tusaha jiiiftada—meel walba ma galaan

'adjacent or geminate consonants have special places in the *jiifto* template—
 they do not go in every place'

Before continuing with discussion of this condition, we might consider what Gaarriye had to say on this topic in the other articles he wrote on Somali metrics. In subsequent weeks in *Xiddigta Oktoobar* he presented other metrical patterns but in none did he discuss the condition on consonant clusters specifically. However, he did present the *jiifto* metre as a part of other metres, for example, in Maxamed 1976b what he calls *heesta cawska* 'the song of the grass'²⁰ is presented as a metre in which a further long vowel unit is added to what he says is essentially the *jiifto* line²¹. Another example also mentioned in Maxamed 1976b is the *maqalay warlay* metre

¹⁹ Note that geminate consonants, written with digraphs in the Somali orthography, are equivalent in the prosodic phonology of the language to a cluster of two consonants.

²⁰ Here this is used to mean a song which is sung by women when making a *raar* mat out of grass (my thanks to Ruqiya Maxamed Faarax for information regarding this).

²¹ This particular metre seems to be very similar to the *haantii kodhe* metre presented in Orwin and Maxamed 1997: 91. In that article the *haantii kodhe* metre is presented as essentially the *jiifto* line with an additional

(which he spells *maqaleey warlaay*). He presents this as the *jiifto* line without the final two vowels (i.e. metrical position P5). This is also something which the Djibouti school of metrics has assumed (see Orwin & Maxamed 1997: 88-9). Since these metres are presented as the *jiifto* line with vowel units added or subtracted, we might assume that they share other characteristics of the *jiifto* line which leads to the conclusion that they may also be subject to the consonant cluster condition. I must point out that this is a conclusion based on what Gaarriye says in his articles, nowhere does he spell this out explicitly. Given the similarities between Gaarriye's approach and the Djibouti scholars' approach one may contemplate the idea that at least all the metres grouped together in the *gabay guntin* group in Orwin and Maxamed 1997 (see pp. 86-92) are subject to the consonant cluster constraint. Further work is needed to gain a full picture of these issues.

There is one further mention of the consonant cluster constraint in a literature article in *Xiddigta Oktoobar*, but not one by Gaarriye. An author called Cawed 'Kholi' published an article in the newspaper also entitled 'Miisaanka maansada' (Cawed 1976). This article is critical of the work Gaarriye had presented in his articles, although in my opinion much of the criticism is founded on a misunderstanding of what it is Gaarriye was saying. With regard to the matter of consonant clusters Cawed 'Kholi' is critical in saying that the places where consonant clusters may or may not occur are not given by Gaarriye. This is not completely true, as Gaarriye does give details of certain positions in the line, as we have seen above. There are positions which he does not account for (see below), but in my opinion this is not cause for criticism rather an invitation to join Gaarriye in further understanding the details of his ideas on these issues. Gaarriye responds himself to these criticisms in a constructive manner (Maxamed 1976c also a little in Maxamed 1976d) pointing out the way in which the criticisms seem to be founded on misunderstanding of his own work. The details of the arguments do not contribute to our discussion here and so the interested reader is directed to look at the original articles.

It seems appropriate at this stage also to mention the work of Cabdullaahi Diiriye Guuleed. His publications on Somali metrics approached the subject in a somewhat different way to Gaarriye in that he was very much concerned with the numbers of vowel units in a line and the ratio of these to the number of syllables. He doesn't introduce the patterning of vowels in the same way as Gaarriye does, nor does he mention the matter of consonant clusters. Whilst important in the whole development of Somali metrical studies, Cabdullaahi's ideas do not have any direct bearing on what we shall go on to discuss below.

short vowel slot at the end of the line. In Gaarriye's *heesta cawska* example lines each vowel at the line end is long, but is one which might be counted as a single vowel hence the similarity, if not identity.

