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Anonymous poet, sung by Bu'ú Saqwaré

Koonkír Hhandoo

Heeloo yeehee heeloo heeloo yeehee,
Heeloo yeehee Koonkír Hhandoo heeloo yee

Haya haya hamma hamma ehee laleé

Koonkír Hhandoo hho'oo kíí lo'eé hee,
Heeloo yeehee Koonkír Hhandoo heeloo yee

Haya haya haya haya ehee laleé

O Koonkír Hhandoo deede/ír qomar heeloo yee,
Heeloo yeehee heeloo Koonki heeloo yee

Haya hamma haya haya ehee laleé

O deede/ír qomar hee deede/ír qomar heeloo ehee
Heeloo yeehee Koonkír Hhandoo desi way

Haya haya hamma hamma ehee laleé

O Koonkír Hhandoo hho'oo qwaláng tsehhuusaéån heeloo he,
Heeloo yeehee qwaláng tsehhuusaán desi

Haya haya haya hamma ehee laleé

Translated by Paschal Bu'ú and Raheli Lawi, transcribed and translated into English by Andrew Harvey

Koonkír Hhandoo

*Heeloo yeehee heeloo heeloo yeehee,
Heeloo yeehee Koonkír Hhandoo heeloo yee*

Haya haya hamma hamma yes go on

*Koonkír Hhandoo sister, are you true? ohee,
Heeloo yeehee Koonkír Hhandoo heeloo yee*

Haya haya haya haya yes go on

*O Koonkír Hhandoo little lark heeloo yee,
Heeloo yeehee heeloo Koonki heeloo yee*

Haya hamma haya haya yes go on

*O little lark hee little lark heeloo ehee
Heeloo yeehee Koonkír Hhandoo oh girl*

Haya haya hamma hamma yes go on

*O Koonkír Hhandoo sister – come let us prepare the manure heeloo he,
Heeloo yeehee come let us prepare the manure, girl*

Haya haya haya hamma yes go on

O qwaláng tsehhuusaán he tsehhaa a mureeroô heelo he,
Heelo yeehee mureér emee heelo yee

Hamma hamma hamma hamma ehee laleé

Qwaláng tsehhuusaán hee kií tsehha a mureeroô heelo he,
Heelo yeehee mureeroo emee heelo yee

Hamma hamma hamma hamma ehee laleé

O mureeroo emee hee kií tsehha bara si' heelo yeehee,
Heelo yeehee kií tsehhaa bara si' desi way

Halala hala halala hala ehee laleé

Kií tsehhaa bara si' tseha a mureeroô heelo he,
Heelo yeehee mureér emee heelo ee

Haya haya haya haya heya ehee laleé

O tsehhaa bara si' qwaláng heeluusaán heelo yee,
Heelo yeehee qwaláng heeluusaán deede/i

Hamama hamma hamma hamma ehee laleé

O come let us prepare the manure *hee* are you ashamed of manure? *heeloo he*,
Heeloo yeehee shame of the times *heeloo yee*

Hamma hamma hamma hamma yes go on

Come let us prepare the manure *hee* are you ashamed of the manure? *heeloo he*,
Heeloo yeehee shame of the times *heeloo yee*

Hamma hamma hamma hamma yes go on

O that shame of the times *hee* if you refuse the manure *heeloo yeehee*,
Heeloo yeehee if you refuse the manure oh girl

Halala hala halala hala yes go on

If you refuse the manure, are you ashamed of manure? *heeloo he*,
Heeloo yeehee shame of the times *heeloo ee*

Haya haya haya haya heya yes go on

O if you refuse the manure, come let us sing a working song *heeloo yee*,
Heeloo yeehee come let us sing a working song, lark

Hamama hamma hamma hamma yes go on

O tsehhaa a mureeroô heelloo a mureeroô ehee,
Qwaláng naanuusaán he

Hamama hamma hamama hamma ehee laleé

Kíí qwaláng naanuusaán he naanú a oombi heelloo he,
Heelloo yeehee naanú a oombi he

Haya haya haya haya ehee laleé

O naanú a oombi he naanú a oombi heelloo he,
Heelloo yeehee oombír yaa'e heelloo yee

Haya haya hamma hamma ehee laleé

O oombír yaa'ee hee Yaa'eér Me'e'eelaa heelloo he,
Heelloo yeehee yaa'eér Koonkoo heelloo ye

Hamma hamma haya haya ehee laleé

O yaa'eér Koonkoo he kíí oombi bara sí' lo'o he,
Heelloo yeehee naanú a mureeroô Koonki

