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## **The Total Somali Clan Genealogy (second edition)**

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# The Total Somali Clan Genealogy

2<sup>nd</sup> edition

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## Introduction

1.

Somali clan genealogies, and their importance in ordering and influencing daily life, politics, and violent struggles in Somalia, have always held fascination for many observers, beginning at least with Richard Burton in his fascinating book *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1856). In the absence of long traditions of state-making and strong or even successful central government, the social and political-economic uses of such a genealogical ideology for the local people are obvious. Locally it is known as *abtirsinyo* or *abtirsiimo* (litt. 'the counting of fathers'). Its development can also be considered a major cultural achievement of the Somali people.

The following sketch of the 'total Somali clan genealogy', updating a first edition of 1999, was prepared on the basis of my own interest in this achievement as well as to provide people interested in Somali social and political history and the underlying(sub-)clan relations, always a touchy and nebulous issue. This paper does not claim to give 'authoritative' answers to the features of the 'system', e.g. on the historical nature of the descent lines. This is due to the nature of the Somali genealogy: while one could claim that the genealogical relations and 'descent trees' presented are historical ones, this can never be ascertained. I.M. Lewis has found that in northern Somali the genealogies contain a very significant basis in fact and can in fact usually be taken as 'history' (Lewis 1994a: 96), but from some other work (e.g., Mansur 1995: 122) it is evident that the facticity is highly doubtful, due to the multiple assimilations of groups to genealogical lines not their own having taken place, not to speak even of manipulation of the lines (ibid.: 120). The well-known Somali saying *tol waa tolane*, meaning 'clan [or agnates, patrilineal kin] is something joined together', illustrates this point.

Some people therefore, including many Somalis, will find the exercise of making a total Somali genealogy misguided or futile. But others may be stimulated in reflecting on the game of clan-line classification or finding out past and current relations between (alleged) clans and clan names and their distribution and fusion due to historical and socio-political processes. Surely, due to the fusion of narrative and fact, the idea that there will ever be an



undisputed total genealogy is a chimera: the very basis of genealogical tracing in Somali culture is its flexibility as an idiom of social and political positioning of people: within the broad outlines of the major clan-families, alternative reckonings, reclassification and 'manipulation' of descent and lineages are the very game of Somali life. As said, there is still is a minimal and shared idea of the structure and order of genealogical relations among Somalis, from the six main clan-families down to the sub-lineages, the lowest recognized groups. These are recognized by most Somalis, because there simply has been a historical process of clan segmentation and growth. Only in Somali diaspora communities this genealogical thinking is said to be in decline (cf. Luling 2006: 483). But a historical interest may be returning, as evident from some Somalia genealogy websites (like [www.abtirsi.com/list.php](http://www.abtirsi.com/list.php)).<sup>1</sup>

Somali studies scholar Virginia Luling has made the pertinent remark (2006: 474) that a certain 'intellectual compulsion' is at play when discussing or writing about the Somali genealogy, which theoretically would map the entire nation and supposedly bring order out of chaos. She continues: "The idea that the relationships must be there if only one can establish them is very powerful. It has the compelling force that great simplifying ideas have: it is so logical that it must be true" (ibid.). So caution is needed, but one should not forget that Somalis themselves are very much busy with this idea and cherish it as a cultural ideology. Luling cites (2006: 482) the efforts by the scholar Mohamed Abdi Mohamed, who used computer analysis for preparing a database with all known names, yielding a very complex and perhaps unintelligible genealogical tree schema including all Somali (sub)groups ever mentioned. Another writer (J.L. Davies 2002)<sup>2</sup> has tried to apply DNA methods into the study of Somali genealogies..

The following genealogy is a simpler outline and based on the tracking and checking of references in the relevant literature on Somali studies and among some Somalis in the Netherlands. It is a reflection of, perhaps perennial, 'work in progress', and as will be clear by now does not purport to be an accurate historical tree at any specific point in time. While there is an historically rooted socio-cognitive 'schema' among most Somalis about descent lines, relating to which clan groups and 'tribes' (Lewis 1994b: 14) existed where and had (historical) rights in certain territories above those of others, such an accurate tree would be impossible to obtain, due to various factors:

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<sup>1</sup> Special websites on the different clan families are also emerging (in the diaspora); see for the Dir clan-family: <http://codkabeeshadireed.blogspot.com>; for the Darod clan-family: [www.bookrags.com/wiki/Darod](http://www.bookrags.com/wiki/Darod). In addition, various Wikipedia articles are being written on the separate Somali clans and clan-families.

<sup>2</sup> See: [www.somalishir.org/genealogy](http://www.somalishir.org/genealogy), but this website is not freely accessible. It is not clear whether this project made any significant progress since 2002. Also: [www.freewebs.com/habarjecloonline/index.htm](http://www.freewebs.com/habarjecloonline/index.htm).

- the diverse and partly untraceable historical origins of most of the groups referred to. There are also complex linkages with other peoples, e.g., the Oromo and Orma in the Kenya and Ethiopia border areas, which make it difficult to speak of some groups as 'belonging' unambiguously to either the Somali or Oromo category (cf. Schlee 1989, 1994).
- the multiple association and dissociation of parts of clans and lineages to other clans (e.g. for ritual-religious, economic, or political purposes, often through *heer*, or 'contract'). This often depends on developments in modes of livelihood. The institution of *sheegat*, a patron-client relationship between two (sub-)clans, also falls into this category. Here individuals and clans can temporarily 'submerge' in another one, due to problematic economic and political conditions, but can move away and reclaim their original identity at a later stage.
- the frequent, ideologically inspired, modifications in stated levels of inclusiveness and alleged descent relations (cf. Luling 2006: 479);
- the 'telescoping' of lines and levels of recognized descent. This holds on two accounts: a) the names of the groupings above the level of the *reer* (local group) or the individual households are a conflation of real people and legendary people. Lineages are contracted and placed under a given collective name which has been retained because of its importance in indicating a collective identity. Some Somali individuals, however, can enumerate a descent line of more than a hundred individuals along a patriline; and b) the distinction of levels and groupings within the genealogy is subject to change in actual social life. As an example of one individual line, I have included the lineage of an Isaaq Somali at the end of the genealogy. Interesting was that when asked to give his descent line and clan affiliations, the informant started with the top of the genealogy (Isaaq) and *not*, as one would expect, with his own family, and then tracing upwards from the lowest level.
- the erosion of the system of genealogical thinking and respecting of historic and clan rights due to the persistent crisis in property relations; in the observance of customary law and contract, and due to the Islamist radicalization of much of Somali society in the last decade, where dogmatically applied forms of Muslim *shari'a* are often held to supersede, or rather are superimposed on, clan and customary law.

The growth and decline of lineages and clans (in size, wealth and political influence) has also had a great impact on the recognition of genealogical relations. As time and demography proceed, new units emerge (split off) from existing ones and previous ones are telescoped.

It should be emphasized that the 'total genealogy' is therefore also a *metaphoric, symbolic construct*; but nevertheless it is constantly referred to by Somalis and by scholars concerned with their rich history and culture and studying the political use to which these labels are put. A.O. Mansur has noted that because there are so many versions of descent

lines and clan relations, the Somali clan system is mythic (Mansur 1995: 122) and not based on blood relationships but primarily “...the fruit of the nomadic pastoral life” (ibid.) and the challenges of defense, migration, new alliances, etc.

While its key organizing principle is stated by Somalis to be the idea of patrilineal descent or *tol* (with significant excursions and tracing through maternal or ‘uterine’ lines if need be), the actual lines of the genealogy have thus been determined in the course of history by alliances formed in the process of harsh socio-economic life in conditions of nomadic pastoralism and other politico-economic considerations. However, in the context of the post-Siyad Barre civil war and warlord group violence in Somalia, a select number of these ‘clan-identities’ have tended to become fairly rigid. The Siyad Barre regime was also notorious - under the façade of a non-clan ideology - for systematically politicizing and playing out the presumed clan identities and differences (especially after 1978, the year of the lost war against Ethiopia, and intensifying after 1988 when the North revolted). It thus created a specific arena of segmentary political conflict and predatory violence which has marked Somali society throughout the late 1990s and into the 2000s. Such rivalry was even visible within the Transitional Federal Government. This TFG, which was installed in 2004 after lengthy negotiations and a complex power-sharing agreement, is now virtually defunct. In the last decade of militia warfare, large-scale criminal activities and radical-Islamist violence in a stateless context, clan affiliation or belonging is as important as ever, providing the perpetual basis for ‘survival’ and mobilization of people. Clan affiliation was simultaneously always a discourse of antagonism and divisiveness, e.g. in the urban wars between militia groups, the warlord depredations, and also, despite their denying it, in the activities of the new Islamic Courts Union since 2004, which claimed an overarching Islamic identity. The presently active radical-Islamist *Al Shabaab* militia is predominantly a Hawiye/Habr-Gidir/‘Ayr movement (although with important leaders from other clan groups). As in any ‘segmentary system’, (sub-)clan identities keep on clashing at various levels (There is never any balance in a segmentary system). At the higher levels of segmentation, there is no longer a guarantee of unity or common action. Indeed, what marks the current phase of destructive violence is the deep divisions within the Hawiye clan family, with many sections and clan elders opposed to the, what for many observers can only be termed terrorist, violence of *Al Shabaab* and its leaders, but powerless to act against it. One could say that while the genealogy of the Somalis is a cultural achievement and a core constituent of personal and of group identity (the latter in Somali called *tolnimo*, pre-eminent group solidarity vis-à-vis other kin groups), it is at the same time an insurmountable obstacle to

establishing a stable polity and an incentive to disorder, volatile alliances, and inter-group cheating.<sup>3</sup>

In 1957 the noted British specialist on Somali studies Professor Ioan M. Lewis (emeritus professor of anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science) produced a work entitled *The Somali Lineage System and the Total Genealogy*. This unpublished typescript - which is no longer available and is also very rare in libraries - contained historical information on the lineages and clan-families, but did not present a list of all the reputed lineage and clan-names in a lineal order. For this Working Paper, I have extensively used Lewis's updated *Peoples of the Horn of Africa - Somali, Afar and Saho* (1994b), outlining the clan and (what he calls) 'tribal' divisions among the Somali (This work also has a very interesting and amazingly detailed map of the distribution of Somali groups on the ground). A remarkably fascinating and solid work on Somaliland and its clans is that of J. Dent (1951), presenting a richly detailed survey of all levels of genealogical branching in the area until c. 1950. This level of detail is not aimed at in the present paper; here only the main outlines can be presented, and at the right end of the pages below one could add many additional names, if only because of the growth of sub-lineages and the changes in the *diya*-paying groups over time.

## 2.

The words 'clan-family', 'clan', 'sub-clan', or 'lineage' have no universally accepted equivalent words in Somali. Clan (below the clan-family) is often called with the Arab word *qabiil* or with *qoolo*. The various groups distinguished on the basis of kinship are neither corporate nor cohesive localized groups, except perhaps a certain number of lineages. Usually these groups can only be recognized as levels of genealogical depth. In Somali, the word for 'patrilineal' descent or kinship is *tol*, and indeed the question usually asked in a meeting between two unacquainted people is: *Tol maa tahay?* (= Who are your agnates / clan?). In the chart below the lines are reconstructed and distinguished from right to left on the basis of this concept of patriline tracing. However, the genealogy occasionally also uses 'uterine' lines, traced through one of the women married to the male ancestor. The word for this uterine line is *Bah* (See for instance below, under the Hawiye: Bah Girei vs. Bah Arbera).

I have distinguished six levels of *tol*, starting from the top: the clan-family; the clan (-family) moieties (if distinguished) or territorial divisions; the clans; the sub-clans; the lineages;

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schlee (2001: 15-16; 2002: 31) on the value of 'cunning' in Somali society.



and the sub-lineages or *diya*-paying groups (Arabic *diya* = blood; the Somali equivalent is *mag*).<sup>4</sup> Within the latter, more levels could be distinguished. As time passes, the level of inclusion shifts, and lineages may become sub-lineages, individuals become the focus of a family within a *diya*-paying group, etc. Thus, there may emerge an increasing measure of confusion about the *intermediate* levels of segmentation. In general people know their clan and clan family on the one hand, and their immediate lineage and *diya*-paying group on the other, but the levels in-between may be fused or telescoped.

The terminology for the levels of segmentation is complex, also because of the fact that territorial dispersion and social change have given rise to a shift in labels. Thus, the terms 'clan sub-family' and even 'clan' may be ambiguous and sometimes not correct: the names on this level (below the clan family, but above the clans) can also refer to territorial associations of clans known under a certain label. Furthermore, I.M. Lewis speaks of lineages but also of three levels of segmentation below the clan: primary, secondary and tertiary segments (cf. Lewis 1994b: 210-211). Others use only clan, sub-clan, or lineage but not segments. Some authors call a 'clan' what others call a 'tribal family', 'clan confederacy' or a 'clan family'. What is termed a 'sub-clan' could also be called a clan. Thus, the terms for the group distinguished according to level of segmentation are used inconsistently in the literature (see also Bradbury 1994). They remain 'emic', formal terms. The term 'sub-lineage' can perhaps be retained as the most recognizable, lowest level of segmentation, indicating an existing kin-group showing solidarity and corporate identity on the basis of its obligation to unite and pay 'blood money' in case of a homicide (the *mag* or *diya*-paying groups).<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the distinction with a 'lineage' is often not clear. This lowest-level group is often indicated with the Somali word *jilib*, and sometimes with *reer* ('people of ...'), although this can also refer to a group with some collective identity on the basis of territorial settlement or *heer* ('contract').

### 3.

The graphic depiction of a total clan genealogy should ideally be done on a very large folding map. In the chart below, spread out over several pages, the levels of genealogical segmentation downwards are depicted from right to left. As said above, there is no pretension to give an historically accurate construct. Neither presented here are the connections with descent line versions of the Quraish lineage (of the Prophet Muhammad),

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<sup>4</sup> Compensation payment in case of homicide.

<sup>5</sup> They vary in size, but typically range from c. 1000 to 4000 people

claimed by some clans, e.g. the Sheikhaal (cf., however, Mansur 1995, and Lewis 1994b: 15). The status of the named groups followed by a question mark is insecure and could not be confirmed from more than one source.

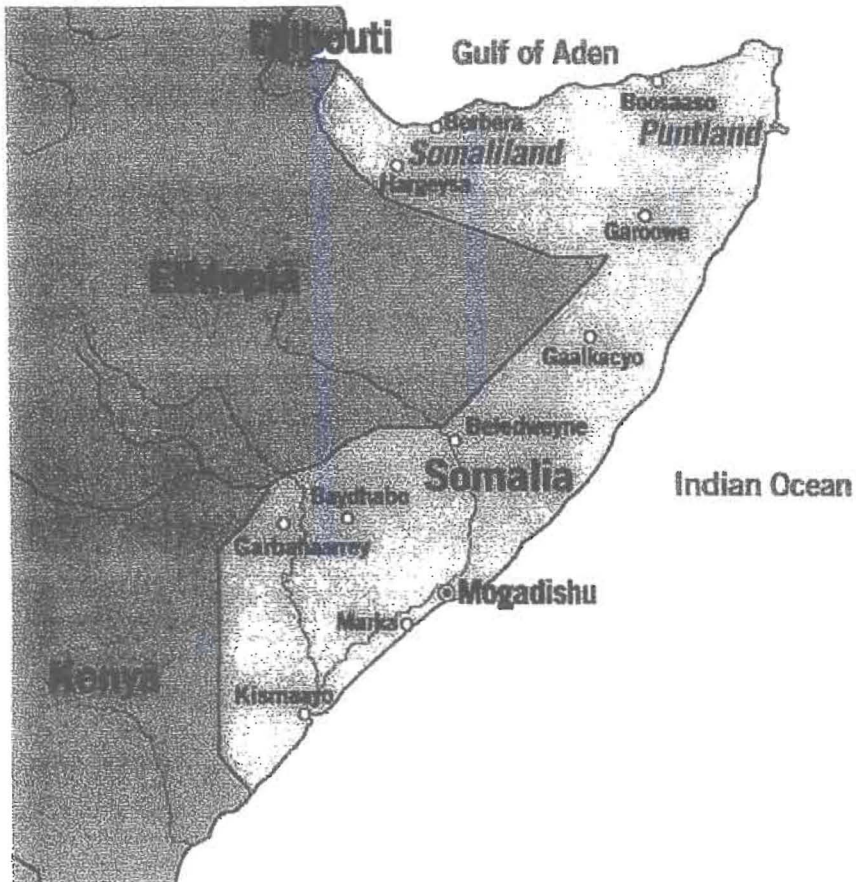
The genealogy is incomplete notably on the right side: that of sub-lineages. The empty spaces on the right usually mean that not sufficient information was available, not even on the main lineage names. In case there was, only a few well-known lines were given. To be sure, a full picture of all the known sub-groups for several lines would require enormous space. In addition, the sign -/- below means that intervening ancestors or nodes in a line are omitted, due to unclarities or vagueness about certain names as ancestors. Finally, in the descent lines names often are similar. But in that case adding the father's name (one higher) will exclude ambiguity. In this paper no strict transliteration rules for Somali names were followed.