This then concludes our look at what Gaarriye says in his first *Xiddigta Oktoobar* article. For a single page newspaper article that shares the page space with both a crossword, the answer to last week's crossword and a cartoon, it is rich in ideas and must have been an exciting read at the time to anyone interested in these matters. There are two particularly interesting points which the article raises which are of as much relevance to Somali metrical studies today as they were in 1976. The first is the way in which the vowels are patterned in relation to words, mentioned in the section on condition 2. This issue of metricality being related to the vowels and 'pronunciation' is something which will benefit from further research, not only in terms of the *jiifto* line, but also in terms of other metres. In broad terms, the issue seems to have to do with the relation between vowel groupings in a metrical line and the boundaries of words and morphemes, an issue which has not been explored in any great detail as yet. Having noted this, the second issue is the matter of the position of consonant clusters in the *jiifto* line which we shall now consider in greater detail.

4. Further ideas on consonant clusters in the *jiifto* line

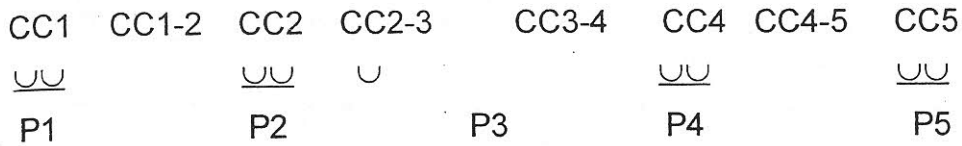
In his third condition, Gaarriye presents us with the statement that consonant clusters and geminate consonants cannot simply occur anywhere but have specific places in which they may be found. In giving us example lines and explaining them, he states what some of these places are in the *jiifto* line, but does not provide details of all the logically possible places where consonant clusters²² might occur in the line. In this section, we shall try to flesh out the ideas relating to where consonants can or cannot occur in the *jiifto* metre.

Returning to the template of the *jiifto* metre, let us look at which points it is logically possible for a consonant cluster to occur. In so doing we must note that Somali does not allow consonant clusters within syllables, that is to say there are no homosyllabic consonant clusters. All consonant clusters are cases of a syllable final consonant followed by a syllable initial consonant, and this is also how geminate consonants are represented prosodically. Referring again to diagram 1 above, we can see that it is logically possible for consonant clusters to occur within metrical positions P1, P2, P4, P5 and between P1 and P2, between P2 and P3, between P3 and P4, and between P4 and P5. In order to refer conveniently and economically to these positions where consonant clusters may occur we shall label them with the acronym CC (consonant cluster) followed by reference to the metrical positions. For example, CC1 refers to the position of a possible consonant cluster within metrical position 1 (this is the position of the consonant cluster in the word 'Cabdi' in example 1b above), CC1-2 refers to the position of a

²² Please note that from now on we shall only refer to consonant clusters for sake of convenience. When consonant clusters are referred to it is to be understood that we are at the same time also referring to geminate consonants, to which they are prosodically equivalent, as mentioned above.

possible consonant cluster between P1 and P2, and so on. All of the positions in which a consonant cluster may occur are given in the following diagram:

Diagram 4. The basic *jifto* template showing metrical positions and the eight places where consonant clusters may logically occur.



Having ascertained these eight logical possibilities²³, let us see which ones Gaarriye accounts for. The only ones we know his opinion on for certain are CC1 and CC3-4 which allow consonant clusters, and CC2 and CC5 which do not allow them (see the examples above). This leaves the following unaccounted for: CC1-2, CC2-3, CC4 and CC4-5. So, the only positions in which Gaarriye states consonant clusters do not occur are CC2 and CC5, both within metrical positions. Also three of the four points between metrical positions are not accounted for, and the only one that allows a consonant cluster.

