SOMALI PROSODIC SYSTEMS[1]

John William Johnson

A recent breakthrough by two Somali scholars, Maxamed Xaashi Dhamac and Cabdullaahi Diiriye Guuleed,[2] has repopened the question of Somali prosodic systems and has led to an understanding of the units by which Somali classical and other poetry is scanned. These two scholars discovered, apparently independently, that the four classical genres are scanned quantitatively, that is by counting temporal units on the line. They are not scanned by tone, or by stress patterns, or by any other method. What stumped us for years was the exact nature of the units which were to be scanned. Maxamed and Cabdullaahi discovered that the mora (also called chronos and chroneme), and not the syllable, is the key unit in Somali classical prosody. We shall return to this unit later, but first a bit of background for the sake of orientation would be useful here.

The Somalis live on the eastern Horn of Africa. They number somewhere around five million and are approximately 70 to 80 percent nomadic, being herders of camels, sheep and goats, and (in the southern regions) cattle. Their literature is almost entirely oral, although there is now a growing body of written literature due to the government's decision to use the Latin alphabet for transcribing the language.[3] By far the most important form of oral literature in Somalia is some 35 (or more) genres of poetry, all of which have been skillfully described by the Somali scholar Muuse Xaaji Ismaaciil Galaal.[4] The most important of the traditional genres were described and examples of them were pub-

lished by Andrzejewski and Lewis in their book *Somali Poetry: An Introduction* (1964). The modern poem, which is also oral in nature and which has had a powerful impact on recent Somali social and political life, is called the *heello* or *hees*. It was described in its historical context and examples of it were published in my book *Heellooy Heelleellooy: The Development of the Genre Heello in Modern Somali Poetry* (1974).[5] The present essay will concentrate only on a detailed textual description of the prosodic systems of the four classical genres called *gabay, jiifto, geeraar*, and *buraambur*. The reader may refer to the above mentioned books for such other topics as function and context of Somali oral poetry. Let us put the four classical genres into perspective in relation to the rest of Somali poetry.

Until the advent of the two radio stations in Somalia,[6] and the birth and growth of the modern *heello*, Somali poets were non-professional as the great majority of them remain even today. That is to say, poets did not earn their living by their skills. Indeed, everyone was permitted and encouraged for reasons of gaining prestige to participate in this artistic endeavor, but, obviously, a minority were really genius at it. The four classical genres were considered the highest forms of poetic expression and were reserved for the serious political, social, and philosophical commentary: thus, our designation of them as "classical."

The Somali poetic creative context is very interesting to many students of oral literature and folklore in that, while oral in nature, it is not for-

mulaic in the Perry-Lord sense of that term.[7] In other words, composition and recitation are not usually simultaneous. Verbatim or near verbatim memorization, an old topic in folkloristics recently reopened by Ruth Finnegan,[8] is very important in the diffusion and ultimate preservation of this type of oral art. When variation of a specific poem occurs, which is relatively rare, it usually takes the form of transposition or omission of entire lines rather than of words on a single line. Such memorization is made possible by the incredible constraints of prosody placed on the genres, the rules of which are explained below.

Exceptions to the normal practice of composition in private occur. Friends sometimes assist a poet in his creative process of composition. Moreover, poetic combats in Somalia often require an on-the-spot response to a poetic challenge, which, incidentally, requires the same alliteration in the reply as was found in the challenging poem. In these cases, license is given the poet, a license which would not be permitted in other contexts. The poet is given more time to work out his lines; he is permitted to leave a line unfinished while he proceeds with other lines and to return to the difficult line later; and he is permitted to "struggle through" a line, sometimes mumbling through part of the line with which he is having difficulty. In the latter case, repetition is allowed, each repeat producing more words and fewer mumbling as the line is completed and perfected.

One result of the normal composition in private is that the contexts of composition and performance may be separated; therefore, composer and reciter represent two different, albeit overlapping, skills. Once composition of the poem is completed in private, it can be recited by either the poet or by an agent to whom the poet has taught his poem. In this context, authorship of specific poems may be assigned and remembered. This practice in fact is a part of Somali poetic tradition.

We must now turn to the question of how genres of Somali poetry are differentiated, for there is more than one method by which this process is accomplished, and it is important to point out that metrical structure is not the only method. We are designating a genre as such, not by a cross-cultural theory, which is certainly valid when discussing other aspects of prosody not dealt with here, but by Somali standards only. In short, a genre of Somali poetry may be defined here as a form to which a Somali name has been assigned.

