

Somali Traditional Dances

Saar, Wilisaqo and Buraanbur

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Essential Questions

- How do traditional dances, both Somali and those from the U.S. or Minnesota, **reflect the values, history, and identity** of the cultures they represent?
- In what ways do Buraanbur, Saar, and Wilisaqo reflect the cultural identity and experiences of **Somali women**, and how have these art forms contributed to social change and empowerment throughout history?

Learning Targets



Students will be able to analyze the cultural significance, historical context, and social impact of Buraanbur, Saar, and Wilisaqo in Somali society, and identify key figures and themes associated with each dance and poetic form.

Examples of Saar dance



Wilasqo Dance

- **Overview:** A traditional Somali dance celebrated for its cultural significance.
- **Region:** Primarily practiced in central Somalia.
- **Cultural Heritage:** The Xawadle clan is known for its rich tradition.
- **Participation:** Both men and women participate, showcasing unity and celebration.
- **Occasions:** Performed during weddings and other joyous occasions, symbolizing prosperity and community spirit.



Buraanbur

- **Overview:** Buraanbur is a popular dance and **poetic genre** among Somali women. It serves as a medium for women to share their thoughts, experiences, and aspirations.
- **Themes:** The poems often address social and political issues, reflecting the community's values and concerns.



- **Performance:** Buraanbur is typically accompanied by rhythmic drumming, clapping, and dancing, creating an engaging and expressive atmosphere.

History of Buraanbur

- **Cultural Importance:** a vital aspect of local culture in Greater Somalia.
- **Historical Use:** notably employed during the independence movement, serving as a powerful tool for expression and activism.
- **Ongoing Relevance:** Plays a significant role in conveying political, social, and educational messages, raising awareness within the community.



Hawa Jibril

History of Women in the Struggle Against Colonialism

Breaking Seclusion: Women sought to break away from their traditional seclusion and engage actively in societal issues.

Embracing Responsibility: They wanted to take on responsibilities that had historically been denied to them.

Expressing Emotions and Views: Women aimed to express their feelings and perspectives on the political landscape.



Example of Buraanbur

- **Video Performances:** Here are some examples of Buraanbur performances:
 - [Buraanbur Performance on female mutilation](#)
- **Contemporary Poet:** Jawaahir Ahmed is a notable contemporary Buraanbur poet, contributing to the genre with her unique voice and perspective.