In order to form an idea of what happens at the points in the line which Gaarriye does not account for, two poems have been carefully examined for consonant clusters. The first poem is a *hees* entitled *Hooyo* 'Mother' by Maxamed Ibraahim Warsame 'Hadraawi' (1943-) (Maxamed 1993: 95-97) which uses the *jifto* metre. The other is a *masafo* by Sayyid Maxamed Cabdille Xasan (1856-1920) entitled *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay* 'I have a complaint concerning it' (Jaamac 1974: 78-82)²⁴. As mentioned above, the basic template of each half-line in the *masafo* is the same as the basic template of the *jifto*, although, the *masafo*'s second half-line, according to Banti & Giannattasio, does allow some different variations to occur at its beginning when compared to the first half-line (see diagram 2 above). Each line in the two poems was examined for consonant clusters and the results of this examination are given in the appendix where

²³ There is, of course, another position in which a consonant cluster may occur, namely between the 'extra' syllable of one of the line initial variations and the adjacent metrical position or positions. Where one of these variations occurs, most cases are, at least in the poems to be examined below, of an extra short syllable at the very beginning of the line and the position of the possible consonant between such an anacrusis and metrical position P1 will be labelled CCA-1 ('A' referring to anacrusis).

²⁴ The choice of poems for analysis was somewhat arbitrary, although three factors were in my mind when choosing. One was to use a *jifto* and a *masafo* to see, even if on the basis of just two poems, any difference in the position of consonant clusters was apparent. Another factor was to take poems which were composed some time apart thus leading one to assume that any generalization made might say something more fundamentally about Somali poetry than would be the case if two poems were considered which were composed at the same time (or even by the same poet). Also the Sayyid's poem *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay* features in Banti & Giannattasio's 1996 article where they discuss lines from it in terms of both metre and performance, so the interested reader may compare what they say with what is said here on the consonants. One further factor is that there are more than one published version of each of these poems, so we have the opportunity of comparing variants.

anomalous lines and variant lines are also dealt with in footnotes. The table below gives the number of unambiguous²⁵ consonant clusters in the poems and the final column shows whether or not that position is mentioned specifically by Gaarriye in his article.

Diagram 5. Table showing the number of consonant clusters in the poem's *Hooyo* and *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay* and whether the position concerned is mentioned by Gaarriye in his article.

	<i>Hooyo</i>	<i>Dacwad baan...</i>	Mentioned by Gaarriye?
CCA-1	3	7	no
CC1	34	36	yes
CC1-2	31	55	no
CC2	0	0	yes
CC2-3	25	47	no
CC3-4	29	36	yes
CC4	0	0	no
CC4-5	34	33	no
CC5	0	0	yes

Considering consonant clusters shown in the appendices which could occur in one of two different positions we can say the following:

In *Hooyo*: there are 2 clusters which could occur in CCA-1 or CC1

In *Dacwad baan...*: there are:

15 clusters which could occur in CCA-1 or CC1

4 clusters which could occur in CC1 or CC1-2

5 clusters which could occur in CC1-2 or CC2

There are no further instances of clusters possibly being in more than one position²⁶.

This accounts for all the consonant clusters found in these two poems, and, although the total number of lines examined is small and only represents the work of two poets, the table shows something quite clear for these poems, namely that there are no consonant clusters within metrical positions P2, P4 and P5. Of the five instances where there is the possibility of assuming a consonant cluster within P2, it is an instance when another, equally valid scansion of

²⁵ That is to say consonant clusters which could not possibly occur anywhere else in the line. See below for details of variations in position.

²⁶ Please note, however, that there is one consonant cluster which occurs between P5 and an 'extra' syllable, see line 15a.

the line allows for the consonant cluster to occur between P1 and P2. With regard to what Gaariye says in his article, the results given here clearly confirm his ideas regarding the positions he mentions, namely CC1, CC2, CC3-4 and CC5. As for those positions which he does not mention, on the basis of these poems, we can propose hypotheses regarding them: no consonant clusters are allowed in position CC4 and consonant clusters are allowed in positions CC1-2, CC2-3 and CC4-5.²⁷ Taking Gaariye's ideas and the findings of the investigations presented here, we may consolidate the condition relating to consonant clusters in the *jiifto* line as follows:

In the *jiifto* line:

- a) consonant clusters are not allowed within P2, P4 and P5²⁸
- b) consonant clusters are allowed in all other possible positions

This condition is presented in terms of consonant clusters since we have been basing our discussion so far on the ideas of Gaariye and the means of expression he uses. In phonological and metrical terms this is not the most appropriate form of expression since consonant clusters themselves are merely the reflection of more fundamental aspects of language structure. We assume here (following Orwin 1994 and 1996) that all syllables in Somali begin with a consonant,²⁹ that is to say they all have onset consonants. Given this, and the fact that there are no homosyllabic consonant clusters in the language, all consonant clusters are the result of a syllable final consonant adjacent to the subsequent obligatory syllable initial consonant. We may therefore more appropriately express our condition on the *jiifto* line in terms of syllable final consonants, and a revised version, presented in the form of a constraint on metrical structure, may be formalized as follows:

When P2, P4 or P5 are realized as two short syllables, the first of these syllables cannot include a coda consonant.

In light of the fact that we have now expressed the condition in terms of syllable final consonants, it would be interesting to see if consonants are allowed at the end of P5, that is to say at the end of the line (or half-line in the *masafo*). In *Hooyo* there are consonants at the end

²⁷ I think it is interesting, and perhaps not insignificant, that of the possibilities where consonant clusters may or may not occur *within* metrical positions Gaariye mentions three out of four, whereas of the positions between metrical positions he only mentions one out of the possible four. In light of what I am about to say here, this may be a reflection of markedness of consonant clusters within metrical positions as opposed to unmarkedness of them between positions.

²⁸ Remember that it is impossible for any consonant cluster to be found within P3 since this comprises only one vowel unit. As it is logically precluded we need not mention it in the condition here.

²⁹ This includes words which orthographically begin with a vowel. Such words are pronounced in isolation with a glottal stop at the beginning, although in speech, where possible, the vowel often becomes resyllabified as the nucleus of a syllable whose onset is the final consonant of the previous word (see notes to such instances in the tables in the appendix).

of the following lines: 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 60, 96, 98, 102, 104, 110. In all of these cases the consonant is 'n'.³⁰ Given this interesting finding for this poem, it is possible that this reflects another constraint on the line in this metre (and possibly other metres). As a nasal, the consonant 'n' may be regarded as somewhat weaker than other consonants which may allow it to appear in this position³¹. In *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay* we find a more complicated but nevertheless still interesting picture. The details are given in the following table:

Diagram 6. Table showing the consonants which occur at the end of half-lines in the poem *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay* and the number of occurrences of these consonants.

	n	d	g	sh	r	l	c	total
1 st half-line	18	6	1	1	1	2	--	29
2 nd half-line	28	1	1	--	--	--	1	31

From this we can see that there is a similar number of consonants found at the end of first and second half-lines. Interestingly however, there is a greater diversity of consonants found at the end of the first half-lines than at the end of the second half-lines. What is more there is a much greater propensity for the consonant 'n' to be found at the end of half-lines than any other consonant, especially in the second half-lines. This finding compares interestingly with the situation in *Hooyo*. To what extent these findings are the result of general word shape in Somali and to what extent they are indicative of poetic structure I am not able to say as yet. Nevertheless, this matter will need to be further investigated if the whole picture relating to syllable final consonants in Somali poetry is to be fully understood. Given this we shall not revise the condition above since it is possible to have consonants at the end of P5 in the *jiifto* line, and this is reflected in the condition as it stands.

Having expressed the constraint on syllable final consonants in the *jiifto* line as we have, we might ask if there is a way in which this may be incorporated into the sort of template which has hitherto been used to express the metrics of the *jiifto* line such as in diagrams 1 and 2. This question goes to the heart of what is one of the most important implications of these ideas, namely the matter of consonant weight in Somali metrics and indeed Somali phonology. This matter is mentioned in the conclusion below and is not one which I shall resolve in this article,

³⁰ The cases in this poem are all plural verb endings and first person pronouns except for two instances: 60: *weyn*, 110: *roon*.