First of all, as mentioned above, there is quantitative scansion. The numbers and combinations of numerical units differentiate some of the genres of Somali poetry. Another major method is melody. In Somali poetics, all genres can be sung; some may also be recited as well as sung, while others must be put to music. Examples of the latter case are the genres we call miniature. In Somali they are called *wiglo, dhaanto, hirwo,* and *belwo,* and they last from two to ten lines in length. With these genres it is the melody that makes the difference.[9] An experiment I tried with the Somali poet and playwright Xasan Sheekh Muumin sought to prove this thesis. I later learned that B.W. Andrzejewski had carried out the same experiment with the Somali scholar Muuse Xaaji Ismaaciil Galaal some years earlier and obtained the same results. The hypothesis was this: recited, the genres could not be differentiated; sung, the genres could be identified. The method used to test this theory was simple. If melody were the only factor differentiating the genres, then the same text, regardless of its generic designation, could be sung to any of the four melodies. This assumption in fact turned out to be true. A *wiglo* text was chosen, and the poet was asked to "convert" it from a *wiglo* to a *dhaanto,* then to a *hirwo,* and finally to a *belwo,* simply by changing the melody.

Other genres appear to be differentiated by a combination of quantitative scansion and the appropriate subject matter reserved for the form. *Hees-geel,* "camel-song," and *hees-adhi,* "sheep and goat song," are examples. Context even appears to come into play, as with such genre differentiation as *hees-wadaameed,* "first camel watering song," and *hees-rakaadeed,* "second camel watering song." The first time the camels are watered, the genre employed is rapid and rhythmic, as the workmen are not yet tired out and can keep up a quick pace in slinging water containers up and down sometimes very deep wells dug into dry river beds. The "second camel watering song," however, finds two very tired workmen whose slower pace is matched by a very much slower rhythm to the song. But more research is needed to be certain of these

rules, and this research is being vigorously pursued by several scholars and their students at the Department of Somali Language and Literature in the National University of Somalia and at the Academy of Somali culture,[10] a research and publishing institute funded by the Somali government. The latter has accepted for publication the works on scansion by the two Somalis mentioned at the beginning of this essay.[11] At the moment only Maxamed's work has seen print in the national daily newspaper, *Xiddigta Oktoobar* (October Star).[12]

The modern *heello* is delivered as a lyric to song music and is differentiated from other genres by several criteria. Every *heello* melody is different from every other *heello* melody, as with any song. Quantitative units are not operative, as the poetic line is dominated by the melodic beat of the music. This form of prosodic constraint external to the linguistic structure of the line has been described by Charles S. Bird.[13] With the *heello*, musical instruments are used to accompany the genre and there appear to be no constraints at all on the subject matter.

Finally, we come to the four classical genres, which we wish to describe in detail. As mentioned above, it was the two Somali scholars who provided the breakthrough in this study by isolating the smallest units of this quantitative scansion. My own contribution has been to isolate metron or foot patterns, thereby providing a distinct definition of the meter of each genre. Altogether I analyzed scansion patterns of published texts of three *gabays*, three *geeraars*, three *buraamburs*, and a *jiifto*, amounting to some 604 lines.[14] Detailed statistical analyses followed, and my conclusions are based on this work. It must be made clear at this point that this research has only just begun, and the conclusions to which we have come to date must be considered tentative.

Let us begin with a discussion of characteristics common to all four classical genres. Also a quick word on terminology. Many phenomena found in Somali scansion are also found in Greek oral poetry, and it is from the study of Greek and some Latin prosody that many of the terms are taken.[15]

The smallest unit on the classical line is the mora, defined simply as the temporal duration of a syllable containing a short vowel. A syllable containing a long vowel, then, is equivalent to two morae. Instead of counting syllables, as we tried for years to do, we have learned to count morae. Monosemic units are one mora in length, while disemic units are two morae in length. The latter may consist of two short syllables, or a long vowel, or a diphthong followed by a consonant.[16]

The next largest unit on the classical line is the metron or foot, which can be defined as a pentasemic unit. Put another way, a classical foot contains from three to five syllables, equivalent to five morae.

