CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES

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SPECIAL ISSUE ON SOMALIA

The Tragedy of Somalia

Somalia is going through the most difficult period in its history. War and drought have devastated the whole nation. The country has yielded to anarchy. The state has ceased to exist, the support system (government institutions) has collapsed, and the country has fallen apart.

And the war has destroyed the infrastructure and has ruined the production capacity of the nation. As a result, over half of its eight million people are starving to death. The people have become very dependent on international relief. According to the United Nations' estimate, one in four Somali children are dead by the age of five, and there is little hope of survival for others.

The root cause of the current food crisis in Somalia (the South) is the military regime's destruction of the economic infrastructure. At present the warlords of Muqdisho are preventing the people from returning to the land, where they were formerly self-sufficient in food production. Consequently, death has taken its toll. Even before the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991, the military government devastated northern Somalia. In 1988 Siad Barre declared war on the North, destroying the region's economic base.

The international community did not pay sufficient attention to the plight of the Somali people in the early stages of the calamity. Relief aid arrived after UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali accused the West of negligence in what he described as the worst human disaster in living memory, but the relief was too little and too late.

The warlords struggling for power in Muqdisho did not make the international relief workers' task easy. The food donated to alleviate the plight of the destitute people is looted daily and turned into a profitable business. In certain cases, food was used as a source of power by the warring factions.

Because of strategic interests during the Cold War, Somalia was at the top of the superpowers' political agenda in their effort to control the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean to which Somalia has access. Aware of the international politics, Somalia's military government took

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REFUGE
YORK LANES PRESS
Centre for Refugee Studies
Suite 351, York Lanes
York University
4700 Keele Street, North York
Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3
Phone: (416) 736-5663 • Fax (416) 736-5837
Electronic Mail via Bitnet Address
REFUGE@YORKVM1
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sides in order to accommodate the superpower that would best serve the interests of the ruling military junta.

While gross human rights violations persisted in Somalia for over twenty years under the ousted military dictator Siad Barre, the United States gave generous economic and military aid to keep the military government in power. Throughout the 1980s, Siad Barre benefited from the United States' military and diplomatic support, without which he could not have survived the public pressure.

The public's frustration with the system increased throughout the last decade. However, the military government suppressed any organized opposition at the national level. The government adopted a policy of divide and rule. It instigated interclan wars and pitted clans and family members against each other. The family unit and traditional leadership were destroyed. Even clergymen were not spared, as they were considered a security risk by the military regime. As a result, they were oppressed by the government and vilified by an unjust media.

The social fabric of the nation was unravelled. Opposition movements were formed out of necessity to stop the military's atrocities against the people, particularly the clan to which the opposition movement's leaders belonged. Most of the movements had no political agenda or national vision other than to depose the military dictator. Once Siad Barre was ousted, power struggles started among different factions of the same group, resulting in the present chaos in the South and the birth of the self-proclaimed Somaliland Republic in the North.

The international community has a role to play in finding a solution to the crisis. Any effort that will help end the warlords' activities is urgently needed. Any conflict resolution package made without full participation of the traditional leaders will not be practical. Therefore, an effective utilization of the traditional leadership's arbitration services and the moral authority of the nation is needed if the international community, particularly the Security Council of the United Nations, tries to resolve the Somalia issue once and for all.

In Somaliland the political situation is under control and is relatively stable, but the economic situation is not much better than that of Somalia. The people are on the brink of famine because of poverty and a lack of support systems. To prevent a potential tragedy, international donors should offer substantial assistance to the people of Somaliland to rebuild their shattered economy before it is too late. One has to believe that reconstruction of Somaliland can save the situation from developing into the chaos that now prevails in Somalia.

In this issue our contributors give in-depth analyses on the root causes of this human disaster. My article is a background analysis on the myth of Somali nationalism that discusses the factors that instigated the union of the two regions that comprised Somalia, the weak foundations on which the union was built, and how the political elite in power used regional disparities to perpetuate their control of the state. The article by Daniel Campagnon provides a full sketch of the nature of the military regime in Somalia. He explains how Siad Barre transformed the central authority of the state from a bureaucratic system to one of personal rule, as well as the shortcomings of the system. Alain Gascon describes the relationships between human suffering, politics and the environment. Ogenga Otunnu's article deals with the plight of Somali refugees and the Somali-Kenyans in Kenya. He analyses the reasons for the cold reception extended to the Somali refugees in Kenya. He also explains why Kenyan authorities have perpetuated maltreatment of Somali Kenyans, and why they are increasingly viewed as a security risk to the state. Joan Simalchik addresses the issue of Somali refugees in Canada who have survived torture and persecution from the ousted government in Somalia. She describes how difficult it is for them to integrate into the Canadian mainstream without proper counselling. We hope the different scholarly approaches of the writers in this issue will contribute to a better understanding of the Somali crisis. ■

Dr. Saeed Sheikh Mohamed is a Research Associate with the Centre for Refugee Studies

IN MEMORIAM

Kerry Reade

Kerry Reade was born on June 6, 1954. He died on November 3, 1992. After graduating from the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, in 1978, a graduation delayed by his years of world travel, Kerry Reade joined the Department of Employment and Immigration on January 29, 1979 and rose to become director of settlement for the Ontario region on July 6, 1989. I was with him at a conference in Hungary in May 1991 when we had to send Kerry home early because he became ill on the trip. Though Kerry sometimes rallied and returned to his duties, he never really recovered. Kerry Reade will be remembered with deep love by the many resettlement agencies and individual refugees he personally helped, the department officials with whom he worked, his friends and acquaintances. He was a wonderful son and brother for his parents and three sisters. Kerry was a compassionate, caring director of settlement who left this world a better place than he found it. We invited Elizabeth Gryte to write a memorial tribute to Kerry in this issue dedicated to Somali refugees, the refugees who were most on Kerry's mind when he died.

Howard Adelman, Editor

I knew Kerry for ten years as a colleague, neighbour and friend. I remember those attributes that everyone recalls—his intelligence, dedication and struggle to push and risk within the system to make it better for newcomers. His enormous courage became more and more evident the closer he came to the end of his life. In addition to a true sense of fair play, he had the patience to listen, a genuine respect for all points of view, and the determination to ensure that they were expressed. His concern was always for the outsider, newcomer or stranger, whether in his own house or country.

Because of Kerry's crazy sense of humour and talent for telling a story, some of his friends (whom I never met) and their exploits have become a lasting part of my memory. And any description of Kerry would be incomplete without an acknowledgement of his great beauty and sense of style.

What I believe made Kerry so special and so effective in his work was revealed in one of those moments of intense frustration. When the world of work was not evolving as it should, Kerry and I played true confessions. He told me something about himself, which he saw as a flaw. He confessed that, as a child, he never dreamed of what he wanted to be, whether a fireman, a veterinarian or even a rich man. He felt that he lacked ambition. He was extraordinarily lucky to have fallen into work he loved and to have found a cause in which he truly believed.

If asked what he would do if he suddenly won a million dollars, his plans always centred around refugee work. During one of the times when bureaucratic hurdles appeared insurmountable, preventing him from opening up reception houses to provide temporary shelter for refugees coming to Canada, Kerry talked about buying lottery tickets and using his winnings to realize his dream. He overcame the obstacles and started the reception houses.

The clarity of Kerry's goals and beliefs and the continuing satisfaction he derived in working towards them made him a powerful and trustworthy advocate for the rights of refugees and newcomers. He was ambitious for others. Perhaps because of that he was able to accomplish far more and affect many more lives than by struggling to advance his own career. My luck was in being able to work with him. My ambition is to follow his example.

Elizabeth Gryte

The Rise and Fall of Somali Nationalism

Saeed Sheikh Mohamed

When the Somali state was formed in 1960, most African countries envied the homogeneity of the Somali people. Unlike the African countries south of the Sahara, Somalis share the same culture and language; they believe in the same religion and belong to the same ethnic group. This is the only perspective from which European scholars and African writers base their analysis of Somali studies. However, they fail to observe the diversity of the same culture, which is an inherent characteristic of the clan system.

Despite their common characteristics, Somalis did not experience a centralized form of administration before the Europeans arrived, nor did they enjoy a statehood that encompassed all of the Somali tribes. Instead, they were organized in tribes, subtribes, clans, subclans and extended families. They had a traditional leadership that was responsible for the welfare and security of its followers, who lived on their own agricultural and grazing land.

When the Europeans arrived in Somalia, they did not respect the territorial integrity of the different tribes and just drew arbitrary boundaries on the map to mark their zone of influence. Consequently, the Somali territory was divided into five parts: the British Somaliland Protectorate, the Italian Somaliland, the French Somali Coast, the Northern Frontier District of Kenya (as part of the British East African Administration). The rest of the Somali territory (known as Western Somaliland or Ogaden) was left under the rule of King Melenik of Ethiopia.

The Europeans imposed new political structures on the Somali people, but they did not succeed in dismantling the tribal organizations. The superimposed colonial system subjugated the traditional structure and values, so the power base of the traditional authority was reduced. The country was divided into regions, districts, subdistricts and villages; men of the same tribe were found in different jurisdictions and sometimes under different colonial rule. The security and justice systems came under the colonial authorities. Hence, each tribe faced a new challenge in protecting its interest within the system, since its tribal organization and cultural values were in jeopardy. The traditional leaders had no option other than to submit themselves to the colonial administration. The only function left for them was to enforce solidarity among their followers in case of calamity or war and to try to defend their economic interests. However, the European presence on Somali soil and the alien administrative system was widely regarded as a threat to the very existence of the Somali people.

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The Mullah and His Revolt

In 1898, at the beginning of the European colonization in Somalia, Mohamed Abdille Hassan, from Ogaden, challenged the colonial rule.[1] He advocated waging a holy war against the European infidels and called for the unity of the Somali nation. He reawakened Somali nationalism, which was dormant because of tribal divisions. The Somali tribes in the North willingly accepted him as their unopposed leader and gave him full support in order to restore their territorial integrity and independence, although there was old hostility between his tribe and the other tribes in the North.

He waged a war against the British that continued from 1900-20.[2] However, he lost the war after he established a dictatorship in rural areas. He also exacerbated hostility among the different Somali tribes, using divide-and-rule tactics. Unfortunately, he betrayed his position of great trust by alienating the Somali tribes living in the North, particularly the Isaaqs, whose firm support was essential in combat. He diverted the purpose of his struggle to settle an old account with the Isaaqs. The Isaaqs retaliated after they organized themselves. The British took advantage of the situation and provided arms and ammunition to the Isaaqs. Although Mohamed Abdille Hassan was defeated in 1920,[3] the war had disastrous consequences for the Somali people. Touval (1963, 54)[4] confirms that the civil war Mohamed Abdille Hassan started claimed about one-third of the male population of the North. The end of Mohamed Abdille Hassan's tyranny closed a chapter of Somali nationalism. As a result, Somali unification was widely disregarded by the population of the North for more than two decades.

The Resurgence of Somali Nationalism

In 1941 the British military administration was established in the South, following the British victory over the Italians in the Horn of Africa.[5] The Somali Youth League (SYL), the first political party in the South, was established in Muqdisho in 1946. The SYL's agenda was to struggle for independence and unification of all the Somali territories. The idea was in line with the British policy at that time. All Somali territories, except French Somaliland, were under British control. The British were very keen on the strategic position of Somalia. Ernest Bevin, who was the British foreign secretary at the time, was an ardent supporter of Somali unification and he

confirmed the British government's commitment to maintaining the unity of the Somali people and territories.

The people of the British Somaliland Protectorate were generally enthusiastic about unity. However, the traditional authorities in the North accepted the idea with reservation because of what they experienced during the tyranny of Mohamed Abdille Hassan some thirty years before. The Somali National Society, the only political party in the North, which was established in 1935,[6] mobilized the masses and collaborated with the SYL leadership to preserve the unity of the Somali people. When the British government took the Somali case to the Security Council of the United Nations for settlement, the four powers (the United States, British, France and the Soviet Union) failed to agree on the destiny of the ex-Italian Somaliland. The issue was transferred to the United Nations General Assembly, which voted to leave the Somali case as it was before the war.[7]

It gave the Italian government the mandate to control the South as a United Nations trusteeship and to prepare the region for independence for ten years, which ended on July 1, 1960. The short-lived political union of the Somali people and territories collapsed by virtue of the United Nations General Assembly's resolution.

The Peak of Somali Nationalism

After the British government failed to control all the Somali territories, it entered into a secret deal with Haile Selassie to cede an important region of the northern nomads' dwelling to Ethiopia. The agreement became effective in November 1954 and the region known as the Haud and Reserved Area was annexed by the Ethiopian government.[8] The people of British Somaliland felt betrayed by the British authorities because the region was an important part of the traditional grazing land of the Protectorate.

This new development effected a complete turn around of political awareness in Somaliland. Somali nationalism was revived throughout the territories, particularly the North. The Somali people realized the weaknesses of the tribal system. They gave their primary loyalty to the political leaders instead of to their traditional leaders. The North was convinced that the only way to retrieve the Haud and Reserved Area was to join forces with the South and develop common goals and strategies based on the Somali people's hope for independence and unification. The political elite in the North, who were organized as the Somali National Society, later became the Somali National League (SNL).[9] They opted to unite with the South in order to form a strong government that could negotiate with the different European colonizers and the Ethiopian government for the liberation and the unification of all Somali territories.

The Formation of the Somali State

In the North, the new political elite benefited from Western education; they were devoted to Somali nationalism based on unity and brotherhood. They suppressed traditional leadership and values and advocated creating a strong central government based on democratically-elected political representation. Unfortunately, their nationalistic views were not based on sound political judgement. They could not foresee the government's role and the type of institutions needed to preserve checks and balances in the system, nor did they think of ways to protect the interests of their region after unification with the South, let alone power-sharing and regional representation in the central government.

The South was politically prepared for independence and already had a council of ministers and chamber of deputies. These gave the region experience in real politics and power profiteering. The political elite in the South, struggling for power, was divided on tribal lines and was not enthusiastic to unite with the North because they were not ready to share government privileges at any cost. By contrast, the political leaders of the North, who were not fully aware of the political situation in the South, wanted to forge the basis of Somali unity.

Some preliminary discussions took place in April 1960 between the authorities of the two regions.[10] The political leaders in the South were very sceptical of the union, were not cooperative and wanted to abort the unification procedure by insisting on their own terms:

- That unification of the two regions must not require power-sharing.
- That the two regions must be fully integrated with a central administration system.
- That the capital must be Muqdisho, the capital city of the South.

Immediately after independence on June 26, 1960, the political leadership of the North went to Muqdisho and signed the protocol of unification five days later on July 1. The protocol was in accordance with the terms of the South. Northern politicians sacrificed their political ambition and regional interests for the sake of national unity because there was a great surge of patriotic feeling in the North.

Although the two regions were united, the legal process was not respected. The protocol of unification was not ratified by the two chambers of deputies in the North and the South separately as normal constitutional procedures stipulated, nor has there been a referendum on unification since then. The two chambers of deputies were merged. Adem Abdalle Osman was elected from the South as the first president of the new state and a central government was formed immediately. Hence, the government of Muqdisho ruled the North without any legal grounds for doing so. Once the chamber of deputies in the North became an integral part of the Somali parliament, there was no institution left in the North to represent the region. The thirty-three deputies from the North became a minority in the Somali Parliament, which included ninety deputies from the South. Regional parliamentary representation was not abased on a population census, but was individually determined by the two colonial authorities and the issue was never reviewed to rectify this.