³¹ Note that it would not be possible, given the phonology of Somali, for the only other phonemic nasal, /m/, to occur at the end of a line, since this is not allowed at the end of a syllable. It only occurs in syllable final position when followed by another labial consonant.

thus, the constraint as expressed above is how we shall leave it until further work leads to a more satisfactory expression.

6. Conclusion

The implications of Gaarriye's ideas as presented here are quite extensive, both for Somali metrical studies and Somali phonology. In terms of other metres, we have mentioned the need to investigate these to ascertain the extent to which this constraint may or may not apply in them. Other implications relate to a more fundamental linguistic point, namely that these ideas show that consonants do play a role in the metre, and that they must therefore be represented prosodically in any phonological representation. I have assumed in previous work (Orwin 1994 and 1996) that, in a moraic model of prosodic representation, no consonants have weight postlexically. This has been consistent with all other accounts of tonal-accent assignment and metrical patterning, which have concluded that it is only vowels which count in these contexts. The ideas of Gaarriye presented here show, I think, that the situation is not as straightforward as we have thought. Syllable final consonants do seem to count, which leads us to consider whether syllables of the shape CVC must now be regarded as heavy rather than light. Another interesting question is why the constraint on these syllable final consonants patterns as it does. Why, in the *jiifto* line, is it only within the first metrical position that a syllable final consonant is allowed? And the corollary: what explains the constraint against them within other metrical positions?

It is now some twenty four years since Gaarriye published his original article, and I think it is a measure of the ground-breaking nature of his thought on the metrics of Somali that his first article can still throw up such fundamental questions as have been suggested here. I have intended in this article to bring them afresh to the community of scholars working on these matters and hope that further work will address some of these important implications.

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Appendix

The two tables in this appendix show the consonant clusters and their positions in the poems *Hooyo* and *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay*. Where a consonant cluster occurs in a line the actual consonant cluster is given. If the two letters are directly next to each other this indicates that the consonant cluster is within the same word. Where there is a dash between the two letters, the consonants in the cluster are in two different words (the first is the final consonant of a word, and the second the first consonant of the following word). Where consonant clusters are given in curly brackets { } this indicates that there are two possible scansions of that line, and the consonant cluster may be considered to be in either one of the positions indicated. Included in the tables are occurrences of a word final consonant followed by a word beginning with a vowel, these are given in brackets since in the majority of cases it may be assumed that post-lexical re-syllabification creates one syllable out of what underlyingly may be assumed to be two syllables.

1. *Hooyo* by Maxamed Ibraahim Warsame 'Hadraawi' (Maxamed 1993: 95-7)

line	CCA-1	CC1	CC1-2	CC2	CC2-3	CC3-4	CC4	CC4-5	CC5
1								nt	
2	dd		ny						
3			n-k			xd			
4	ft		n-l						
5		dk							
6		dd	g-h		d-k				
7					d-m				
8			x-h						
9		bk							
10									
11		rk			r-k			qd	
12						dd			
13	{lk}	{lk}			nt				
14						rs			
15		nt	d-h		d-x	mb		rt	
16					dk				
17			dd			qs			
18		bt			n-x				
19									
20		rk			d-n	n-h		ll	
21									
22		ly			n-dh				
23								st	
24		rk			d-n	n-h			
25								ql	
26		sk				ll			
27			nt						
28		(r-'i)						st	
29									
30	(as23)							st	
31		rk			d-n	n-h			
32			n-t			n-m			
33		r-m	rk						
34					d-h			dsh	
35									
36			gs						