The remaining sublinear unit, the hemistich or half line, occurs only with the *gabay* and the *jiifto*. Both these genres contain a caesura or pause between each half line. The caesura has a tendency to occur between clauses or smaller sense groups but is constrained only in that it must not fall in the middle of a word.

As with Greek prosody, there are several categories of syllables which may be described as permissible variations to the "proper" rules of the line. We have so far isolated three acceptable variations: syllabula anceps, anacrusis, and truncation.

First, the anceps syllable is one which may be counted as long or short according to the poet's needs on any given line of poetry. At least six linguistic combinations provide anceps possibilities for Somali. A diphthong of either a long or short vowel, followed by the offglide, followed not by a consonant as in the above mentioned variety, but by a vowel or by nothing at all, will allow the syllable to be counted as either a monoseme or a diseme.[17]

The second anceps variation involves the preverbal pronouns which normally have long vowels. First person *aan*, second person *aad*, and third person, masculine singular *uu*, may be counted as long or short. The auxiliaries *waa* and *baa* normally have long vowels but are the third anceps variation, while the fourth is the conjunction *oo*. The other conjunction in Somali, *iyo*, incidentally, is often contracted to the word preceding it by elision of the last vowel in that word. *Aniga iyo* (five morae), "I and . . .", for example, may become *anig' iyo* (four morae). The fifth anceps is the suffix *-ii*, a noun determiner, and the last example of anceps is the negation particle *aan*. It should also be pointed out that there may be other anceps yet undeciphered. For the time

being, they fall statistically in the catagory of "bad lines."

The second variation of the proper line is the one which permits an anacrusis or up-beat before the first foot, thus allowing six morae, but only in the first foot. The result is either an extra short syllable or a long voweled syllable in place of the initial monosemic unit on the line.

Finally, truncation or loss of one or more syllables is permitted on the classical line. It takes several forms. Catalexis is the loss of one monosemic syllable at the end of a half line or line. Brachycatalexis is the loss of a disemic unit, which can be either a long-voweled syllable or two shorts. The loss of three morae may also occur and may be classed under the general rubric of hypercatalexis. Initial truncation also occurs, producing an acephalous or "headless" foot. The latter is the opposite of anacrusis.

Turning to the question of meter, the *gabay*, the *jiifto*, and the *buraambur* are tetropodies; that is, they contain four feet per line. The *geeraar*, on the other hand, is a dipody with only two feet per line. The metron itself, as we have indicated, is always a pentasemic unit, and eight varieties exist for the classical genres. Greek names exist for all these feet, but they are somewhat inappropriate for Somali prosody.[18] We have simply assigned an alphabetic letter to each foot. Using macrons to mark disemic syllables and microns to mark monosemic syllables, the eight feet may be transcribed as follows:

A.
B.
C.
D.
E.
F.
G.
H.

When these feet are employed in a classical poem, the poem may be described as an episyntheton; that is to say, the same type of foot does not have to occur in each of the pentasemes on the same line. It would be impossible to describe a Somali poem as a tetropody in A foot, or a dipody in B foot, because both these feet and any of the others may occur on the same line and on any of the other lines in the same poem. In fact, the statistics indicate a tendency toward a line of at least three different varieties of feet, the fourth one being the same as one of the other three. The *geeraar*, which is a dipody, is the exception to this tendency. None of the several hundred lines we scanned in the other three genres permitted four identical feet on the same line. To illustrate the episynthetonic nature of these poems, the foot occurrence patterns of the scanned examples given below are listed after the translations.

Apart from the units of quantitative scansion, another constraint, which is truly amazing about classical and other types of Somali poetry, is its alliterative pattern. The *gabay, jiifto,* and *geeraar* require that only one sound per poem may alliterate, a sound being defined as a single consonant or all the vowels collectively. A 150-line *gabay*, for instance, will have 300 words that alliterate with the same sound. Thus we may call any given poem a *gabay* in "Q", or a *geeraar* in "M", or a *jiifto* in "vowels."

Alliteration does not occur in words that are side by side on the line. The only requirement is that each half line in the *gabay* and *jiifto*, and each line in the *geeraar* contain a word with the specified alliteration. The *buraambur* alliterates on each half of the line (there is no caesura in the *buraambur*), but this genre is an exception for another reason as well. Each line must have two words that alliterate with the same sound, but each new *buraambur* line may have a new alliterating sound. In this respect, the *buraambur* alliteration pattern resembles that of Old English poetry.