Southern Domination

When the State of Somalia was established, the North was better educated and its economy was better organized with a well balanced budget that was capable of generating some surplus, while the budget of the South was experiencing chronic deficit.[11] However, the North was largely underrepresented in the first government of the new state. Out of fourteen ministers, only four with minor portfolios were from the North: the deputy prime minister with no specific responsibilities, the minister of defence, the minister of education and the deputy minister of agriculture. All the key positions were filled by men from the South. The key positions of government institutions, including military and police forces, were also dominated by southerners.[12]

In short, the executive and legislative bodies, along with other important institutions, were dominated by the South. This was in line with the policy formulated by the political leadership of the South who wanted to exclude the North from decision making. The political elite in the South did not consider the fragility of national unity, which was in jeopardy. Frustrated young military officers in the North attempted a military coup in 1961 in an attempt to break away from the South. Although the coup was soon aborted, it was widely condoned by northeners who were deeply frustrated by southern domination.

The Policy of Regionalism

The policy of civilian governments from 1960 to 1969 lacked a broader vision to cope with national issues. Political leaders in the South were very shortsighted and envious of the economic development in the North, as compared to that in the South. They gambled with regional issues and committed themselves to dismantling the few institutions devised by the British to serve the interests of the people in the North. The Somali government downgraded the education system, health care, the media, etc. and did not provide sufficient funds to sustain these systems in the North, let alone undertake a development program in the region. At the same time, large-scale development projects implemented in the South contributed less than 20 percent in government revenue. Moreover, the North was deprived of its share of international development aid because 95 percent of the bilateral and multilateral aid were spent in the South. After more than thirty years of independence, the government has not established anything in the North that is worth mentioning. Furthermore, the political system in the country was geared to create regionalism—North versus South—and tribal conflict throughout the country. Regional and tribal antagonism persisted until President Abdirashid Ali Sharmake was assassinated, which opened the door for a military rule.

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The Military Rule

When Siad Barre came to power in a military coup on October 21, 1969, he immediately transformed the country, with help from the Soviets, from a state of anarchy to a personal rule. Institutions were created for espionage and counterespionage, and special courts were formed for so-called subversive actions and political crimes that were considered antirevolutionary. A wife was recruited to spy on her husband and a son was appointed to report on the family's activities. This system destroyed the family unit and social values, and trust became a rare commodity. This new and efficient political system allowed Siad Barre to rule Somalia by will, particularly after he embraced socialism in 1971.[13] However, he followed the policy established by his predecessors with regard to regional and tribal issues. He went too far in obliterating the economic base of the North in the name of socialism. He nationalized business, agriculture and the international trade. This had a tremendous impact on the national economy, particularly in the North, where people were entrepreneurs par excellence. However, the Ogaden war in 1977 was a turning point when the Somali government wrongfully waged a war against Ethiopia over the Ogaden instead of looking for a political solution. As a result, the nation's meagre economic resources were diverted for military purposes. Moreover, Siad Barre declared the North as a war zone and the military governor in the North was ordered to confiscate private properties in the region for the war effort.

By the end of the war in 1978, Somalia was hosting 1.5 million refugees from Ethiopia, 750,000 of whom were from Ogaden, and the national economy was not in good shape.[14] Living standards deteriorated and government services and institutions collapsed because of a lack of funds. The recession was severe and inflation was out of control. Consequently, corruption was rampant among civilians and the military in power. There was misuse of government funds and appropriation of private properties to supplement incomes.

In April 1978 some army officers attempted a coup.[15] Although the coup was foiled, it exposed the oppressive nature of the Siad Barre's regime as Hassan (1984, 5) noted.[16] Siad Barre ruled Somalia with an iron fist. Injustice, intimidation, mass arrests, summary executions and lawlessness became hallmarks of the regime. This incited

mass discontent. A group of military and civilian dissidents founded the Somali Democratic Action Front (SODAF) in 1978, the first resistance movement to challenge the system.[17] As the key leaders of the front were from the eastern regions of Somalia, the military government waged a war against the civilians in that area. Thousands of defenceless civilians lost their lives in a scorched-earth policy. Although the SODAF (later known as the Somali Salvation Democratic Front) was well organized and well equipped, it failed to sufficiently mobilize the masses in order to get a broad popular base.

In April 1981 there was a renewed effort to create a strong opposition. A group of intellectuals and former senior civil servants, who were mainly from the North, formed the Somali National Movement (SNM). The SNM's main objective was to restore democracy in the country. As soon as the SNM was launched, a military command was formed for ethnic cleansing. It was known as the Dabar Goynta Isaaqa (the Isaaq Exterminators).[18] The northern Isaaq clans were deprived of their legal, economic and social rights. By late 1981, hundreds of prominent Isaaqs were detained, private properties were confiscated and businesses were looted and closed. The policy of economic destabilization in the region was openly adopted by the military governor at the time, General Mohamed Hashi Ghani, a relative of General Siad Barre.[19]

The military command in the North occupied the region by force and committed atrocities towards innocent civilians. According to Lewis (1990, 58) in 1985 the North was like a colony under oppressive foreign control.[20] The Isaaqs' animosity towards military forces forced them to side with the opposition. The SNM took advantage of the situation and succeeded in getting total support from the Isaaqs and substantial popularity in the South. Siad Barre, who prolonged his rule by pitting different tribes against each other, used the military to end the conflict. The government's hostility towards the Isaaqs intensified in 1988 when the SNM defeated the military in the North and captured Hargeisa, the capital city of the North. Siad Barre ordered war against the Isaaqs and used the military to destroy their homeland. Moreover, the Ogaden refugees were encouraged to fight against the Isaaqs and to take their properties and homes in order to cleanse them from their homeland. In 1988 over 50,000 civilians were killed in Hargeisa, and Hargeisa and Burao were reduced to rubble.[21] Survivors escaped to the rural areas, but the government troops, including the air force, turned on these defenceless and innocent civilians. Consequently, more than 300,000 people took refuge in Ethiopia, while over a million refugees were uprooted from their dwellings and scattered in the countryside. This mass destruction was the final episode in thirty years of political failure of Somalia's southern-based leadership.

The Somali people urgently need a political solution to ease their plight, but any foreign military intervention may escalate hostilities.

Siad Barre's power base was exclusively derived from his clan Mareehaan, but he received tactical and intermittent support from the different clans of the Darood tribe, of which Mareehaan was one. The government tightened its grip on the capital. The Hawiye clans around Muqdisho, together with some other small tribes, took up arms against the military government.

The SNM, which failed to recruit all the opposition groups, realized that it could not depose Siad Barre without the assistance of other main tribes. The SNM entered a military agreement with the United Somali Congress (USC), an opposition movement formed in January 1989 by dissidents of the Hawiye tribe, and the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), a small group from the Ogaden clan. Siad Barre, as usual, used his Darood clans against the opposition coalition in order to protect his regime, but this time it was too late because the militants were fighting in his courtyard. The presence of the Hawiye-dominated USC in the opposition alliance was an important factor in ending the military dictatorship. Siad Barre was defeated on January 27, 1991, but his legacy included long-lasting hostilities among the Somali tribes, particularly those in the South. Moreover, the defeat of the military government and the weak organization of the opposition movement created a power vacuum in Muqdisho. Once Siad Barre was ousted, a power struggle started among the USC leaders. As a result, the undisciplined USC freedom fighters started to take their revenge on the Darood clans and confiscated their properties. A USC faction based in Muqdisho unilaterally appointed Ali Mahdi Mohamed as head of state and formed a government without the consent of the USC military wing and the other two liberation movements, the SNM and the SPM. Immediately afterward, two factions of the USC confronted each other with arms.[22]

The SNM, frustrated with the chaos in Muqdisho, yielded to pressure from the masses in the North, who opted to form an independent state in the region.[23] As soon as the North seceded, the war escalated in Muqdisho between the two USC factions, led by Ali Mohdi Mohamed, the interim president, and the popular Mohamed Farah Aideed, the secretary general of the USC, to determine by force whose authority should prevail in the capital. However, the combat is no longer about political or ideological differences but about simple interclan conflict. As a result, the South has fallen into anarchy and all government institutions in Muqdisho have collapsed. Consequently, individual tribes have proclaimed their independence from Muqdisho.

The catastrophic situation in Somali urgently requires a political solution to ease the people's plight, but any foreign military intervention may escalate hostilities. However, the international community has a significant and positive role to play in current Somali affairs by encouraging the handling of politics according to Somali traditions. ▩

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Political Decay in Somalia: From Personal Rule to Warlordism

Daniel Compagnon

The Somali people's high expectations after Siad Barre's oppressive regime was overthrown in January 1991 have since turned into bitter disillusionment and mass suffering. According to some UN reports, 4.5 million people in Somalia are facing a food shortage and 1.5 million will starve in the coming months. In May and June 5,000 children under the age of five died daily[1] and 7,000 people died in Baydhaabo in June. The case of the interriverine region exemplifies how the famine is a direct outcome of political internal strife and lawlessness: the farmers interviewed in the Bardeera area explained that the Mareehaan militias of Siad Barre looted their herds, water pumps and sowing seeds several times, while those of Baydhaabo said they were looted by United Somali Congress (USC) gunmen as well.[2] This human disaster is probably the largest one in Somali history and beyond anything that could have been foreseen even two years ago when Siad Barre was still in power.

Those who bear the main responsibility are the Somalis of the various factions who cultivate warfare and mafia-type behaviour. The lack of concern shown by foreign powers, despite their involvement in Somali politics during the last thirty years, accounts for the international community's low-scale initiatives, especially in contrast with the attention focused on other parts of the world (Yugoslavia or Cambodia). But it is also quite clear that the lack of far-sighted leadership and political planning on the so-called "liberation fronts" are crucial factors in the Somali crisis. In addition, historical as well as sociological factors, some of them deeply rooted in the Somali social fabric, have to be taken into consideration.

Daniel Compagnon teaches at the Centre du recherches et d'études pour Afrique orientale, Paris, France.

The rapacity of the political entrepreneurs and their impatient drive to secure state power at any cost, added to the preexisting factors of political decay and clan-based factionalism, are all part and parcel of Siad Barre's legacy.

The Bitter Legacy of Personal Rule

The analytical notion of personal rule is designed to capture a contemporary style of governance well represented in Africa[3] that combines authoritarian rule, a low level of institutionalization of political processes (including decision making), concentration of power in the hands of the ruler, and private appropriation of state resources through corruption, patronage and prebends.[4] Siad Barre's regime evolved from an original pattern of bureaucratic-authoritarian rule in the early 1970s towards personal rule in the 1980s and eventually into its corrupt variety called "sultanism" (i.e., when the ruler makes no attempt to restrain from the abuse of force).[5] This type of governance had major negative effects in Somalia and provide the background of the current crisis.

Economic Ruin Through Patrimonialism

This patrimonial dimension[6] developed under Siad Barre's regime to an extent unknown in the 1960s, and the Ogaden war might have been a turning point in this respect.[7] Embezzlement of public funds, corruption of ministers and civil servants in connection with public markets and development projects,[8] baksheeshes at all levels of the bureaucracy, illegal trafficking by relatives or friends of the president—all these were tightly linked to a direct access to state power. These were the spoils of personal rule. Patron-client ties were built between those who had that access

and others, especially Hawiye businessmen. With the absolute power to appoint, transfer, sack or even jail, Siad Barre was the ultimate boss of the whole network. His personal patronage was eagerly sought for and he got his share in the biggest deals. Somalis used to say that Siad Barre looked at the national state and economy as "parts of his teashop." This patrimonial behaviour enlarged the group of people who had a personal interest in the continuation of his devastating rule.[9]

It also implied that investment capital was predominantly oriented towards speculative trading activities and all kinds of illegal trafficking detrimental to the productive side of the economy.[10] A stratum of wealthy and corrupt businessmen (many of whom were penniless in the early 1970s) arose from all the clans. As the economic crisis deepened and the power circle narrowed down to the ruler's family, and while the unleashed repressive bodies (the National Security Service, Hangash, some army units and Red Berets) raised the level of violence and extortion to such levels that they provoked a massive displacement of population in the North and the eventual uprising in the South, the leading officials of the regime completely plundered the state budget and the banking system. In this respect, the looters who have been ravaging the capital city since January 1991 are the heirs of Siad Barre and his clique for three reasons:

- The first to loot were Siad Barre's Red Berets and other military units at the bottom of the hierarchy and his patrimonial servants at the top.
- The country was bankrupt and food shortages had already begun during the summer of 1990. For impoverished urban dwellers and destitute nomads, looting became the only means of survival.
- There was no moral restraint (the Somali crisis is also spiritual) as robbery became a way of life even before Siad Barre's downfall. Interestingly, some of those who benefited financially from the previous regime were in the best position to make money from the looting.

State Disintegration

Despite prominent officers in the state hierarchy since 1969, from the top down to the remote rural districts, the apparent backbone of the military regime was never able to act against the will of Siad Barre, let alone depose him. From the beginning, he viewed the officers either as his personal clients or as his personal foes.[11]

The army, whose support was a crucial political resource for imposing an authoritarian state in the 1970s, was perceived as a threat after the abortive coup of 1978. Through purges, accelerated promotions of Mareehaan and (to a lesser extent) related Darood clan officers, while the military from other clan families were transferred to administrative positions, Siad managed to keep the potential hostile elements of the armed forces at bay. He never allowed the minister of defence to build a personal power position.[12] The patrimonial nature of his policy was exemplified by interferences from members of his family in military appointments. Colonels and generals were part of the president's patronage network; they had to remain loyal to him and his close relatives, whether they had a command or were temporarily in the Cabinet.[13] Inclusion in the regular army of the Ogaadeen, Warsangeli and Dulbahante militias to fight against the Isaaqs in the North and the creation of units exclusively drawn from the Mareehaans eventually discredited the very idea of a national army.

The military apparatus offers a good example of Somali institutional decay as a result of the state's patrimonialism. Other examples of institutional decay include the diplomatic service since Abderahmaan Jaama Barre became minister of foreign affairs, cooperatives under Warsame Indolleh, finances and banking, etc. The state disintegration began long before the overthrow of the ruler. Since 1987 there has only been a semblance of a state: not a single public service was working effectively, the administration was paralysed by factional struggle at its head for the long-awaited succession and also by insurgency at the periphery.

Hence, the random killings and systematic abuses of the Isaaqs in the North as well as the Ogaadeens in the Jubba area or the Hawiyes in the central regions,[14] were signs that Siad Barre's regime had reached the stage of sultanism, a variant of personal rule characterized by arbitrary violence. By the time the opposition fronts were able to take over, there was no state as such to seize, and they were not prepared to provide an alternative to prevent anarchy.

From the summer of 1988 onwards, there was a combination of political repression against targeted clans and private use of violence by predatory units and individuals of the former "national" armed forces—already in the process of disintegration—who used their power to rape, kill and loot freely. The classic distinction between private illegitimate violence and public coercion disappeared. Many former military men later joined the clan militias or the armed gangs.

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Vendetta Politics and the Exacerbation of Clan Rivalries

Another striking feature of Siad Barre's survival tactics in the 1980s, as many scholars have already noted, was his extensive use of clanism[15] as a political resource. To secure lasting loyalties, he filled the key positions in the army, police, diplomacy and security force with members of three Darood clans closely related to his own *reer*: Mareehaans, Dulbahantes and Ogaadeens,[16] yet the importance of this alliance should not be exaggerated. Contacts with elders and the support of

some prominent men in the clan do not necessarily mean that the whole clan is behind the regime: other members exiled abroad could be engaging in some opposition activities at the same time.[17] Siad Barre played on the segmentary social organization: while he was courting a subclan or a lineage that received prebends and honours, another branch of the same clan was given a hard time. On the other hand, many Isaaqs and Hawiyes served the regime until the late 1980s and were instrumental in the ruler's claim that he was still able, unlike the armed opposition, to rally significant support among the clans, a crucial point for his public image.