For comments on previous versions of this paper, I am grateful to Professor I.M. Lewis, Abdi Nunow, Faysal Aden and Ahmed A. Magan. For this second edition the author also would like to thank various readers and users of the first edition of this paper who gave criticisms and comments.

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## Somalia: general map

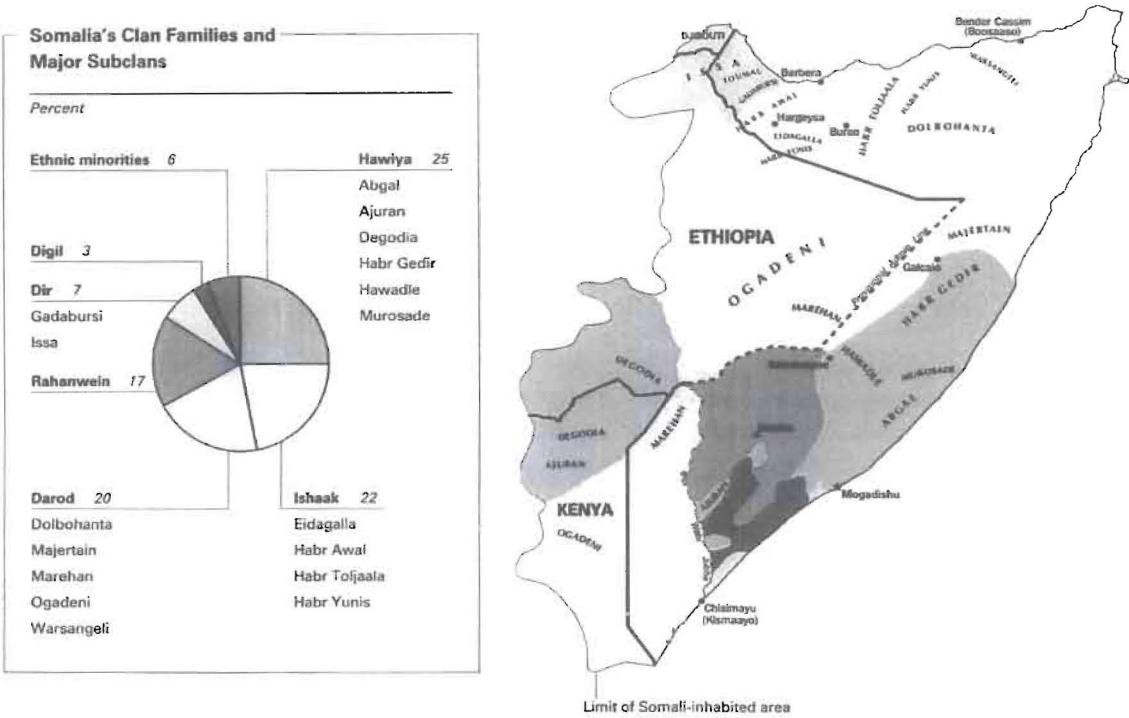


### Source:

A. Harneit-Sievers and D. Spilker, eds, *Somalia. Current Conflicts and New Chances for State Building*. Bonn: Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2008.

# Map of the Somali clan areas

This well-known CIA map of the Somali clan-families (reproduced with permission and based on an older map, see: [www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/somalia\\_ethnic77.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/somalia_ethnic77.jpg)) gives their approximate distribution of clan groups in the 1970s-1980s. The lines have changed in the 1990s and 2000s (especially in the South) due to the multiple conflicts, power struggles and migrations, whereby several well-armed clan groups expanded on lands not originally theirs and displacing others.<sup>1</sup>



Source:  
[www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/cia\\_somalia.pdf](http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/cia_somalia.pdf)

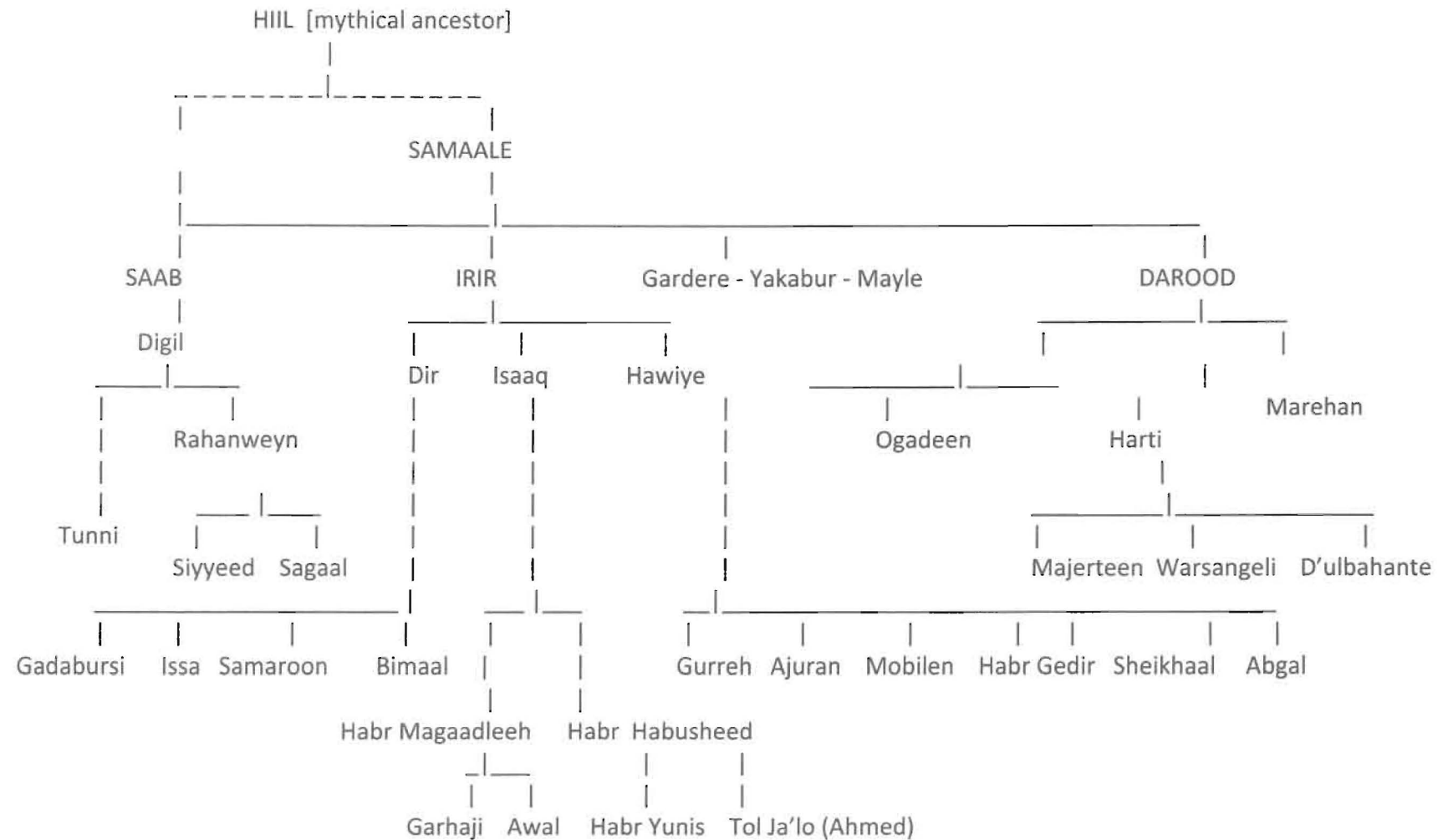
<sup>1</sup> Cf. the World Bank report, *Conflict in Somalia: Drivers and Dynamics* (Washington, DC, January 2005), p. 31.



## 1. Chart of the main lines in the total Somali clan genealogy

The chart below is a modified version of the one presented on p. 9 of Lyons and Samatar 1996 (See: References).

It is *one version* of a chart which has been presented by various authors and informants as having several alternative branches.



## 2. The total genealogy

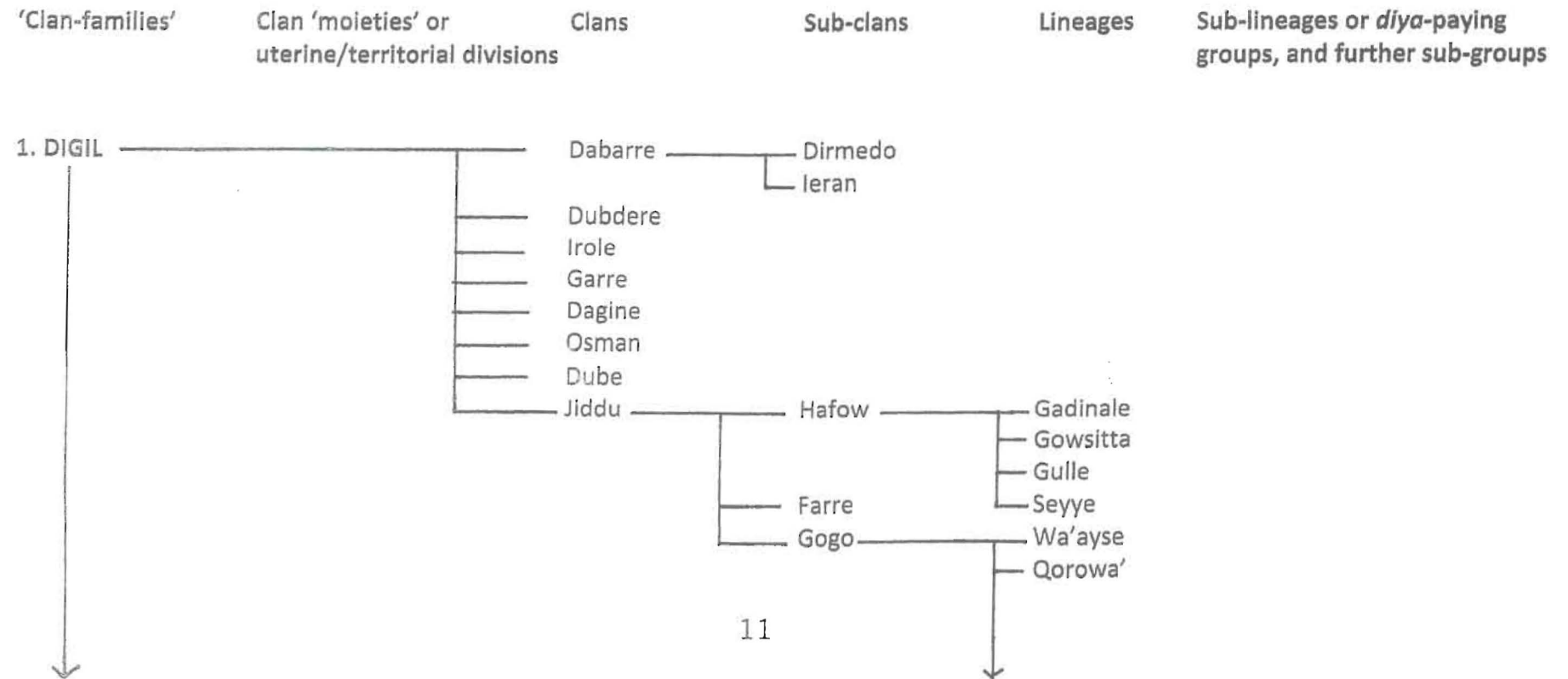
From Hiil (the alleged first mythical ancestor) is traced **Samaale**, and often, on the same level, **Sab** (cf. Lewis 1994: 15). From Samaale are traced: Irir and Darod. The Sab are not classified as 'Somali' (cf. Lewis 1994:15), but are seen to descend from the mythical common forefather Hiil. They are mainly cultivators in southern Somalia, the two others mainly pastoralists. Following M. Colucci, Lewis (1994: 26-27) has also distinguished the 'pre-Hawiya', a group descended from an unknown ancestor collateral to Irir. These four categories are then subdivided as follows:

