

THE FREEDOM SONGS of the SOMALI REPUBLIC

with
ABDULLAH KERSHI
and
AHMED SHERIF



Drawn by a Somali artist

collected by
CHET WILLIAMS
with
HASSAN HUSSEIN (WIRELESS)
and by
MUSSA GALLAL
with voices and lute, drums and tambourine

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FREEDOM SONGS of the SOMALI REPUBLIC

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Descriptive notes are inside pocket

DULKAYAGA For our own Land	WALALAHA Brothers
MADAFAN The Most Important	RAQAAT
LUMUUMBA	ALOW Oh, My God!
WA MAHAD ALEH Thank God	AWEE Where?
OGAADA Take Care!	ALANKAA Blue; Blue Flag

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with

Abdullah Kershi and Ahmed Sherif

Collected by Chet Williams with Hassan Hussein (wireless) and Mussa Callal

Accompanied with voices and lute, drums and tambourine

SOMALI SONGS

Tape of assorted contemporary folk music from the Somali Republic, featuring the work of folk-composers and singers, Abdullah Kershi and Ahmed Sherif. January, 1962, Mogadiscio. Collected by Chet Williams, assisted by Hassan Hussein ("Wireless"), and by Mussa Gallal, regarding orthography.

SIDE ONE

Abdullah Kershi, contemporary outstanding poet and composer, sings and plays, accompanying himself on the Eastern lute, aided by Fatima Kenya, Fatima Dales, and Duniya, amateur young lady singers who alternate with drums and tambourine.

Side I, Band 1: DULKAYAGA

(Words by Ahmed
music by Abdullah Kershi)

Note:

The entire first verse is repeated. In the other verses each couplet is repeated.

English (meaning only)

For our own Land; for our own Land,
We will die
For our own Land.

For pure blood and
Against defenders
We will die
For our own Land.

Youth and babies,
We are all ready.
We will die
For our own Land.

For it we have been born,
And now we have the courage.
Badness and difficulties
We will not accept
For our own Land.

Not all agree with the many,
For some are like the dumb,
And some are like the deaf.
We will die
For our own Land.

Somali

Dúlkayága, dúlkayága,
Waw dimañaynaa,
Dúlkayága, dúlkayága, dulkayaga.



Díig ínan dú shubo
Aán dagár kú galo
Waa kú daarannoó waw dimañaynaa
Dúlkayága, dúlkayága, dúlkayága.

Dallíniyo dallaán,
Waw wada dannoó.
Waw dimañayanaa
Dúlkayága, dúlkayága, dúlkayága.

Wáw dalannayoó,
Díbtiyo humaá.
Waa ku daarannoó
Waannu diirrannoó
Dúlkayága, dúlkayága, dúlkayága.

Káan ku daadannini,
Waa doohanyoó,
Waa degalá, yay.
Waa kú daadannoó; waw dimañaynaa
Dúlkayága, dúlkayága, dúlkayága.



Side I, Band 2: MADAFAN

The Most Important, refers to the most important day, Independence, 1 July, 1961. This is another tune sung by Abdullah in classical Somali and not understood by all, particularly those speaking Southern Somali dialects.

Side I, Band 3: LUMUUMBA

(Words and music by Abdullah Kershi)

Note:

Each line of each verse is sung twice.

English (meaning only)

Chorus:

Lumumba is not alive and he is not dead;
Do not believe either.
His figure is not visible,
But think not he is absent.

He was our worthy head;
Has he left an unoccupied place?

(CHORUS)

All colored peoples are with you,
Congolese, and today you are only
One Unity.

(CHORUS)

We do not want to be slaves or
protected;
Is it possible that they can
impose on us anything?

(CHORUS)

Where the sun shines, no other
lights are needed.
Africa will fight strenuously.

(CHORUS)

Traitors, you have abandoned us
And we are aware of your mischief.

(CHORUS)

Somali

Lumúumba má noolá mana dimanéy;
Labáda mídna háw malaynína,
Muúqiisóo la waayéy mooyaañey,
Inuu maqányay ha moodína.

Madáhabuu nó ahaa mudnáanjirey;
Miyáy kaalíntiisii maqántahay?

Mádowgu gíddi waá idiinlá midoó,
Koongóy máanta waá midkáa qúda.

Midiidíniyo magán ahaánmáyneec;
Miyaa nala muquuninkárayaa?

Hádkoo muuqdá míli'da lamá rábo.
African maanta waá mintidayaa.

Maangaabýada méel nagaga da'áyiyo
Má moogin godóbta nagá maqan.

Side I, Band 4: WA MAHAD ALEH --

means Thank God. Abdullah Kershi sings his patriotic song, thanking God for the independence of his country.

Side I, Band 5: OGAADA (Take Care!)

(Words and music by Abdullah Kershi)

This song stresses the need for education and cultural growth.

Note:

The chorus is sung twice through each time. Each line of each verse is sung twice.

English

Without knowledge there is no brightness.
It is like a house without a light.

Chorus:

Take care! Take care!
And go to school, take care!

It is like thirst and drought.
It is like dryness and without water.

(CHORUS)

Let us open our eyes with knowledge
So that we may become advanced people.

(CHORUS)

Somali

Oqoon la, aani waa iftiin la, aaneey.
Waa aqaliyo ilaya la, aaneey.

Ogaada ogaada dugsiyada ogaada!
OO aada oo aada walaalayayaalow
aada!

Waa oommananiyo abaaarey.
Omasiyo biyo la, aaneey.

Injaha aan ku kala qaadnee
Ifka ugu ilbaksanaannee.



Side II, Band 1: WALALAHA

Brothers, advises Somalis to unite because they are all brothers and urges them to live in peace and forsake strife, as they move forward to develop the nation.