Clanism also provided a means to weaken the opposition, which was accused of being tribal-minded. The Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) was labelled a Reer Mahamud organization in order to reduce its appeal, so that the regime would gain the support of smaller lineages of the Majeerteen clan. Siad Barre also played on the Hawiyes' resentment of the Majeerteens for their alleged domination of the Somali polity in the 1960s. Similarly, the Somali National Movement (SNM) was presented as an Isaaq chauvinist and secessionist group by Siad Barre's propaganda, skilfully using some elements of truth to damage the image of the whole movement. The ruler tried several times to stir up the rivalries between the main Isaaq clans,[18] in order to diminish the support for the SNM in the North. Furthermore, the state was involved in interclan feuds among the nomad pastoralists. By giving money and weapons to the clan segments whose goodwill he wanted to win, thereby weakening lineages hostile to his rule, Siad Barre repoliticized lineage competition, deliberately breaking with the postcolonial state's long-term efforts to appear neutral. In the late 1980s to the early 1990s some of these conflicts were deliberately instigated or encouraged to prevent discontented clans[19] from forming a coalition. By doing so, the personal ruler sharpened clan rivalries and brought back clan-based factionalism as a major factor in Somali politics. The actions of Siad Barre and his aides in creating the Somali crisis should not be forgotten too quickly. Nonetheless, his contenders and successors did not fare better.

The Deadly Gamble of Political Entrepreneurs in the Post-Siad Barre Era

According to press reports, Somalia is confronted with a tribal war, which suggests atavistic hatreds and endless conflicts. It is an inaccurate description of a segmentary society whose clan families are not differentiated along cultural and linguistic lines, and in which the competition between the segments is constantly reshaped by shifting alliances.[20] It also falls short of explaining the various dimensions of the factional competition for supremacy. If Somalia's current upheaval was a traditional feud between neighbouring clans, it should have been possible to end it through the traditional *heer* and *shir*.[21]

None of these organizations, which claimed they were fighting against a dictatorship and for a democracy, had a clear vision of what should be done to establish such a regime and rebuild the country.

Shortcomings of the Former Opposition to Siad Barre's Regime [22]

From the early 1980s the Somali opposition was divided into rival organizations that were politically weak mainly for the following reasons. They recruited massively from a single clan or clan family, thereby limiting their appeal to other groups that were automatically suspicious of alleged clan hegemony. The clan factor was always at the core of Somali politics and played an important role in the factional struggle of the 1950s and 1960s, even within the nationalist parties. But in the atmosphere of growing fear and distrust in Siad Barre's Somalia, no single clan could achieve a violent overthrow of the regime because they had limited constituencies at the fronts. The regime actually collapsed due to the disintegrative effects of personal rule. Although the SSDF (in 1981) and the SNM (between 1984 and 1987) got closer to this objective, their leaders either made mistakes that ruined the whole plan or showed that they were just paying lip service while calling for unity of the opposition. The United Somali Congress (USC) is no exception, since it was intended to voice the interests of the Hawiyes. Siad Barre's propaganda deliberately fuelled these clan rivalries, but the fact that these divisions persisted after his downfall shows that his machiavellian abilities were not the main factor: there are still very few Somalis who have a political vision that extends beyond asserting their own clan rights and strength. Another consequence of this kind of recruitment was the formation of military units along the lines of social segmentation at the level of the primary lineages. This later facilitated the lineage-based factionalism within the fronts.

There was no coordination of activities, especially military cooperation, between the armed fronts. Hence, the Majeerteen resented the lack of support when they were under attack in the Mudugh area between 1979 and 1982, and the Isaaqs bitterly pointed out the lack of southern solidarity while they were being harassed and later massacred by the regime's squads. "Let the noses of the Isaaqs be bloodied" was later countered by the vengeful "Let Muqdisho be destroyed as Hargeisa was."[23] We can see today how counterproductive these attitudes were. Significantly, the exception here is the agreement signed in August 1990 between the Somali National Movement, United Somali Congress/Aydiid and Somali Patriotic Movement/Ahmed 'Umar Jess. The purpose of this alliance was mainly to preempt and share state power in the event of the fall of the

regime, especially in defiance of the other groups, the Manifesto, Somali Salvation Democratic Front and USC/'Ali Wardiigley.

None of these organizations, which claimed they were fighting against a dictatorship and for a democracy, had a clear vision of what should be done to establish such a regime and rebuild the country. The paucity of their political programs was probably intended to diminish their leaders' responsibilities during the transition period, but it also denoted a lack of careful analysis of the Somali crisis. The simplistic slogans branding the "bloodthirsty dictator" and the "bankrupt regime" were indeed useful for mobilizing support, but fell short of providing a model for governance.[24]

Since the overthrow of Siad Barre, the clan-based politico-military organizations appeared exclusively motivated by the struggle for supremacy and the sharing of the spoils. The war that devastated Muqdisho from November 1991 to March 1992, killed as many as 14,000 and injured twice this number, according to Africa Watch, cannot be explained otherwise. But even in the North, where the SNM enjoyed several months of peace and unchallenged political hegemony, nothing decisive was achieved. This can be explained by the lack of resources, the lack of coherent plans to rebuild the country, and, above all, by the factional competition within the SNM, which reached a peak during the serious fighting in Burao and Berbera.

Rival Entrepreneurs, Merchants and Clan-Based Factionalism

In May-June 1991 the Manifesto group was an attempt to prevent civil war and clan fighting after the collapse of Siad Barre's regime, but the group disbanded at the time it was most needed. Also, from the beginning some of its leaders had their own agenda and the race for power began as soon as Siad Barre left the capital city. A national reconciliation government failed to appear because the USC, which officially controlled Muqdisho, was not able to prevent the massacres of Darood civilians and other non-Hawiyes. This can account for the rise of a pan-Darood alliance in early spring 1991, which came very close to conquering Muqdisho before it was stopped by USC troops. Clan rivalries rapidly evolved into open warfare when the state was perceived as an easy prey.

The war between the clans seemed to revive the traditional competition between lineages for scarce resources, which was one of the fundamental characteristics of the precolonial pastoral society. However, differences between the current instability and the traditional pattern lie not only in the prizes (state resources including foreign aid, instead of pastures and wells) or the weapons (bazookas and artillery, instead of spears), but also in the role played by political entrepreneurs and merchants.

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The case of the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland illustrates the clan elders' ability to defuse the tensions at the local level between neighbouring lineages, especially during the first six to eight months of 1991. However, it also demonstrates their powerlessness in preventing factional fighting at the national state level. They are not able to impose their will on the incumbent leaders who are already largely discredited.

Political entrepreneurs, whether with a military or a civilian background, rely on clan solidarity and clan chauvinism as political tools to achieve their goals. They use their own clan as much as they serve it (very much like Siad Barre did with the Mareehaans until he went into exile). Although the conflict between Sa'ads and Abgaals is reminiscent of some politicking in the 1950s when 'Abdullaahi 'Iise was prime minister, it is still difficult to understand unless one considers the personal rivalry between Mahamed Farah Aydiid and 'Ali Mahdi Mahamed in their bid for power. The split of USC dates back to the very beginning of the organization in January 1989 when a group of mainly Abgaal people in exile in the Western countries elected 'Ali Osooble Wardiigley as chairman. The Sa'ads then decided to stay in the SNM that Wardiigley had just left and General Aydiid, long courted by the SNM leadership, joined them in Ethiopia. Then a USC unit was organized there in the spring of 1990 and from then on there were two Hawiye guerrilla movements fighting the regime. Judging from the propaganda war waged outside the country between USC/Aydiid and USC/Rome, and from the fierce comments made in private on both sides, one could tell that this factional rift would not be easily mended. Both factions are based on lineage alliances that formed during the fighting—currently Haber Gidir/Hawaadle versus Abgal/Mururaade—but are cemented more effectively by personal loyalties and individual rewards. This may explain why a Salebaan general serves in 'Ali Mahdi's forces and a Mururaade businessman and former politician supports Aydiid. Although the clans provide young men for the struggle, their elders do not control the whole process. The political entrepreneurs are constantly trying to broaden the alliance on which they rely in order to strengthen their autonomy. It is precisely what Aydiid has been doing since he defeated Siad Barre in late April this year.

The merchants also play a key role in the current upheaval, since they finance the war as well as the physical survival of the political entrepreneurs and their cliques. At the same time, they take advantage of the scarcity of food or the demand for *khat* and the large number of destitute and hungry looters to make huge profits.[25] Now that increased international aid is being delivered, they dictate their prices for transportation as

well as for military protection. Their interest is so closely linked with the state of anarchy that they might be more willing to support warlords than invest in peace and reconstruction. Without their money to supply ammunition, buy back the loot and selectively feed the gunmen, the factions would have been unable to sustain themselves during eighteen months of unrest.

Militarization of the Political Conflict: Warlordism in the Making

The prolonged political squabble among various political parties and military fronts did not bring about any lasting government coalition capable of reconstructing the state. The competition between political entrepreneurs within each of the main groups, especially the uncompromising stands of the two factions fighting for Hawiye supremacy, has jeopardized the implementation of the Djibouti agreement of July 1991, the most notable effort at national reconciliation. The subsequent months of warfare and atrocities deepened the rift of distrust between the clans and strengthened the position of military strongmen (most of them former army officers) in each camp.

Since there is no credible political settlement in sight and because there is a high level of insecurity in all the de facto autonomous regions, time seems to favour the warlords who will try to build their own mini-states in the areas they control. As the inevitable partners of the NGOs and international relief agencies, the warlords can extract more resources to reinforce their authority. Ironically, more humanitarian intervention might help them consolidate their power. They might be able to deliver the goods in terms of stability and minimum order, but they can scarcely be regarded as champions of democracy. Even the North might evolve along the same lines if the SNM leadership remains inefficient and immobile and fails to reach a consensus.

The threat of war will remain since none of the warlords will voluntarily renounce his claim to state power. When they make compromises, it is only for tactical expediency. This political culture is consistent with Somali traditional values and with oral poetry that praises dominance by force asserted in the battlefield and looting of those who are defeated.[26] For many years, Somali politicians and the majority of scholars emphasized the "democratic" nature of the pastoral society and neglected this other side of its culture. Sayyid Mahamed 'Abdulle Hasaan, who was able to build an autocratic system of rule by using the resources of lineage politics and religious charisma, definitely remains a model for the modern warlords.

The picture is extremely gloomy and I tend to believe that the only way out of the nightmare is to call for a full intervention of the United Nations, not only to establish peace in the country, preserve its unity and save the people from famine, but also to preempt the power and create a new democratic order to preserve equal rights for all the lineages and, if necessary, to quell the open resistance of the warlords—in other words, establishing a new trusteeship for Somalia. ■

Notes

1. See *The Montreal Gazette*, June 17, 1992.
2. See *The New York Times*, July 19, 1992, AFP, July 27, 1992.
3. See R.H. Jackson and C.G. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982; Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, 2 vols. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968; Guenther Roth, "Personal Rulership, Patrimonialism, and Empire-Building in the New States," *World Politics* XX, no. 2 (January 1968): 194-206.
4. See the notion of prebend, as applied to a postcolonial African state, in Joseph Richard, *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987): 55-68.
5. See Daniel Campagnon, "Political Crisis in Somalia: The Legacy of An Exhausted Personal Rule." Paper presented at the 1990 meeting of the African Studies Association, Baltimore, Maryland. On the bureaucratic-authoritarian system, see Charles Andrain, *Political Change in the Third World* (New York: Unwin Hyman, 1988) 22-30.
6. See the theorical debate summarized and updated in Jean-Francois Medard, "L'Etat néo-patrimonial en Afrique Noire," in *Etats d'Afrique Noire, Formations, Mécanismes et Crise*, edited by J.F. Medard (Paris: Karthala, 1991): 323-54. See also the notion of "belly politics" in J.F. Bayart, *L'Etat en Afrique La Politique du Ventre* (Paris: Fayard, 1989): 281-315.
7. See A.K. Galaydh, "Notes on the State of the Somali State," *Horn of Africa* XIII, nos. 1 and 2, 1-28.
8. The figure of 40 percent of each contract was put forward in David D. Laitin and Said S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of A State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987): 95.
9. The petty corruption developed in the late 1980s as a result of the economic crisis. It seemed that Siad Barre more or less legitimized these practices with the notion of *"hawlfududayn"* (a "tip" to help civil servants perform their duties). Petty corruption is crucial for securing the compliance of large sections of the population, according to interviews.
10. See Norman Miller, "The Other Somalia: Illicit Trade and the Hidden Economy," *American Universities Field Staff Reports: Northeast Africa Series* 29 and 30 (1981).
11. Those who failed to comply were among the victims of the political repression since 1969. See Amnesty International, *Somalia: A Long Term Human Rights Crisis* (London: Amnesty International, September 1988) 36.
12. Salad Gaveire was arrested in 1971, Mahamed 'Ali Samatar was fired in April 1981 and again in January 1987, while "promoted" to prime minister. 'Umar Haaji Mahamed, his successor in 1981, was jailed in June 1982, and the too confident Aadan 'Abdulle "Gabyow" received the same treatment in July 1989. The president always kept direct control of the armed forces—at least until his car accident—and never appointed another commander-in-chief.
13. In the late 1980s the number of senior army staff in the senior ranks far exceeded the number of available commanding officer positions in the active service. For example, in December 1986 twenty-two colonels were

promoted to generals at the same time! See *Africa Confidential* 28, no. 7 (May 1, 1987). This is an example of patrimonialism: many of these officers were Mareehaans or MOD.

14. Africa Watch, *Somalia: A Government At War with Its Own People: Testimonies About the Killings and the Conflict in the North* (London: The Africa Watch Committee, January 1990). See also other publications of Africa Watch concerning the southern regions.

15. "Clanism," as opposed to "tribalism," better describes the segmentary nature of Somali society. See I.M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics Among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961). On clanism under Siad Barre, see Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of A State*, 155-63, and I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988): 220-22, 250 and Campagnon, "Political Crisis in Somalia."

16. In the mid-1980s the artillery and tank units surrounding the capital were under Mareehaan command, as were one-third of brigade commandants. In total, 50 percent of the police and army commandants in the regions and districts and 80 percent of the military sectors and army divisions were Darood. See "Somalia: Military Politics," *Africa Confidential* 27, no. 22 (October 26, 1986): 1-2; Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia*, 256. For diplomacy, see the letter of Ibrahim H. Addow, published in *Horn of Africa* 5, no. 1 (1982): 75, and Mahamoud Hassan, "Status of Human Rights in Somalia," *Horn of Africa* 3, no. 2 (1980): 6.

17. The Garad 'Ali Garad, of the Dulbahante/Farah Garad primary lineage, lived in exile in London for many years and his heir 'Abdulqani negotiated an agreement with the Isaaq/Habar Ja'lo that undermined the ruler's policies. The whole clan did not consider Sulayaman Daffle as its natural leader. The second Dulbahante member of the SRC withdrew in 1983 and several Dhubahante officials like 'Ali Khalif Galaydh defected in the 1980s, according to interviews. For examples of Mareehaans who suffered from Siad Barre's personal rule, see A. Sultan's letter in *New African* (June 1987).

18. He wanted to gain the support of the Habar Awal. This clan made up the majority of Hargeysa's population and is well represented in the Isaaq business class, as well as among the *waadad*. Many Habar Awal did not accept the loss of the SNM leadership in 1983 and became critical of Ahmed Silanyo's conduct of the organization. Siad Barre tried to appease the elders of the clan by appointing Ina-Lah-was vice-president and later vice-prime minister. The latest tricks in this game were the sudden appointment of Mahamed Hawaadle Madar as prime minister on September 1, 1990 and of 'Umar Arteh Galib in early January 1991, according to interviews.

19. See the analysis of some of these feuds in Gérard Prunier, "Stuctures de clan et pouvoir politique en Somalie," *Cultures et Développement* 17, no. 4 (March 1987): 602-97. See also "Somalia on the Brink of Civil War," *Horn of Africa* 6, no. 3 (1983): 41; Laitin and Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, 161-162; and Said S. Samatar, "An Open Letter to Somali Scholars: Should Siad Host the Next SSIA Congress? Some Second Thoughts," *Horn of Africa* 13, nos. 1 and 2 (1990): 88-95.

20. See I.M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy*, the major study on the pastoral Somalis.

21. The *heer* is the jural contract that requires lineages to form military alliances or diya-paying groups; the *shir* is the council of elders that makes decisions on collective issues, including war, at all levels of society. On this, see Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy*.