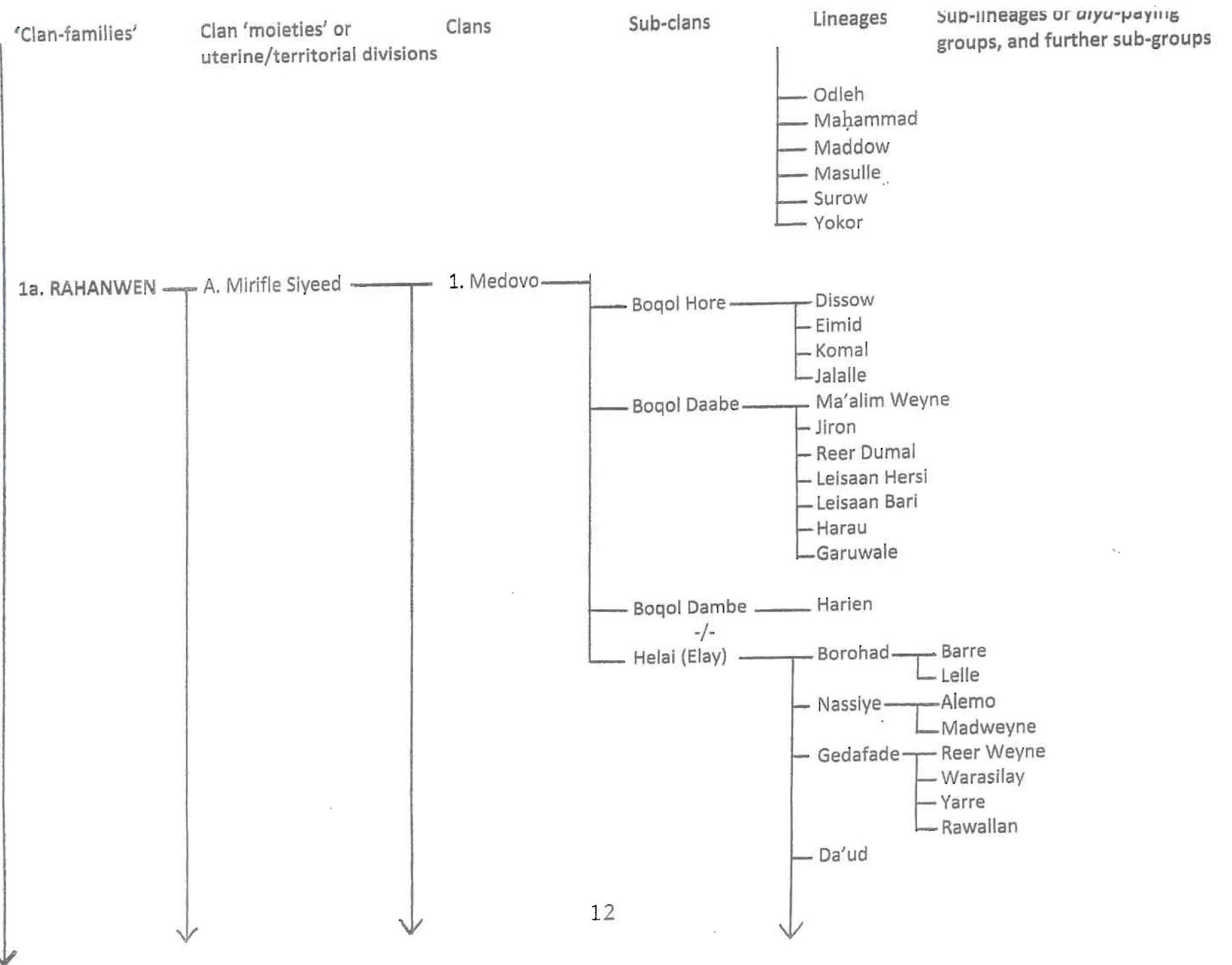
SAAB: Digil  
Rahanweyn  
Tunni

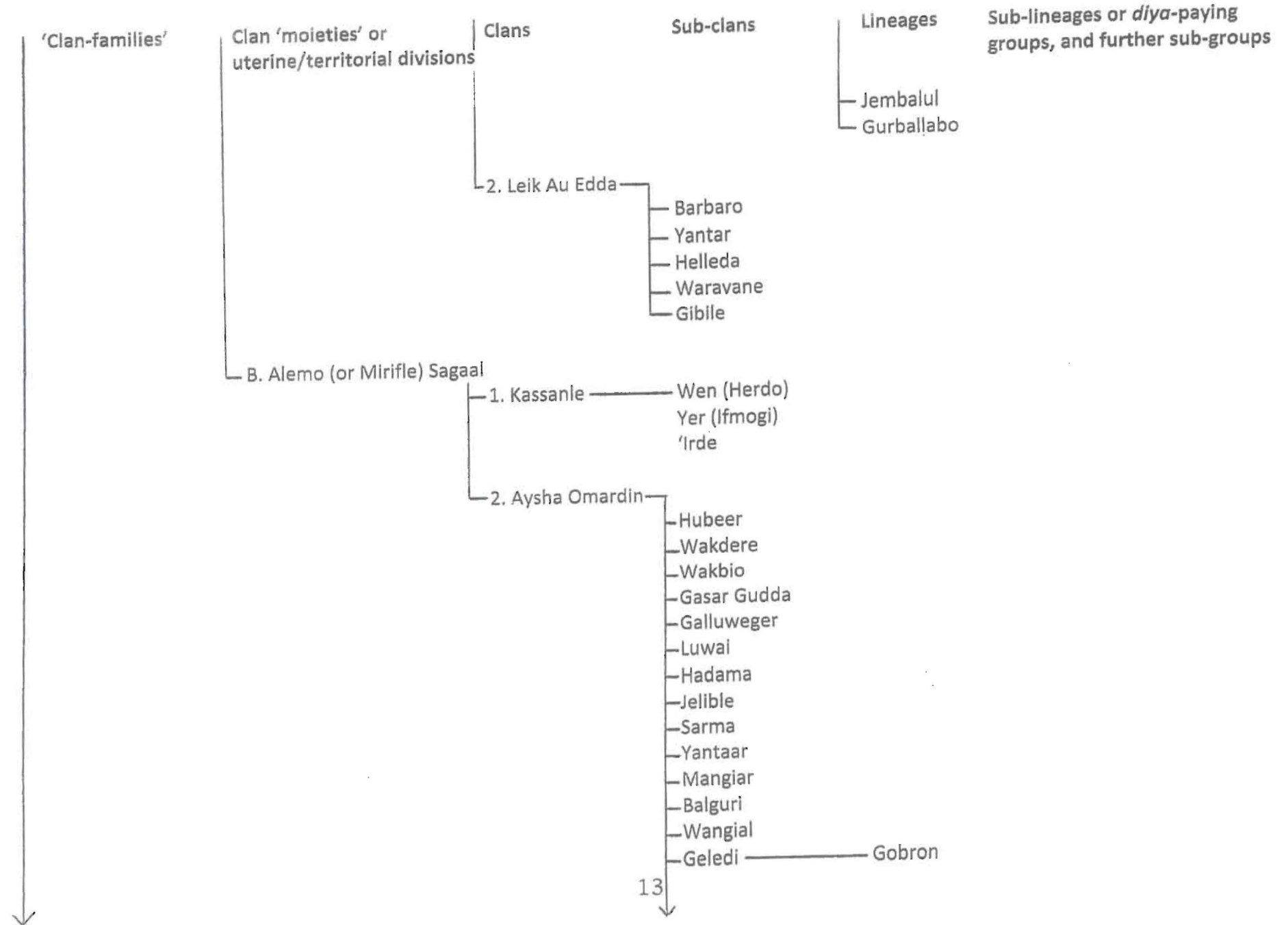
IRIR: Dir  
Isaaq  
Hawiya

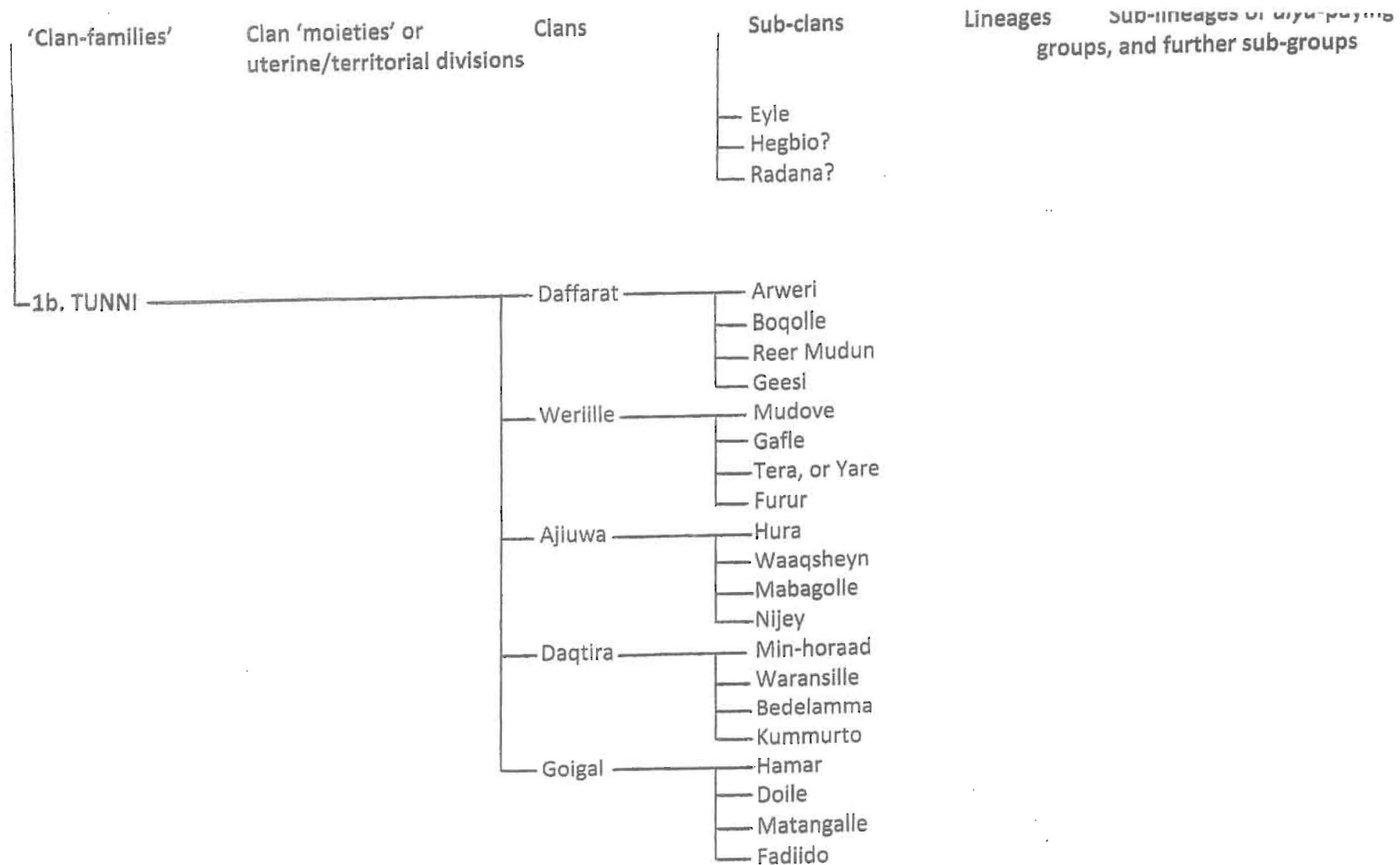
DAROD: Harti & Ogadeen  
Marehan

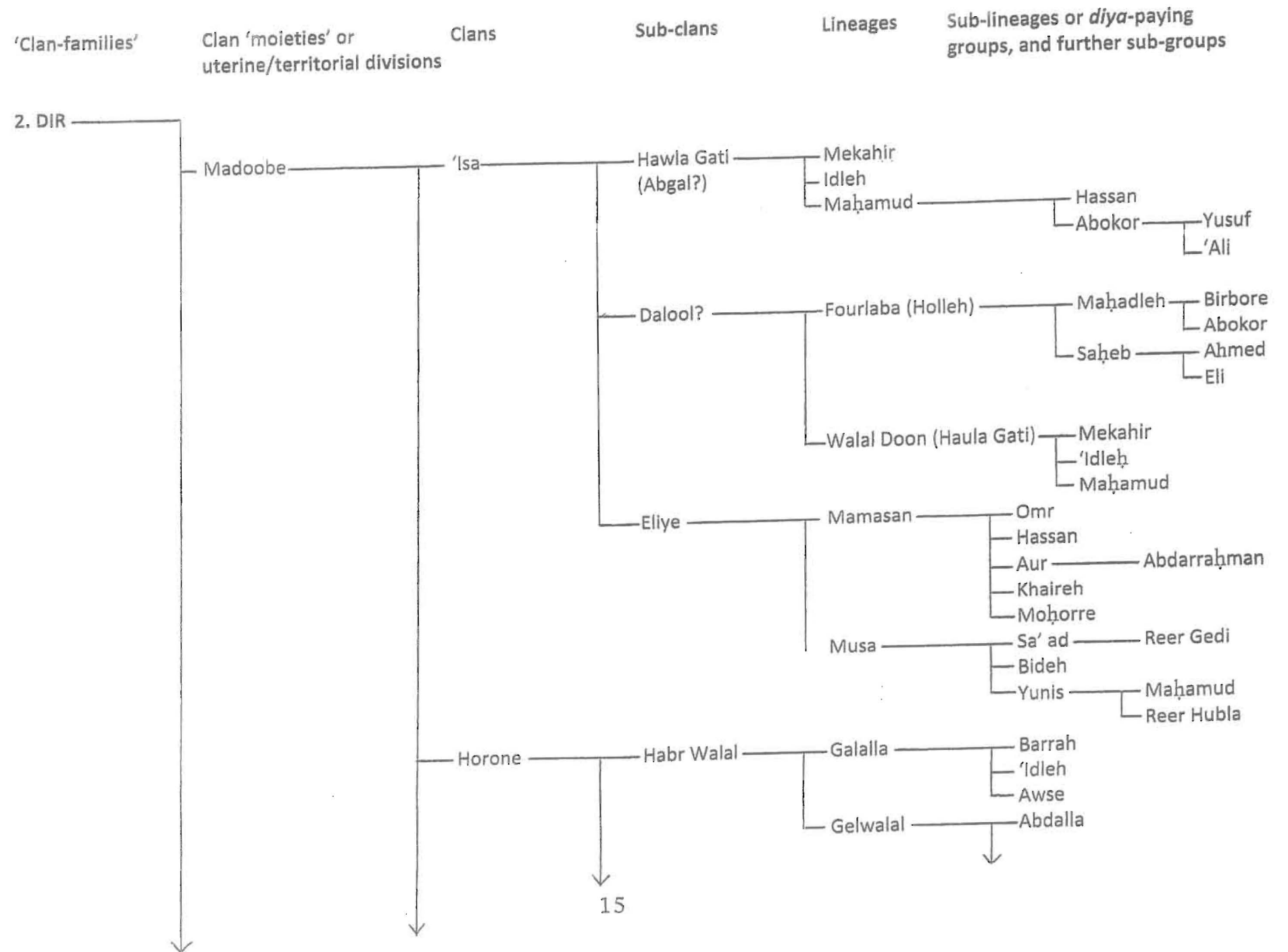
'Pre-Hawiya': Gardere  
Yakabur  