The tendency statistically in about half of the cases is for the first word on the half line to alliterate in the *gabay* and *jiifto* and for the first word on the line to alliterate in the *geeraar* and *buraambur*. Where the first word does not alliterate, at least some word in the first foot will do so. In 80 per cent

of the cases we scanned, the first foot contained an alliterating word.

One final comment on classical poetry in general concerns larger line units. Classical poetry lines are arranged in strophes and not in stanzas. That is, there is no set number of lines in this larger unit, although one classical poet, the Sayyid Maxamed Cabdille Xasan, now honored in Somalia as the national poet, was known to compose some of his *gabays* in triplets. A strophe is easily determined, for the last syllable of the last line of the strophe is held on a low note for a much longer period of time than is its counterpart on any internal line of a strophe. Moreover, it is also only at the end of a strophe that the audience is permitted to interrupt the performance, and only then with a reinforcing statement of appreciation, which might include repetition of the last half line of the last line of the strophe.

Turning now to specific characteristics which which differentiate the genres, let us begin with the most popular and the most structurally constrained genre, the *gabay*. The *gabay* foot pattern has internal constraints and may be defined as a diseme, followed by another diseme, followed by a monoseme, and may be symbolized by the following diagram. The spaces between the lines represent morae, while a double vertical line indicates a foot boundary. Internal foot boundaries are of two types. The broken line may be crossed by a long vowel, but the solid line may not.

$$\| \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \|$$
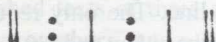
The foot boundary in any classical poem is easy to recognize, because it is the smallest unit of *recurrent* patterns of morae on the line. Four such patterns may be isolated on a *gabay* line, thus producing a line in tetrameter. Because of the internal foot boundaries for the *gabay*, only the first four feet, A, B, C, and D may occur in the *gabay* metron.

The structure of the *gabay* line may be symbolized by the following diagram:[19]

$$\| \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \| \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \| \quad \vdots \quad \| \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \| \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \vdots \quad | \quad \|$$

The uniqueness of the *gabay* line lies in the fact that the caesura falls after the first diseme in the third foot; in other words, it does not fall at the fc

boundary. Thus the first hemistich contains twelve morae, while the second contains eight. Note also that an anacrusis is permissible with this genre. The following passage, alliterating in ''D'', will illustrate how the *gabay* line scans.[20]

Somali text and scansion pattern:

33. Ilash baa dabkoodiyo sandahay, danabbadoodii ye
34. Dadka ugu ma liitaan e waa, diriri waayeen e
35. Afartaa sidii Deleb La riday, maysu dabo joojay?
36. Da'daan kaga bilaabiyo miyaan, deelka ka habowshay?
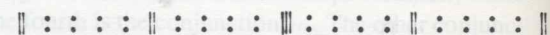37. Ma daleeyay deylqaafku waa, Kaa dilaa gabay e

Translation:

33. God has put out their fire and has dampened (the valour of) their heroes;
34. They are not the weakest among people and yet they have not fought (at all).
35. Have I not put these four (points) one after the other, like the (marked) sticks in the Deleb game?
36. Have I lost the alliteration in the letter *D* with which I began?
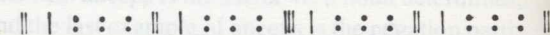37. Have I not set it out clearly? Errors and prevarication spoil a poem!

Foot Patterns:

33. D — B — A — D (with anacrusis)
34. A — D — B — D
35. C — B — C — C
36. B — B — D — C (with anacrusis)
37. C — D — D — B

The *jiifto* as well as the *geeraar* have no internal metron constraints, and the *jiifto* line pattern may be diagramed as follows:

$$\| \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \| \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \| \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \| \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \|$$

There is, however, a definite tendency for each foot to begin with a short syllable, thus:

$$\| \quad | \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \| \quad | \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \| \quad | \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \| \quad | \quad \vdots \quad \vdots \quad \|$$

All eight feet are therefore possible, but B, D, and H

are decidedly unpopular with the *jiifto*, as the statistics indicate for the materials we analyzed. The line is again in tetrameter, but the caesura falls in the exact center, after the second foot boundary. The first and second hemistichs are, then, equal, with ten morae apiece. Alliterating in "D", the following passage will demonstrate *jiifto* line scansion.[21] Note that initial truncation occurs.