22. See Daniel Campagnon, "The Somali Opposition Fronts: Some Comments and Questions," *Horn of Africa* XIII, nos. 1 and 2 (January-June 1990): 29-54; Gérard Prunier, "A Candid View of the Somali National Movement," *Horn of Africa* XIII and XIV, nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, 107-20.

23. See Samatar, "An Open Letter to Somalist Scholars" for the first quotation. The second comes from interviews.

24. The original program of the SSDF was more sophisticated with its Marxist phraseology—thanks to the SWP and SDLF intellectuals—but did not provide concrete plans for recovery.

25. See Roland Marchal, "La guerre à Mogadiscio," *Politique Africaine* 46 (June 1992): 120-25.

26. See Said S. Samatar, *Somalia: A Nation in Turmoil* (London: The Minority Rights Group, August 1991): 33.

Crise Nationale et Crise Spatiale en Somalie[1]

Alain Gascon

La Somalie est l'Etat le plus homogène qui soit en Afrique au Sud du Sahara, hormis la minorité bantoue et les locuteurs du swahili de la côte, le somali est parlé par tous et tous professent l'Islam *shaf'ite*. Tous les auteurs insistent sur le modèle social que représente l'éleveur nomade, modèle qui prévaut encore en dépit de l'exode rural. Leurs travaux révèlent la richesse du patrimoine poétique partagé par tous les Somali.

Pourtant, cette unité n'a pas empêché les déchirements que l'on sait, longtemps mis sur le compte du partage colonial. Or, la chute de la "maison" Siyaad a entraîné la Somalie : "Nation in Search of a State" (Laitin & Samatar, 1987) dans un éclatement tel, qu'il faudrait maintenant plutôt dire : "Nation in Search of Herself". Maintes explications ont été données : les clans et les nomades "instables", la crise, le réveil de l'Islam... Aucune, cependant, ne tient compte de la gestion de l'espace dans la reproduction des systèmes sociaux de production pastorale et agro-pastorale : quel est le rapport à l'espace des Somali, quel espace produit une société d'éleveurs nomades et d'agro-pasteurs en crise ? Cet article tente de répondre à cette question.

Une forte unité?

On sait par expérience que l'usage d'une langue commune est un critère ni suffisant ni nécessaire à l'unité nationale: Renan et Mommsen en débattaient déjà au siècle dernier à propos de l'Alsace-Lorraine de langue germanique, mais partie intégrante[2] de la nation française. A l'hostilité des partisans de l'usage de l'arabe, s'est ajouté le scandale de l'utilisation de l'alphabet latin pour écrire le somali (D.D. Laitin & S.S. Samantar, 1987).

Alain Gascon, géographe, Laboratoire de Sociologie et de Géographie Africaines, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, France.

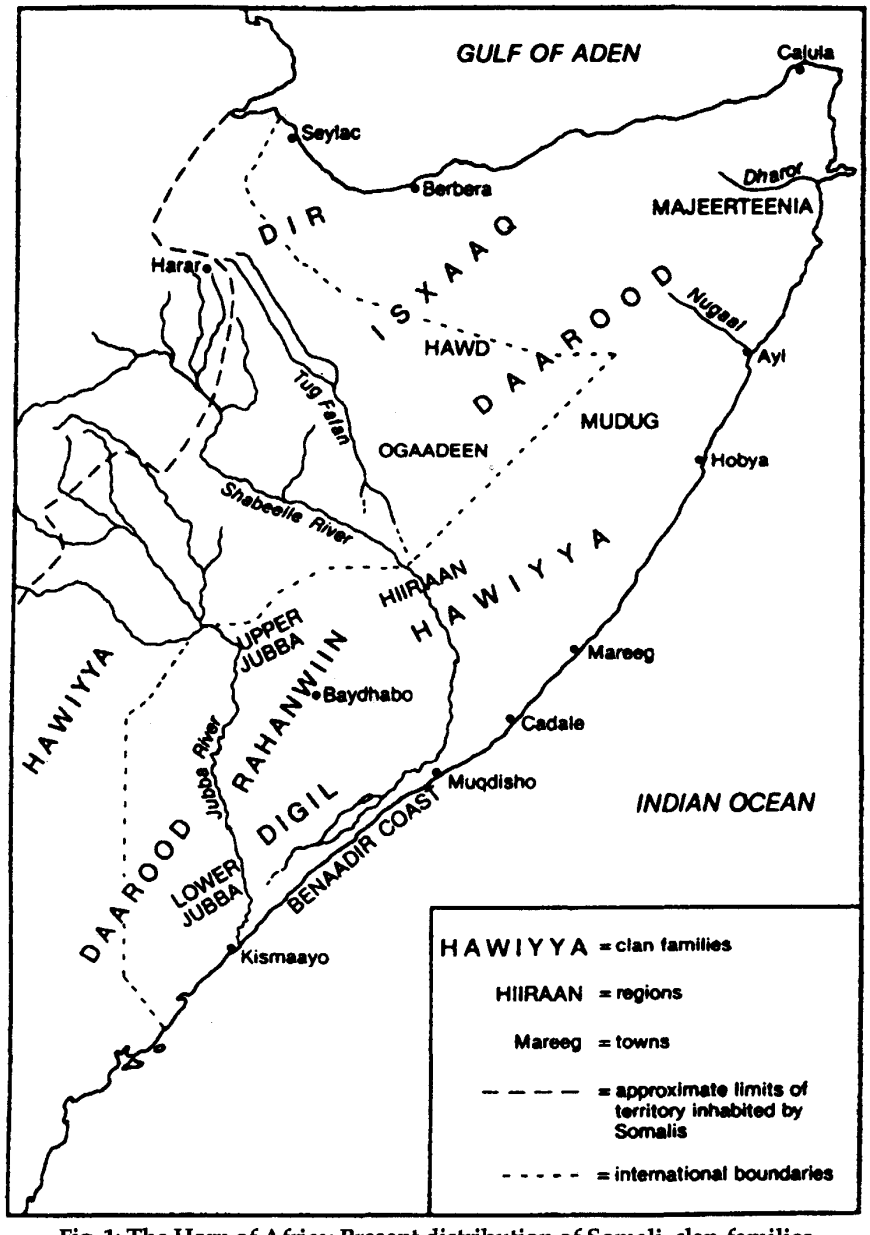

Fig. 1: The Horn of Africa: Present distribution of Somali clan-families
(From: L. V. Cassanelli)

La rivalité entre les confréries (Qadiriya, Ahmediya, Salihiya) divise profondément l'unité "mystique" de l'Islam somali (I.M. Lewis, 1982), les saints fondateurs étant assimilés aux ancêtres éponymes des clans.

La péninsule somali est incluse d'un bloc dans le Sahel; trop souvent on oublie que Mugdisho est à la latitude du Gabon, Sahel certes, mais Sahel équatorial ! Il faut introduire une double opposition entre la "Somalie heureuse"[3] du Nord,

rebord vigoureux du Rift d'Aden qui dépasse 2000 m, surplombe une *tihama*[4] torride (*guban*) et reçoit plus de750 mm de précipitations, le plateau aride du Hawd et la Mésopotamie somalienne où la courbe des pluies se relève vers le Sud.

Contrairement au Sahara, l'eau est accessible, notamment au pied des failles et le long des deux fleuves pérennes qui descendent des hauts plateaux d'Ethiopie, le Jubba et le Wabi Shabeele, le Nil de Mugdisho qui coule parallèlement à la côte sur 400 km au Benaadir : une Egypte avec deux Nils ! Manquant de longues séries pluviométriques, on pense que les récurrences sèches reviennent tous les dix ans avec des minima inter-stadaires tous les trois ou quatre ans (L.V. Cassanelli, 1982). Peut-on étendre à toute la péninsule la succession admise de quatre saisons : une saison sèche courte, *xaaga*, coupant la saison humide en deux sous-saisons humides, *gu* et *dayr*, s'opposant à la longue saison sèche, *jilaal*?

Les clans et les formes d'occupation de l'espace

Ce milieu naturel fragile où règne la précarité, est partagé selon la segmentation lignagère jusqu'à l'unité élémentaire de lignage, le *reer*, croisé avec les pactes territoriaux, les *xeer* (Fig. 1). Ces alliances temporaires regroupent des groupes voisins issus de clans différents qui s'engagent à défendre les pâturages et à payer le prix du sang. Ils sont conclus dans des assemblées, les *shir*, dont tous les membres sont égaux en droits et en devoirs : I.M. Lewis y identife l'institution fondamentale de la "pastoral democracy" qui régit les Somali. Au gré du rythme des précipitations, l'espace résidentiel, les hameaux enclos ou *gurri*, et l'espace technique, les parcours,sont redécoupés chaque année. Pour ma part, pour rendre compte de cette situation, je préfèrerais employer l'expression "anarchie pastorale"[5].

Les clans étaient aussi des instruments de gestion de l'espace de telle façon que la structure sociale fût reproduite. L.V. Cassanelli décrit fort bien la complémentarité ville-campagne qui fonctionnait en cas de sécheresse: les "bouches inutiles" étaient placées chez les parents dans les ports, les petits ruminants puis les bovins étaient sacrifiés pour acheter la nourriture à l'étranger afin de conserver aussi longtemps que possible une présence auprès des puits et des pâturages pour les réinvestir une fois la crise passée. Il remarque que les sécheresses coïncident avec un accroissement sensible des exportations d'animaux qui transparaît dans les séries statistiques coloniales italiennes.

Abstract:

National Identity and Territorial Crisis in Somalia

As a geographer involved in Somali studies, I have expressed a few thoughts about the reasons for the recent fragmentation of Somalia, the only homogeneous state in Africa south of the Sahara. This crisis, which is seen as a rivalry between clans, threatens the unity of Somalia.

It is a fact that several Somalias exist within the peninsula, each with a specific combination of settlement patterns and pastoral or agro-pastoral production systems. Somalia is in the equatorial Sahel zone and therefore is not prone to drought, in spite of its irregular rainfall. Water is more abundant in the south with the Jubba and the Wabi Shabeele rivers running through it and flooding the valleys every year, as well as in the northern mountains. Nonnomadic populations have settled in these more rainy areas. They have long been dependent on cattle breeders with whom they maintain clan allegiances and neighbourhood links. Each major drought jeopardizes these ties and results in a new spatial distribution of the Somalis within the peninsula.

Insufficient attention has been given to territorial segmentation, a consequence of clan division. This fragmentation has internal causes, such as rivalry among clans and Muslim brotherhoods, as well as external causes, such as colonial partition: the Italians were awarded the irrigated valleys and the urbanized coastal plain; the British occupied a few strategic locations within an area traversed by pastoral nomads whose clans fought for its control. Independent Somalia, which only takes in the two former European colonies, has ended neither the clan divisions nor the movements of populations inside the North and the South.

Although there is an overall determination to recapture Ogaadeen from Ethiopia, the feeling of national unity had little weight when confronted with a succession of climatic, economic and political crises. Each crisis renewed and widened the split between the North and the South.

International aid poured into Somalia in an effort to rescue the scores of refugees. The aid stimulated artificial economic activity in the South and fuelled the mafia-like style of Siad Barre's regime. In the North, the influx of refugees, the misappropriation of aid and massive cattle sales prevented the perpetuation of the social system of pastoral production and paved the way for revolt and secession. As Siad Barre's clan-based power dwindled, the area under his control shrank until it was eventually reduced to the town of Muqdisho.

Siad Barre's fall did not stop the process of fragmentation; it spread this process throughout Somalia, which is now threatened by partition. ■

Translated by Bernard Liger

Après l'épreuve, une nouvelle répartition des parcours s'instaurait dans la violence. Pendant l'été, pendant les pluies, les hommes migraient vers les pâturages du Hawd disputés entre *Isaaq* et *Ogaadeen*[6] (J. Markakis, 1989). Une autre complémentarité territoriale se formait avec les agriculteurs sédentaires des plateaux du Nord et des vallées et des mares du Sud, par le biais de la solidarité et de la sujétion claniques (Fig. 2).

On peut esquisser une géographie des formes d'occupation de l'espace au siècle dernier qui s'est prolongée jusqu'aux crises récentes. La Somalie des puits de clans, *ceel*, et des réservoirs, *basked*, correspond au Nord, au Nogaal et à l'Ogaadeen. La Mésopotamie et le Benaadir sont le domaine de villages d'agriculteurs égrennés le long des fleuves, parmi les forêts-galeries peuplées de Bantous, chasseurs, pêcheurs et cultivateurs temporaires, dans le bas Jubba. Autour de lacs temporaires de dérivation des hautes eaux, *deshek*, ou de mares pluviales, *war* ou *baali*, la culture de décrue fixe de gros villages (Fig. 3).

Au siècle dernier, les bénéfices de la vente des carcasses aux colonies européennes étaient réinvestis dans des plantations de coton, irriguées par des canaux dérivés de barrages sur le bas Wabi Shabeele. Elles étaient cultivées à l'aide d'esclaves achetés à Zanzibar. Une bande densément humanisée, perpendiculaire puis parallèle à la côte, formait l'hinterland du chapelet des ports du Benaadir, déjà intégré au marché international.

Les dynamiques spatiales et le partage colonial

La péninsule somali était déjà soumise à des formes économiques d'organisation de l'espace différentes et divergentes, avant le partage colonial.

Au Nord, un espace "fluide" était animé par les mouvements "browniens" autour des puits; et chaque variation du régime engendrait une nouvelle répartition des troupeaux et des hommes. Au Sud, un espace homogène était "polarisé" vers la côte extravertie.

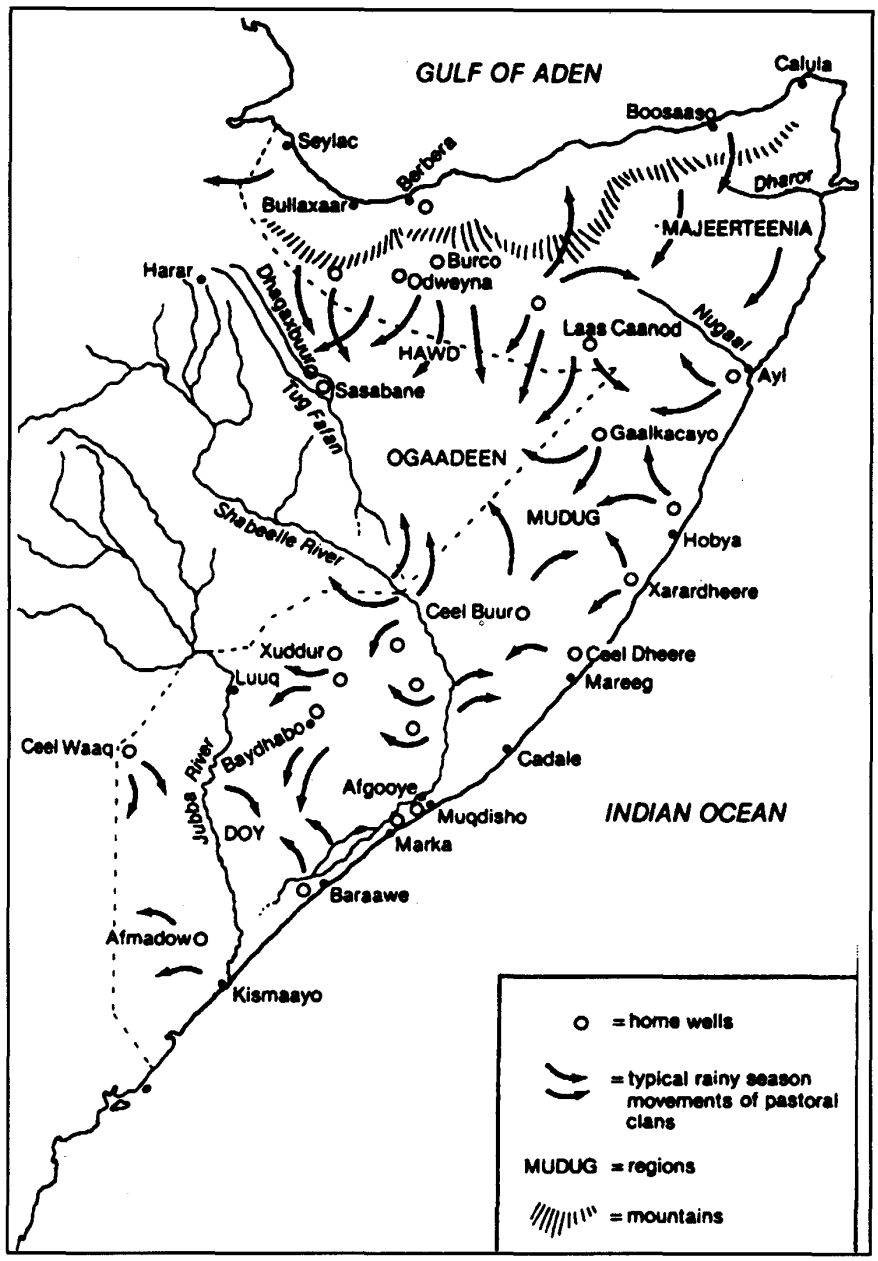

Fig. 2: Major patterns of Somali transhumance (twentieth century)
(From: L. V. Cassanelli)

La colonisation coïncida, engendra et fut également la conséquence de mouvements internes à la Corne de l'Afrique comme le prosélytisme des confréries musulmanes. *Aw Awees*, sheykh Uways, de Baraawe et ses disciples, *wadaad*, installèrent de nombreuses *zawiya* ou *jamaha* autour des tombeaux des saints. Elles furent particulièrement denses dans la Mésopotamie somalienne chez les cultivateurs hors-clans (C. Ahmed, 1989).