Mayle

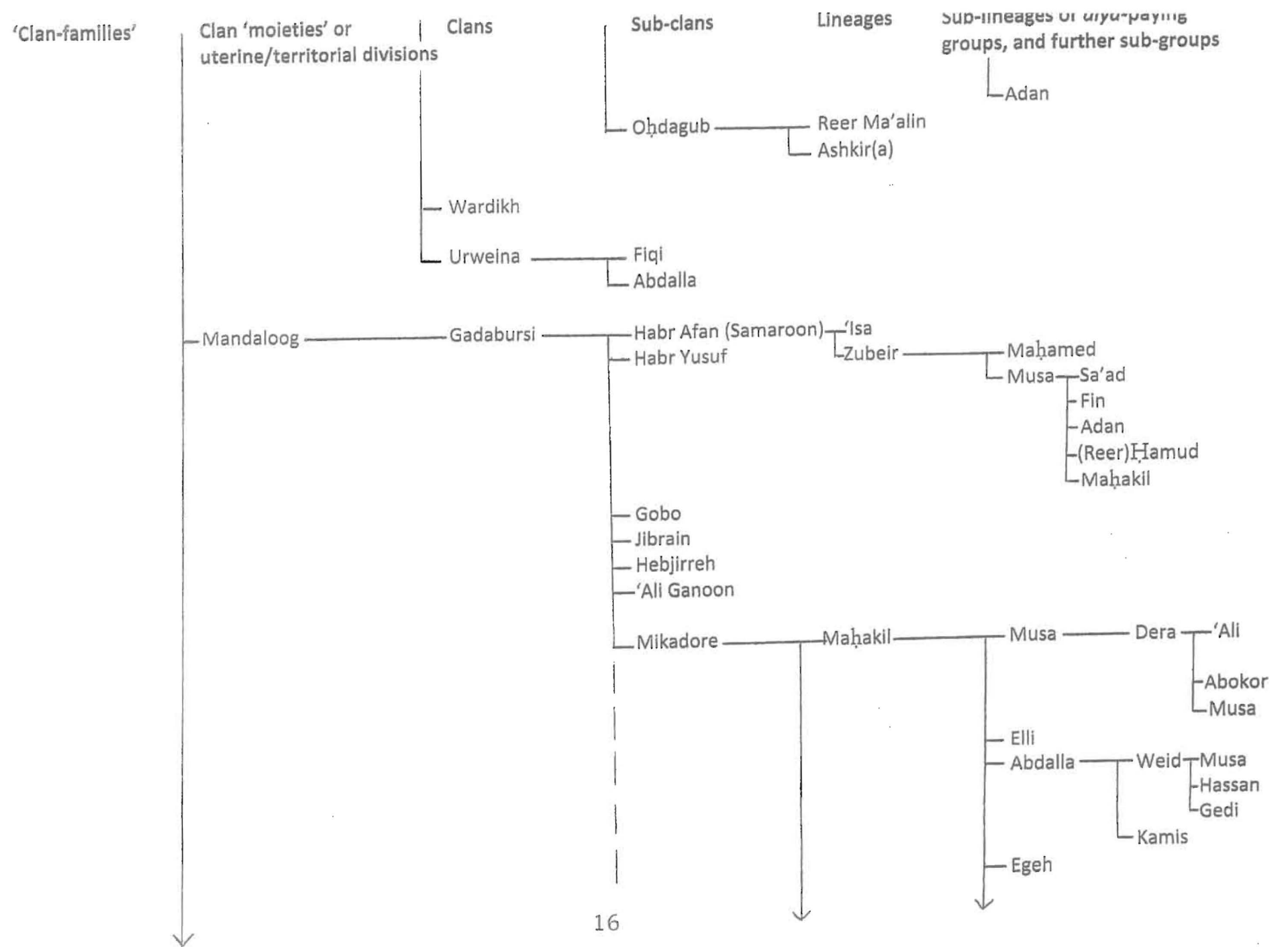


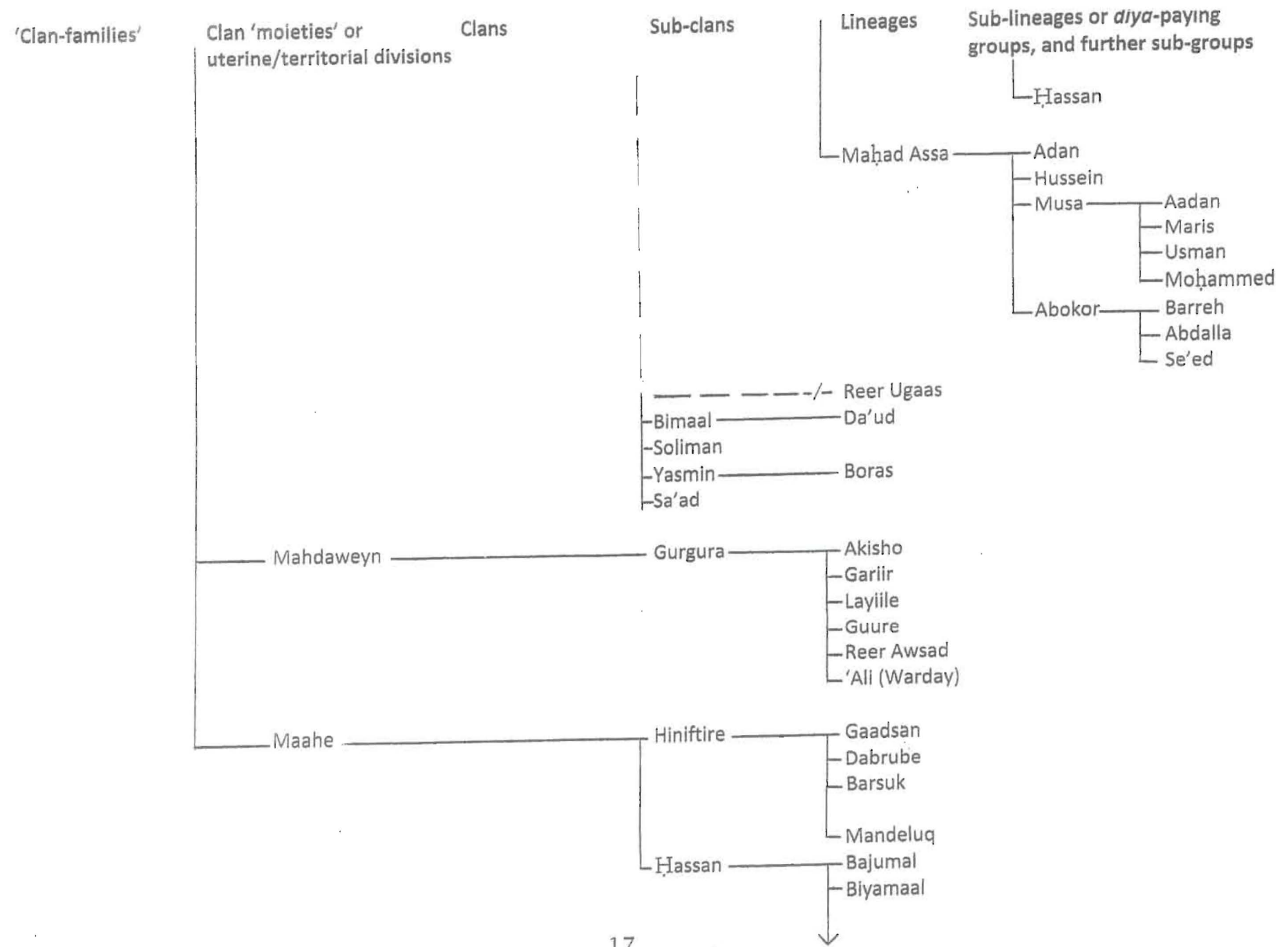




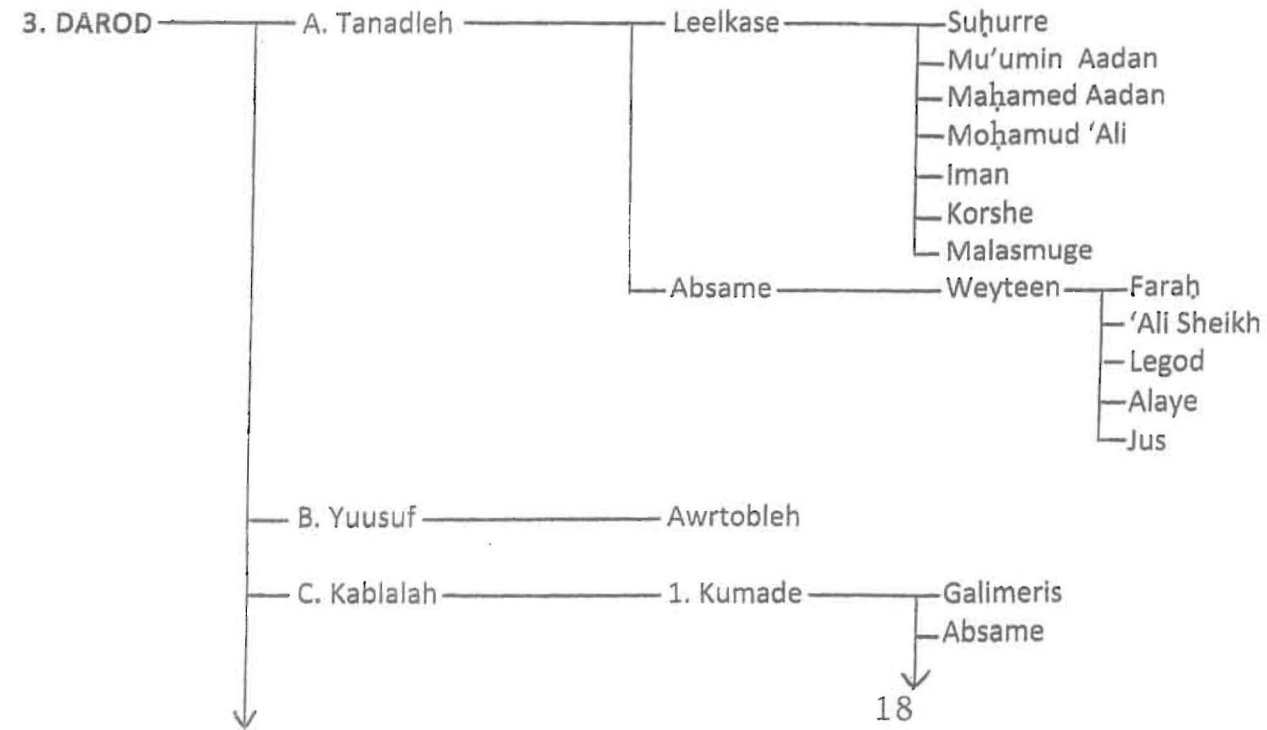
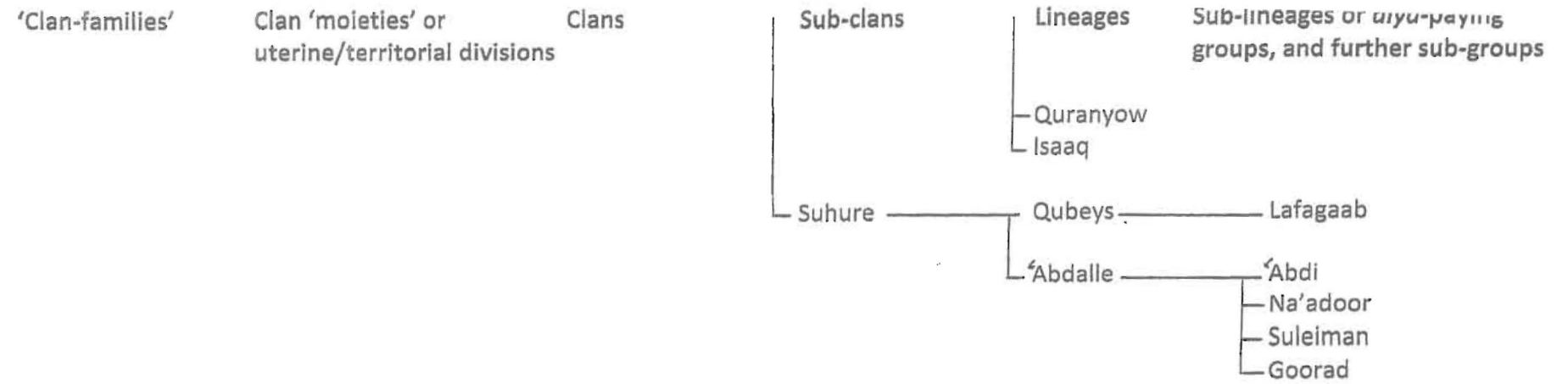












'Clan-families'

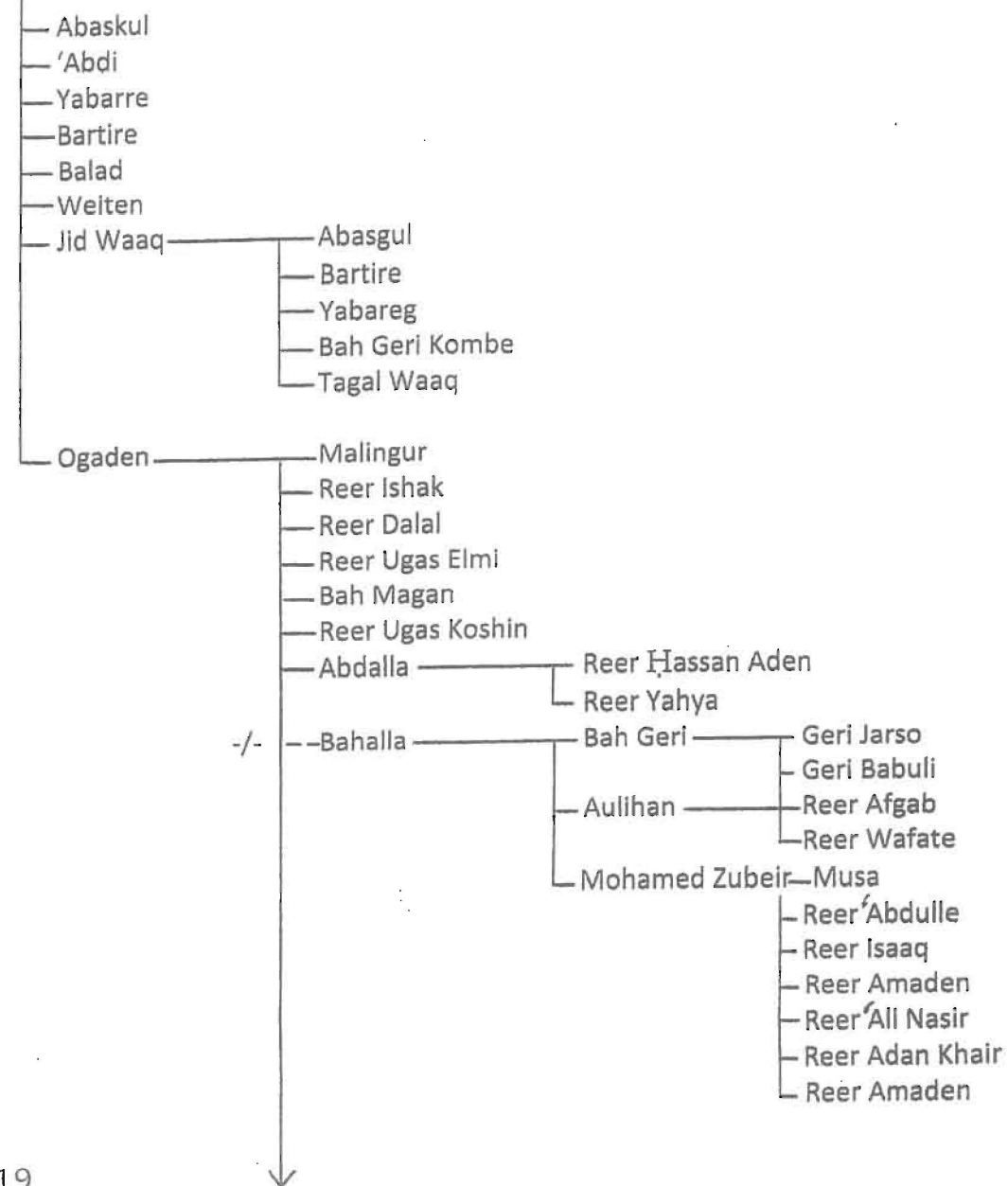
Clan 'moieties' or  
uterine/territorial divisions