Somali text and scansion pattern:

```
   ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋            ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋
5. Amba waa ka dabo geli,      dakankiyo qaadkee,
   ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋            ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋
6. Dirham haddii aan kaga tago,  anaa been dabaad sh e,
   ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋            ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋
7. Waxaan Kaa dalbahayaa,       duunkaagu wuxuu qabo,
   ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋            ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋
8. Intaad dawlad u tahay,       adigaa u damiin sh e,
   ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋            ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋
9. Ma waa diidi nimankaad,      dabatay e i soo dhacay?
   ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋            ⁋  _  _⁋  _  _  ⁋
10. Waxay iga dudduubeen,       may kor u dabaashaan?
```

Translation:

5. I will myself seek to recover the property and the loot which they seized.
6. Were I to leave a single penny with them my pledge would be perverted.
7. What I claim from you is only what you yourself owe me;
8. Since you are the government the responsibility is yours;
9. Can you disclaim those whom you tricked into attacking me?
10. Do they not swim in the prosperity which they have gained from what they devoured of mine?

Foot patterns:

5. G — A — G — F (initial truncation on both hemistichs)
6. G — A — F — E
7. F — G — D — E
8. F — G — C — E
9. E — G — C — E
10. E — F — E — F (initial truncation on second hemistich)

The *geeraar*'s foot constraints and tendencies are identical to those of the *jiifto*. Moreover, there is but one alliterating word per line, so that the *geeraar*

line structure may be described as half a *jiifto*, thus:

$$\mathbb{I} : : : : \mathbb{I} : : : : \mathbb{I}$$

Diagramming the tendency for an uncrossable internal boundary to fall after the first monoseme will render the following change:

$$\mathbb{I} \, \mathbb{I} : : : \mathbb{I} \, \mathbb{I} : : : \mathbb{I}$$

The *geeraar*, then, scans in dimeter, with two feet per line, a total of ten morae. It further differs from the *jiifto* in that its truncation is terminal. Also interesting to note is that anacrusis and truncation may both occur. Finally, the mode of delivery is different for these two genres. The following passage, alliterating in "C" will exemplify *geeraar* scansion.[22]

Somali text and scansion pattern:

```
       ‖   _  _   ‖        ‖   _  _   ‖
9. Nin habeenno casheeyay
       ‖   _  _   ‖        ‖   _  _   ‖
10. Cadar aan hadh lahayn
       ‖   _  _   ‖        ‖   _  _   ‖
11. Iyo ceeryaamay ugu toosta,
     ‖   _  _   ‖          ‖   _  _   ‖
12. Oo inuu caafiyaddiisa
        ‖   _  _    ‖          ‖   _   ‖
13. Cabbaar meel la fadhiisto
     ‖   _  _   ‖        ‖   _  _   ‖
14. Caqligaanay gelayn e.
     ‖   _  _   ‖        ‖   _  _   ‖
15. Waar tolow, colka jooja!
```

Translation:

9. He who sups plentifully every night
10. (Whom pride and prosperity shroud like) shadeless cloud

11. And damp mist mixed together,
12. That in his good fortune
13. He should repose in peace and tranquility
14. Would be hard to credit.
15. Oh clansmen, stop the war!

Foot patterns:

  9. C — F
10. C — E or F (with brachycatalexis)
11. F — G   (with anacrusis; "bad" line)
12. G — C
13. F — C
14. C — E   (with catalexis)
15. H — C

The *geeraar* is more popular than the *jiifto* in modern times, and its meter is said to match the rhythm of riding on horseback. It is in fact a battle poem, while the *jiifto* is a genre devoted largely to philosophical and melancholic topics. The *gabay* deals mostly with politics and social commentary. These three genres are masculine poems, composed and recited by men and without any accompaniment of musical instruments, hand clapping, or much audience participation.

The *buraambur* stands in opposition to the latter three in that it is composed and recited by and for women. A drum and hand clapping, as well as dancing, often accompany its performance. No internal foot constraints or tendencies exist for the *buraambur*. All eight feet are employed; indeed metron H, unpopular with the masculine genres, was the most popular foot in the examples we analyzed. The line, a tetropody, looks simply like this:

‖ : : : : ‖ : : : : ‖ : : : : ‖ : : : : ‖

Like the *geeraar*, the *buraambur* has a tendency to truncate, which can be observed in all but the last line of the following *buraambur*.[23]

Somali text and scansion patterns:

1. Dalkeenniyo Reer Caloo deyr La kala marshow,
2. Cirkoo di'i waaysy oo dunidu ciirtayow,
3. Dayaxa nuurkiise oon dib u iftiiminow,
4. Shamsada oo daslacdoo Laga dam siiyayow,
5. Basra timirtii ka imanaysay oo baddii xidhdhow.