Les raids entrepris par les Ethiopiens après la prise de Harär par *ras* Mäkonnen, agirent comme un détona-

teur et firent voler en éclats le partage du territoire entre les clans-familles, segmentation territoriale et segmentation clanique demeurant intimement liés (H.S. Lewis, 1964). La jihad de sayyid *Maxamed Cabdulle Xasan* fut dirigée à la fois contre les *gaal*, les Européens, mais aussi contre ses ennemis de clans et de confréries (C. Ahmed, 1989). Jouant des rivalités coloniales, le sayyid se fixa à *Taleh*, une ville forteresse située à proximité des limites des zones d'influence des conquérants.

Le partage n'entrava les déplacements des éleveurs qu'après le retour de l'Ogaadeen et du Hawd à l'Ethiopie en 1955. Italiens et Britanniques autorisaient la transhumance vers le Hawd alors que les Ethiopiens tentaient de la contrôler afin de percevoir des impôts et de limiter les infiltrations de guérilleros dans le "glacis" du Harär, après l'indépendance de la Somalie en 1960 (J. Markakis, 1987). Jusqu'au milieu des années 1970, les camions qui se rendaient de Hargeysa vers le Sud, coupaient nuitamment par la voie directe, l'Ogadén en territoire éthiopien, en toute impunité.

Les projets des puissances européennes étaient différents. Les Anglais furent entraînés dans la colonisation pour déloger les Français installés à Seylac en face d'Aden. Ils s'engagèrent dans la guerre contre le sayyid pour ne point perdre la face. Ils maintinrent une présence militaire minimale à partir des deux ports, Berbera et Seylac et d'une ville à l'intérieur, Hargeysa [7].

Pour les Italiens, la côte de la Somalie était le tremplin de la conquête future des hautes terres salubres d'Ethiopie. Maîtres du Benaadir puis du bas Jubba, du littoral urbanisé et de l'arrière-pays fertile mis en valeur par une population dense d'agriculteurs, les Italiens remontèrent le cours des deux fleuves, délaissant la Majerteen et le Nogaal d'ailleurs traversés par la frontière du Somaliland. Ils ne développèrent pas une colonie de peuplement, mais découpèrent de grandes plantations cotonnières, sucrières et bananières sur le bas Wabi Shabeele (Genale, Villabruzzi, maintenant Jowhar) pour les besoins de la métropole.

Hormis les cadres européens, la main-d'oeuvre était indigène, salariés permanents et ouvriers temporaires réquisitionnés. En proportion, la population italienne de Mugdisho était beaucoup moins nombreuse que celle d'Asmära sur les plateaux d'Erythrée ! En dehors de cette région au Nord-Est du Wabi Shabeele, le seul établissement italien important était les salines de Ras-Hafun, enclave extravertie vers l'exportation, en liquidation judiciaire en 1937.

Les sécheresses récurrentes, la guerre, la croissance démographique, l'explosion urbaine et l'intégration au marché international agirent comme un révélateur des déséquilibres entre les régions et les aggravèrent.

La même évolution divergente, la même dynamique spatiale contradictoire se poursuivit jusqu'à l'indépendance, sous la tutelle de l'Administration Fiduciaire Italienne de la Somalie[8] au Sud et des Anglais au Nord.

Les dynamiques spatiales et la crise des systèmes sociaux de production pastorale et agro-pastorale

Cette crise resta sous-jacente jusqu'à la Révolution de 1969, jusqu'à l'instauration sous la férule de Siyaad Barre, d'un Etat fort, centralisé, nationaliste et se réclamant du marxisme-léninisme modernisateur et niveleur de toutes les traditions qui assuraient l'articulation entre l'espace résidentiel et l'espace technique. Les sécheresses récurrentes, la guerre, la croissance démographique, l'explosion urbaine et l'intégration au marché international agirent comme un révélateur des déséquilibres entre les régions et les aggravèrent. Alors que le gouvernement et les organisations internationales de développement prétendaient agir dans le but de réduire les écarts régionaux, les éleveurs du Centre et du Nord ressentirent les mesures d'aide impulsées depuis la capitale comme un complot visant à les affamer par la mise en défens de périmètres irrigués de plus en plus vastes et à les assujettir par les programmes de sédentarisation. La dérive maffieuse du pouvoir central ne fit que confirmer ces accusations.

La "Révolution" de 1969 et les dynamiques spatiales

L'indépendance n'entraîna pas de rupture radicale dans les dynamiques spatiales mises en oeuvre pour la reproduction des systèmes sociaux de production. Les plantations bananières, cotonnières et sucrières du Benaadir exportaient largement vers le marché de l'ancienne métropole. De grandes sociétés italiennes implantées depuis l'avant-guerre continuaient la tradition coloniale. De petits exploitants somaliens pratiquaient une polyculture irriguée à laquelle ils avaient intégré des cultures de rente. Une industrie de transformation des produits agricoles s'était installée à Mugdisho et dans les environs.

La Révolution de 1969 instaura le socialisme et procéda à la nationalisation des plantations et des entreprises industrielles possédées par les étrangers (P. Decreane, 1977). Les exploitants somaliens furent enserrés dans un système de livraisons obligatoires. Des fermes d'Etat mécanisées sur le modèle des *sovkhoz*, tentèrent une céréaliculture sèche sur les plateaux de la Mésopotamie et du Nord en recourant à la mobilisation de la main-d'oeuvre "volontaire".

L'impact spatial de la sécheresse

Le bilan de la catastrophe de 1973-75 a été dressé par P.Decreane et T. Labahn, celui des crises plus récentes est plus difficile à établir dans le désordre croissant qui s'installa dans les dernières années de Siyaad.

Le cheptel subit des pertes importantes et ce furent les régions du Nord qui furent le plus touchées. Les cultures irriguées du Sud souffrirent mais jamais les fleuves ne se tarirent alors que les puits et les mares s'asséchèrent. L'agriculture sèche et le *dry farming* pratiqués au Centre et au Nord ne survécurent pas à la succession des crises climatiques[9]. La sécheresse *Dhabaadheer* (1973-75) n'a pas seulement touché les hommes (17 000 morts, 300 000 déplacés) mais aussi le cheptel: un tiers a péri (273 000 dromadaires, 4,4 millions de chèvres et de moutons et 289 000 bovins). Cinq années d'investissements ont été perdues. Dans les années 1980-85, la Somalie importait les 2/3 de sa nourriture (dont la moitié sous forme d'aide). Et la sécheresse frappa à nouveau en 1984-85 et en 1987 au Nord et au Centre.

La crise climatique atteignit certes une ampleur exceptionnelle et frappa un pays soumis à un fort accroissement de sa charge démographique; mais, la "détribalisation" avait affaibli le système clanique. Le gouvernement tenait également à montrer son efficacité et profita de l'occasion pour précipiter la modernisation des systèmes de production "archaïques" comme on le fit en 1984-85 en Ethiopie. La mesure d'urgence la plus spectaculaire fut le transfert autoritaire, par avion, de 300 000 éleveurs vers le Sud. On les installa dans des villages sur les plateaux et dans les vallées où on les convia fortement à devenir agriculteurs. On tenta même la reconversion en pêcheurs, pour un petit nombre, néanmoins.

Les projets de développement visèrent en priorité à étendre les surfaces irriguées aux dépens de l'agriculture de décrue par la construction de retenues sur le Wabi Shabeele et sur le Jubba à Fanoole : on ne pouvait étendre l'irrigation qu'au Sud. Les périmètres furent consacrés en priorité aux cultures d'exportation et aux cultures industrielles qui alimentèrent de nouvelles usines de transformation (sucrerie de Jowhar, cotonnerie de Balcad) situées dans le Benaadir, à Mugdisho et à Kismaayo. Ces entreprises d'Etat réalisaient en fait des

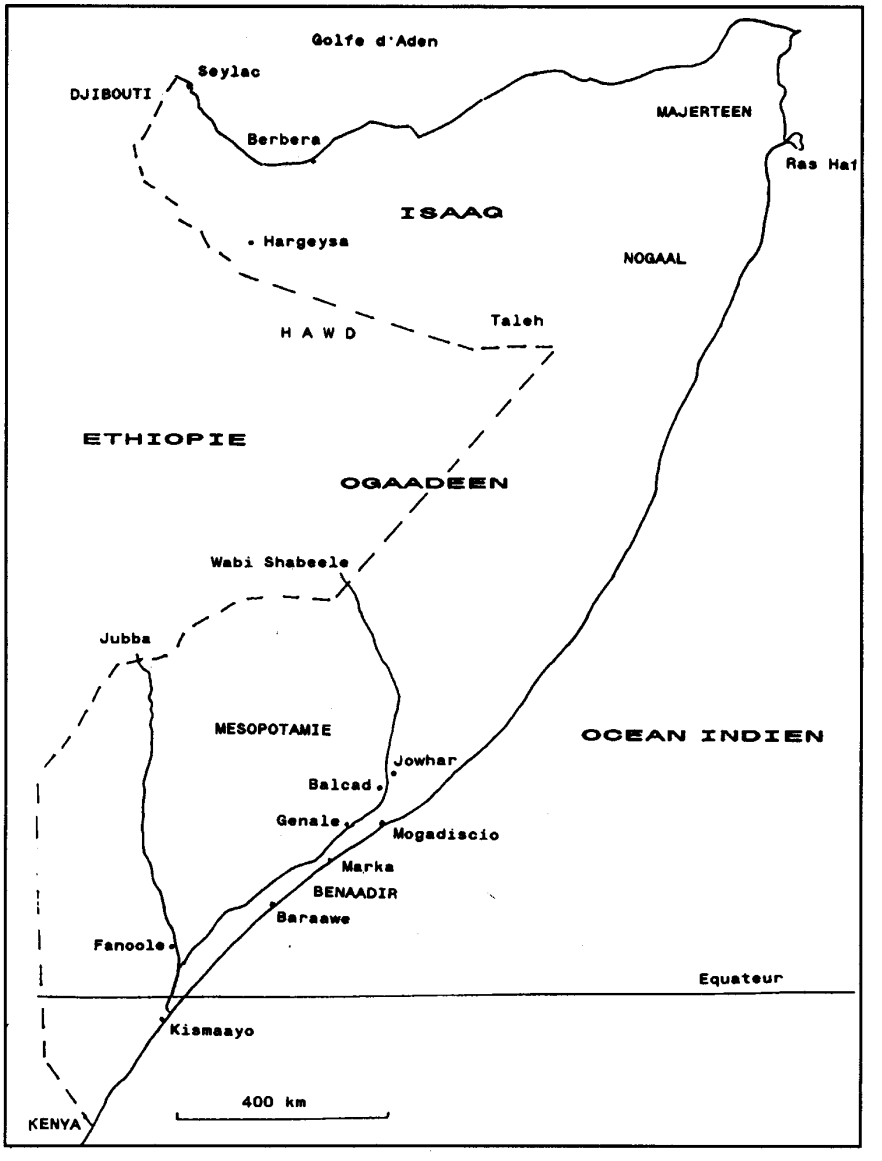

Fig. 3: Somalie

projets conçus pendant la période coloniale, mais financés par des capitaux étrangers, arabes surtout après l'adhésion à la Ligue Arabe, et exécutés par des techniciens des pays de l'Est.

L'Italie boudant les produits de Somalie depuis la nationalisation de ses intérêts, on chercha des débouchés en Arabie et dans les pays du Golfe (où vivait une forte diaspora somalienne). La part des exportations de bestiaux vers les pays arabes augmenta jusqu'à atteindre 90% du total à la fin des années 1970. En 1983, l'Arabie invoquant des motifs sanitaires, diminua de moitié ses achats destinés au pélerins de la Mecque et plongea l'économie somalienne dans un marasme dont elle se releva incomplètement même après la reprise des achats séoudiens (J. Janzen, 1986; A.J. Gray, 1989).

Cette irruption brutale de l'économie de marché monétarisée parmi les éleveurs, rompit les solidarités

traditionnelles déjà distendues et introduisit la compétition individuelle pour la maîtrise de l'espace technique par la multiplication des réservoirs bétonnés, enjeux d'affrontements sanglants au Nord et dans le Hawd entre *Isaaq* et *Ogaadeen*. (J. Markakis, 1989). Ces conflits préparèrent puis alimentèrent la rébellion du Mouvement National Somali dirigée et soutenue par les *Isaaq*[10].

La guerre aggrave la crise spatiale

La guerre somalo-éthiopienne (1977-78) a gonflé le déficit, accumulé les pertes humaines et animales et entraîné un afflux de réfugiés. Le régime s'engagea dans une politique d'endettement qui le conduisit à passer sous la tutelle du FMI (la dette extérieure bondit de 1 milliard de $ en 1980 à 1,8 milliard de $ en 1987 et équivalait au PIB). L'industrie, déjà désorganisée par les nationalisations s'effondra et la Somalie couvrit de moins en moins ses importations. De plus, l'aide internationale qui représenta 40% des ressources du budget somalien, était distribuée à partir de la capitale et parvenait au Nord non seulement en retard, mais diminuée par les détournements. Cette manne fut pour la Somalie, toute proportion gardée, ce que la manne pétrolière fut pour les Etats du Golfe ; elle acheva de désorganiser l'économie et les relations sociales. Le pays s'accoutuma à la dépendance vis-à-vis de l'extérieur, si bien que le plan quinquennal de 1982-86 aurait dû être financé à 80% par l'aide.

600 000 à 1 000 000 de réfugiés affluèrent, chassés par les combats, la collectivisation de l'agriculture et la 'villagisation' en Ethiopie. Pour la plupart, ils se fixèrent dans des camps à la frontière au Nord et au Sud. Au Sud, les sols fertiles et l'eau abondante des deux fleuves offraient des sites d'accueil alors que le Nord soumis à des récurrences sèches, était moins favorable à leur établissement ; pourtant moins nombreux, leur poids y était insupportable.