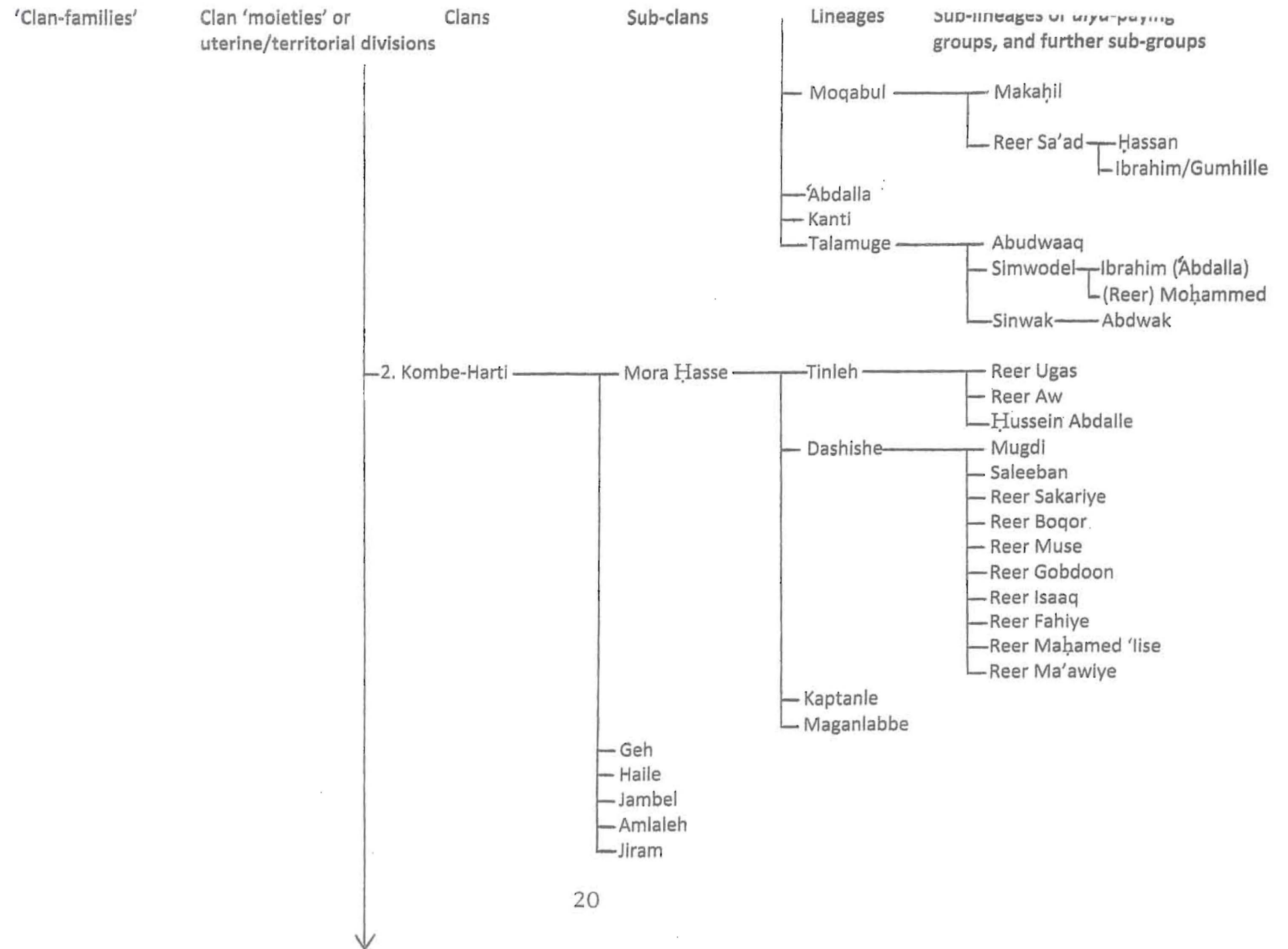
Clans

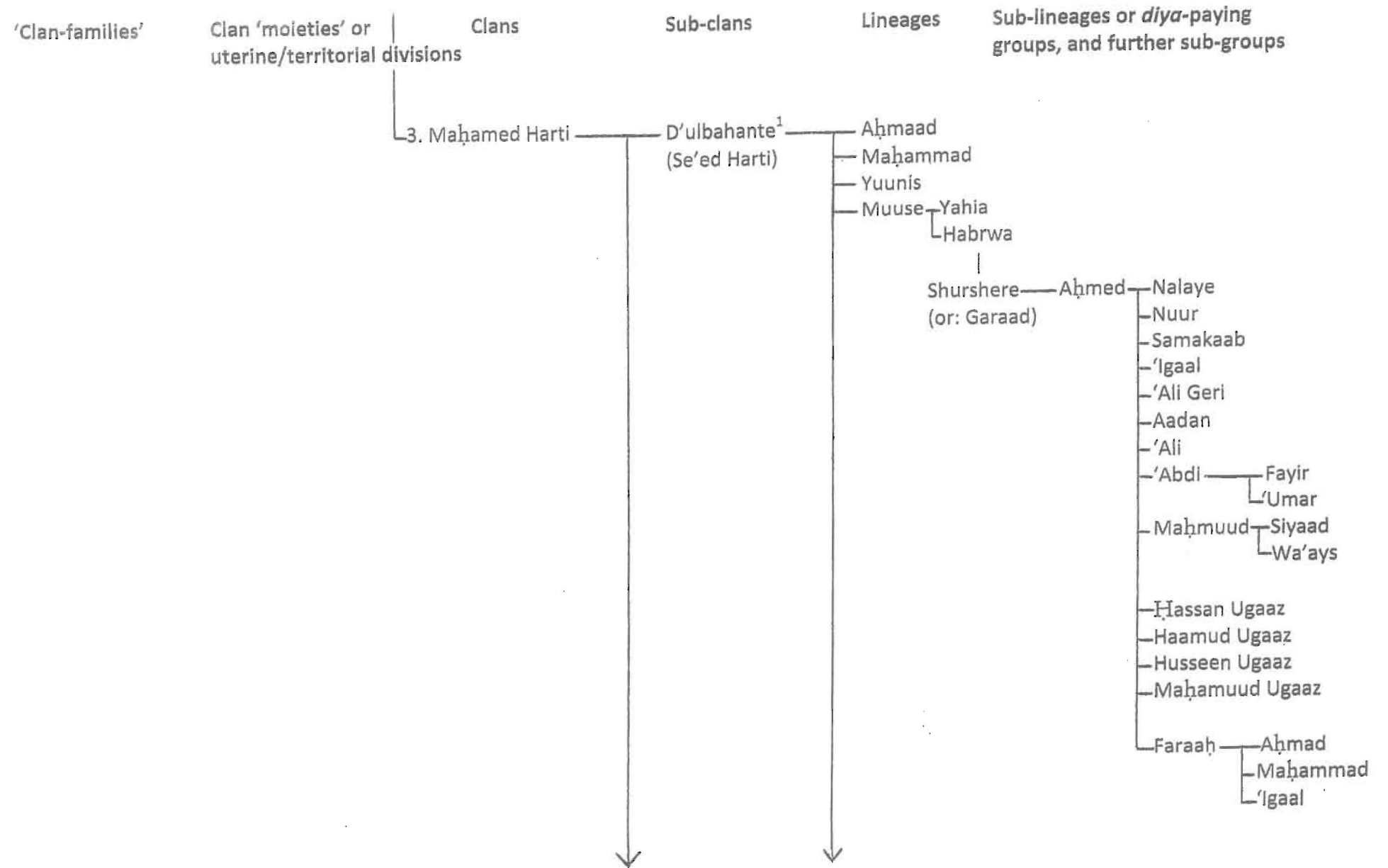
Sub-clans

Lineages

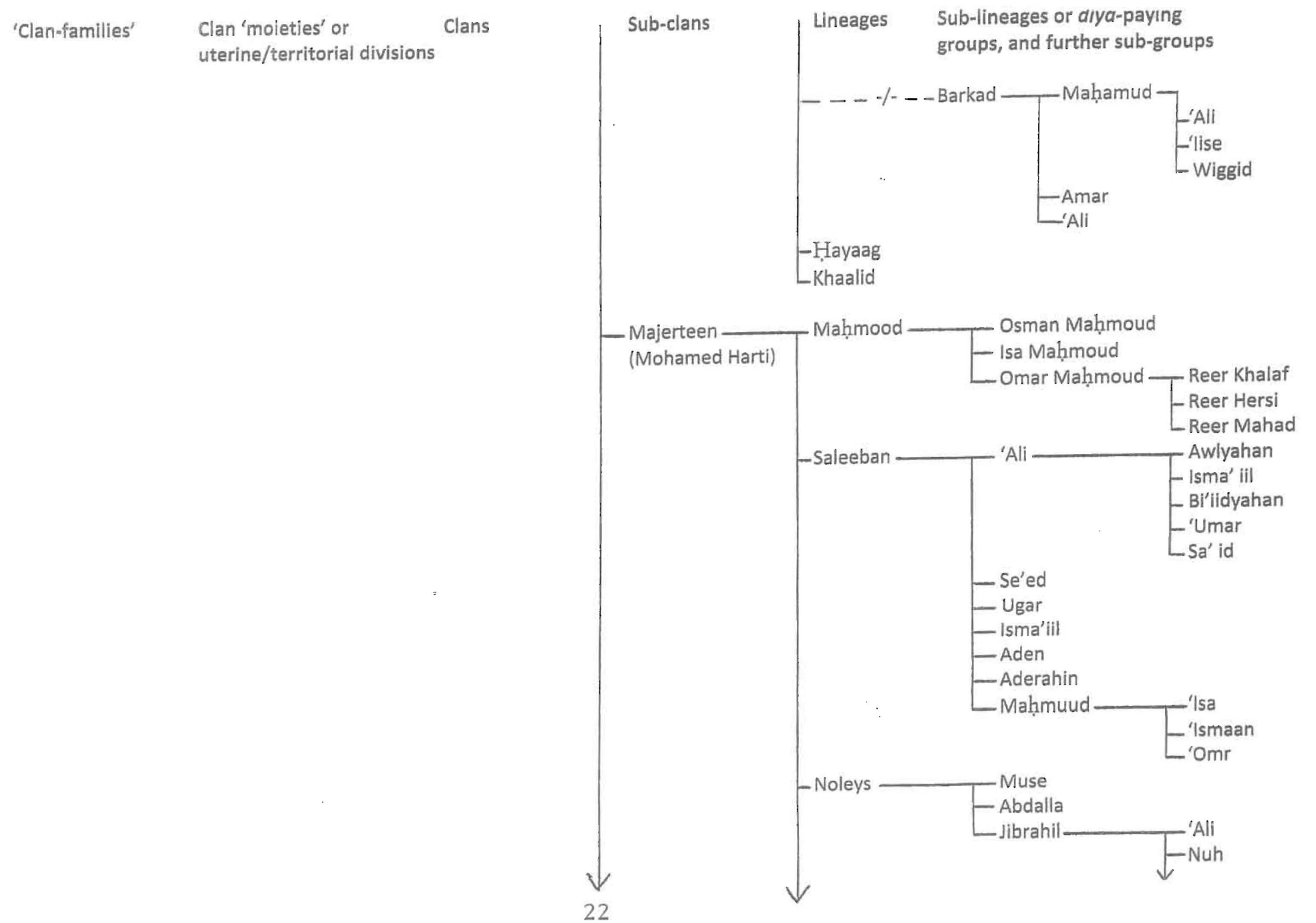
Sub-lineages or *diya*-paying  
groups, and further sub-groups

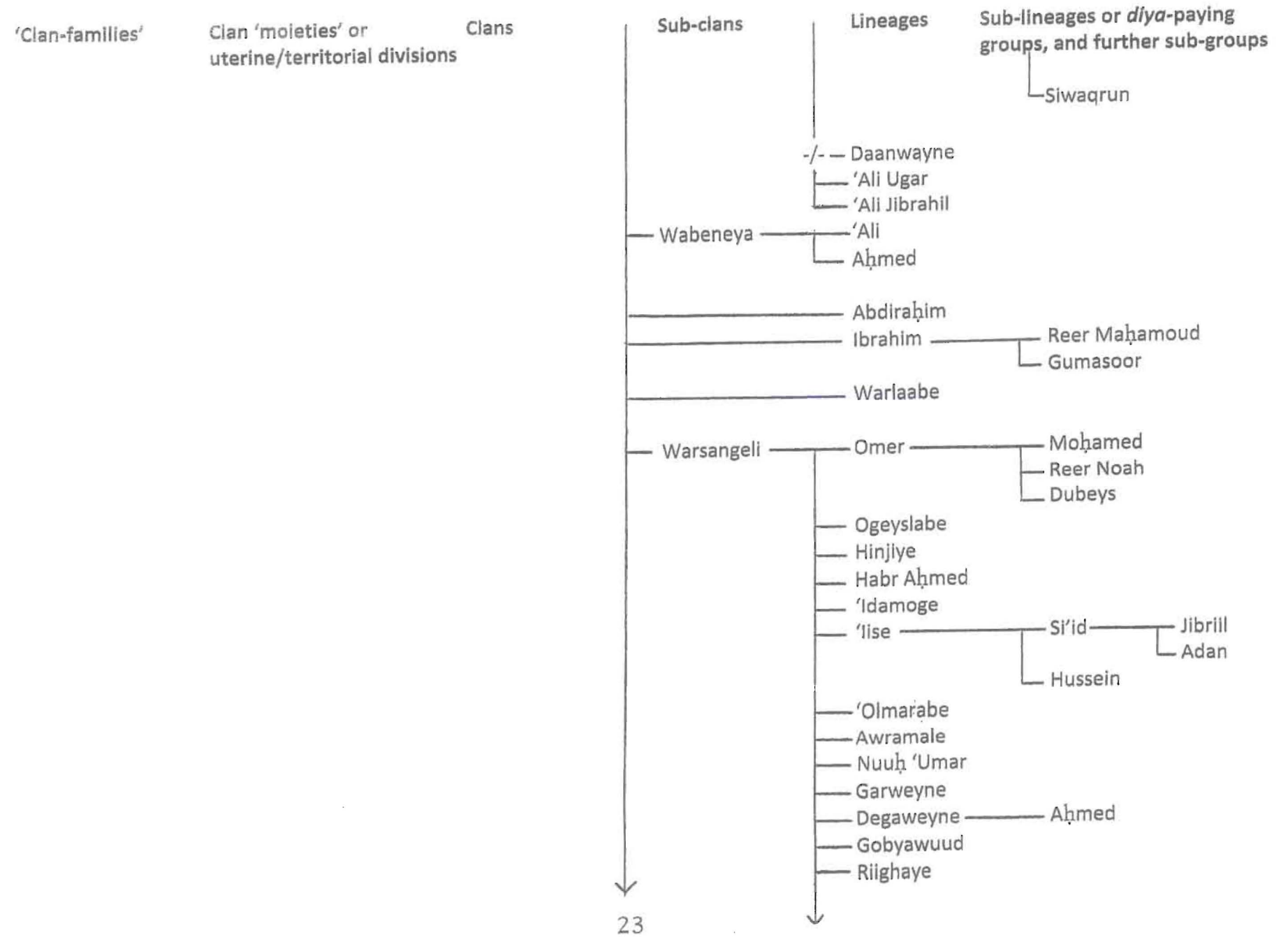


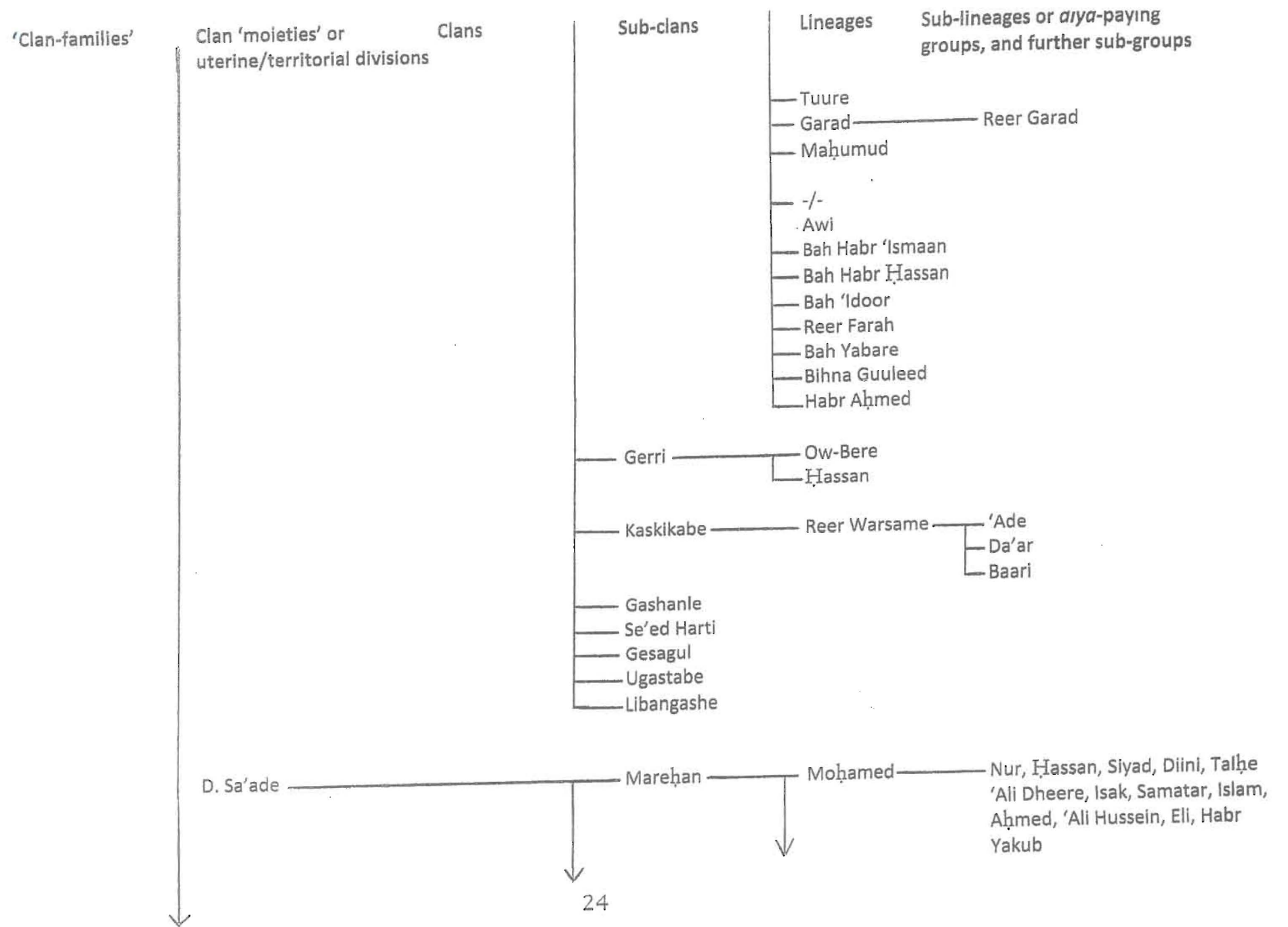




<sup>1</sup> For a full genealogy of the D'ulbahante down to the lowest level, see Lewis 1999, map in the Appendix.







'Clan-families'

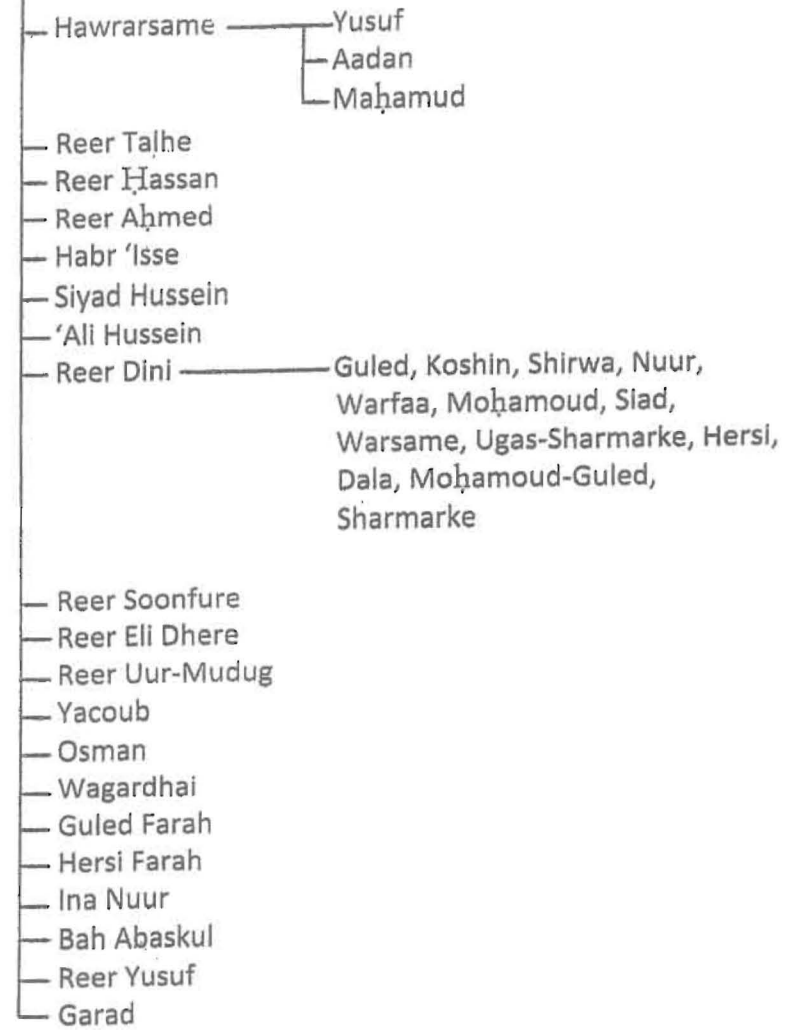
Clan 'moieties' or  
uterine/territorial divisions

