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By H. F. Morris

SOMALI POETRY
An Introduction
By B. W. ANDRZEJEWSKI and I. M. LEWIS

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OXFORD
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1964
57 Who would run for safety with speed,
58 And with men who counsel war
59 And are determined on it, you are full;
60 Oh clansmen, stop the war!

* * * * *

61 (Just as) the Majeerteen clan their glory,
62 And their tribute from the Hawiye people
63 And their regal staff,¹ have lost,
64 The 'Ismaan Mahamud lineage
65 And 'Igalle's descendants who are in the same plight
66 And 'Tise's people, are all deficient in strength;
67 In the regions of 'Adduun
68 And 'Aadaale they pasture no longer,
69 At 'Asayr and Sayn
70 By the famous tree
71 Beyond 'Awbarre
72 In remote places
73 Facing the shore
74 They are forced to turn for sustenance to the fruit of the
immature date palm.
75 And this is the path you are following (to the same end)
76 Oh clansman, stop the war!

15. The Limits of Submission
FAARAH NUUR

This poem describes how the poet's clan had for long lived in submission to a stronger group, but were driven in the end to rebel and to assert their independence.

1 Over and over again to people
2 I show abundant kindness.

* * * * *

3 If they are not satisfied
4 I spread out bedding for them
5 And invite them to sleep.

* * * * *

¹ 'Regal staff' refers to the decorated wooden staff of office traditionally carried by some clan sultans.

57 Oo cararaaya had dhow
58 Iyo nin colaad talinaaya
59 Oo caddaystaydinka buucha e
60 Waar tolow, colka jooya!

* * * * *

61 Majeerteen calankii
62 Iyo cashuurtaa Hawiyya
63 Iyo cukaaaskii bogor waa
64 Oo Reer Gismaaan Machamuud
65 Iyo Cigallii ka dhignaa
66 Iyo Cise ways ku itaal
67 Iyo in dhowayd ba Cadduun
68 Iyo Cadaale reer ma furayn
69 Cunnaayr iyo Sayn iyo
70 Geedkii caanka ahaa
71 Iyo Cawbaarrawgu sokaysa
72 Oo hadduu cawtalgasira
73 Iyo badda coonka u jeedda
74 Ka cawaaganayaa
75 Oo caynkuu baydin waddaan e
76 Waar tolow, colka jooya!

1 Rag sabaan ka sabaan baan
2 Samaantuun badiyaa

* * * * *

3 Hadduu saakimi waayo
4 Saritaan u dhiigaa
5 Is ka seecho idhaa

* * * * *
6 If they are still not satisfied,
7 The milk of the camel whose name is Suub
8 I milk three times for them,
9 And tell them to drink it up.

* * * * *

10 If they are still not satisfied,
11 The homestead’s ram,
12 And the fat he-goat I kill for them.

* * * * *

13 If they are still not satisfied,
14 The plate from Aden
15 I fill with ghee for them.

* * * * *

16 If they are still not satisfied,
17 A beautiful girl
18 And her bridal house I offer them.

* * * * *

19 If they are still not satisfied,
20 I select livestock also
21 And add them to the tribute.

* * * * *

22 If they are still not satisfied,
23 ‘Oh brother-in-law, oh Sultan, oh King!’
24 These salutations I lavish upon them.

* * * * *

25 If they are still not satisfied,
26 At the time of early morning prayers I prepare
27 The dark grey horse with black tendons,
28 And with the words ‘Praise to the Prophet’ I take
29 The iron-shafted spear,
30 And drive it through their ribs
31 So that their lungs spew out;
32 Then they are satisfied!