Les camps de réfugiés jouent un rôle décisif dans la "citadinisation" des éleveurs. Les réfugiés ont été déplacés le plus souvent en camion, si ce n'est en avion, sur de longues distances et pour de longues périodes : les liens claniques se sont distendus et les pactes de voisinage, rompus. De plus, les camps présentent un habitat léger proche de l'habitat "spontané" des bidonvilles et sont organisés en quartiers qui les habituent à "consommer" des services qu'ils trouveront en ville. Ceux qui sortent des camps se dirigent naturellement vers les bidonvilles.

Les réfugiés et le croît naturel submergent les villes

La Somalie dans les frontières de 1938[11], était peuplée de 1 200 000 habitants ; quarante ans plus tard, P. Decreane et J. Janzen estimaient la population à plus de 5 000 000 d'habitants, soit une multiplication par plus de quatre ! A.J. Gray fixe le rythme de croissance à 3,3% par an, soit un doublement en moins de 20 ans. Au début des années 1980, 400 000 habitants vivaient à Mugdisho, soit dix fois plus qu'en 1938.

Hormis Berbera et Hargeysa, la plupart des villes sont situées au Benaadir dont le poids démographique s'accroît encore. Selon A.J. Gray, la population urbaine connaît une progression annuelle de 6,5%. Les dernières évaluations antérieures aux combats de 1988, avancent une population de 2 000 000 d'habitants à Mugdisho qui regrouperait entre les 2/5 et les 2/7 des Somaliens !

Encore aussi nombreux que les agriculteurs et les citadins réunis, il y a dix ans, les éleveurs sont maintenant minoritaires, moins nombreux même que les habitants des villes! Les ventes d'animaux se sont poursuivies à un rythme tel, que la reproduction du troupeau est menacée comme le montre la recrudescence des vols de bestiaux jusqu'au Kenya. Soldats, policiers et fonctionnaires payés irrégulièrement, ont toléré ces pratiques quand ils n'étaient pas complices. Les guerres rituelles entre les clans sont devenues des raids prédateurs !

"Le bateau ivre" du "maire de Mugdisho"[12]

Avant de succomber, le président avait joué pour durer, les segments de clans les uns contre autres, amenuisant peu à peu sa "base clanique" et par conséquent sa base territoriale. Il se maintint tant qu'il partagea les entreprises et les revenus de l'Etat et redistribua l'aide internationale entre ses fidèles, membres de son clan et de sa propre famille (D. Compagnon). Le népotisme érigé en système de gouvernement et de prédation entraîna une appropriation familiale de l'Etat, sa patrimonialisation. Sa chute brisa même le seul lien qui unissait l'opposition.

Cette dérive maffieuse, cette errance au gré d'alliances de rencontre[13], acheva de dévaluer l'image de l'Etat comme garant de l'espace économique national et provoqua un repli sur l'espace technique porteur de la reproduction des deux principaux systèmes sociaux de production. Le morcellement actuel du territoire national renvoie à la fois à la segmentation spatiale et à la segmentation sociale où le système clanique fournit des signes de reconnaissance collectifs. N'est-il pas troublant qu'un des romans de Nurrudin Farah s'intitule précisément "Maps" ?

Il est sûr que le partage colonial n'a pas favorisé l'unification d'un espace économique somalien ; notamment l'Ogadén entre les mains des Ethiopiens et enfoncé comme un coin entre le Somaliland et la Somalie ex-italienne, a bloqué et ralenti les rapports entre les deux régions. Ce partage recouvrait en dernière analyse, de vieilles divisions

Le népotisme érigé en système de gouvernement et de prédation entraîna une appropriation familiale de l'Etat, sa patrimonialisation. Sa chute brisa même le seul lien qui unissait l'opposition.

claniques, religieuses mais séparait également deux systèmes de production dont la logique de la reproduction spatiale conduisait à la mise en oeuvre de dynamiques divergentes. Selon A. Bourgeot, le même processus est à l'oeuvre au Mali et au Niger entre le Nord parcouru par les éleveurs nomades touaregs et le Sud, domaine des agro-pasteurs et des agriculteurs.

Cette réflexion n'est une prise de position ni dans le débat ni dans le conflit qui opposent les factions, groupes et partis; c'est un appel à la prise en compte des dynamiques spatiales dans la construction du territoire national comme élément de la constitution de l'identité nationale. ▩

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Notes

1. Cet article reprend le texte remanié de ma communication au Forum : "La guerre civile en Somalie : quand ? comment ? pourquoi ?" organisé par Maxamed Cabdi Maxamed (Association Amitié Franco-Somalienne) à l'Institut du Monde Arabe (Paris 7-8 Avril 1992).
2. Sur ce débat et la conférence prononcée en 1882 par E. Renan en réponse aux historiens allemands (Mommsen) qui justifiaient l'annexion de la province parce que ses habitants parlaient un dialecte germanique, voir les ouvrages suivants :

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3. par analogie avec l'Arabie heureuse.
4. en arabe côte désertique et brûlante.
5. En la débarassant de toute connotation péjorative en revenant au sens originel fort, au sens de Proudhon qui écrivait anarchie : "a-narchie" avec un trait d'union, pour marquer son opposition radicale à toute forme de gouvernement.
6. *Isaaq* ou *Isxaaq* , du nom de l'ancêtre éponyme : l'un des six grands clans somali, majoritaire dans l'ex-Somaliland britannique. *Ogaadeen*: l'un des clans de la grande famille des *Daarood*, a donné son nom au territoire du même nom, souvent écrit Ogadén selon la graphie éthiopienne (cf. carte).
7. En 1940, face à l'agression italienne, les Britanniques évacuèrent le Somaliland sans combattre et, après la guerre, ils envisagèrent de céder le couloir de Seylac à l'Ethiopie en échange des *Reserved Aeras*, Hawd et Ogaadeen (A. Gascon & B. Hirsch).
8. L'Italie reçut le mandat de l'ONU sur son ancienne colonie en 1950, pour dix ans.
9. L'exemple le plus connu est le camp de Tog Wajale proche de la frontière éthiopienne, au Nord.
10. Mouvement connu sous ses initiales anglaises : S.N.M. (Somali National Movement); il exige l'indépendance du Somaliland et a pris le pouvoir à Hargeysa.
11. Ex-Somalie italienne augmentée de l'Ogadén éthiopien mais diminuée du Somaliland.
12. Sobriquet donné à Siyaad dans les deux dernières années de son "règne" alors que ses partisans ne contrôlaient plus que la capitale et ses faubourgs.
13. Aligné sur l'URSS jusqu'à la guerre avec l'Ethiopie (1977), Siyaad rejoignit ensuite "l'Occident". Le détournement manifeste des subsides dénoncés par la presse ternit l'image du régime qui se tourna alors vers le plus offrant : Arabie Séoudite, Irak, Libye, etc.

Factors Affecting the Treatment of Kenyan-Somalis and Somali Refugees in Kenya: A Historical Overview

Ogenga Otunnu

This paper is an attempt to explain the Kenyan authorities' inhumane treatment of Kenyan-Somalis and Somali refugees in terms of long-standing conflicts between Kenya and Somalia, and the Kenyan authorities' reaction to what they perceived as a "credible threat" from the North-Eastern Province. This long history of conflict and tension has created a distorted and hostile image of the Somalis as "enemies" of the Kenyan state. The image, real or imaginary, has continued to influence the Kenyan authorities' behaviour towards the Somalis, which has led to gross violations of human rights.[1] This, however, is not an exhaustive explanation for the treatment of the two groups. Other variables, not directly examined here include the nature of the postcolonial state, the broader question of political legitimacy, the nature of the ruling class and the role of violence as a response to state repression.

In order to understand the development of this image and its implications for Kenyan Somalis and Somali refugees in Kenya, it is imperative to highlight some of the critical elements of the conflicts between the Kenyan government and the inhabitants of the North-Eastern Province of Kenya (which is the major part of what was formerly the Northern Frontier District), and between the Kenyan government and the government of Somalia. The conflict has its origins in the colonial era. At the turn of the century, Britain extended her control over this semiarid area. One of the foremost scholars on the region, A.A. Castagno, cites three reasons for this action: 1) to "provide a buffer between Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia on the one side, and the East African railway and the white settlers in the highlands on the other"; 2) to deter the Ethiopian imperial power from annexing Boran and Gabro; and 3) to check "the Somali south-westward expansion."

To effect some of these policies and minimize ethnic and clan conflicts, administrative borders were redrawn, and in 1909 Somalis were not allowed beyond the Somali-Galla line. However, these policies caused Somali resistance to British colonialism to escalate.[2] The colonial regime responded by declaring (through its Outlying District Ordinance) the Northern Frontier District (NFD) a closed district in 1926. By this draconian ordinance, colonial administrators were given sweeping powers to deal with any form of dissent or resistance. This was followed by the Special District Ordinance, which imposed severe restriction on movement to or from the "Special District."[3] With this administrative control mechanism, Somalis were required to obtain special approval or passes to enter other provinces. It is clear, therefore, that this region did not generally share the same colonial experience with the rest of the country. To be precise, no serious attempt was made by the colonial regime to foster the socio-economic and political integration of this area into the rest of the country.

This long history of conflict and tension has created a distorted and hostile image of the Somalis as "enemies" of the Kenyan state.

In a relentless attempt to address the grievances of the inhabitants of the area and revitalize the quest for Somali unity in eastern Africa, the Somali Youth League (SYL), founded in 1943 in Muqdisho, established itself in the NFD, the Ogaden region of Ethiopia and in British Somaliland.[4] However, in keeping with the colonial response to the development of African nationalism in the country, political parties were banned in the NFD and the leadership of SYL was exiled between 1948 and 1960.

With the lifting of proscription on Somali parties in the area in 1960 and the unity between Somali and British Somaliland on July 1, 1960 to form the Somali Republic, the struggle for self-determination intensified in the NFD. The Northern Province People's Progressive Party, the Northern Province Democratic Party, the People's National League, and the National Political Movement (Nairobi) were organized to champion the cause for the NFD's unification with the Somali Republic. On the other hand, the Northern Province People's National Union, the Galla Political Union (Nairobi) and the United Ogaden Somali Association (Nairobi and Garissa) were organized to oppose any union with Somali Republic. The former were better organized and represented the aspirations of the majority of the people in the area.[5]

The development of modern nationalist politics reflected the nature of the relations between the larger colonial state and the region; furthermore, the minority faction in the area that opposed unification with Somalia would not only become reliable agents of central government but would also influence administrative policies in their own interest and to preserve the status quo. As agents of the central government, these "collaborators" took upon themselves the delicate task of balancing the conflicting interests between the state and "their limited constituency." Whether or not it was by their own volition, this group was promoted as the "legitimate" voice of the Somali population in the country.

Ogenga Otunnu is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History at York University and a Researcher in the Centre for Refugee Studies.

During the Lancaster House Constitutional Conference on Kenya's independence (February-April 1962), the thorny issue of Somali self-determination was raised by members of the NFD and Somali delegations. The NFD delegation and the Somali government, the latter not officially a party to the conference, demanded that the NFD question be addressed before Kenyan independence. As Castagno points out, the NFD and Somali government

> *insisted that the responsibility for settlement was exclusively Britain's and that the Somali claims should by no means be used by Britain to retard the granting of Kenyan independence. KANU and KADU categorically rejected the secessionist proposal, and some members of KANU rejoined that the Somalis in the NFD could emigrate to Somalia if they did not want to accept Kenyan administration. KADU's members alleged that the dominant view in the NFD favoured a Kenyan regional government of the type advocated by KADU's leaders. Ethiopia also interposed her views. She supported the Kenyan leaders and exerted pressure on the British government to reject the Somali claim, on the ground that acquiescence to Somali expansionism would lead to "balkanization" of the area. Thereafter, vitriolic exchanges between Somalia and Ethiopia and intermittent border clashes increased the tension that had long marked the Somali-Ethiopian border question.... President Aden Abdullah Osman of Somalia presented his government's view that self-determination—when employed to unify and enlarge an existing state (as in the Somali case)—could not be regarded as balkanization.*[6]

British Colonial Secretary Reginald Maudling responded to the NFD-Somali request by announcing on April 6, 1962 that a commission would be appointed to inquire into the state of public opinion in the NFD.[7] In December 1962, the commission's report was conclusive. It stated that the majority of the people overwhelmingly supported the unification of the area with Somalia. However, the British government acrobatically violated the spirit and the findings of the commission; it quickly rushed through its own *Report of the Regional Boundaries Commission*. The latter report deliberately recommended keeping the area within Kenya by simply redrawing regional borders.[8] According to the Somali government, Britain's reversal of policy on this matter was due to pressure from Ethiopia against reunification and the concession both Britain and the Kenya African National Union (KANU) made over the question of white settlers in Kenya.[9] Betrayed by Britain's move, the Somali government severed diplomatic relations with the U.K. on March 18, 1963. Similarly, the majority of the inhabitants of the area rejected the new border policy and intensified its armed struggle against the colonial regime. To counter the heightened insurgency activities in the area, a state of emergency was declared as Kenya obtained independence. In short, Kenya's independence did not mean freedom from subjugation and harassment in the area.

> *less explicit was the resolution on Somaliland, which stated that "the Conference supports the struggle of the Somali people for their independence and recognizes their right to self-determination." The omission of any reference to Somali unity is significant, but the reference to "the right to self-determination" was ambiguous, and could be interpreted as implying support for secession as an expression of self-determination.*[10]

The Conference of Independent African States in April 1958 was far less compromising on the general questions of boundary and the reunification of national groups divided by colonialism. In his summary of the conclusions of the conference, President Nkrumah of Ghana pointed out that: "Our conference came to the conclusion that in the interests of that Peace which is so essential, we should respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of one another...."[11] The All-African Peoples Conference in December 1958 sounded another conflicting position:

> *Be it resolved and it is hereby resolved that All-African Peoples Conference that the Conference: (a) denounces artificial frontiers drawn by imperialist Powers to divide the peoples of Africa, particularly those which cut across ethnic groups and divide people of the same stock; (b) call for the abolition or adjustment of such frontiers at an early date; (c) calls upon the Independent States of Africa to support permanent solution to this problem founded upon the true wishes of the people....*[12]

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The struggle for the unification of a Somali nation was also pursued through regional and continental bodies. As a matter of fact, Somalia attempted to identify its quest for unity through the broader quest for pan-Africanism. The Somali question, however, received mixed support, partly reflecting the ideological divide between the radicals and the moderate camps among nationalist politicians. Saadia Touval made the following observation on the First Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Conference in Cairo, December 1957:

> *Most explicit in its endorsement of irredentist claims was the resolution on Morocco, which stated that "the Conference strongly supports the demand of Morocco for the return of areas still dominated by imperialism in order to ensure the unity and complete independence of Morocco".... Somewhat*

However, with the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, the pendulum finally swung in favour of the commitment to territorial integrity and respect for existing national borders.[13] Thus, contrary to previous

rhetoric about the illegitimacy and artificiality of colonial borders, the OAU showed that African leaders were not willing to relinquish their territorial possessions. To be sure, the OAU agreed that borders of postindependence African states were artificial. However, at the same time it maintained that the survival of the borders is preferable to the endless problems that would come up once they are critically questioned.[14] This position, which supports the status quo, is part of the larger commitment in theory to the principle of noninterference in the domestic affairs of other African states. In this context, self-determination by Somalis in Kenya (North-Eastern Province), Ethiopia (Ogaden and sections of the Haud and Bale) and Djibouti (Afar and Issa regions of the former French Somaliland) or by any other group is regarded as illegitimate and illusionary.