Clans

Sub-clans

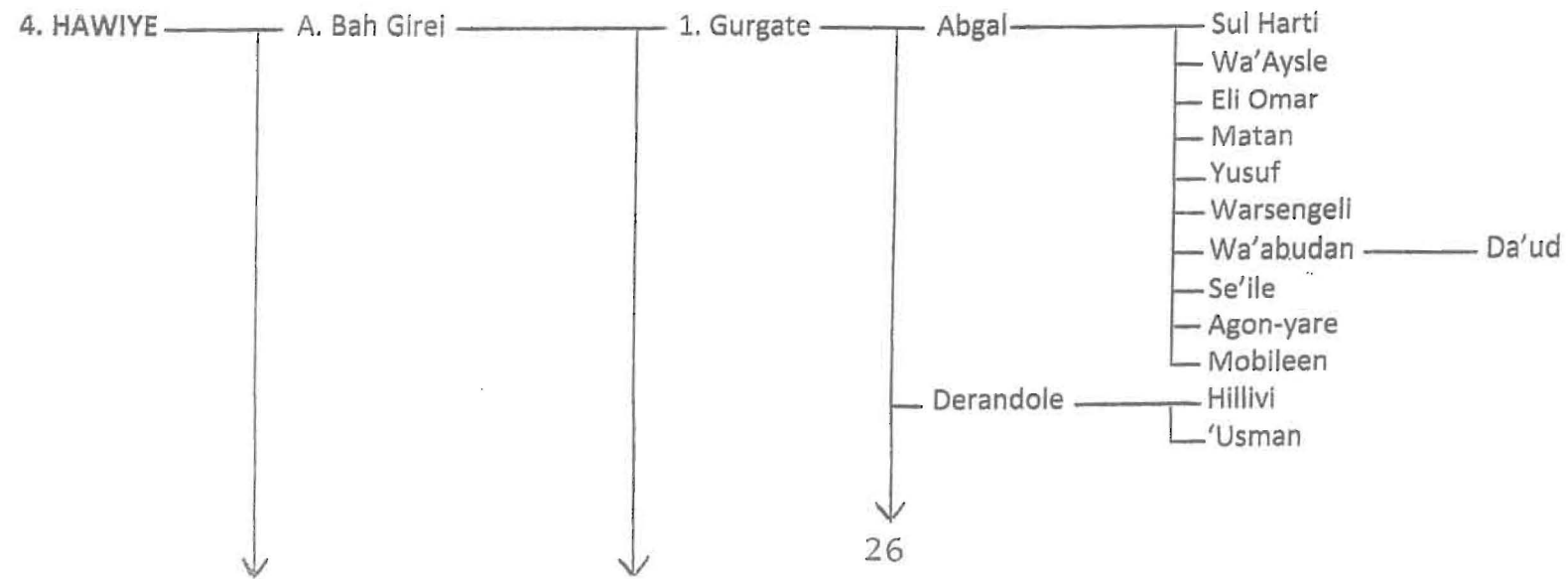
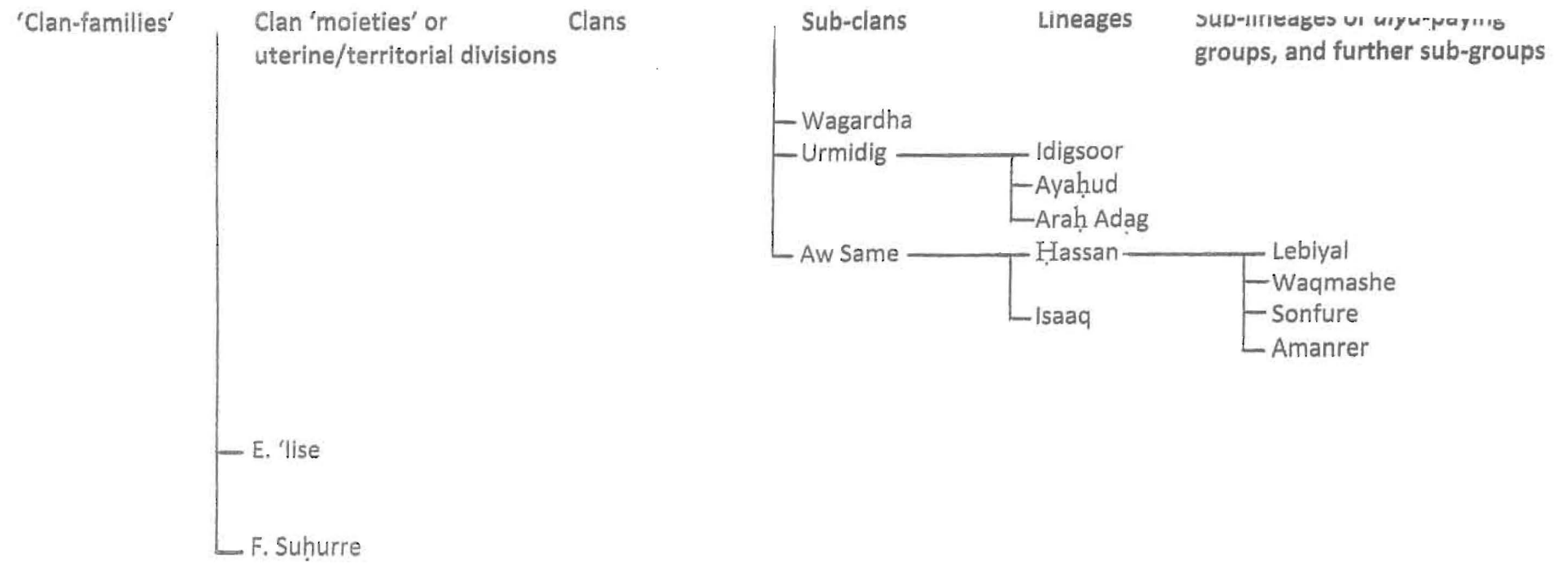
Lineages

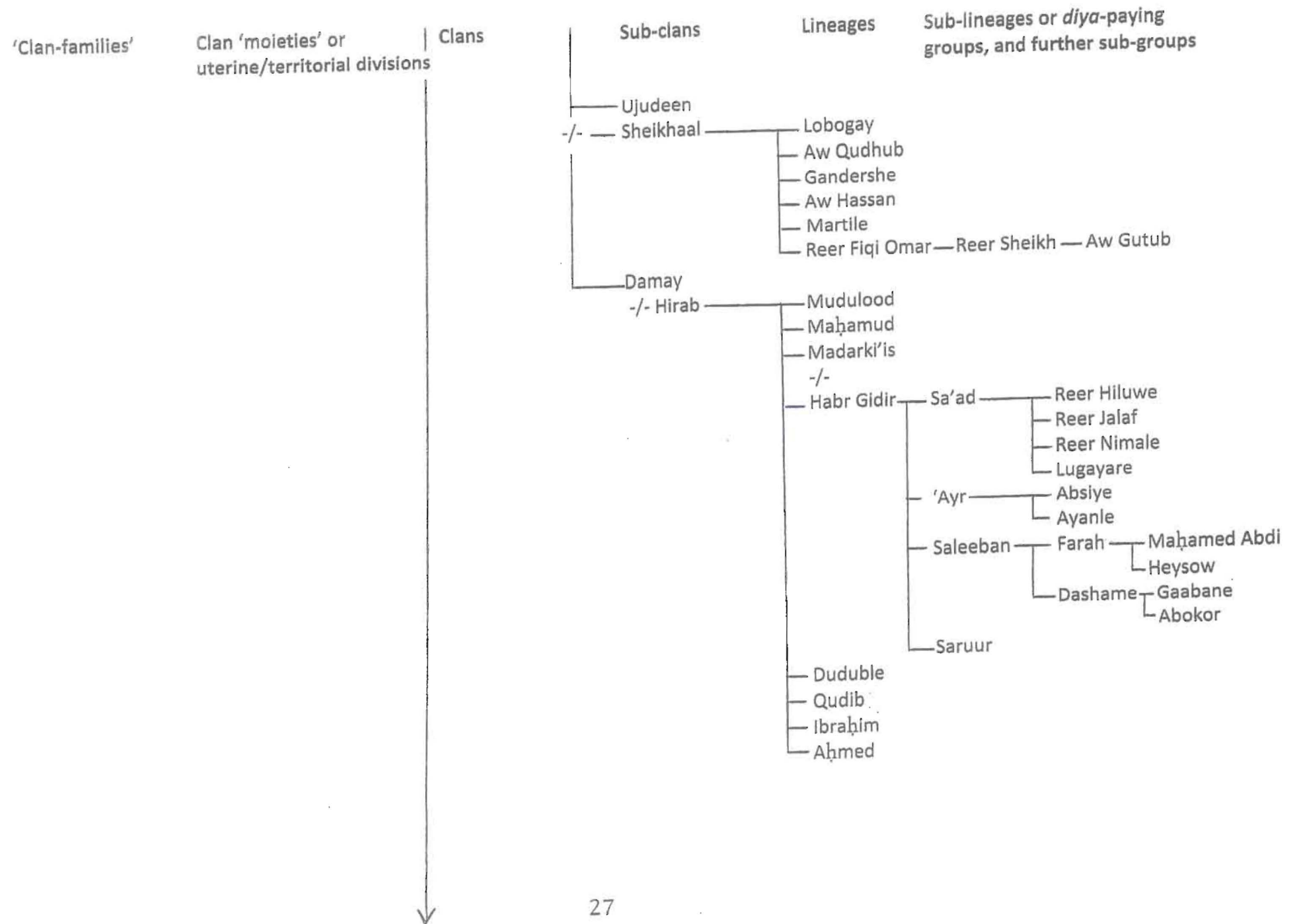
Sub-lineages or *diya*-paying  
groups, and further sub-groups