37	(as 23)				st
38		rk		d-n	gg
39			r-t		lk
40		rt		n-y	
41				(s-'u)	
42			st		
43		bk		kht	
44			gg	gt	gg
45		dk			
46					
47	(as 23)				st
48		rk	d-h		
49		nd		l-c	
50		b-dh ¹		rsh	
51				rt	qd
52			ns	n-y	ns
53		bb			nn ²
54				nn	nsh
55				r-dh	
56	(as 23)				st
57			(r-'i)		n-b
58			l-l		st
59				mm	
60				d-c	n-w
61			(g-'u)		
62				cs	
63		bl			
64		rk		r-l	bsh
65			dh-h		
66				n-l	
67		rt			b-q ³
68			xd		dl
69					st
70	(as 23)				st
71	(as 1)				nt
72	gg		d-l		rt
73	(as 1)				nt
74			l-l		
75				d-h	
76		lb		d-h	(s-'i)
77					
78					
79					
80				lg	lk
81				st	
82					
83			d-l		

¹ In this cluster there is a hyphen in the text.

² Although written with a geminate consonant in the text, one would not expect this to be pronounced as a geminate the word in question is *yaqaannoo*, the verb *yaqaan* and the coordinating particle *oo*, here meaning 'who knows and'.

³ In this cluster there is a hyphen in the text.

84				bt	
85	rd			m' ⁴	
86				ft	
87	gs				
88				l-m ⁵	
89 ⁶				nt	
90		n-l			
91		l-l			
92		l-l			
93	gs			fn	nt
94	dd				
95	{nt}	{nt}	d-h		
96	mb	ly			n-b
97	nt				
98	mr			q-dh ⁷	r-b
99					
100					
101		gg			
102					bt
103					
104				gg	
105		l-h			
106	ng	l-b	(n-'u)		
107	nt		dk		
108		l-h	r-d ⁸		gg
109	fk				
110				lk	

⁴ In this case the /m/ and the glottal stop can be assumed to form a definite consonant cluster without resyllabification since the glottal stop is part of the verb root (*gama'* 'to fall asleep').

⁵ In this cluster there is a hyphen in the text.

⁶ This line reads: *hooyo ababintaadee* 'mother your raising [the children]'. The text is the same in the version in Antinucci & Axmed 1986: 171. This line does not scan according to the pattern in Banti & Giannattasio's first *masafo* half-line, although it does scan according to Antinucci & Axmed's template in which case the consonant cluster is in the position shown.

⁷ In this cluster there is a hyphen in the text.

⁸ Although here written with a hyphen, this word is normally written as one *habardugaag* 'wild animals'. It makes no difference to the substance of what is being said here.

As mentioned in the text of the article, this poem is of the *masafo* genre and so there are two half lines to a full line. Since the basic metrical characteristics of each half line are the same each half-line has been given a separate line in the table. All of the lines meet the criteria set out in the template of Banti & Giannattasio unless otherwise stated in a footnote. The first half line is labelled 'a' and the second half line is labelled 'b' (the second half-line is in the shaded row). A consonant cluster which is within square brackets [], indicates a cluster which is a different position to the one indicated by the column, footnotes provide details.

2. *Dacwad baan ka leeyahay* by Sayyid Maxamed Cabdulle Xassan (Jaamac 1974: 78-82)

line	CCA-1	CC1	CC1-2	CC2	CC2-3	CC3-4	CC4	CC4-5	CC5
1a					n-h				
1b		cw	d-b		n-k				
2a			l-h		(d-'a)	mx			
2b									
3a									
3b								nn	
4a					(r-'i)				
4b								n-l	
5a		mb							
5b			nk					nk	
6a ¹	rh	n-h	dd			n-k			
6b		rh	n-h	dd		n-k			
7a					n-d				
7b			n-k			lb			
8a	{nt}	{nt}	nk						
8b			d-d			dd			
9a			d-d					nk	
9b									
10a						bb			
10b						dd			
11a									
11b	lb		(d-'u)					rsh	
12a	{lk}	{lk}	(d-'a)					gt	
12b		rc							
13a		(r-'a)	ll					(s-'i)	
13b					d-l				
14a									
14b			n-b						
15a ²					dn				[lk]
15b			lk						

¹ This line reads as follows: *Dirhan haddii aan kaga tago* 'If I leave a dirham there', and it may be scanned in two ways. Here the brackets indicate an anacrusis syllable and the forward slashes indicate the boundaries between metrical positions: (Dir)han had/dii / aan / kaga / tago or Dirhan / haddii / aan / kaga / tago. The consonant cluster positions for both possible scansions are given in the table.