Side II, Band 2: RAQAAT --

is another unique Kershi song. The word raqaat denotes the lengthy pause taken by camels after they have quenched their initial thirst at water holes. The term is here employed symbolically, alluding to pauses in human enterprises after Independence has been won.

Side II, Band 3: ALOW

Oh, My God!, was written by Abdullah Kershi for the Military in 1961. Sung by Ahmed Sherif, the patriotic essay calls for the necessity of the uniformed forces' setting an exemplary example for everyone to follow.

Side II, Band 4: AWEE --

Where?, ("Where is our harmony? Where is our friendship? Where is our relationship?") is another new top hit in the Somali Republic. Ahmed Sherif sings his own 1961 song concerning l'amore perduto.

Side II, Band 5: ALANKAA (Blue, Blue Flag)

(Words by Ismail Ahmed
music by Abdullah Kershi)

English (meaning only)

Chorus: (sung first and after each of the verses)
Every nation's flag has a color (2x)
And ours is like the sky.
Without clouds; please love it.

You, like the white star, have
helped us.
You are alone to our country
like the first baby.
Be famous, like the bright sun.

Our body on the day you were born
Was cleansed and purified.
May God not turn you back (Amen)

What our five parts have
missed before
You have returned to us and
assisted us.
It is a wonderful change to see
you flying.

Somali

Qoloba 'alankéedu waa 'aynoo
Innaga kéennu waa irkoo kale.
Aan 'aadna lahayn é 'aashaga, éy.

hiddigyay 'adi waad na
'iilbihisee.
'arrada kéligaa adaw
dáha 'hradee.
'ad'eédda sideéda 'aan noqo.

'ashadaad dalataad 'alooshayadii
Sidii 'ulaygii 'idaad marisee.
Allow haku 'eelin 'awoy dáha.
Shanteen 'ududood 'adkii
ka maqnaa
Adaw 'eliyoo na 'aawimayoo.
Waa 'alaf 'emriga isku
keen sismay.

Abdullah Kershi

Abdullah Kershi is poet, composer, and Somali Folk-singer -- all in one. One hears his songs hummed by children in the streets, sung by waiters, presumably to themselves, chanted by work crews building houses, and played proudly and loudly by the official (Police) band of the land, the one-year-old Somali Republic. The songs he writes are mostly patriotic ones -- fifty-three have been composed in this category -- although he has written more than one-dozen love songs.

Indeed, his first song, composed in 1949, called Gartanaqua, dealt with love; the title meaning, Solve It, Please. This was written in Hargeisa, the scene of a recent small unsuccessful revolt, then capital of British Somaliland, many years after he had finished his first 'guitar', from a large tin can and pieces of gut string salvaged from discarded fishing equipment found along the edge of the Red Sea, but only four years after on his own he had started to learn the rudiments of the Eastern lute; the song was created while he was a clerk, in which capacity he has since worked in medical, public works, and police departments.

Abdullah maintains that his music is somewhat eclectic because, coming from a family of gum and mirrh traders, he spent his boyhood away from his native country, in Tanganyika and Aden. Indian, African, and Western, Occidental, music are now all familiar to him, a fact readily discernible when one hears his music. Thanks to a kindly Egyptian music teacher on his own time acquainting the Mogadiscio Artists' Company with rudimentary music notation, he will soon be able to score his own compositions, particularly as he studies under the direction of musicians in London, where he is now undergoing medical treatment through the courtesy of the British Council.

He has known hardship and poverty and even harassment, as the result of standing on civil rights prior to Somaliland's independence. Although (a) his song Dulkayaga, Our Land, was selected as the national anthem when Somaliland gained its independence, (b) his Alankaa, Blue, Blue Flag, is the only national song of the Somali Republic written by a Somali, and (c) he received a standing, cheering ovation by thousands during outdoor African Day ceremonies in Mogadiscio in April, 1961, at which time he sang his new stirring Lumuumba -- according to the press and eyewitnesses greeted with unrestrained enthusiasm -- tangible official recognition has come slowly, and only recently has he been a performer on Radio Mogadiscio.

AHMED SHERIF

Ahmed Sherif, born in Baidoa, then part of Italian Somaliland, in 1939, comes from a religious environment, his father being a teacher of Moslem theology. His family later moved to Afgoi, near Mogadiscio, where, with the help of his five sisters and two brothers, they run a butcher shop while also dealing in stock-trading. Self-taught on the lute and flute, Ahmed always wanted to compose and sing. At 16, after completing the formal schooling then available to him, he formed a small singing group in Afgoi. Four years later he was signed on as a professional musician with Radio Mogadiscio. He has six "hellos" to his credit and eight new tunes, in addition.



Abdullah Kershi, photo - UNESCO/Eric Schwab 1961

Hints in Pronouncing Somali

(Chet Williams, Unesco, with help of Mussa Gallal.)

Consonants

- ' glottal plosive consonant (Arabic ain), pronounced as the ine in fine.
- , glottal stop, similar to the sound of t as spoken by a Cockney as he pronounces water. (When , appears at the end of a line it is intended to be a comma.)
- q Arabic sound, somewhat akin to the English k.
- g As g in get
- h glottal fricative, somewhat like the hy in hyena.
- d retroflex d, pronounced with overlapped tongue. (Indian languages but not English have this sound.)

Vowels

- a a in cat
- aa a in car
- aw oe in woe
- i i in it
- ii ee in seen
- u u in put
- uu oo in moon
- e e in get
- ee e in café, or et in buffet
- o o in got
- oo or in for

(Accent marks in poetry or songs might best be shown by underlining, unless the typewriter contains accent marks such as é, è, à, î, ù, ð.)

hh could be used for h in typesetting. The q is made by first hitting an h and then a q.