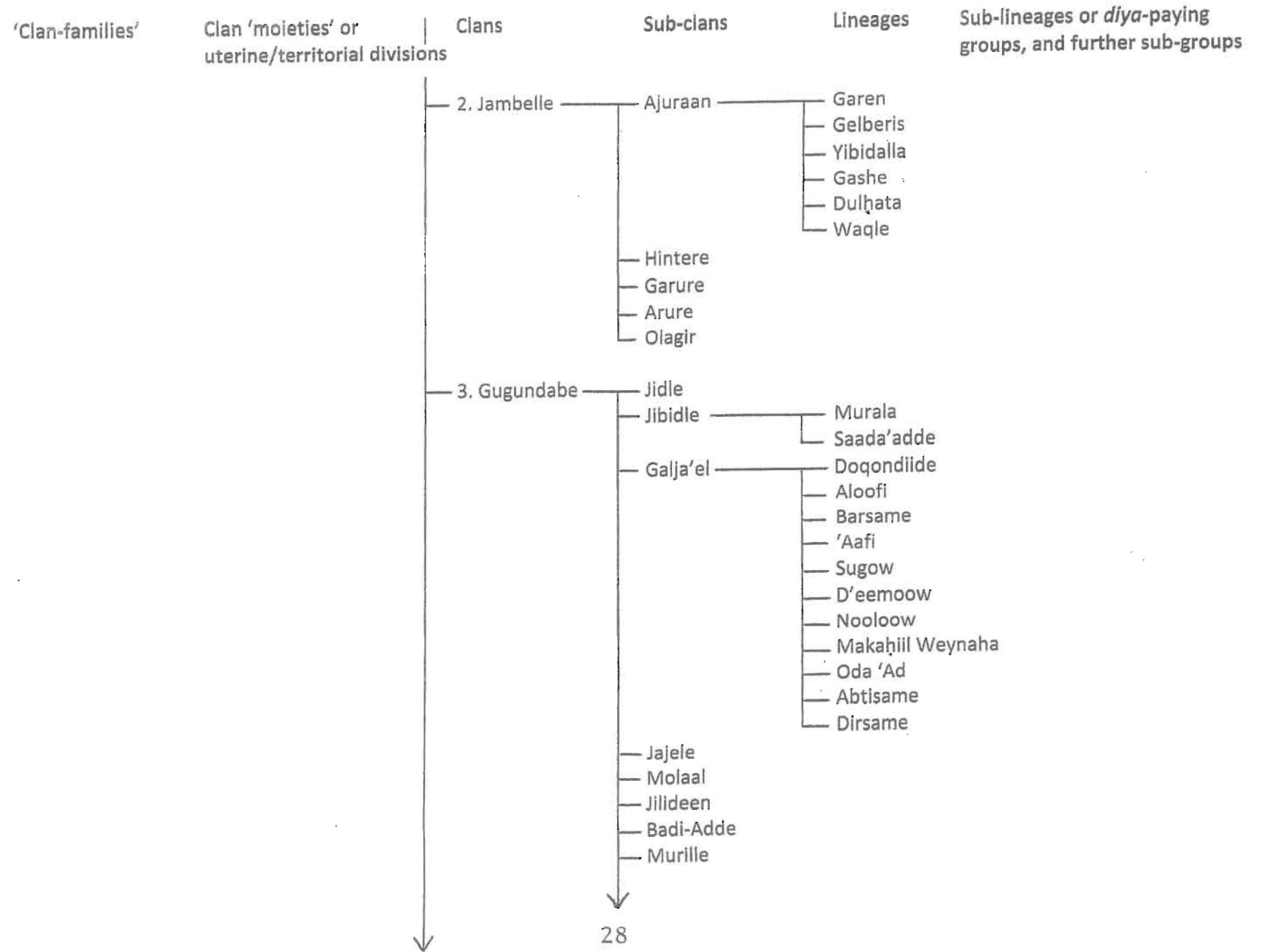


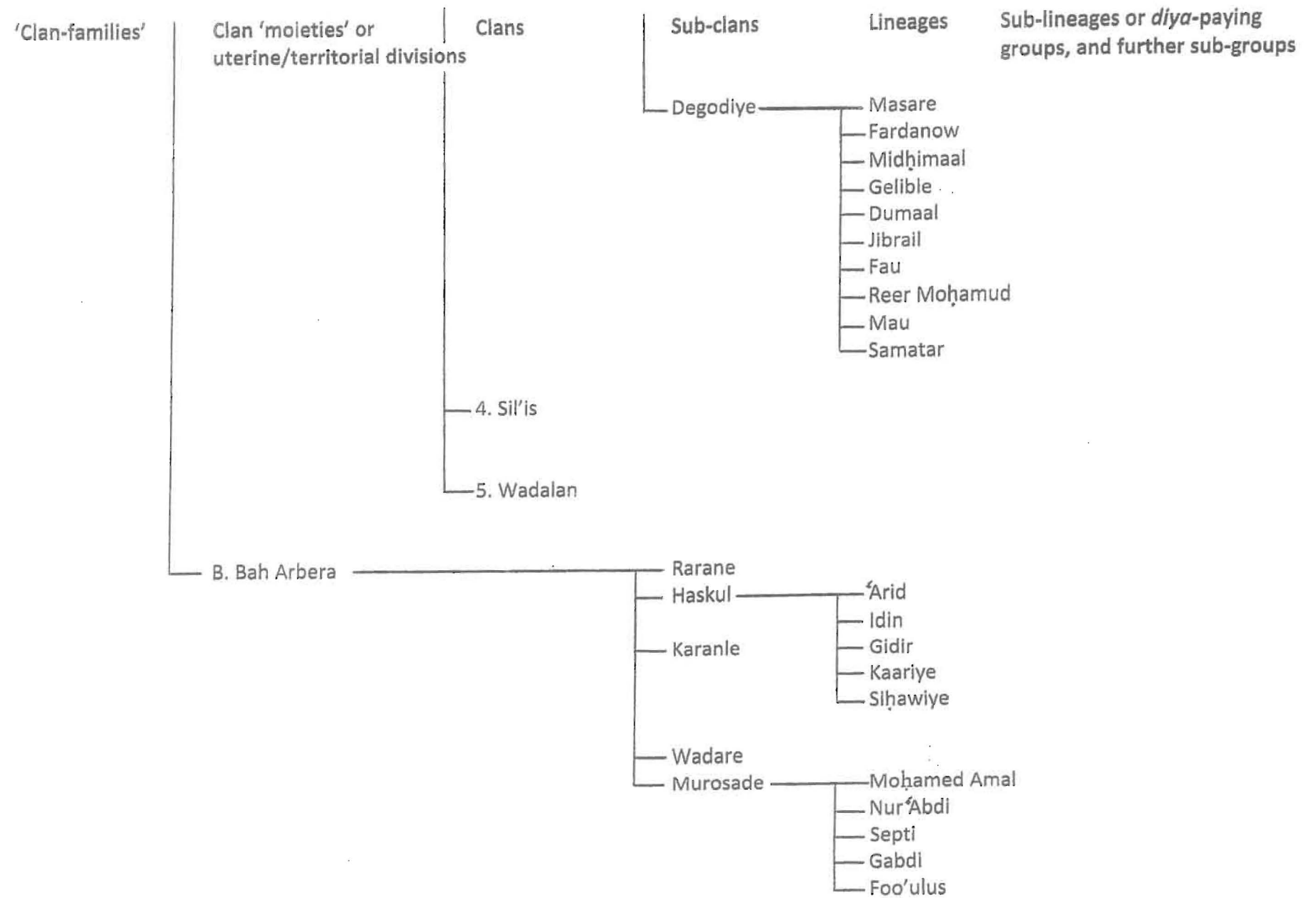
Awrtable — Mur'ase  
Fahaie





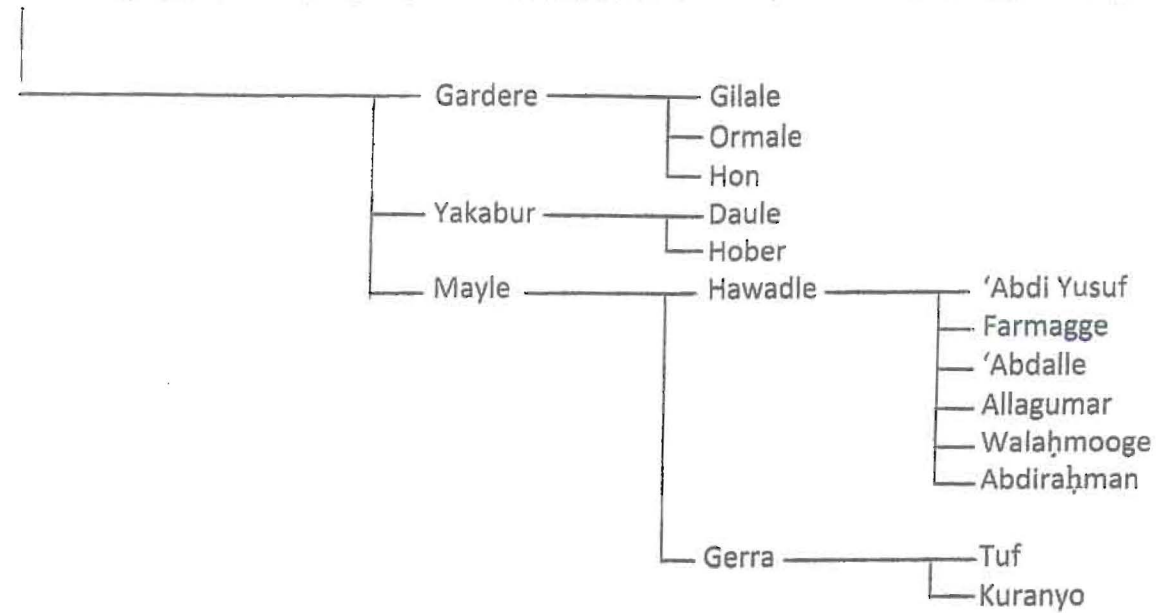




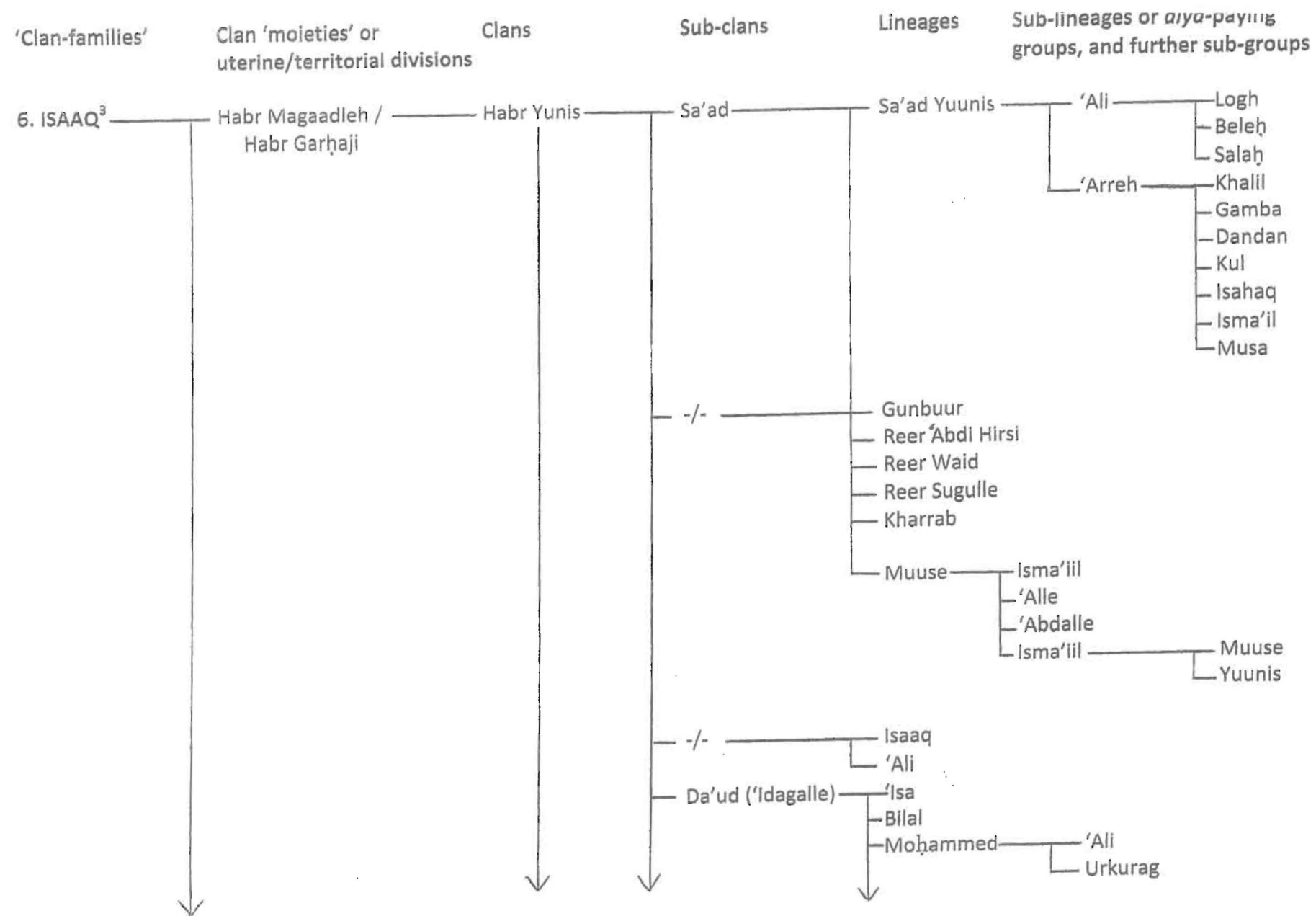


'Clan-families'	Clan 'moieties' or uterine/territorial divisions	Clans	Sub-clans	Lineages	Sub-lineages or <i>diya</i> -paying groups, and further sub-groups
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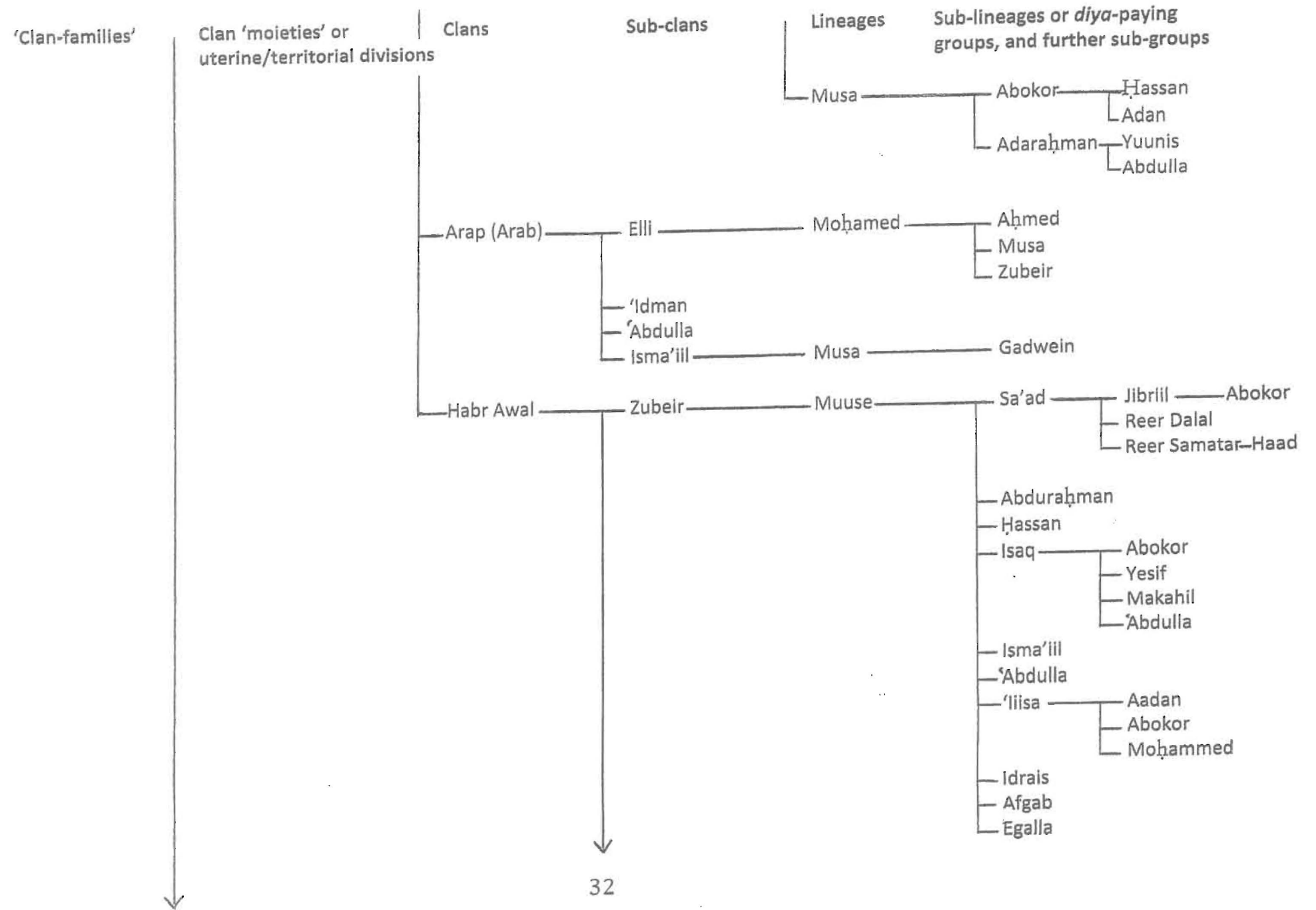
5. Gardere - Yakabur - Mayle ('Pre-Hawiya' group, claimed descent from 'Imr, an ancestor on the same genealogical level as Samaale; see p. 10)<sup>2</sup>

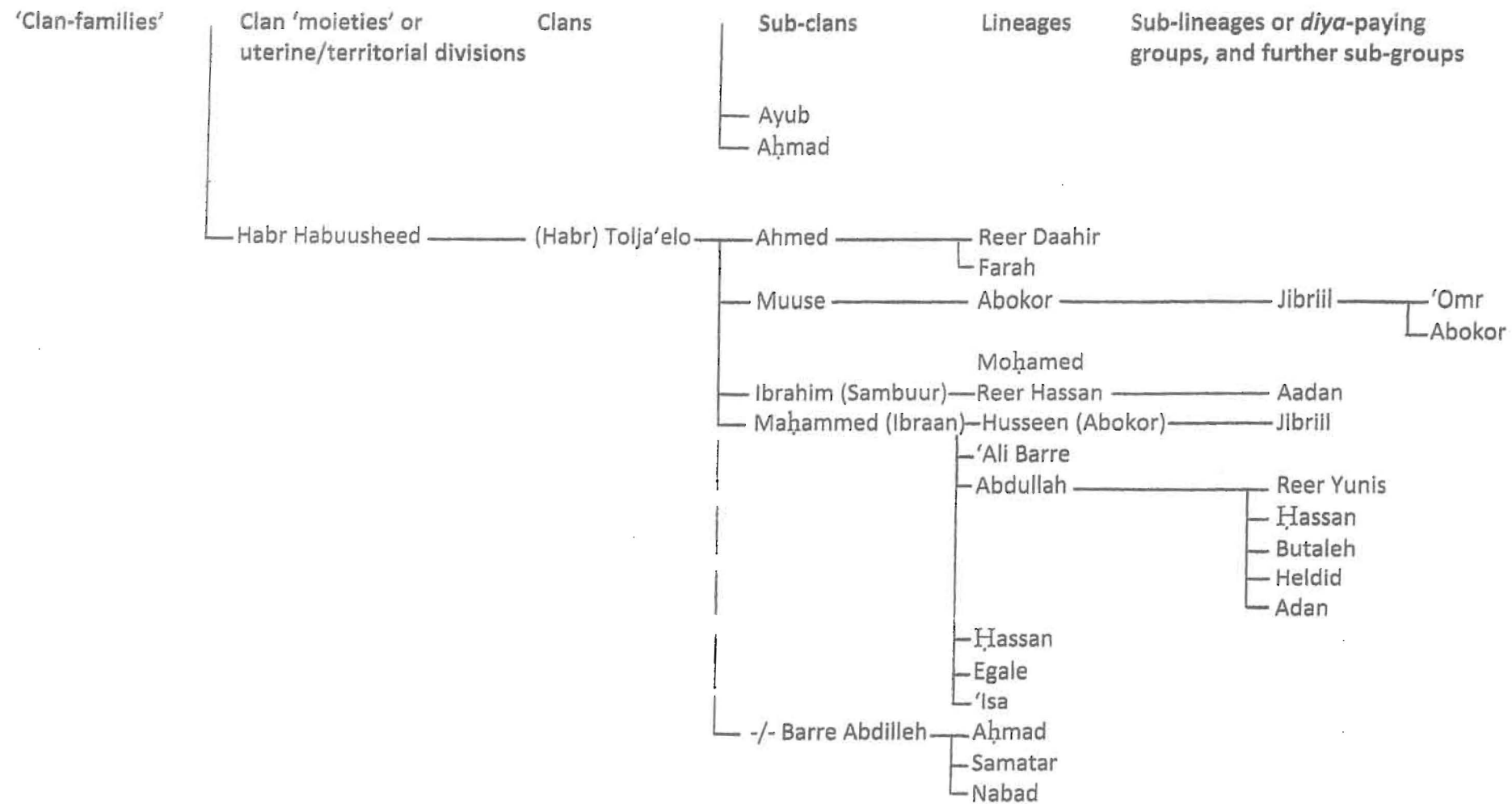


<sup>2</sup> How these groups (most of them much reduced in number) relate to the current Hawiye clan-group is not entirely clear, but some of them, for instance, the Hawadle, are today often presented as one of the major clan-group within the Hawiye. There may thus have been processes of incorporation of these 'pre-Hawiye' into the Hawiye.



<sup>3</sup> For more background details, including uterine lines, of the Isaaq genealogy, see Lewis 1994b: 106.