² This half-line reads as follows: *Dabadeedna sow maalkii* 'And then the wealth ... (continuing as a negative question)'. The scansion of the half-line is as follows: $\cup \cup _ \cup \cup _ \cup$. This fits the following possible first half-line in Banti & Giannattasio's template: $\cup \cup \cup \cup \cup \cup _ \cup$. Given this we can say that the first consonant cluster is found in position CC2-3 and the second one is found in the position between the end of metrical position P5 and the 'extra' syllable at the end of the line, hence the square brackets.

16a						
16b		ft	rk			
17a				r-dh		
17b		bn				
18a						r-r
18b						
19a			n-d	ds		
19b			n-d			n-h
20a	{dd}	{dd}	d-d		(d-'i)	
20b						(d-'o)
21a		{r-m}	{r-m}		x-k	
21b			lk			
22a			nn			(n-'a)
22b	(as 1b)	cw	d-b	n-k		
23a		r-m		d-d	rd	
23b		n-l		nt		
24a			(l-'a)	n-d		
24b						
25a			lk			
25b		dd				
26a		ly	n-w		dk	
26b				(n-'a)	d-w	
27a	{dd}	{dd}		d-d	ql	
27b	nn		d-s			
28a			c-d	ll		
28b	ll		n-k			
29a				ny		
29b		'rk				
30a		ld	ll			
30b			r-n			ersh
31a		rq	n-n		x-j	
31b				l-k		
32a					rr	
32b						
33a						
33b			rt			
34a		sn				nt
34b						
35a	{nt}	{nt}	d-d			
35b						
36a				(b-'i) ³		
36b		bb	d-k			
37a ⁴				dd		
37b		by				

³ This sequence comprises the words *dab iyo* 'fire and'. It may be confidently assumed that post-lexical resyllabification takes place in this case and that in performance the sequence is pronounced without any glottal stop at the beginning of *iyo*.

⁴ This half-line reads as follows: *sow daraaddii kuma imaan* 'Didn't I come because of him'. In this writing of the line, the final long vowel in *imaan* (the past tense negative form of the verb *yimi* 'to come') is assumed to be a typographical error here. In both other published versions of this poem the line is as follows: *Sow daraaddii ku ma iman* (Andrzejewski & Lewis 1964: p. 79, line 36) and *Sow daraaddi kuma iman* (Yaasiin 1984: p. 149, line 58). Taking the word *iman* to be accurate the line's scansion is straightforward.

38a				bc	dd	
38b	{gg}	{gg}				
39a		r-n	n-sh			ny
39b						dd
40a ⁵	(a)rr		dd			rr
40a	(b)	rr		dd		rr
40b						nt
41a						
41b				rs		
42a		rr	fl			
42b				qs		
43a			n-k			
43b						sk
44a		rs	ng		(c-'u)	
44b	(as 1b)	cw	d-b	n-k		
45a		r-h	dd			rt
45b		sk			d-m	
46a		bc				gg
46b	{n-k}	{n-k}				
47a				sh-h	dd	
47b			(c-'u)			xd
48a	r-d			(d-'i)	sm	
48b		r-m		d-w		gt
49a ⁶	rr		dd			
		rr		dd		
49b			(d-'i)			rx
50a						
50b	rr		(d-'a)			
51a						
51b						
52a				ny		
52b			n-n			
53a						
53b			ld	n-r	gg	
54a						
54b						ns
55a			d-d	c-l	ll	
55b			r-k			dd
56a		kr				
56b				d-k		
57a		rd	rk		rd	
57b		nn		d-k		
58a		rb	dd			bk