In postcolonial Kenya, armed encounters continued between the Kenyan security forces and loosely organized Somali groups (referred to as *Shiftas* or "bandits" by the Kenyan government). The latter were supported directly and indirectly by the Somali government. It is reported that between 1964 and 1967, some 2,000 Somalis were massacred by Kenyan security forces.[15] Accordingly, the OAU intervened to negotiate what it preferred to consider exclusively as a border dispute between Kenya and Somalia. After the OAU summit in Kinshasa, a negotiated armistice between the two states was reached under the chairmanship of President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia in October 1967.[16] Although the negotiated settlement scaled down hostilities between the two states and halted the four-year revolt in northeastern Kenya, the question of Somali unification, which was the root of the crisis in the Horn of Africa, was left unresolved. According to *Africa Contemporary Record*, the settlement also meant different things to Kenya and Somalia:

> *In a public speech on October 20, President Kenyatta referred to the dispute as "a little quarrel" which had been reconciled, and announced a relaxation of the 5-year state of emergency in the North-Eastern Province. In contrast with this, Prime Minister Egal, speaking to the majority political party in Mogadishu on October 14, said that his Government's policy was to 'stand on one leg ready for war and with the other ready for peace.'*[17]

Pressure for the unification was kept alive by various Somali groups in eastern Africa. In mid-1974 the United Liberation Front of Western Somali handed a memorandum to delegates at the OAU Summit in Muqdisho, demanding the return of the disputed territory to Somalia. The response to the memorandum by the attorney general of Kenya, Charles Njonjo, summarized the familiar official view of the government: "Kenya could never agree to surrender part of her territory. Kenyans, be they Borans or Somalis, who did not support Kenya 'should pack their camels and go to Somalia'."[18] While the message and the tone were not new, the implications for the inhabitants of the area, however, were significant. Expelling inhabitants of the area to Somalia became a strategy for resolving the question of self-determination. Even peaceful and democratic dissent to government policies in the area would now be lumped with other forms of dissent, so that anyone partaking in any form of dissent in the region would be seen as an "enemy" of the state. This reinforced the image of the inhabitants of the area as "aliens," whose loyalty to Kenya was always questionable.

Tensions between Kenya and Somalia, however, were soon overshadowed by a more profound conflict between Ethiopia and Kenya, the Ogaden war. This war was a result of both internal and external contradictions.

Tensions between Kenya and Somalia, however, were soon overshadowed by a more profound conflict between Ethiopia and Kenya, the Ogaden war. This war was a result of both internal and external contradictions. Local conflicts arising from long and uncompromising territorial disputes between Somalia and Ethiopia were aggravated by superpower involvement and rivalry in the region. To be sure, border clashes based on the Somali question had been sporadic and all previous engagements had been won by Ethiopia. After the overthrow of the civilian regime of Prime Minister Ebrahim Egal in October 1969, the new military regime in Somalia moved swiftly to reorganize its military capability to surpass that of its opponent, Ethiopia. In 1974, Somalia signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union, which also allowed the Soviet Union to build extensive military facilities at Berbera on the Red Sea coast. The treaty alarmed the West—"conservative Arab regimes" across the Red Sea and Kenya. The threat this treaty created was aptly summarized by the U.S.: "the strategic Gulf to Cape route had now fallen under the Soviet threat."[19]

Ethiopia, which had granted the United States facilities at the Kagnew Base outside Asmara and had benefited from enormous U.S. military assistance since the 1950s, faced a serious socio-political crisis following the October 1974 military coup/revolution.[20] Specifically, the struggles between the Ethiopian left and the *Dergue* from 1975 to 1978 led to a reign of terror in the country. The crisis in Ethiopia, therefore, provided the regime in Somalia with a somewhat false opportunity to attempt a military solution to the Somali question by annexing the Ogaden.[21]

As it is now well known, the superpowers dramatically changed client states—the U.S. backed Somalia and the Soviet Union backed Ethiopia. With one of the largest armament airlifts in contemporary African history, the Soviet Union and Cuba made it possible for Ethiopian troops to route the Somalian military in the Ogaden in

1978.[22] When the war ended in July 1979, President Moi of Kenya visited Ethiopia and, in turn, President Mengistu of Ethiopia visited Kenya in December 1980 in a move to strengthen the defence cooperation between the two states. The fact that the Kenyan government was at that time promoting a fervent anti-Marxist, anticommunist ideology, while the Ethiopian government was using Marxist dogma to purge government bureaucrats and opponents who were branded as "capitalist roaders," did not appear to deter the two governments from strengthening relations. In fact, their mutual opposition to the Somali government's territorial claims and to Somali nationalism within their respective territories were clearly major points of agreement around which forms of cooperation could be worked out. This should not come as much of a surprise, however, for anti-Marxist dogma in Kenya and anticapitalist dogma in Ethiopia were used respectively as ideological weapons for silencing or bludgeoning political opposition. One regime might find the other's political program unpalatable, but the tacit agreement demonstrated in these actions is that it does not matter what ideology one side or the other is using, as long as it is meant to achieve the same ends.

The fact that Kenya and Somalia had a common arms supplier (the United States) and similar U.S. military bases on their soil did not disturb the Kenya-Ethiopia anti-Somalia alliance. To be sure, the U.S. did not support Somalia's border claims and quest for "Greater Somalia." The stated U.S. position was that provision of armaments to Somalia were "conditional upon a nonaggressive posture towards Kenya by Somalia." Tensions between Kenya and Somalia were thereby reduced.[23] The strategic regional aspirations of the major players in the Cold War had superseded the aspirations of Somalis who were struggling for unification. As far as Kenya was concerned, Somalia's failed adventure in the Ogaden was a clear reminder of the determination of the regime in Muqdisho to realize its vaulting ambitions through whatever means, including infiltrating north-eastern Kenya. Convinced that there was a real and potential threat there, the Kenyan government increased its coercive military presence in the area.[24]

While the growth of superpower involvement in the region (including in Egypt and the Sudan) from the 1970s until the demise of the Soviet Union may have been primarily attributable to the region's strategic position in relation to the oil-producing Middle East, client-states faced with enormous internal problems encouraged the superpowers to expand their role in the region. Writing in 1984, Peter Woodward pointed out that:

> *Troubled client-states may expect help from their external patrons to deal with political and economic difficulties: indeed, these may be presented in such a light as to actively encourage the involvement of the super-powers. Allegations that subversive activities in the domestic arena are being organised by "communists and revolutionaries" on the one hand, or "feudalists and capitalist lackeys" on the other, quickly become the language of describing opposition threats, however far they may be removed from the real complexities of the political and economic problems faced by most states in the region.*[25]

Although superpower involvement in local politics led to increased state repression, increased violations of human rights and increasing numbers of refugees, external support sustained the regimes of Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya, each of which were facing a crisis of legitimacy on the domestic front.

In the 1980s border incidents and general insecurity in the North-Eastern Province provoked severe military retribution. Kenyan security forces responded with brutal military operations in the area, following an ambush in which a Kenyan government officer was killed in June 1981. In another incident in early 1984, the army massacred some 400 civilians.[26] On February 20, 1989 the Kenyan government reported that Somalia armed forces invaded the Sebule border area, wounded a number of Kenyans and killed six elephants.[27] In September 1989 the Kenyan government reported that four Kenyan policemen were killed, four other people were injured and some policemen were captured, following an attack on the small town of Garissa by Somalia armed forces.[28] Kenya's security forces reacted to these incidents by using force totally out of proportion with the level of threat that the Somali dissidents posed to the security of the area. Violence was employed arbitrarily, unpredictably and brutally against people who were deemed "enemies" of the state. Perhaps the Kenyan government's strategy was to deter future disturbances in the area.

By 1989 the political situation in Somalia was leading to civil war, social disintegration and the collapse of the state. In response, the Kenyan government shifted its focus from "troubles originating" from Somalia to its local poaching problem. The increasing incidence of poaching in Kenya's game parks, particularly in Tsavo, was now allegedly linked to the "agitators" in the North-Eastern Province. Indeed, the recent spate of poaching and killings in the area has been blamed on "indigenous" and "alien" Somalis. Ironically, while similar incidents in other parts of Kenya are treated as isolated cases of crime, in the North-Eastern Province or adjacent areas they are often treated as part of deliberate political and economic strategies to destabilize the nation and discourage tourism. The incident of September 5, 1988, in which twelve travellers were killed and twenty-nine others injured when three buses were attacked between Gartuba and Bangale, is a case in point.[29] Accordingly, the government attempted to save its troubled tourist industry by appointing Dr. Richard Leakey to implement its nationwide shoot-to-kill policy against poachers. However, since

Violence was employed arbitrarily, unpredictably and brutally against people who were deemed "enemies" of the state.

the government had presented Somalis as poachers, this policy was interpreted by some Kenyan-Somalis as an official strategy to legitimize the massacre of their people.[30]

In November 1988 the MP for Dujis in Garissa District and Minister of State Hussein Maalim Mohammed, stated that aliens from a neighbouring country (Somalia) had infiltrated the country and were illegally acquiring citizenship and engaging in dubious business. In 1989 the Kenyan government began screening ethnic Somalis in the country. The *Weekly Review* (November 17, 1989) made this observation:

> *The current screening of ethnic Somalis in Kenya may, on the face of it, appear unusual, but those anxious for an explanation probably need not go much further than the deterioration in recent months of the security situation in North-Eastern Province and surrounding areas.... If the intention of the current screening exercise of ethnic Somalis is to root out rebels whom Barre complains have sought sanctuary in the country, then the Somali government has every reason to be pleased. As for local Somalis, some of them may find the exercise inconvenient, and probably even a discriminatory one. But the security factors involved appear to have led the Kenya government to decide that the move was imperative. Being a neighbour of Somalia and having a sizeable ethnic Somali population within its borders, Kenya can barely escape some consequences of the internal strife in Somalia.*[31]

The image of Somalis seen in the larger historical context of conflicts between the two states and between the central government and the North-Eastern Province have blurred the distinction between Somali refugees and Kenyan-Somalis. As a matter of fact, the distinction is often arbitrary, and this has affected the lives of all Somalis in Kenya. *Africa Watch* had this to say:

> *State of emergency laws in the North Eastern Province allow security forces to detain anyone for up to 56 days without trial. An umbrella charge of "banditry" has been used ubiquitously in the North Eastern Province to subject a countless number of individuals to harassment, beatings, detention and torture as well as being levied against entire village communities as an official platform to carry out violent security sweeps. There have been a number of massacres by Kenyan security forces in the North Eastern Province condemned as gross violations of human rights by the international organizations—in Garissa 1980, Modgashe 1982, Pokot 1984, Wajir 1984 and Wajir 1987.... In 1987 another incident in Wagala, near Wajir, resulted in at least 297 people massacred, although the government only acknowledged 57 dead claiming "inter-tribal clashes." The killing followed a systematic operation by the security forces who confiscated thousands of identity cards and closed all water sources in Wajir, a desert region. Eyewitness reports told of people forced to strip, detained in barbed wire enclosure and deprived of food and water. Groups of people were burned alive with petrol; others were shot or beaten to death.*[32]

In its opposition to government repression of Kenyan-Somalis and the forcible repatriation of Somali refugees, *Africa Watch* argued that:

> *The Kenyan authorities are also using the influx of Somalis seeking sanctuary to impose a discriminatory and repressive screening process on its own ethnic Somali community, which has suffered a history of persecution.... Some 3,000 refugees staying in makeshift shelters in Liboi, North Eastern Kenya, received no food or assistance from the Kenyan authorities since arriving in Kenya on September 20.... The refugees were harassed and beaten by Kenyan security forces, and three arrested for "inciting resistance" against deportation. All refugees have now reportedly been returned to areas in Somalia where heavy fighting persists, or have fled to escape forcible repatriation.... The authorities have increased security sweeps and identity checks of Kenyans of Somali origin and Somalis living in Kenya. The arrival of the refugees is being used as an opportunity to impose compulsory screening on all Kenyan-Somalis, in order to identify "illegal aliens."* [33]

It is also imperative to indicate that the unstated policy of "refugee deterrence," which often means discouraging refugee influx by forcing refugees to go to the overcrowded camps and/or inducing involuntary repatriation, affects the treatment of refugees in general. Sending refugees to overcrowded camps, however, also reflects the lack of resources available to provide needed assistance to refugees. As a matter of fact, the severe ecological, political and economic crises the country faces have direct implications for refugees in the country. With thousands of internally displaced persons (products of political or "ethnic" violence) and hundreds of thousands facing famine due to drought, the government of Kenya does not have the capacity to meet the basic human rights needs of an estimated 700,000 refugees now living within Kenya (most of whom are Somali refugees).

The Kenyan government needs to radically change its inhumane treatment of Kenyan-Somalis and Somali refugees. This will mean that the state should adhere to international human rights and refugee covenants it endorsed. Also, it should develop a refugee determination mechanism that will make a clear distinction between Kenyan-Somalis and Somali refugees. Equally important, Kenya and other OAU member states must find a democratic way of addressing the question of the state's political legitimacy. The question of protecting and meeting minority ethnic groups' aspirations can no longer be avoided by Kenya and the OAU. There is an urgent need for the international community to address the crisis in Somalia to save the loss of human lives and allow for a speedy repatriation of Somali refugees. Assistance to refugees in Kenya may be directed to the UNHCR, African Medical and Research Foundation, Médecins San Frontières, All-African Conference of Churches, Church of the Province of Kenya, National Council of Churches of Kenya/ Refugee Service Unit, International Committee of the Red Cross, Kenya Red Cross Society, Jesuit Refugee Service in Africa and Kenya Catholic Secretariat. ■

Notes

1. U.S. Committee for Refugees, *World Refugee Survey* (1991): 44-45; U.S. Committee for Refugees, *World Refugee Survey* (1992): 43-45; *Africa Watch*

(November 17, 1989). See also *World Refugee Survey* (1987): 38.

2. A.A. Castagno, "The Somali-Kenya Controversy: Implications for the Future," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 2, no. 2 (1964): 165-69.
3. Ibid., 70-71.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 176-77.
7. See Somali Government, *The Issue of the Northern Frontier District* (Muqdisho: Somali Government, 1963): 19.
8. *Report of the Northern Frontier District Commission*, presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the colonies by command of Her Majesty (London: HMSO, 1962); *Kenya Colony and Protectorate: Report of the Regional Boundaries Commission* (London: HMSO, 1962).
9. Somali Government, *Frontier Problem Planted by Britain between Kenya and Somali Republic* (Muqdisho: Somali Government, 1963).
10. See Saadia Touval, *The Boundary Politics of Independent Africa* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972): 52-53.
11. Ibid., 54.
12. Ibid., 56-57.
13. See Crawford Young, "Self-Determination, Territorial Integrity, and African State System," in *Conflict Resolution in Africa*, edited by Francis M. Deng and I. William Zartman (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991): 327; John Ravenhill, "Redrawing the Map of Africa," in *The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa*, edited by Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazen (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988): 282-306; Harvey Starr and Benjamin A. Most, "Contagion and Border Effects on Contemporary African Conflict," *Comparative Political Studies* 16, no. 1 (April 1983): 92-117.
14. See Peter Woodward, "Relations Between Neighbouring States in North-East Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 22, no. 2 (1984): 280.
15. Gundrun Dahl, *Suffering Grass: Subsistence and Society of Waso Borana* (Stockholm: Studies in Social Anthropology, 1979): 200.
16. See Nzongola-Ntalja, "The National Question and the Crisis of Instability in Africa," in *Africa: Perspectives on Peace and Development*, edited by Emmanuel Hansen (London and New Jersey: The United Nations University, 1987): 55-86; Chege, "Conflict in the Horn of Africa," in *Africa: Perspectives on Peace and Development*, edited by Emmanuel Hansen (London and New Jersey: The United Nations University, 1987): 87-100; W. Scott Thompson and I. William Zartman, "The Development of Norms in the African System," in *The Organization of African Unity After Ten Years*, edited by Yassin El-Ayouty (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975): 5-6.
17. See *Africa Contemporary Record* (London, 1968-69): 159.
18. *Africa Contemporary Record* (London, 1974-75): B209.
19. Chege, "Conflict in the Horn of Africa," 91.
20. Bereket H. Salassie, "The Dilemma on the Horn of Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 22, no. 2 (1984): 260.
21. Ibid., 272.
22. See, for example, Keith Sommerville, *Foreign Military Intervention in Africa* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1990): 41-60; I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985): 71-117.
23. Chege, "Conflict in the Horn of Africa," 94.
24. For a useful theoretical debate on state repression, coercion and terror, see David Pion-Berlin, *The Ideology of State Terror* (Boulder and London: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1989): 1-7; Ekkart Zimmermann, *Political Violence, Crises, and Revolutions: Theories and Research* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1983).
25. Woodward, "Relations Between Neighbouring States in North-East Africa," 283.
26. Chege, "Conflict in the Horn of Africa," 93.
27. See Nairobi-based newspapers, *Standard, Daily Nation and Kenya Times* (February 21, 1989).
28. See "Terror Reigns in Eastern Kenya," *Weekly Review* (Nairobi, n.d., 1992): 21-22.
29. *Weekly Review* (Nairobi, November 12, 1989): 19-20.
30. Personal interview with a Kenyan-Somali, Mombasa, June 23, 1992.
31. *Weekly Review* (Nairobi, November 17, 1992).
32. *Africa Watch* (November 17, 1989): 10-11.
33. Ibid.