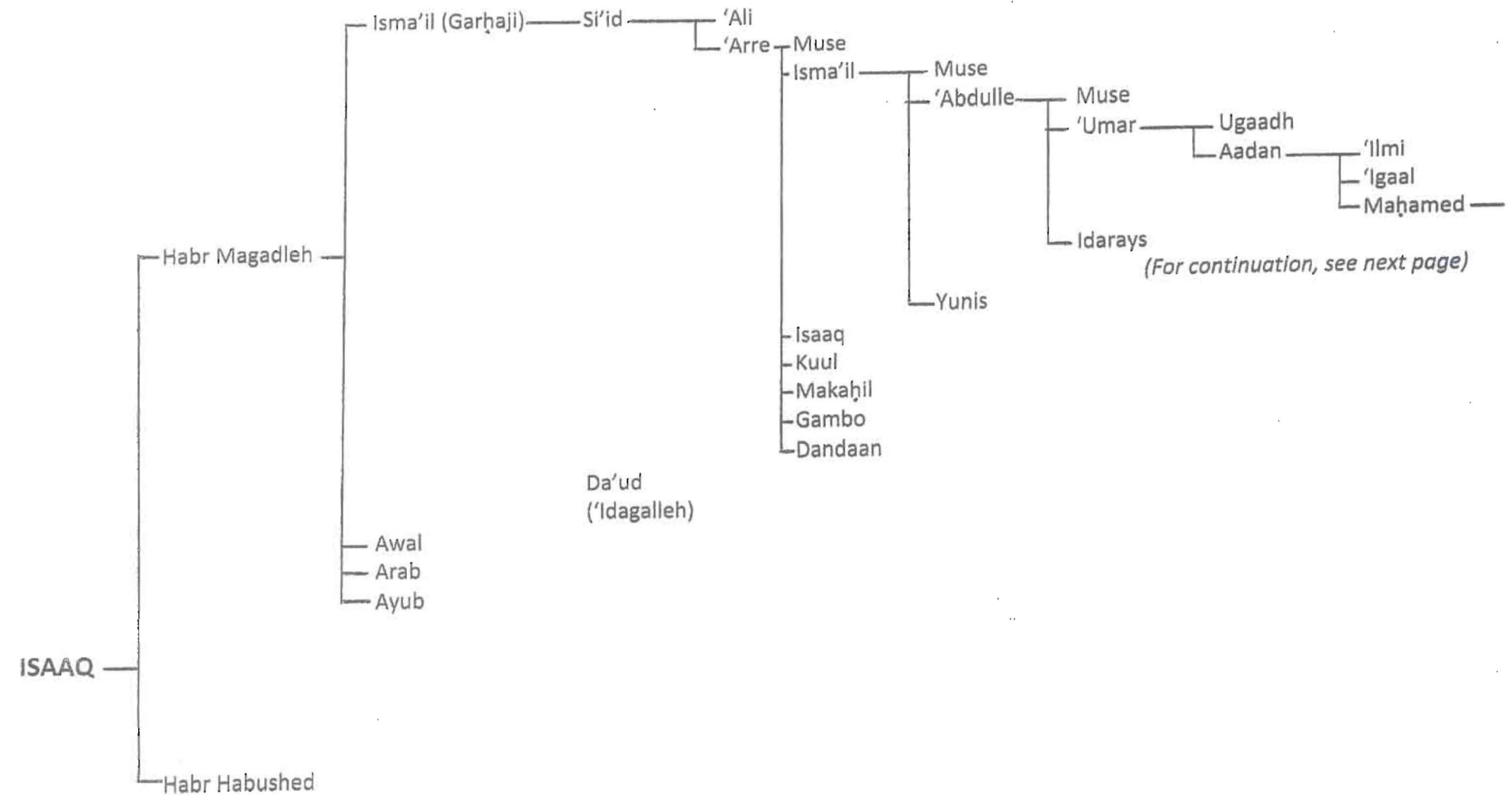


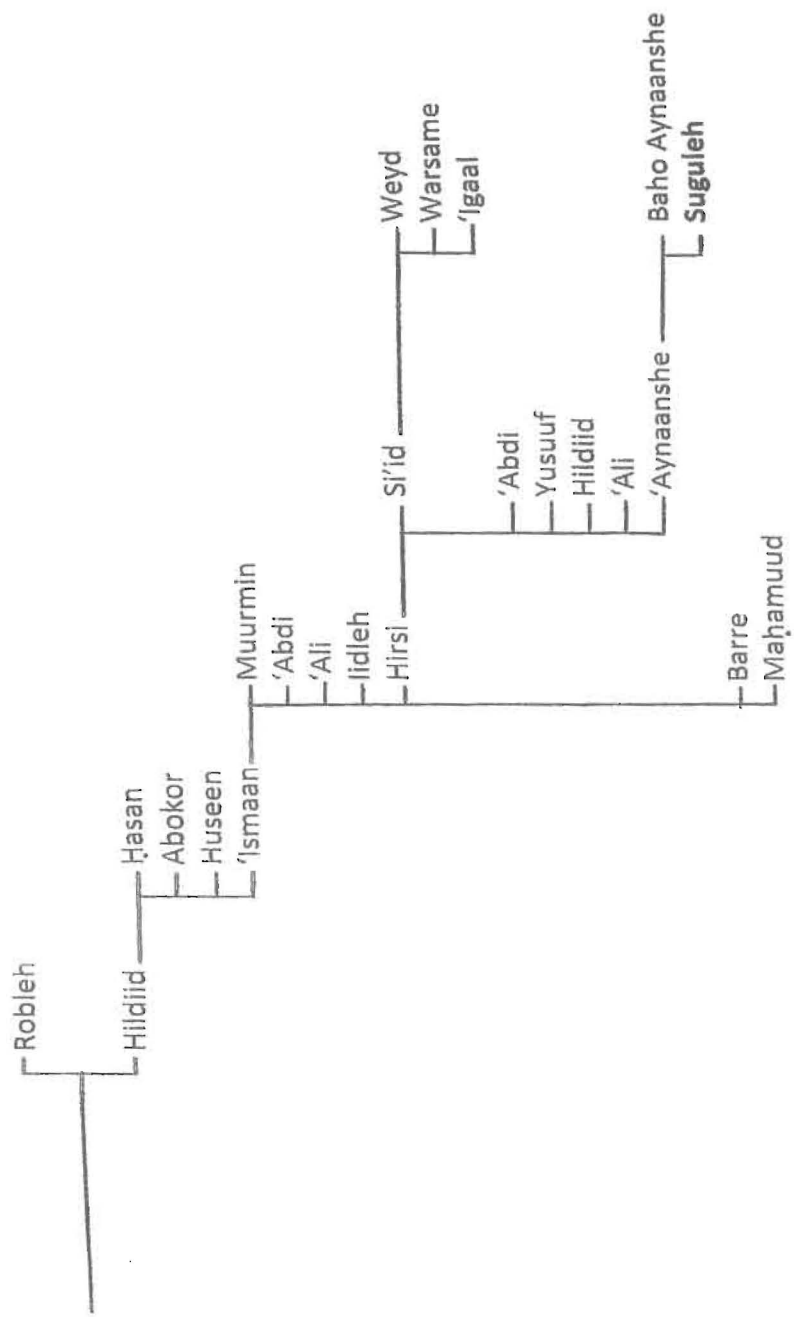




### 3. Individual example

This example is the line of Suguleh, from the Isaaq clan-family. The levels of segmentation is not that of generations (which some Somali claim might even run into 120 to 140 names) but are considerably more detailed (and perhaps more idiosyncratic) than in the genealogy above.





#### 4. Groups 'outside' the clan framework

Somali society is not homogenous in either an ethnic, linguistic or even religious sense, although virtually all Somalis adhere to varieties of Islam. There is no complete survey of ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural diversity within Somali society in the past and present, but recent research has emphasized that there exists a large number of groups that do have not a place in the traditional Somali genealogy (cf. Luling 1984, Besteman 1992; cf. Lewis 1994b: 41-43). They are either occupational caste groups (traditionally considered 'inferior') known as *sab*, descendants of Swahili and Bantu-speaking communities near the coast, or hunter-gatherer groups of diverse origins, who live mainly in the riverain areas. These peoples were usually endogamous and rarely intermarried with the 'mainstream' Somali population. The names of these groups differ in the various regions of Somalia. They have often suffered greatly in the upsurge of violence in the past few decades, with abuse, killings, land grabs and other depredations. Many of them have fled the country, for instance to Kenya, and a large number Bantu-speakers (e.g., the Bajuni) have found asylum in the United States.

The Sab Somali groups ('Sab' with capital S), i.e., the Digil-Mirfle and Rahanwein, in the South are also seen by many as different from the 'real Somali' (descendants not of the alleged ancestor Sab but of Samaale) and to speak the Af-May language, a variety of Somali not readily understood elsewhere, e.g. in northern and eastern Somalia. For linguistic diversity in Somalia I refer to the work of Heine (1992), Nurse (1992), and especially Lamberti (1986).

The *sab* groups considered as being outside, but appended to, the clan framework are the following:

Baidari (or *sab*): Yibir (hunters and magicians) <sup>(1)</sup>

Midgan (leather workers, tanners and hunters)

Tumaal (blacksmiths)

Gabooye

Madjiban

Gobaweyn (non-Somali hunters-cultivators in the Rahanwein area)

Mosa Dirie

Waraabeye (near Mandera)

Other groups outside the framework have a primarily non-clan identity, when they identify on the basis of, e.g., place of residence or linguistic/historic affinities. Some

among these groups are also of non-Somali origin. They mainly live in southern Somalia. Some groups speak of their sub-groups also as 'clans', but they differ from the units in the segmentary structure of the system outlined in Section 2 above.

1. The main group consists of the 'Benadiri':

- the Reer Hamar (people of Mogadishu and the Benadir). They are often called 'Gibilcad' (= 'fair-skinned') and are divided in the following subgroups:
  - Dhabar Weyn
  - Shanshiya, or Shanshi
  - Moorshe
  - Qalmashube
  - Bandhahwau
  - Rer Faqi
- Shangani:
  - Amudi
  - Bah Fadal
  - Rer Sheich
  - Abakarow
- Ashraf:
  - Hussein: Reersharif Magbul, Sharif Ahmed, Sharif Balaaw, a.o.
  - Hassan: Mohamed Sharif, Sharif Ali, Sharif Ahmed, Ashraf Sarman, a.o.
- the Merca 'clans':
  - Shukereere
  - Rer Maanyo
  - Ahmed Nur
  - Ali'yo Mohammed
  - Duruqbe,
  - Gameedle, a.o.

2. Baraawa (people of the town of Baraawa, divided in: Bida, Hatimi and Ashraf)

3. Bajuun (fishermen and sea traders of Swahili origin, mainly in the Kismaayo area and the Bajuni islands off the coast)

4. Ribe (hunters, in the middle Juba area)

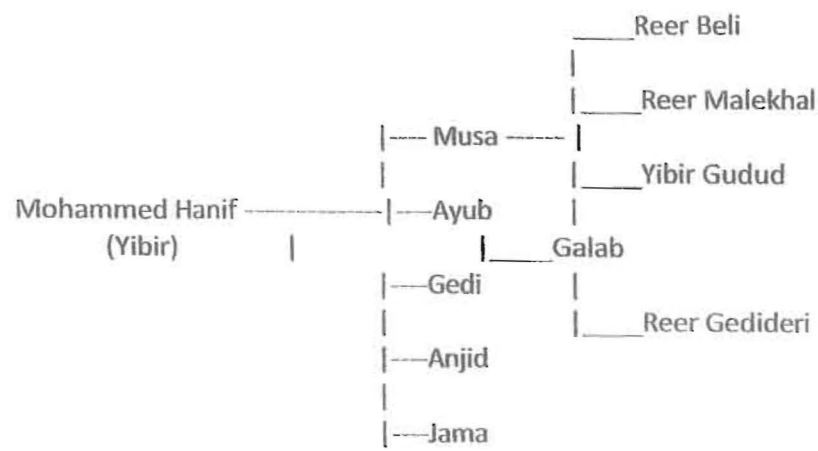
5. Zanj (descendants of pre-Somali settlers, live between the two great rivers, mainly in the Garbahaarre and Jowhar districts)

- 6. Helai (near Baidoa town)
- 7. Reer Shabelle (fishermen and small-scale cultivators of the Shabelle river area), possibly also of Bantu origin
- 8. Aweer (or 'Boni', a Cushitic-speaking group)
- 9. Jareer, or Gosha (litt. 'people of the bush', a diffuse category, partly of people of Bantu origin). Some allegedly Bantu-speaking groups are often also referred to as Adoon (= 'slaves') or Muki. The main subgroups of the Jareer/Gosha are: Gabaawiin, Rer Dhooboy, Shiidle, Kaboole, Makanne, Duubo, Jaaii, Mushungulu (the only group sure to speak a Bantu language), Eyle (or Aylo), and in the Lower and Middle Juba area: Manyasa, Miyau, Majindo, Makua, Mlima, Pokomo, and Manyika.

How these groups relate to each other and what self-terms they use is unclear. Many of them are often linked or co-opted to the Somali clans (via *sheegat*, or 'adoption').

(1) Note

Lewis (1994b: 55) gives the following clan segmentation of the Yibir:



APPENDIX 1

Main political organisations and/or ‘warrior’ or ‘warlord’ groups and religious or Islamist movements and their dominant (sub-)clan since the 1991 central state collapse

For an overview of recent Somali political history and the emergence of these ‘clan militias’ and parties, see the chapter on Somalia in I. Frame, ed., *Africa South of the Sahara 2008*, with a list on p. 1072). Many of these organizations have ceased to exist or were merged with others (those marked with an \*). The list below does not include all political groupings, religious associations and civic organizations in Somalia.

In line with the very complex, volatile and opportunistic alliances made by groups and individual strongmen, many additional small-scale clan-based militias have also emerged in recent years, next to the Islamic Courts Union (or SCIS, see below) in 2005-06 and various radical-Islamist combat groups.

Certain regional authorities (e.g., the former Juba Valley Authority) also had their own militias. Puntland as an autonomous region has its own armed forces and a security service (the P.I.S.).

Organization	Clan reference	Main area of residence
USC - United Somali Congress*	Hawiye	in and around Mogadishu; and central Southern Somalia
Divided in : USC/SSA (Somali Salvation Alliance) -	Abgal and Murosade sub-clans	
USC/SNA (Somali National Alliance) -	Habr Gidir, Hawadle, Galjaal sub-clans and some Ogadeni groups	
SNM - Somali National Movement	Isaaq	in Somaliland
USF - United Somali Front* (a 1991 offshoot of SNM)	Isa	in Somaliland
SDA - Somali Democratic Alliance	Gadabursi	in Somaliland (Boroma region)

SSNM - Southern Somali National Movement*	Bimaal and southern Dir clans	south central Somalia
SSDF - Somali Salvation Democratic Front	Majerteen	northeast
USP - United Somali Party *	Warsangali - Dulbahante	central
SNDU - Somali National Democratic Union*	Various Darod clans outside Warsangali - Dulbahante	central
RRA - Rahanweyn Resistance Army*	Rahanweyn	south, between Juba and Shebeele rivers
SNF - Somali National Front*	Marehan (ex-president Siyad Barre's supporters; general 'Hersi' Morgan's group)	south and central
SAMO - Somali Asal Muki Organization	'Muki', Bantu-speaking groups	south
SPM - Somali Patriotic Movement*	a) Ogadeni (around Kismayo; general Omar Jess's group, and the SPM-Harti faction of Adan Abdullahi Nur 'Gabiyo' (Awlihan Ogaden clan)	south central
	b) Majerteen	central Somalia
SDM- Somali Democratic Movement* (since ca. 2000 split into three factions)	Rahanwein, Digil, Mirifle	in and around Baidoa town and south, between the rivers
SNU - Somali National Union*	(Reer Hamar; urban people, and others outside the clan system)	south central

<i>Al-Ittihad al-Islami</i> (Islamic Unity)	Islamist militant movement that emerged in the early 1990s and aimed at a Somali state ruled by <i>shari'a</i> and anti-democratic. Tried to transcend clan-divisions. Among its leaders was Hassan Dahir 'Aweys', a hard-line Islamist now in the ARS-Asmara. Declined after military setback in the late 1990s; resurfaced in the SCIS and the <i>Al-Shabaab</i> .
SCIC – Supreme Council of Islamic Courts	Exists since early 2006. Also known as ICU (Islamic Courts Union). Opponent of the Transitional Federal Government. Of mixed clan composition, but mainly Hawiye Habr-Gidir Having emerged from <i>shari'a</i> courts and <i>Al Ittihad</i> elements, they were seated in Mogadishu in 2006 and with their own militias conquered most of Southern Somalia. Defeated and dispersed by TFG and Ethiopian forces in December 2006.
ARS - Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia	Formed by remnants of the SCIC in early 2007 after their ouster by the TFG and its Ethiopian allies. Led by Islamist radicals and some other, mainstream Muslims. Mixed clan-background. In late 2008 it split into two parts: the <i>ARS-Asmara</i> (led by the unreformed radical Islamist Hassan Dahir Aweys) and <i>ARS-Djibouti</i> (led by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, who became the Somali President in December 2008).
<i>Mujahidinta al-Shabaab</i> - 'The Youth Warriors'	Originally a combat group of radical youths with the SCIC led by Somali ex-Afghanistan <i>mujahidiin</i> veterans and <i>Al-Ittihad al-Islami</i> combatants, it became an autonomous Islamist group in southern Somalia, aimed at destroying the TFG and later in 2008-2009 also the reformed SCIC-branch ARS-Djibouti. Drew support from radical-Salafist religious figures and <i>sheikhs</i> . Its apparent goals were a theocratic state in Somalia under <i>shari'a</i> , and violently expelling all foreigners, including AU peace-keeping troops. Also NGOs, the press and aid workers were targeted. Dominated by 'Ayr (Hawiye) sub-clan members, but it



includes also other Hawiye, several Digil-Rahanweyn and people from other clans. Notorious for their uncompromising, violent extremism, also against ordinary Somalis, mainstream religious leaders and civil society organizations, the 'Al Shabaab' were put on lists of terrorist organizations, e.g., by the US (Cf. the ICG reports).

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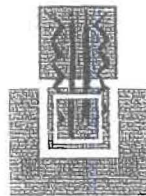


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