Translation:

1. You were the fence standing between our land and the descendants of 'Ali,
2. (Now in your departure) you are the sky which gives no rain while mist shrouds the world,
3. The moon that shines no more,
4. The risen sun extinguished,
5. The dates on their way from Basra cut off by the seas.

Foot patterns:

1. E — H — B — E or F (with brachycatalexis)
2. E — H — G — D
3. G — H — G — E or F (with brachycatalexis)
4. G — H — G — D
5. A — G — H — D

In closing, one can see how highly constrained Somali classical poetry is, not only by foot and line patterns, but also by alliteration. Knowledge of the internal structure of these constraints now makes a claim by some Somali poets and reciters much more credible, and that is this: it is said that some reciters are so skilled at memorization that they can remember and recite a classical poem after hearing it only once.

Notes

1. A modified form of this paper was presented at the Ninth Annual Conference on African Linguistics held at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, from 7 to 9 April, 1978.

2. The spelling system employed throughout this essay is the one officially adopted by the Somali government on 21 October, 1972. I have not, however, changed bibliographical citations, where the spelling remains the same as it appears on the title page of the work. For a history of the activities leading up to the adoption of this alphabet, and for a description of the phonemic referents of its graphemes, see Hussein M. Adam (1968), Andrzejewski, Strelcyn, and Tubiana (1969), and Andrzejewski (1974a), (1974b), (1977b), and (1978, forthcoming). The most important innovations in this alphabet are as follows: the symbol ⟨x⟩ is employed for the voiceless pharyngeal [ħ] or [h] and ⟨c⟩ for its voiceless counterpart [ ].

3. For a good description of the rise of Somali written literature, see Andrzejewski (1975).

a4. For a list of Muuse Galaal's publications, see Johnson (1969) and (1973) and Mohamed Khalief Salad (1977).

5. Published by Indiana University Press for the Research Center for the Language Sciences, this book is now distributed by Humanities Press.

6. For a description of the impact of the radio on Somali poetry, see Suleiman Mohamed Adam (1968) and Johnson (1974). For its impact on language change, see Andrzejewski (1971).

7. The basic book on the formulaic theory is Lord (1960).

8. See Finnegan (1976) and (1977) for thorough discussions of this topic.

9. For a thorough description of these genres, see Johnson (1972).

10. For a description of the Academy, see Andrzejewski (1977a).

11. See Cabdullaahi Diiriye Guuleed (1978).

12. See Maxamed Xaashi Dhamac (1976).

13. See Bird (1971) and (1976).

14. Scansion and analysis was performed on texts in Andrzejewski and Musa H.I. Galaal (1963) and Andrzejewski and Lewis (1964). I should like to thank the authors and publishers of these two works for granting permission to reprint portions of these texts as examples in this essay. Note that the spelling in these passages has been altered to conform with the new Somali national orthography.

15. Works consulted for terminology were Maas (1962), Raven (1962), Rosenmeyer, Ostwald, and Halporn (1963), and Preminger (1965).

16. The diphthong which must be counted as a long vowel may be symbolized by the following formula: # V G C #. The symbol # represents syllable boundaries, while V stands for a long or short vowel. The letter G symbolizes the off glide, either 'y/ or /w/, and C represents a consonant.

17. The anceps dipthong may be symbolized by the formula: # V G (V) #. The parentheses represent an optional choice.

18. In the spirit of the movement in Somalia to modernize the language, I feel it would be more appropriate for Somali scholars to assign Somali names to these feet. Moreover, bacchiac and palimbacchiac, named from odes to the Greek and Roman god of wine, are decidedly inappropriate for naming poetic feet employed by a Moslem society. Listing the Greek names here is for edification and reference only: (A) Pentabrach, (B) First paeon, (C) Third paeon, (D) Palimbacchiac (Antibacchiac), (E) Second paeon, (F) Bacchiac, (G) Fourth paeon, (H) Cretic (Amphimacer)

19. The triple verticle line may not be crossed by a disemic syllable, and it represents the caesura boundary, but it does not necessarily occur between feet. Only with the *jiifto* does the triple verticle line represent both caesura and foot boundaries.