Somali Torture Survivors in Canada

Joan Simalchik

Frequently, it is the presence of refugees in a host community that alerts a wider audience to a particular situation of human rights abuse. Such is the case of Somalia. From the mid-1980s to today, Canadian immigration reports that thousands of Somalis have sought refuge in Canada. Large numbers of these refugees who fled from the Siad Barre regime testified to experiences of violent persecution, mass repression and torture.

Somali torture survivors approached the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) for assessment, documentation, counselling and treatment. Successive CCVT annual reports record the numbers of Somali survivors seeking help. In 1987 the Centre registered thirty-six Somali cases; in 1988, twenty-two cases; in 1989, ninety-two cases; in 1990, 121 cases; and in 1988, 272 new intakes were conducted. Three hundred women were on the waiting list for the Centre's mutual support group.

By 1990, Somali refugees were increasingly making their presence known throughout Canada. Community members formed a variety of organizations and began to join the staffs of settlement and social service agencies, as well as mainstream institutions, universities and colleges. Still, despite the contributions being made, Somali refugees had the trauma of their past experiences to surmount in addition to the obstacles of settlement.

CCVT doctors soon recognized the legacy of trauma as manifested in Somali torture survivors. Writing in the National Academy of Science's 1988 report, *Scientists and Human Rights in Somalia*, Dr. Wendell Block stated: "The incidents described to me spanned the period between August of 1977 and August of 1986. Most of these men continued to complain of a variety of somatic and psychological problems, typical of torture victims. Somatically, these included spells of dizziness, headaches, stomach pains, back pains, aching eyes, knee pains, coughing and choking feelings. Psychologically, there were frequent complaints of nightmares, poor sleep, poor appetite, difficulties with short-term memory and concentration, fatigue, depression and anxiety." He continued, "The most common visible, physical scars were those of abrasions and lacerations, entirely consistent with whippings, kicks, bayonet cuts and other methods of beatings described. They were located on faces, chests, backs, abdomens, arms, legs and feet."

Dr. Donald Payne, a psychiatrist in private practice and coordinator of CCVT's Medical Network, wrote: "It appears that little effort was made to hide the fact that the victims had been tortured. They were punched, kicked and hit with sticks, whips and rifles. Almost all the individuals reported threats to their lives and found this quite terrifying as it appeared that their death could result from a whim of the guards rather than requiring any order from a higher authority."

Dr. Philip Berger wrote of a thirteen-year-old boy who was detained. He was "repeatedly stabbed with bayonets to his chest, back and buttocks. He says he was hung by his leg from a tree, kicked and slapped and burned with cigarettes to his face. He exhibited severe and extensive scarring with over fifty scars counted over all parts of his body. Most notable were five identically shaped scars on his chest. These were in forms of crosses with each line of the cross ranging from five to seven cm and thickened. He had severe scarring on his arms, legs and back. His scars were strongly suggestive of injury with a sharp object occurring in a similar fashion to different areas of his body. In over ten years of examining over 200 torture victims, I have never observed such dramatic signs of previous injury."

The internal political situation in Somalia has deteriorated and is now worsened by a severe drought. Somali refugees in Canada experience severe difficulties. Many are separated from families, others face uncertain immigration decisions and still others struggle to recover from incidents of torture, imprisonment and persecution. The impact of losing one's country, family and past life is greatly exacerbated by memories of intense personal violation and maltreatment. Specialized service is necessary, but recognition and support from the larger community remains vital for those who have endured and survived the torment of torture. ■

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Joan Simalchik is associated with the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Toronto

REFUGEE CLAIMS

Number of Refugee Claims made in Canada by Somali citizens from 1985 to 1991

1985	31
1986	459
1987	699
1988	1,772
1989	2,653
1990	3,840
1991	3,503
Total	**12,957**

Source: CEIC/IRB

BOOK REVIEW

The State and Rural Transformation in Northern Somalia 1884-1986

Abdi Ismail Samatar

The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989

Reviewed by Michael Zmolek

This work sets out to retheorize the nature of Somalia's political economy by focusing on the role that the state plays in agrarian change and underdevelopment in Somalia. No previous work has taken on this task, and Abdi Samatar argues for the necessity of reformulating a Somali political economy that goes beyond the currently dominant methodological framework in order to bring research questions in consonance with social reality. The first task, accordingly, is "to deconstruct the ghettoization of Somali studies as a backwater area in African studies." The theoretical and methodological advances that have been made in the 1970s and 1980s in African studies, he insists, must now be critically utilized to inform the Somali condition. Samatar differs from I.M. Lewis—the leading Somalicist whose work since the 1950s has provided the foundation for Somali studies—when it comes to defining the precise meaning of specific terms, such as the state, tribalism and pastoralism. According to Samatar, these terms must be made historically specific because, for example, the pastoralism found in Somalia today is not the pastoralism of precapitalist Somalia, and distinctions such as these are not merely historical or "academic"; different usages (or nonusages) of such distinctions produce different analyses and ultimately affect people's lives in different ways.

> *Attempts to explain the Somali problem, both in the popular media and in academic discourse, have produced what amounts to a barrage of hollow pronouncements regarding the origin and nature of this human calamity. Accordingly, the causes assigned to poverty are either climatic aridity, poor resource endowment, and/or a corrupt public sector.... [These scenarios] fall far short of providing a coherent and purposeful analysis of the genesis of the Somali predicament, analysis which would help in the formulation of more practical ways out of the paralysis. In no way am I arguing that inclement nature and corruption are not important in shaping the development process; rather, they constitute a secondary constraint to it. (p. 3)*

Little has been written in previous work on Somalia concerning the social relations in agriculture and the extraction of surplus. Samatar sees the extraction and redeployment of surplus as the motor of development and hence a suitable point of departure. He sets out to examine the society and economy of Somalia in three stages of history: the precolonial, the colonial and post-independence periods. I shall briefly restate his historical review. The first period saw a pastoral production that was developed over the centuries to make good use of the region's meagre resources. Mobility and flexibility were therefore required, and units of production had to be small and widely dispersed. The logic of the pastoral economy was to minimize risk in order to ensure the preservation of the family. A clan system arose, each clan having from one hundred to 1,000 members, which marked the highest limit of political cooperation. Though the economy had trade with the outside, it was principally based on a barter system.

Colonialism sought control over Somalia not so much for economic returns on goods to be had there—Somalia had no copper mines or "white highlands"—but for strategic and geographic reasons. Colonial attempts at developing pastoralism and agriculture in Somalia failed because they affected only a tiny fraction of the pastoralists and the emergent peasantry. But they did have a threefold impact, which Samatar identifies as: 1) turning a single-sector economy into a three-sector one—pastoral, peasant and town; 2) ending the era of statelessness; and 3) rupturing the traditional pastoral-ecosystem relation by establishing a commodity-based economy. In this way rural producers lost their capacity to withdraw from the economy when conditions dictated such a necessity, for they were now an integral part of a national economy, dominated by merchant capital.

In examining the postcolonial state, Samatar argues that it was "neither inherently dependent nor inherently independent from metropolitan capital." (p. 83) Incorporation into the world capitalist system "circumscribes the economic and political latitude available to the postcolonial state and society." Colonialism left a certain level of development in the nation's productive forces, which in Somalia's case was quite undeveloped. This, combined with the balance of class forces, would constitute the nature and function of the post-colonial state. The author demonstrates that the colonial regime relied heavily on outside grants to run the colonial government, and that this pattern was continued after independence.

The postcolonial regime was a balance of power between the merchants and the young bureaucrats. Neither was sufficiently powerful to dominate the political scene, and neither had a direct role to play in primary production. Both depended on surplus extracted in the sphere of exchange for their existence—the merchants relied on wholesale trade of rural produce, the bureaucrats on foreign aid to finance its development schemes. The state was therefore suspended over the population. Development schemes, usually funded by foreign aid (which typically favoured large-scale projects), failed to significantly improve the production methods of the peasants and pastoralists or to incorporate them into the planning and implementation of these schemes.

Michael Zmolek is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Refugee Studies.

Though initially the postcolonial regime spurred an increase in livestock production, the lack of improvements in transport meant that the northern ranges in particular were to be devastated by the increased traffic in livestock, which contributed to the suffering incurred in subsequent droughts.

The regime of 1960-69 had by its end become more reliant on foreign assistance, and its development schemes had only furthered the marginalization of the rural producers. A government reliant on outside funding for its continuation saw the fragmentation of politics into the smallest units possible, that of individuals who competed with one another for access to development money.

The 1969 elections saw the proliferation of sixty-two political parties in Somalia, the ultimate result of which was a coup. But the only thing "revolutionary" about the new regime was its success at strengthening commodity relations among rural producers, a process that began under the colonial regime.

The degeneration of politics into a scramble between individual bureaucrats for funds makes appealing to "clan" or ethnic identity among supporters an attractive means of garnering support. Samatar critiques commentators who explain the current crisis of Somali society as a triumph of old-time clan ideologies over nationalist aspirations. For Samatar, "the precolonial Somali tradition has been blown asunder by its incorporation into the world capitalist system." (p. 154)

Colonial rule attempted to establish administrative boundaries coinciding with traditional tribal areas and to make clans into vassals of the state. This "caricatured and ossified the precolonial political system" and pitted clan against clan in competition for state favours. An artificially-produced political system based on ethnicity changed the foci and character of Somali politics forever. In postcolonial Somalia, where private accumulation of wealth was fused with direct access to state funds, "ethnicity" is reinvoked by politicians in the heat of competition, unleashing "centrifugal forces of immense destructive [potential]." (p. 159)

This work in 1989 precisely anticipated the kind of social collapse we see occurring in 1992. Samatar foresaw that the degeneration of politics along a division between the state and civil society would continue for several reasons: a) ethnic cleavages are deepened by the use of military force against selected populations; b) certain ethnic groups are overrepresented in the armed forces and other sectors of the public realm; c) the breakdown of the public security system prolongs the crisis; and d) continued "development" funding perpetuates and deepens the cleavage between the state and rural producers, who find that they are pawns in the intraclass rivalries of state bureaucrats. Finally, Somalia's nationalist ideology "the main supraclan cohesive fiber in this society," is in jeopardy due to the unprecedented use of coercion and repression by the previous authoritarian regime, which thereby undermined the basis of state legitimacy.

> *The repression by the militarized 'tribalist' regime deepens ethnic cleavages because communities and individuals seek refuge in the ruins of precapitalist social structures, which ironically reinforces social fissures. This prolongs the dying of the deformed old and delays the birth of the new. (pp. 161-62)*

For Samatar, the crisis in Somalia is one of social reproduction. This crisis is circumscribed by the economic relations between the state, the mercantile class and the rural producers. Readers who wish to deepen their understanding of the current crisis in Somalia should study this work and the issues with which it is engaged.

As a student of Abdi Samatar at the University of Iowa, I first came to understand the relevance and importance of theory in academic discourse. "Theory is the eyes of your mind," he instructed us. Professor Samatar is a keen theorist with a profound grasp of Somalia's social realities. ▩

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AND AWARDS

Centre for Refugee Studies
YORK UNIVERSITY

A. KATHLEEN PTOLEMY RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

An annual Can. $15,000 Kathleen Ptolemy Research Fellowship has been set up to permit a visiting scholar from a developing country to undertake research on refugees. Scholars interested in the study of refugee women who are in need of protection, and demonstrate commitment to refugee rights advocacy or service to the disfranchised will be given priority.

B. ANNUAL RESEARCH AWARDS

The goal of these research awards is to provide funding to a number of graduate students while they undertake research projects under the auspices of the Centre for Refugee Studies. Eligible students are/will be registered full time in a graduate program at York University and whose intended research area is refugee and migration studies. International students are eligible to apply.

VALUE OF AWARDS

i. Naomi Harder Refugee Award - Can. $15,000
The Naomi Harder Award may not be held in conjunction with an external scholarship or any other teaching or research assistantship.

ii. General Refugee Awards - 5 awards of Can. $9,000
The General Refugee Awards may be held in conjunction with an external scholarship, but may not be held in conjunction with any other teaching or research assistantship.

Candidates should submit a curriculum vitae (resumé), academic records, two letters of reference and a sample of research or publications to the Centre for Refugee Studies, together with a statement of intent by March 15, 1993.

VISITING SCHOLARS

Visiting scholars may use the facilities at the Centre for Refugee Studies for short-term or long-term projects. Short-term projects are those that can be completed within a few weeks or months. We will provide visiting scholars with office space and a computer. Long-term research projects are for the duration of the academic year, which extends from September to April and are also eligible for funding support.

Please submit your applications to:

Helen Gross, Student/Faculty Liaison
Centre for Refugee Studies
Suite 322, York Lanes, York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, ON
Canada M3J 1P3

Tel: (416) 736-5663 • Fax: (416) 736-5837
E-mail via BITNET, address: REFUGE@YORKVM1

CRS ANNUAL DINNER AND MEETING

FEBRUARY 4, 1993

Yes, it's that time of year again! The Centre for Refugee Studies (CRS) cordially invites you and your friends to join us at our Annual Chinese Dinner and Meeting. The dinner is being held on February 4, 1993 at the Jade Garden Restaurant, 222 Spadina Avenue, Toronto.

VINCENT KELLY AWARD

We are pleased to announce that we have invited the Honourable Kim Campbell, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, to present the Vincent Kelly Award.

This year's award will be presented to **Barbara Jackman** and **Pierre Duquette**, two lawyers who have performed outstanding work on behalf of refugees. The dinner will focus on the legal profession and its contribution in the area of refugee studies.

CRS ENDOWMENT FUND

Our Annual dinner is an opportunity for the Centre to bring together those interested and involved in refugee studies. This year the dinner will assist in funding two graduate legal students with their research through the CRS Endowment Fund.

We look forward to you joining us or your financial support through a donation, which will then enable people from the refugee community to attend our dinner on your behalf.

Please copy the registration form and send it to us at your earliest convenience. The CRS greatly appreciates your interest in and support of our endeavours.

Join Us!

CENTRE FOR REFUGEE STUDIES
ANNUAL DINNER AND MEETING

Jade Garden Restaurant

222 Spadina Avenue, Toronto

February 4, 1993

DONOR INFORMATION

Corporate Patron	A table for ten to the dinner *plus* a subscription to ***Refuge*** and notification of events sponsored by the Centre	**$600**
Patron	One ticket for the dinner *plus* a subscription to ***Refuge*** and notification of events sponsored by the Centre	**$125**
Friend	One ticket to the dinner	**$60**
	Special student rate	**$30**

REGISTRATION FORM

I would like to reserve ____ table(s). Total number of dinner tickets required: ____

I wish to renew my support. Enclosed is my cheque in the amount of:

❒ $600 ❒ $125 ❒ $60 ❒ $30 ❒ $____

❒ I will attend the dinner on February 4, 1993.

Menu preference: ❒ Regular ❒ Vegetarian

❒ I cannot attend, but I am sending a donation to the Centre.

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CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES
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York Lanes Press
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