⁵ There are two possibilities for understanding the consonant cluster positions in this half-line. These are shown as follows, the slashes indicate boundaries between the metrical positions and anacrusis is shown in parentheses: (a) (ber) ri had / day / nu / dirir / rana (○○○ _ ○○○○○) (b) berri / hadday / nu / dirir / rana (○○○○○○○○○○). The translation of the half-line is: 'Tomorrow if we fight'. In scansion (a), the initial syllable is scanned as an anacrusic syllable and the open syllable diphthong in *haddaynu* is scanned as long; in (b), on the other hand, the diphthong is scanned as short and so the initial syllable is the first short syllable of P1. In the table the consequences for the consonant clusters of these two possibilities are both shown under 40a(a) and 40a(b).

⁶ This half-line also allows for two possible scansions like half-line 40a which mean different positions for the consonant clusters as shown in the table.

58b			nk		d-k		
59a		(r-'i)			d-d		
59b							
60a					rs		
60b			lq		fk	(n-'a)	d-t
61a			rk				
61b							
62a							
62b	(as 1b)	cw	d-b		n-k		
63a						nq	
63b							
64a			rr				
64b							
65a							rr
65b					g-k		
66a		lb			ll		dd
66b	dm				rr		
67a					n-w	x-g	nn
67b	gn		(n-'i)				bn
68a		rk					
68b							
69a ⁷	gd	g-h	dd		n-l		
		gd	g-h	dd	n-l		
69b					fs		
70a	{nt}	{nt}			n-l		
70b			n-l				
71a							st
71b		x-m			ll		ll
72a					d-sh		gt
72b	(as 1b)	cw	d-b		n-k		
73a							
73b		rb					ll
74a					s-d		ln
74b		n-d	lm		(n-'a)	ll	
75a					ll		
75b ⁸							
76a					ll		
76b					rk		
77a					bl		
77b					d-k		
78a			nk				gg
78b					fk		
79a	{nt}	{nt}				rx	

⁷ This half-line reads: *Degdeg haddaan looga furin*. The scansion of this is odd: ○○○○_○○○ and does not meet any of the templates given in this article. When we look for other versions of this half-line we see that it is not found in the version of the poem in Andrzejewski & Lewis 1964, but is found in the version in Yaasiin 1984: p.149, line 42, where it reads: *Degdeg haddii an loo furin*. This version of the line may be scanned without any problems in two ways and so it is this half-line in Yaasiin's version which has been used here to show the consonant clusters. Note that, although very close, the two versions are slightly different in meaning. The version in Jaamac 1974 with *looga* would translate as follows: 'If he is not let out quickly'; whereas the Yaasiin 1984 version translates: 'If it is not opened for him'.

⁸ Note that in the Jaamac 1974 text there is a typographical error: *qadaa* should read *qaadaa*.

79b					
80a	{dd}	{dd}			
80b			n-k		nq
81a				n-d	x-g
81b			dd		
82a					n-g
82b			l-b		
83a		nn			
83b					n-h
84a ⁹	(a)	b-h	dd		(n-'o)
84a	(b)		b-h	dd	(n-'o)
84b			bt	n-k	
85a					
85b			n-k		
86a		(l-'i)		n-d	gs
86b			(n-'i)	n-k	
87a	{dd}	{dd}		n-d	nb
87b			r-m	(g-'a)	h-s

⁹ This half-line is as follows: Dayib haddaadan oranayn, 'If you do not say 'Fine'. Given this there are two possible scansion leading to two possibilities for consonant cluster positions. The first possible scansion takes the initial syllable as anacrusis: (a) (da) yib had / daa / dan / ora / nayn, the second assumes that the syllable /daa/ in *haddaadan* is counted as short: (b) dayib / haddaa / dan / ora / nayn.