20. The passage is from Andrzejewski and Musa H.I. Galaal (1963), pp. 22 and 24.

21. The passage is from Andrzejewski and Lewis (1964), pp. 74–77.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 130–31.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 138–39.

Bibliography

Andrzejewski, B.W., "The Role of Broadcasting in the Adaptation of the Somali Language to Modern Needs," in *Language Use and Social Change: Problems of Multilingualism with Special Reference to East Africa*, ed. W.H. Whiteley (London: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute, 1971): 262–73.

———, "Somalia Introduces a National Orthography," *Africa* 44:1 (London: International African Institute, 1974): 84.

———, "The Introduction of a National Orthography for Somali," *African Language Studies* 15 (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1974): 199–203.

———, "The Rise of Written Somali Literature," *African Research and Documentation* 8/9 (Birmingham: African Studies Association of the United Kingdom, 1975): 7–14.

———, "The Somali Academy of Culture," *IAI Bulletin: African Studies Notes and News*, Supplement to *Africa* 47:1 (London: International African Institute, 1977): 7.

———, "Five Years of Written Somali: A Report on Progress and Prospects," *IAI Bulletin: African Studies Notes and News*, Supplement to *Africa* 47:4 (London: International African Institute,197): 4–5.

———, "The Development of a National Orthography in Somalia and the Modernization of the Somali Language," *Horn of Africa* 1:3 (Summit, New Jersey: Horn of Africa Journal, July/September, 1978): 39–45.

Andrzejewski, B.W., "The Role of Poetic Tradition in the Modernization of the Somali Language," *Heegan (Vigilance)* 11 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 25 September, 1978): 4–5.

———, "A Survey of Cushitic Literatures, 1940–1975," *Ethiopianist Notes* 2:1 (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University African Studies Center, 1978): 1–27.

———, "A Survey of Cushitic Literatures Before 1940," *North East African Studies (Incorporating Ethiopianist Notes)* vol. 3 (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University African Studies Center, 1979). [forthcoming]

Andrzejewski, B.W., and I.M. Lewis, *Somali Poetry: An Introduction* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964): pp. 167.

Andrzejewski, B.W., and Musa H.I. Galaal, "A Somali Poetic Combat," *Journal of African Languages* 2 (East Lansing, Michigan: African Studies Center, 1963): I, pp. 15–28; II, pp. 93–100; III, pp. 190-205. (Republished in monograph form by Michigan State University, n.d.).

Andrzejewski, B.W., S. Strelcyn, and J. Tubiana, "Somalia: The Writing of Somali," *Somaliya: Antologia Storico-Culturale* 7/8 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Education, Department of Culture, 1969): 214-34. (Reprint of U.N.E.S.C.O. Report WS/0866.90, CTL)

Bird, Charles S., "Aspects of Prosody in West African Poetry," in *Current Trends in Stylistics*, ed. Braj B. Kachru and Herbert F.W. Stahlke (Edmonton: Linguistic Research, Ltd., 1971): 207–15.

———, "Poetry in the Mande: Its Form and Meaning," *Poetics* 5 (Amsterdam: North-Holland Pub. Co., 1976): 89–100.

Cabdullaahi Diiriye Guuleed, "Buraanburka iyo Miisaankiisa," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:247 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 8 November, 1978): 3. [For the second half of this article, see under "Hojis iyo Hooris Buraanbur.]

———, "Dhaantadana Miisaan," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:164 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 2 August, 1978): 3. [For the second half of this article, see under "Suugaanta Soomaaliyeed."]

———, "Gabaygeenna Miisaan," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:126 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 18 June, 1978): 3.

———, "Gabaygeenna Miisaan: Qaybta Labaad," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:134 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 28 June, 1978): 3.

———, "Geeraarka iyo Miisaankiisa," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:190 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 2 September, 1978): 3.

————, "Geeraarka iyo Miisaankiisa: Qaybta Labaad," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:191 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 3 September, 1978): 3.