Hamma hamma hamma hamma ehee laleé

O are you ashamed of manure? *heeloo* are you ashamed? *ehee*,
Come let us collect greens *he*

Hamama hamma hamama hamma yes go on

You, come let us collect greens *he* the greens are swampmallows *heeloo he*,
Heeloo yeehee the greens are swampmallows *he*

Haya haya haya haya yes go on

O the greens are swampmallows *he* the greens are swampmallows *heeloo he*,
Heeloo yeehee swampmallows of the river *heeloo yee*

Haya haya hamma hamma yes go on

O swampmallows of the river *he* the River Me'e'eelaa *heeloo he*,
Heeloo yeehee the River Koonkoo *heeloo ye*

Hamma hamma haya haya yes go on

O the River Koonkoo *he* if you really refuse the greens *he*,
Heeloo yeehee are you ashamed of greens Koonki?

Hamma hamma hamma hamma yes go on

Kíí naanú a mureeroô kíí /oyee bar tlehhit heeloo yehe.
Heeloo yeehee kíí /oyee bar tlehhit desi way

Hala hala haha hamma ehee laleé

Aso /oyee bar tlehh díí dó' Tulumbu heeloo he,
Heeloo yeehee díí dó' Tulumbu he

Hamma hamma aha hamma hamma ehee laleé

Dirí dó' Tulumbu he gitláy dó' idorihee heeloo yee,
Gitláy dó' idorihee heeloo yee

Hamma hamma haya hamma ehee laleé

Are you ashamed of greens? Maybe do a dance *heeloo yehe*.
Heeloo yeehee maybe do a dance, oh girl

Hala hala haha hamma yes go on

So maybe do a dance at the house of Tulumbu *heeloo he*,
Heeloo yeehee at the house of Tulumbu *hee*

Hamma hamma aha hamma hamma yes go on

Here at the house of Tulumbu *he* hey this kind of house *heeloo yee*,
Hey this kind of house *heeloo yee*

Hamma hamma haya hamma yes go on

Gorwaa (also Fiome, Goroa and Ufiomi) is a South Cushitic, Afro-Asiatic language spoken by about 15,000 people in Babati District, in the Manyara Region of Tanzania. It is similar to Burunge, Alagwa, and Iraqw (it has been suggested that the language is a dialect of Iraqw). Little documentation of the language has been carried out, and there is no published dictionary, grammar, texts, or standardised writing system. Due to small speaker numbers, sudden, rapid urbanisation and a political environment that is hostile to languages that are not Swahili or English, Gorwaa will face considerable challenges as a viable language. Gorwaa is accorded no formal status in Tanzania, and is banned from use in important public domains.

'Koonkír Hhandoo' is a traditional song that was documented by Andrew Harvey after he heard it sung by Bu'ú Saqwaré. Harvey says: 'I've heard several, slightly different versions of this song in many places across Gorwaaland.' While many of Harvey's recordings are scaled-down versions, this version is a section from the recording he made of Bu'ú Saqwaré singing all three parts. Andrew Harvey is a junior fellow at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. The title of his current funded research is 'An Initial Description of Ihanzu: A Bantu Language of the Tanzanian Rift Valley Area.' His interests include the languages of the Tanzanian rift, their documentation and description, formal morphosyntax, and the histories and cultures of their speaker communities, especially as evinced through their linguistic arts and language contact.

The song 'Koonkír Hhandoo' involves a chorus ('*Haya haya hamma hamma*', yes go on') which is sung by listeners in the crowd. Often, each of the intervening 'verses' are sung in alternation (i.e. singer 1, listeners, singer 2, listeners, singer 1, etc.). The title of the poem is the name of a girl, Koonkír Hhandoo, which literally means 'Koonki of Hhandoo'. The line in the song 'they look for a beauty' has an interesting translation into English. Harvey says: 'the literal translation is "looking for something nice". When elders are looking for a special sacrificial sheep, for example, this is the term they will use (i.e. they are looking for the "special make-and-model", not any old sheep).' The song embraces the relationship between human life and the surrounding environment, particularly the development from girlhood into the working life of womanhood. In this section of the song the call to the girl to take part in the daily work of the village also involves collecting manure and the greens 'which are swampmallows/ ...of the river'. The emphatic, rousing rhythm of '*hamma hamma hamma*' ('yes go on' in English translation) suggests a working rhythm which everyone of suitable age is called upon to contribute to.