————, *Gorfaynta Maansada [Analysis of Poetry]* (Mogadishu, Somalia: Academy of Culture, Ministry of Higher Education and Culture). [forthcoming]

————, "Hawraarey Ninba Si Kuu Qaaday," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:119 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 10 June, 1978): 3.

Cabdullaahi Diiriye Guuleed, "Hawraarey Ninba Si Kuu Qaaday: Qabta Labaad," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:120 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 11 June, 1978): 3.

————, "Heelladana Miisaan," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:172 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 12 August, 1978): 3.

————, "Heelladana Miisaan: Qaybta Labaad," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:173 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 13 August, 1978): 3.

————, "Hojis iyo Hooris Buraanbur," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:248 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 9 November, 1978): 3. [For the first half of this article, see under "Buraanbur iyo Miisaankiisa."]

————, "Jiiftadana Miisaan," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:149 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 16 July, 1978): 3.

————, "Jiiftadana Miisaan: Qaybta Labaad," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:150 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 17 July, 1978): 3.

————, "Suugaanta Soomaaliyeed: Qaybta Labaad," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 6:165 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 3 August, 1978): 3. [For the first half of this article, see under "Dhaantadana Miisaan."]

Finnegan, Ruth, "What Is Oral Literature Anyway? Comments in the Light of Some African and Other Comparative Material," in *Oral Literature and the Formula*, ed. B.A. Stolz and R.S. Shannon, III (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for the Coördination of Ancient and Modern Studies, University of Michigan, 1976): 127-76.

Finnegan, Ruth, *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977): pp. 299.

Hussein M. Adam, *A Nation in Search of a Script: The Problem of Establishing a National Orthography* (M.A. Thesis, Makerere, Uganda: University of East Africa, 1968).

Johnson, John William, "A Bibliography of the Somali Language and Literature," *African Language Review* 8 (London: Frank Cass, 1969): 279-97.

————, "The Family of Miniature Genres in Somali Oral Poetry," *Folklore Forum* 5:3 (Bloomington, Indiana: Forum Society, 1972): 79-99.

————, "Research in Somali Folklore," *Research in African Literatures* 4:1 (Austin, Texas: African and Afro-American Research Institute, 1973): 51–61.

————, *Heellooy Heelleellooy: The Development of the Genre Heello in Modern Somali Poetry* (Bloomington, Indiana; Indiana University Press for the Research Center for the Language Sciences, 1974): pp. 209. (Distributed presently by the Humanities Press.)

Laitin, David, *Politics, Language and Thought: The Somali Experience*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

1977): pp. 268.

————, "Somali Becomes the Official Language," *R.P.C.V./SOMALIA Newsletter* 1:1 (Pub. by Returned Peace Corps Volunteers in the Somali Republic, 1979). [forthcoming]

Lord, Albert B., *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960): p. 309.

Maas, Paul, *Greek Metre* (London: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1962): pp. 116.

Maxamed Xaashi Dhamac (Gaariye), "Toddobaadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisaanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:2 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 24 January, 1976): 3.

————, "Toddobaadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisaanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:8 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 31 January, 1976): 3.

————, "Toddobadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:14 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 7 February, 1976): 3.

————, "Toddobaadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisaanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:20 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 14 February, 1976): 3.

————, "Toddobaadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisaanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:55 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 27 March, 1976): 3.

————, "Toodobadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:73 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 17 April, 1976): 3.

————, "Toddobaadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisaanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:86 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 3 May, 1976): 3.

————, "Toddobaadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisaanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:90 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 8 May, 1976): 3.

Maxamed Xaashi Dhamac (Gaariye), "Toodbaadkan iyo Suugaanta: Miisaanka Maansada," *Xiddigta Oktoobar* 4:108 (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 29 May, 1976): 3.

Mohamed Khalief Salad (comp.), *Somalia: A Bibliographical Survey* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977): pp. 468.

Preminger, Alex (ed.), *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974): pp. 992.

Raven, D.S., *Greek Metre: An Introduction* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962): pp. 125.

Rosenmeyer, Thomas, James W. Halporn, and Martin Ostwald, *The Meters of Greek and Latin Poetry* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963): pp. 137.

Suleiman Mohamoud Adam, *The Development of Broadcasting in Somalia* (Mogadishu, Somalia: Ministry of Information, 1968): pp. 34.

John William Johnson is an Assistant Professor of Folklore at Indiana University in Bloomington.